

Berryville Bible Beacon

“It’s Not Personal”

We have all seen one version or another of the mobster shows where the "hit man" walks up to his good buddy who has had a contract put on his life and say, "Sorry, Rico. It's not personal, it's just business." At which point, Rico's left ventricle gets very personal with a 32-mag bullet. How can the man say such a thing--"Its not personal"--when the truth is that it doesn't get much more personal than that!

More recently, I have seen the ads for a new "reality show" called "The Apprentice" where several people are competing to work for Donald Trump. The winner gets a job with a six-figure salary. The losers get fired. One ad has Donald saying, "Its not personal, its just business!" This is all too common a mentality in our world today. When it comes to dealing with personal relationships, we seek to depersonalize them thinking that our "objectivity" will excuse us from the responsibility of our decisions in that relationship. But no matter how many times the phrase "It's not personal" is said, there is a person on the other end of the relationship.

Christianity is about a personal relationship with Jesus. The personal Son of God, came to this earth and was crucified on a very personal cross so that the world might be personally saved. The genius of God's plan to save is that it is a very personal plan. Each unique person has the opportunity to personally accept or reject this plan. Acceptance means that you have a very personal relationship with Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Paul wrote, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved **me**, and gave himself for **me**" (Galatians 2:20). Notice the personal pronouns in this verse. Christianity is a very personal religion that depends upon individuals having a per-

sonal relationship with Christ.

When we are blessed with a personal relationship with Jesus, then He expects us to take our relationship with Him personally. In part, this means that we seek to help others have a personal relationship with him too. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations..." (Matthew 28:19^{ASV}). Making disciples means that we teach others to be crucified with Christ and to give themselves over to a personal relationship with Him. In turn, when these others have a personal relationship with Christ, then we have a personal relationship with them. Fellowship with other Christians is about acknowledging the personal relationship that they have with Jesus. John writes, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Too, when a Christian leaves their personal relationship with Christ they leave their personal relationship with other Christians. Jesus takes such a situation personally, and so should we. Christianity should be taken personally.

How is it, then, that someone can say, "It's not personal" when dealing with personal relationships? Those who say such are simply not being honest. They fail to recognize that personal actions are created from personal beliefs. Jesus upheld this concept in Matthew 15:19. He said, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." The actions of our lives, whether sinful or righteous, first originate within the heart with our own personal beliefs. The truth is that when we truly and personally believe something, we will act personally upon that belief and our actions toward other people tell them what we believe. The apostle John draws on this principle through his first

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Not Necessarily Safe

Someone has observed, "People are certainly peculiar -- they want the front of the bus, the back of the church and the middle of the road." [source: calendar quote]

Are either of these three places really safe? The front of the bus may not be safe if the driver slams on the breaks too quickly or if the bus is involved in a head on collision. The back of the church building may provide too easy a place to drift off to sleep and miss some of the benefit of the teaching and worship. And taking a MIDDLE OF THE ROAD stance could place one in a position to be opposed by both sides since it may be unclear where one really stands. Perhaps this last one is the most dangerous place of the three.

What do the Scriptures reveal regarding the danger of seeking the MIDDLE OF THE ROAD? Jesus stated... "Whoever is NOT WITH ME IS AGAINST ME, and whoever does NOT GATHER WITH ME SCATTERS." (Luke 11:23 ESV)

It appears there is a decision which must be made. What does our life reveal with regard to Jesus' statement?

Jesus had John record the following warning to the church in Laodicea: "(15) 'I know your works: YOU ARE NEITHER COLD NOR HOT. Would that you were either cold or hot! (16) So, because YOU ARE LUKE-WARM, and NEITHER HOT NOR COLD, I will spit you out of my mouth.'" (Revelation 3:15-16 ESV)

"What do the scriptures reveal regarding the danger of seeking the middle of the road?"

There are choices we must make. To make no choice in an attempt to remain neutral or MIDDLE OF THE ROAD is a decision in itself. Jesus indicated it is not a safe decision. In fact, to Him it is the most unpalatable choice we could make.

Children are taught at an early age that it is not safe to play in the MIDDLE OF THE ROAD. Perhaps it is wise advice for every age. Are we heeding it?

Have a great day REVEALING CLEARLY THAT WE ARE WITH JESUS!

Carl Hanson

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epistle. He states, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). John tells us that mere words do not necessarily reflect the fact of our love. When someone says, "Its not personal," and proceeds to affect you, by their actions, in a personal way, their words are not agreeing with their beliefs. John calls it lying (1 John 4:20).

Christianity is a personal religion that demands personal belief that results in personal actions. The relationships that we maintain, both with God and other Christians are personal. When we honestly examine those relationships, we will understand that they are built upon our own personal faith and the actions that result from that faith. When we recognize this, we will not try to depersonalize our application of the gospel. We will not think that our "objectivity" will excuse us from the responsibility of our decisions in that relationship. Instead, we will recognize that true objectivity requires of us a personal effort toward maintaining and building better relationships both with God and with one another. The expression, "its not personal" is not an expression that should be uttered from the lips of a Christian because with Christianity, its always personal.

