

Light or Darkness

I am all for examining our faith, doctrine and practices. This includes our traditions and catechisms (summaries of doctrine), even though we often prefer to deny that we have any such thing. It is healthy and good to do so and right and necessary to make changes as they are found wanting in light of God's word and will.

By Jonathan Perz

However, I question and challenge the Spirit that does so with a sneer, and with mocking and with derision -- even unintentionally so. Such merely fuels the bitterness and division and turmoil Satan has brewing in our midst. We tap (and sometimes pound) the hammer on the bitter wedges that Satan is using to divide us, instead of making a soul-searching and spirit-filled appeal to unite on God's truth. Satan seeks to divide God's people. God seeks our unity. Whose work are we doing?

Therefore, avoid the urge to mock and deride traditions that are not necessarily wrong or sinful. Scripturally make your appeals and suggestions for that which you believe is better, recognizing the right of expedient and lawful action in both cases. Love your brother more than your opinion. If a

doctrine is wrong and sinful, remember the wisdom of Paul to Timothy in 2

Timothy 2:24-26. Avoid expressions that generally cast the Lord's people under the bus, so to say, with their error. Is not our shared and charged goal to save souls and maintain the unity of the Spirit? Don't forget the charge to couple longsuffering with doctrine in 2 **Timothy 4:2.**

If God's truth naturally divides, that cannot be helped and things are as God wants them to be. However, it is another thing altogether when it is our spirit in handling His truths that causes the division. We will not remain blameless in such cases. May we always bear the fruit of the Spirit as we address the perceived maladies of Christ's body. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are never wrong and always glorify God. Let us live them as we preach and teach, challenge and discuss, reprove and rebuke. May we not only hold Christ our Head in reverence, but may we always hold His bride whom He died for in love and honor as well.

Classes This Week

Sunday 5:15 PM Kids Class in Auditorium	Tuesday 10 AM Ladies' class at Candy Long's on "Giving God Control"	Saturday 6-8 PM 1st - 5th Grade at TBA	Saturday 6:30-8:30 PM 6st - 8th Grade at TBA
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Brad Marshall (Allie Hosey's Cousin)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Wanda Price (Ada Owen's sister)
Betty Mcareavey (Mary Ann Roberts' mom)	Audrey Barnett (Joanetta's sister-in-law)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle)	Joy Powell (Tori Luther's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	William Herd	Rebecca Davis (Chuck Hahn's Niece)	Ray Humphrey (Seth's dad)
John M. Rhodes and Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkin's Dad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	Esther Biddle

Those Graduating This Week:

Matt Loggins -
Master's degree
Justin Bice
Tyler Cox
Heath Donahue
Chase Harrison
Joey McGee
Nathan Rouse
Erica Seymore

News and Notes

- ☒ - Anthony Sanderson's dad, James Yell, had a heart attack and now is at home.
- ☒ - Greg Lanier had a back procedure on Friday in Birmingham.
- ☒ - Ada Owen had shoulder surgery on Wed and is to begin therapy.
- ☒ - Please remember Susan Sullivan and her family in your prayers as she lost 2 aunts recently, Beulah Sims and Edna McElyea.
- ☒ - Please remember Betty Bradford in your prayers as she struggles with her health.
- ☒ - Please pray for Lisa Carter (Luke's mom) who has growth in both lungs and will go for a scan this week.
- ☒ - The flower fund low. See Mary Ann Roberts to make a contribution.
- ☒ - Joanetta's sister-in-law Audrey Barnett lost her mother, Jerrie Moore, on Monday. Please remember this family in your prayers.
- ☒ - Esther Biddle continues at home in recovery from her hip surgery.
- ☒ - Gerald White continues to recover at home.
- ☒ - William Herd's father, Charles Herd, remains in serious condition in California.
- ☒ - Pray for Betty Bradford as she suffers from an infection in her foot.
- ☒ - Teachers and hosts are needed for the upcoming monthly kids class.

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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Praying Like David

By Al Diestelkamp



Thoughts to Ponder

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your works; I muse on the work of Your hands. I spread out my hands to You; My soul longs for You like a thirsty land. (Psalms 143:4-5)

If like me you sometimes find yourself becoming dissatisfied with your personal prayers to God and want to do something about it, it would be good to go to some of the psalms of David. Many of the psalms are actually prayers that can be adapted to fit our own life situations. Such is the case with **Psalms 143**.

1 Hear my prayer, O Lord, Give ear to my supplications! In Your faithfulness answer me, And in Your righteousness.

There are at least twelve New Testament passages which assure us that God hears and answers prayer (i.e., 1 Jn. 5:14-15).

Why then do we ask God for what He has already promised? It's not because we don't believe God will keep His promise. It's like a child asking his parents to protect him even though they have assured him time and again that they are there for him. Or it's like a wife asking her husband if he still loves her even though he vowed to do so "till death do they part."

He feared an untimely death and called on God's lovingkindness to take him through the night. He expressed trust in the Lord and asked to know which way to walk. No matter the circumstances, we need to trust the Lord and ask for guidance in the way we walk.

