

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Jo Anderson (*not been well lately*), Joe Brown (*cancer, sick last week*), Marian Church (*will have procedure soon*), Mildred Church (*shut in*), Jim & Mary Elliot (*taking care of Jim's ailing sister*), Linda James (*rehab/ Clearwater*), Keith & Becca Marschall (*illness*), Neil Miller (*back*), Butch Morgan (*ongoing medical*).

Family and friends: Tonya Bryan (*Dottie's Reynold's daughter*), Ned Hicks (*ongoing medical*), Plen Hicks (*Larry's brother*), Herb Grannemon (*Bucky Day's uncle*), Brian James (*cancer*), Jesse Jordan (*Yvonne Jordan's husband*), Wayne Ryland, Ardis Tucker (*ongoing medical*), and Charles Woods (*Ed and Terrell's brother-in-law*).

Out of Town: Audrey Davis & Stef Marschall and Bonnie Meagher are out of town.

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

Ladies Bible Class: Next class will be *March 13th (next week)* at Steph Marschall's (@ 7PM). In preparation, please study lesson IX that begins on page # 143 in the book, "Some Do's and Don'ts for the Christian". (*See the sign-up sheet in the foyer*)

Kids' Review: Next review class will be *March 12th (next week)*, shortly after the evening worship service in room # 7.

Gospel Meeting: We have an upcoming meeting that's scheduled for April 2nd-5th (*begins four weeks from today*); with various speakers presenting lessons from God's word. Please make plans to attend, and also spread the word to others (*invite your family and friends*).

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 3/8/17

Song Leader: Joe Brown
 Opening Prayer: Eddie Lawson
 Invitation: Jordan Lawson
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Eric Stevens
 Recordings: Clay Sadler
 Usher: Mike Sadler

Sunday Evening: 3/12/17

Song Leader: Nick Ross
 Opening Prayer: Bucky Day
 Lord's Table: Jeremy Wharton
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Neil Miller
 Recordings: Clay Sadler
 Usher: Gus Johnson

Sunday Morning: 3/12/17

Lord's Table: Jeremy Wharton (B)
 Jerry Williams (C)
 Serving: Ed Lawson
 Jordan Lawson
 Song Leader: Colby Sadler

Opening Prayer: Leon Miller
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: David Williams
 Recordings: Clay Sadler
 Usher: Gus Johnson



**Lakeland Hills
 Leader**

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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

“Text, Context and Secondhand Coats”

John the Baptist would not fit in well with the custom made suit industry. In addition to his general appearance, he seemed to have little concern for the need of a tailor-made single person fit: “He that hath two coats, let him give to him that has none.” Horrors.

Yet as anyone knows who has benefited from hand-me-downs or second hand shops, a good coat that once warmed person A can generally keep person B just as warm. There are some obvious exceptions; attention should be paid to whether you're shopping in the boys section or the girls section, and a coat from Goliath is clearly not going to fit Zacchaeus.

So it is with texts and contexts. Some texts are obviously one-size-fits-all, like the two greatest commandments (**Mt.22.37-39**). Some texts fit one context, but not another; “Israel... remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt ... therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath” (**Dt 5; but cf. Col. 2.17**). Some texts appear in a specific context, but certainly fit elsewhere just as well. When Paul warned the Corinthians that “bad companions corrupt good morals,” the context was an anti-resurrection influence; yet the applications fit far beyond that. Indeed, this simple statement of truth was already borrowed when Paul employed it here (it was a well known maxim among the Greeks).

Consider then please, some common mistakes regarding text & context.

Ignorance of Context

A man walks into the middle of a conversation. Everyone else understands what's being said, while the man coming in partway is confused. People get confused by the Bible in the same way. Reading random verses from the middle of Romans or Hebrews will not give good Bible knowledge just as sampling random sentences from a stack of history books would not give good history. Context helps the text make sense.

Misapplication of Context

Another man steps up to a conversation, hears a name, and jumps to a premature conclusion. He thinks he understands, but may discover he does not after offering congratulations or condolences to the wrong person. Likewise with the biblical texts, when attention is not paid to context people jump to flawed conclusions and end up misinterpreting the text. Consider some examples: **1Cor.3.15** "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved"

Is Paul referring to a man walking in sinful works, but being saved regardless (in contradiction to ch. 6.10,11)? Read and see the context to be the construction of the Corinthian church, with Paul, Apollos and others being workers (**v.9ff.**), and the Corinthian converts being the work (**3.9, 9.1**); with some converts enduring like gold, and others being burned up like stubble (**3.12**), to the reward, or loss, of the worker in the gospel (**cf. Php. 2.16**).

