

October 26, 2009

SERMONS FOR SUNDAY

November 1, 2009

a.m. *“Work Out Your Own Salvation”*

Scripture: Philippians 2:12-18

p.m. *“A Stone of Help”*

Scripture: 1 Samuel 7:12-17

Establishing A Home

Don Hatch

As a family begins the best foundation for the home will be to have reverence and respect for God’s Word. As devout individuals join in marriage they can grow into God-loving and God-fearing parents. Looking at God’s book and using it as a constant resource brings guidance and respect for the roles of mother, father and child.

Genesis establishes the reasons for the home, “... it is not good for man to dwell alone” (Gen 2:18). God created a companion who was equal to the man in mind and spirit becoming attendants to each others needs (husband and wife). The industry of each mate in the marriage is appropriate to the well-being of the home. Each has his or her role to fulfill. Love is not a “catch-all phrase” but an all inclusive respect and responsibility that the husband and wife share. Faithfulness, ideals, standards and loyalty must be the fabric of married life. Association with those of like precious faith lends a helping hand to any couple starting their marriage. Families, friends and members of the church are resources to be called upon. Relationships like marriage are not “spurred on” but encouraged and nurtured. No matter how arduous the tasks may be the faithful find strength to overcome and their marriage thrives.

Putting energy into the marriage is a must. Developing strength, true-heartedness, gladness for the opportunity to be a mate is encouraged by a mutual love shared for each other. Thoughtfulness and truth are substantial items needed to face the future with a clear vision of applying their lives to be of use in the Kingdom. Realizing early in marriage that a respect for God precedes a respect for each other is foundational to any lasting and harmonious marriage. A clear vision of the end of life’s walk helps a couple to start on the right road and keep to the narrow way (Matt 7:13, 14). Time for prayer, service and worship are not frivolous prattle but prized and valuable. Engaging in clean, wholesome and worthy activities is vital to building

lasting love. Vital to the marriage is the knowledge that it is a worthy endeavor which is the basis for a nation's well-being. As the home goes, so goes the nation.

Knowing that marriage is a permanent bond, "until death do we part," agreement is a principle which should be revisited many times as the years go by (Rom 7; 1 Cor 7). Chastity is "not a sentence of death" but a prescription for the many purposes and joys of marriage. Without chastity there will never be a trust between the spouses. Immorality is commonplace in a decaying society. Purity is the foundational focus if marriage is to be championed and upheld. Attentiveness to the needs of each mate is unquestionably of such great importance that there is no scale by which to measure it. Each partner is nurtured in such a wholesome arrangement. The Bible alone establishes the foundational requirements for a happy home. "Duty" is not a by-word but the means to a keen insight into fulfilling all parts of the marital union. Obligations are seen and fulfilled in the lives of devout couples seeking each other's highest good. Well-meaning but misguided opinions of marriage are like an apple which is beautiful on the outside but rotten at the core. One cannot "defraud the other" without taking something out of a marriage. Agreements are reached by prayer and consideration of each mate's life and circumstances. Pursuing permanence in marriage takes time and effort.

Attaining a respect for the wife or husband is first formed in a spiritual union. The mutual consent to love and honor are timely privileges found in the bonds of holy matrimony. Marriage is a protective environment where the participants are shielded by loving deference and mates employ temperance and consideration to express a deepening love. Marital bliss is not a "short-lived," shallow concept but a commitment each must share. Mutual esteem, consideration, goodness and honor are parts of the sincere and tender regard that is guarded by an innate love for purity and sensibility.

Sharing aspirations are pivotal in marriage. Wanting the best for a mate involves mutually finding common grounds for desires and expectations. Willingness to support each other evolves into tenderness and singleness of mind and heart. The idea of mutual interest, companionship and responsibilities is fundamental to unity in marriage. Had Eve and Adam taken the time to consider the consequences of their actions would Eden's history have been different? Treasuring marriage and being aware of corruptive forces, thieves who steal bliss from and sinister plots to destroy marriage should sober and challenge mates. Godliness with contentment is a great gain (1 Tim 6:6). Gracefulness is built one "brick at a time".

