

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Reagan Cunningham, Kelly Cochran, Kurt Dickey, Betty Eubanks, Juanita Huseman (*sick*), Linda James, Yvonne Jordan, Keith Marschall (*Recovering from procedure done on his knee*), Leon Miller (*Scheduled to have knee replacement on the 10th*), Butch Morgan, Dottie Reynolds, Emilee Ross (*It was announced last that Nick and Emilee are expecting; let's pray for mother and baby*), Wayne Ryland (*Ongoing medical*), and Ken Turner (*Swollen lymph glands; conferring with an oncologist*), Lilah Wisdom (*Very sick lately*).

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.

Working and/or Out of Town: The Sadlers tended to work responsibilities Wednesday evening, and so did Charles Rawdon. The Rice family is in Hoboken, Georgia, as Ian is preaching a gospel meeting there.

Ladies' Bible Class: The next ladies' Bible class is going to be February 8th, at Angela Wisdom's home (at 7PM). In preparation, please study lesson number XIII (13) that begins on page # 85 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 held at 5pm on February the 14th.

Kid's Review Class: February the 14th, shortly after the evening worship service, in room # 7.

Group Meeting: Group (3) meets tonight after worship.

Gospel Meeting: Please make plans to invite your relatives and friends to our Gospel Meeting that will be held in three weeks (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: 2/10/16

Song Leader: Eddie Lawson
 Opening Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Invitation: Larry Wisdom
 Announcements: Bob Marschall
 Closing Prayer: Jordan Lawson
 Recordings: Nick Ross
 Usher: **OPEN**

Sunday Evening: 2/14/16

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: 2/14/16

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

Opening Prayer: Larry Hicks
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: **OPEN**
 Recordings: Keith Marschall
 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

The Traditional Party Line

Years ago, a man from a neighboring church came to the city where I was located, walked into my office and immediately said, "OK, what is your position on the marriage question?" I said, "...whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." His response? "Yeah, the traditional party line!"

I said, "Wait a minute. All I did was quote **Matthew 19:9**; I've just repeated the words of Christ!" He said, "Well, but is that all the truth?" Almost as he said that, he heard what he had said! "I mean ... I mean, I know Jesus taught the truth ..." His words had already betrayed him. Rather than submit to the clear teaching of Jesus he had chosen to hurl an accusation that impugned my beliefs. But what did he mean by the phrase "traditional party line?" Behind this charge may be at least one of four attitudes:

1. I don't like what you teach, won't accept it so I'll distract you from discussing the Bible by making this charge. This was certainly the case with the man above. If I spent time defending myself and why I believed what I believed that was time not spent discussing what **Matthew 19:9** means. Clever tactic, yes? If I have close friends or relatives who want to marry, naturally I don't like to hear someone teach something that would question that union. And without any doubt, if I am contemplating a relationship, and you tell me I shouldn't, I won't like that. But instead of just saying, "I don't like what you are teaching," it is much easier (and sometimes more effective) to charge "Well, you are just repeating the traditional party line."

2. There are many others who have taught this for many years. So what? The fact that a teaching has been held for years does not necessarily prove it is wrong. Being traditional is not always bad. 2 Thessalonians urges us to hold the traditions of the apostles. There are thousands of brethren

who have taught the necessity of repentance and baptism for many generations. This says nothing about the validity of repentance and baptism. The number of preachers and/or writers who have taught a proposition does not minimize its validity, or prove it. Likewise, the number of years something has been taught neither diminishes its truthfulness, nor makes it true.

3. You haven't really studied, and you don't really have your own convictions; you have blindly accepted the word of others. I would guess this is what is behind the "traditional party line" charge most of time. The charge then is a way of saying that I can read your heart and know your motives. It also says that I know that you are not sincere, nor a truth seeker. The only person qualified to make such a charge is the one who is able not only to know what we teach, but why we teach it. If you are able to know (have real evidence) that someone has put himself under the dominion of others; if you are certain that a man prefers "popular brotherhood thought" (whatever that is) to personal Bible study, then perhaps you are

equipped to make this charge.

4. I don't have any real arguments or response to what you are teaching. Here is the real problem the man described above had. He had nothing to say in response to **Matthew 19:9**, knew what he was doing was wrong, but wanted to do it anyway. So, he threw charges around to try to save face. When I tell people my belief that the only man (with a living mate) free to remarry is the one who has put away his spouse for fornication I want them show me the error of my position (if it is error). Don't make mindless charges - come to the scriptures and teach me the truth. Help me to see where I've been deceived or made a mistake in my study. Lead me through the passages that pertain to this. Give me something substantial instead of just charging me as a slave to human opinion or party pressure. Often, though, when a disputant makes the charge of "traditional party line," he is reacting in frustration over his or her lack of substantial biblical arguments.

I am not prepared to ignore a real danger here. There is a temptation to preach what others are preaching; there is the sin of listening to men and ignor-

ing God; and there is such a thing as a Pharisaic, party-spirit mentality. But when you teach what the Lord said in **Matthew 19:9**, or anywhere else, because you believe in the Lord and want to stand where He stands, don't be intimidated by the charge of submitting to the "party line." And the fact that 95% of the preachers you know and respect teach the same thing is never a reason to throw it out. What do you think?

My good friend Harold Turner wrote about this a few years ago in a journal. His conclusion fits well here: "Personally, I don't give two hoots about traditional or nontraditional in the whole thing, and would like to make an appeal to anyone who might be feeling the pressure of the nontraditional use of the word traditional these days. Don't be too quick to apologize for preaching and teaching that which has characteristically been taught, for there is at least an outside chance that the reason that bit of teaching is traditional is because it is so."

-By Warren E. Berkley