

**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 (*shut in*), Shawn and Francesca Johnson (*in need of encouragement*), Yvonne Jordan, Paul Lloyd, Kirk Marschall, Ahrea Miller (*hoping to get to go home tomorrow*), Neil Miller, Butch Morgan (*ongoing medical*), Dottie Reynolds (*in need of some encouragement*), Suzette Stevens, Arlena Turner, and Ken Turner.

*Family and friends:* Tonya Bryan (*Dottie Reynold's daughter*), Roger Church (*Marian's husband*), Laurence Cutts (*recovering from recent stroke*), Ned Hicks (*ongoing medical*), Chuck Goodall (*Charles and Vernita's son*), Brian James (*cancer*), Lisa Ross (*Robyn Day & Nick Ross' mother*), Wayne Ryland (*medical*), and Ardis Tucker.

**Out of Town:** Bob & Stef Marschall (*back July 8th*), the Ross family (*back June 18th*), Keith and Becca Marschall (*back June 22nd*) are out of town.

**Group Meeting:** Group 2 will meet tonight after the evening worship service.

**Kids' Review:** Class will be *July 16th* in classroom number 7, shortly after the evening worship service.

**4th Sunday:** Next Sunday (*June 25th*) will be the 4th Sunday of the month, and Ronnie Henderson will preach during the PM worship service.

**Assignments for Worship Service**

**Wednesday Night: 6/21/17**

Song Leader: Larry Wisdom  
 Opening Prayer: Jerry Williams  
 Invitation: Ian Rice  
 Announcements: Leon Miller  
 Closing Prayer: OPEN  
 Recordings: Bob Marschall  
 Usher: Larry Hicks

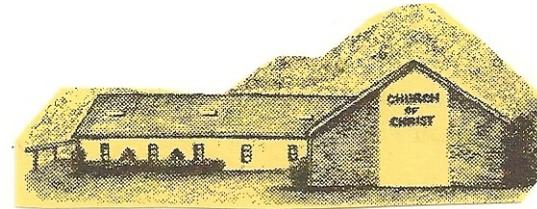
**Sunday Evening: 6/25/17**

Song Leader: Bob Marschall  
 Opening Prayer: Ronnie Henderson  
 Lord's Table: Nick Ross  
 Announcements: Larry Hicks  
 Closing Prayer: Eric Stevens  
 Recordings: Trent Stevens  
 Usher: Gus Johnson

**Sunday Morning: 6/25/17**

Lord's Table: Nick Ross (B)  
 Bucky Day (C)  
 Serving: Ed Lawson  
 Jim Abram  
 Song Leader: Larry Wisdom

Opening Prayer: Jordan Lawson  
 Announcements: Larry Hicks  
 Closing Prayer: Mike Sadler  
 Recordings: Trent Stevens  
 Usher: Gus Johnson



**Lakeland Hills  
 Leader**

**LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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**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  
 Michael Sadler  
 Moses Stevens  
 David Williams

**EVANGELIST:**

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

***Some Principles of Growth***

The period of childhood is a time filled struggle & trial, but it's also a time of tremendous growth & development. Likewise, the time between a person's conversion and spiritual maturity is a time when one feels a good deal of uncertainty & frustration. People in that position need much encouragement! With that in mind, let's consider a few principles that should encourage us in growing spiritually.

***Growth Requires Time***

The Christian must develop in many different areas. We must grow in developing Christ-like attitudes (Eph. 4:25-32), putting away pride (Phil. 2:1-11), and reforming various patterns of behavior (Col. 3:5-17). It takes time to grow accustomed to these things - changing the way we speak, act, and even think.

That said, a physical child is not born immediately knowing the difference between right and wrong, is he? He must be taught accordingly, and that's why studying God's word is so needful! God commands that His spiritual children grow in knowledge of His word (Heb. 5:12-14); and the obtaining of His blessings is conditional to our growing in that endeavor (2 Pet. 1:1-11).

There is also the matter of our need to engage in good activities that will benefit others, as well as ourselves. In preaching to Cornelius' household, Peter said that Jesus went about doing good and helping others (Acts 10:38). Jesus provides the example, and we've also been commanded as individuals to do good unto others (Gal. 6:10).

The life of a Christian demands a lot of us. Certain attitudes, our knowledge of things spiritual, and the volume of good deeds unto others... That's a lot to take in; but do not let those facts overwhelm you. Rather, allow the things you learn to become planted within you, and become a part of who you are (Jas. 1:21)! As we progress, the ways of God should become second nature (Mark 4:26-29). The process of learning and growing does take time, though - because there is so much to learn.

### ***Growth Requires Effort***

Spiritual growth does take time, indeed. But, without any serious effort - many years may pass by with no growth, for some. It is sad to witness that many neglect their studies, and thus fail to grow. Let's remember the instruction that Paul gave Timothy: *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* (2 Timothy 2:15) Being diligent means "to be constant in effort to accom-

plish something; attentive and persistent in doing anything". We must all be consistent in this work, realizing that the amount of effort we put in directly affects the time it takes to grow! (For those who wish to grow a little faster, keep that in mind)

### ***Growth Requires Proper Nourishment***

In the Bible, we read that Timothy's source of growth was to come from his reliance upon the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:15-17). This is why it is so important to read & study daily, as well as to continue in the apostles' doctrine when the saints gather (Acts 2:42).

To grow as we should also demands that we guard our very thoughts (Phil. 4:7; Eph. 4:31-32). Improper attitudes/language/actions are often manifested in various forms of entertainment (books, magazines, television shows, movies, etc.), and can adversely influence the way we think. Let us therefore be careful of what we choose to expose our "little eyes" and "little ears" to, lest our consciences be corrupted.

Maintaining proper companionships (1 Cor. 15:33; 5:6) will also directly affect the measure of our growth, spiritually speaking. So, let's surround ourselves with others who also wish to grow themselves!!

Furthermore, let us rely upon prayer: *"If any of you lacks wisdom. Let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."* (James 1:5) God tells us to pray, keep proper companionships, guard our thoughts, AND to rely upon the Scriptures. Proper spiritual nourishment is needed for us to grow - so maintain a steady, healthy diet.

### ***Growth Requires Struggle & Trial***

God tells us that various trials may indeed be a testing of our faith; and that testing has the potential to produce patience (Jas. 1:2-4).

Even as persecution was on the horizon for many Hebrew Christians in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, many were told their trials would be of benefit to them, spiritually (Heb. 12:1-13).

Whatever the struggle, there is great encouragement provided by God for those who faithfully endure (1 Peter 1:3-7). By our trials, God says that our faith will be proven genuine if we continue steadfast! Then, when Christ comes, we will have praise, honor, and glory!!

There will be many conflicts and struggles in life... Such things can draw us closer to God; thus we grow stronger. Consider Paul's own experience, *"And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I*

*pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak I am strong."* (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) Patience, and the proving of the genuineness of our faith... Those are potential outcomes of enduring life's struggles! Will we gladly spend and be spent, for the exercising of our souls? Let us use every opportunity to glorify God, even during times of distress.

Again: the period of childhood is a time filled struggle & trial, but it's also a time of tremendous growth & development! Likewise, the time between a person's conversion and spiritual maturity is a time when one feels a good deal of uncertainty & frustration. People in that position need much encouragement! If you're striving to grow, continue to work hard and be patient! However, if you're not making efforts to grow (*whatever your spiritual age*) you will not grow. Therefore, determine to put forth the effort necessary to grow in a *more consistent* way. God has given us all the tools necessary. Let's utilize them!