Kevin Cauley

Sermons and Study Topics

Week of 1/11/04

Morning	Attitudes In Prayer
Scripture	James 5:16
Evening	Costa Rica Report
Scripture	Acts 14:26-28
Sunday Morning Bible Study	The Book of Hebrews
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	Our Passion

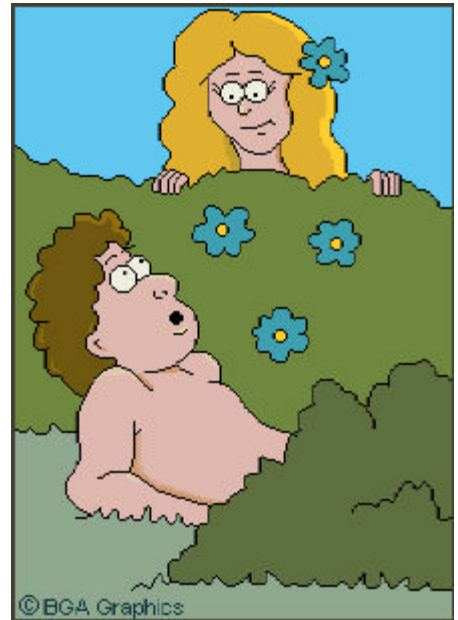
Weekly Record

Week of 1/4/04

Sunday Class.....	58
Sunday A.M.	75
Sunday P.M.	67
Wednesday	60
Contribution.....	\$1370.89
Budget.....	\$1760.00

Basic Bible Facts for Kids

1. How many books are in the Bible?
2. Who wrote the Bible?
3. How many books in the Old Testament?
4. How many books in the New Testament?
5. Who was the first man in the Bible?
6. What did he give to all of the animals?
7. Who was the first woman?
8. Where did these two live?
9. What did they do to lose their home?
10. What did God make to cover them up?



Kevin's Korner

I sure hope that everyone will make their plans to be with us tomorrow evening for our report from Costa Rica. We will be presenting this information during the evening assembly. Luke records for us in Acts 14:27, "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." We are more than pleased to be following the example of the apostle Paul as he followed Christ in presenting this information to the church. I believe that you will find it to be edifying and encouraging as we move forward in our work for the year 2004!

Speaking of the year 2004, Mary

Lynn and I have made a resolution to exercise a little more. So we will be spending some time at the Berryville Community Center on the indoor walking track. People from all over our community, (Berryville, Green Forest, Eureka Springs, and etc.) visit the center on a daily basis. It is a great place to get to meet people. I encourage anyone who can to go down there and use the facilities. You never know, you just may meet your next brother or sister in Christ there!

Despite Rusty's comment about me being here twenty-five years this past Wednesday, it has only been two. It has been a good two years. This past year our mettle was tested, but we came through together more refined than before. I certainly want to tell the eldership how much I appreciate their having

me come here to work with the church at Berryville. I don't think that we could have found a better congregation to work with. Mary Lynn and I are extremely happy to be living in Berryville and are looking forward to another wonderful year. We invite everyone to come celebrate this anniversary with us the last Sunday afternoon in January.

Elders:

Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan,
Bruce Foster, Bill Fort, Glenn
Quigley

Deacons:

Ken Smith, Brent Stevens,
Rusty Windle.

Preacher:

Kevin Cauley... 870-423-6707

News, Notes, and 'Noucements

- We are truly thankful to God for the wonderful new Lord's day that he has given us today to worship him in Spirit and in Truth!
- Raymond Kimes was admitted to the hospital in Harrison this past week, but is now at home recovering. He would enjoy a visit when you have time to make one. Please remember him in your prayers.
- Let us remain constant in prayer for the following individuals: Geneva Atchley, Donna Brown, Curtis and Opal Hull.
- Next Sunday is our monthly potluck. Please make your plans to attend. Also, you might want to invite a visitor to have lunch with us. The monthly elders and deacons meeting is also next Sunday.
- There is a thank you note posted from Art Roberts on the back bulletin board. Please take some time to read this.
- On Sunday, January 25th, there will be an open house at the Cauley's marking their 2nd anniversary with the congregation. You are cordially invited to attend between the hours of 2 and 5 PM.
- During this evenings assembly, Kevin will give a presentation on the recent mission trip to Costa Rica. Please plan to attend to hear more about this exciting work.
- "The Life of Christ 2" is available in the foyer for \$28.50. This is the second part in the Truth for Today commentary series.
- Tonight after the evening services we will have a VBS planning meeting. Those who want to participate in VBS are encouraged to attend this meeting.
- The pantry item for this week is soap.



Welcome! To the Berryville church of Christ.

Family Times for 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

Serving Each Other

January 11th, 2004

January 18th, 2004

Sunday Morning

Songs:	Brent Stevens	Ken Smith
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Bill Fort	Bruce Foster
Scripture Reading:	Perry Foster	Leon Duncan
Lord's Table	Leon Duncan	Dan Hand
	Larry Elliott	Rusty Windle
(assist)	Brandon Foster	John Gass
	Ray Duncan	Matt Bassing
Closing Prayer	Brent Stevens	Dan Hand

Sunday Evening

Songs:	Bruce Foster	Hugh Atchley
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Dan Hand	Larry Elliott
Scripture Reading:	Perry Foster	Brent Moore
Lord's Table	Dale Pinkley	Leon Duncan
	Jack Gentry	Ray Duncan
Closing Prayer	Matt Bassing	John Gass

Wednesday

Songs:	Glenn Quigley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Brandon Foster
Invitation:	Rusty Windle	Leon Duncan
Closing Prayer:	Brandon Foster	Perry Foster