

The REMINDER

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, TX

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February 24, 2013

Number 8

PILGRIMS

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims..." (1 Peter 2:11). Peter goes on to tell his audience some aspects of a pilgrims life, but the point is that we are temporary on this earth. We encourage each other with songs about heaven and our desire to go "home" to be with God and His eternal family, and that's the "hope" Peter talks about in chapter 1. But a "pilgrim" faces difficulties in life that makes the journey dangerous. Look at a few.

1. We're only here for a short time. Life is temporary, and that's difficult to face. Life is, for the most part, enjoyable. We fill it with friends and family and activities. Boredom is an enemy. With the affluence of American life come all the "toys" to help us fill our days and weeks: time shares, boats, athletic equipment. From mountains to sea shore, and even foreign countries, we seek excitement. We admire the beauty of God's earth, and long to explore. There's more than we can see in a normal lifetime. No problem with any of these, unless they distract us too much from the basic point: we won't last forever. We're temporary, dwelling in a strange place not our home. When we begin to feel permanent in an earthly location, we've lost a focus that is necessary. We're not trying to be morbid, just realistic.

2. Earth, life centered. We educate ourself and our children for a career, and that's a good thing. The writer of Ecclesiastes tells us that work is a gift from God. It provides for our families and helps us fill our time. We're told, "Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might." Great advice, and we should take it to heart for self and teach it to our children. Again, it may be the exclusion of a spiritual focus that destroys us. "Seek first the kingdom of God..." (Matt. 6:33). Solomon covers this well in Eccl. 12. Again, distractions work against us. School, Job, eventual retirement become our focus. Eternal life should be ever before our eyes.

3. Going Home. Ever thought about building your "dream" home? Jesus built ours - John 14:1ff. Do you look forward to it? We want "roots", a place to belong. We look forward to high school and college reunions where we can visit with friends from years gone by. Here we may find a life for 70 or 80 years. There it is permanent in a way we can never find here. Do you ever dream about meeting God's whole family? Seeing the father of your spirit, and giving thanks for all He's done face to face. That home is for those who seek it and prepare for it. Jesus is the way. Let Him guide you.

JLS

Bulletin Board

Sermon
Notes:

AM Lesson - Steve - "Maturing Members"
PM Lesson - Jack - "The Church At Antioch"

Please keep the following members in mind who have difficulty being with us due to prolonged illness: **Dee Boyd, Doris Norman, Billie Glitsch and Don Hurd.**

NEWS AND NOTES: We were saddened by the news of the passing of Sharon's mother this past week. The funeral was yesterday. Our sympathy to the family in this loss.

We have several who need our prayers for health problems. Doris Norman, a former member here, spent several days in the hospital in Baytown. Her health has been poor for several years now. Cathy Johnson, a friend of Kris Hester, had a serious infection following surgery. She lives in Tuscaloosa. Keep her in your prayers for a recovery. Anita's brother, Roger, had a serious blockage, and had a stent inserted following an angiogram. He's doing well, but will be on medication for a year or so.

Muffy is in Louisville visiting her family. Her father had knee replacement a week or two ago.

New quarter begins next Sunday. Robert will be teaching Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther and the "silent 400 years", the time between Malachi and Matthew. That will probably be in room 107/109. I'll be teaching the book of Revelation in the auditorium.

Keep our spring gospel meeting in mind. Don Truex will be with March 17-20.

SPIRITUAL WORSHIP

We're all familiar with the Lord's caution in John 4 to worship "in spirit and truth". I wonder how many times in ages gone by mankind has left God out of worship by altering His word to suit the whims of the day. Jesus commented on this in Matt. 15 with the conclusion that such worship is "vain". But we also fail the God of heaven when we leave our heart out of the worship. "In spirit" seems to apply to our participation on an emotional level. I came across this story some time ago: "A man once dreamed that he was in a fine, large church building where many people had gathered. He saw people singing, but heard no sound. He saw the minister moving his lips but heard no words. After a time the congregation rose to pray. He heard only the voice of a child praying.

He was puzzled and amazed. An angel came and stood by him to explain: 'You've heard today as God hears,' he said.

The singers were thinking about other things as they sang, and were not actually praising God. The minister was watching his words that he might preach a good sounding sermon. God did not hear him. Only the child had feelings of love and reverence in her heart for the Lord, and only her words of praise and prayer reached the Heavenly Father."

Perhaps the story exaggerates the point. Perhaps not. But I wonder if the Lord is hearing us individually today. Do your part. That's what each of us is responsible for.
JLS

Assignments for today

Sunday, February 24, 2013

Morning Service

Announcements.....Scott Clanton
Hymn Director.....Robert McDonald
Scripture Reading.....I Thess. 5:10
Scripture Reader.....Samuel Camp
Opening Prayer.....Bill Hill
Closing Prayer.....Scott Clanton

Evening Service

Hymn Director.....Michael Robinson
Opening Prayer.....David Gorski
Closing Prayer.....Scott Clanton

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Schedule of Services

Sunday:

9:30 AM Worship
11:00 AM Bible study
5:00 PM Worship

Wednesday:

7:30 PM Study and Devotional
Minister and editor
Jack Smith and Steve Garrett

The Reminder is published weekly by the church of Christ in Bellaire