

The REMINDER

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, TX

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THE PLACE OF SAFETY

I knew a man some years ago, one of thousands, who felt assured of his salvation because he occasionally assembled with the saints in the church building. As the worship service began he didn't participate in the singing because he "didn't have the voice." I guess he didn't think of the heart (Eph. 5:19). He had been a "member" of the church for over 30 years, but couldn't lead a prayer. As you might guess his financial contribution was small, again there was a "because," "Because the church has more money in the bank than I have." At the end of the service he departed, not to be seen again for a couple of weeks. One might inquire of his private life, "Was it filled with good works (Titus 2:7, 14)? Not that anyone notices, because he "minded his own business."

If someone asked him, "Are you saved?" the answer was, "Of course. I was baptized years ago and I still go to church." That baptism is required for salvation is an indisputable fact (Gal. 3:26-27; Acts 22:16). Worshipping God with those of like precious faith, exhorting and being exhorted, provoking to love and good works and being provoked are blessings from God. But a one time act of obedience and occasional entrance into a building do not assure one of safety.

We should hesitate to generalize that God's people have always had a problem remembering who and what they were, but the scriptures do reveal to us numerous instances of this problem. Look at Jerusalem during the days of Jeremiah. It was the city of God, and in it was located the temple of God, yet there was no true religion there. The people were circumcised in the flesh (an act of obedience), but not in the heart (Jer. 4:3-4; 6:10; 9:25). They went to the temple, but God doesn't accept worship from idolatrous people.

About a century before the time of Jeremiah the prophet Micah dealt with the same problem. He says in 3:11-12: "The heads thereof judge for reward and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets divine for money: yet they lean upon Jehovah and say, 'Is not Jehovah in the midst of us? no evil shall come upon us.' Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps..." Their attitude was that nothing could happen to them because they had priests, prophets and a temple. God sent destruction to teach them the folly of trusting in earthly structures and systems. For our time and purpose we need to remember that buildings and offices do not necessarily constitute a church recognized by the Lord.

Where is the place of safety? For the people of Jeremiah's day safety wasn't in the temple, but in the Lord. The same is true for us. Safety isn't in a building, but in the true church, a body of working saints. "For we are God's fellow-workers; ye are God's husbandry, God's building" (I Cor. 3:9). Being in a building isn't the same as being in the Lord. The people of God weren't just *called* Christians, they *are* Christians, and there is a vast difference.

Who are we? Christians - followers, imitators of Christ. What are we? Strangers, sojourners, pilgrims - we're not earthly residents, we're just passing through. Don't try carrying too much cumbersome baggage. Remember to help others along the way. Where are we going? To heaven. Let nothing deter or distract us.

JLS

Bulletin Board

Sermon Notes:

AM Lesson - Steve
PM Worship - New song practice.

News and Notes: Anita and I are out of town, so I'm preparing this ahead of time, and am not current on the latest. I do want to list the classes for next quarter, which begin June 2.

Steve will continue his class on the "Harmony of the Gospels."
Jesse will teach a class on "Creation and Evolution." This is open for adults, but the teens will be involved also. I will have a class on 1st and 2nd Corinthians."

Each of these should be a wonderful opportunity to learn better how to serve God in our community.

Weighted Down?

The army of Alexander the Great was advancing on Persia. At one critical point it appeared that his troops might be defeated. The soldiers had taken so much plunder from their previous campaigns that they had become weighted down and were losing their effectiveness. Alexander immediately commanded that all the spoils be thrown into a heap and burned.

The Hebrews writer admonished, "Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight and the sin which besets us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1)

The Spirit of Christ

Have you ever wondered why the church has not made greater numerical and spiritual growth? Do you suppose we, the members, could be at fault? Maybe we need to make some adjustments?

1. **Am I so critical** that I see a person's weak points quicker than I do his good points?
2. **Am I so childish** that everyone has to handle me with caution to keep me from getting mad?
3. **Am I so sensitive** that I make myself miserble by taking in a personal way everything that is said by others?
4. **Am I always thinking** that everyone else is out of step but me, and that I could be happy if everybody would just "do right?"
5. **Do I hurt** people with my sharp and caustic remarks?
6. **Do I have bottled up** inside me a feeling of hostility towards another?
7. **Do I repeat** that which should be kept secret and the explain myself saying, "But it's the truth?"
8. **When the good reputation** of another is being undermined, do I participate?
9. **Do I follow** after the things which make peace, or do my words promote strife?
(author unknown, but probably experienced among us)

"Sticking your nose into other peoples' business is the surest way of coming face to face with trouble."

Assignments for today

Sunday, May 19, 2013

Morning Service

Announcements.....	Rudy	Black
Hymn Director.....	Robert McDonald	
Scripture Reading.....	I Peter 1:2, 18-25	
Scripture Reader.....	David	Haley
Opening Prayer.....	Bob	Ward
Closing Prayer.....	Rudy	Black

Evening Service

Hymn Director.....	Steve	Garrett
Opening Prayer.....	Chad	Smith
Closing Prayer.....	Rudy	Black

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Schedule of Services

Sunday:

9:30 AM Worship
11:00 AM Bible study
5:00 PM Worship

Wednesday:

7:30 PM Study and Devotional
Minister and editor
Jack Smith and Steve Garrett

The Reminder is published weekly by the church of Christ in Bellaire