

Know when Jesus returns

Volume II, Number 8

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Letter

Freedom to serve

Dear Saints,

Grace to you seems to be the best way to open this letter. We find ourselves once again seeking God's word for a greater understanding of His grace. My desire through the past few teachings has been to understand more clearly for myself how I can appropriate the grace of God in my life. I hope it is helping you move into more of a freedom from sin.

In the next couple of Sundays we will go on to Romans 8 and see that we must not only be "dead but lead". We cannot just run from sin, we must run to Him. It is in following after Jesus that we live a victorious life.

Many times we can get so caught up trying to deal with sin that we forget that we are to reach out and love others. Our own problems can become the focus of our lives. That in itself can be sin.

As we continue to lay the groundwork for living free from sin, we must realize that unity with Christ means a resurrected life of service.

We have talked about death to sin through becoming one with Christ. In Romans 8 we will see that following hard after the Spirit is now our privilege and pass to victorious living.

After the first of the year we will move on to the teaching of Romans 12 which says, "Find your part, give yourself to it, and live for those around you."

It is like Paul unravels all of our questions and excuses for selfishness and then says, "O.K., now put your money where your mouth is. You've had all your questions answered. Do you really want it?"

I am excited that we are learning the key to living a victorious life is to give ourselves to something that is greater than we are.

Begin to search in your heart for ways you can serve the body as we move toward next year and a new chapter in the life of the church.

This copy of the Brief is full of articles on what others in the body are doing. Make sure to read them all.

Bless You

Billy

In this issue:

Singles issues Pg. 2

Y Lock in

CET

Gotta' have a woman

Building Vision Pg. 3

Parent's meeting

Dec. 24th meeting

Mexico

Teaching Pgs. 4-5

Know when

Jesus returns

Church Family Pg. 6-7

Develop training

Women praying

Christian Spirituality

Home School workshop

Calendar Pg. 8

Pastor's Brief

This newsletter is produced by Billy Henderson and Robert Hartley for members and friends of LCF. It is intended to clarify the vision of this church, as well as encourage and instruct.

YMCA lock in Let's do it again!

It was good. It was so good we have decided to do it again. The lock in at the YMCA, that is.

But before we do, we want you to know that the church is not in the business of providing a good time to compete with the world's good time. There is true spiritual meaning to what we do.

It is easy to want to do something "fun" and then spiritually justify it. That is the essence of the religious personality. But, it is also true that many things which are truly spiritual are also fun.

Take the retreat for example. Some people are air heads. They just like being social. They just like basketball. They just want to have fun this weekend.

Contrasted to this is the spiritual man. He or she draws purpose and meaning from God. His joy comes from giving himself to the things which build him and others in the things of God. If he plays basketball, it is not just to gratify his flesh. It is because he finds it profitable in God. Oddly enough, it is often profitable in God to just have fun.

We believe that it is good to just get away and be with each other in "non-religious" ways. At the same time, we honestly believe that to the truly spiritual, all things are spiritual.

Look for another lock in during late winter.

Campus Evangelism Team

So you can know

The purpose of this article is to let you know.

I want you to know that 10 people have committed themselves to reach out and touch the lives of students.

I want you to know that Jimmy has committed his home fellowship to the vision of reaching campus.

I want you to know that every week John, Curt, Rick, Dawn, Kyra, Cathy, Debbie, and Laura spend time on campus.

I want you to know that they have talked to many about the love of Jesus Christ and His purposes for their lives.

I want you to know that about 15 students have become involved in Bible studies in the dorms.

I want you to know that these people need your support.

I want you to know so that you can pray.

Pray that those attending the Bible studies will be added to the church and come to full maturity in Christ.

Pray that the members of the team will not lose heart as they give themselves to minister.

Pray that more people will be reached in this coming semester.

Pray.

Gotta' have a woman

With Claude and Nancy joining the ranks of newly weds who sit in the pews and beam, its enough to make any single man or woman think that marriage is the key to happiness. And, more than one honest single has said that every time a marriage rolls around they think, "When is it going to be my turn."

With those kind of thoughts floating around, it is a good time to remind singles that marriage should result from God's call and not selfish desire.

The constant fight of Christians is against the world's standards and ways. Hollywood has painted having a mate as the basic need of man. God's view is that man and woman have a need to give themselves to another in order to fulfill His purposes.

Looking for love can easily cause young singles (and older singles) to snoop in the wrong places. Even older, well intentioned, Christians can give the wrong advice of, "You need a husband." As a pastor and one who works extensively with singles, my challenge is to bring men to the place of maturity where they are able to take a wife for the good of the Kingdom.

In an earlier issue of the Brief we published an article by Steve Humble that dealt with helping young men come to the place of maturity before they pursue marriage. It was followed by an article Billy wrote. We have reproduced these and made them available at the book table.

If you are getting the "itch" for marriage, pick up one of the reprints. Read through to see if your itch is from God or just bad spiritual hygiene.

Parents meeting

If you have children you will want to plan to stay after church on December 10.

We will be having a meeting to discuss the training programs we are using for the children of the church.

I'm sure you are aware of our desire to supplement the parents in the training of their children rather than supplant them. This meeting is to keep you as parents abreast of how to best benefit from the programs we offer.

At the meeting Rob and Bonita Scales will be presenting an overview of the 0-5 year old classes. The teachers will also share how they feel they can best serve you as you train your children.

We will meet immediately after church in the basement. Bring a desert and plan to stay until 9:00 p.m.

Sunday meeting, December 24th

December 24th we will meet as usual at the church for our Sunday evening meeting. Many folks will be out of town while others may be otherwise occupied. Nonetheless, for those of us who are available, we will join together for worship, prayer and sharing from the Word.

The preceding Sunday, December 17, we will be praying over the team that will be leaving for the trip to Mexico. Be prepared ahead of time to enter into this time of prayer.

Mexico

In less than a month we will board American Airlines bound for Acapulco, Mexico. After eight hours with the airlines and two hours by bus, we will be in a small market town called Ayutla. The weather will be a mild 70 degrees and we will begin construction on Pedro Basilio's house.

Moving toward that day we are making both spiritual and natural preparations. December 8th the team members will meet at Billy's house to be briefed on the trip. At 8:30 we will call Pedro in Mexico so that we can make final arrangements. Anyone who is interested in praying with the team on that evening is welcome.

Pray for the continued protection of the Basilio family. Also, with the coming trip, you can pray for travel safety and ease in final preparations. Also, you can lift up the actual construction of the house.

FLASH...FLASH...FLASH...FLASH...FLASH...FLASH

Just before printing the Brief we got word from Dow Robinson who is in Mexico. The situation in Ayutla in regard to Americans is delicate now and we need to be wise as we plan to go. When we first heard from Dow it seemed that we might need to narrow the group down a bit, but at this point, everyone who is signed up will be going.

Need to honor someone with a special gift?

Don't Forget

"A Touch of Grace"

For radical Christians, Christmas can be a challenging time. All of the customs can be difficult to sort through and decide which should be followed.

However, giving is first and foremost a Christian virtue. It is always appropriate for us to give.

When it comes time to give certain people gifts, it can be difficult to find something that will bless them.

Since most of our parents already have what they need, our gifts are really a way to honor them. Because of that, it is important that we find something that will let them know we were thinking of them and their tastes.

Kyra, and her parents have gathered together a great selection of unique items (Mr. Fossett is especially fond of music boxes) which are on display at the store in Frankfort.

If you are having trouble finding something that will bless those you would like to give to at this time of year, a drive to Frankfort might be worth your time.

If you want to know a little more about what they might have, call the 800 number.

1 (800) 456-6209

Who will see the return of Jesus?

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of god: and the dead in christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

II Thessalonians 4:16-18

“Comfort one another with these words.” I wonder what Paul had in mind when he gave these words to the church? Do you suppose he had in mind conjuring up some great projection of the seven headed beast, tramping through your old neighborhood devouring all the little brats that didn't make the rapture? Or maybe he was thinking more along the lines of striking terror in your heart so that you would run to the mountains and build a cabin stocked with a 3 1/2 year supply of food and bottled water?

I don't think so.

Paul was simply telling the people of God that Jesus had a plan and when it was completed that He Himself would be united with His people to live together forever. Whether you live or whether you die, you will be with the Lord when all that has been said in eternity is done in time.

That is a comforting thought to me.

More specifically, the comfort was intended to be for those who had lost loved ones before the return of Christ (v. 13). It was a comfort that we would not miss them in eternity.

No Christian can read these verses without them eliciting great emotion from our inner beings. There is a longing in us to be united with lost loved ones. Even more, we groan deep in our spirit to be united with Jesus.

These simple words bring comfort. Other ideas added to these verses can bring confusion and fear. We must simply believe what the scripture says and let God work out the details.

Who did not see Jesus?

When Jesus came the first time many had their ideas about Messiah. The Pharisees were looking for one who would confirm their system of beliefs. The Sadducees were expecting the same. The Essenes thought surely He would come as one of them, living a lifestyle of separation in the wilderness. Finally, the Zealots thought of a political/military leader. “Surely”, they thought, “Messiah will deliver us from the Romans.”

Because of their preconceived ideas, none of these were able to receive Jesus when he came.

The Pharisees could not

see a Messiah who would forgive a woman caught in adultery or heal on the sabbath.

The Sadducees could not believe in a Messiah who not only believed in a resurrection but said He was the resurrection.

The Essenes would have no part with someone claiming to be Messiah but mingling with and being a part of the suburban hustle.

