

February 2009 Newsletter

Fellowship Presbyterian Church

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“Discipline”

by Martin H. Martin



As I sit working on my contribution to this month’s newsletter, I find myself reflecting on God’s recent providence in my life and how thankful I am for Jesus Christ and His bride the church. I have just finished a term of service on our Presbytery’s Shepherding Committee, a term in which we have seen two ministers in our presbytery removed from pastoral ministry. I am also reminded that twice in our own congregation, we have found it necessary to pronounce sentences of discipline on two of our (now former) members. These sorts of situations are heartbreaking on one hand, encouraging on the other and an occasion to be reminded of certain things.

First, we should be encouraged that we are privileged to be a part of the Church of Christ in which there is still a willingness to practice formal church discipline. Of course it is always a difficult thing to do and we never feel that we have done it perfectly. There is always something we wish we had known sooner, a phone call we wish we had made, a conversation we wish we had handled differently; but difficulty and imperfection do not absolve us of the responsibility to do something and we have to trust our Savior in what He has instructed us to do. The easiest thing to do (at least in the short term) is nothing, but we inevitable discover sooner or later that we are better off when we follow our Lord in doing hard things.

Second, we should praise God when He brings sin to the surface and allows lives to unravel in the process of bringing a soul to conviction and deliverance from sin’s bondage. Scripture reminds me that the most hateful thing I can do to my children is to simply come home, flop down in the recliner, tell them not to disturb me and ignore their eruptions of sin. Praise our heavenly Father that He cares for us enough to make us experience the misery and ruin of sin so that we might finally hate and turn from it.

Finally, never forget that the ultimate goal of any discipline is ultimately restoration. Whether we formally admonish (warn) somebody regarding sin, or suspend them from the sacraments, or actually move to the step of excommunication, the goal of all of these actions is that they be brought to their senses, see the miserable bondage of sin and turn from it back to Christ. Discipline is never done to vent our indignation or get rid of someone who doesn’t measure up. The purpose of discipline is to press home to the one being disciplined and everyone watching that sin has consequences, that sin is *its own* consequence, that it is miserable, that it destroys, and that our only hope is to turn from it to Christ.

And you know what is so marvelous? When we turn from our sin to Christ, no one is quicker than He to embrace and forgive! The Lord has blessed me with a wonderful family, and I think here especially of my children; and I am reminded that whenever one of them comes to me in true sorrow over sin, my heart can only go out to them and my arms reach to take them in my embrace. How much more is our Heavenly Father good to discipline us in His love and embrace us in His mercy!

Pastor Marty

DEACON NOMINATIONS—UPDATE:

The Session is currently following up with those who have agreed to consider being nominated for the Office of Deacon. The time and dates for training (which is open to all who are able to attend) will be announced soon.

Sunday Evening Fellowship Supper

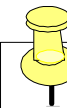


February 22nd



Plan to join us on Sunday, February 22nd, following evening worship, for supper (sandwiches, chips, lemonade & dessert) and time of fellowship!

Please sign-up (in the narthex) to bring a tray of sandwiches or your favorite dessert. Thank you!



Church Notes:

The sacrament of the **Lord’s Supper** will be celebrated **Sunday, February 1st**; during morning worship.

WEDNESDAY SUPPER & ACTIVITIES

5:30 PM: Supper (catered meal cost: \$3.50/adult, \$2.50/child, \$10 max/family)

2/04: Fried chicken, mac & cheese, mixed vegetables, rolls, tea & strawberry shortcake

2/11: Make your own taco salad, tea & assorted pies

2/18: Italian baked chicken, brown & wild rice, broccoli casserole, rolls, tea & cake

2/25: Ham, mac & cheese, corn, rolls, tea & apple pie

6:00 PM: Choir Rehearsal

6:40 PM: Devotional & Prayer Time (adults); Catechism (children grades k-4 thru 6th)

***PLEASE NOTE: THE KITCHEN SERVES FOOD UNTIL 6:15 PM.**

WEDNESDAY EVENING SIGN-UP FOR FEBRUARY:

CATECHISM TEACHERS:

2/04: S. Dyer, Willborn

2/18: Waynes

2/11: P. Farmer, D. Lesley

2/25: TBA

KITCHEN CLEAN-UP:

2/04: Root

2/18: Sarvis

2/11: Willborns

2/25: Richards

Ladies’ Bible Studies:

The Ladies’ Tuesday Morning Precepts Bible Study (an inductive study of the gospel of John) meets Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 A.M. at the church; nursery is available. Please contact, Wendy Richards (877-3267 or 399-9276) for more information.

