

Family & Friends..... March 17th, 2021

Many of the greatest saints endure life in the weakest bodies. Henry F. Lyte was one who battled poor health most all of his life and left an orphan at a young age. It is believed that it provided him with the ability to see so clearly the strength of God. He conveyed it so powerfully in his poetry, music, and sermons. He wrote the hymn "Abide with Me" in 1847. It was a beloved hymn by many and provided comfort to them. "Abide with Me" was sung by ex-prisoners of war from England who recalled how they sung the hymn each Sunday evening while imprisoned. Survivors of the Titanic tragedy told of hearing the tune of this hymn, sung by the doomed passengers standing on the sinking ship as it slipped beneath the sea. The words of this hymn were on the lips of a British nurse, Edith Cavel, as she faced a firing squad in 1915 during World War I. Lyte preached many years in a fishing community in England and gave encouragement to them and their families. He ignored his own infirmities and ailments while serving others. He said "It is better to wear out than to rust out." The hymn "Abide with Me" seemed to take on a life of its own after his death in 1847 with tuberculosis. It was translated into dozens of languages and became meaningful to believers of all nationalities and ages. We will sojourn here on earth as we remain steadfast and faithful to God. I would like to remember my grandfather, Elisha Claud Faulk, who died a year before I was born in 1946 with tuberculosis.

*If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you,
ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
John 15:7*

Those on our prayer list: Continue to remember the Albers family in the extensive fire damage to their home. Lou Hollo has cancer and we pray his treatment will bring a speedy recovery. Dallas and Jerri Dobbs have asked us to pray for their friend, David Baker, who had shoulder surgery and a stroke. Gene Roberts, preacher in Hiwassi, has pneumonia and the Covid-19 virus. Keith Hubanks tore his meniscus. (oooh that sounds painful) Wanda Coffee's son, Aaron, was in an automobile accident. Continue to remember Loisell Tyler, Jennifer Oxford's mother, Tim & Susan Duffy, Susan's dad, Bob Kearney, Ginny Alderson's brother, Cliff, Ray Reiss, Lofty Carrier, families that have recently lost loved ones, our missionaries, our military and police force, our country and president, and a cure for Covid-19.

Items needed for Fair Haven Children's Home: Taco sauce, puddings, Hamburger Helper, salad dressings, juice, hand soap.

For our Food Pantry: Honey, jelly, peanut butter, flour, sugar, rice, spaghetti sauce, baking mixes-pancake, biscuit, muffin mixes, fruit cups, apple sauce.

The Lamb who died to save us is the Shepherd who lives to lead us.

Love you, stay safe. *Karen*

**Bella Vista
Church of Christ**

Highway 71 and County Road 40
989 NW McNelly Road
Bentonville, AR 72712

Return Service Requested

LORD'S DAY		8:15
Early Worship	Bible Class	9:30 AM
Second Worship		10:30 AM
WEDNESDAY		9:45 AM & 7 PM
Ladies' Class	Bible Class	Live Stream @ 7 PM

Phone: 479/273-2434

www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com

ELDERS

Tracy Bowman.....479-899-3089
Don Butcher.....636-548-0458
Dallas Dobbs479-640-4943

DEACONS

Mark Bagwell John Bowman Chris Johnson Bryan Busbee Joe Hott
Robert Horton Perry Johnson Harold Phillips Terry Roberts Aaron Sloan Mitchell Whittington

MINISTERS

Randall Caselman.....479-855-4447
Jeff Grisham.....479-531-9135
Parker Willis.....615-587-3208
Selywn Nel Cape Town, South Africa
Javier & Helmer Rosero..... Bogota, Colombia

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Bella Vista

Making Wise Choices

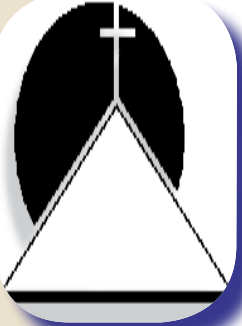
*"Now therefore, fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord! And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."
Joshua 24:14-15*

Two friends were talking about compromise in marriage. One said, "In my marriage, my wife makes all the small decisions and I make all the big decisions." The other replied, "Yea, and how is that working for you?" He lamented, "We have yet to have any big decisions."

When Joshua charged the people of Israel with the task of making a decision about whom they would serve, there were no options for compromise. The people had to make a choice. In making their decision, the people followed some sound advice; they looked at the facts. "So the people answered and said: 'Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; for the Lord our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed'" (Joshua 24:16-17). Experience is a great teacher, even when some of our experiences are not good ones.

Joshua instructed the people to serve the Lord "in sincerity and truth." This emphasizes that they were not to compromise or try to be on both sides of the fence at the same time. They must either serve the gods of the world or the Lord. Jesus taught, "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money" (Matthew 6:24 NLT). Making choices in life is hard and choosing one road to travel means leaving other roads behind.

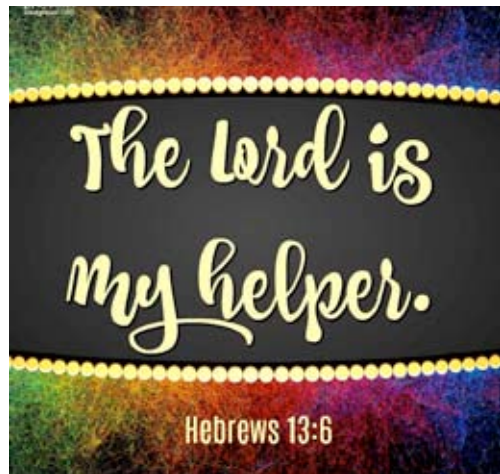
MEMBER



One of the first things to consider in making a decision is what are the options. We must weigh the pros and cons of the choices before us. It is usually helpful to seek wise counsel from someone that we trust. Proverbs 11:14 states, *“Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”* What is true of a nation is also true for the individual. There is wisdom in good counsel.