And, if the man claiming to be Messiah would not take up arms, surely He could not be the one who would restore the Kingdom to Israel.

Those who did not see Jesus were the ones who had their ideas about what Messiah should be.

Who did see Jesus?

The people who did see Jesus at His birth are a precious group. Mary, a young virgin, and her believing husband saw Him. Anna, a prophetess who spent every day in the temple serving God saw in the baby Jesus redemption for all those who waited. And the old man Simeon, who the Bible says was just and devout could say “...lettest thou

thy servant depart in peace, For mine eyes have seen thy salvation", after a view of Jesus.

Mary and Joseph were two

We must simply believe what the scripture says and let God work out the details.

for how He will return. Many also have an idea about what He will do when He returns.

Some of their ideas might be right. Unfortunately, most are not. Some argue whether there is a rapture or not. Others, convinced that there is a rapture, speculate when it will come. One movement believes in total

political salvation while another believes the fall of their country is eminent.

Those who are straining at gnats to answer questions that Jesus has not answered are in very real danger of not seeing His revelation of Himself at all.

They will be like those who had no idea that the Baby born to a simple couple full of faith, was Messiah. They will look for Him in the portals of religious, political, or military power. He will come to the simple manger.

like Joseph, when things might not seem to be working out like they think it should, they will stick with God rather than their ideas.

These are the people who will most clearly understand the return of Jesus as it unfolds in His way.

No one really knew when, how, or where the Messiah would come the first time. But to those people who had the right hearts, He was seen clearly as He revealed Himself.

In the same way, no one really knows when, how, or where Jesus will return. But to those whom God has prepared as vessels of faith, He will be seen as He unfolds His glory in the earth.

So, take comfort in the words that He will return. Yield your heart to God and not the theories of man. Stay close to

Yield your heart to God and not the theories of man. Stay close to Him, and you will not miss His second appearance.

simple people. Mary simply responded in faith to the revelation of God. Joseph, a carpenter, responded to the word of God in taking Mary to be his wife, although she was carrying a child. In their simple faith, they recognized Jesus when He came.

Anna had spent her life fasting and praying in service to God. She had not built her own elaborate system to reach God. She had just been a woman of prayer. On the day that she saw Jesus, she had no trouble discerning who He was.

Simeon is similar to Anna. He was a man with a word from God, he was just, he was devout, and he was in touch with God.

These are the kind of people who see God. Simple people see God. People of prayer see God. Devout people of Faith see God.

Who shall not see Jesus?

Today, many people have an idea about when Jesus will return. Many have elaborate plans

Who shall see Jesus?

Today there are those who, like Anna, are pressing into the Spirit of God through daily communion with God. Like Simeon, they are just and devout. Like Mary, they are ready to say, let it be according to thy word. And,

Him, and you will not miss His second appearance. If those who are dead in faith can be a part of His second coming, surely those who believe and are still living will rejoice in that day too. ■

Children

Develop training not babysitting

"As more people in this body are having children, it is becoming a greater burden on the rest of us to deal with them during our services." This is the kind of sick statement you might hear from someone who doesn't understand the honor and privilege each child presents to parents and friends. A church with this sick attitude would try to do something to keep the kids occupied during their services.

At LCF kids are seen as a blessing and part of the vision. As a result, we are not trying to throw together some classes to keep them occupied. We have a very clear vision of what we want for our children and we are prayerfully aiming to do the best job in training, teaching, and educating them.

Rob Scales has recently joined with his wife Bonita, who was already working with our children who are from 0-5 years old. Since we are developing more teachers and ministers who will be working with children we have come up with some Principles and Goals that we can share with the church.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our teaching program is designed to:

1. Aid parents, not replace them, in training their children.
2. Teach parents about character and spiritual development in their children.
3. Teach the children the Bible with a goal toward:
 - a. Knowledge of the whole

Word and not just selected portions.

b. Application of Biblical principles in their lives.

c. Development of character.

d. Spiritual growth and experience.

e. True relation with God.

4. Tie our children's training to the corporate vision of establishing a New Testament church.

GOALS

1. Build a foundation for life in all aspects.

2. Nurture a child toward a personal relationship with God (salvation).

3. Learn to obey from the heart, not just an outward conformity.

4. Develop relationship and responsibility toward one another (love one another).

5. Help our children understand God's purpose for their lives and how that fits with the greater plan of God.

6. Bring our children to an understanding of belonging to God's family and His Kingdom.

7. Cause our children to under-

stand that God wants them to extend the Kingdom (evangelize) in their neighborhood, town, country and in the world.

PROGRAM

In our actual classes, we try to capitalize on children's ability to learn by hearing, seeing and touching. Lots of visual aids are used to help in visual learning. Repetition and consistency are guiding teaching techniques. When trying to communicate a particular truth, playtime is used to reinforce the lesson. Opportunities for practical application and thereby learning are sought out.

