

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Jo Anderson (*arm fracture*), Karen Berry, Norman & Margaret Blackburn (*whose daughter, Debbie Montgomery, passed away last week*) Joe Brown (*healing from procedure done last week*), Kelly Cochran, Kurt Dickey, Betty Eubanks, Linda James, Rowena Lawson (*new convert*), Paul Lloyd (*back*), Leon Miller, Bonnie Meagher, Butch Morgan (*ongoing medical*), Wayne Ryland, Mike Sadler (*pneumonia*), Ardis Tucker, Ken & Arlene Turner, and Jeremy Whitehead (*recently restored*).

Our family and friends: Susan Bebbby (*Bucky Day's sister with cancer*), Elnora Bennet (*Moses Stevens' sister*), Mildred Church (*Shut-in*), Bob Elston (*the Rice's neighbor; cancer*), Diane Fields (*Keri Rice's mother*), Brian James (*digressing lately*), and Ardis Tucker.

Ladies' Bible Class: The next ladies' Bible class will be April 11th, at Kyoko Williams' home (*at 7PM*). In preparation, please study the lesson that begins on page number 101 in the book, "Some Do's and Don'ts for the Christian". (*See the sign-up sheet in the foyer*)

Afternoon Singing: Our next afternoon singing will be April 10th (*@ 5pm*) in the auditorium.

Bible Class Review: The younger kids are all invited to Bible review class tonight in classroom number 7, shortly after the evening services.

Group Meeting: Group (2) meets tonight after worship. All are encouraged to participate in this good work.

Out of Town/Working: The Marschalls are traveling, and Paula Sullivan is traveling too (*Paula is scheduled to be back on 4-4-16*).

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 4/6/16

Song Leader: Eddie Lawson
 Opening Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Invitation: Trent Stevens
 Announcements: Bob Marschall
 Closing Prayer: Jordan Lawson
 Recordings: Nick Ross
 Usher: Ian Rice

Sunday Evening: 4/10/16

Song Leader: Eddie Lawson
 Opening Prayer: Jeremy Wharton
 Lord's Table: Ben Cunningham
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: David Williams
 Recordings: Jordan Lawson
 Usher: Bob Marschall

Sunday Morning: 4/10/16

Lord's Table: Ben Cunningham (B)
 Kevin Winn (C)
 Serving: Jim Abram
 Norm Blackburn
 Song Leader: Larry Wisdom

Opening Prayer: Larry Hicks
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Mike Sadler
 Recordings: Jordan Lawson
 Usher: Bob Marschall



**Lakeland Hills
 Leader**

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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ELDERS

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SERVICES

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.

DEACONS:

Robert Marschall
 Charles Rawdon
 Michael Sadler
 Moses Stevens
 David Williams

EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

He That is Without Sin Among You

One time the Pharisees brought a woman who had been taken in adultery to Jesus and asked Him what to do about her. Should she be stoned as the law said? They were not really interested in the law, nor right and wrong, nor the woman. They were trying Jesus "that they may have whereof to accuse him" (**Jn. 8:6**). After a pause and further questioning Jesus said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (**Jn. 8:7**). The statement Jesus uttered on this occasion has often been violently and blatantly misapplied. His reply was strictly in keeping with the law which said, "At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is to die be put to death; at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hand of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So thou shall put away the evil from the midst of thee" (**Deut. 17:2-7**).

The case Jesus dealt with was not simply one in which a woman had committed adultery. Jesus always dealt with the primary issue and then with the subordinate issues. Here the primary issue was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and their incredibly intense hatred of Jesus. There were actually three issues involved in the episode: the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, the demands of the Law of Moses, and the fate of the woman. When Jesus said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her," He convicted the Pharisees of their sin of hypocrisy, because not even they had the audacity and gall to step forward and say, "Well, I'm perfect. I'll cast the first

stone." They particularly knew that in this matter they were not innocent. One by one, beginning from the eldest, the people began to walk away. When Jesus said, "Woman, where are they? Did no man condemn thee?" He satisfied the requirement of the law because, with no witnesses, the woman could not be stoned. Then Jesus dealt with the woman and her sin by saying, "Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way; from henceforth sin no more."

