

NEWS AND NOTES

- ◇ Please remember in prayer– The Hicks family, Edith Miller, the Ryland and Lawhon families, Mike Sadler, Rachel Miller, Patti James’ son (Brian), Kathy Gray, Debbie Montgomery , Alma Townsley (Angela Wisdom’s aunt) , Jane Ross (Nick & Robin’s Grandmother), Nadine Fields (Moses’ sister), Hugh and Paulette Sills, Ted Penland, Joshua Dykes (Butch Morgan’s cousin), Bob Calkins (A friend of the Millers), and Dorothy Wilson (a friend of Marian Church in MI).
- ◇ The Lawson family, and Bob Marschall are out of town.
- ◇ Group 2 meets tonight.
- ◇ Please remember also our shut-ins.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Last Friday of each month - Teen Bible Study *(Has been changed to this week!)*
- 2nd Sunday each month - Afternoon Song Practice *(Next Week)*
- 2nd Monday night each month - Ladies’ Bible Class. *(On hold throughout summer)*
- 4th Sunday of each month -Men’s Bible Class

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Assignments

Wednesday Night: 9/4/13

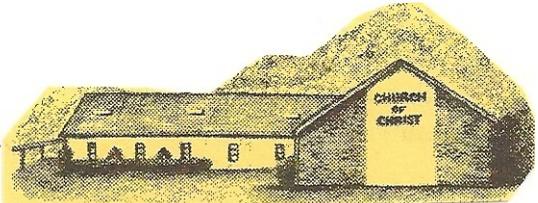
Song Leader: Eddie Lawson
 Opening Prayer: Eric Stevens
 Invitation: Nick Groenhof
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Clay Sadler
 Parking Lot: Leon Miller

Sunday Evening: 9/8/13

Song Leader: Ben Cunningham
 Opening Prayer: Jerry Williams
 Lord’s Table: Eric Stevens
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Jordan Lawson
 Parking Lot: Norm Blackburn

Sunday Morning: 9/8/13

Lord’s Table: Eric Stevens (B)
 Sherman Johnson (C)
 Serving: Jim Abram
 James VanDoorn
 Song Leader: Charles Rawdon
 Opening Prayer: Bucky Day
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Rodger Robinson
 Parking Lot: (9:00) Paul Lloyd
 (9:50) Larry Hicks



Lakeland Hills LEADER

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| <p><u>ELDERS</u> Larry Hicks (863) 899-7405 Leon Miller (863) 640-6378</p> | <p><u>SERVICES</u> Sunday Bible Study 9:00 A.M. Morning Services 9:50 A.M. Evening Services 6:00 P.M. Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 P.M.</p> | <p><u>DEACONS:</u> Robert Marschall Michael Sadler Eric Stevens Moses Stevens David Williams</p> |
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“Remove the Plank!”

“Judge not, that you be not judged.” (Matt 7:1) Oh, how people love this verse! It is the first line of defense for those who do not wish to have their sins brought to light. They might as well say, “Don’t bother me with the truth.” Or more clearly, “I don’t need you to point out that what I’m doing is wrong, I already know it and I don’t really care.” I guess they somehow feel that if others don’t point out the sin in their life that God will overlook it Himself.

Anyone who has read past verse one in Matthew 7 can see that Jesus was teaching against hypocrisy and not against pointing out sin in the life of another. When Peter, in Acts 2, told those gathered on the day of Pentecost to repent he was telling them they were in sin; he had called them murderers (v.23) and with many other words told them to “be saved from this perverse generation” (v.40). In doing so he was making a judgment

but he did not violate Jesus' teaching in Matt. 7:1.

Many times our response to those who would misapply Matt 7:1 stops here. Once we have proven that we do in fact have the right to judge with righteous judgment (Jn 7:24) we move on without regard to the rest of the passage. Yes, we point out that Jesus was warning against hypocrisy but do we actually stop and apply the teaching?

Have you ever noticed how much easier it is to see sin in the lives of others than it is to find fault in ourselves? We overhear Sally tell Suzy something that is really not her concern and we are outraged that she is gossiping. We then repeat the scene to someone else (because we are really concerned for her soul) and fail to see that we are now just as guilty as we thought she was. We should not overlook sin in the lives of others but we must first examine ourselves, perhaps we've been overlooking a few things within ourselves.

"Judge not". Those are pretty forceful words our Lord used. He did not say "be careful" or "judge, but make sure you judge yourself as well." The command is for us not to judge so long as we have the plank in our eye. At this point some might suggest that there would never be a time that we could judge a brother properly; after all, none of us are perfect. Peter wasn't perfect. He had denied Christ three times on the night He was betrayed. However, between that night and the day of Pentecost, he repented. No, none of us are perfect; we have all sinned. But we can be forgiven of those sins and then live blameless before the Lord.

Each night when we go to sleep let us be forgiven and blameless. If the snares of the devil have caused us to sin we need to repent and take the necessary steps to make sure we do not fall again. We must pray to God for forgiveness; not presumptuously but with a humble spirit. Then we can awake the next day ready to walk blameless before

the Lord and when we come upon those in need of salvation, those lost in sin, we can show them the error of their way without playing the hypocrite. We remove the plank and cast it away!

So often we think we can just stick the plank in our back pocket or place it on a shelf until we are finished removing the speck from our brother's eye. We leave the brother, satisfied that we have kept the Lord's command, and promptly place the plank right back where it was. How ridiculous! Remove the thing and get rid of it.

It's easy to see how many in the world have a hard time taking "Christians" seriously. There they are with their specks while those who call themselves Christians are stumbling around with their planks trying to remove their speck; all they end up with is a sore eye. They will not be excused for rejecting God but neither will those who cause them to stumble. "Woe to the world be-

cause of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes."(Matt 18:7)

If we fail to see and remove our plank be sure that it will be seen. We will all stand before the Lord in judgment and there we must give an account for all that we have done. (2 Cor 5:10) He will not overlook our sin. It will be noticed and we will be judged accordingly. Christ shed His precious blood so that the plank can be removed. He has promised us help in removing it. When it is gone He will remember it no more. So what are we waiting for? Let us remove the plank!

- *Written by Brad Sullivan*