



Truth for Today

July 5, 2020

1500 Wellman Road | Shenandoah | 77384 | 281.367.2099

Published for the members and guests of the Woodlands church of Christ

Live as Servants of God

By Don Hooton

For a decade before the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1775, tensions were building between American colonists and British leaders before the Lexington and Concord skirmishes that kicked off the armed conflict in April 1775. By the following summer, rebels were waging full-scale war that culminated on July 2nd when the Continental Congress formally adopted the Declaration of Independence, written largely by Jefferson, and signed later in August. Yet, violence afterwards never formally ended until 1783. And it was not until 1781, after the French helped the Continental Army force a British surrender at Yorktown, Virginia, that the American colonists effectively won their independence. The 4th of July is our nation's day to celebrate all the events that led to that independence.

But in those events that led to independence, there is much to admire in their bravery and to disdain for their vileness in this tension and violence that went on for two decades. Americans today may romanticize their heroics and offer them saintly status in the halls of freedom; but the reality of war and all things connected to it has been aptly described as "hell" by General Sherman (1820-91) for good reason. Many Christians fought in that war and many died – as well as in wars thereafter. It is reported that over 1.2 million people have died and nearly half of those numbers in the Civil War. But many soldiers lived through those wars – and many average people as well. And many did not fight.

Our moment in time in 2020 where the world around us is going crazy and things seem out of control should be seen in this pursuit for freedom. Some today vent their "freedom defending" chants online – Some "protest" in the streets – and some engage in "violence". It should be remembered that our nation began with the same uneasiness and was scattered with unlawful acts and unscrupulous activities justified because it was war: "Give me liberty – or give me death!"

So, how should Christians live in violent times, whether there are Revolutions or Civil Wars?

When Jesus told Peter to sheath his sword because "*those who live by the sword will die by the sword*" (c.f. Matthew 26:52), He was announcing the higher kingdom to which all of His disciples are called: "*If my kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting...*" (John 18:36). The answer to the question about how Christians must respond is not articulated by the hallowed halls of history but in the sacred pages of Scripture.

How were Christians urged to respond to their Herods and their Caesars?

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor (1Peter 2:11-17).

For early Christians, whether it was the unfair taxation of Rome through the tax-collectors, the evil persecution of people because of their religious preference or the mocking of the immoral masses, Peter said that unbelievers were to see our behavior as honorable, glorifying God and full of good deeds: Honoring everyone; Loving all Christians; Showing Reverence for God in all you do: And manifesting respect for whatever King is in charge of the land.

Sadly, this is not what I have seen in some Christians, in social media, and even in some pulpits. While I have worked very hard to live up to the duty to which Peter's words demand, my past is littered with foolishness for which I am ashamed. Jesus turned the tables on money changers, but He never beat up people. Jeremiah laid peacefully on his side proclaiming the ruin of the nation, but he never razed things to the ground. And Paul, even when his fellow believer was wrong in his prejudicial and unjust treatment of Gentile believers, he went to him and spoke face to face with him – without any threats or inuendo on his character. Sheathing the sword is not just about the sharp instrument that can extract life from a person – it is also about the words, attitudes, and actions in which we engage that kill and maim.

How about you?

Whether it is face-masks or taxation, incivility or injustice (all of which are held by different people as the more noble and most significant threat to our democracy than any other), let me tell you what threatens our nation – and every other nation in this world – more than anything else: When Christians stop listening to Christ and what He has called them to be ***in every generation and in every culture.***

Let your voice be heard for righteousness. But do not let it be drowned out by your unrighteous ways.

NEWS & NOTES

UPDATED PRAYER LIST

- **Mark Birdwell** will have more tests (cat scans) for followup after he injured his ribs.
- **Bill Hooton** was in the ER twice this week after several falls.
- **Lori Alexander's** neighbor, Olive Lohey.
- **Craig Preuss' dad**, Arthur, has scheduled cancer surgery for early August.
- **Dehbrenda Preuss' dad**, Bill Harrison.
- Connor Foster, the boyfriend of **Preuss' daughter Lindsay**, had a bronchoscope on Thursday and remains in ICU.
- **Willie & Rita Ray's** daughter, Kimberly Dyniewski, is improving.
- Several of our senior members who are confined in their senior home and still unable to get out are feeling blue and would love your prayers, cards and calls: **the Halls, Bill Hooton, Linda Peterson, the Yaws.**
- **ECONOMIC CHALLENGES.** There are still some of our church family who have had pay-cuts, furloughs, and job loss. Please let the elders know. There are many who are ready to help.
- **PRAY FOR PEACE.** There is much unrest and much hurt and hatred in our society. It is frightening for many, and there are many civil servants and private citizens putting themselves in harm's way to keep peace. There are also many people hurting as evidenced by what caused the protests that were peaceful. *You can make a difference by loving all of them, listening to them and embracing them - especially people of color. Love everyone and pray for everyone.*
—See Enews for Ongoing Prayer List

MEETINGS, EVENTS, SINGINGS & STUDIES

- Sunday Worship Assemblies
 - Reserved seating for members and those who regularly attend with us. Please contact an elder if there is any change

planned in upcoming weeks: if you 1) will be out of town, 2) are changing your time slot (from last Sunday) or, 3) if you will have more than your family.