2 Do not enter into judgment with Your servant. For in Your sight no one living is righteous.

This is a confession of fault from "a man after God's own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14). Like David, we must acknowledge that none of us is able to prevail in front of a just judge. As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10). It is true that one day we will all have to stand before God in judgment (Heb. 9:27); but like David, I don't seek justice; I seek mercy.

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Elders
Walker Davis
(334) 703-0050
Larry Rouse
(334) 734-2133

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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3 For the enemy has persecuted my soul; He has crushed my life to the ground; He has made me dwell in darkness, Like those who have long been dead.

4 Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me. My heart within me is distressed.

This was likely a time when David was in exile, hiding from King Saul. He felt as if he had been crushed. He was forced to dwell in “darkness” of caves that are more suited as graves. He felt overwhelmed!

How blessed we are by the lack of physical persecution. Not all Christians in the world can say this. But keep in mind that we, too, have no assurance that such persecution will not come to us in future days. Are we prepared?

5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your works; I muse on the work of Your hands. 6 I spread out my hands to You; My soul longs for You like a thirsty land.

Maybe David longed for the “good old days” when he was lauded as a hero in Israel. You know, when he stood before a giant and said, “I come to you in the name of the Lord...” (see **1 Sam 17:45-47**); or when women danced in the streets, singing, “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands” (**1 Sam. 18:7**). Like David, we need to thirst for God’s help and “spread out our hands” in prayer.

7 Answer me speedily, O Lord; My spirit fails! Do not hide Your face from me, Lest I be like those who go down into the pit. 8 Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, For in You do I trust; Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, For I lift up my soul to You.

When David felt his own spirit failing, he called on God not to hide His face from him. He feared an untimely death and called on

God’s lovingkindness to take him through the night. He expressed trust in the Lord and asked to know which way to walk. No matter the circumstances, we need to trust the Lord and ask for guidance in the way we walk.

9 Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies; In You I take shelter. 10 Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.

David depended on God as his shelter and asked to be “led” in the right way. King Saul was not David’s only enemy. Like us, he had a much more formidable enemy in the person of Satan. Even if one is able to escape his human enemies by his own wit and might, he would be foolish to think he can defeat Satan by himself.

It is imperative to recognize who our real enemy is. Our only hope in defeating him is to seek God’s help. We must take “shelter” in God and rely on Him to lead us in uprightness.

11 Revive me, O Lord, for Your name’s sake! For Your righteousness’ sake bring my soul out of trouble. 12 In Your mercy cut off my enemies, And destroy all those who afflict my soul; For I am Your servant.

David had confidence that God in His mercy would save him from his enemies because he served God. For us, God has put an end to the force of our enemy through the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ.

Consider David’s words in other psalms:

Psalm 25

4 Show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths. 5 Lead me in your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation.

Psalm 86

11 Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in your truth.



The Big IF

By David Diestelkamp

The response often is, “IF!? Do you realize what you did? Do you see how much pain and suffering you produced!? How can you say, ‘If? There’s no IF about it!’”

So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, “It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus Job did regularly. - **Job 1:5**

Job craved righteousness for his family so much that he regularly got up early and sacrificed for each of them just in case they had sinned. If they had, Job wanted them forgiven. If they had cursed God, Job sought His mercy. If their hearts weren’t right, Job wanted to atone for it. These are a lot of ifs. Job thought about God like the Psalmist: “For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You” (**Psa. 86:5**). So in faith we pray and sing,

If I have wounded any soul today,
If I have caused one foot to go astray,
If I have walked in my own willful way,
Dear Lord, forgive!
(Charles H. Gabriel, An Evening Prayer)

I’m wondering if we show the character of God in forgiving others—especially in the area of ifs. What do we do when someone says to us, “If what I did was a sin against you, I apologize.” “If I offended you, I’m sorry.” “If I showed hate in my heart toward you, forgive me”? The response often is, “IF!? Do you realize what you did? Do you see how much pain and suffering you produced!? How can you say, ‘If? There’s no IF about it!’”

Ephesians 4:31-32 has a lot to say about forgiveness: “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-

hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” Sometimes it is hard to forgive because bitterness, wrath, anger, and malice are being savored in our hearts because we feel the offender deserves punishment rather than mercy. Clamor (fighting) and evil speaking (slander) are how the world naturally responds when people do terrible things, but we are not of the world. We are to respond in a

radically different way.

“...forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (**Eph. 4:32**). We do our best in our service to our Lord, but we still aren’t perfect — imperfect faith, imperfect obedience, imperfect repentance, imperfect confession. We are drawn to God’s perfection, but we still have to join David in pleading to God, “Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins...” (**Psa. 19:12-13**). Do we forgive others in the same way we ask God to forgive us? Does the apology have to be worded precisely as we think it should be? Must it be the first and the last time to merit our forgiveness? (**Matt. 18:21-22**) Can there be no ifs involved?

Jesus asked if we only love those who love us, only do good to those who do good to us, and only lend to those who can repay us, how are we any different from the world? (**Lk. 6:32-34**) Following Christ makes us radically different, and that includes forgiving as He forgives. Is how we forgive any different from how the world forgives? Are people amazed when they see how we forgive, get past relationship problems, and maintain fellowship and unity? God’s grace is amazing! His children’s grace should be amazing too!

