

Our Prayer List

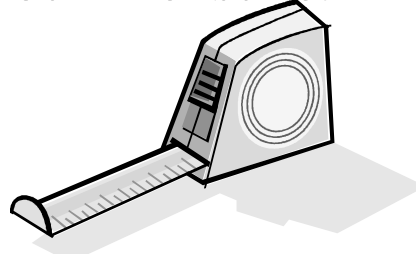
- ◆ Sarah Adams
- ◆ Dawn Copes
- ◆ Bill Cyrus
- ◆ Dottie Daniels
- ◆ Ann Egan
- ◆ Tom & LaVonne Haines
- ◆ Keith Hodges
- ◆ Beulah Keppler
- ◆ Bob Meiers
- ◆ Gaylin Miller
- ◆ Liz Miller
- ◆ Mike Miller
- ◆ Janice Ortman
- ◆ Hallie & Don Phillips
- ◆ Cora Shrake
- ◆ Rene Whitaker
- ◆ Mark Young
- ◆ Shirley Young
- ◆ Geco "Hannah's Aunt"

Health

Encouragement

- ◆ Bill Copes
- ◆ Don Craig
- ◆ Matt Wood

The true measure of loving God is to love him without measure.



This Morning Sermon

"Testing Your Faith"

(Gen 22:1) "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham"

(Deut 13:3) "Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."

Weekly
Memory
Verse



Order of Service

Morning

Song Leader	Bob Calvert
Prayer	David Craig
Table	Doug Cyrus
Assist	Eric Whitaker
Assist	Jerry Witt
Assist	Arnold Miller
Lesson	Shawn Daniels
Prayer	Don Craig

Evening

Song Leader	Eric Whitaker
Prayer	David Craig
Lesson	Bob Whitaker
Prayer	Jerry Witt

killing another man, and never display one ounce of reverence to God. There are other reasons why we may keep the moral laws; he may judge within himself that it is wrong to kill.

Someone that has judged within themselves to do a command because he feels it is right has not obeyed God. He has only obeyed himself. He may have done something that God has commanded, but it's only because his judgment coincides with God's judgment. He's looked at the commandment of God and said, "Yes, I can see where this is a good command. I'll follow this one." This shows no reverence to God.

There is another class of commandments that when kept does reflect and display our reverence to God. We call these positive commands. These commands are right just because they are given. These are tests in which God gives us to prove our love and devotion to him. There are many reasons why we may keep the moral laws, but there is only one reason why we would keep the positive laws; it's not because they seem right in our eyes, but we want to be obedient to God.

These positive laws could also be divided up into many different groups. Let's look at a few of them. First, there are some commands in which there is absolutely no recognizable connection between the thing commanded and the blessing promised. A great example of this is in the book of Exodus. When God command the children of Israel they were in the land of Egypt. Moses records, "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it." (Ex 12:7) Now, there is no recognizable or logical reason why putting blood on the door posts of the house would ward off the death angel.

Second there are some commands in which not only are there no recognizable connection between the thing commanded

and the blessing promised, but where the thing commanded is distasteful and obnoxious in its nature to some people. An example of this is with Naaman. Naaman had leprosy and was told by his wife servant girl that there was a prophet in Samaria that could heal his body. (2 Kings 5:3) Naaman went to the prophet and the prophet told him to dip seven times in the river of Jordan.

Now, there is no logical or reasonable reason why dipping seven times in the river of Jordan would give Naaman freedom from his leprosy. Naaman was also very disgusted with the idea of dipping seven times in the river of Jordan. Naaman said, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage." (2 Kings 5:12) Of course, the answer is no. The command must be obeyed as God gave it.

The third group of commands is commands that are not only a recognizable connection between the thing commanded and the blessing promised, but the thing itself would actually be wrong under other circumstances! The perfect example of this would be the story of Abraham and Isaac. (Gen 22:1-19) God tested Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice his son to God! As far as Abraham knew, he was going to plunge a knife in the throat of his beloved son.

