

University Heights Messenger

Volume 4--Number 4

January 22, 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:

Paul Ayres (due to significant problems, brother Ayres is likely to need open heart surgery in the near future), **Nilma Covington** (having surgery to remove cancerous polyps), **John Thompson** (his knee replacement surgery must be rescheduled due to pneumonia), **Elva Humphries**, the wife of John Humphries, passed away last week.

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, The Shepherd family, Faye Hensley, Mary Wilson, Edith Tirey.

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: Mic 1-3, Ps 143, Rev 2-3
Mon: Mic 4-7, Ps 144, Rev 4-6
Tue: Nah, Ps 145:1-13, Rev 7-9
Wed: Hab, Ps 145-14-21, Rev 10-12
Thu: Zep, Hag, Ps 146, Rev 13-15
Fri: Zek 1-5, Ps 147, Rev 16-17
Sat: Zek 6-9, Ps 148, rev 18-19

LEADERSHIP

ELDERS

Garry Banks
David Collins
John Thompson

EVANGELIST

Adam Litmer

DEACONS

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

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)

There's a lesson here

What an awesome and serious responsibility parents have to bring up their children "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4) God has always required this of parents. Concerning the Law, Moses told the people, "*You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*" (Deut. 6:7-9).

For a time, when children are very young, it seems that everything is going along just fine. The capacity that young children have to absorb information and reflect it back is simply amazing. For a time, it appears that what they have been taught about God has become a part of them. For example, the faith of a four year old can put to shame the disbelief of older folks.

You see, very young children do not question what they have been taught by their parents. But, as they grow older their world expands bringing them into contact with others whose influence, both direct and indirect, invariably conflicts with what they have been taught at home and reinforced at church. Doubts can begin to cause cracks in the spiritual foundation laid down by godly parents. The variety of information expands exponentially and choices have to be made as to which sources will be considered to be the most credible. Will it continue to be the Bible? Will conversations with friends hold sway? Will modern philosophies win the day? Perhaps secular teachers and professors will be considered to be the most authoritative. Which body of information will the child, now a young adult, utilize to base his or her spiritual decisions upon? Will it be the same body of knowledge, the Bible, which was taken for a given when he or she was so very young?

Children become faithful adult Christians when the spiritual instruction they received at home becomes their own understanding; when they believe it because they have studied the bible on their own and found it to be more spiritually credible than any and all other sources of information; when they allow the gospel to be God's power for salvation, not their parents, other teachers, friends, books, and so on. (Rom. 1:16) Children can fail to become Christians, or become unfaithful Christians, when they place the bible on a shelf and infrequently, if at all, open its cover again. It is the bible that provides assurance of the things taught by parents and other godly teachers. It is the bible that satisfies the questioning mind with certainty and sureness concerning the reality of God and His plan for the redemption of mankind.

Add Zech 10-Mal, Ps 149-150, and Rev 20-22 to your reading for this week. We will begin a new reading schedule in the next bulletin.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Consider the purpose with which Luke was inspired to write to his friend, the most excellent Theophilus. “Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.” (Luke 1:1-4) Children, it is only through your own bible study that you will have certainty concerning the spiritual things you have been taught at home by your parents. The Elders

“Therefore do not throw away your confidence”--2

Confidence— 1)“full trust; belief in the powers, trustworthiness, or reliability of a person or thing.” 2) “belief in oneself and one’s powers or abilities; self-confidence; self-reliance; assurance.”

In the previous article based upon Hebrews 10:32-36 we considered the reward promised to the saints upon completion of a faithful life. In this article I’d like to consider the confidence of which the writer speaks in verse 35. Having been involved in organized sports throughout my schooling, the importance of confidence was something I heard proclaimed regularly. I believe that considering various aspects of confidence will help us in our Christian walk.

