

By Grace Through Faith...But When?

For one to be scripturally baptized, he must allow human hands to lower him into a watery grave and to raise him up from that watery grave in a likeness of the burial and resurrection of Jesus.

But while that resurrection is taking place, effected by human hands, a resurrection of far greater significance is taking place, effected not by human hands, but by the hands of almighty God. For the same God who made Jesus alive from the dead, and raised Him up to sit at His own right hand in the heavenly places (Eph. 1:20-23), makes us alive from spiritual death and raises us up together with Christ that we might sit with Him in the heavenly places.

"And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins ... but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:1-6).

How do we come to be raised together with Christ? It is by grace (God's unmerited favor) coupled with

By Bill Hall

our faith. "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph. 2:8,9).

So many, however, who have come to recognize how we are raised with Christ have failed to recognize when we are raised with Him. We are raised with Him in baptism. A parallel passage, Col. 2:12, says so: "Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead."

We thus establish a parallel between Eph. 2:8,9 and Col. 2:12. The two passages are not contradictory. They are complementary, Eph. 2:8,9 telling how one is raised with Christ (by grace through faith) and Col. 2:12 telling when this takes place (at baptism). When one is brought to see this parallel, he will then be able to see that the faith of Eph. 2:8,9 is an active, obedient faith that includes, among other things, baptism. Baptism is essential to salvation!



Brad Marshall (Allie Hosey's Cousin)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Frank Hand (Anna and Humphrey's dad)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Wanda Price (Ada Owen's sister)
Betty Mcareavey (Mary Ann Roberts' mom)	Audrey Barnett (Joanetta's sister-in-law)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland (Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle)	Joy Powell (Tori Luther's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	William Herd	Rebecca Davis (Chuck Hahn's Niece)	Ray Humphrey (Seth's dad)
John M. Rhodes and Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkin's Dad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	Esther Biddle

January Birthdays

- 1-David Ogle
- 2-Savannah Spohn
- 2-Chuck Hunt
- 4-Phillip Box
- 6-Erica Seymore
- 7-Sarah Darby
- 9-Jordan Oldag
- 9-Liseth Aragon
- 9-Tyler Hudson
- 10-Mallory Randolph
- 11-Spencer Hall
- 11-Shepherd Hall
- 15-Michael Bassie
- 17-Anna English
- 18-Scott Vaughn
- 21-Jacob Jerkins
- 23-Connor Godwin
- 25-Caleb Daniels
- 25-Sara Lail
- 27-Blake Bagents
- 28-Holly McDaniel
- 30-Kayla Garlock
- 30-Kristi Garlock
- 31-Jennifer Daniels

News and Notes

- ☒ - Please remember the Tam's in your prayers as they are away in China until mid-January.
- ☒ - There is a meal list for the meeting on the bulletin board.
- ☒ - Lisa carter, Luke's mom, is scheduled to go to MD Anderson in TX this Wednesday.
- ☒ - Joey McGee's aunt, Terri Moore, has had surgery and awaits plans for her cancer treatments.
- ☒ - The Weekend Student Study and the meeting with Doy Moyer starts next week! Cards are in the foyer.
- ☒ - Pray for Betty Bradford as she suffers from a wound in her foot.
- ☒ - There will be a song leading class beginning soon for those interested.
- ☒ - Teachers and hosts are needed for the upcoming monthly kids class.
- ☒ - Those ladies interested in going to the ladies' study in Russellville Jan 30 should see Yvette this week.

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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Take Heed to Yourself

By Al Diestelkamp



Thoughts to Ponder

Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. (1 Timothy 4:16)

If you've ever flown on a commercial airline has witnessed a flight attendant giving safety instructions "in case of an emergency." First-time flyers may give undivided attention to the routine while experienced flyers busy themselves with their electronic devices or other distractions. The memorized instructions have become so ignored that some flight attendants have turned the memorized instructions into a comedy routine which delights even the most frequent flyers and distracts the nervous ones from the seriousness of the information.

I recently attended a half-day seminar designed for caregivers of loved ones who have been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and dementia. Before discussing how to deal with the common physical and cognitive issues of the patients, the doctor projected onto a screen a picture of a flight attendant going through the safety routine. He specifically drew

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our attention to the instructions given in the event of the loss of cabin pressure which causes oxygen masks to drop from above. If traveling with a small child or other person unable to administer the oxygen without help, one is instructed to put on his own mask before aiding a dependent one. This instruction goes against what one would do by instinct but is necessary because one must be able to breathe in order to help the helpless. The doctor's point to the caregivers

(Continued on page 2)

Elders
Walker Davis
(334) 703-0050
Larry Rouse
(334) 734-2133

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday
Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM
E-Mail:
larryrouse@aubeacon.com

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Find us on the Internet: www.auchurch.com and www.aubeacon.com

(Continued from page 1)

was to take care of yourself (physically and emotionally) so that you can provide the care needed for the loved one.

