

University Heights Messenger

Volume 4--Number 1

January 1, 2012

GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION

- Hear the gospel (Romans 10:17)
- Believe Jesus is the Christ (John 3:16)
- Repent from sins (Luke 13:3)
- Confess faith in Jesus (Romans 10:9-10)
- Be baptized for remission of sins (Acts 2:38)
- Live worthy of the calling (Ephesians 4:1)

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Recent Additions:

Faye Hensley (recovering from open-heart surgery) **Mary Wilson** (she is showing some improvement after being critically injured in a train accident), **Edith Tirey** (has been moved to Cardinal Hill for rehab, room 241. Her spirits have been down lately.)

List:

Our members: Jeff Howerton, Glenn Kimberlin, Arlena Poynter

Others: Glen Davis, Charlene Antle, Lala Whitson, Tom Curtis, Rita Pagan, Robin Miller, Vina Krassow, Courtney and Aubrey Reeves, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Gail Stein, Michael Poynter, Taylor Osterling, CJ Nash

Reminder: If you wish to have someone added to the prayer list please submit his or her name and condition to me *in writing*. Thanks.

WEEKLY READING

Sun: Ezek 34-35, Ps 122; 1 Tim 4-6
Mon: Ezek 36-37, Ps 123, 2 Tim 1-2
Tue: Ezek 38-39, Ps 124, 2 Tim 3-4
Wed: Ezek 40-41, Ps 125, Ti 1-3
Thu: Ezek 42-44, Ps 126, Phil
Fri: Ezek 45-46, Ps 127, Heb 1-3
Sat: Ezek 47-48, Ps 128, Heb 4-6

LEADERSHIP

ELDERS

Garry Banks
David Collins
John Thompson

DEACONS

Troy Antle
Richard Brundige
Neal Erickson
Adam Litmer
Bill Morelan
Jim Parsons
Pat Seabolt
Matt Thompson

EVANGELIST

Adam Litmer

SERVICES

Sunday

Bible Study: 9:45 AM
Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7:30 PM

1st Fri. of Month

Singing: 7:30 PM

3rd Fri. of Month

Bible Study: 7:00 PM
(Ask for location)

How did you do in 2011? How will you do in 2012?

There's A Lesson Here

Observing children and their adoration for super heroes takes us back in time and reminds us of our own super heroes when we were growing up. The heroes might be different, but the attraction for someone or something with super powers is the same now as it was when we were youngsters. And sometimes we become sad sensing the loss of an important and pleasant aspect of childhood.

But the Christian does have super heroes, lots of them, a Bible literally full of them, from Genesis to Revelation. Hebrews chapter 11 is particularly relevant to any mention of Bible super heroes. In fact, those mentioned in the chapter are often called, and rightly so, heroes of faith. Did they have super powers? Well, not in the way that fictional characters do. But they had the power of faith in a Supreme Being, the very Being who created all things and who always had their best interests in mind as He brought His will to bear upon the workings of the world. They had the power of faith, and that may very well be the greatest power that any human being can have.

Just how important to God is man's faith in God? The first few verses of Hebrews 11 are extraordinary in how they make clear the seriousness and value we are to place upon faith. *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the people of old received their commendation. By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible....And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that he rewards those who seek Him."* (Hebrews 11:1-3, 6)

If we had been Abraham, would we have left our home solely on the basis of some vague promise of future benefits? If we had been Moses, would we have

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had the degree of faith required to refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter? The stories of the heroes of faith are given to inspire us to gain and maintain the faith that pleases God. Their faith can boost and energize our flagging zeal, goad and push us to action, reassure our doubts, steel and strengthen our resolve, brighten our outlook and cheer us up, embolden and galvanize us past our lack of self-confidence, and fortify us in times of persecution.

Hebrews chapter 6 can be seen as a sort of preface to chapter 11. Having chastised the recipients of the letter in the latter part of chapter 5 for becoming dull of hearing and not progressing as they should have, the writer encourages them to *"leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity..."*, and he cautions them not to fall away by pointing out how much more difficult it would be to *"restore them again to repentance."* In verses 9-12 of Hebrews 6, the writer encourages them with these words: *"Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."*

God wants us to not be sluggish, but to be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Who are those who through faith and patience inherit the promises? They are those mentioned in chapter 11. They are our super heroes, our heroes of faith. They are those of whom it is said in Hebrews 11:32-40. *"And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets—who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated--of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, since*

God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect."

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." (Hebrews 12:1) The Elders

A New Year

Whether a Christian makes "New Year's Resolutions" or not, the start of a new year is an appropriate time for reflection. In the grand scheme of things 12 months does not even register as a "drop in the bucket." Yet within our personal lives an awful lot can happen in the span of twelve months.

In the past year some of us have lost loved ones while others of us have added new loved ones to the family. In the past year some have moved away while others have moved in. In the past year some of us have purchased new homes and new cars. Others have started new jobs or begun new studies. Some have gotten engaged and are preparing for a new life together. No, a span of one year does not amount to much as one views eternity but we sure do manage to pack that span full of life changing decisions and happenings, don't we?

What was this past year like for you spiritually? Take a moment to consider January 1 of 2011. Are you stronger and more mature spiritually exactly one year later? Peter said, *"Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation"* (1 Peter 2:2). Do you find that your appetite has increased over the span of a year? In verse 11, Peter said, *"Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul."* Did overcoming these passions become any easier for you over the course of the last year? In 1 Peter 1:22 we read, *"Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart."* Has your love for the brethren increased since January 1 of last year?

I hope everyone answers "Yes" to these questions. If so, well done! In 2012 let us all continue to press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus! AL

Sermons: AM "Ready to remind" PM A mirror for the soul

Reading: AM (Matthew 20:17-34) PM (Matthew 21:1-17)