A question to be asked is, What constitutes the home? Who was the Author of marriage and what were His reasons for the home? How can the home be reinforced and blessed? How can the mates find happiness, contentment and joy? Knowing that marriage is permanent becomes grounds for forging deeper love. Is the home a dwelling place where husbands, wives and children find a refuge in the storms of life? Will neglect have a profound effect on marriage? How do the mates learn the other mate's needs without being deeply committed to them and vitally interested in them? Let marriage be held in honor among all (Heb 13:4). Establishing a home requires diligence and commitment.

FAMILY CARE: A Message from Our Shepherds

This is the largest shipment (30,000 lbs.) of Mission Printing tracts ever created. The 750,000 tracts are loaded and ready for shipment on Monday (10/26/2009) to Ghana. The cost per pound is \$.24 instead of the normal \$3.18, saving MP \$88,000 in freight. The Belt Line Rd. church of Christ is a big part of this effort. Your donations and volunteer work helped make this possible, along with many dedicated Christians throughout America. We now have a fifth congregation, Downtown church of Christ in Cedar Hill to share in the MP workload at their building every week. We need more volunteers and donations to continue the good work of 'Evangelism by the printed page'. Please pray that each tract will be read by hundreds of hungry souls in West Africa. In December, MP has the opportunity to ship a large number of boxes free to Capetown, South Africa with a missionary, Rohan Jones. Thank you for your dedication in contributing finances and showing an enthusiastic work for all our church related activities. Have a great week in the Lord, Richard Renfro



Some say churches of Christ are graying and dying, but are these claims true? While some congregations have a majority of members that are retired, many more are filled with children and young adults. Churches of Christ actually have a larger percentage of young adults than the national average. In fact, we rank #3 among religious groups having the most adults aged 18-29. According to the Pew Forum's nationwide survey last year, twenty percent of the American population falls between the ages of 18 to 29. This survey says churches of Christ have 22 percent in that category ("U. S. Religious Landscape Survey," www.pewforum.org, 82-83).

Statistician Flavil Yeakley, Jr. has studied trends in churches of Christ for decades. He confidently says these things about churches of Christ: (1) We are the twelfth largest religious group in America; (2) we are the sixth fastest growing church in America; (3) we are fourth in the nation in the total number of congregations; (4) we are fifth in the nation in number of counties in which there is a congregation; (5) we are first in the nation in distribution of congregations; and (6) we are first in the nation in weekly attendance of adherents. In fact, 76 percent of our adherents attend regularly, which is much higher than most mainline religious groups. According to a survey by Barna some years ago, churches of Christ were also first in the percentage of members who contributed to support the church.

Let's not be discouraged. We are not pitiful and not dying. We know there is a hunger for God's Word. SEARCH fills almost 5,000 requests for material per weekly program, and nearly a thousand come to its website each day. We are making a profound difference in our world. Please keep us in your prayers and help us financially. The Lord be with you, Phil Sanders

This article courtesy of the Search Program. Flavil Yeakley, Jr. is a former minister of Belt Line.

City Set On a Hill

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Mat 5:13-20).

The cities of antiquity were built to protect the inhabitants. If possible they chose a hill to build upon. This afforded a natural deterrent because battling up-hill was difficult. In Israel’s history were many cities built on hills. Jerusalem was of major importance. It was established on top of Moriah and Zion. The walls built around the city were to keep invading armies “at bay”. At night-fall the gates were secured and all traffic was stopped. These gates became famous and identifiable to the Israelites.

Other cities like those called “Cities of Refuge” were built upon hills. These cities were located strategically in Israel to give the person fleeing to them easy access in order to save their lives. In the Law of Moses the regulations concerning these cities of refuge indicated they were “asylums”. If a perpetrator was innocent of murder, he could go there and claim asylum. He had to remain there until the High Priest died. At that time he was free to leave the city without fear of retribution.