Isa. 55.8-9 "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are my way your ways"

Clearly, we have biblical texts that focus on the omniscience of God (Job 38ff, etc.). But is that the point of this particular text?

In this text, is the point: you are not expected to be all knowing as God is (**cf. Dt. 29.29**)? Or is the point: you are expected to stop being carnally minded and become godly minded (**cf. Col.3.2**)? Let the context tell you: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts... For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways" (**Isa. 55.7-8; cf. Php.2.5**).

Textual dismissal by contextual strait-jacketing

Respecting context is good Bible study. Abusing context to the point of hindering the text is not. Perhaps you've heard some of these: **Acts 2:38** is not applicable to us since it was addressed to Jews in Jerusalem. **2 Thess. 3:6ff** is not applicable beyond busybodies that won't work. None of the instructions in 1 Cor.14 apply today, since the context is spiritual gifts. **1 Cor.16.1-2** ought not to be read before collection since the context was a special collection for needy saints.

Yes, Acts 2 was addressed to Jews, but doesn't it apply to those afar off (v.39)? Yes, 2 Thess. addressed a particular problem, but is discipline limited to lazy gossips (cf. 1Cor.5)? Yes, the context of 1 Cor. 14 is spiritual gifts (ch.12 and 13 as well). Does that negate the teachings on love, edification, maturity, gender roles, or decency and order? Yes, the instructions of giving in 1 & 2 Cor. related to benevolence. But for other works of the church, ought we to abandon them in favor of giving grudgingly, in assigned amounts, regardless of income, every time the doors are open? Or ought we to let the biblical principles, precepts and precedents be applied to

more than just the details of their first application?

Let's respect the original contexts, but let's also not leave the word in the first century. The word is living and active, and needs to be brought into our contexts too. As the old saying goes: if the shoe fits, wear it.

-by Scott Smelser

"The Party Spirit"

Sectarianism is the practice of choosing certain doctrines and building a "party" with them as a boundary, while refusing to consider anything else as truth. Most brethren agree that the sectarian spirit should be denounced and condemned by both pen and pulpit. Some brethren pride themselves in not being a member of any "brotherhood camp" and in not flying the flag of any party. Yet those same brethren often *encourage* and *demonstrate* sectarianism by their actions toward those with whom they differ!

For example, one may claim to be against sectarianism and then encourage it by heeding and spreading prejudicial statements made about a certain brother or congregation. What someone said about someone else has been the cause of many misunderstandings and false representations. Erroneous conclusions have often been drawn about brethren because of secondhand information. James 1:19 tells us that we are to be "swift to hear, slow to speak" and Christ warns that we will give an account for every idle word that we speak (Matt. 12:36). The best way to avoid the sectarian error of misrepresenting others is to check with them about their actions and convictions.

If we are truly opposed to partyism, we must also avoid the practice of ignorantly categorizing brethren. Just recently, a brother referred to my attitude

about a particular situation, when I had given him no indication of my attitude. I asked him what gave him the idea that I felt that way. The reply — several other preachers of "my persuasion" felt that way, so he assumed that my attitude was the same. I suppose "my persuasion" referred to my agreement with what some brethren teach on one or two particular subjects. Because of similar convictions on these matters, it was assumed that those of "my persuasion" thought the same way and believed exactly the same thing in **all** matters. When we begin placing brethren into certain categories because of false assumptions or erroneous information, we partake of the party spirit.

Finally, one of the most obvious ways in which we demonstrate sectarianism is by refusing to study with those whom **we** have branded as sectarian. The Jews referred to Paul as "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes"-- and their Jewish party pride prevented them from giving Paul an honest and objective hearing (Acts 24: 5f). If we differ with a brother, and we will, we should be willing to study together as brethren — seeking divine truth. As someone well said, "The only thing that suffers from open and honest investigation is error." We must always have the attitude that we might be wrong in our conclusions on some matter. When we think we have everything worked out, and our conclusions are equivalent to "truth," *we have become the sectarian!*

Sectarianism will prevail as long as we view a brother as "one of them" and are unwilling to study with him in a common endeavor to find the truth. Yes, we may openly condemn the party spirit and teach against it — then by our actions *encourage* and *demonstrate* the very thing we claim to oppose!

- by Robert F. Turner