

The Church and Christians

When it is said one is a Christian, the thought is conveyed that the one referred to is a follower of Christ—that he believes Christ is the savior and subscribes to his teaching without any reservations, and embodies in his life the principles of Christ's teaching in all relationships.

I do not recall that human slavery is specifically condemned in the New Testament, yet I am persuaded that the principles of the teaching of Christ led to the freeing of the slaves in our country.

The New Testament does not give the "blue prints" by which we are to build our residences; yet in building them the Christian follows the principles of Christ in building, as does the workman in the construction of the house.

The store-keeper, if he is a Christian, follows the principles of Christ, in dealing with his customers—honest dealing, and truthful representations.

Though the New Testament does not specify in what particular field of human endeavor a man engages, it does demand that he work and provide for those who are dependent on him; and have to give to the work of the Master.

Christians not only sustain a relationship to the Lord; but being a citizen in the country in which they live sustain a

By C. R. Nichols

relationship to that country—citizens with whom they associate.

The church is in no sense a worldly institution. It is not the business of the church to enter the marts of the world in an effort to make money—it is not the business of the church to become a competitor in the business world. Rather the church gives of its money to help suffering humanity, and to preach the gospel.

The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. 3:15.) I think it would be well if many who are members of the church would give serious study to the foregoing passage; and in connection therewith it will be well to remember: "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31.)

The first work of the church is to preach the gospel. He who thinks the physical demands of humanity comes first—in importance—has not learned the first lesson of the Scriptures. By way of comparison the physical life, and blessings for the physical man sink into insignificance compared with the spiritual. If needs be one must sacrifice his physical life, rather than deny the Lord. It is more important to maintain your faithfulness to the Lord than to preserve your physical life.

Bible Banner -March, 1948



Sick			
Brad Marshall (Allie Hosey's Cousin)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller)
Betty Mcareavey (Mary Ann Roberts' mom)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Mark Dean (Father of Logan Dean)	Jerry Foropoulos (Anna Jean's Uncle)
Jon Jon Henderson (Suzanne Stagner's cousin)	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Bob Cannon (Friend of Holly Law)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Amy Baswell Hall	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	John Marvin Rhodes (Toni Herd's cousin)
Lisa Carter (Josh and Luke Carter's mother)	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkin's Dad)	Toni and William Herd	Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle)

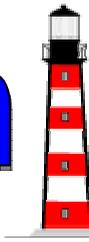
December Birthdays

- 2 - Brady Peek
- 4 - Justin Padgett
- 5 - Rusty Weldon
- 5 - Charlie Johnson
- 5 - Drew Ogles
- 5 - Allie Hosey
- 7 - Michaela Walton
- 8 - Macy Johnson
- 13 - Dave Hosey
- 13 - Will Bruce Harris
- 14 - Beth Lingerfelt
- 16 - Cliff Parsons
- 17 - Joseph Miller
- 18 - Tin-Yau Tam
- 20 - Chris Zeannah
- 20 - Meredith Reid
- 20 - Micah Waters
- 21 - Holly Johnson
- 22 - William Herd
- 22 - Laura Abell
- 22 - Carter Burns
- 24 - Ryan Yates
- 24 - Jessica Yates
- 27 - Jacob Neeley
- 28 - Ebony Morrison
- 28 - Turner Stephens
- 28 - Gabby Borden
- 29 - Christian McGee
- 30 - Holly Law
- 30 - Justin Miller

News and Notes

- Lets keep in our prayers our expectant mothers, Laura Humphrey, Brittany Bagents, Shang Li and Jana Hall!
- Jeff Cobia (Daniel's father) remains in the hospital but has made improvements. Please remember him and the family in your prayers.
- Brooks Pender will have eye surgery on Monday in B'ham. Prayers appreciated.
- Remember Tim Morton in your prayers as he is deployed to Afghanistan.
- Please remember Jennifer Dean from the Flint Hill congregation as she fights cancer.
- David Hartsell returned home yesterday after an overnight stay following his procedures on Friday. They found a tumor behind his sinus cavity and removed what they could see.
- Congratulations to Chase and Abbie (Buchanan) Harrison as they were married yesterday!
- There will be a singing night tonight!
- Let us remember the many who are travelling during the holidays.

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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Problems Surrounding Material Prosperity

By Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.



Thoughts to Ponder

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Timothy 6:10)

The Scriptures teach us that the love of money is at the root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim. 6:10). At the same time, we are taught that we must work in order to have money to buy the things we need and to have to give to those less fortunate than ourselves (Eph. 4:28; Acts 20:33-35; 2 Thess. 3:10). It is also clear from the Scriptures that there have been godly rich people. The rich among Christians are addressed and warned against the pitfalls of wealth with no indication that their prosperity was wrong of itself (1 Tim. 6:17-19). Instead they are told that God has richly given them their wealth to be enjoyed (v. 17). John wished for Gaius, "that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers" (3 Jn. 2). Local churches depend on the prosperity of their members' in order to do their work (1 Cor. 16:2). With all of this, why would Jesus say that it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than

The danger is in the things that having money, or the perception of having it, can bring them, i.e., Pride, Popularity, Prestige, and Power.

for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God (Mt. 19:24)?

The reason it is difficult to the point of near impossible is that "... they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:9). Very few can handle the pressure. The danger is not so much that they will become like the miser sitting in his vault room running

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Elders

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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his fingers through his piles of money. The danger is in the things that having money, or the perception of having it, can bring them, i.e., Pride, Popularity, Prestige, and Power.

