

University Heights Messenger

Volume 5--Number 16

April 14, 2013

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

List:

Reese Worley was doing quite well at the time of this writing. **Paul Ayres** (preacher and elder at the Taylorsville Road congregation in Louisville) has dealt with substantial health problems for many years and continues to do so. Let us remember him as he and his wife strive to find ways to improve his health.

Our members: Jeff Howerton, Glenn Kimberlin, Paul Atkisson, Lindsay Morgan

Others: Lenny Shepperson, Jan Hogen, Barabara Matheny, David Morrow, Debbie Parker, Rita Pagan, Vina Krassow, John Bennett, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Gail Stein, Dawn Rutledge, Sandy Childress, Mary Wilson, Doris Baker, Bill Childress, Susie Burton, Fred Dalton, Norma Hurt, Taylor Osterling, Vernon Johnson, Ed Sissel

<u>WEEKLY READING</u>		<u>LEADERSHIP</u>		<u>SERVICES</u>
Mon	Numbers 8-11, Colossians 1	<u>ELDERS</u>	<u>DEACONS</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
Tue	Numbers 12-14, Colossians 2, Psalm 28	Garry Banks	Troy Antle	Bible Study: 9:45 AM
Wed	Numbers 15-18, Colossians 3, Psalm 113	David Collins	Richard Brundige	Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM
Thu	Numbers 19-21, Colossians 4	John Thompson	Matt Thompson	<u>Wednesday</u>
Fri	Numbers 22-25, Luke 1		Adam Litmer	Bible Study: 7:30 PM
		<u>EVANGELIST</u>	Bill Morelan	<u>1st Fri. of Month</u>
		Adam Litmer	Jim Parsons	Singing: 7:30 PM
			Pat Seabolt	<u>3rd Fri. of Month</u>
			Adam Daniels	Bible Study: 7:00 PM
			Jamie Powell	(Finished for the time being)

There's A Lesson Here

One cannot help but wonder how many souls have been and are currently spiritually lost simply

Our gospel meeting is THIS week. Have you made your plans to attend? Your attendance will be an encouragement to your fellow members and brother Sebree alike.

because they were never fully convinced to obey the gospel. Each time they heard the gospel plan of salvation preached from the pulpit or had it taught to them by a faithful Christian, they failed to be baptized for the remission of their sins. Some have rejected God, refusing to believe that He even exists. Others refuse to accept the Bible as God's inspired Word. Those people find nothing compelling about the idea of a Supreme Being who is both creator and sustainer and pass the Bible off as a clever piece of literature. Still others demonstrate some degree of conviction regarding spiritual matters, but fail to become fully convinced that the Bible does, indeed, specify that God wants people to humbly come to Him repenting of their sins, confessing the Jesus one reads about in the Bible to be His Son, and to be buried by baptism into Christ's death and to rise from that watery grave to be united with him in a resurrection like his. (Romans 6:4-5)

Conviction is such an important component of faith. If one's thoughts regarding a certain matter never reach the point of conviction, then one's actions, at best, are tentative, hesitant, and easily reversed. One's faith is weak, ill-defined, and ineffectual, and easily sabotaged by the evil designs of others. How frightening it must be to step out not fully convinced of where your foot will land. But conviction and acting in faith go hand in hand. *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen"* (Hebrews 11:1). The solution to being unconvinced is not to remain in that limbo-like state, but to become fully convinced. To remain unconvinced is to remain inactive, and to remain inactive with regard to one's spiritual condition is to remain eternally lost.

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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We must also realize that within a consistent lack of conviction lies a very significant element of distrust. Our fellow men have given us ample reason to distrust, but when has God ever treated His creation in a way that justifies distrust of Deity? When has He ever deceived, lied, promised but not provided, or presented Himself as something He is not? Those are Satan's methods, not God's. People fail to obey the gospel because, when push comes to shove, they simply distrust God and the Bible.

There is a passage in Romans 4:18-25 concerning Abraham that ties all of the above concepts together. *"In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness." But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

It is our desire, if you are not a Christian, that at your next opportunity to become one you will be fully convinced of what the Bible says you need to do to become a Christian, and that no unbelief will make you waver. The Elders

What if God acted like us?

Have you ever thought to ask yourself the above question? 1 Peter 1:14-16 says, *"As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy'."* We are called upon to conduct ourselves in a holy manner just as the One who called us is holy. But what if the Holy One, if only for a month, chose to conduct Himself after the pattern that He sees in us? How much do you suppose would change?

Psalms 34:15 says, *"The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cries."* Hebrews 4:16 says, *"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* It is wonderfully comforting knowing that God's eyes and ears are

always inclined toward the saint. But would that still be the case for the month He patterned His conduct after ours? Would there be times when He was not very inclined at all to see, listen to, and help His saints through their daily struggles? Would He be too tired, preoccupied, or self-absorbed to care?

Ezekiel 18:21-23 says, *"But if a wicked person turns from all his sins that he has committed and keeps all my statutes and does what is just and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions that he has committed shall be remembered against him; for the righteousness that he has done he shall live. Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?"* More than anything else our God wants to be able to forgive a person of their sins and enjoy a saving relationship with them. The entirety of Scripture is about the deployment and fruition of a plan to accomplish His will in this matter. But would that still be the case for the month He patterned His conduct after ours? Would a desire and willingness to forgive characterize Him for that month? Or is it possible that He would become a grudge-holder for the month, refusing to forgive those who slighted Him even as they repent and ask forgiveness?

Malachi 3:10 says, *"Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need."* Our God has always been eager to pour blessings upon His people, physically and spiritually. But would that still be the case for the month He patterned His conduct after ours? Would He continue to eagerly rain spiritual blessings upon those faithful to His cause? Or is it possible that He'd be too preoccupied with Himself to even appreciate those working for and trusting in Him?

God is *not* going to pattern His conduct after ours. He is *always* faithful and true. But answering these questions can tell us much about ourselves. Did you like the answers? AL

Sermons: (AM) What's the point?

(PM) Do I proof-text?

Reading: (AM) John 10:20-42

(PM) John 11:1-19