



The Berryville Church of Christ

# Bible Beacon

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105)



Volume 1, Issue 29

August 18th, 2002

## "Why Are There So Many 'Churches'?"

Recently I was asked this very important question. It is a question about which many people have pondered. It is a question that largely goes unanswered by many that choose rather to uphold the status quo of mainline religious bodies today. It is a question, however, that is begging to be answered by millions and answer it we must! Christ prayed for his disciples in John 17:20-23. He said,

*"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."*

Jesus prayed for the unity and oneness of those who believe on Him. If this was His great concern and plea, then why do we have so many "churches?"

The first reason we have so many "churches" is because of something that John wrote. He said in 1 John 4:1 *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."* Indeed there are many false prophets that have gone out into the world and some of these false prophets have created "churches" of their own. And this is part of Satan's plan to divide the followers of Christ. The Bible teaches that if it is to his benefit that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). We go on to read in the next verse, *"Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness."* In other words, there are people in the world today who appear to be ministers of righteousness but who are actually working for Satan. How do you know the difference between the two? John has the answer. *"Try (test) the spirits whether they are of God."* Therein lies the only available avenue to know whether one is teaching truth or falsehood--to test the teaching of the false teacher. How does one do this? Compare what they are saying to what

the Bible says and then ONLY believe what the Bible ACTUALLY teaches. If the Bible does not actually teach it, then reject it. Many false prophets mean many false "churches." Herein is a reason why there are so many churches.

The second reason we have so many "churches" is because there are many who are not content to be just Christians. Many want to be "Christians" of a particular sort. This was the problem that those at the church at Corinth were having. Paul had to rebuke them because they were calling themselves after something other than Christ. We read in 1 Corinthians 1:11, 12 *"For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ."* Just like today many want to say that they are Baptist-Christians, Methodist-Christians, Presbyterian-Christians, Pentecostal-Christians, Lutheran-Christians, etc. What was Paul's response to this type of thinking? He said, *"Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"* Instead of being content to be followers of the one who was crucified for them, instead of being content to be followers of the one in whose name they were baptized, they wanted to be known as Paul-Christians or Peter-Christians, or Apollos-Christians. They were not content with just being mere Christians. They wanted their own personalized, monogrammed "Christian club." This lack of wanting to be merely Christians causes many "churches" to come into existence today.

The third reason we have so many "churches" is because there are many who simply want their own way. And they want it enough that they are willing to allow a church to be divided over their own opinions. They confuse their opinion with what the scriptures teach. To avoid this requires that we study and know what the Bible teaches so that we do not pawn off our own opinions as Biblical teaching and so that we do not pawn off Biblical teaching as our own opinions. Either mistake is disastrous when it comes to the unity of the church. The Christians at Borea practiced this. We read in Acts 17:11 *"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."* They did not merely accept the preacher's opinion regarding what the Bible taught. They checked things out; they made absolute sure that what Paul was saying was the truth. They were not content to

# Gospel Meeting



Preacher: David Deffenbaugh  
of Tahlequah Oklahoma

Sunday October 6th through  
Wednesday October 9th

*Our Theme:*

## *Jesus Said*

9:30 AM Sunday Class  
**Why Should We Care What Jesus  
Said?**

10:20 AM Sunday Worship  
**"Come To Me"**

6:00 PM Sunday  
**"You Cannot Be My Disciple"**

7:00 PM Monday  
**"The Way is Narrow That Leads to  
Life"**

7:00 PM Tuesday  
**"I Will Never Leave You"**

7:00 PM Wednesday  
**"I Will Build My Church"**

*Be there with us!*

accept Paul's opinion. Accepting the opinions of men as "gospel truth" causes division and is a large part of the reason there are so many "churches" today.

What is your desire my friend? Do you long for the kind of unity for which Jesus prayed? Do you desire to test the things that you believe against what the scriptures say? Do you want more than anything to be "just a Christian?" Then I offer you this challenge this very day. Find a "church." Question them regarding what they believe and practice. If the scriptures do not teach it, then reject it. If they are doing what the scriptures teach and ONLY what the scriptures teach, then accept it and become part of that church today. It is my personal conviction that the church of which I am a member, the church that belongs to Christ--the church of Christ--is doing exactly this, no more and no less. The church of Christ is not a denomination as many are lead to believe. It is merely a body of Christians who meet every week to worship together and who have banded together in God's church to further the work of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We invite you to learn more about us and lead the simple life that is called "Christian."

