

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Reagan Cunningham, Kelly Cochran, Kurt Dickey, Betty Eubanks, Linda James, Yvonne Jordan, Keith Marschall, Leon Miller (*Recovering from knee replacement surgery*), Butch Morgan, Dottie Reynolds, Wayne Ryland (*Ongoing medical*), and Ken Turner (*Swollen lymph glands; conferring with an oncologist*), and Arlene Turner.

Our family and friends: Susan Bebbly (*Bucky Day's sister; diagnosed with cancer*) Joe Brown (*Cancer*), Elnora Bennet (*Moses Stevens' sister*), Mildred Church (*Shut-in*), Chet Sheffield (*out of town*), Shelby Sprott, Brian James (*Cancer*), Debbie Montgomery (*The Blackburn's daughter*), and Ardis Tucker.

Ladies' Bible Class: The next ladies' Bible class is going to be March 14th, at Stef Marschall's home (at 7PM). In preparation, please study the lesson that begins on page number 93 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 today at 5pm in the auditorium.

Kid's Review Class: Tonight, shortly after the evening worship service, in room # 7.

Group Meeting: Group (1) meets tonight after worship.

Gospel Meeting: Please make plans to invite your relatives and friends to our Gospel Meeting that will begin **this Friday evening at 7:30PM (February 19-21)**. John R. Gibson, of Athens, Alabama will be preaching on the theme, "Christianity in the 21st Century Culture".

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 2/17/16

Song Leader: Joe Brown
 Opening Prayer: Jordan Lawson
 Invitation: Ben Cunningham
 Announcements: Charles Rawdon
 Closing Prayer: Jerry Williams
 Recordings: Bob Marschall
 Usher: **OPEN**

Sunday Evening: 2/21/16

Song Leader: Eddie Lawson
 Opening Prayer: Jeremy Wharton
 Lord's Table: Ben Cunningham
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: David Williams
 Recordings: Keith Marschall
 Usher: Bob Marschall

Sunday Morning: 2/21/16

Lord's Table: Keith Marschall (B)
 Sherman Johnson (C)
 Serving: Norm Blackburn
 Jerry Williams
 Song Leader: Charles Rawdon

Opening Prayer: Jeremy Wharton
 Announcements: Larry Wisdom
 Closing Prayer: Wayne Ryland
 Recordings: Bucky Day
 Usher: Mike Sadler



**Lakeland Hills
 Leader**

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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

"Directed Toward God"

"In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes." (**Judges 17:6**) This passage has long been used to describe a society in which there is no absolute standard of right and wrong—a society in which the individual has become the ultimate authority and choice has become a god. I imagine there is not a single reader of this article who cannot identify the similarities between the nation of Israel as described in the book of Judges and the modern world in which we live. There are also none who can deny that this philosophy has long influenced the religious world of today.

As an infant, I was "baptized" (sprinkled) in the Methodist Church. As I grew older, I attended the services of an "Evangelical Free" Church. A few years later I became a Baptist. Finally, I was taught the Gospel and became a Christian. When I was finally exposed to the Lord's church, I noticed a remarkable difference between the churches of men and the church of God.

Instead of doing whatever the members wanted, the emphasis was placed on doing what God wanted. Instead of focusing the services on the parishioners, they were directed toward God. It was refreshing to find individuals who were more concerned about God's instructions than their own enjoyment. But as I have aged, it seems this longing to serve rather than be served has grown far too rare.

Today, even among those who claim to be New Testament Christians, there appears to be a growing desire to "get more" out of worship. There are calls by preachers and authors to make worship more relevant, to revitalize it, to modernize it, and to make it more effective. But what often gets overlooked in these pursuits is the fact that worship is not designed for the worshiper. By definition, worship is a way for the worshiper to show reverence or pay homage to the one being worshiped. It is not about getting something out of it! Can you imagine any Old Testament Jew returning home from offering worship to God and commenting on how much they got out

of their sacrifice? Or how encouraging it was when they burned an animal carcass on the altar? Their service was directed toward God, not man.

However, those who want to get a little more out of their worship have turned their attention toward anything that can generate more emotion. They have become disappointed with the "traditional" worship and seek to spice it up a little. They are not unlike those in Malachi's day who complained, "How tiresome it is!" (**Mal. 1:13**). But the real problem with their worship back then was not that it had lost its energy or appeal, but had lost its meaning. They no longer cared about serving God. And I'm afraid we are closer to that situation than many would like to admit.

In **Romans 1:25**, Paul warns about those who "exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator." When we attempt to design everything we do in such a way that it will be enjoyable for our-

selves, how are we different? It seems to me that some are worshipping worship instead of God. They are more concerned about how they feel at the end of the assembly than they are about whether or not God has been glorified. In fact, the assumption is made that the better they feel, the more God is pleased.

In truth, there is a relationship between emotion (feelings) and worship. However, this relationship is the opposite of what many think. Instead of worship causing us to have certain feelings or emotions, worship is an activity in which we engage ourselves because of our emotions. In other words, emotion is the motivation behind worship, not the result of our worship. We worship God because of what He has done for us. There are similarities between this relationship and our love for God. We love God because He first loved us (**1 John 4:19**). As a result of this love, we want to worship and serve Him. Whether we enjoy particular acts of service or worship is irrelevant. Because I love my family, I try to provide a nice home for them to live in. As a result, I end up doing chores which I do not particularly enjoy.

However, they are not a burden to me because of my love. Remember Jacob's service for Rachel (**Gen. 29:20**)? That's the attitude we must have.

Thankfully, the commandments God has given are not burdensome and the worship He has described is not tiresome. I enjoy singing songs of praise to my Creator. I am encouraged and strengthened by the time we spend together remembering our Lord, praying to the Father and studying His word. I appreciate the opportunity to show my thankfulness to God for all He has given me by giving back a small portion of those blessings. But, having said all this, I do not engage in these activities because I enjoy them. If that were the case, I would only be serving myself. True worship is directed toward God and is directed by God.

- Jason Longstreth