These tend to blend together in the minds many who desire wealth. While we cannot read the hearts and minds of such people, over time we can see enough to reasonably discern their motives by their demeanor. At any rate, God knows.

We see people, even in the church, who are like Hezekiah—very proud of their wealth and willing to show it off (**2 Kgs. 20:12-18**). It is obvious they want you to know what they are worth materially. Though some of these may be very generous with their money, they do it in a way to make sure that folks take note of it - thus increasing their popularity. They understand that "the rich has many friends" (**Prov. 14:20**). They love being known as "pillars of the community," not so much because of their character, but because of what they mean to the community financially. Because of their wealth, or perception of it, they may hold prestigious positions in various secular institutions and unfortunately at times leadership roles in the church. All woven into this is the desire to have power over people. No one denies that money is power. It often makes folks become obligated to the one who has it. Also the prestige and popularity that money has brought (or bought) results in more power.

On the other hand, we have seen people who are obviously well off, who seem to be completely unaffected by the "big four." They are humble, and show no signs of desiring popularity, prestige or power, but

rather doing what the rich are told to do: "... that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (**1 Tim. 6:17-19**). To such persons we can truly wish for them to prosper even as their soul prospers.

Brother or Sister in Christ, if you have been blessed with prosperity, whatever the amount, please be aware of the temptations and snares it can bring and determine to avoid them. Thank God for blessing you with it and manage it in a way that will glorify Him and serve others.

Be aware also that the love of money is not limited to the well-to-do. The warning against the love of money was first addressed to poor slaves (**1 Tim. 6:1**) before it was expanded to charging the rich. In **Proverbs 30**, Agur the son of Jakeh recognized both the dangers of being rich and being poor when he prayed, "Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die: Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain" (**Prov. 30:7-9**). The inordinate love of money affects people all across the entire spectrum of the economic scale. - Biblical Insights, July 2014



"Is Any Merry? Let Him Sing."

By Bill Hall

God, in His infinite wisdom and foresight, provided a natural response for every mood and condition that man faces. For times of affliction, there is prayer. For times of sickness and guilt, there is the summoning of good men (elders) who can assist. For times of cheerfulness and joy, there is singing. "Is any merry? let him sing" (**James 5:13**).

The natural response for the godly man, however, will not be just to sing "any old song," but to sing psalms and praise. The godly man lives with an awareness of God. In his cheerful moments he sees God as the source of his joy and happiness. Where could he find a better avenue for expressing his joy and gratitude than in the words and melody of:

"My Jesus I love Thee, I know thou art mine; For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;

My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou: If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now." -W. R. Featherston

or in the words:

"He leadeth me! O blessed thought! O words with heavenly comfort fraught! What-e'er I do, where-e'er I be, Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me." —Joseph H. Gillmore

Indeed, one indication of the depth of a man's spirituality and godliness is the songs which he naturally sings when he is merry.

A happy church is a singing church. The happy church does not view the singing portion of its worship as a dull, emotionless requirement, but as a powerful expression of its love and praise and joy. The happy church does not allow its singing time to be cut short so the preacher can have more time. Rather, in its singing it builds enthusiasm and emotion that enhances every other part of its worship.

Happy homes often express their happiness through singing psalms. This can be done in a more formal way while sitting around a table with song books in hand, or in less formal ways, while riding in the car or working around the house. We once heard a teenage girl where we were visiting request that we sing their "family's theme song" —no, not "Tennessee Waltz" or "Mares Eat Oats," but L. O. Sanderson's lovely hymn, "The Lord Has Been Mindful of Me." Her request resulted in joyful praise from a joyful family.

Happy Christians find singing as a natural way of expressing their joy when they get together. We are not suggesting that every social should be built around singing, but having a group in for singing can make for a good evening. It is an activity in which Christians of varied backgrounds and interests can all participate, leaving no misfits.

But some are hesitant to have a group in to sing. They are fearful that the jovial surroundings are not sufficiently conducive to true worship. In some cases, their fears are well founded. Spiritual songs containing God's name and divine truth should be sung with reverence and respect. We have been in groups where the challenge of the music — getting the parts to come in at just the right moment and timing the half-beats — was obviously the predominant concern, and where every song ended with hilarious laughter. Such casual use of that which is spiritual cannot be right. At the same time, a cheerful atmosphere that makes it easy to laugh does not automatically render worship and praise impossible; in fact, it is under these very conditions that the Holy Spirit says, "Let him sing psalms." Somewhere, then, between that thoughtless joviality that makes "praise" irreverent and that somber, death-like atmosphere that makes "praise" virtually impossible is a happy, merry environment that makes true praise so easy and natural. It is this environment that we try to establish when we invite a group in to sing.

Some of the songs of the world have aesthetic and even moral value, but many of them are pure filth. The Christian must be cautious. He can no more please God in singing filth than he can in speaking filth. "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (**Matthew 12:37**). We see no wrong in a person's singing the songs of the world that are morally pure, but better still: as Moses and the children of Israel sang praises after their deliverance from Egypt (**Exodus 15**); and as David would "give thanks unto the Lord, and sing praises unto Thy name, O most High" (**Psalms 92:1**); and as the "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" around God's throne sing "Worthy is the Lamb" (**Revelation 5:11-12**); so today, "Is any merry? let him sing psalms."