- KIDzONLY Summer BIBLE CLASSES | LiveStream Sundays, 8:00 a.m.
- TEEN Summer BIBLE CLASS | Zoom Sundays, 2:30 p.m.
- Summer ADULT CLASSES
 - *Songs Outside The Psalter* | LiveStream Sundays, 1:30 p.m.
 - *Psalm 119 | The Psalm of the Word* | LiveStream Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m.
- BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES | will be postponed and resumed at a later date.
- 2:52 Kids Class [2-12] | (TBA)
- TEENS STUDY [13-18] | (TBA)
- YOUNG ADULTS | (TBA)
- TEEN DEVO [12-18] | (TBA)
- ADULT STUDY [30/40] | (TBA)
- BARNABAS GROUP | See Leo Betancourt
- WORKDAY | 8/1, 8-10 am
- YOUTH LECTURES | with *Caleb Churchill and Andy Harrison* | will be only a virtual event on Sat, Aug 8.
- MEETING with *Ben Hall* | 9/13-16
- WOMEN'S DAY with *Sarah Sanford Lyon* | 10/10
- MEN'S DAY with *David McClister* | 11/7

DIRECTORY UPDATES

- **We would like all families** to update their information and ALL worship leaders to do the same. If you have any questions about the DIRECTORY application of our website, *be sure to see Brian Clark.* he most recent printed directory is in the foyer for members.
- **The Potters** will be moving to Cleveland, TX, next week. They are moving closer to Morgan's mother and they will continue to worship with us.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

- **WOULD YOU TEACH?** Contact John Beighle for info on teaching in September.
- **VOLUNTEER SIGN UPS.** See the Monthly Assignments and let Barrett Blankenship know if you cannot fulfill an assignment.
- **HOSPITALITY?** Marissa Suarez will coordinate food for members who need assistance during an extended recovery period after surgery or for the family at a funeral. **We need a new volunteer to begin July through December.**

WEEKLY BIBLE READING

- **Week Twenty-seven** (beginning 7/5)
 - Read Psalm 26, 76, 126
 - Memorize Psalm 126:4-6
- **Signup for weekly reminders at** <https://www.remind.com/join/weeklymemo>

Attendance	InPerson Average Last-Month	Virtual Average Last-Month	InPerson Last Week	Virtual Views Last Week
<i>KidzOnly Bible Class</i>	<i>n/a</i>	4	<i>n/a</i>	8
<i>High School ZOOM</i>	<i>n/a</i>		<i>n/a</i>	TBA
<i>Sunday Adult Class</i>	<i>n/a</i>	25	<i>n/a</i>	19
<i>Sunday Worship AM</i>	115	48	135	12
<i>Sunday Worship PM</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<i>Wednesday PM</i>	<i>n/a</i>	12	<i>n/a</i>	7

NEXT WEEK'S SERVICE & WORSHIP ASSIGNMENTS	8:30 AM July 12	10:00 AM July 12	Contact Information
<i>Communion Preparation</i>			Elders
<i>Sound Booth</i>	C. Latson	C. Latson	Keith Arrants 936.582.1244
<i>Foyer 1/Greeting</i>	A. Bohanan	S. Jones	George Chapman 281.298.1303
<i>Foyer 2/Usher</i>	L. Betancourt	A. Suarez	Norman Davis 832.326.2966
<i>SongLeading</i>	N. Davis	J. Chandler	Don Hooton 936.443.6230
<i>1st Prayer</i>	G. Chapman	L. Cockrell	Deacons
<i>Scripture Reading</i>	Mike Harvey — Rom 6:1-10	C. Ford — I Thess 5:1-11	John Beighle 806.367.3389
<i>Communion</i>	L. Betancourt	D. Haas	Adam Bohanan 281.798.1093
<i>Bread</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	Brian Clark 281.513.0706
<i>Fruit of Vine</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	Gary LeBlanc 281.292.0262
<i>Contribution</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	Craig Preuss 832.477.0578
<i>Assist</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	Evangelists
<i>Assist</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	Don Hooton 936.443.6230
<i>Preaching</i>	D. Hooton	D. Hooton	Website
<i>2nd Prayer</i>	K. Arrants	S. Jones	www.woodlandschurchofchrist.org
<i>Announcements</i>	A. Bohanan	B. Clark	Office Phone
<i>InterService Clean—Foyer/Bath</i>	N/T Davis	D/T Hooton	281.367.2099
<i>InterService Clean—Auditorium</i>	A/S Bohanan	C/L Ford	Church Email
<i>Doors Open @8 Lockup @11:30</i>	J. Beighle	M. Chandler	woodlandschurchofchrist@gmail.com