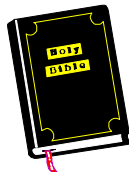


WEST COLUMBIA CHURCH OF CHRIST



“every disciple that is perfect shall be as his master.” Luke 6:40b

CHURCH ATTENANCE AND DAILY LIVING

I once heard a man say he went to church once a month to keep out of hell. He may not have been altogether serious, yet his saying implied the idea that many people have — that going to church gives them favor with God, apart from any benefit they may receive from the services. It is about like the notion that making the sign of the cross, or keeping a Bible on the parlor table, will protect from evil and harm.

Under a similar misconception, many believe they will get to heaven because they have held, as a mere conception of the mind, the belief that Jesus is the Christ. And still others, who ought to know better, cherish the illusion that they will be admitted into heaven on the ground that they have gone two steps further and added repentance and baptism to their faith — and there stopped.

Years ago I was troubled with the idea that millions of people would be sent to heaven, and other millions be sent to hell, just because the former had been baptized and the latter had not. I could not see the justice of making such a tremendous difference in their future destinies on such a slight basis. But I remember also that my mind was greatly relieved by some teaching of David Lipscomb on that subject. This teaching — now mixed with some of my own — was to the effect that God does not arbitrarily send anyone to either place, but each responsible person "sends" himself to his final destination by the kind of life he chooses to live.

We believe certain things to be true because the Bible teaches them. We can turn that statement around and say with truth that the Bible teaches certain things because they are true. For example, it is true in human experience that a certain way of living leads to (comparative) contentment and happiness, while a different way of living leads to discontent and unhappiness. These results are sure to follow in each case: No one can escape the consequences of an ill-spent life, nor can anyone obtain the rewards of a well-spent life without living such a life.

One thing, however, that we learn from the Bible and accept by faith is that God, knowing the great evil that men bring upon themselves and others by their ways of living, has pointed out to men the wrong way and the right way, and the consequences sure to follow in each case. Furthermore, in His mercy and love He has given man every incentive, encouragement, and help to induce him to turn away from the wrong way and walk in the right one. He does not propose to save man from the consequences of the wrong life.

— (Continued on page 3)

THE BULLETIN—VOLUME 38, NUMBER 17 May 13, 2012

SERMONS THIS SUNDAY:

AM: ED KELLEHER

THE ARMOR OF GOD

PM: ED KELLEHER

THE END OF THE COMMANDMENT

**"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men"
- Colossians 3:23**

IN THE BIBLE WE'LL DELVE IN 2012

**JOIN US IN
NEW TESTAMENT
CHRISTIANITY
TODAY!**

A Warm Welcome awaits you at all our services. Come see!
www.WestColumbiaChurchOfChrist.org

The Bulletin
USPS-994-500
Periodicals Postage Paid
West Columbia, SC
Published Weekly By:

West Columbia Church of Christ
1701 Augusta Road
West Columbia SC 29169

SERVICES

Sunday 10 AM Bible Study
Sunday 11 AM, 6 PM Assembly
Wednesday 7 PM Bible Study
Office Phone (803) 794-5320
Nursery provided

Bible Classes for all ages

LADIES CLASS

To be announced

EVANGELIST

BULLETIN EDITOR

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“PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER” - James 5:16

- **REMEMBER IN PRAYER:** Margaret Herring, Wilson Burton, Betty Mathis, Lamar Reeves, Elma Berrier and Phyllis Johnson.
- **Richard Ramkinson**, the preacher at Windsor Lakes church, has an ailment the doctors have not been able to figure out yet. Please keep brother Ramkinson in your prayers.
- **Gail Allen**, requests prayers for a friend **Kristy**, who has cancer and is in hospice care—not expected to recover.
- **Margaret Herring** is very thankful to all for their encouragement through her long bouts of illness. A thank you note in on the bulleting board in the foyer.
- **Michael** and **Samantha Mancuso** will be having outpatient surgery in the new few weeks.
- **Tommy White** requests prayers for a friend Charlie, who fell and cut open his head.
- Give thanks to God for His mercy, and pray for all these, and the work of the Lord here at West Columbia.

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." - Acts 14:22

“AND THEY CONTINUED STEADFASTLY” - Acts 2:42

- Area wide **SINGING** at Windsor Lake Church. Details on bulletin board.
- **Building Cleaning** signup for the New Year is posted in the Foyer.
- Remember the cards **Marshal Mancuso** has provided to mail to visitors and people who we've been missing recently. They're in the church office for you to use.
- **Bible Study at Church Building, Saturdays 3 pm**, all are invited and please invite visitors to come! It's a good way for people to learn more of us. An informal session around a table with everyone using their bibles and Strong's Concordances.

"Whatsoever thy hand findest to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, wither thou goest" - Ecclesiastes 9:10

IN THE BIBLE WE'LL DELVE IN 2012

“REJOICE WITH THEM THAT DO REJOICE!” - Romans 12:15

- **Michael Gamble** made the Dean's list (the good one!) at USC. We're very happy for **Michael**, and **Dawn** and **Jones**.

CHURCH ATTENANCE AND DAILY LIVING—(cont. from page 1)

The only way He can save man is to get him to find the right way and walk therein; for, "**whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap**" (Gal. 6:7). Under these circumstances, if anyone refuses God's proffered mercy and walks in his own way, then he cannot blame God for the plight in which he finds himself.

The right way of living, of course, is the life which Jesus Himself lived and taught — a life of self-denial and service in behalf of others. "**If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me**" (Matt. 16:24). The only entrance into this life is through faith, repentance, and baptism; and the only way to continue this life is through the means which God has appointed in the church. Anyone who neglects these means is not even trying to live a life of self-denial and service. The blessings offered men in the gospel are not so much things that God will do for men as that they are the certain results or consequences of their way of living. These blessings are gifts of God, but men can obtain them only through the means which God has appointed. A loaf of bread is a gift of God, but men can obtain this gift only through the orderly processes of sowing, reaping, milling, and cooking.

God does not — I may even say cannot — hand out His gifts directly to men apart from a life of self-denial and service — a life of "faith which worketh by love." When He would give men the gift of fruit, such as apples or peaches, He does not bring the fully ripened fruit and hang it upon the barren branches of the trees.

The "good news" of Christ brings its gracious influence to bear upon the hearts of men. Their minds become filled with new objects of thought, new ideas and ideals, new attitudes toward life. The whole current of their thoughts, feelings, imaginations, desires, and purposes is changed. They have been "born again" and are made "new creatures." The tree has been made good, and henceforth the fruit will be good. And this bearing of fruit not only brings happiness to others, but brings the greatest possible happiness to the one bearing the fruit.

In one respect, living a life of self-denial and service may be compared to playing some game — tennis, for instance. In such a game, the players do not look upon the playing as a disagreeable task to be done for the sake of some external reward, but they expect their enjoyment from the playing itself. While the exercise lasts, the enjoyment lasts. When the game ends, the enjoyment ends.

Just so does happiness come from living a life of self-denial and service. And it is reasonable to suppose that if anyone finds his happiness in such a life here on earth, he will continue such a life with such a result in the world to come. But if he does not live such a life now, he will never do so later, and there is no hope of happiness for him either here or hereafter.

"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" - Matthew 7:21

- **E. G. Sewell**, 1830-1924, Gospel Preacher, Tennessee