The Ladies’ Thursday Evening Bible Study, “I Will Be Your God”, meets each Thursday, 7:00 P.M. at the home of Barbara Wilder. The study will focus on how God’s covenant enriches our lives (Ezekiel 36:26-28). Please contact Barbara Wilder (848-6434 or bwilder220bellsouth.net) for additional information.

There is a Session Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 10th, at 7:00 P.M.

The Adult Choir (Jr. Hi & up) will rehearse Wednesdays, 6:00—6:40 P.M., beginning February 4th. **Newcomers are welcome!** Please contact Annette Stubbs (288-3066) for more information.

The February issue of **TABLETALK** focuses on the gospels examining the main point and purpose of each of the four books. **TABLETALK** is a monthly devotional magazine offered (free of charge) to all members and visitors (on a first come, first served bases); pick up your copy (in the narthex) today.

Attention Ladies: The Annual Calvary Presbytery WJC Meeting will be held on Saturday, February 28th, at Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church. This year’s speaker will be David Sinclair.

MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16th, 2009.

SERVING IN FEBRUARY:

Elder of the Month: Jeff Wayne (967-8434); Deacon of the Month: Sam Stubbs (968-9555)

Greeters of the Month: Lindsey Dyer & Madeline Martin; Ushers: Troy High & Bill Wilder.

Family and Youth Corner:

by Breno Macedo

The Necessary Exercise of Meditation

In one of the catechism classes, dealing with the doctrine of the providence of God, I emphasized the necessity each Christian has to think carefully on this truth, to spend time meditating on this subjecting (of God's providence) seeking to apply it to their lives. What really caught my attention was that while I was talking about meditation, one of the kids did the yoga position and everybody started to laugh, including me. But, putting the joke aside, it is really sad that we as Christians think so little about meditation when Scripture is full of recommendations (and examples as well) that we should do so and full of examples as well. So, let's forget for a moment the modern mystical view of this important Christian duty and than find its place in our lives.

First, we need to understand that to meditate is a biblical duty. There are many passages in Scripture that incite us to meditate. For example, Psalm 1:2 says that the righteous or blessed man's delight "is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he *meditates* day and night." The psalmist declares again in Psalm 19:14: "Let the words of my mouth and the *meditation* of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer." There are many other passages but, according to these, meditation must be an exercise accepted by God, it must meet His standards, and it has a specific goal. It is not a subjective exercise to be done by the rules of some "guru" to empty your mind but it was meant to fill your mind with the word of God, with His directions for your life, and you are to think upon them in a way that honors and glorifies God and that is pleasing to Him.

But, what is it to meditate? Is it merely to think upon a theological subject or a bible verse and that is it? Theologians of the past have great definitions that can help us to make up our mind. Thomas Watson defined meditation as "a holy exercise of the mind whereby we bring the truths of God to remembrance, and do seriously ponder upon them and apply them to ourselves." According to this old puritan, we deliberately bring to our minds the sweet knowledge of the triune God, we "chew" these truths, expend them and use them to direct our actions, to evaluate and control our thoughts, to correct our feelings and desires.

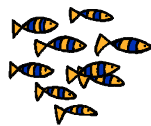
Have you already consider this precious duty? What is the place of biblical meditation in your life? How often do you spend thinking on the things of our Lord and applying them to the different areas of your life? Are you desirous of developing the habit of meditation?

In the next article let's consider the methods of meditation.

~Breno

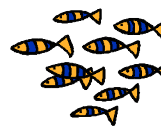
Youth Event: Saturday, February 21st, Friday Night Movie & Pizza! Details TBA

If you have any questions, please contact Breno Macedo (631-3896)



MISSIONARY MISSIVE *The Peru Mission Team*

by Carolyn Root



When God laid the foundations of the earth at the first creation, "all the angels shouted for joy" (Job 38:7), glorifying and praising Him. Even so at the dawning of the New Creation, the mighty army of heaven joyfully heralded the birth of the Savior. This Gospel brings God's peace to the earth, providing forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, justice, love, and healing.

At the beginning of the new year, the Peru Mission Team is rejoicing in God's provisions and thankful for the ways He has blessed their efforts to extend His peace upon earth. They are thankful for the prayers, financial support, and short-term workers who assist in their ministry.

They are looking forward with anticipation to see how the Lord is going to bless His people. The greatest need for 2009 is the construction of the Larco Church building. Even with a deficient infrastructure, the Larco community has grown tremendously, both in numbers and maturity in the faith. They deeply desire to help this church obtain an attractive and functional building so as to serve more effectively as an agent of God's peace in the world.



If you would like to assist toward this goal, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

*Christian Missionary Society
P.O. Box 53363
Knoxville, TN 37950-3363*



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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED