

THE FOREST HILL NEWS



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Ministers:

Barry M. Grider, Pulpit
Matthew Jones, Associate

VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.
Morning Worship..... 10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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Volume 37

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Number 3

Resolutions of Faithfulness #3 Faithful in Prayer

Barry Grider

Whether our days be filled with sunshine or shadows, good times or bad, we should always pray. Of Jesus, it is said, "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). Paul instructed the Thessalonians to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). When one becomes a Christian some habits need to end, while others need to begin. When this life is over, you will never regret the many hours spent in the closet of prayer. In fact, as we consider our faithfulness to the Lord, it seems the best we can do, in any situation, is to pray. Yet, how often do we fail to take advantage of this marvelous spiritual blessing provided by our heavenly Father?

Before every flight, the cabin crew will review for the passengers the safety features of an aircraft and instruct the travelers about what they should do in case of an emergency. For most of us who have heard this repeatedly, we simply tune out and continue reading or take a nap. However, if there was an in-flight emergency, I am sure most all passengers would take advantage of the oxygen masks that are available. Sometimes we view prayer the same way. It is good to have during times of emergency, when we face major crises in life, but rarely used any other time. Prayer is both a privilege and a responsibility. Jesus naturally assumed His followers would pray, for when He taught the disciples the model prayer, He began by saying, "When ye pray" (Matt. 6:7), not **if** you pray." In fact, Jesus sets a marvelous example of how each Christian ought to begin his day. "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there he prayed" (Mark 1:35). Jesus, no doubt, chose to do this every morning of every day. Often, we bemoan the evil in our world, and we realize that tragedy could strike our families and friends anytime. Yet, despite this, do we leave our homes sometimes refusing to pray, and asking for God's guidance and protection? It would seem, when we leave home in the morning, forgetting to talk with our Heavenly Father, we are saying, "Lord, I really don't need you." Surely we do need Him!

So, when we pray, there are three guidelines to remember. First, **pray according to the Lord's will** (1 John 5:14). Second, **ask in faith** (James 1:6). Third, **pray in Jesus' name** (John 16:23; 1 Tim. 2:5). Let us never be careless in our prayer lives. Do not allow sin, pride, cynical indifferences, etc. to keep you away from the throne of grace. Sin will hinder your relationship with God; therefore, when you sin, quickly confess your faults and let God forgive you (Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9).

God created man for His own. He desires a close relationship with each of us. He communicates to us every day through His written Word. We communicate with Him through prayer. So, remember the words of the chorus of the following hymn, "O how praying rests the weary! Prayer will change the nights to day; So when life seems dark and dreary, Don't forget to pray."

(reprinted from *The Southwesterner*)

Fragile: Handle with Care

Mark Lindley

You have likely seen a package with the label: “Fragile: Handle with Care.” If not handled carefully, the contents of a package bearing that label could be damaged or broken. When handling such a package, one cannot afford to be too rough.

The same could be said of some who are members of the church—they must be “handled” with extreme care, lest they get offended. Christians should always be kind and loving to one another: “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph 4:32). “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another” (Rom. 12:10). Sometimes, we may offend someone because we fail to show enough warmth and love for one another. We can always grow in Christian character, and we can always strive to become more like Jesus.

However, it seems there are some who are just too sensitive, and they *imagine* that others are unloving and insensitive. The problem with such church members is not that others are unloving or insensitive. The real problem is that they are ultra sensitive, and any little thing—real or imagined—will offend them. Some are easily offended if another church member does not speak to them. They might say, “He offended me because he isn’t very friendly.” They may not even consider that the one who did not speak might have been distracted, was having a bad day, or was sick and simply did not feel well. Others might be offended because the preacher preaches a strong sermon, and they imagine that they know the preacher’s motive and that he was picking on them. The preacher, however, may have had a totally different reason for presenting the sermon. Yes, some people can come up with a thousand reasons they have been offended: “I was sick and only one person called to check on me”; “He said something hurtful to me twenty-five years ago”; “She looked at me the wrong way,” etc.

Nevertheless, God’s Word teaches us to grow up, mature in the faith, and to put away such childish attitudes: “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?” (1 Cor. 3:1-4). Paul reminds us, “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things’ (1 Cor. 13:11). One should never turn away from the Lord and His church just because he was “offended.” On the final Day of Judgment, the Lord will not accept—“I was offended”—as an excuse for unfaithfulness. Let’s resolve to not be so fragile!

(from *Words of Truth*, September, 2009)

Mark preaches for the Chapman Church of Christ near Ripley, Mississippi and is a 1995 graduate of the Memphis School of Preaching.

Haiti Relief Fund

Many of you have asked how you can help with relief efforts for the earthquake victims of Haiti. Forest Hill will be collecting monetary donations and forwarding them to a congregation already supporting mission work and an orphanage in Haiti. Checks may be made to Forest Hill Church of Christ and marked Haiti Relief Fund. The Estes Church of Christ has a website with updates on their work in Haiti. Go to www.estes.tn.org.

From the Preacher

Tragedies are happening all around us. This past week America has turned its attention toward the island of Haiti, following an earthquake that hit the tiny Caribbean island. Closer to home, our hearts are heavy as this bulletin is being published. We just heard the news of MSOP alumnus Paul Martin's wife, Vanessa, and their children, being involved in terrible automobile accident. We are anxiously awaiting updates on their condition. Paul is also the son of MSOP instructor and Cordova evangelist, Jerry Martin. Life really is fragile and we must handle it with prayer (page 1). Be sure to pray for all who are experiencing heavy burdens and trials in life. May the Lord help us be filled with His sympathy and compassion toward others. On page two of the bulletin you will find information concerning monetary relief for those in Haiti if you would like to contribute to that fund.

When someone is baptized into Christ that is always cause for rejoicing. There really is no hope outside of Him. We are happy to welcome Mr. Thomas May into God's family. I had the pleasure of studying with him last week and subsequently baptizing him. He is also the brother of Linda Collum, a frequent Forest Hill visitor. Sadly, the aged mother of Thomas and Linda, Bertha May, passed away on Friday. Please keep both of them in your prayers as they deal with this loss.

If you have been reading the news and notes section of your bulletin, there are several planning sessions taking place for various age groups this first month of the new year. We look forward to exciting happenings each month of 2010 and in all these things may God be glorified and may we be drawn closer to Him and to one another.

Barry

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