

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Jo Anderson (*shut in, injured in recent fall*), Joe Brown (*medical*), Mildred Church (*shut in*), Linda James (*recent back surgery, at Northdale Rehab Center in Tampa*), Paul Lloyd (*rehabilitation in Toledo, Ohio*), the Marschall family (*exhorting Kirk to faithfulness*), Kirk Marschall (*in need of spiritual encouragement*), Linda McKenzie (*tending to her mother's health*), Butch Morgan (*shut in*), Dottie Reynolds (*ongoing medical*), Paula Sullivan (*recent passing of sister-in-law, Ardis Tucker*), the Wisdom family (*with the recent death of Larry's sister*).

Family and friends: Ned Hicks (*Larry Hicks' father, ongoing medical*), Brian James (*cancer*), Diana Marcum (*Arlene Turner's sister, cancer*), John Marschall (*Bob's father*), Lyndell McReedy (*Cindy Hicks' aunt*), Betty Parrish (*Diana Jordan's mother*), Johnny Wisdom (*Larry Wisdom's brother, recovering from heart surgery*). Remember and encourage others who are struggling physically and spiritually.

Out of Town: Joe & Donna Brown, Larry & Cindy Hicks, Keith & Becca Marschall, the Wisdom family.

Home Study: The final class will be next month (*May 27th*).

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

Kids' Review: There will be a review class immediately following the worship assembly this evening.

Men's Bible Study: The 4th Sunday of each month at 5 pm (*April 28th, today*).

Ladies Bible Class: Class will be May 13th at 7PM in Diana Jordan's home.

Gospel Meeting: The Fortune Road Church of Christ in Kissimmee has a meeting that starts today with Ken Chapman preaching (*April 28-May 1*). See bulletin board for details.



Lakeland Hills Leader

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST
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<u>ELDERS</u> Larry Hicks (863) 899-7405 Leon Miller (863) 640-6378 Larry Wisdom (863) 583-4311	<u>SERVICES</u> Sunday Bible Study 9:00 A.M. Morning Services 9:50 A.M. Evening Services 6:00 P.M. Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 P.M.	<u>DEACONS:</u> Robert Marschall Michael Sadler Moses Stevens David Williams
<u>EVANGELIST:</u> Ian Rice (863) 213-9795		

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 5/1/19

Song Leader: Jeff Lanning
Opening Prayer: Ian Rice
Invitation: Keith Marschall
Announcements: Larry Hicks
Closing Prayer: Tent Stevens
Recordings: Clay Sadler
Usher: Larry Hicks

Sunday Evening: 5/5/19

Song Leader: Colby Sadler
Opening Prayer: Jordan Lawson
Lord's Table: Sherman Johnson
Announcements: Larry Wisdom
Closing Prayer: Steve Parker
Recordings: Trent Stevens
Usher: Gus Johnson

Sunday Morning: 5/5/19

Lord's Table: Sherman Johnson (B)
 Ryan Boyett (C)
Serving: Mike Sadler
 Ed Lawson
Song Leader: Colby Sadler

Opening Prayer: Jim Elliot
Announcements: Larry Wisdom
Closing Prayer: Earl Branham
Recordings: Clay Sadler
Usher: Gus Johnson

“Baptism and How We Read”

Think about these two statements:

Baptism has nothing to do with salvation.

Baptism now saves you.

Which is true? I was studying with some who were adamant in their opposition to thinking that baptism was connected in any way to salvation: "baptism has nothing to do with salvation," they insisted. I clarified to make sure of what they were saying; I didn't want to misunderstand. They stressed it: "Nothing" to do with salvation. I wrote it down on a piece of paper, and they agreed. Then I wrote down a second statement: "baptism now saves you." They denied that statement in favor of the first. They were quite clear about it.

I asked them to open up **1 Peter 3** and read. They read out loud. "Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you— not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience —through the resurrection of Jesus Christ..." (**v. 21**).

You could tell there was some discomfort here. I asked, "Now which of these two statements is true?" I was seeking explanation, some way to reconcile the ideas. They doubled down on their position, and without hesitation, affirmed what is not said in Scripture to deny what is said: "The first one. Baptism has nothing to do with salvation." Though I figured that's what they would

do, there is, still, always a little bit of disbelief when those who claim to believe Scripture so plainly deny it. They had no explanation at all for **1 Peter 3:21**. They didn't try to explain it. They simply denied it.

