

East Columbus Bulletin

Vol. 2, No. 05 – May 3, 2015



East Columbus church of Christ
 811 Alabama Street, Columbus, MS 39702
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John 18:37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
9:00 a.m. Worship/10:05 a.m. Bible Study 11:00 a.m. Worship with Lord's Supper	7:00 p.m. Bible classes for all ages

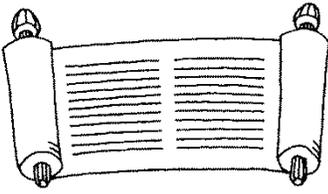
- Other Study and Worship Opportunities**
- Second Sunday 2:00 p.m., Trinity Care Home Worship Service
 - Second Saturday Men's Bible Study Ranch House Restaurant 6:30 A.M.
 - Third Sunday Bible Study 6:00 p.m. location (TBA)
 - Young Bible Scholars meet each month - Time and Location (TBA)
 - Fourth Tuesday Women's Bible Study 11:00 A.M. Church Building
 - Bible Study at the Pines - 5 p.m. Mondays & 8 p.m. Sundays, Cady Hill Thurs. 6 p.m.
 - CD's of sermons are available by signing up in the back
 - 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.
 - Sunday Sermon Speakers – May 3 – Ed Williams at 9 a.m., Allen Jones at 11 a.m., May 10 – Tommy Holley (Northside Starkville), May 17- Michael Hurst (Sturgis)

Prayer Requests

Home Bound Members: - Mike Butler, Annie McCrary, Jack Burks, Eula Mae Harliss
 Others Limited by Health: - Frances Barham, Joyce Monasco, Joyce Ratcliff, Willena Woods
 Sick: - Joyce Ratcliff is having serious health issues, Burt Wheeler is continuing rehabilitation therapy, Allen Swedenburg was recently diagnosed with Lyme Disease as has Ellen Haas, daughter of Ed & Nancy Williams. Harold Young, Lynette Coburn's father has been experiencing multiple serious health problems.

Recuperating Births - April Green and Allen Jones continue to have health issues following surgery.
 - Barrett Robert Briggs was born 3/9/2015 to Jacob and Jennifer Briggs. We are thankful that mother and baby are both doing well.

Elders: Jay McCrary and Jerry Paschall
 Deacons: Clyde Hollis, Ed Williams, Don Zant
 Preacher: Vacant



Jer. 15:16 Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.

Jump Start # 1336

Proverbs 1:5 *"A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel"*

Learning, education-it's not something that is only restricted to school age children and college students. Learning is a life long process. The more we learn, the better we become. The opening pages of Proverbs is devoted to acquiring wisdom. This wisdom is not mathematics, or text book lessons but instead, wisdom from God. Learning life from the one who designed life, God. Learning what works from God.

There are a couple of lessons I see here:

First, we need to approach our Biblical studies with a more academic approach. Just showing up for Bible class without having a clue what was taught the week before nor what the current lesson is going to be about and then offering comments that just pass through our brain probably isn't the best method or means to learning. This feeds shallow thinking and superficial questions and answers and little depth and little application and mostly little changing. It's beyond me to see folks show up to a Bible class without even a Bible. They just sit there and stare at the teacher. They have brought no pen and paper, so no notes will be taken if by chance they do learn something new. The teacher must work hard to try to engage the class and spoon feed them on the simplest themes. Sharing ignorance is often what is accomplished in the class. More time is spent chasing rabbits than it is in learning the text of God's word.

What's the solution? Two fold: First, the teacher must teach. Challenge the class to think. Give quizzes. Lower the nets to deeper levels. Second, the students, the class, must come prepared to learn. They ought to do some homework ahead of time. They ought to give some thought to what is being studied that day.

A person who has been a Christian for twenty years ought to have a massive understanding of the word of God. The number of classes he has sat in, the number of sermons he has listened to, and then his own private studies, should have given him a greater understanding and insight in God's word. But far too often, that's not the case. The guy has been sitting in Bible classes for twenty years, but he has never learned much. He has never applied himself. He has never been prodded to use what was being taught. Twenty years of teaching went in one ear and out the other. There is a great failure in what happens here. This man doesn't grow. He doesn't change. He doesn't become better. He's just about the same as he was twenty years ago. He ought to be teaching, but he doesn't know. He ought to be leading God's people, but he doesn't have a clue. More classes. More sermons. He stays the same. The bad in all of this, his character, his heart doesn't become more Christ-

like. He stays pretty much the same. Worry, doubt, fear, are always near by. He relies upon old thoughts and old things he heard people saying a long time ago, never realizing that those things were not accurate, helpful nor Biblical.