These commands were given to those of Old to prove their love to God. There was no logical reason why these commands gave blessings. They obeyed them because God commanded them and the blessings came. Today God has a test for you. It is in obedience to the gospel. What logical reason does baptism have with your salvation? Christ commanded it; we need to be obedient. (Mark 16:16) "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Will you be like Abraham and be obedient?

port; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (Phil. 4:8.) It seems to me that the exegetes I have examined miss the point in the last clause. Certainly Paul did not raise the question as to whether there was any virtue or anything worthy of praise in the things he had mentioned. What then? In as much as he tells the brethren to think on these things, he must have meant, if there were any virtue and praise in their hearts they were to think on the excellent things he had mentioned; for it is a fact that people can become so corrupt and selfish and so devoid of all goodness of heart and mind that they cannot meditate on good qualities or have any praise for any goodness, or good person. If you still have any liking for virtue or any praise for goodness, think on these things Paul mentioned. It will do you good, and that will have a transforming effect on your own character. Character comes from within. And Paul also tells us to be transformed by renewing the mind. (Rom. 12:2.)

The heart determines the character, and Paul shows plainly that God counts as nothing the person who has not love, no matter what display of powers he may make. (1 Cor. 13.) Notice what love does and what is does not do. “Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.” Love is not a mere sentiment; it is practical. Love for others is right conduct toward them. It is not arrogant and selfish, but helpful and considerate. If the traits Paul mentions do not abound in you, then no matter what great

things you do or what claims you make you are nothing in God’s sight. So the condition of the heart is made manifest in thoughts and action. Had Simon’s heart been right he would not have offered money for the gift of God.

If a disciple will be what he ought to be, he will do what he ought to do. Here should be placed the main emphasis, but is it done? Too often emphasis is placed on doing something, instead of being something. Yes, it is do, do, do; and people get into such a whirl of “working for the Lord,” or doing “church work,” that they have no time to think of the Lord. Faithful work, faithful obedience to God, is essential; but all service to God must spring from the right attitude of mind and heart. I fear that pride has much to do with building fine meeting houses. Some reports seem to reflect pride in achievements. We do not want the denominations to make a bigger show than we do! When pride comes in, the Lord goes out. “Keep they heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life.” (Prov. 4:23.) “The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good.” (Luke 6:45.) All improvement, all reformation, all growth in grace, all worship, all gracious conduct toward others, must come from within; out of the heart. Is your heart right? We have had striking demonstrations that some hearts are not right. Of course what you do has a reflex influence on the heart, but the condition of the heart has a direct influence on what you do.

There can be no foundation for a good character without a deep feeling of personal responsibility to God. There must be a feeling of entire dependence on him. There can be no development of Christian character without a living faith in God and in Jesus the Christ, and the Bible as a revelation from God.

RLW

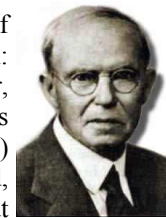


God Reigns Within

By: RL Whiteside

Jesus said, “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here, or, there! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke 17:20, 21.) You do not see the reign of God, for he reigns within the heart. That reign in the heart leads to right living; but even so, a man’s self-interests may lead him to so live that outwardly he seems to be a fine character, but God does not reign in his heart. To such characters Jesus says, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” (Matt. 23:27, 28.) Jesus says also, “From within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed...” These evil thoughts proceed into evil deeds. (Mk. 7:21-23.) Again Jesus tells us that “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,” and that “the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.” (Matt. 12:34-35.) One pity is, that a man with an evil heart may cause others to be “evil affected against the brethren.” (Acts 14:2.)

