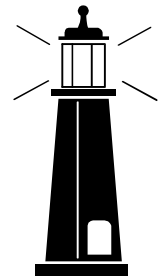




The Berryville Church of Christ

Bible Beacon



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

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December 8th, 2002

The Mission and Work of the Church – Benevolence

Kevin Cauley

The mission and work of the church centers around the great mission that Christ proclaimed namely to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). The church as the bride of Christ has the responsibility of support the Christ in this great work (Ephesians 5:23, 24). As we have studied through the work of the church in our bulletin articles over the past several weeks, we have looked at the concept of evangelism and edification. Evangelism is primarily focused upon those who are outside of the church—the alien sinner. Edification is primarily focused upon those who are within the church—both saved and apostate. The work of benevolence, however, transects both spheres of work. Often the work of benevolence reaches out to the alien and edifies those who are saved or apostate. Many times benevolence encourages those who are wayward to repent and come back and shows the alien the great love that the church has for mankind and the result is conversion. No doubt, this is part of the design of benevolence. However, we should not think of benevolence as merely a means to an end, but rather should think of it as an end in and of itself. Benevolence must be done from a pure motive in order to be effective. Benevolence should not necessarily include on our part the expectation of evangelism or edification (though it may be our ultimate desire we should not necessarily expect it out of the individual to whom we are doing good works) and this is the reason that often time it is discussed outside of the context of both evangelism and edification. James writes that pure religion is to support both the orphans and widows and to keep oneself unspotted from the world (James 1:27). The support of orphans

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Kevin's Korner

Perhaps the first item we should discuss is the baptism of Kendra Smith this past Sunday evening.



For this we rejoice. Welcome Kendra, to the family of God, the body of Christ, the brethren of Christ, the church of Christ!

This past week has seen numerous events. We had an extremely enjoyable trip to St. Louis with Moises and Maritza. They were both very excited to see the animals at the Zoo and then to ascend into the Arch. The day was, as Moises expressed it, "muy bonita (very beautiful)! We are glad that we had the opportunity to do this with them.

You may have already noticed that they are still with us this morning. There was a last minute change of plans and the decision was made to keep them through tomorrow. So we get to spend one last Sunday with them. Let's all pray for their safe return to Costa Rica on Tuesday.

The Christmas party was a delight. It was great to be able to let down our hair a little through the gift exchange. I think everyone had an enjoyable time and we all left with great memories which was of far more value than the actual gifts themselves.

This past weeks weather certainly made things interesting. I owe a special thank you to Ken Smith for driving my vehicle out of his parking lot. My vehicle is NOT a 4-wheel drive and after getting down into the lot there at the Castle I figured that we might have a hard time getting out. Ken, however, was able to pilot us safely to the main road. Thanks Ken!

December is a month with five Sundays. This means that the last Sunday will be singing at the nursing home. Although I will be gone on family vacation, I sure hope that many will turn out for this effort. The people there sure do appreciate when we come and sing.

and widows is a work of benevolence and it is set forth by James as pure religion—sufficient as a practice of the church in and of itself.

The word “benevolence” comes from the Latin word “benevolens” and means kind, well-meaning, benevolent. It is composed of two words “bene” which means “good” or “well” and “volo” which means “to will” or “to intend.” Thus the compound idea is to intend to do well. We find the same idea in the New Testament expressed in the thought, “good works.” The concept is a scriptural one and the church must be involved in the activity of benevolence or doing good works. In 1 Timothy 6:18 we read where the rich were commanded to be involved in good works, “That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.” This context is showing that the idea of “good works” involves the concept of benevolence. Having this in mind, we go on to look at Galatians 6:10, “So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith” (ASV). More literally, the Greek says let us do good works toward all men. The churches of Galatia were to be involved in these good works and so should we.

Sadly, it seems that in many congregations benevolence does not get a large portion of the budget. Perhaps this is in part to the deplorable practice of many in our society to want to get by with as little effort as possible. Regardless, the church needs to find ways to practice this most important work. We find considerable stress and emphasis upon this work within the New Testament. In fact, the work of benevolence (whether congregational or individual) is mentioned more within the scriptures than any other activity that involves church finances. It was a priority for the early church to be involved in benevolence. In Acts 4:32-35 we read,

“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one {of them} said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. For neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need.”(ASV)

The key thing to think about in this passage was that there was a need and that the church provided for that need through the generous spirit of some. This was not merely a one time event, the

church made it a practice under the direction of apostolic authority to consistently take up a collection. No doubt there were many things to which the collection was going to be applied, but the first mention of this consistent practice and the primary application of the collection was church benevolence. This is the main purpose behind 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come” (ASV). The idea of Paul’s coming in this context was in regard to the great collection that was first started as a result of the prophecy of Agabus in Acts 11:28-30. That the collection continued to be taken up for other purposes as well no doubt can be inferred correctly from the prescriptive way in which Paul issued this directive. It was to be done in the churches of Galatia as well as the church in Corinth and as we find out in 2 Corinthians 8:1ff that the churches of Macedonia were involved in this as well. Such an event provided a catalyst to both initiate and educate the church on the proper use and practice of giving.

The priority of benevolence in the early church can be seen in the various charges that are given from different apostles. Paul was instructed by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem to remember the poor (Galatians 2:10). Paul says that he was zealous to do this. Paul charged the eldership at Ephesus to be mindful of the poor as well. He said, “In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35 ASV). The context indicates that the “weak” here are those who are poor. It also fits well with the instruction that Paul gave to the church at Ephesus regarding one of the proper uses of money as the result of work,

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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

(Continued from page 2)

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need" (Ephesians 4:28 ASV). Indeed God is well pleased with those who do good and share (Hebrews 13:16).

