



Living By Faith

“The just shall live by faith.” Romans 1:17

September 12, 2010

4th & Stewart Church of Christ

Contact Us:

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Brownwood, TX 76801
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Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:45 AM
Worship..... 10:40 AM
Care, Inc. Service..... 2:30 PM
Worship..... 6:00 PM

Tuesday:

Redstone Class 9:30 AM

Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class..... On Break
Bible Study..... 7:00 PM

Elders:

Gene Bannister Billy Chism

Deacons:

Mike Bannister Jim Moore
.....
Don Smith..... James Thomas

Preacher:

Ryan Smithy

Works We Support:

Belize Mission & Kindergarten
Cherokee Home for Children
Food Pantry
Gospel Broadcast Network
Gospel Chariot Missions
House to House, Heart to Heart
Lake Cisco Camp
Mission Printing
Rohan Jones, Africa
The Truth in Love
World Bible School

Let us know if you want to study
the Bible to know more about
Christ and His Church.

WHERE ARE WE LOOKING?

It is easy for the Christian to become discouraged as he goes through this life. One is certain to face disappointments, difficulties, temptations, and other problems along the way. We have to remember, however, that these are all things that we can overcome as long as we keep our focus. I want you to consider for a moment the Christian's focus in terms of a race. We see this type of imagery used in the Bible; consider, for example, Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain" (1 Corinthians 9:24). Paul was encouraging them to "run" the Christian race with a mind set on winning—the prize being eternal life. Any runner will tell you, if you are determined to win, you must keep your eyes focused in the right direction, on the finish line, the goal towards which you strive. So in terms of race, the Christian, too, must keep his eyes on the goal. So ask yourself, "Where am I looking?"

Are you looking behind?

It is easy for the Christian to start to look behind himself. There are two ways in which one might do this. First, one can look into his past and worry and fret about what is behind him. He might find himself constantly worrying about things of the past or worrying that past sins have condemned him even though he has repented of them. There is a continual remembrance of things he has done in the past even though he has done everything he can to correct those things and leave them behind.

The other way we can look behind us is to look at what we have accomplished in our lives and get haughty. We might think that in some way we have "arrived," that we have finished the race, or that we have somehow done enough. We allow pride to convince us that we have done enough for God and it is time for someone else to work.

Both of these attitudes reflect a problem in the Christian life that could have troubled Paul. He was one that, in the past, persecuted the church but did not let that keep him from serving God. Later he could have looked at all that he had done and just been satisfied and given up. Instead he expresses his attitude to the Philippians, "Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before" (Philippians 3:13). He neither dwelt in past sin nor revelled in past accomplishments—he just kept on running the Christian life.

Are you looking sideways?

Rather, maybe we are looking sideways at the others running beside us. This can be a great distraction for the runner; he can't take the time to see where others are as he must keep pressing forward regardless. For the Christian, this might be done by comparing ourselves to others about us. We might say to our-

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selves, "I am doing better than so-and-so over there" or "At least I am not doing what they are doing." It is almost as if we begin to judge or decide our level of service to God based on the actions of others about us, instead of being faithful to God according to His Word. Joshua was not looking sideways when he said to his fellow countrymen, "...choose you this day whom ye will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). He was going to serve the Lord regardless of what the others around him did.

Are you looking downward?

Additionally, we have to ask ourselves if we are looking downward. A runner that is looking down cannot see obstacles ahead, he has no goal to strive for, and is setting himself up for an accident and defeat. But, how easy it is in the Christian life to get caught up in the things that are going on right here, right now, in this present world. We begin putting emphasis on physical concerns rather than on spiritual. We allow our service to God to be sidetracked by caring for the concerns of this temporary life instead of our eternal life. A runner will train with weights on his ankles but when it comes time for the race he will lay all of those things aside so that he will not be hindered. In the same way, the Hebrews writer says we have to lay aside the concerns of this world - "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). We have to remember there are a great number of faithful Christians that have already run this race and their example provides encouragement for us to keep our focus on the goal. Both Jesus and Paul were excellent examples in the New Testament; when eminent death awaited them they steadfastly set their faces on doing the will of God. They refused to get caught up in this life and instead put the fear and pain of death aside and went onward.

Or, are you looking onward?

So the real question is are we looking onward? The runner has to keep looking ahead, keep looking at the

goal before him, and keep his focus. As a Christian we must do the same thing. Remember to keep pressing forward, remember the gift of eternal life that is set before us, remember to keep our focus on our spiritual reward. Paul reminds Christians to, "**Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth**" (Colossians 3:2). We are to run the race that is laid out before each of us and to fight the good fight (cf. 2 Timothy 4:7)—not dwelling on the things of the past (i.e. looking behind). We are to compare ourselves with the Bible and find areas in our lives that need improvement (cf. James 1:25)—not looking to man for our measuring stick (i.e. looking sideways). We are to remain focused on our spiritual lives (cf. Matthew 6:33)—not getting caught up in the things of this life (i.e. looking downward). And we are to strive to do what the Bible commands and thereby be pleasing unto God (cf. Colossians 3:17), following His Will (cf. Matthew 7:21), no matter what besets us (cf. Revelation 2:10) (i.e. looking onward).

