

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:

New: Sarah Brundige (Richard’s mother) is receiving Hospice care.

Our members: Jeff Howerton, Paul Atkisson

Others: Mamie Dart, Casey Sparrow, Hope Vinogradov, Barabara Matheny, David Morrow, Debbie Parker, Vina Krassow, John Bennett, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Gail Stein, Sandy Childress, Susie Burton, Jacob Profit, Valarie and Barry Boyd, Leroy Weatherholt, Wilma Lawson, Janett Brundige’s mother and stepfather, Diane Whitehead, Tony Tyree, Sandy Driver, Autumn Fox, Beth Erickson Erlene Young, The Don Orthober family

WEEKLY READING		LEADERSHIP		SERVICES
Mon	Proverbs 29-31, 1 Thessalonians 4	ELDERS	DEACONS	Sunday
Tue	Song 1-3, 1 Thessalonians 5, Psalm 72	Garry Banks	Troy Antle	Bible Study: 9:45 AM
Wed	Song 4-6, 2 Thessalonians 1	David Collins	Richard Brundige	Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM
Thu	Song 7-8, 2 Thessalonians 2, Psalm 127	John Thompson	Matt Thompson	Wednesday
Fri	1 Kings 5, 2 Chronicles 8, 1 Timothy 5	Adam Litmer	Adam Litmer	Bible Study: 7:30 PM
		EVANGELIST	Bill Morelan	1st Fri. of Month
			Jim Parsons	Singing: 7:30 PM
			Pat Seabolt	3rd Fri. of Month
			Adam Daniels	Bible Study: 7:00 PM
			Jamie Powell	(Finished for the time being)

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Nathaniel: A Most Unique Individual

Do you have an outstanding characteristic, one so outstanding and unique that you are virtually in a class by yourself? Would that characteristic be so recognizable that others would automatically identify you with that quality? If Jesus saw you approaching would he point you out on the basis of that one, outstanding characteristic?

Our “meet and greet” for new students is rapidly approaching (August 23). Everyone is encouraged to aid in this evangelistic endeavor.

As Jesus went about gathering his disciples he decided to go to Galilee and there he found Phillip. Phillip immediately sought out Nathaniel, telling him that he had found the Messiah. Nathaniel was skeptical that anything good could come from Nazareth. Jesus took no offense at this comment, but recognized Nathaniel’s absolute honesty when he said, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” (John 1:47)

So, that’s about all that is said of Nathaniel. Or, is it? What does it really mean to be without guile or deceit? One who is without deceit is no hypocrite. Hypocrisy is the epitome of deceit. The hypocrite exudes deceit. Virtually everything the hypocrite does to influence others is a façade, a false-front that hides the real person. Hypocrisy functions on the basis of deceit. Jesus, using probably the strongest language he ever spoke, condemned the Pharisees and scribes for hypocrisy. But Nathaniel was without it.

What does it really mean to be without guile or deceit? It meant that Nathaniel was a man of integrity. Jesus knew that when Nathaniel became his disciple he would be, from that point on, a true disciple. He would not “join the cause” under false pretenses. He would not avoid or evade the responsibilities that would be “part of the job.” He would be loyal, fully committed from beginning to end. When he stood before kings he would not seek to please men; when facing persecution he would not compromise; when he was confronted

with life-threatening circumstances he would be *faithful unto death*. (Revelation 2:10). How do we know all of this? Because Jesus said Nathaniel was a man without deceit.

In that one brief sentence Jesus virtually wrote a book about Nathaniel. Nathaniel did not cheat or defraud. He did not stretch the truth or embellish things to make himself look good. He did not tell lies, white ones or otherwise. He was not greedy or covetous, nor did he make gains at the expense of others. We could go on and on about Nathaniel's character and behavior. Suffice it to say that since he was without deceit he did not sin in ways that involved deceptiveness.

Nathaniel is one of two people described in the Bible as being without deceit. Jesus is the other. "*For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.*"

<sup>22</sup> *He committed no sin, **neither was deceit found in his mouth**. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.*" (1 Peter 2:20-23) May we, too, be without deceit. John Thompson

### **Don't Blame The Job!**

Dan Shipley

"Jobs don't have futures, people do." I don't know who said it, but it is certainly a thought provoking and sense making statement. The point is that success and failure lie mostly with the individual and not so much with his kind of employment. Most of us can think of those who have failed with golden opportunities and the most favorable of circumstances and of others who have succeeded eminently where opportunity appeared meager. The very job in which one makes outstanding achievement has been the scapegoat for another's failure. The difference is in the person.

The difference is in the person in the spiritual realm, too. It is not unusual to hear Christians blaming the "job" for some of their own failures. For instance, when churches do not grow or when the membership declines, it is because "the meeting house in a poor location" or "insufficient parking space." While such things could certainly be contributing factors, it may well be time to take an unbiased look at the person as well (remembering that circumstances are often blamed for man's failures). Unless the members are hard working, dedicated, and involved it is not likely that

another location or more parking space will solve their problem. I fear that we may have placed too much emphasis on such externals, even to the point of depending upon them. Many small, financially burdened churches have learned the hard way that a new and modern meetinghouse is no guarantee of growth. "Dead" churches *do* need a change, but it must come from within with a renewal of the mind (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23).

Others blame the "job" by insisting that "no one will listen to the gospel anymore." Thus, they don't spread it. Sure enough, they *don't* convert anyone and thus *prove* (?) their premise. The only thing worse than a world that is lost and dying are Christians who don't care enough to do something about it. To many Christians the work of committing the gospel to others is just a "job" without much of a future. Sadly, this makes them Christians without much of a future.

Absolutely nothing can take the place of individual effort and initiative by consecrated saints. The primary need is not for better "jobs" but for better *people* to do the jobs God wants done. There is little profit in lamenting over what can't be done, or over what could be done "if we had more members" or "if we met in a better location." If we are not doing the best we can with what we have and where we are, then what would be accomplished by having more?

The faithful are little affected by circumstances and situations which "help" or hinder others. They always see the "*fields that are white unto harvest*." They don't succumb to the problems, discouragements, and obstacles that are bound to come wherever they might be. They seek opportunities, not excuses; for a better self, not a better "job." They appreciate the fact that God has furnished them completely for every good work (2 Timothy 3:17). Their only need is for like-minded brethren to help do the job.

**"Sermons:** (AM) "The manifold wisdom of God" (Ephesians 3:1-12)

(PM) Satan: Deadly, Wicked, Real

**Reading:** (AM) Psalm 49

(PM) Psalm 50

**The Blog:** The blog will be updated during the week.