However, not only the apostles placed a high value on "good works," but our Lord himself consistently challenged individuals in His lifetime to give to the poor. We read in Luke 14:12-15,

And he said to him also that had bidden him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbors; lest haply they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; because they have not {wherewith} to recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just. (ASV)

Jesus said to the rich young ruler, "If thou wouldst be perfect, go, sell that which thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me" (Matthew 19:21). Does this verse imply that we will be lost if we don't sell everything we have and give it to the poor? No. The fact that the poor needed some things indicates that it is not a sin to own some things. The instructive value of this verse for us today can be taken in conjunction with Luke 14:12-15 namely that if we choose to bestow goods to the poor, we will no doubt have a greater heavenly reward. Nevertheless, the challenge is made by the Lord to this man here and the warning should be heeded by all of those who do have this world's goods—giving to the poor contains more spiritual value than maintaining earthly possessions and let us not forget the command of Paul to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:18. Moreover, that Jesus himself gave to the poor is indicated by John 13:29. Jesus and the twelve carried a treasury of money for various purposes. When Jesus mentioned to Judas to do what he

had to do, some of the other apostles thought that this was in regard to giving to the poor. They were mistaken, but no doubt, they assumed this out of experiential knowledge of Jesus' practices. He himself had no place to lay his head (Matthew 8:20), yet he found a way to give to the poor. He had to have this attitude in His life in order to have the attitude that He had in His death. Paul wrote regarding this in 2 Corinthians 8:9, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich." Our very spiritual livelihood depended upon a Savior who cared not for riches, glory, and power, but who cared rather for the spiritual wealth of every person who ever lived on the planet. We would do well to imitate His example in this regard.

Perhaps the most motivating verse in this regard is 1 John 3:17 which says, "But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" The very proof of our love for God and subsequently for our fellow man can be shown through giving to the poor and needy. What a frightening thought to know that one day we will stand before God in judgment with this verse written within His word. The greatest commandment is "to love the Lord thy God" (Matthew 22:37) and yet we cannot fulfill that great commandment without giving to the poor. When we look at the importance that the early church, the apostles, and Jesus placed upon giving to the poor and then consider the fact that our loving God depends upon it, how can we neglect it so in our work today? May each one of us resolve to work more diligently in our own personal lives as well as within our roles within the church to give to the poor.

Sunday's Sermons

For December 8th

MorningI am the Lord and Master

Scripture..... John 13:12-16

EveningQ&A

Scripture..... NA

Our Record

Week of 12/1

Sunday Class	58
Sunday A.M.....	78
Sunday P.M.	51
Wednesday	35
Contribution.....	\$1583.40

News, Notes and Prayer List



- We want to welcome everyone to our services today. If you are visiting, please fill out a card so we can have a record of your visit with us.
- We rejoice that Kendra Smith was baptized this past Sunday evening.
- Please remember the following in your prayers: Virgil Butler, Justina Goucher, Raymond Kimes.
- We offer our condolences to the Glenn family in the loss of Donna Brown's nephew.
- Lucille Wright is in room 504 of the Berryville nursing home.
- Edith Mischler is in the nursing home in Eureka Springs.
- Please remember our shut-ins Mary Patterson and Art Roberts. Art is always very appreciative of the lunches that we provide him.
- The regular monthly men's breakfast will be this coming Saturday. Please make plans to attend.
- This evening we will have our youth devotional. It was postponed from last week due to the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. Please bring drinks, chips, and chocolate.
- Tonight is our monthly question and answer session.
- December has five Sundays in it. This means singing at the nursing home on the 29th. Unfortunately, I will not be there due to family vacation. Please make your plans to go to this and encourage those there.
- If you can baby-sit a dog for several days, would you please contact me, Kevin C.
- Please note that there will be no bulletin for December the 29th.
- The Pantry Item for this week is Toothpaste.



Men to Serve

	<u>Today</u>	<u>Next Week</u>
Sunday Morning:	December 8th, 2002	December 15th, 2002
Song Leader:	Larry Elliott	Brent Stevens
Preacher:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Rusty Windle	Glenn Williams
Scripture:	Perry Foster	Ray Duncan
Lord's Table:	Bob Moore	Clyde Atchley
	Brent Stevens	Raymond Kimes
(assist)	Bill Fort	Matt Bassing
	Brandon Foster	Larry Elliott
Closing Prayer	Clyde Atchley	Clay Bozarth
Sunday Night:		
Songs:	Rusty Windle	Glenn Williams
Preacher:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Matt Bassing	Clyde Atchley
Scripture:	Glenn Williams	Perry Foster
Lord's Table:	Dale Pinkley	Clay Bozarth
	George Eddings	Brent Stevens
Closing Prayer	Ray Duncan	Dale Pinkley
Wednesday		
Songs:	Clay Bozarth	Glenn Quigley
Opening Prayer:	Glenn Quigley	Glenn Williams
Invitation:	Leon Duncan	Bill Fort
Closing Prayer:	Larry Elliott	George Eddings
Monthly Assignments		
Announcements	Glenn Williams	
Worship Coordinator	Rusty Windle	
Communion Prep	Susan Elliott	Donna Henderson
Communion Carry	Leon Duncan	Clay Bozarth

The "Berryville Bible Beacon" is published by the Berryville church of Christ. Please contact Kevin Cauley at work at (870) 423-3068 or at home at (870) 423-6707 or e-mail bvccoc@alltel.net to contribute information.

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