

Midtown Messenger

Volume 2

December 22, 2019

Issue 51

I Am Weak But Thou Art Strong

By: Don Walker

*I*t took seven years of living as a wild animal before Nebuchadnezzar knew “that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men” and before he humbled himself (Dan. 4). Belshazzar knew of Nebuchadnezzar’s humility and still did not learn (Dan. 5:22). Oh, that men would learn that when they humble themselves before the hand of Jehovah, He extends His hand to help.

We live in difficult and trying times. It seems that even the normal necessities of our lives can become burdens which seem to weigh us down to the point that we wonder if we will be able to take another step. Add to that the challenges of “peer pressure,” of being a light that shines in dark places, or the challenge of just not being swept away with the crowd, and we wonder if we will make it at all. It is easy to see why Jesus said, “Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. 7:14). The Greek word translated *strait* means “narrow, or pressed against.” Paul used another Greek word, which has this word in it, when he wrote, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed” (2 Cor. 4:8). Ours is a life of challenges, but we cannot afford to allow them to hinder our spiritual progress or bury us under a pile of worldly rubble. We, with the Apostle Paul, must determine to “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:14). The language of the apostle is very illustrative. The “mark” Paul speaks of is a “mark or goal upon which we can fix our eyes”. Paul’s picture is of one who is competing in a foot race. The runner has turned the corner and is in the

home stretch, where he can see the goal and his gaze is fixed upon the prize.

If we are not careful, we can begin each day as if our success is determined strictly by *our* ability, and our ability alone. We can too easily face the day, all alone in self-sufficiency all because we failed to stop and consider our God and petition Him for help. Instead, we should humbly rise and proclaim, “I am weak, but Thou art strong.”

As we begin our day, while we walk in the way, and when we lay down to rest at the end of our day, we do well to acknowledge our need and dependency on the God we love, trust and serve. It should serve as a great comfort to each of us that we can “cast all our cares upon Him; for He cares for us” (1 Pet. 5:7). When we learn to trust our God and lean upon Him, then we learn the true joy and rest of which our Lord spoke.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Matt 11:28-30).

Often times we have individuals respond confessing sin and requesting prayers that they might have the strength to live, as they should. Those that do such are an indication of the longing we have to live properly before our Lord. They also indicate the challenges that so often arise. Of course, each one of these individuals must do their part, but it should be just as obvious that we, their brothers and sisters, can also help them to be strong. Every one of us can say

honestly, “I am weak”. Along with that proclamation, we must also turn and say, “Thou oh God, art strong.” Only in so doing will we be able to rise above this mundane world and soar. Let us each one remember the other in our prayers and actions. Let us so labor that we may be like Philemon when Paul wrote of him, “For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother” (Phi. 7). Until next time, let us encourage, exhort, and edify each other and let us each study our Bibles more and more.

The Forest Hill News, Forest Hill Church of Christ Weekly Bulletin, October 23, 2019.

How to Sear Your Conscience – John Baker

Scripture is filled with warnings concerning our conscience. Jeremiah spoke about his people having, “forgotten how to blush” (Jer. 8:12). Further, he said that when wickedness was done in Israel, “my people love to have it so” (Jer. 5:31). Paul speaks of those who, “suppress the truth in unrighteousness” and therefore do not pay attention to God’s will (Rom. 1:18). Later, Paul again mentions people who had spent so much time in sin that they were, “past feeling” (Eph. 4:19). Jesus Himself spoke of those whose, “hearts have grown dull, their ears hard of hearing, and their eyes closed” (Matt. 13:15).

All those passages point to one frightening truth: it is possible for people to get to a point where sin no longer pricks our conscience and causes us to feel guilty (hence the term, “seared” — 1 Tim. 4:2). When we become numb to the presence of sin, it becomes impossible to please God (Rom. 8:8). How do people often sear their consciences?

Procrastination — When Felix heard the Gospel, he told Paul, “When I have a more convenient time I will call for you” (Acts 24:25). One would-be disciple told Jesus, “Lord, let me go first and bury my father” (Lk. 9:59). Seems like everybody could come up with an excuse for not obeying God today. The result of hearing and not doing God’s will is self-deception (Jas. 1:22). How can we afford to procrastinate when we have no future time promised us (1 Thess. 5:2)?

Rationalizations — Rationalization is the art

of making what we know to be wrong seem right. “Well, I lied, but it was for her own good.” “I know God says it’s wrong, but doesn’t He want me to be happy?” “I know it’s wrong, but I’ll do it and ask forgiveness later on...” Rationalization is one of the fastest and most efficient ways to sear our conscience.