Once we have considered the options before us and sought out good counsel, it is time for us to really examine ourselves. We must consider our own motives. Are we truly listening to wise counsel and making a valid choice of possible options, or are we at the mercy of our own feelings about the matter? Are our motives pure? Have we done enough self-examination to understand our own motivation? It is possible to over-think a situation or to be stuck in indecision. It may be helpful sometimes to set a deadline for ourselves.

We need strength and courage to make difficult decisions. God told



Joshua, *“...as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage...”* (Joshua 1:5-6). It was no longer Moses leading the people. Joshua had to step up to the task and find the courage to trust God and move forward.

And once we make a decision, we must learn to be content with it. We

must not play the “what if” game. There may be other decisions to make later, but we must be happy with the ones we made for today.

—L. SCOTT GAGE
Fayetteville, Arkansas

Making Life Determining Choices

Life is filled with decisions, choices as to what we wear, what to eat, how to spend our time, talent, treasure and energy. We must decide whom we spend our time with. We must know this: the choices we make will determine our happiness here and our eternal destiny. We see this principle demonstrated in the lives of Abraham and Lot from the thirteenth through the nineteenth chapters of Genesis. Lot chose to pitch his tent toward Sodom and the cities of the plains, but Abraham dwelled in the Land of Canaan.

There will be consequences to our choices. A few years later, Lot and his family were caught in a civil war between a group of kings resulting in their being taken political prisoners. They had to be rescued by Abraham. Later, Lot was forced to flee for his life as God destroyed Sodom because of her wicked behavior. In this incident, Lot put his family at risk, lost his wife and was involved in a sinful relationship with his own daughters.

On the other hand, Abraham and his family were blessed in Canaan. One is made to wonder what would have happened to Lot and his family had they chosen to stay in Canaan? More importantly, what can we learn about decision making from this Old Testament narrative?

The desire for material things complicates life. I know folk who can’t enjoy life because of constant worry over interest rates, insurance premiums, rent houses, lease arrangements, the fluctuating stock market, taxes, maintenance schedules, fashion trends and disposable income. Wow!! Think back a few years before we owned all this stuff. Didn’t we have less worries? Wasn’t life more enjoyable? I had a man say to me a few weeks ago, “Oh, how I wish I could just be a kid again!!” Don’t we all? Don’t we all wish for a simpler time?

Jerome K. Jerome, in his book "Three Men in a Boat wrote," "Let your boat of life be light, packed with only what you need: a homely home, simple pleasures, one or two friends worth the title, someone to love, and someone to love you. Indeed, we will find our life-boat easier to pull, it will not be so easily upset, and it will not matter so much if it does upset, because good, plain merchandise will stand water."

Right choices demand right priorities. We’ll never know why Lot chose to pitch his tent toward Sodom, but we can suppose it was because of business concerns — pasture and water for his herds. Our priorities regulate life. We allow the urgent to determine our

choices, rather than the important. Grass and water for his livestock were urgent matters; but they were not the most important matters in Lot’s life.

Lot does not seem to be concerned with his relationship with God. There is no record that he wanted what was best for his family. There is no indication that he prayed to God for wisdom in making this choice. You see, living by the tug of the urgent places us on a never ending treadmill. We go from one crisis to another. Choosing to live by the urgent results in a pressure filled existence.

James Boice says it so well: “We may think that we are a lot different from Lot. But if we place our job ahead of our family’s spiritual life, if we put social and political agendas ahead of association with God’s people, if we let our choices keep us from worship services and spiritual growth – we have moved from the land of Canaan, and pitched our tent toward Sodom.”

Right choices are made by faith, not by sight. *“Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld the plains of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere... Even as the Garden of the Lord.”* Lot’s choice was made by sight, not by faith. Living by faith is knowing what is right and doing it. Abraham trusted God. Lot trusted his own senses, his own human logic.

We must know that there is no logic in serving a God we cannot see. There is no logic in God dying on a cross to forgive and save His people. There is no logic in becoming a child of God by faith and baptism. Question! Will we choose logic or humble, unconditional obedience to God? *“Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him”* (Hebrews 11.6). *“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ”* (Galatians 3:26, 27). Indeed! We must live by faith.

Yes, every day we make choices that will effect not only our own lives, but the lives of our children and grandchildren, along with others around us. Pray that God help us make right choices, wise choices. Amen?



—RANDALL CASELMAN

SUNDAY SERVANTS: 3/21/21

EARLY SERVICE (8:15 AM)

Song Leader Alex Thompson Prayer & Scripture Harold Phillips
Communion Scripture & Prayer Mark Tucker Greeters/Handouts Joe Hott & James Branstetter

SECOND SERVICE (10:30 AM)

Song Leader Sammy McCain Prayer & Scripture Bryan Busbee
Communion Scripture & Prayer Bob Spaw Greeters/Handouts Mike Spencer & Howard Hurst

MARCH WORSHIP COORDINATORS

Worship Coordinator Mike York Streaming Coordinator Elijah Johnson
Audio Coordinator Homer Makinson Video Coordinator Aaron Bagwell