

# The Lakeland Hills Leader

**Lakeland Hills Blvd  
church of Christ**

2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd  
Lakeland, FL 33805  
(863) 688-4336

**Schedule of Services**

*Sunday*  
9:00 AM Bible Study  
9:50 AM Worship  
5:00 PM Worship

*Wednesday*  
7:00 PM Bible Study

**Visit our Website:**

[www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com](http://www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com)  
For Sermon & Class outlines,  
Bible Study Materials and  
Other Information.

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information, and links to our  
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Live Streams and Video  
Archives.

**Elders**

Bob Marschall  
Leon Miller  
Larry Wisdom

**Deacons**

Bucky Day  
Sherman Johnson  
Michael Sadler  
David Williams

**Evangelist**

Kent Heaton

## Giving An Account Of Self

By Kent Heaton

*For it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God." So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. (Romans 14:11-12)*

There was an old sage whose wisdom was sought out by the community. He was a wise man giving answers to difficult questions of life. One day, a young and arrogant youth sought to stump the old man by concealing a live bird in his hands and asking, "Sir, is the bird in my hands alive or dead?" His plan of deception was simple. If the wise man said it was dead, he would open his hands and let the bird fly away. If he said it was alive, he would give his hands a quick squeeze and open them to reveal a dead bird. Surprisingly, though, the old man never looked at the younger man's hands. He looked deep into his eyes and quietly said, "My son, it is whatever you wish it to be."

Life is about choices. A man can blame others for his troubles, indict society for the ills of life, and refuse to take personal responsibility, but at the end of the day, a man's life is determined by the choices he makes. Ironically, many blame God for the trials of life. They cast dispersion on God's character for the suffering in the world, refusing to realize that God never intended for humanity to live in a world of suffering. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit and were challenged by God, they blamed everyone but themselves. Eve blamed the serpent, and Adam blamed the woman. They would not accept that the choice was singularly theirs and theirs alone.

Blaming others is not the answer to poor decisions that are made in life. Shifting the blame to someone else is the favorite pastime in a world that refuses to accept personal accountability. Everyone is innocent. The world is to blame. What the world fails to acknowledge is that, before God, a man stands alone, accountable to himself. There will be no advocates to plead his case. Parents will not be able to answer for their children. Husbands and wives cannot appeal to each other. Society will not be on trial at the judgment seat of God. Every life is open and laid bare before the judgment seat of God.

The choice of life and death is in the hands of every individual. There are no exceptions. God views a man's life from one viewpoint – what has the man done with his life? There will be no excuses, no appeals, and no blaming others. Everyone who stands before God will agree with God's judgment because they will know their life as a choice they made. God's grace is a choice that must be made for all who stand before a righteous God. You hold your life in your hands. Whatever you wish it to be, it will be.

Individual choice declares the glory of God. The Lord God created the universe and all of its splendor, but He will not force someone to worship Him or to obey Him. Adam and Eve were free moral agents, able to make choices. Satan did not force Eve to take the forbidden fruit. She did so of her own volition. Eve was deceived by her decision whether to 'let the bird live or die.' God could have stopped Eve from taking the fruit, but her decision was her choice. So, it is with the judgment of God on the final day. God desires for all men to repent and come to Him.

The final judgment will be according to the righteousness of God and the choice of man. No one will blame God if they lose their soul. Those who inherit eternal life will praise God for His righteousness. Everyone who is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone will agree with the judgment of God because the choice was made by themselves. They denied the grace of God who wanted to save them. The matter of choice is in the hands of the individual. There can be no blaming parents, society, or God. All men will choose whom they will serve. Like the young man who did not understand the moral prerogative of choice, "My son, it is whatever you wish it to be.