Compromise — Christians are commanded to, “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them” (Eph. 5:11). However, when standing for what is right might make us a little uncomfortable, the temptation is often to compromise what God’s word says for what will seemingly make life a little easier. It’s frightening how fast one compromise: “It won’t hurt if we just sleep in on one Sunday” can become a habit.

Apathy — Many people are seared by spiritual inactivity and lethargy. From the outside, they may appear to be “good” people, but the word of God has no noticeable effect on their growth and development, spiritually speaking. This is a great concern, for God’s word commands us to grow (2 Pet. 3:18), and be transformed (Rom. 12:1-2). Jesus said that those who hear His words and fail to do them are foolishly building their spiritual houses on a foundation of sand (Matt. 7:24-27).

Pride — Another way to sear our conscience is to hold so strongly to our own beliefs and opinions that we cannot be instructed by God’s word. This is exactly what the Pharisees did; they set up traditions and elevated them to the same status as God’s word (Matt. 15:7-9). When their beliefs were challenged by Jesus, they proudly held on to what someone else had taught them. May we always take care to be teachable, not proud and stubborn.

Levity (Laughter) — Many a conscience has been seared while distracted by laughter. The very context that mentions people being past feeling (Eph. 4:18-19) also speaks of “coarse jesting” (Eph. 5:4). Is it possible in our entertainment culture that Christians are, in the words of one author, “amusing themselves to death?” When a child of God begins to laugh at sin, his conscience is often being seared without his knowledge. May God help us to be as sensitive to sin as He is!

The Messenger, the Maud Church of Christ Weekly Bulletin, October 15, 2017.

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE
Week of December 22, 2019

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Jeff Harris
Scripture Reading: Fred Scherffius

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Bryant Siegel
Fruit of the Vine: James Cammock
Offering: Doug Jobs
Assist: Kirk FitzSimmons, BJ Davis, Desmon Flonnory

Sunday Evening: Bryant Siegel, James Cammock

Prayer

A.M. Closing: Anthony Scherffius
P.M. Closing: Mark FitzSimmons

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Anthony Scherffius
Sun. P.M.: Mike McVey
Wednesday: Larry Nuckels

Ushers:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devotional:

Steve Randle

Open/Close Building:

Jobs

Sound System:

Curtis Scherffius

Greeters:

Don Lynn
Allen Clifton

Prepare Communion:

Jeff & Kelly Cannady

Please update the Pocket Directory in the foyer for the 2020 Pocket Directory. If there are no corrections needed, please put a check mark. Also, please put an asterisk (*) next to each baptized member in your family.

Sunny Glen Children's Home is requesting the following items only: Gallon freezer bags and fruit drinks like capri suns or kool aid jammers. Please place the items in the donation box in the hallway. The truck will be here to pick up February 11-12.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Bob Law, husband of Sally Law, who is still recovering from salmonella and septic shock. Bill Young who is dealing with health issues.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec. 25: Singing night in lieu of Bible Classes
Jan. 5: Bridal shower for Alex Scherffius at the home of Nia FitzSimmons from 2-4pm. Alex is registered at Bed, Bath & Beyond, Target, Amazon.
Jan 5: Men's Meeting @ 3pm here at the building
Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28: Tuesday Men's and Ladies Bible Class
Jan. 11: Picture Day for Wall Directory
Jan. 12: Jr/Sr. High Devo hosted by the Dolans

AREA EVENTS

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:

Happy Birthday: Leta Reeves (22), Athena Scherffius (23), June Hawkins (27), Kelson Jacobs (28)

Sign Up Sheets on the Bulletin Board:

Please sign up to update your family photo for the Pictorial wall directory on Sat., January 11, 2020. Also, Please sign up to Open/Close the building, Prepare Communion, and host Youth Devotionals for 2020.

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Veronica Serenil
Clark Withers

SHUT-INS:

Faye Henderson
Sandy Malone

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Minister: Ronnie Scherffius
Secretary: Nina Siegel

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM
Sunday Evening Worship: 5:00PM
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of December 15, 2019

Bible Class.....	111
A.M. Worship.....	136
P.M. Worship.....	90
Wednesday Bible Class.....	74

Offering \$3,547

Reading for this week: Titus 1-3

The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works.

Titus 3:8



SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli

Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore

Southwest School of Bible Studies - William Pedigo

GO PAPERLESS!

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