*Kevin Cauley  
Berryville, AR*

## Kevin's Korner

If you are visiting with us today, we welcome you! You are our honored guest. After our worship today we are having brisket and ribs, BBQ style. Please stay and eat with us today!

I thought it best to abbreviate my "Korner" today to get in the article. Someone asked me this very question this week and it is a great question. I hope this helps with your personal studies with others as well.

Our gospel meeting is coming. Let's all make sure that we start inviting our friends and family to come. As you can see from the left column, we have a tremendous schedule laid out. Let's start making our plans to be present!

Saturday will be our trip to Lost Valley. Let's all go and spend time with one another in God's creation. Each should bring a lunch and appropriate attire. Meet at the building at 9:00 AM!

**Elders:** Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan, Bruce Foster, Bill Fort, Glenn Quigley

**Deacons:** Ken Smith, Brent Stevens, Rusty Windle.

**Preacher:** Kevin Cauley 870-423-6707

## Times of Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:.....9:30 AM  
Sunday Morning Worship: ..... 10:30 AM  
Sunday Evening Worship: .....6:00 PM  
Ladies Bible Class: ..... 10:30 AM  
Wed. Evening Bible Class:.....7:00 PM

# I CANNOT REPAY!

We, of all people, are most blessed both physically and spiritually. And when we consider how graciously and richly God has blessed us we should easily be struck with the realization there is no way to pay Him back. Acknowledging this, we accept His gifts with a humble and thankful heart.

Do we feel a great sense of indebtedness to God? Seeing that we cannot possibly repay Him, does that remove us from any responsibility regarding this debt? Are we not to be good stewards of our blessings and strive to bring blessing to others?

You may have seen the movie "PAY IT FORWARD", starring Kevin Spacey, Helen Hunt, and Haley Joel Osment and directed by Mimi Leder. The idea of the school project begun by Trevor McKinney (Haley Joel Osment) was to fix something in life he did not like. His idea was to do something good for someone else and make them promise to "PAY IT FORWARD" -- that is they were to do something that helped someone else rather than returning the favor. By the end of the movie the impact ended up being enormous.

Paul felt a deep sense of indebtedness. To the church at Corinth he wrote: "(9) For I am the least of the apostles and DO NOT EVEN DESERVE to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (10) BUT BY THE GRACE OF GOD I AM WHAT I AM, AND HIS GRACE TO ME WAS NOT WITHOUT EFFECT. No, I worked harder than all of them -- yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me." (1 Corinthians 15:9-10)

And to the church at Rome he acknowledged, "(14) I AM OBLIGATED [or "debtor"] both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. (15) That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome." (Romans 1:14-15)

Paul, in magnanimous ways, reached out to others with the blessing of the Gospel of Jesus

Christ. He could not buy or repay such a grace as He had received and so he, allowing God to work through his life, paid it forward, thus bringing God's blessings to others. As we read through Acts and the letters of instruction Paul wrote, we see clearly how churches and individuals were impacted by His life.

Because the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia had shared in the Gospel blessing of the Jews, even though Paul noted their being pleased to give of their material things to help the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, he noted that it was really owed anyway. (Romans 15:25-27) And the Macedonians were eager to have the privilege to give. In fact, they pleaded to be given the opportunity in sharing with them. (2 Corinthians 8:1-5)

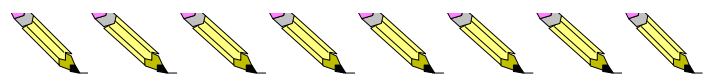
We have been called upon to share what we have, whether it be spiritual or material, because the meeting of those needs reveals our gratitude for being abundantly blessed by God. It also reveals our awareness that we are merely stewards of those blessings.

To the church at Corinth, Paul's generous spirit is noted in his words, "So I WILL VERY GLADLY SPEND FOR YOU EVERYTHING I HAVE AND EXPEND MYSELF AS WELL. If I love you more, will you love me less?" (2 Corinthians 12:15)

We cannot repay the debt that Christ paid on the cross for our sins. We continue to be indebted to Him for that and every other blessing given us by God. But as we touch the lives of others by sharing generously (whether spiritually or physically) we are serving a purpose to which God has called us. As we are mindful of "PAYING IT FORWARD" we will glorify God, reveal our gratitude for His blessings, display our trust for His further provision, and will be allowing Him to continue His work of meeting needs through our life. Let it be so!

Have a great day BRINGING BLESSING TO OTHERS!

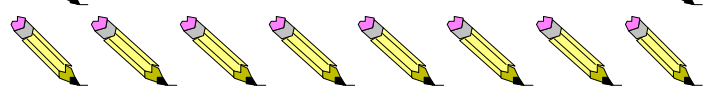
Carl Hanson



## Our Record

### Week of August 11th

Sunday Class .....	79
Sunday A.M.....	100
Sunday P.M. ....	78
Wednesday .....	72
Contribution.....	\$1883.30



## Sunday's Sermons

### For August 18th

**Morning .....** The Substitution of Christ  
 Scripture..... Galatians 2:20  
**Evening .....** Taking Risks for Christ  
 Scripture..... Hebrews 11:8-10

## News, Notes and Prayer List



- Please remember the following in your prayers: Geneva Atchley, Michael Collins, Evelyn Johnson, Oleta Widener, Opal Hull, Denna Dickey's brother.

- Lucille Wright is in room 504 of the Berryville nursing home.
- Jessica Lovelady is also in the nursing home in room 307.
- Edith Mischler is in the nursing home in Eureka Springs.
- Mary Patterson and Art Roberts are confined to their homes at this time.
- We extend a very big and warm welcome to Denna Dickey who placed membership with us this past Sunday. Welcome Denna!
- There is an elders and deacons meeting tonight.
- Today is our Back to School Picnic Lunch day. All the food is ready and set. Hope you came hungry today!
- Saturday morning all are invited to come to Lost Valley for our yearly hike. We will meet at the building at 9:00 AM. Be sure to bring a lunch for you and yours.
- Some jewelry has been found in the church building. This is not costume jewelry. If you know of some jewelry that is missing or you know of someone who is missing some jewelry, please see Bill Fort.
- Please remember Rusty and Kevin as they prepare to go to Costa Rica September 21st through 28th.
- Our gospel meeting is coming up soon. Let's all start making our plans to attend.
- We had 100 in attendance this past Sunday. That's great! Keep up the good efforts!!!
- The Pantry Item for this week is Spinach.



## Men to Serve

	<u>Today</u>	<u>Next Week</u>
<b>Sunday Morning:</b>	<b>August 18th, 2002</b>	<b>August 25th, 2002</b>
<b>Song Leader:</b>	Brent Stevens	Bill Fort
<b>Preacher:</b>	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
<b>Opening Prayer:</b>	Clay Bozarth	Ken Smith
<b>Scripture:</b>	Brent Moore	Brandon Foster
<b>Lord's Table:</b>	Glenn Quigley Larry Elliott	Leon Duncan Glenn Williams
<b>(assist)</b>	Perry Foster Raymond Kimes	Brent Moore George Eddings
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Rusty Windle	Larry Elliott
<b>Sunday Night:</b>		
<b>Songs:</b>	Glenn Williams	Clay Bozarth
<b>Preacher:</b>	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
<b>Opening Prayer:</b>	Clyde Atchley	George Eddings
<b>Scripture:</b>	Dale Pinkley	Bob Moore
<b>Lord's Table:</b>	Leon Duncan Brent Moore	Dale Pinkley Brandon Foster
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Ray Duncan	Brent Moore
<b>Wednesday</b>		
<b>Songs:</b>	Hugh Atchley	Rusty Windle
<b>Opening Prayer:</b>	Bob Moore	Dale Pinkley
<b>Invitation:</b>	Brent Stevens	Kevin Cauley
<b>Closing Prayer:</b>	Kevin Cauley	Ray Duncan
<b>Monthly Assignments</b>		
<b>Announcements</b>	Kevin Cauley	
<b>Worship Coordinator</b>	Larry Elliott	
<b>Communion Prep</b>	Neva Welch	Dena Williams
<b>Communion Carry</b>	Bruce Foster	John Gass

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For questions or comments, please call (870) 423-3068 or write us at:  
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