

# University Heights Messenger

Volume 5--Number 21

May 26, 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:

**Sharon Tirey** is battling pneumonia. **Jim Parsons** continues to battle weakness and pain. **Lindsay Morgan** is taking medication to treat sarcoidosis. **Lavon Speer** (wife of Robert Speer from Winchester) is battling a severe infection in her knee. She is in a great deal of pain and also suffers from various blood issues. She and her family need our prayers at this time. Let us remember the **Rutledge family** after Dawn's passing.

**Our members:** Jeff Howerton, Glenn Kimberlin, Paul Atkisson

**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, Sandy Childress, Reese Worley, 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>
<b>Mon</b>	Judges 7-8, Luke 22	<u>ELDERS</u>	<u>DEACONS</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
<b>Tue</b>	Judges 9-11, Luke 23, Psalm 17	Garry Banks	Troy Antle	Bible Study: 9:45 AM
<b>Wed</b>	Judges 12-16, Luke 24, Psalm 146	David Collins	Richard Brundige	Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM
<b>Thu</b>	Judges 17-18, Acts 1, Psalm 21	John Thompson	Matt Thompson	<u>Wednesday</u>
<b>Fri</b>	Judges 19-21, Acts 2	<u>EVANGELIST</u>	Adam Litmer	Bible Study: 7:30 PM
		Adam Litmer	Bill Morelan	<u>1st Fri. of Month</u>
			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**

In January of this year a Gallup poll reported that 36 percent of Americans are overweight with 26 percent considered to be obese. Being

overweight is a significant health issue as it contributes to many other diseases and social problems. For example, obesity is an intimate companion of heart disease, diabetes, musculoskeletal conditions, respiratory diseases, and many others. All of that extra weight saps one's energy, impedes one's mobility, increases one's discomfort, detracts from one's attractiveness, and negatively affects one's self-concept. Being overweight can be likened to dragging around a ball and chain. We all know that it is much easier to gain extra weight than it is to get rid of it and keep it off.

Can a spiritual lesson be obtained from the dangers of being overweight? The answer is "Yes." *"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, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."* (Hebrews 12:1-2) In this passage sin is pictured as a weight. While Satan would have us focus on the "fleeting pleasures of sin" (Hebrews 11:25), sin, in reality, harms us spiritually in much the same way that obesity harms us physically. Sin saps our spiritual energy and zeal, impedes our upward progress, decreases our comfort and peace, makes us appear spiritually unattractive, and redefines our self-concept.

Looking at different versions of Hebrews 12:1-2 brings out two important aspects of sin it would behoove us to consider. The King James Version refers to *"the sin which doth so easily beset us."* Becoming overweight takes little to no effort. It happens almost outside of our awareness; it sneaks up on us. In like manner, becoming sinful takes no effort at all. A little compromise here, a bit of carnality there, and before we know it, sin is dominating our lives and weighing us down. The English Standard Version refers to the sin *"which clings so closely."* From a physical standpoint, all of that extra weight clings to us so closely that it is indistinguishable from the rest of our bodies. In like manner, sin clings just as closely to our spiritual bodies.

Who might we be able to study the Scriptures with this week? Let's make studying with the lost a goal.

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So, what is to be done about this enormous weight of sin? Hebrews 12:1 says to “*lay it aside.*” In other words, get rid of it; take it off; remove it and then proceed to live without it. “*And let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.*” The scripture does not say that we should stumble along, dragging that weight along with us everywhere we go. Can you picture how difficult it is to go uphill while attached to a ball and chain? And then what is likely to happen when one reaches the top of the slope and begins to go down the hill? So, the Hebrew writer tells us to get rid of the weight of sin which besets us more easily than we want to admit and clings so closely to us.

Getting rid of the weight of sin would be an insurmountable task except for the example set by our Lord and Savior, Jesus. We are told to look to “*Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*” (Hebrews 12:2) The Elders

### **Judging and the Golden Rule (2)**

How are we to determine that someone is a false teacher? We’re told the Bereans examined the Scriptures daily to see that the things Paul taught were true (Acts 17:11). *That* is the only standard permitted in our judging anything spiritual. Only in this way may we judge accurately what someone teaches. If the word of Scripture is going to be the standard by which we are finally judged (John 12:48), it would be a very good idea to learn it now.

When it comes to how we treat people there are essentially three rules of life that we can live by. We see all three in the parable of the Good Samaritan from Luke 10:30-37, which I encourage you to read before going further.

The robbers were living by what some have called the iron rule. This rule says “What’s yours in mine if I can take it from you.” Obviously, this is the source of most crime. It’s also, unfortunately, the basis for many business practices of the day. Some folks seem to feel as though misrepresentation is acceptable provided one doesn’t tell a “bold faced lie. To “get the best of someone” is not just accepted these days; it is often encouraged and rewarded.

The priest and the Levite were motivated by what some have called the silver rule. This one says, “What’s mine is mine and you have no right to it.” The theme of this rule is rooted in Cain’s question to God, “*Am I my brother’s keeper?*” They would not steal from the wounded man, but neither would they spend time, money, or energy to help him. Paul offers something to consider in Romans 14:7-8. “*For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s.*” To go through life without harming people is good, but there is still a much *better* way to live.

The actions of the Samaritan show us the golden rule. The essence of this rule is found in Matthew 7:12. “*So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also for them.*” The thought behind this rule says, “What’s mine is yours if you have need of it.” Jesus Himself lived by this rule. Because we were sinners, He came to earth and died to deliver us

from the guilt and practice of sin (Romans 5:6-10).

If we live our lives according to the golden rule, we cannot remain neutral as that priest and Levite did. We *must* act. We *must* be good for something or we are good for nothing. We *must* act on our world. Titus 2:11-12 says, “*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.*” To live as this passage instructs is to live by the golden rule; it is to tend to the needs of those around us as we have opportunity to do so.

One of the great blessings of fellowship within the church is the help of other Christians (1 Corinthians 12:25-27). We must be concerned enough with one another to be there to take care of one another. The Hebrew writer says it like this: “*Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works*” (Hebrews 10:24).

Imagine if all society lived by the golden rule. There would be no crime, no war, no marital discord, no child abuse, and no neglected people. We could close the jails and prisons, and there would no longer be any need for a police force or military might. Of course, as long as Satan is the “*god of this world*” then, as John said in 1 John 5:19, “*the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*” The devil is never going to allow those who belong to him to live by the golden rule. So, what can Christians do?

1 Peter 2:21-24 says, “*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. 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 judged justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*” Jesus set the pattern for disciples to live by. As we follow that pattern we, in turn, set the pattern for a lost and unbelieving world.

We *can* make a difference! You can make a difference for even just one person--in your home, your community, your workplace, your world. In John 13:15, Jesus said, “*for I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.*” When Christians really live by the golden rule, it will impact the world around them. You and I can change this world, only a little bit at a time, but we *can* change it. “*Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.*” (1 Corinthians 16:13-14). AL

**Sermons:** (AM) Discipleship 2

(PM) God’s providence

**Reading:** (AM) John 16:1-15

(PM) John 16:16-33