

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Jo Anderson, Joe Brown (*cancer*), Marian Church (*back*), Mildred Church (*shut in*), Jim & Mary Elliot (*taking care of Jim's ailing sister*), Linda James, Paul Lloyd (*hospital stay at the end week; result of irregular heartbeat*), and Butch Morgan (*ongoing medical*).

Family and friends: Gerald Beatty (*member at Plant City who suffered recent stroke; not doing well*) Tonya Bryan (*Dottie's Reynold's daughter*), Roger Church (*Marian's husband*), Betty Eubanks' family (*mourning her loss*), Ned Hicks (*ongoing medical*), Chuck Goodall (*Charles and Vernita's son*), Brian James (*cancer*), Jesse Jordan (*Yvonne Jordan's husband*), and Ardis Tucker (*ongoing medical*).

Group Meeting: Group 1 will meet tonight after the evening worship service.

Ladies Bible Class: Class will meet tomorrow (*April 10th*) at Kyoko Williams' home (@ 7PM). In preparation, please study lesson X that begins on page # 149 in the book, "Some Do's and Don'ts for the Christian". (*See the sign-up sheet in the foyer*)

Kids' Review: Class will be tonight shortly after the evening worship service.

Gospel Meeting: The Southwest Church of Christ has a meeting with Tommy Peeler that starts today, and will continue through Wednesday (April 9th-12th). Their weekday services begin at 7:30pm.

The Plant City Church of Christ also has a meeting that begins today, and it will continue through Friday (April 9th-14th). Their guest speaker is Kent Heaton, and the weekday services each start at 7:30pm.

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 4/12/17

Song Leader: Colby Sadler
 Opening Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Sermon/Invitation: Bob Marschall
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Neil Miller
 Recordings: Clay Sadler
 Usher: Mike Sadler

Sunday Evening: 4/16/17

Song Leader: Keith Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Nick Ross
 Lord's Table: Bucky Day
 Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: Jordan Lawson
 Recordings: Keith Marschall
 Usher: Larry Wisdom

Sunday Morning: 4/16/17

Lord's Table: Bucky Day (B)
 Trent Stevens (C)
 Serving: Jim Abram
 Clay Sadler
 Song Leader: Joe Brown

Opening Prayer: Ronnie Henderson
 Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: David Williams
 Recordings: Keith Marschall
 Usher: Larry Wisdom



**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
 Michael Sadler
 Moses Stevens
 David Williams

EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

The Compelling Love of Christ

"For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again." 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15

The love of Christ, especially as seen in the cross, should be a compelling force in our lives. Because the sacrificial love of Christ can have such a great influence in our lives we need to think about Calvary often. When we think about how powerful that story can be, it is no surprise God's people are commanded to pause each week and remember that death in the eating of the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). This article is intended to set before us all the love of Jesus in such a way that it might have the effect God intends, not only as we eat the Lord's Supper, but every day. As we meditate on the sufferings of our Lord as He went from Gethsemane to Calvary, it behooves us to remember that He went to the cross because of our sins and in order to bring us reconciliation, forgiveness, peace, etc. (Isaiah 53:1-12; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; et al).

Throughout this brief study, keep in mind two important facts. First, Jesus of Nazareth was completely innocent of any sin or wrong doing (Hebrews 4:15). Second, He *willingly* partook of these sufferings because of His love for us (John 10:10–18).

For the sake of space we will not attempt to cite the specific references to each facet of Christ's suffering on our behalf, but everyone should carefully read and meditate on Matthew 26:36–27:50; Mark 14:32-15:37; Luke 22:39–23:46; John 18:1–19:37.

See the Loving Lord Betrayed By His Friends

After having spent approximately 3 years with the Lord, Judas identified Jesus by the most unholy kiss ever given. Using an act universally associated with friendship, Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus to the authorities. But Judas was not the only friend to fail the Lord that night. The other disciples were asked by Jesus to watch with Him in prayer, but instead allowed their sorrow to cause them to fall asleep. Then, when Christ was arrested, after a brief moment of courage on the part of Peter, the eleven apostles were said to have “forsook Him and fled.” Though Peter and John seem to have quickly regrouped and followed Jesus to the house of the high priest, once there, Peter denied the Lord three times.

The next morning Jesus suffered the humiliation of hearing the crowd request the release of a murderer and demand His crucifixion. Though we have no specific information on the make-up of “the howling mob,” it would seem almost certain that it included many who had welcomed Him with Hosannas five days earlier and had eagerly listened to His teachings that final week. The greatest friend man has ever known was truly hurt by His friends.

See God's Holy One Treated Like a Criminal

Jesus Himself asked, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me?” His enemies sent a large contingent of soldiers and police to arrest one who was kind, gentle, and willing to surrender. After arresting Jesus, they bound Him as though the one who had willingly surrendered Himself might try to escape. Through that night and the next morning He was repeatedly labeled an evildoer despite the lack of evidence against Him. Even when He was put to death, they placed Him between two robbers as if He were just another criminal receiving His just reward.

Be Shocked at the Cruelty and Mockery Jesus Experienced

During the night the captors blindfolded Jesus and played a cruel game in

which they struck Him, and then taunted Him to prophesy and identify the one who had hit Him. During this cruel mockery they also spat on Him. The next morning Herod and his troops had their fun as they dressed Jesus in a gorgeous robe and mocked Him. These make us shudder, but the cruelest mockeries were still to come. After Jesus had been scourged, the Roman soldiers put a “royal” robe around Jesus, wove a crown of thorns for Him and placed a reed in His hand to serve as His scepter. The soldiers then mocked Him by bowing before Him and tauntingly calling Him king. They also spat on Him and took the reed and struck Him on the thorn-crowned head. Following this Jesus was taken to Calvary to be crucified and in His dying hours the taunts continued, “If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross....He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down from the cross and we will believe Him.”

Feel Some of the Pain the Lord Felt

Before the crucifixion Christ experienced a beating that by itself could be enough to bring death to its victim. The Roman scourge, with metal and/or bone in the leather thongs, would cut the skin, sometimes so deeply that internal organs were exposed. After this horrific beating Jesus had His cross laid on His own back that He might bear it to the place of execu-

tion. We do not know how far he carried it before Simon of Cyrene had to finish, but every step He made must have involved an unspeakable agony. Then at Golgotha Jesus experienced one of the cruelest deaths ever devised. Nailed by His hands and feet to a wooden cross our Lord endured six hours of torture before it was finished and He yielded His spirit to God.

Rejoice With the Lord

It is imperative we understand and more deeply appreciate what our Lord endured for us, but we must not stop at Calvary. Three days later the tomb was empty; and almost six weeks later Jesus ascended into heaven where, having been given the name which is above every name, He became Lord of lords and King of kings. In His death the price of redemption was paid, and in His resurrection and exaltation the victory was assured. The key now is allowing the story of the cross to move us to follow Jesus and share in that victory. May God help us all to examine carefully the compulsion the cross has on us. *"He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him"* (Hebrews 5:8, 9).

- John R. Gibson