

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Jo Anderson, Margaret Blackburn (*pancreas and hip*), Earl Branham, Joe Brown (*cancer*), Mildred Church (*in poor health*), Vernita Goodall (*her sister—Joy Blaine, in Owensboro, KY—had a recent stroke; also, her niece—Treva, in Louisville, KY—had two strokes recently*), Margie Iserhardt (*still struggling with pain from fall she had in April*), Linda James (*ongoing medical*), Yvonne Jordan (*sickness*), Bennie Jones (*diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis*), Paul Lloyd (*extended stay at LPMC*), Neil Miller (*still has breathing issues*), Butch Morgan (*ongoing medical*), Dottie Reynolds (*pain in her back*), Mike Sadler (*neck pain*), Suzette Stevens (*Suzette’s brother passed away last week*), and Arlene Turner (*recent fall*).

Family and friends: Geraldean Day (*Bucky Day’s mother*), Nell Goodall (*Charles Goodall’s aunt*), Ned Hicks (*ongoing medical*), Brian James (*cancer*), John Marschall (*Bob Marschall’s father; in rehab*), Lindy McReedy (*Cindy Hicks’ aunt, cancer*), Wayne Ryland (*ongoing medical*) and Ardis Tucker (*ongoing medical*). Remember and encourage others who are struggling.

Out of Town: Eric & Suzette Stevens are traveling to Ohio for her brother’s funeral.

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

Men’s Training Class: 4th Sunday of each month at 5 pm (*June 24th*).

Kid’s Review Class: There will be a kid’s review class shortly after the PM worship service tonight.

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 6/13/18

Song Leader: Trent Stevens
 Opening Prayer: Eric Stevens
 Invitation: Sherman Johnson
 Announcements: Bob Marschall
 Closing Prayer: Eric Stevens
 Recordings: Bob Marschall
 Usher: Larry Hicks

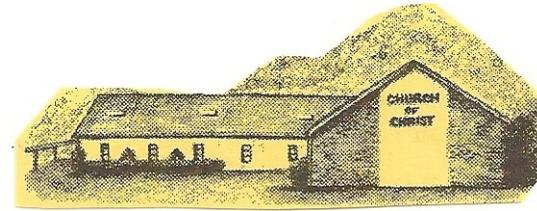
Sunday Evening: 6/17/18

Song Leader: Kirk Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Leon Miller
 Lord’s Table: Joe Brown
 Announcements: Larry Wisdom
 Closing Prayer: Charles Goodall
 Recordings: Bob Marschall
 Usher: Gus Johnson

Sunday Morning: 6/17/18

Lord’s Table: Joe Brown (B)
 Clay Sadler (C)
 Serving: Jim Abram
 Trent Stevens
 Song Leader: Keith Marschall

Opening Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Announcements: Larry Wisdom
 Closing Prayer: Mike Sadler
 Recordings: Bob Marschall
 Usher: Gus Johnson



**Lakeland Hills
 Leader**

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.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
 Michael Sadler
 Moses Stevens
 David Williams

EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

“It Is Easier”

To emphasize the difficulties the rich and wealthy have in depending upon God, while trusting in their uncertain riches, Jesus stated: “For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God” (Lk. 18:25). Jesus then added: “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (verse 27). Salvation is certainly “possible” for the rich who obediently “trust ... in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy” (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

Borrowing the expression “it is easier” from our text, let us make the following observations:

It is easier to be conformed to the world and follow its ways, than to present your body as a living sacrifice and “to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:1-2). But friendship with the world is enmity with God (James 4:4); and those who love the world do not have the love of the Father in them (1 Jn. 2:15-17).

It is easier to travel the broad way of the majority, than it is to travel the narrow way of the few. But the broad way leads to destruction, while the difficult and narrow way leads to life (Matt. 7:13-14).

It is easier to criticize and complain about the mistakes and shortcomings of those who are sincerely doing their best in serving the Lord, than it is to join in with them in doing good works. But those who criticize and complain never get the job done, and certainly cannot hope for a reward at the judgment (Matt. 25:31-46).

