

Making Bricks of Mud

by Robert F. Turner

Paul was set upon by a mob, and then dragged from their hands by the police. Falsely charged, he spent 2 years in Jewish prisons, and was then sent to Rome to appear before Caesar. His traveling days ended, and threatened with death by savage beasts (2 Tim. 4:17), we could understand his being depressed and feeling "all is lost." Instead, he wrote to the Philippians, "the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (1:12-21). He could write, "I rejoice!"

Discounting his personal discomforts, he saw the good side of the bad - saw victory in defeat. I know his selflessness, his trust in the lord, is the key. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Paul had to learn this attitude; but I am impressed that he learned it so well it seems to have become a part of him. He "learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (4:11); and this kind of thinking spawned hope instead of despair. Throw mud at Paul and he made bricks of it, and built a house. Send him a lemon, and he would enjoy the lemonade, and thank you for them. It is hard to defeat a person with such an attitude as that.

We do not refer to an artificial Pollyannish attitude, out of touch with reality. Paul sought relief from his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. 12:8), but, when this was denied him, he could "glory in my infirmities," making the most of them in defending his apostleship (vs. 7-11). He did not enjoy being forsaken by his brethren any more than do we, but he could "pray God that it may not be laid to their charge" (2 Tim. 4:16-17). He was confident that the Lord would save him.

Nor is this simply the SELF-reliance, "indomitable ego" that is so highly recommended by psychotherapists. Human philosophies "plug in" to no higher source than man himself, and, when society fails (as it does repeatedly), the individual despairs - sometimes ends it all in suicide. But the "look up" attitude of a true believer in God removes fear of the future, his soul is anchored (Heb. 6:18-20), and he "shall not be moved." As one rancher friend of mine put it: "Things are going to pick up!"



Classes This Week

Sunday 5:15 PM kids class 5:15 auditorium	Tuesday 8:00 PM Truth Seekers in room 2326 of the student center	Thursday 7:00 PM Ladies' class at Sarah Bethea's house on "Seasoning Your Words"
---	--	--

Lisa Carter (Luke's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Nell Holcomb (Ben's grandmother, Joannetta's aunt)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Ruth Addison (gmom of April and Julie)
Madeline Morton (Greg Lanier's g'daughter)	Alexander Locke (Jeremiah's cousin's son)	Betty Bradford	Jay Jennings (Brooke Perkins' dad)
Jean Buchanan (Abbie Harrison's grandmother)	Tina Atnip (Orie's cousin)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Arabelle Rich (Joannetta's aunt)	Sasha Rozier (Makenzie Reynolds' cousin)	Charles Hunt, chuck Hunt's dad
Gay Ulrich (Emma's mom)	Charles Cecil (Orie's g'dad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	John Duke (Jared Johnson's cousin)

March Birthdays

- 1-Amanda Cagle
- 2-Maddie Norman
- 2-Chase Harrison
- 2-Bryan Golden
- 2-Angela Fowler
- 2-Joy Powell
- 2-Connell Hodges
- 3-Shaun Oliver
- 4-Morgan Cavender
- 5-Sophie Borden
- 7-Josh Pender
- 8-Carmen Herd
- 9-Richard Zacarius
- 9-Austin Bartlett
- 10-Pepper Humphrey
- 10-Parker Godwin
- 12-Brad Hartsell
- 13-Adam Holliday
- 16-Taylor Godwin
- 17-Susan Sullivan
- 18-MaKenzie Anderson
- 18-Alaina Barham
- 20-Jimmy Roberts
- 21-Carter Hunt
- 21-Rachel Bobo
- 22-Will Hollis
- 23-Sarah Embry
- 25-Sawyer Hall
- 25-Ethan Chandler
- 27-Shelby Freeman
- 27-Katie Jasper
- 28-Jacob Hagedwood
- 29-Rachel Simpson
- 29-Makenzie Neeley
- 30-Amanda Stephens

News and Notes

- ☒ - Group meetings are tonight!
- ☒ - Anna Acuff's aunt, Taina Acuff, has been diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor. Please keep her in your prayers.
- ☒ - Sarah Chandler's sister, June, had successful knee replacement on Monday and is home and starting rehab.
- ☒ - Hayden Phillip's grandmother, Dewayne Pressnell, died on Wednesday. Please keep this family in your prayers.
- ☒ - Rachel Bobo's 12-year-old cousin, Molly Morris, has cerebral palsy and is in the hospital in Huntsville being treated for pneumonia.
- ☒ - Fallon Hartsell is scheduled to deliver her new daughter this Wednesday!
- ☒ - Orie's cousin, Caleb Atnip, died on Tuesday. Please remember this family in your prayers.
- ☒ - Please pray for our expectant mothers: Brooke Perkins, Fallon Hartsell, and Ingrid Chavez.
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Gustavo as we are seeking to have approval of a work visa so he can continue to preach here!
- ☒ - All audio is immediately posted on www.auchurch.com.

