

Family & Friends..... January 12, 2022

“Bringing In the Sheaves,” an old hymn that encourages us to be busy about our Master’s work, spreading His goodness in word and deed, and preparing for the Harvest when the Lord shall claim His own. This hymn was written in 1874 by Knowles Shaw, who is also known as the “Singing Evangelist.” His father passed away when Knowles was 12 years old. His last words to his son were “My son, be good to your mother and prepare to meet your God.” His father also left him his violin that became a source of income. He later played his violin at parties and dances where alcohol was served. One night at work he remembered his father’s words “prepare to meet your God,” and quit what he was doing. He was 18 when he confessed his sin, accepted Jesus as his personal Savior, and was baptized for the remission of his sins. He became a popular evangelist and preached to many. He liked to live among, help, and teach the people he worked with. He was often criticized for being eccentric and peculiar, but others said “He reasons like Paul, is as bold as Peter, and as tender as John.” He converted and baptized 11,400 by his own record. He said “people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” “Oh, it is a grand thing to rally people to the Cross of Christ,” he said. His unwavering faith and strong will power served him well. For many of us the old hymns are ingrained in our hearts. To God Be the Glory.

Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Matthew 9:37

Always a joy to announce our visitors: Kailey Kimbrell (Colorado Springs, CO), Suzie Kirby (Fort Payne, AL), David & Sarah Ellison (Fayetteville), Kyle Dillard (Springdale), Debra Lewis (Rogers), and Kelli Homeyer (Bella Vista).

Those on our prayer list: Keep the Winters family in your prayers in the loss of Linda’s mother, Melba Keen. Sue Gartrell’s upcoming surgery on the 19th of January. Pat Musson will have radiation treatment soon. Susan Duffy suffering from an infection. Becky Donceel having health problems. Continue to remember and pray for Pam Bertschy, Donna Rowland, Robbie Arnold, Aaron Sloan, Tim Short, David Reeves, Doug Klingman, Bob Douthih, Ramin Salimi, our missionaries, our military and police force, our country and president, a cure for the Covid viruses.

We want to thank our ladies who gave the lovely shower for Alexis Albers on Sunday. A big thank you to Amy, Becky, Staci, Abby, and Ashley! Wishing you lots of love and a beautiful wedding Alexis!

Children’s Home: salmon, mandarin oranges, hot chocolate mix, pork & beans, egg noodles. Food Pantry: ketchup, mustard, mayo, jelly, honey, sauces needed are soy, sweet & sour, taco/hot sauce, peanut butter, salad dressing, canned chicken, tuna/spam.

Gracious words are always the right words. 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 AM
Early Worship	9:30 AM
Bible Class (Livestreamed)	10:30 AM
Worship (Livestreamed)	
EWEDNESDAY	9:45 AM
Ladies’ Class	7:00 PM
Bible Classes (Livestreamed)	

Phone: 479/273-2434

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ELDERS

Tracy Bowman.....479-899-3089
Don Butcher.....636-548-0458
Dallas Dobbs.....479-640-49439
Pery Johnson.....913-707-8379
Ray Reiss.....903-908-0203

DEACONS

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

MINISTERS

Jeff Grisham.....479-531-9135
Parker Willis.....615-587-3208
Cory Spruiell.....501-941-4525
Javier & Helmer Rosero.....Bogota, Colombia

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Seeking the Good

It was a confusing time for the people of God in Judah. It seemed that everything was crumbling around them. A part of their people, the ‘best’ of their people, had been taken to Babylon, and the rest wondered what would happen next. There were prophets, claiming to speak for God, telling them that everything would be ok. After all, the Temple of God was in Jerusalem. He would defend them. Sure, they had received prophetic warnings of being expelled from the Promised Land, but surely God would take care of them. This must be just a warning. It is only temporary. Those in power were getting nervous. Maybe God wasn’t capable of defending against such a power as Babylon. These politically savvy leaders believed that they needed others to partner with them to defeat the Babylonians.

Then there was Jeremiah. He had been called by God to warn the people of the coming trouble. He had told them why all this was happening. They had been unfaithful to the covenant of God and as a result, the curses promised in that covenant were on their way. This was not going to be temporary. It was going to be a long exile. God’s people would be taken from the land where he had chosen to cause his name to dwell. The great city would become a pile of rubble. What were they to do?

There’s an interesting passage in the book of Jeremiah that records a letter that Jeremiah sent to the first wave of exiles who were in Babylon. Jeremiah writes:

“Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply

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there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. (Jeremiah 29:4-7)

The first part of the message from God to those exiles is painfully clear. This exile will not be short. No matter what the others are telling you, you are going to be in Babylon for quite a while. As shocking as that statement may have been to the exiles, the second command given would have been even more mind-boggling. *“Seek the welfare of the city where I sent you and pray to the LORD on its behalf.”* Seek the welfare; seek the good, work for the benefit of Babylon? The evil empire that is responsible for the destruction of the holy city of Jerusalem, the nation whose soldiers will starve out and kill your relatives, execute the sons of the king, and humiliate your people; pray for them and seek their good. That can't be right. That's not the way this is supposed to work. They are the enemy.