It is easier to ignore religious error, than it is to refute it. But to ignore religious error is not following in the steps of Christ and His Apostles. Preaching the word involves reproving, rebuking, and exhorting (2 Tim. 4:2), which is not always easy. But this is needed because the word of God “is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

It is easier to condone sin, than it is to rebuke it. When Ananias and Sapphira sinned, they were rebuked by the Apostle Peter and struck dead by God (Acts 5). Stephen courageously rebuked his audience because of their sins, even though it cost him his life by so doing (Acts 7). Sin in the church is often condoned, by simply “sweeping it under the rug,” because it is the easiest thing to do, but it most certainly is not the right thing to do (1 Cor. 5)!

It is easier to be baptized (Mk. 16:16), than it is to live the Christian life. The fact that many who are baptized never grow and eventually become unfaithful should be sufficient evidence to prove this point (Lk. 8:13-14). Baptism is the beginning of the life of a new born

child of God — not the end. If local churches today could restore all the backsliders in their own community throughout the country, most church buildings would not be large enough contain the overflowing crowds. Thus, although baptism is necessary for remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16), just being baptized will not secure us a place in heaven without faithful, dedicated, diligent service unto the Lord.

It is easier for a sinner to confess his sins, than it is for him to genuinely repent of them. Yes, it is admirable for one to say he has sinned (1 Jn. 1:9); but it takes a great deal of courage and determination for one to truly repent of his sins and to faithfully be devoted to serving the Lord. Think of how many times King Saul confessed he had sinned. But without a change of mind that leads to a changed life, one cannot please God and expect to go to heaven (Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 8:22; 17:30).

In serving the Lord, as in other matters, the easy way is not necessarily the best way. Jesus never promised that being His disciple would be easy (Lk. 9:23-24). But He has promised His disciples the strength to overcome the difficulties that come their way, and to receive a home in heaven if they are “faithful until death” (1 Cor. 10:13; Phil. 4:13; Rev. 2:10). Pleasing God is not a matter of taking the easy way — it involves choosing and traveling the right way — God’s Way (Acts 24:14, 22).

by R.J. Evans

“Is It True?”

This is the question King Nebuchadnezzar asked of Daniel’s companions, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego when it was reported they had refused to bow down to his image of gold (Dan. 3:14). In rage and fury this great Babylonian king threatened them with a fiery furnace if they refused to serve his gods. With no reluctance whatever they boldly told Nebuchadnezzar it was true, and furthermore their God would deliver them.

Even Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste when he saw that these men were not hurt by the fire. The furnace had been heated seven times hotter than usual so that the men who took them to the furnace were themselves slain, but not an hair was singed on the heads of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

The courage of these three men is needed in our own time. We may not be threatened with death for refusing to serve the god of this world, but we are put to the test: “Is it true?” that you believe what your profess?

The Worldly Church Member Answers: “It Is Not True”

Christians must live a life distinctive from the world — in thought, word and action (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 4:1-4). When the Christian tries to make a fusion with the world and Christ, he causes confusion in his life. No man can serve two masters (Matt. 6:24). Even the world looks upon him as a hypocrite; consequently, he does more harm than good. He fools himself who thinks he can mock God (Gal. 6:7-8); he discourages his brethren by his lack of faith; and he tells the world that standing up for Christ isn’t really all that important.

“The Unconcerned Church Member Answers: “Well, Maybe”

The fact we aren’t faced with sacrificing our life has contributed to indifference and unconcern of a convenient faith. While many would not commit immorality or practice false doctrine, they make an uncertain sound of the trumpet by their half-hearted commitment to Christ. Bible study, faithful attendance to worship, and teaching the lost are regarded by them as necessary only if we “have time” (Lk. 14:16-24). The influence of Satan has changed from persecuting the church to petting it to death. Freedom of religion and prosperity of our nation has in many ways proven to be a curse to God’s people by enabling us to think ourselves faithful without renouncing all that we have (Lk. 14:26-33).

The Compromising Church Member: “It Is Not Important Enough”

With double tongues some proclaim in one breath they do not approve of the activities sponsored by the church where they belong, and with the next breath declare that if one more unscriptural practice is introduced they are going to change. Some have said this for the last twenty years as they compromised one principle of faith after another until now the church is not only burdened with human institutions, but it has become a veritable social center. Disagree they might, but truth has never been important enough for them to endure the fiery test of standing up for Christ. How would you have answered Nebuchadnezzar had you been faced with the fiery furnace? If you aren’t sure, examine your present course and you will know.

- by Robert Harkrider