- Ryan Smithey

"So I Could Stand Beside My King"

by Tom Moore

There is an old story about the Greek Marathon. Muscular, conditioned runners paced nervously near the starting line for the long-distance race. The time was near. They "shook out" their muscles, inhaled deeply, and put on their "game faces." In the midst of it all, a young stranger took his place at the starting line. His physique was awesome. Taking no notice of the other contestants, he stared straight ahead. Two prizes would be awarded the winner of the Marathon: a magnificent bouquet of flowers and the honor of standing beside the king until the conclusion of other contests. There seemed to be no question among the runners about who would win the prize. It is alleged that the stranger was offered money not to run. Someone else attempted to bribe him with property. Refusing the offers, he toed the mark and awaited the signal to run. When the signal was given, he was the first away. At the finish line, he was the first to

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Television	God's Plan for Redeeming Man	Bible Reading Schedule
The Truth In Love (Eddie Parrish) Sunday @ 7:00 am on KTAB In Search of the Lord's Way (Mack Lyon) Sunday @ 7:30 am on KTAB Gospel Broadcasting Network Online: 24/7 @ gbntv.org Good News Today: Sunday @ 6:00 am on Dish: 259, DirectTV: 364, Harris: 208	Hear Learn the saving message of Christ's sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17). Believe Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24) Confess Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33) Repent of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5) Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)	Sunday...Ps. 145-150; 1 Cor. 14:26-40 Monday...Proverbs 1-2 ; 1 Cor. 15:1-34 Tuesday...Proverbs 3-4; 1 Cor. 15:35-58 Wednesday..Proverbs 5-6; 1 Cor. 16 Thursday...Proverbs 7-8; 2 Corinthians 1 Friday...Proverbs. 9-11; 2 Cor. 2 Saturday...Proverbs 12-13; 2 Cor. 3
Radio Preaching the Word (Michael Light) Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3		<i>Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15)</i>

News & Notes

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Saturday, September 18th: **Ladies day at the Elm Street congregation in Coleman.** Flyer on bulletin board.
- ◆ September 24-26: **Lectureship at 5th & Grape in Abilene,** please see the flyer on the bulletin board.
- ◆ Saturday, September 25: **Ladies Day at Patrick Street congregation in Dublin;** the theme is "Four Trees". There is a flyer on the bulletin board and you need to RSVP by the 18th.
- ◆ September 29: **5th Wednesday singing.**
- ◆ October 3-6: Our own **meeting with Tom Moore;** the theme is "The Church Moving Forward." This is rapidly approaching and is now only 3 weeks away! Keep this effort in your prayers and begin inviting others. Flyers are now available at the back of the auditorium.



Directory & Picture Updates

Please remember to make corrections to your bulletin proof sheets and fill-out the work program information on the back. As soon as you are done, please return them to Ryan or just place them in the office. I appreciate so many who have already returned theirs.



Also many have commented that they want updated pictures taken. Tom Wilcox has offered to take those pictures through the month of September. Please seek him out over the next few weeks to have your picture taken.

Let me know if you have any questions and thanks again for your help in updating our information for the directory and picture board.

~Ryan Smithey

Visitation Program

Remember our **visitation meeting following the evening worship services.** Last week **33 contacts** were made. Also remember next Sunday is our 3rd Sunday finger-food night.

Bible Search

Area congregations are once again going to be starting up a Bible Search program beginning in October. Details will be finalized at our preachers meeting tomorrow but please start making plans to be a part of this great time of fellowship and Bible study. Age groups are from kindergarten to 12th grade and this year we will be studying the book of Acts.

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cross, well ahead of the rest. When it was all done, someone asked the young man if he thought the flowers were worth as much as the money and property he had refused. He replied, "I did not enter the race for the flowers. I ran so that I could stand beside my king!"

Beloved, that is why we run the race – so we can stand by our King, the King of kings! "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:1-2). What greater joy could we imagine that to stand by our King and hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Mt. 25:21).

Think About It!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY TO:

September Birthdays: James Fuller (06), Storie Arnold (08), Gene Bannister (16), Billie Ford (17), Clarence Ford (17), Ben Griffith (18), Marie White (18), Cindy Proud (26), Garret Barnum (27).

September Anniversaries: Jack & Joyce Hill (10).

*"Rejoice with those who rejoice..." (Romans 12:15)
Mistakes? Left Out? Let Ryan know...*



	Recent Records	August 29, 2010	September 5, 2010
Bible Class		62	57
AM Worship		88	79
PM Worship		56	N/C
Wednesday PM		53	N/C
Contribution		\$1633	\$1530

Privileged to Serve	09/12/10 - AM	09/12/10 - PM	09/19/10 - AM	09/19/10 - PM
Greeters	Mileen & Ashley Kahlich		John & Tina Barnum	
Scripture Reader Scripture Reading		James Fuller 1 Peter 3:10-12	Hank Wheeler	
Opening Prayer	Ken Makuta	Gene Bannister	Allen Griffith	Jim Moore
Wait on Table	Allen Griffith*, Jim Moore Gene Bannister, Michael Bickford	Allen Griffith	Don Smith*, Garrett Barnum John Barnum, Ken Makuta	Don Smith
Closing Prayer	Tom Wilcox	Billy Chism	Gene Bannister	James Thomas
Attendance Cards	Chase Churchwell Seth Smithey		Chase Churchwell Seth Smithey	
Wednesday Devotionals	September 15 Jim Moore	September 22 Don Smith	September 29 James Fuller	October 6 Ken Makuta

Studies For The Week of September 12th:

Sunday Class Tom Wilcox

Wednesday Class *Hosea (Chap. 4-5)*

**Sunday AM: Jim Moore
Sunday PM: Allen Griffith**

Something to think about:

Take a piece of wax, a piece of meat, some sand, some clay, and some shavings, put them on the fire and see how they react. Each of them is being acted upon by the same agent, yet...the wax melts, the meat fries, the sand dries up, the clay hardens, the shavings blaze.

Just so...under identical influence of circumstance and environment one man is made better, he becomes stronger, and another weaker, while another withers away.

This explains why one hears the Word of God and is made better. Still another hears the same thing and is made angry. Not so much what is done to us, but what we do determines our destiny. Take heed how you hear and act.

~Author Unknown

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock." ~Matthew 7:24-25

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Return Service Requested