

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Jo Anderson (*has been ill lately*), Margaret Blackburn (*pancreas and hip*), Joe Brown (*cancer*), Marian Church (*neck and back*), Mildred Church, Jim & Mary Elliot (*taking care of elderly; thus taking turns attending worship*), Linda James (*recovering from surgery*), Paul Lloyd (*has been ill lately*), Neil Miller (*back; will see specialist on the 16th*), Butch Morgan (*ongoing medical*), and the Rylands.

Our family and friends: Tonya Bryan (*Dottie's Reynold's daughter*), Ned Hicks (*Larry Hick's father, ongoing medical*), Brian James (*cancer*), Jesse Jordan (*Yvonne Jordan's husband*), Ardis Tucker (*Paula Sullivan's sister-in-law*), Bob Waldron (*ongoing medical*), and Charles Woods (*Ed and Terrell's brother-in-law*).

Out of Town: Larry and Cindy Hicks will be traveling back tomorrow (1/2/17).

Bible Class Review: The next kid's review class will be January 8th (*next Sunday*), shortly after the evening services, in classroom # 7.

Group Meeting: The **NEW GROUP (2)** meets tonight after worship. Please check to see what group you are in, as our groupings have changed.

Ladies Bible Class: The next Ladies' Bible class will be held Monday, January 9th at Angela Wisdom's home (@ 7PM). In preparation, please study lesson number VII that begins on page # 131 in the book, "Some Do's and Don'ts for the Christian". (*See the sign-up sheet in the foyer*)

Happy New Year: I pray that 2017 will be a happy and fruitful one for all! With that said, there are new lists in the foyer for building cleanup, communion prep., Sunday night groups, and Wednesday night speakers. There is also a new Bible reading plan available at both entrances of the building. Let's be encouraged to start the New Year right, and to be consistent in all efforts moving forward.

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 1/4/17

Song Leader: Trent Stevens
 Opening Prayer: Eric Stevens
 Invitation: Mike Sadler
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Recordings: Bucky Day
 Usher: Larry Wisdom

Sunday Evening: 1/7/17

Song Leader: Bob Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Colby Sadler
 Lord's Table: Sherman Johnson
 Announcements: Larry Wisdom
 Closing Prayer: Paul Lloyd
 Recordings: Clay Sadler
 Usher: Leon Miller

Sunday Morning: 1/7/17

Lord's Table: Sherman Johnson (B)
 Bucky Day (C)
 Serving: Ed Lawson
 Jim Abram
 Song Leader: Jeremy Wharton

Opening Prayer: Keith Marschall
 Announcements: Larry Wisdom
 Closing Prayer: Neil Miller
 Recordings: Trent Stevens
 Usher: Bucky Day



**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

Seeking God

The Prophet Isaiah wrote, "Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near." (Isaiah 55:6 NKJV)

The writer of the New Testament book of Hebrews tells us that "God exists and that he rewards those who seek after him" (Hebrews 11:6 RSV).

There are many who say they are seeking God and often mistakenly think they have found him – while looking for him in the wrong places. He is not going to be found in some "better felt than told" feeling. He is not going to be found in some "transcendental meditation" technique. He is not even going to be found merely by observing his marvelous creation. We can only know who God is and what his will is from the words of divine revelation in the scriptures.

Theologians are fond of saying that God has revealed himself to man in two ways: biblical revelation and natural revelation. Some take that and run with it and say that one can find God either way.

It is true that nature (all of God's material creation) bears witness to God:

"... Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:15-17 NKJV) The psalmist wrote, *"The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork."* (Psalm 19:1" NKJV)

The marvelous wonders of God's creation serves, in legal terms, as **corroborating** witnesses rather than **primary** witnesses. The Bible writers give us the primary testimony about God, while the creation serves as corroborating testimony. Without a knowledge of the primary testimony of the biblical writers, the ways of God are past finding out: *"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"* (Romans 11:33 NKJV)

Believing scientists and researchers do a great service in corroborating the biblical testimony. They can strengthen one's faith already gained from a knowledge of

the written revelation. But when one begins to let his scientific research to modify the primary testimony of the scriptures – Houston, we have a problem. For example, some look at the Genesis account of creation and at their scientific data and have concluded that the Genesis testimony at face value must not be accurate and must be modified. The "days" of creation must be modified to reflect "ages" of creation rather than "days" of creation. The longer creation period then lets them buy more time for "theistic" evolution to have occurred.

By studying the natural creation, one can reach a lot of truly logical conclusions. He learns of the strong evidence that the universe is not eternal, but had a beginning and a maker. Some refer to that maker as a "first cause" or "creator" or "great designer" or even "god." But he can not know the God (Jehovah) by gazing into the heavens nor digging into the earth. At best, he can use what he finds, to whet the appetite to look for the source that tells him who the "First Cause" is and what his will is for man.

One only knows God by digging into "treasures of wisdom and knowledge" found in the Scriptures – the words that God spoke to the prophets of old and the New Testament apostles and prophets. These spoke and wrote it for those of

their generation with the writings being providentially preserved for all generations to come.

Beginning at Romans 1:18 and going on into chapter 2, Paul speaks of the guilt of the Gentiles as well as that of the Jews as a people to show the justice of God in condemning them both as sinners – of the Gentiles, he says they were "without excuse" and of the Jews they were "inexcusable." Chapter 1 is often cited as proof that God's creation alone is sufficient evidence to produce faith and knowledge of God. Especially verse 20, *"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse."* It does say that the Gentiles were inexcusable because they had the "things that are made" to observe and thus should have known and served God.

A close reading of the context shows that Paul is not speaking of coming to know God. In the first chapter section, he speaks of the Gentiles who at one time knew God in their past, but no longer knew him. He speaks of a time when "they knew God" as a people, but there came a time when they ceased to glorify him as God. They drifted from knowing, thanking, and glorifying him into their present state of idolatry and immorality. This should never have happened because at sometime in the past God had

revealed himself to them through primary revelation (tracing their ancestry back to Noah proves this point), also as a people they had the things made to remind them of God. With all of this "back up testimony" they should never have turned from the God they knew to their pagan ways. They were without excuse, not because they failed to find God through his creation, but because they left God in spite of the revelation they had received in the past and being surrounded by the corroborating testimony of God's great creation.

My friend, if you are seeking to know God, turn to the Scriptures. They contain the confirmed testimony of the people to whom God chose to reveal himself and his will directly. As one of the writers said, *"the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."* (1 Corinthians 14:37). After you have come to know God and initially obey him to be saved, let the marvelous creation of God continually remind you of his eternal power and Godhead in addition to your study of the Scriptures.

- Edward O Bragwell, Sr.