

East Columbus Bulletin

Vol. 2, No. 11 – November 01, 2015



East Columbus church of Christ
811 Alabama Street, Columbus, MS 39702
Phone (662) 328-6227
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Proverbs 22:17

*Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your heart to my knowledge;
18 For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; Let them all be fixed upon your
lips, 19 So that your trust may be in the LORD; I have instructed you today, even you.*

SUNDAY

9:00 a.m. Worship/10:00 a.m. Bible Study
11:00 a.m. Worship with Lord's Supper

WEDNESDAY

7:00 p.m. Bible classes for all ages

Other Study and Worship Opportunities

- Second Sunday 2:00 p.m., Trinity Care Home Worship Service
- Second Saturday Men's Bible Study Ranch House Restaurant 6:30 A.M.
- Third Sunday Neighborhood Bible Study 6:00 p.m. location (TBA)
- Young Bible Scholars meet each month - Time and Location (TBA)
- Bible Study at the Pines - 8 p.m. Sundays & 5 p.m. Mondays, Cady Hill 6 p.m. Thurs..
- CD's of sermons and Gospel Meetings are available by signing up in the foyer
- Recorded sermons and gospel meetings and other resources are also available at the church website <http://eastcolumbuschurch.com/>. Contact Steve Coburn if you need assistance.
- Auditorium class- remember to read a chapter in Proverbs every day, summarize chapters, and select favorite or notable verses for the Sunday adult class this quarter.
- Don't forget to submit questions for the preacher for the first Sunday lesson each month.

Prayer Requests

Home Bound Members: - Mike Butler, Annie McCrary, Jack Burks, Eula Mae Harless

Others Limited by Health: - Frances Barham, Joyce Manasco, Joyce Ratcliff, Willena Woods

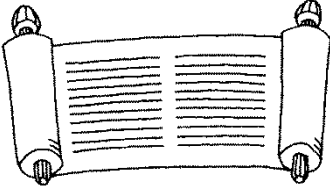
Sick - Harold Young, Lynette Coburn's father, **continues** at home under hospice care. **Joyce Ratcliff** continues receiving therapy at home. **Marion Butler** is home recovering from spinal surgery. **Annie McCrary** is home under hospice care. **Desiree Wilson's** mother had surgery recently and is still very ill.

Note: If you would like to make known a prayer request for an individual or family member who has experienced a sickness, death, hospitalization, or other need, please contact Ed Williams, 323-9502, or glenedwilliams@yahoo.com

Elders: Jay McCrary and Jerry Paschall

Deacons: Clyde Hollis, Ed Williams, Don Zant

Preacher: Kevin Kay



Proverbs 23:17-18

“Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day; For surely there is a hereafter, And your hope will not be cut off. (NKJV)

The Problem of Self

Several years ago one of my favorite authors, anonymous, wrote a short essay entitled, “How To Be Miserable.” It began “Think about yourself. Talk about yourself. Use “I” as often as possible.”

The article continued, “Mirror yourself continually in the opinion of others. Listen greedily to what people say about you. Expect to be appreciated. Be suspicious. Be jealous and envious. Be sensitive to slights. Never forgive a criticism. Trust nobody but yourself. Insist on consideration and respect. Demand agreement with your own views on everything. Sulk if people are not grateful to you for favors shown them. Never forget a service you have rendered. Shirk your duties if you can. Do as little as possible for others.”

The problem of self is age-old. It reminds me of a quote by evangelist Dwight L. Moody who once quipped, “I’ve had more problems with D. L. Moody than any ever man I’ve ever met. Being self-absorbed leads to all kinds of personal problems and spiritual maladies. Consider a few.

Self-righteousness. A common criticism of Christians is an air of spiritual smugness and moral superiority. It’s an attitude that we are better than others. It fails to realize we are all sinners. We all have flaws, faults and foibles. Jesus often condemned the Pharisees because they “trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others” (Lk. 18:9)

Self-Deceit. The Bible often warns, “Be not deceived” (I Cor. 15:33; Gal.6:7; Jas. 1:16). A persistent problem we all face is thinking something is true when it’s not. We may allow ourselves to be duped by our own prejudice, religious traditions, or family heritage. People are deceived by their intellectual understanding, physical attributes, social status, or financial success. Such self-absorption over estimates one’s own power and prowess and neglects the spiritual needs of the soul.

Self-indulgence. Our age is all about having more. Getting more things. Enjoying more pleasure. Achieving more success. Receiving more honor. Relishing more experiences. Going more places. Eating more. Drinking more. And doing more.

Jesus warned that a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions (Lk.12:15). Self-indulgence to the extreme often leads to one’s self-demise. Sexual addictions, substance abuse, and compulsive behaviors are self-indulgence issues.

There are many other self-inflicted problems we all face including being self-willed, self-serving, and self-loving. They all speak the issue of being self-centered. Self-absorption will negatively impact your relationships in your family, among your friends, with your co-workers and in your church-family.

A personal relationship with God reminds us that life is not all about self. It should be centered in Christ. Jesus calls us to self-denial and self-discipline.