Six of these cities were built upon a hill. The geographic location made them important. They were situated intentionally about one day away from all the major cities in Israel. Moreover, they were able to be found even in the night. They were accessible to all who fled to them for refuge. As a haven the person could live there escaping the “avenger of blood” (Josh 20:3). Upon arrival the perpetrator declared to the elders of the city the circumstances of his fleeing.

The Church and Christians are noted as lights. They are the light of the world (Jn 8:12). They serve to help mankind find a refuge of hope (Heb 6:18). The Christian walks in light because of fellowship with God (1 Jn 1:1-10). God is light and has no shadow of turning (Jas 1:17, 18). Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount explains to the disciples that they were figuratively “a city”. They would be obvious to all nations as people living “in the light” needing to escape the ravages of sin. Light and darkness are common metaphors for “good and evil”. Christians are “light”.

GREETER ASSIGNMENTS

Sunday, November 1, 2009

Front foyer: Nancy Pond; Roberta Price

Back foyer: Jamie & Megan Little

Sunday, November 8, 2009

Front foyer: Richard & Carolyn Renfro

Back foyer: Stan & Doris Selby

Family News:

MISSION PRINTING

Mission Printing will meet **Sunday** at 4:00 p.m. in the Jr. Auditorium.

SINGING SESSION

The **Sunday afternoon** singing session will meet in room #116 at 5:15 p.m.

MENS' GATHERING/DEVOTIONAL

The **Monday morning** devotional will meet at 6:00 a.m. in the Annex.

RESPONSES

Beverly Sweat requests prayers for her & her children; also, visitor **Rodney Graham** requests prayer & to be restored.

CHRIST'S HAVEN

Pick up a sack to fill for Christ's Haven. The van will be here next Tuesday, **November 3rd**.

LADIES

Ladies' Bible Class for **Tuesday, November 3rd** is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. with a lesson by Letitia Beverly on "Staying in the Circle: Fellowship" followed by a luncheon.

CONGREGATION

I send occasional email updates about our congregation and our activities to anyone who would like it. Please send me your email address if you would like to be on the list or let me know if you don't want to be on the list. Just something to help us communicate better.

renfro.richard@att.net

THANK YOU

Dear Brethren, I want to thank you for the phone calls, cards and food. I deep appreciate you all. You have been so kind while I was under the weather with the flu. Jerry McKey and Henry Seidmeyer are such thoughtful and kind Christian gentlemen. They took over my responsibilities and I deeply appreciate them. The sermons and lesson they taught were outstanding. I want to compliment them for such superb service to the Lord. Don Hatch

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

It's time to turn you clocks **back** this Saturday night for the ending of Daylight Savings Time.

WITH SYMPATHY

George McGuire (Geraldine Jones' brother) passed away last week in Lamesa, TX.

Robert Bufe (frequent visitor, LeRoy Bufe's brother) passed away last Friday.

Jim & Julie Dubeck (minister of the Smithfield Church of Christ in N. Richland Hills) lost their 15-month old son in a tragic accident at their home last Saturday.

THOSE TO SERVE IN NOVEMBER

Lord's table (front): Purman Cofer, Jerry Baker, Dorris Walker, Marvin Brown, Mike Garrison, Bill Matthews, Ty Harvey, Rob Farmer

(back): JC Ross, Robert Taylor, Max Melton, Keith Vaughn, Roy Martin, Derroll Allen, Bobby Bowen, Brandon Howard

p.m. Darrell Allen & Garl Latham

Card Pickup: a.m. Cole & Ethan Howard **p.m.** Alex & Kenny Mayer

Contribution Counters: John Mayer, Rob Farmer

Communion Preparers: Garl & Michele Latham

NEWS OF THE SICK

•**Debra & Jessica Alonzo** have been ill at home.

