

University Heights Messenger

Volume 4--Number 41

September 30, 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:

John Thompson continues his recovery and rehab. **Julie Spivey** is improving after her tonsillectomy. **Fred Dalton** (Adam Daniels' uncle) has lymphoma and treatment options are being explored. **Bill Childress** (Janet's father) is back in the ICU and having significant gall bladder problems.

List:

Our members: Jeff Howerton, Glenn Kimberlin, Paul Atkisson, Julie Patton

Others: Lenny Shepperson, Jan Hogen, Taylor Osterling, David Morrow, Debbie Parker, Rita Pagan, Vina Krassow, Courtney and Aubrey Reeves, John Bennett, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Gail Stein, Michael Poynter, Sandy Childress, Mary Wilson, Charlie Little, Doris Baker, Edith Tirey, Bill Childress, Susie Burton, Gladys Dunbar

<p><u>WEEKLY READING</u></p> <p>Sun: Ps 32, 1 Sam 21-22, Dn 4, Lk 2:22-52</p> <p>Mon: Ps 33, 1 Sam 23-24, Dn 5, Lk 3:1-22</p> <p>Tue: Ps 34, 1 Sam 25, Dn 6, Lk 3:23-4:13</p> <p>Wed: Ps 35, 1 Sam 26, Dn 7, Lk 4:14-44</p> <p>Thu: Ps 36, 1 Sam 27, Dn 8, Lk 5:1-6:16</p> <p>Fri: Ps 37, 1 Sam 28, Dn 9, Lk 6:17-49</p> <p>Sat: Ps 38, 1 Sam 29-30, Dn 10:1-11:1, Lk 7:1-35</p>	<p><u>LEADERSHIP</u></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>ELDERS</u></td> <td><u>DEACONS</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Garry Banks</td> <td>Troy Antle</td> </tr> <tr> <td>David Collins</td> <td>Richard Brundige</td> </tr> <tr> <td>John Thompson</td> <td>Neal Erickson</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Adam Litmer</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>EVANGELIST</u></td> <td>Bill Morelan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adam Litmer</td> <td>Jim Parsons</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pat Seabolt</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Matt Thompson</td> </tr> </table>	<u>ELDERS</u>	<u>DEACONS</u>	Garry Banks	Troy Antle	David Collins	Richard Brundige	John Thompson	Neal Erickson		Adam Litmer	<u>EVANGELIST</u>	Bill Morelan	Adam Litmer	Jim Parsons		Pat Seabolt		Matt Thompson	<p><u>SERVICES</u></p> <p><u>Sunday</u> Bible Study: 9:45 AM Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM</p> <p><u>Wednesday</u> Bible Study: 7:30 PM</p> <p><u>1st Fri. of Month</u> Singing: 7:30 PM</p> <p><u>3rd Fri. of Month</u> Bible Study: 7:00 PM (Ask for location)</p>
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There's A Lesson Here

God has the infinite capacity to have all things in mind at one and the same time. His mind doesn't stop being fully cognizant of the birds of the field and the number of the hairs on each person's head while fully considering the needs of His people as well as the conditions of the nations of the world. Only an all-knowing and all-powerful God could operate on both an individual level and national level simultaneously.

It is to this God that we confidently pray for hope and change to come to our great nation. God has told us His preference with regard to how nations conduct themselves. *"Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people"* (Proverbs 14:34). God wants the people of a nation, any nation, to live righteously. When the conduct of the people of a nation, any nation, is best described as sinful, that sin will ultimately result in the downfall of the nation. First, reproach will occur; other nations will laugh and ridicule the one that is on the decline and will even try to speed up its departure from the world scene. Eventually, the world will rejoice in the fall of that great nation. Thus it has been since the beginning of time, and thus it will continue to be until God brings about the downfall of all nations.

In the beginning chapters of Deuteronomy, Moses addresses the Children of Israel prior to their actual entry into the promised land. He recounts their history, especially how they had been given the law. He reminds them that they had the opportunity many years before to take possession but they had stubbornly refused out of fear. Shortly afterwards, they did make an attempt to begin the conquest, but they were soundly defeated because God had left them. To help prevent such a thing from ever happening again, God had Moses speak these words to them:

"Keep them and do them [the commandments of God], for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today? Only take care, and keep

The Sick List

Please check the sick list and let me know if there are any to be removed or added, particularly in the "Others" section.