A second lesson that is found here is the understanding that all of God's people need to always be learning. Preachers need to be growing. They need to feed their souls and be learning. The books that they read help them grow. Preachers need to always be looking at how to be better. We train young preachers where I am at. They receive a notebook-it's grown into two large notebooks. These notebooks are packed with articles about preaching. All kinds of interesting things such as how to teach classes and when is it time to move. Before the articles make it to the notebook, Mr. Roger here reads them first. I read them for myself. I read them to be a better preacher. If they are good, they make it to the notebook.

The same ought to be said of the shepherds within a local congregation. They lead, but they are not finished learning. The more they grow the better they will lead. They need to learn about leading people. They need to understand people. Again, this is something that tends to fall off today. Some have the idea that they know all that they need to know. So there is a ceiling to their knowledge. It won't take long until the congregation will be ahead of them and progress will slow down. Leaders need to grow. They need to spend time learning. They need to spend time looking at how Jesus led people. They need to understand why sheep tend to wander off. They need to see what is bothering sheep today. The methods of the 1960's may not be the best methods for today. There is a growing segment of society today that considers it's self to be spiritual but not religious. Do leaders understand that? Are they in tune that what is bothering folks today? Learning these things will help them decide what classes to offer and what the congregation needs. Leaders who are not growing will find the church drifting after a while.

Ignorance is one of Satan's greatest tools. Without knowledge, we get scared easily. Without knowledge we will never try something that is different. Studying the same topics, in the same manner, over and over gets to be mindless and tedious. Depth. Challenge. Learn. Grow. Become. That's the answer.

This all starts with me. It starts with me turning off the mindless TV and picking up my Bible and really blowing the dust off it and getting into some unique studies. See Jesus. Ask yourself, "Why, did He do that?" "Why did He ask that?" Peel the layers back. Chew on it a while.

For instance, when we read about the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8. He was reading from Isaiah when Philip came to him. Have you ever thought what it must have been like to have his own copy of Isaiah? Back then? Hand written. Few copies. Philip most likely did not have his own copy. Chew on that a while and that tells you a bit about the Ethiopian's faith and love for the Lord.

Little things like that are on every page of the Bible. We over look them because we go too fast, repeat the same thoughts we have always heard and we don't look with insight. They are there. Fresh. Interesting. Challenging. Faith building.

Wisdom-it's more than knowing facts. It's living what we have learned. It's a life long experience and a wonderful journey.

Roger Shouse

Using the Sword of the Spirit

As a boy at a very early age I learned to use a sling shot. Later I was taught how to handle a firearm. And, in the same years I learned to use a knife. A knife was used to whittle and to skin animals. But, I never learned to use a sword. And, I don't know how to use one today. Not knowing how to use one, if I had one, I would probably do more damage than good. There is danger in using a weapon (sling shot, gun, knife or sword) without having learned the proper use of it.

God has given his people a weapon. It is a sword (Ephesians 6:17). It is sharp with two edges (Hebrews 4:12). It can cut (Acts 5:33) and destroy (John 12:48) or it can protect and convert (Psalm 19:7). It depends upon how it is used. Those who use God's sword in the wrong way do so to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16; Galatians 1:8) and to the destruction of others (Luke 6:39). It must be used properly. We have to learn to use it so.

Paul told Timothy to make every effort (give diligence) to accurately handle the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15 NASB). He told Titus to use "sound speech, that cannot be condemned" (Titus 2:8). He wrote to the Galatians to warn them about any who would "pervert the gospel" (Galatians 1:8). Peter warned of those who would wrest" ("distort" - NASB) the scriptures (2 Peter 3:16).

Just being able to quote or read a scripture does not make proper use of it. Satan can, and did, quote scripture (Matthew 4:6). But he misapplied it. He distorted or perverted it by making the wrong application. We have not used the "sword of the Spirit" properly if we simply quote it. We do not use it properly when we take it out of context or make an application of it without taking into consideration other passages that deal with the same subject.

To properly use the "sword of the Spirit" one has to do as Ezra did of old (Nehemiah 8:8). The NKJV says that "he read distinctly from the book" and "gave the sense" and in so doing helped the listeners to "understand the reading." To "read distinctly" is to read in such a way that listeners can understand what you are saying. To "give the sense" is to explain the context of the passage and explain what is meant by it. Both these things are done so that those who listen can "understand the meaning" of the passage.

If we just make a statement and then quote a passage we may be like Satan and be perverting God's word by making a use of it that God never intended. This is not proper use of the "sword." This is one reason why James warned about those who would be teachers (James 3:1). Someone may say, "if this responsibility is so great, I just won't try to teach." But, we don't have a choice. God expects each of us to use his "sword" (Ephesians 6:10-18). That means we have to learn to use it properly or we will destroy ourselves and those who listen to us.

J. F. Dancer, Jr., *Southside Informer* (Houston, MS), 10-13-13