•**Mary Curtis** is now home recuperating from the flu.

•**Fauna Garrett** is back at Ashford Hall, room #212.

•**Max Melton's** shoulder surgery has been postponed due to needed heart testing.

•**Tom Prince** is also now home; he & Billie both are recuperating from illness.

•**Dessie Ross** requests prayers for her & her family's health problems.

•**Ann Ryon** received a good doctor's report.

•**Myrtle Wade** underwent leg surgery last Friday; she will undergo another on November 6th.

•**Christine Matthews** (Bill & Linda's daughter-in-law) was released from the hospital last Wednesday.

•**Mia McKey** is out of the hospital.

•**Sonya** (Hank & Becky Henry's granddaughter) was scheduled to deliver twins last Friday; she suffered with the flu & other issues during pregnancy.

Continuing Prayer Concerns:

Ilene Ashworth, Grady Fowler, Billie Gilliam, Don & Judy Hancock, Jean Kelly, Jack & Frances LaFerney, Gardean Latham, Elsie Nanney, Everett Newton, Frances Seidmeyer, Thomas West, Brad Anderson (Bill Paschall's friend), Charlie & Mary DiPalma (missionaries), Louise Gierling (former member Tom Gierling's mother), Dalton Gordon (Elizabeth Garrison's great nephew).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Be sure and mark your calendar -

- November 1 Mission Printing in the Jr. Auditorium at 4:00 p.m.
- November 1: Singing session in room #116 at 5:15 p.m.
- November 3: Ladies' Bible Class & lunch at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex

LORD'S TABLE/MORNING

Front Table

- Purman Cofer
- Jerry Baker
- Dorris Walker
- Marvin Brown
- Mike Garrison
- Bill Matthews
- Ty Harvey
- Rob Farmer

Rear Table

- JC Ross
- Robert Taylor
- Max Melton
- Keith Vaughn
- Derrol Allen
- Roy Martin
- Bobby Bowen
- Brandon Howard

SUNDAY A.M. PRAYERS

- Dean Webb
- Stan Selby
- Henry Seidmeyer

A.M. SCRIPTURE READING

- Mike Batot
Philippians 2:12-18

A.M. SONG LEADER

- Darrell Allen

SUNDAY P.M. PRAYERS

- Glen Kelly
- Denzil Myers

P.M. SCRIPTURE READING

- Garl Latham
1 Samuel 7:12-17

P.M. SONG LEADER(S)

- Ty Harvey

LORD'S TABLE/EVENING

- Darrell Allen
- Garl Latham

COMMUNION TO SHUT-INS

- Ty Harvey

FOR THE RECORD: WEEK ENDING ATTENDANCE & BUDGET

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>This Week</u>	<u>YTD Avg.</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Sun. Class	80	72	92	125
A.M. Worship	151	145	155	210
P.M. Worship	76	91	85	112
Wed. Class	83	64	81	110
Ladies Bible Class	20	18	22	35
Contribution	\$4889	\$4417	\$5336	\$5474

MISSIONS

Charlie & Mary DiPalma - India
Willie & Del Gley – Ghana/Togo, Africa
Roland & Rose Mohsen – France
Gary & Nadya Workman – Ukraine
Glen & KuinTattersall – Australia
Oleg & Natasha Yakimenko - Russia
Wil & Telanda Sadler – Military Missions
Christ's Haven Children's Home - Keller, TX
Foster's Home for Children – Stephenille, TX
Bitragunta Church of Christ, Bitragunta, India
Ian & Mabel McPherson – Tasmania Australia
Wayne Jackson – Christian Courier on the Web
Ted Lingren - Sisophon Bible School – Cambodia
Mission Printing Worldwide Literature Distribution
Terry & Pam Laurence – Ft. Defiance, Arizona – Navajo Nation
Dennis & Beth Johnson - Chennai Teacher Training School – India