Then (Jesus) said to them all, ***“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.”*** (Lk. 9:23-24).

–Ken Weliever, The Preacherman

Spiritual Tunnel Vision

Peter warns that those who lack the “Christian Graces” of 2 Peter 1 are “blind and cannot see afar off.” (V. 9). The phrase “cannot see afar off” is from the Gr. MUOPAZO, from which we get the medical term MYOPIA, meaning near sightedness. So there is precedent for comparing a spiritual condition to eyesight – seeing or not seeing properly.

We often speak of keeping our eyes focused on Jesus and avoid distractions around us, like “looking unto Jesus” in our race as Christians (Heb. 12:2). The analogy of the eye is also used to show the need to be single-minded in relationship of Christ (with all for which He stands) as opposed to being double-minded (like eyes out of focus), trying to serve God and mammon at the same time. (Matt. 6:19-34). In this case, single vision versus double vision, has to do with focusing on the spiritual rather than trying to focus on both the spiritual and material at the same time. This only results in a kind of spiritual blindness.

Another spiritual eye problem has become rather common place among professed Christians of late is that of tunnel vision – the loss of peripheral vision. This pertains to various elements included in the “kingdom of God and His righteousness” upon which we are to focus. Physical tunnel vision robs one of a lot of beauty because he can only see what is right in front of him. He is also unable to see dangers that may be approaching him from the side.

Almost daily, on social media and other outlets, I notice some brother approaching a religious subject by picking out one aspect of the subject and declaring that it is “the thing” of importance and relegating all else on the matter as, at best, secondary or even worse as unimportant. Wittingly or unwittingly, they project themselves as having greater insight than most folks, when in reality their field of spiritual vision is too narrow.

On the subject of salvation. The New Testament mentions several things that have to do with our salvation. But, a tunnel vision brother, sees only “grace” with all else being secondary or unimportant. Another sees “faith” with all else, especially works and obedience, being secondary or unimportant. Once one reaches this point, there is a very small step from “unimportant” to “unnecessary.”

On the subject of reasons and motivations for serving God. We read, in the word, of “love,” “fear,” “duty,” “gratitude,” “hope of heaven,” to “glorify God,” etc. A tunnel visioned brother sees “love” as “the” rather than “a” motive and declares it should not be out of fear; or that it should be out of gratitude and not out of duty; or it should be to “glorify God” and not to avoid hell and go to heaven. One writer even suggested that serving God in order to go to heaven is “selfish” on our part.

If presented with a list of things mentioned in the Bible as contributing to salvation or a list of reasons for obeying/serving God and asked to select which is “the thing of focus,” there is nothing wrong with saying “all the above” and not allowing tunnel-vision to kick in. Our focus should be broad enough to include “all things commanded” (Matt. 28:19). Instead of spending effort poring over the list of things commanded, to select the one of most importance, accept them all. Which ever is chosen is subjective to the one choosing. So, you have about as many most important things as people you have poring over the matter.

Ed Bragwell, Sr.

Addicted To Good Works

Do you know folks who seem to be addicted to good works? They join diligent hands with the woman who did a good work by anointing the head of Jesus with oil (Mark 14:3-8). This woman and a host of others were highly praised for their good works.

Paul says the household of Stephanas was "devoted to the ministry of the saints" (1 Corinthians 16:15). Dorcas was highly praised for making "tunics and garments for the widows" (Acts 9:39).

Brethren bore witness of Gaius' charity before the church, testifying to John that Gaius does "faithfully whatever he does for the brethren and for strangers" (3 John 3-6).

Phoebe was spoken of as a "servant of the church," for doing whatever her righteous work allowed her as a woman to do. Paul called for the brethren at Rome to "receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever she may need from you" (Romans 16:1)

These slaves of good works beckon us to a higher calling, to a notable gauge of faithfulness. Consider Timothy's gauge: there is "no one like him who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare" (Philippians 2:20).

Who can forget Barnabas, who "having land, sold it; and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet for the poor saints" (Acts 4:37)? Can you imagine being so addicted to good works and doing such a thing?

Would it be better if these folks could stop their addiction to good works? The loafers and critics would feel better; if no one works, they won't be embarrassed by their own idleness. Instead of criticizing, it would be far better to join and assist them. Titus assisted Paul and became, as Paul put it, "my partner and fellow worker for you" (2 Corinthians 8:23).

Folks addicted to good works set the bar high! Next time you find someone diligently helping the saints, they likely would welcome your help—just ask. You too, can become a fellow worker in Christ.

The work is easy to find. Just look around you. Someone has a need you can fill. It might be as simple as giving a drink of cold water to a weary saint; driving Miss Doyle, lending an ear or shoulder to a troubled saint. Just do it. I promise you will find it rewarding. Let's all get addicted to good works!

Wendell Ward
(The Old Hickory Bulletin, 1-5-12)

Constructive comments are welcome for improving this bulletin which is published on the first Sunday of each month. Feel free to send articles you have found helpful and instructive as well. Be sure to give credit to the source so it can be properly cited. (EW)