

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Joe Brown (*cancer*), Marian Church (*back*), Kelly Cochran, Betty Eubanks (*out of town*), Cindy Hicks, Linda James (*on-going medical*), Rowena Lawson (*new convert*), Paul Lloyd, Bob Marschall, Keith Marschall, Steph Marschall (*bulging herniated disc*), Leon Miller, Butch Morgan (*ongoing medical*), Dottie Reynolds, Wayne Ryland, Ken Turner & Arlene Turner, and Jeremy Whitehead.

Our family and friends: Elnora Bennet (*Moses Stevens' sister*), Mildred Church (*Shut-in*), Bob Elston (*the Rice's neighbor; cancer*), Diane Fields (*will have procedure to remove cancer on May 25th*), Ned Hicks, Brian James (*cancer*), and Ardis Tucker.

Ladies' Bible Class: The ladies' Bible class will take a break during the summer months, and pick back up in the fall.

Out of Town: Jordan Lawson, Charles & Vernita Goodall, Joe & Donna Brown, David & Kyoko Williams, Paula Sullivan, and Audrey Davis, Ed & Terrell Lawson. Keri Rice will also be traveling this week to be with her mother during surgery.

Bible Class Review: The next review class for the kids will be June 5th, shortly after the evening services, in classroom # 7.

Afternoon Singing: The next afternoon singing will be June 12th at 5pm.

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

Area Meetings: The Trilacoochee Church of Christ has a gospel meeting this week, and there is a summer series soon to be held every Thursday night at the Lutz Church of Christ. Please see the announcement flyers in the foyer for details.

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 5/25/16

Song Leader: Nick Ross
Opening Prayer: Leon Miller
Invitation: Ben Cunningham
Announcements: Charles Rawdon
Closing Prayer: Ben Cunningham
Recordings: OPEN
Usher: Larry Hicks

Sunday Evening: 5/29/16

Song Leader: Clay Sadler
Opening Prayer: Jordan Lawson
Lord's Table: Sherman Johnson
Announcements: Larry Hicks
Closing Prayer: Wayne Ryland
Recordings: Keith Marschall
Usher: Bucky Day

Sunday Morning: 5/29/16

Lord's Table: Sherman Johnson (B)
David Williams (C)
Serving: Ed Lawson
Eddie Lawson
Song Leader: Joe Brown

Opening Prayer: Jeremy Wharton
Announcements: Larry Hicks
Closing Prayer: Neil Miller
Recordings: Keith Marschall
Usher: Bucky Day



**Lakeland Hills
Leader**

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

2510 Lakeland Hills Boulevard Lakeland Florida 33805 (863) 688-4336

www.lakelandhillchurchofchrist.com

ELDERS

Larry Hicks (863) 899-7405
Leon Miller (863) 640-6378
Larry Wisdom (863) 583-4311

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

“Do Not Let It Be Known”

The story of Ruth is one of the most heartwarming accounts in all of Scripture as it tells of a young Moabite widow choosing to leave her family and journey to Bethlehem with her Jewish mother-in-law, Naomi. In Bethlehem, the young widow met an older man named Boaz who eventually became her husband, and their son Obed was in the lineage of David and the Christ. While the purpose for the book being written almost certainly involves this history of the family of David, I want to back up to the wedding proposal that brought Ruth and Boaz together as husband and wife and notice an important lesson from the threshing floor.

While it is usually the man who drops to a knee and proposes, on this occasion Naomi hatched the plot and Ruth carried it out to perfection. Boaz and his men were celebrating the end of the wheat harvest and were sleeping on the threshing floor. After Boaz had gone to sleep, Ruth quietly uncovered the feet of Boaz and lay down at his feet. When the startled Boaz awoke during the night,

Ruth asked him to take her under his wing, that is to say, become her husband and protector. Because of the customs of the day, Boaz could not marry Ruth without first getting permission from a kinsman of Ruth's late husband, but he was flattered and promised to make it happen if he could. Ruth lay back down at his feet and then before it was light enough for anyone to recognize her, Boaz sent her away saying, "Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor" (Ruth 3:14). Why was he so concerned that she get away without being seen since he and Ruth had done nothing ungodly or immoral? Though she was a virtuous woman (Ruth 3:11), Boaz knew Ruth's presence on the threshing floor could be misinterpreted by some and the reputations of both of them, but especially hers, be damaged.

"Abstain from every appearance of evil." So reads 1 Thes. 5:22 in the King James Version and through the years some have cited this passage and its condemnation of things that "looked bad" as justification for re-

stricting many different types of conduct. Some argued against "spot cards" because certain people gambled with them. One man told me of a time when people were taught that they should not drink soda from a can lest someone think they were holding a beer can. A person, often-times a preacher, would object to something and when asked to show why it was wrong would simply cite the "appearance of evil."

Even if we did not know that the word appearance in 1 Thes. 5 signifies every form or manifestation of evil (see the ASV and NKJV) and not "it might look questionable to some," we ought to recognize that a command to avoid everything anyone might possibly question would even bring our Lord under condemnation. For example, He sat down at the well with the Samaritan woman in John 4, and allowed a woman to wash and kiss His feet in Luke 7. Jesus also performed miracles on the Sabbath that were "seen" as evil by some (Mark 3; John 9). Any interpretation of a passage that indicts Jesus as a sinner is a misinterpretation (Hebrews 4:15).

But as people began to realize that 1 Thes. 5:22 was being grossly misused, though often with good intentions, I fear that too many Christians then made the mistake of rejecting a vital principle. Boaz acted as he did because he wanted to keep the innocent Ruth from being seen as immoral and Paul took precautions with the collection because he wanted to not only be honest, but he also wanted to be seen as honest (2 Cor. 8:20, 21). As people called to be the light of the world, it is imperative that we give thought to and guard our reputations (Matt. 5:14-16).

I recognize that this principle can be stretched to unreasonable lengths and there are times when doing the right thing will cause us to look bad in the eyes of some, for that was what happened to Jesus in Luke 5, Luke 15, and other passages, but that doesn't mean we should be unconcerned about appearances and what others may think of our actions. If our goal is to be *"blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the*

world" (Philippians 2:15), we must be as Timothy was exhorted to be in 1 Timothy 4:14. *"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity."*

Let's learn to treasure more highly our reputation and influence for good, and therefore look more carefully at what we wear, where we go, what we do, and those with whom we associate. That some have made laws they had no right to make does not give us permission to do as we please without caring what others think.

All quotes taken from the New King James Version, copyright 1994, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

- John R. Gibson