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

Volume 8, Issue 28

March 26, 2017

"Let Love Of The Brethren Continue"

By Jefferson David Tant



Thoughts to Ponder

But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. (Colossians 3:14)

The most enduring quality in this world is that of love. The great apostle who suffered so much at the hands of false brethren, who was repeatedly imperiled by the elements, who was savagely persecuted by misguided zealots, who was forsaken by fellow-workers, who languished in prison for the crime of preaching the gospel of Christ in an effort to save souls, could *still* write the moving words "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing... but now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor.13)

Yes, others have betrayed me. They have lied about me. They have shamefully abused my own father in the flesh. But there is not a one of them that I cannot treat decently, nor one for whom I cannot sincerely pray.

had devastated the redeemed body of Christ. And what did Paul, in turn, feel for them? "Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved." (Rom. 10:1)

What does God have in store for those of us who violate the greatest command of all — the command of love? How is it that some of us "Christians" can harbor ill-will, bitterness, hatred, animosity, or any such attitude toward brethren in Christ and claim to be followers of the one who is love personified? Are we greater than the one who

(Continued on page 2)

Elders
Walker Davis
(334) 703-0050
Larry Rouse
(334) 734-2133

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday
Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

E-Mail:
larryrouse@aubeacon.com

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Find us on the Internet: www.auchurch.com and www.aubeacon.com

(Continued from page 1)

pleads for mercy to be shown to the very ones who drove spikes through his hands and feet? To be sure, we preach and listen to many sermons on first principles, the "Issues," giving, attendance, etc., but I am afraid we sometimes "have left undone the weightier matters of the law."

I have known of preachers who could hardly stand to be in the same room with other certain preachers, of preachers who have said of another particular fellow-soldier "I'm going to stomp him in the ground," etc. Think, now, is there any room in that heavenly kingdom for those with such an attitude? Surely not! It matters not what may have occasioned such bitterness--whether personal injury, false doctrine, ungodliness, or what have you, the child of God cannot afford to reciprocate with such attitudes. It most emphatically does not "become the gospel of Christ!"

I have known of members of the church who have developed such animosity and bitterness toward another one of God's children that such statements as "there can never be a reconciliation," or "I can never feel right about that person again." Before God, brothers and sisters, can you actually imagine a child of God having such a disposition — especially towards another for whom Christ died, for whom Christ shed his own precious blood? Christ taught that there is no greater tie than the spiritual ties which exist in the family of God. **(Matt. 12:46-50)** How can we so lightly consider them?

What do you think Paul meant when he urged "as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men... but if thine enemy hunger, feed him... be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good?" **(Rom. 12)** It makes not one particle of difference what someone has done to you, or what you "imagine" someone has done to you, there is no reason under heaven why you cannot act civilly to such an one, treat them with decency and courtesy, speak to them with kindness, pray for them, and

help them when they are in distress, No reason, I say, if the love of God abides in your heart. The apostle of love put it very plainly: "But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and knoweth not whether he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes... We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer bath eternal life abiding in him...but whoso bath the world's good, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" **(I John 2:11, 3:14-17)**

Yes, others have betrayed me. They have lied about me. They have shamefully abused my own father in the flesh. But there is not a one of them that I cannot treat decently, nor one for whom I cannot sincerely pray. Why should I lose my own soul over them just because they might be lost? Seems rather like a high price to pay, doesn't it?

True, you may be a prince among preachers, a chief among men, a queen among women, but the word of God is still true. It says, even to this day, "In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another" **(Rom. 12:10)**, "but now do ye also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth"... put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." **(Col. 3:8-14)**

And we are still forewarned that those who practice such things as "enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings... and such like...shall not inherit the kingdom of God." **(Gal. 5:20-21)** Take heed, brethren, lest ye be deceived and blinded.

Gospel Guardian – June 1, 1967



Can We Be Confident?

By Gary Henry

"And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" **(Jeremiah 29:13)**.

We have God's assurance that we will find him, but only if we seek him with all our hearts.

There is no guarantee that the indifferent or the double-minded will find Him. We must do more than dabble in religion, and God must be more than simply one of the "interesting" things on our agenda. We must pursue Him with a purity of heart and a passion that will not be denied. What He seeks is to be the Lord over all our thoughts, and if we seek anything less than that, then it is not God whom we seek. But even so, we need to be strengthened by the confidence that when we seek Him truly, we will in fact find Him.

There is a text in Isaiah where God says that He desires to be found by those who seek Him: "For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited: 'I am the Lord, and there is no other. I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth; I did not say to the seed of Jacob, "Seek Me in vain"; I, the Lord, speak

The lackadaisical may complain that they sought God but never found Him. Yet no one has ever been disappointed who sought Him wholeheartedly and with an honest desire to obey Him once He was found.

righteousness, I declare things that are right" **(Isaiah 45:18-19)**. Just as God did not create the earth and then leave it uninhabited, He did not command His people to seek Him and then hide Himself from them!

When Paul was given an opportunity to speak in Athens, he said that God designed the world so that people would be moved to seek Him: "in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us" **(Acts 17:27)**. We may "grope" for God, as it were, but in truth "He is not far from each one of us". Our seeking for God need not be unsuccessful.

The lackadaisical may complain that they sought God but never found Him. Yet no one has ever been disappointed who sought Him wholeheartedly and with an honest desire to obey Him once He was found. "You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart", God said through Jeremiah. This means that it is a matter of choice on our part whether we find God or not. And the choice that we must make is to seek Him diligently. If we're diligent, then we can also be confident.