There's also a lesson in this regarding our spiritual health. I immediately thought of the apostle Paul's instructions to Timothy to "Take heed to yourself and to doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you" (1 Tim. 4:16). A few verses earlier, Paul had urged Timothy to make sure he was able to "be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (v.12). Timothy would be able to help his brethren to conduct themselves in righteousness only if his own life was in order. The true Christian is to "look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:4). In order to do this, he must first put his own life in order. I am not suggesting one must have attained sinless perfection before teaching others, but he must at least be self-controlled and submissive to the Lord and willing to repent when confronted with his sin.

Besides the previously mentioned admonitions which Paul gave to Timothy, the notice James issues to teachers that they will "receive a stricter judgment" (Jas. 3:1) is followed by some "take heed" warnings about the need to control an unruly tongue. Also, the Hebrew writer's lament that some, by reason of time, "ought to be teachers" but instead needed to be taught the very first principles (Heb. 5:12) proves that teachers need to "take heed to themselves" in preparation to effectively teach others.

Elders are told to "take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers..." (Ac.

20:28). While there is no fault in placing emphasis on evangelism, the shepherds' primary role is to "shepherd the flock of God which is among you" (1 Pet. 5:2). The kingdom of Christ is not advanced by evangelism unless the existing flock is protected, fed, and maintained. This requires discipline and gospel preaching and teaching that includes refutation of false doctrines (even when advanced by sincere, morally upright, but mistaken religious people). The apostle John wrote, "Look to yourselves" as he warned about someone coming among them who "transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ" and commands "do not receive him" (see 2 Jn. 7-11).

The apostle Peter tells wives who want their unbelieving husbands to become obedient to the Lord to be submissive and display "chaste conduct accompanied by fear" (1 Pet. 3:1-4). In other words, he is essentially telling them to first "take heed to themselves," and it will be noticed.

Fathers who want to bring up their children "in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4) will succeed only if they will first "take heed to themselves" and be the spiritual leaders and examples in the home. Fathers who become "busy" with other activities which take priority over their children are guilty of spiritual child neglect. This includes preachers. It is good for preachers to be able to hold gospel meetings, attend lectureships, and be involved in other spiritual works, but those who over-book themselves for such activities, taking them away from home too much, need to learn to turn down some requests and opportunities. To do otherwise is like a parent on the plane affixing his oxygen mask on his face first and then proceeding to help other passengers while leaving his own child to die.



"After Services...Fellowship"

By Larry Ray Hafley

Recently, I received a bulletin announcing the worship services of a church of Christ. It said, "Immediately after services, we will have a period of fellowship." This was a reference to a meal in their "Fellowship Hall."

Consider it. Did they not have "fellowship" during their worship services?! Alas, this typifies how the social gospel has usurped spiritual words, changing that which is divine and holy into that which is secular and worldly. As someone said, "When I hear the word, 'fellowship,' I can smell the coffee and taste the donuts." This is true today, but was it true in the New Testament?

"Fellowship," communion, is a Bible term. Not once was it used to signify a social meal — not once! Have we ceased to "speak where the Bible speaks"? What does it mean to "call Bible things by Bible names" and "do Bible things in Bible ways"? See Isaiah 8:20; 1 Corinthians 4:6; 1 Peter 4:11.

We are called into the "fellowship" of Christ by the gospel (1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Thess. 2:14). "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (1 Jn. 1:3). It does not say, "We eat together that we may have fellowship." Brethren say it. The Bible does not. When Paul prayed that "the communion (fellowship) of the Holy Spirit," might be with the brethren, for what was he praying (2 Cor. 13:14)? If the answer to that question does not involve a social supper, why do brethren today equate fellowship with eating and drinking together?

How can we have "the fellowship of the Spirit"? Let an apostle answer, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn. 1:7). Could language be plainer? How, then, do brethren say, "When we eat and

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drink together, we have fellowship one with another"?

When we eat that bread and drink that cup, "is it not the communion (fellowship) of the blood of Christ?" "Is it not the communion (fellowship) of the body of Christ" (1 Cor. 10:16, 17)? Yes, it is! Why, then, do brethren speak of "fellowship" as a lunch "after services"? Where is the passage that speaks of our fellowship in this manner? Where? Calling me an "anti" and smiling

in contempt will not answer the questions raised. You may feel better, but you and I know that you have not dealt with the fact that Bible fellowship is a spiritual relationship in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13b; Eph. 3:6). It is not plastic forks and Styrofoam cups. You know it, and I know it, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17).

Years ago, if elders had announced they were going to build a formal "dining room" or a cozy "cafeteria," brethren would have rejected them. However, when they were given a "spiritual" connotation, "Fellowship Halls," that made them more palatable. "Fellowship Hall" sounds less fleshly, more spiritual. It worked. As Paul said of Israel, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play" (1 Cor. 10:7).

Since we demand of our religious neighbors that we define baptism according to the Bible, and not by the dictionary, and insist that we baptize as they did in the New Testament, and not as the traditions of men direct, why do we not do the same with the term, "fellowship"? However, if we may pervert the term "fellowship," and make it refer to "refreshments," why object to those who want to pervert the term "baptism," and make it mean "sprinkling"? Tell me. Why?

