

Do You "Hunger And Thirst After Righteousness?"

Jesus taught: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled" (Mt. 5:6). This verse describes an intense craving to be in a right relationship with God. The words that Jesus used here for "hunger" and "thirst" denote a level of intensity in desire that would be similar to the person who is about to starve to death, as versus a simple hunger pang; or a person about to die from dehydration, as versus someone who had a mild desire for something to drink.

Christians often wrestle with a number of problems that could be easily resolved in our minds and removed from our lives if we simply asked the question: "Am I hungering and thirsting for righteousness?" For instance, the supposedly hard questions about social drinking, smoking, dancing, movie and TV watching, immodest clothes, bad language, etc., all just vanish in the face of this test. If I desire to be

by Greg Gwin

right with God at the same level as a starving man desires food, it will be simple to answer these challenges and do the right thing. Watch how neatly this divine principal works on the problem area of church attendance. Ask yourself, would a starving man pass up an opportunity to eat a good home cooked meal?" Answer: obviously not! Why? Because he is starving!! Now, would a Christian who "hunger and thirsts for righteousness" pass up an opportunity to meet and study with other saints - to worship God and study His Word? Answer: certainly not! Why? Because he craves to maintain a right relationship with God, and such assemblies aid tremendously in that direction. You can see the idea here -- and the challenge is to make the application in every area of your life. Think!



Graduates					
Dylan Bartlett - Masters Douglas Bethea Conner Burleson	Anna Cagle Emmy Cantrell Alex Dobbins	Sarah Embry Anna English Will Harris - Pharmacy	Brandon Hester - Pharmacy Lauren Johnson Abby Ambrose	Katie Martin Kyle Ogden Alli Luther - SUCC	Alyssa Pritchard Cheyenne Redus - Masters Paul Tam

Lisa Carter (Daniel's mother)	Jesse and Martha Godwin (Troy's parents)	Barbara Hasty (Ryan's mom)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's grandfather)	Mary Edwards (Sandra Chason's mom)	Kimzey Simpson	Ruth Addison (grom of April and Julie)
Tory Colvin (sister of Case O'Dell)	Maria Williams	Barbara Chandler	Donna Jackson (Kristen's aunt)
Betty Bradford	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Earl Mitchell (Debbi Coleman's dad)	Abbie Harrison
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	EB & Ara Belle Rich (Joanetta's aunt)	Bobby Jennings (Brooke's uncle)	Doug Bailey (Keith's brother)
Helen Andrews (Susan's sister)	William and Toni Herd	Taina Acuff (Anna's aunt)	Mavis Hale (Chris Long's grandmother)

May Birthdays

- 1-Daniel Eison
- 2-Effie Kirby
- 3-Paula Davis
- 3-William Smith
- 7-Isaiah Messer
- 7-Kyle Ogden
- 7-Cameron Ogden
- 10-Ian Norman
- 10-Ryan Hasty
- 10-Branson Williams
- 11-Scott Perkins
- 12-Frances Humphrey
- 13-Anna Grace Long
- 13-Jana Hall
- 15-Bryce Daniels
- 18-Curran LaChappelle
- 18-Heydi Perez
- 20-Kaleigh Williamson
- 24-Andy Roberts
- 25-Chuck Hahn
- 26-Fallon Hartsell
- 28-Barbara Weeks
- 28-Candy Long
- 29-Maria Williams
- 31-Rachel Tolliver

News and Notes

- ☑ - The kids' classes this Sat will be: **1-5 grades**, 6-8 p.m., Roberts' house
- 6-12 grades** 6:30-8:30 p.m., Belinda Hartsell's house
- ☑ - Patsy Ogle requests prayers for her great niece, Emery Anne Vest, who is being treated for heart issues in Children's Hospital
- ☑ - Sean and Erin Ellis' grandmother, Ruth Lee Ellis, had a pacemaker put in last weekend and is home.
- ☑ - Please pray for Debbi Coleman's family in the recent death of her cousin, Joe Welch.
- ☑ - Matt Hall's uncle, Randy Harshbarger, fell and had a hip replacement on Friday.
- ☑ - We are happy to welcome Austin Bartlett as a member here at University!
- ☑ - VBS on "Parables of Jesus" will be June 10-13 in the evenings, 6-7:30.
- ☑ - Daniel Carter's mom, Lisa, will begin a trial treatment for her cancer this week at Vandy.
- ☑ - Ashley Miller's grandfather, Max Carter, continues stable but unresponsive since his surgery on April 3.
- ☑ - Abbie Harrison had successful knee surgery on Monday and will remain in ATL for several weeks.
- ☑ - Pray for our expectant mothers: Kristen Diehl and Nakia Strickland .

The Auburn Beacon

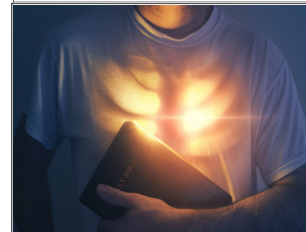


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When I Was Baptized

By Larry Rouse



Thoughts to Ponder

For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. (2 Peter 1:9)

Elders
Walker Davis
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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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Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

We do not forget great turning points in their lives. It may be the memory of meeting and falling in love with the one that eventually would become our mate. It could be the loss of a parent whose memory continues to inspire us to serve God and never quit. These and other critical points in our lives should both humble us and inspire us to draw more closely to the God that provides for us beyond what we could ever know (Rom 8:28).

The greatest turning point for any of us is the day that we entered into fellowship with the God of heaven. This was a point of our turning from our sins and finding the forgiveness that makes a relationship with God possible (Acts 3:19, 26).

I often think back to the situations that led me to that decision to turn to Jesus Christ. It is good for me to remember the rejoicing and the new direction that I found in my life. It was like I myself had died and come back to life (Rom 6:2-5). This turning point transformed my life and led me down paths that I never thought I would take. To this very day my life is filled with newness and an awareness that my future paths are determined by a living faith which looks for doors of opportunity that the Lord may place before me.

Why our memory is important

Over time we can drift from our relationship with God to the point that we are

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caught up in a mindless and heartless "going through the motions." A living faith must continually be growing, adding, and fighting or it is dead. Peter points out why some fail to add to their faith. "For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins (2 Peter 1:9). What do you remember about your forgiveness?"

A time of darkness and hopelessness

One cannot come to God without first seeing their need. I can remember the masquerade of living in the world and giving the appearance of happiness. The world did provide a series of escapes and highs that left my basic needs unmet. The world's "purpose" was found in

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short term pleasure that changed depending upon the desires of the moment (1 John 2:15-17).

The world also had a “carrot and stick” approached to keeping you “in line.” If you were to be accepted by others in the world, then you must accept that there are no real standards and no real “truth.” I learned very quickly that in order to have associations with some people I had to accept their “personal lifestyle” and even become a partaker in it. “In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you” **(1 Peter 4:4)**.

It did not take me very long to realize that a life with no standards is a life with no purpose. Also I came to realize that those in the world who claimed to be my friends, were in fact ruled by the “god of this age”, and were walking in darkness too **(2 Cor 4:4)**. I sadly knew that they would discard me in a moment.

The bright light of a living faith

Within my own heart I knew that God existed and that He ultimately could erase the pain of an aimless life if I could but find Him. I remember praying a simple prayer to God on a beautiful starry night. “God, please let me come to know You.” This was a serious prayer for light. As I would come to know later, our God will always answer such a prayer **(John 7:17, Acts 16:9-10)**.

My search began with a daily reading of the Bible. As I read, I came upon verses that deeply touched me as they attested to the power of a living faith. The optimism of Paul in the face of adversity astounded me.” For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” **(Romans 8:18)**. This was a verse that I read and reread, marveling at how real purpose and joy can be found regardless of outward circumstances. Was it possible that I might one day have such a faith?

The day of my death

As I continued to read the Bible, I came to see how men received Jesus into their lives. My reading of the book of Acts helped me see how people like me were able to turn from the world to serve a living God. Conversion was no casual process. It was a death! “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” **(Gal 2:20)**.

Without exception I found that men that would come

to Christ had to surrender all. Those at Ephesus that became Christians burned their books of magic and gave up the practice of it which had an enormous monetary consequence for them **(Acts 19:19-20)**. Did they complain about this? No, they would speak as the apostle Paul would about the things he gave up for Christ. “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ” **(Phil 3:8)**.