Nursery (0-2) This class is taught on a one year cycle. The basic foundations of a Christian view are taught in this class: God made me, God made families, Creation, Baby Jesus.

Toddlers (2-3) This class is taught on a 2 year cycle. Building on the basics through more detailed teaching, this class also begins character development. The basics are developed through teaching from the Bible.

Children (4-5) This class is taught on a 2 year cycle. This class brings children into an advanced understanding of the things taught in earlier years. Character development continues to be important and actual teaching from the Word is continued.

O my God, I ask for grace to take to heart and wisely apply in dealing with my children the lessons of Thy Word.

May my whole relationship with them be full of the joyful assurance that the fear of the Lord is the path to the enjoyment of all good and that Thy service is happiness. Let this be so real that all thought of pleasure in the world or sin may pass away.

Help me to teach them the fear of the Lord by instruction, and example, and the spirit of my life. .

Andrew Murray

Book review

Christian Spirituality

We are studying through Romans 6-8 in order to understand how we can walk holy by the grace of God. A book that has given me a wider perspective on how Christians have approached this subject is *Christian Spirituality* by Donald Alexander.

The book gives five views of sanctification. These views are presented by scholars from five different traditions. Those traditions are Reformed, Lutheran, Wesleyan, Pentecostal, and Contemplative. It is interesting in that it lets each man present the view of his tradition. Immediately following each presentation is a comment by the other four men. This method really helps you see the differences between the perspectives.

The book was profitable to me by helping define my own questions and answers. It also was a help in understanding why certain people approach spirituality the way they do. I gained something from all of the discussions and feel better able to find God's grace for sanctification.

Something else I decided while reading the book was that the bottom line for most people is whether or not they really had a love for God. Each of these men presented their ideas on the subject. But more important are the lives of the men who presented the teaching.

Although I did not know the men by name who presented the views, we all know the names of men who are associated with their thoughts. Martin Luther, of course, was a good Lutheran. John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards were reformed. Wesley was Wesleyan. As far as Pentecostalism there have not emerged any well known theologians, but some of you may be familiar with Ern Baxter or David Duplessis. Contemplatives would be people like Bernard of Clairvaux and Tomas Merton.

I believe each of these men had true hearts after God. And, I believe that each of them had some portion of the truth that helped them live holy lives. Without confining ourselves to one set of dynamics in sanctification I believe we can draw from all of these views to allow God to perfect us.

I would not suggest that you embrace everything in this book and try to live your life by all of it. As a matter of fact, if you are not able to read something without doing so with discernment, this book is not for you. Stay away from it.

The book is published by Inter Varsity Press. You can pick it up at the Christian bookstore.

Women praying for each other

Sometimes we have problems or situations in our lives that seem too difficult to handle by ourselves. That's when we need the help of our friends. Those close to us may have the faith we need, answers we have overlooked, or the discernment that we may not have.

Recently a few women got together to pray for each other. It turned out so well that one of the women who prayed called the same group of women together to pray for her a couple of weeks later. Again we had a marvelous time of prayer seeing God bring healing, faith and practical solutions.

I believe God wants us to open this up to any women in the body who need an extra portion of prayer and encouragement from other women. When women come together to pray for each other not only do we develop closer relationships but we can also see the hand of God touch our lives.

Please let me know if you would like to get together with some other women to pray for you. The only criteria is, is to be open and honest and ready for God to have his way.

Call Brenda at 277-2346.

Science Workshop for Home Schoolers
Monday, December 11, 1-3:00 p.m.
Second Presbyterian Church

Libby Morely and Levi Gordon attended a workshop for teachers and are offering a hands on workshop here in Lexington. Experiments will be performed with electricity, acids and bases, etc.

You can enroll 3rd-12th graders by calling Libby at 273-7816. Enrollment is limited.

December

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 5:00 pm Worship at Woodland					1	2
3 5:00 pm Worship at Woodland	4	5 Children's HF 7:30 at Woodland	6	7 6:00 am prayer	8 Gregg's HF 7:00	9
10 5:00 pm Worship at Woodland Parents meet after church	11 Home School Workshop (see pg. 7)	12 Billy's HF 7:00	13	14 6:00 am prayer Jimmy's HF 7:00	15	16
17 5:00 pm Worship at Woodland	18	19 Children's HF 7:30 at Woodland	20	21 6:00 am prayer	22 Gregg's HF 7:00	23
24 5:00 pm Worship at Woodland	25 Christmas	26 Billy's HF 7:00	27 Mexico Team Departs	28 6:00 am prayer Jimmy's HF 7:00	29	30

* Gregg and Judy were out of town when we printed the calendar. Look for announcement of open house.

Pastor's Brief

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