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your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children— how on the day that you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, the Lord said to me, 'Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so'" (Deuteronomy 4:6-10).

We are not solely responsible for the conduct of the nation in which we live. We do have the opportunity to effect leadership changes via the ballot box; we have the responsibility to be as informed as we can be about issues of national importance; we have the obligation to help others be fully informed as well. But our greatest obligation is to realize that *"what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?"*

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).
The Elders

"You Christians Are Nothing But Hypocrites"

You may recall that a few months back I wrote a couple of articles based upon a poll question found on the *Cincinnati Enquirers* website. The question was, "Should Ohio legalize same-sex marriage?" A common theme in the "Comments" section of that poll question was that those claiming to love Jesus Christ who voted "no" were hypocrites because everyone knows Jesus was all about love and it is hateful to stand against any group of people seeking happiness. Not long ago in a discussion forum I was attempting to reach a man who at one time claimed to be a Christian but no longer made such a claim. Ignoring essentially every verse I used, he chose to end the discussion abruptly with this parting shot: "You Christians are nothing but hypocrites and I won't have anything to do with you." I have even heard similar statements from those who truly have been washed with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

This is a favorite statement for Christians who want to drift back into the world or for those who don't want to obey to begin with. Somehow seeking to justify their actions, they begin to point the finger at the supposed hypocrisy of Christians. I have even heard preachers from the pulpit bemoan the hypocrisy "prevalent" within the church today. Mr. Webster sets forth this as his first definition of a hypocrite: *"A person who pretends to have virtues, moral or religious beliefs, principles, etc., that he or she does not actually possess, esp. a person whose actions belie stated beliefs."*

The church our Lord died to establish *is not* full of hypocrites and to say otherwise is untrue. What it *is* full of are imperfect people who are striving for perfection, but

aren't there yet. *"You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect"* (Matthew 5:45). The Christian must make it his goal to be like the Father. If he refuses to make this his goal then he yields the right to be called one of God's children. The effort must exist and the Father has promised to aid us. However, I would be lying to you if I were to claim that I have reached this goal and no longer have to worry about stumbling or missing the mark in my life. Never forget that John is writing to Christians when he said, *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"* (1 John 1:8). A Christian is not a sinner in the sense that he or she lives a life characterized by sin. However, there will be times when a Christian breaks Christ's law and sins (1 John 3:4). This makes us imperfect, *not* hypocritical!

Now, I imagine that hypocrites probably *do* exist within the church today. There probably are some who pretend to be righteous and holy who do not really possess those traits but are merely fooling their brethren. However, I am not so cynical, or *dishonest*, to claim that the church is full of such people. My brethren are like me. I don't always live up to the standard that I claim, but I am *not* a hypocrite! I will deny this charge with every breath! I am *trying* to be pleasing to the Lord and I know that the vast majority of my brethren are doing the same. My brethren and I are *imperfect*, not hypocritical.

Now, let us suppose for the sake of argument that this charge were true. What of it? How does another person's hypocrisy change *my* responsibility to God? If every Christian in this world was a Christian in name only and putting forth no effort to really be what he or she claims, what does that have to do with me? Am I released from my obligation to God? Does their hypocrisy somehow excuse my own duty to God? Can any thinking person believe it? The truth of the matter is that this is a deceptive and dishonest charge born from a misguided, desperate, and unholy attempt to justify one's own sinful actions. It is a dishonest straw man argument that misses the real issue by miles, the sickness of my own soul and my unwillingness to obey the Lord.

Only one child of God ever achieved sinless perfection and that was Jesus Christ Himself. Has every other child of God who has ever sinned been nothing more than a hypocrite? No. Shame on those who say that they were. AL

Sermons: (AM) Love believes, hopes, endures (PM) Jehoiakim's conflict with God's Word

Reading: (AM) Luke 8:22-39

(PM) Luke 8:40-56