It was the love of God that showed me that I needed to deal with the issue of my own sin before God. Jesus died on a Roman cross to provide the only possible sacrifice for my sin. It was good news indeed to know that God has provided that which I could never provide on my own. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” **(Rom 6:23)**.

How was I to receive this free gift? As I read through the book of Acts I plainly saw the answer. “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins... **(Acts 2:38)**. “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” **(Acts 22:16)**. Every time one came to believe and turn to Christ in the book of Acts, they were baptized immediately **(Acts 8:34-39, 16:30-34)**.

The day of my baptism was the day that I died. It was a day similar to that of the prodigal son who, because of an utter disgust over his aimless life, came back to his father with nothing to offer but his willingness to be a slave. He just wanted to be with the father that loved him! “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants” **(Luke 15:18-19)**. God responded to my death just like the father of the prodigal did, with a full restoration of fellowship and great rejoicing **(Luke 15:20-24)**.

Why I need to remember

What a joy it is to remember the escape from a terrible slavery to a present life in the grace of God! I need to remember both the darkness of the past and the power of a life with God. “For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” **(Rom 5:20-23)**.

What do you remember?



Fellowship and Friendship

By Edward O Bragwell, Sr.

“Fellowship” and “friendship” are not synonyms. We have a hard time understanding this. We find it hard to deny the “right hand of fellowship” to friends, regardless of their spiritual condition. A few find it hard to work in true partnership (fellowship) with any other than close friends. When a brother says he cannot fellowship a brother, then too many of us automatically assume that he is no longer friendly toward that brother. Such need not be so.

Vine makes an interesting observation on the difference between a fellow (GK: HETAIROS) and a friend (GK: PHILOS). He says, “This (HETAIROS), as expressing comradeship, is to be distinguished from No. 1 (PHILOS), which is a term of endearment.” Thus, one can maintain friendship (endearment) with one with whom he cannot maintain fellowship (comradeship or partnership); or else a Christian could have no friends outside of Christ. Even one’s joining with the local church in withdrawing fellowship from a brother does not mean that he is withdrawing his friendship **(2 Thess. 3:15)**; though the circumstances calls for not keeping company with him. **(1 Cor. 5:9-13; 2 Thess. 3:14)**. Neither friendship or fellowship need be the basis for the other.

There are people with whom I maintain a relationship of endearment (by friendship, kinship, etc.) to whom I cannot extend fellowship - either in the sense of congregational fellowship, or becoming partners with them in moral and spiritual efforts (such as ministerial alliances), or extending “the right hand of fellowship”, or any other gesture that would signal a general endorsement of them in their work.

I have close friends and dear relatives who are not Christians after the New Testament order. I love them dearly and they me. Either would quickly come to the other’s aid in time of need. Yet, we are not fellows in the Lord’s work. I cannot not partake

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of their sins nor encourage them in their spiritual work. I cannot afford to make any gesture that could be taken by them, or others, that there are no vital differences between us in spiritual matters. Even if one of these close friends or relatives, even a parent, brother or sister in the flesh, comes into this community to spread his doctrine then I must not receive him into my house nor bid him godspeed, to avoid being a partaker of his evil **(2 John 9-11)**. I could not an-

nounce his spiritual activities. If he came to the services I would not call on him for prayer. Would that mean that I no longer felt close to him as a friend or relative? Of course not!

Sometimes those who, because of various relationships and associations with us, have greatly endeared themselves to us. Its awfully easy to gear our degree of fellowship with them to our degree of friendship with them. They can virtually “get away with murder” in matters vital to the kingdom of God and the salvation of souls and we still treat them as pillars in the church. Their actions not only causes their faithfulness to the Lord to be suspect, but the openness of their actions places the Lord’s cause in a bad light before all. If the same positions and/or practices were embraced by those not so friendly with us we would have long ago quit bidding them godspeed.

If a good friend gets into a situation that we cannot in good conscience endorse or encourage, it need not destroy our feeling of friendship toward him because we cannot conscientiously do anything we feel would encourage him in his situation. In fact, good friends do not want the other’s endorsement or encouragement against the conscience. Nor should scriptural disciplinary action be taken as an act of animosity.

No, friendship and fellowship are not parallel lines.

