

THE REMINDER

BELLAIRE CHURCH OF CHRIST, 15 APRIL 2018

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Our much anticipated **Spring Gospel Meeting** is upon us! This **Saturday, April 21**, Kevin Clark from Birmingham, AL will be preaching two lessons starting at 10:00 a.m. He will also preach for us on Sunday, including a 2:30 lesson after our potluck at the Bellaire Community Center. See you Saturday!
- Continue to remember **Brian and Deb Haley**, who are still in Tennessee with their daughter, **Jenn Mattson**, and her husband, **Art**, after the tragic death of their baby boy, **Isaac**. Pray for comfort, check on the Haleys, and let them know we are thinking of them. Of course, they are still dealing with Deb's pain issues as well as the reconstruction of their home.
- Don't forget **Bob Stark** as he keeps recovering from his heart transplant and travels back and forth to work in Dallas. **Bob and Erma** are also still displaced and rebuilding their home.
- **Muffy Garrett** will be traveling to Kentucky this week to be with her mother, **Beverly Berthold**, who will be starting her third round of chemotherapy. Pray for healing and safety.
- Remember our one expectant mother, **Josie Haley**.
- Keep praying for those with on-going health concerns: **Pat Butler, Laura Claburn, Jan and Richard Cooper, Mike Flinn, Deb Haley, Janice Kimbrough, Johnny Martinez, Anna Miekle, Bob Stark, and Curby Stech.**
- **Sermon Title: Spiritual Warfare**

WHO ARE WE?

A group of God's children, striving to maintain the organization, doctrine and worship as taught in the New Testament

ELDERS

Brian Haley
Mark Mann
Mike Pharris

DEACONS

Scott Clanton
David Haley
Mitchell Howell
Dan Kimbrough
Jesse Knapp
John Moon
Alex Morolez
Gregory Williams

EVANGELISTS

Daniel Broadwell
Steve Garrett

CONTACT US

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DIRECTORY UPDATES

Email:
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SCHEDULE

Sunday:

9:30 AM Worship
11:00 AM Bible Study

Wednesday:

7:30 PM Bible Study

SERVICE

Welcome - D. Broadwell
Song Leader - C. Harrell
Opening Prayer - J. Carithers
Communion Talk - R. McDonald
Lesson - S. Garrett
Announcements - M. Pharris
Closing Prayer - J. Moon
Wed. Songs - N. Lovinggood
Wed. Invitation - I. Davies
Wed. Prayer - M. Mann

BIBLE CLASSES

Isaiah

- Daniel Broadwell
- Auditorium

Middle - High School

- Steve Garrett
- Upstairs

Classes for All Ages

- Back Classrooms

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The Time Jesus Paid Taxes

When we think of taxes and Jesus, the scripture that probably comes to mind is the story in which the Pharisees ask Him if it is lawful to pay taxes to Caesar. (As a friendly reminder to those of you still dragging your feet before Tuesday's deadline, Jesus said, "Render unto Caesar.") But there is another, less familiar, story about Jesus and taxes, and it teaches us a valuable lesson.

In this story, the authorities ask Peter whether or not Jesus pays the temple tax—a tax collected from all Jewish males for temple maintenance. We're not given much detail, but it's possible that these officials were simply asking whether Jesus would pay or claim the exemption allowed rabbis.¹ True to form, Peter answers assertively, but without full understanding. Later, Jesus prompts Peter to think deeper about the issue. "*What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons, or from strangers?*" (Matthew 17:25) Peter correctly answers the latter, to which Jesus replies, "*Then the sons are exempt.*" (17:26) Peter knew and confessed Jesus' exalted status (see Matthew 16:16), but failed to draw the conclusion that He was not responsible for paying the tax in His Father's house.

This is the point in the story where we ask ourselves: What would I do in this situation? Would I tell Peter to go back to the authorities and correct his misunderstanding? Would I refuse to pay the tax because that's my right—and after all, I have my rights! Plus, it's not like the Jewish leaders had ever given Jesus the respect He deserved; surely, this was the opportunity to make clear His exalted position. "However," Jesus says, "not to give offense to them," and He goes on to give Peter instructions on how to pay the tax (which involves pulling a shekel out of the mouth of a fish).

If you are familiar with Jesus' work, you know that He was not afraid to 'offend' people. He healed people on the Sabbath, knowing that people thought it 'unlawful.' He exposed people's personal problems, and even said things they considered 'blasphemous.' That being said, this story about Jesus and the temple tax teaches us an important lesson about the character of our Lord and Teacher: ***He did something He didn't 'have to' do, for the sake of others.*** These officials were—based on Peter's word—expecting Jesus to pay the tax, and so Jesus was going to honor that. But, Jesus might also be doing this for Peter's sake—to protect Him from appearing dishonest or getting caught in a dispute trying to correct himself. We are speculating to a degree, but the principle is clear. ***Jesus didn't have to pay the tax, but He did anyway.***

As Christians, this is part of what it means to be disciples (followers, imitators) of Jesus. I may not 'have to' stay after worship, but maybe I could get to know my brothers and sisters better, or make a visitor feel welcome. I may feel like I shouldn't be expected to show up every time someone needs work done, but maybe other people are encouraged when I help out. I may have the right to voice my opinions on social media, but would it offend others, and are there perhaps other, more uplifting things, I could post? In every area of our life, we would probably imitate Christ better if instead of asking, "Do I have to?" we asked, "What about others?"

¹ Kenneth Chumbley, The Gospel of Matthew, p.318