Confidence is the result of preparation and training. I was always least confident heading into a contest when I felt as though my preparation had not been as comprehensive as it should have been. One of the greatest compliments that can be paid to any athlete is that no one is better prepared than they. They have thoroughly learned the game plan, they have familiarized themselves with the opponent, they understand the rules, and they know exactly what they wish to accomplish and how to achieve it. With such comprehensive preparation they can enter the contest confident that they are as ready as they can be.

The faithful child of God understands this very well for training and preparation are as familiar to them as breathing. Every opening of their Bible is designed to bring their steps into closer alignment with Christ’s. Every prayer is designed to prepare them for whatever wave the sea of life may throw at them that day. Every call, card, or visit to an ailing saint is designed to further train them in love and compassion. Every confrontation with error prepares them for the next battle. Quite simply, the faithful Christian life is a life of constant training and preparation.

The writer reminded his readers of the need for this continual training when he said, “*But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil*” (Hebrews 5:14). Paul speaks on the topic in 1 Corinthians 9:26-27. “*So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.*” Fellow Christian, would you have confidence in a future reward? Then prepare and train your heart in godliness and have a genuine reason to be confident.

Confidence grows as past successes are remembered. Whenever we competed against a team we had defeated earlier in the season my confidence was always high going into the contest. After all, we had already overcome the opposing team once and if we executed as we had before there was no reason why the result would be any different. Even if the game took a turn in the other teams favor our preparation, along with remembrance of the earlier outcome, gave my team an extra boost that was most helpful.

As Christians we are fortunate to receive our instruction from a “coach” who has already defeated the opposing team. This is none other than the Lamb of God, our Lord and Savior, who Himself said, “*I have said these things to you that you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world*” (John 16:33). The second definition of the word “confidence” found at the beginning of this article speaks of “self-confidence” and “self-reliance.” Let me suggest to you that the Christian possesses something much greater than that and it is *Christ*-confidence and *Christ*-reliance! Any successes we have enjoyed in overcoming our deadly spiritual opponent have all been the result of our following the perfect example of the One who *never* succumbed to spiritual defeat. Note how John says it in 1 John 5:4. “*For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.*” Fellow Christian, would you see your confidence grow even in the face of vicious attacks from the adversary? Remember the past successes you’ve experienced in overcoming him through the example and aid of Jesus Christ.

Confidence can be surrendered. I can recall occasions where a contest was not going well. The ball was not bouncing my way, the calls were not going in my favor, and it just seemed like the opposing team had a bounce in their step that neither I nor my teammates were matching. Cracks began to appear in our confidence until we surrendered it completely and it came crumbling down. It is at these times that a team can begin “going through the motions.” They stay on the court or the field, they continue to move around, but clearly their heart is gone and their will shot. The worst statement that can be made about an athlete or a team is that they “quit” during a contest. Yet that is precisely what happens when confidence is surrendered.

Part of what kills confidence is watching your coach be “outcoached.” Every play your coach designs is perfectly defended by the opposing coach. Every defense your coach calls is easily dissected by the other coach. Few things are as disheartening on the playing field as this. Fortunately, our adversary is incapable of “outcoaching” our Savior. In fact, our God’s power is so far beyond that of our adversary’s that he must operate under a debilitating restraint—he is *never* allowed to tempt us beyond our ability to overcome it! “*No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide a way of escape, that you may be able to endure it*” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Satan operates with God’s hand firmly placed upon his shoulder. He *is* permitted to tempt us. After all, if our faith is never tested how can we know if we have faith enough to save? But no matter what Satan throws our way God stands right next to him providing the way of escape if we will be reach for it. God is faithful and that promise stands as firm as God Himself. This means that if a saint surrenders his confidence it will not be because God failed to hold up His end. Nor will it be because Satan overpowered God. The saint’s confidence finds God as its Source. Only when that Source is left behind is that confidence surrendered. Fellow Christian, would you hold fast to the confidence which leads to a great reward? Remember the Source of that confidence throughout your life and the reward will be waiting at the end. AL

Sermons: AM The silence of God

PM The teaching goals of Jesus

Reading: AM (Matthew 23:1-22)

PM (Matthew 23:23-39)