There's a great reminder to us today of how we are to conduct ourselves as “sojourners and exiles” (1 Peter 2:11). Like those who had been taken from Babylon, we feel the reality that we are not where we belong. As Christians, we know that we are not home. We don't belong here. Our citizenship is somewhere else. We feel that uneasiness within us, that pull toward home. We see the way things are in our world – injustice, oppression, abuse, rebellion against God, sickness, sorrow, disease, hunger – and we know this isn't right. We are moved and stirred within ourselves as day after day we see these things happen. We want God to intervene, to step in and set it right. We read Scripture and are confident in his promise, but wonder when it will happen. How long will we be here?

Like the events at the time of Jeremiah, the exile will not be forever. It will be for a while. God has promised that we will return home to him. But, in the meantime we are to seek the welfare of the city where God has sent us. We seek the welfare by living as his people, being obedient to what he has commanded us to do. We seek the welfare of the city by demonstrating and sharing the love of God shown to us in Jesus. We seek the good of others around us by seeing them as people created in the image of God in need of a saving relationship with him, and not as the enemy for us to conquer. We do this by being the salt and light that Jesus calls us to be. May God bless us as we seek the welfare of the city to which he has sent us, and as we continue to pray to Him on its behalf.

-JEFF GRISHAM

Truth In Labeling

A group of concerned women met to discuss deceptive packaging, truth in labeling. A survey was taken during the meeting which revealed the following statistics: 15% of those present tinted their hair, 28% were wearing wigs, 80% were wearing rouge, 98% lipstick, 25% eye shadow, 22% false eyelashes, and 92% had on nail polish. BUT they were 100% against deceptive packaging!

It's foolish to point out, in others, the very things that are present in our own lives. Introspection is what we need, not pointing out the faults of others, not labeling. Note some areas in which we can be deceptive.

Defending the Faith. *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect. (1 Peter 3:15.)* Defending the Christian Faith is called Apologetics. This is not just a term we apply to preachers, Bible scholars and college professors, but to every Christian individual. We must all come to the defense of God's message. Perhaps the greatest defense of the Word is when we apply it to our lives daily. It is deceptive packaging when we demand truth from our pulpits, but will not apply that truth daily.

As evil and world godlessness increase, Christians are truly seeing themselves as aliens, exiles, sojourners here. Do we know the Word? Do we know what we believe and why we believe it? Are we ready to defend it by applying its principles to our daily walk? Saying that we are Christian, but not walking in the light is deceptive.

Conforming to the world. *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (1 John 2:15).* Some of us have lost our distinction as Christian people. We are so in love with the world that we dress like the world, talk like the world, watch the same video, visit the same websites, read the same materials as the world. Right? Peter says we are called to be different... *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*(1 Peter 2.9). Paul in Romans 12 cautions about allowing the world to press us into its mold. Children of God who allow themselves to be molded by the world are deceptive.

Demonstrating Love. Jesus seemed to teach that some have just enough Christianity to make them miserable. Others have just enough to make them mean. They insist on the letter of the Law, while forgetting the weightier matters such as judgment, mercy and faith. They are blind guides which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Matthew 23:23-24. Scripture says, our God desires mercy not sacrifice.

Don't you get tired of those who are always pointing out faults in others, shortcomings in the church and the brotherhood of believers? You want to ask, “Do you ever think of anything else?” They are never seen going about doing good: visiting the sick, taking food to a neighbor, phoning shut-ins, sharing Jesus, comforting or crying with a friend, etc. No, they are busy destroying the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. *I beg you to walk worthy of the vocation wherein you are called, with all lowliness and meekness with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unit of the Spirit and the bond of peace.* (Ephesians 4.1-3). Claiming Christianity without demonstrating love is indeed deceptive.

We are called by a new name. When we wear this new name we must understand what Paul understood in Galatians 2:20, when he said, It is no longer I, but Christ who lives in me. That, folk, is Truth In Labeling!

-RANDALL CASELMAN

October 17, 2001

SUNDAY SERVANTS: 1/16/22

First Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture	Bill Alumbaugh	Song Leader	Anthony Christiano
Greeters	Joe Hott, Chris Johnson	Communion Scripture & Prayer	Chad Dobbs
	Closing Prayer.....		Harold Phillips
	Nursery Workers		Susan Cluck, Gay Lynn Weldon

Second Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture.....	Perry Johnson	Song Leader	Lee McCain
Greeters	John Bowman, Don Cope	Communion Scripture & Prayer	Stephen Hunt
	Closing Prayer.....		Mike Spencer
Nursery Workers.....	Linda Goings, Jennifer Royer	Van Driver	Charles Flanary

January Worship Coordinators

Worship Coordinator	Mark Tucker	Streaming Coordinator	Abby Willis
Audio Coordinator	Jim Caylor	Video Coordinator	Aaron Bagwell