Men and women who are stubborn of heart and who desire to walk in their wicked ways very often use this statement of Jesus to reply to any who would attempt to rebuke them or to condemn their ways. Thus the drunkard, the adulterer, the liar, the homosexual, the child abuser, and a host of others will defend themselves by saying, "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone." Jesus' words in **Mt. 7:1** are similarly used. "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Let us bring the question into clear focus. Since all of us are imperfect and do sin, does any one of us have the right in God's sight to condemn the actions of another or to rebuke another for wrongdoing?

It was the same Jesus that said, "And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and

the publican" (**Mt. 18:15-17**). It was Jesus who so severely condemned the Pharisees (**Mt. 23**). It was Jesus' forerunner, John the Baptist, who condemned the adultery of Herod Antipas and Herodias (**Mt. 14:1-4**). When Jesus uttered the above condemnations He had the same awareness of man's weak nature that He did when He said, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." Therefore, when Jesus said this He did not mean that it is wrong ever to rebuke anyone for sin.

The writings of the apostles make the issues in this dispute very clear. Someone will usually say, "I like Jesus, but I think His apostles missed it." It would be humorous, if it were not so deplorable, that these people do not realize that the only impression we have of Jesus is that which His apostles have left us. Matthew and John were apostles. Mark was a personal disciple of Jesus, though not an apostle. Luke was, seemingly, a later convert. Only through these men's testimony do we have any record of Jesus' deeds and words. The apostles who testified about Jesus, such as John, were unaware of any discrepancy between Jesus' teaching and theirs. When people talk about liking what Jesus said but not His apostles, they are speaking from ignorance and prejudice rather than facts. Please consider the facts.

Jesus told His apostles to go out and teach or preach. He said, "Teach all nations." He then said, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (**Mt. 28:20**). He said, "Preach the gospel to every creature" (**Mk. 16:15**). Earlier Jesus told His apostles, "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach

you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (**Jn. 14:26**). The apostles went out and did as Jesus commanded. What they taught was what Jesus said to teach. If the Spirit did not guide the writers of Acts through Revelation, then He did not guide Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. One may reject Jesus and His apostles, but one cannot accept Christ and reject His apostles. The apostles were inspired by the Spirit and they spake the truth.

No apostle stressed the need for love, forbearance and forgiveness more than Paul, but it was also Paul who said to the Corinthian brethren, "Put away the wicked man from among yourselves" (**1 Cor. 5:13**). Consider the implication of Paul's statement, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (**1 Cor. 5:6**). In the context, the lump would be the church at Corinth. The church at Corinth was, however, composed of imperfect people. Yet there was one among the rest who was a danger. His example would be a leaven of bad influence. Therefore he had to be purged out. There is a difference between sinning occasionally through human weakness, repenting, calling upon God for forgiveness and, on the other hand, wallowing in sin. Also it seems that there are some sins which are more flagrant than others. In addition the nature of some sins is such that they have a more pernicious influence on others. Through all facts and all arguments one thing stands out clearly. Paul told a church of imperfect people to put away a wicked man from among themselves.

The brethren at Thessalonica were told to withdraw themselves from every brother that walked disorderly (**2 Th. 3:6**). To walk disorderly means to walk out of step with others who are

marching. The passage clearly implies that there are those who, though not perfect, nevertheless do walk in order. Then there are those who walk "disorderly". Those imperfect people who are walking orderly are commanded to withdraw from anyone who walks disorderly. Paul told the saints at Ephesus to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them" (**Eph. 5:11**). He told Timothy, "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. . ." (**2 Tim. 4:2, 3**). One wonders if Paul imagined that those who would not endure sound doctrine would wrest statements of Jesus to attempt to silence the rebukes and reproof that His word says must be given.

Condemned is hypocritical judging. It is not required that one have a perfect record before he has the right to reprove and rebuke. The commands we have studied were given to flesh and blood people who were imperfect. Yet they were clearly told to condemn, to reprove and rebuke. If one condemns another when he himself is not even trying to do right or when he is doing something much worse than the one whom he is condemning, he is guilty of the judging the Lord condemned. When we must rebuke or reprove, let us look to ourselves, lest we also be tempted (**Gal. 6:1**). Let us beware of Satan's influence when we ourselves are rebuked, lest we give him an opportunity to close our eyes to the truth by causing us to resent the reproof.