

## News Of The Sick And Others For Whom To Pray

**Audrey Davis:** Keep Audrey in your prayers as she is home recovering from her recent heart episode.

**Carla Moore Family:** Keep this family in your prayers as they deal with family problems.

**Sylvester Johnson:** Keep Sylvester in your prayers as he deals with his Leukemia.

**Neil and Ahrea Miller:** Keep Neil and Ahrea in your prayers as they struggle with continuing health problems.

**Norman and Margarete Blackburn:** Keep Norm and Margarete in your prayers as they continue to struggle with health issues.

**Moses and Mary Stevens:** Keep Moses and Mary in your prayers as they deal with health problems

**Keep Those in your Prayers:** Who have immune deficiencies and are at high risk as they try to keep themselves safe during this pandemic.

**Say a Special Prayer:** for those who are struggling spiritually and pray for them daily. Not only do we need to pray for them but we need to encourage them in their struggles.

Remember: **Joe Brown, Charles Goodall, Linda James, Leon Miller, Louise Johnson, Dottie Reynolds, Suzette Stevens, Arlena Turner, Curt Boyette, Vivian Dillman, Ned Hicks, Brian James, Eddie and Rowena Lawson, Paul Lloyd, John and Fritz Marschall, Kirk Marschall, Steve Parker, Dorothy Thrice, and Beth Weeks.**

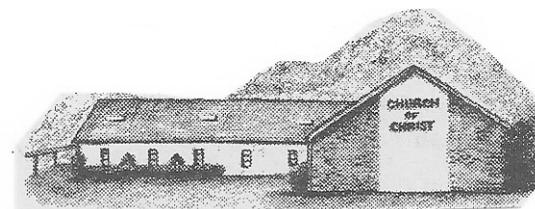
**Rice family:** Keep the Rice Family in your prayers as Ian begins a new work at the East Hills congregation in Pensacola FL.

**Charles and Vernita Goodall:** Keep Charles and Vernita in your prayers as they prepare to move to Tennessee to be close to their children.

**Jordan Lawson:** Keep Jordan in your prayers as he begins his journey in evangelism and in marriage.

**Keep the Elders and Congregation:** In your prayers as we search for an evangelist.

Joshua 1:9 *Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*



## 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

#### EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

#### SERVICES

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.

#### DEACONS:

Robert Marschall

Michael Sadler

Moses Stevens

David Williams

## WHEN GOD'S SAINTS ARE AFFLICTED

*By Dan Richardson*

Life has its varied afflictions – disappointment, guilt, suffering, grief, deprivation, hostility, persecution, death – all are the universal plight of mankind. Righteous Job stated that “*man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble*” (Job 14:1). Moses said, “*We finish our years like a sigh ...for it is soon cut off, and we fly away*” (Psa. 90:9-10). Likewise, David by inspiration writes of his afflictions and their positive effects in his life (Psa. 119:65-72); it is from this text we will consider three lessons to remember when God’s saints are afflicted.

**GOD HAS DEALT ACCORDING TO HIS WORD** (vs. 65). Nowhere does God teach us that we can escape life’s varied afflictions just because we are His children. Concerning the afflictions of God’s people, Peter said, “*Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy*” (1 Pet. 4:12-13).

Too many view life’s afflictions with a “*why me?*” disposition, questioning, accusing, and renouncing God because of life’s tragedies. But God says, “*If you faint in the day of adver-*

sity, your strength is small” (Prov. 24:10). Addressing Christians who were suffering severe persecution for their faith, Jesus said, “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). Rather than Christians giving a cowardly retreat when confronted with tribulations, Jesus said be faithful even if it costs your life! Life’s trials must not become excuses for our negligence in service to God.

**WE YEARN FOR GOD** (vss. 66, 69, 72). *First*, God’s people, in the face of affliction, must seek for wisdom to live pleasing to God. David’s petition was, “Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe Your commandments” (vs. 66). Also, James instructed afflicted saints to ask God for wisdom so truth may be applied in life’s struggles (Jas.1:2-5).

*Second*, Christians must genuinely commit to God. David said, “I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart” (vs. 69). Those who are half-hearted, double-minded and with a divided allegiance are the antithesis to the total commitment that the Lord demands of his people. “Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass” (Psa. 37:5).

The apostle Peter, teaching the value of Christian suffering, concluded “Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator” (1 Pet. 4:19).

*Third*, saints must have their priorities in right order. David showed what was most important in his life when he said, “The law of Your mouth is better for me than thousands of shekels of gold and silver” (vs.72).

Yearning for God, we will seek the discernment to “approve the things that are excellent” (Phil. 1:10). Those who are spiritually mature have exercised themselves “to discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:14).

**WE PROFIT BY AFFLICTIONS** (vss. 67, 71). Rather than have a “woe is me” attitude when afflicted, David knew the spiritual value that could be derived from such in his life. “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word...It was good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes” (vss. 67, 71). How easy it is to forget God when all is going well. Moses sought to impress this upon the heart of Israel before they entered Canaan: “Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, lest – when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage ...then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth’” (Deut.8:11-14, 17).

Consider three benefits of afflictions according to scripture: *First*, to be humbled. Moses reminded Israel how God afflicted them to wander forty years in the wilderness, “to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not” (Deut. 8:2) The way in which man becomes guilty of

lifting up his heart to forget God in times of prosperity (like now) is stated by Moses: “then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth’” (Deut. 8:17). The prodigal son “came to himself” because he had hit rock bottom in his life (Lk. 15:14-17). Likewise, even the apostle Paul was afflicted – a “thorn in the flesh...a messenger of Satan” – in order to learn humility (2 Cor. 12:7-10). All who would please God must learn humility.

*Second*, to become teachable and obedient. When one becomes humble, he then becomes teachable. David said, “It was good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes.” Moses stated that Israel’s humility was designed, “So you should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the Lord your God chastens you. Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him” (Deut. 8:5-6). Even our Lord Jesus “learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Heb. 5:8).

*Third*, to work patience. “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing” (Jas. 1:2-4).

Patience is spiritual endurance to overcome the obstacles (afflictions) in life and remain faithful to the end – like the athlete needs to win the race (Heb. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 9:24), like the farmer needs to harvest his crops (Jas. 5:7-8), and like the Christian needs to receive God’s eternal reward promised (Heb. 10:36-39).

## HOW TO PREACH THE GOSPEL

Rom. 1:15; I Cor. 9:16; II Tim. 4:5

By Donald Townsley

PAUL IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW IT IS TO BE PREACHED (Phil. 4:9). He kept nothing that was profitable (Acts 20:20). He preached the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). He preached to please God, not men (Gal. 1:10; I Thess. 1:4; Luke 6:26). He was bold in his preaching (I Thess. 2:2; Eph. 6:18-19). He told Timothy in his preaching to reprove, rebuke and exhort II Tim. 4:2).

WHAT THIS KIND OF PREACHING WILL DO? It will convict men of sin (Acts 2:37). It will convert souls (Acts 2:41). It will correct sin in the lives of people (2 Tim. 3:16). It will give hope (Col. 1:5).

CONCLUSION: Do you receive the preached word with the attitude the Thessalonians had (1 Thess. 1:13)? Have you been obedient to the word?