"How can you say that?" I asked, perhaps a little impatiently. What disturbed me, even more, was the answer they gave here: "Because **Ephesians 2:8-9** overrides **1 Peter 3:21**." Yes, overrides! In other words, grace was opposed to baptism, and since we are saved by grace, not works, baptism has nothing to do with salvation. Since **Ephesians 2** affirms grace, then it must override what Peter said. There was no attempt to harmonize. No attempt to explain or exegete. One passage just ruled out the other. End of story.

Never is there a need to pit God's grace against a command that He has given. Baptism is not magical, and Peter said as much ("not the removal of dirt from the flesh"). We do need to understand baptism in conjunction with Christ's death, just as Paul indicates in **Romans 6** ("baptized into His death"). We also need to understand baptism in conjunction with God's grace, for there is no way any of us are earning salvation. Baptism is an exercise of faith, not in our own works, but in the working of God (**Col 2:11-14**). After all, the revelation of baptism is God's plan, not ours.

Yet there is something else going on here that we ought to consider, something bigger that impacts the way we read the Bible as a whole. How do we read and study the Scriptures? A question like this cannot be answered adequately in a short article, but I'm asking the question, not in order to provide the answers, but rather to encourage us to think about how we might personally answer it.

When we start coming with up arguments that essentially negate some Scripture because it

doesn't fit our current view, or because we have a favored position that requires us to deny a passage, then we are no longer seeking to understand the truth. Rather, we are looking to rubber stamp what we already think. If we are uncomfortable stating exactly and quoting what the text says, we might be having some trust issues with the Lord.

Think about the lawyer who asked Jesus the question, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus responded, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" Good question. What does the text say? Of course, we have to know this before we can understand or explain what a text means. The lawyer answered correctly, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." Jesus told him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live." (**Luke 10:25-28**)

What happened next reflects the problem we are addressing. The lawyer asked, "Who is my neighbor?" This, apparently, was supposed to show that even though the Scriptures said, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (**Lev 19:18**), the practicality of carrying that out was in question. The lawyer knew what it said, but he was essentially negating it because he didn't see how it could be applied. One can read a text and, due to self-blindness, not see the importance or application of it.

People do it with baptism. People do it with grace. We may see what we want to see and, with a proverbial swipe of the hand, negate what Scripture teaches when it doesn't fit our other assumptions. Let's all be careful, then, to read Scripture in order to see what God wants us to see. "Not my will, but Yours be done."

~ Doy Moyer

"No Substitute for Mother"

Nothing, we are told, has more influence on what we become in later life than what we learn in our earliest years. And, no one, as we know, plays a more important role in these early and formative years of development than the mother. While it is true that she has no control over the sex or physical attributes of her offspring, the mother, more than any one else, is in a position to mold their disposition and character. What an unparalleled opportunity and responsibility, this business of training up children in the way they should go! (Prov. 22:6)

Accordingly, among the very first things every young mother should learn is this "way they should go". It is God's way; it is bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). One of the biggest mistakes made by many young mothers in child rearing is in seeking the counsel of the ungodly — those who have no regard for the counsel of God (Ps. 1:1). Only too late have some realized their mistake in following the advice of prominent psychologists who encouraged "self-expression" and permissiveness in children. Regretfully, even Christians sometimes forget that God's way is always best. No better handbook on child rearing can be found than the Bible — and the best mothers will be those who learn and apply its teachings to their children and to themselves.

Consequently, the mother must live in accord with the way her child should go. Example is one of her most effective teaching tools. As a proverb mentioned in Ezekiel says, "As is the mother, so is her daughter" (16:44). There are

no pretentious airs at home. What we are there IS what we are and even small children know it. What God is to a mother cannot be hidden from her child — and it constitutes the strongest kind of a recommendation for a similar faith. Much good teaching can be nullified by the influence of a bad example. As some sage has noted, to teach right and live wrong is like feeding our children good food with one hand and poison with the other. The mother who doubts the lasting influence of her example need only to recall what she remembers about her mother from childhood — and so shall she be remembered!

It is mostly the mother who puts across the tremendously important and needful lessons concerning respect and responsibility. Regard for authority MUST begin at home! — and it cannot be taught too early. Proper attitudes are taught, not inherited. If, in the first four or five years of life, a child does not learn that he is responsible for his actions and that he cannot defy authority, look out for the next fifteen years or so! The mother who indulges a defiant and rebellious child invites misery and heartaches. God says that true love will not spare the rod (Prov. 13:24). As a noted Los Angeles doctor has said, "The greatest social disaster of this century is the belief that abundant love makes discipline unnecessary". How deceived many have been!

And how deceived are mothers who say they can't afford to take the time for such training. They can't afford not to!

~ Dan S. Shipley