But what is the remedy for evil hearts? The remedy is within the reach of every one so afflicted, but he must take the remedy voluntarily, in a spirit of humility and reverence. In view of calamities that were about to come upon Jerusalem, Jehovah gave this exhortatory command: “O Jerusalem, wash they heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thine evil thoughts lodge within thee?” (Jer. 4:14.) God makes the inner-man responsible for what the body does. “Let no sin therefore reign in your mortal



body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof.” (Rom. 6:12.) If the inner-man allows the body to sin it disobeys God. Peter says that God cleansed the hearts of the Gentiles by faith. (Acts 15:9.) In the Greek it is “the faith.” And that means the gospel—purified their hearts by their obedience to the gospel. “Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently.” (1 Pet. 1:22.) If a man harbors evil thoughts in his heart, he is not living in obedience to the gospel. So therefore, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” (Col. 3:16.) A man cannot improve his ways on the same old stock of ideas that he has always had; for a man lives out in his life the thoughts he cherishes in his heart. But one’s selfish plans and purposes may be polished up, or covered up, till some one begins to interfere with his selfish plans; then he blows up. One sure proof that a man’s plans and purposes are selfish is, that he becomes angry and abusive when some one begins to teach things that interfere with his plans. He has not let the word of Christ dwell in him richly. If you want to live as Christ lived let his thoughts be the moving power in your life. In that way God works in you to will and to do his good pleasure.

“The love of Christ constraineth us.” Read 2 Cor. 5:14, 15. Christ was not moved by selfish impulses and desires. He died for all, and that love constrains, or restrains, men from living unto themselves, or for themselves.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good re-



Preaching the Truth in Love

By: Foy E. Wallace Jr.

We are hearing somewhat about certain "methods of approach" in preaching the gospel, which seems to mean the softpedal art of "getting it over" to the hearer in such easy style that he does not realize it--a sort of anesthetic preaching. The apostles were not trained in that art. On Pentecost Peter's hearers were "pricked in their heart." A brilliant young preacher in the Jerusalem church named "Stephen" preached a sermon to the Jews so caustic that they were "cut to the heart," and they killed him. But it is better to preach one sermon like that and die than live in the praise and plaudits of the modern sort.

But we are softly told that we should preach in love. Paul was the author of the admonition, "speaking the truth in love," vet to one who was opposed to the truth and sought to turn people from the faith he said: "O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10.) He was accused of "turning the world upside down," of being a disturber of peace, of clashing with other religions, opposing other parties, and unsettling things generally.

Preaching the truth in love does not mean that the preacher ought to sentimentally

“The man who loves the truth does not have to try to preach it in love.”

tally love all people so well that he will let them die in disobedience and go to hell rather than say anything to nettle their feelings or stir their consciences.

Paul charged a certain young preacher to "reprove, rebuke, exhort." Some preaching heard and heard about these days would make one think Paul had said "exhort, exhort, exhort"!

The man who loves the truth does not have to try to preach it in love. A young man once asked a veteran preacher how to best prepare himself to preach. The pioneer preacher, known for his plainness in preaching, said: "Get brimful and running over with the word of God, and it will come out." We add that the methods, the gestures, and the love will take care of themselves.

FEW

Article taken from Gospel Advocate, October 1931



Anvil Sparks

By: RL Whiteside

Truth is universal —
that is the reason a person sometimes thinks the speaker is aiming everything he says at him.

CHURCH NEWS & EVENTS

Announcements

Birthdays this month:

Rene Whitaker	5
Joshua Cyrus	7
Shari Baker	10
Ike Wilson	15

Anniversaries this month:

Don & Hallie Phillips	17
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Church Family News

- Something that we may forget to do from time to time is to remember our young members that are at college. Let us pray that God will bless them, keep them safe, and let them be successful in their endeavors!

READ AND STUDY YOUR BIBLE DAILY!
"The wise in heart will receive commandments:
but a prating fool shall fall."

(Prov 10:8)



This Thursday!

**Hickory Estates Singing
Night will be held on
April 30, 2009
at 6:30 pm.**

Presented by the church of Christ in Plover, Illinois

Women's Online Bible Study

The Women's Online Bible Study was designed to give women, that perhaps cannot come to a traditional class, a chance to study the Bible with others. If you are interested in signing up or know others in the community or abroad that may be interested, please pass the word of this work.

