

**If I Had Three (Or More) Wishes**  
**Steve Higginbotham**

The political season is upon us. Two parties who want to shape the future of America, but each in their own way, have ramped up the rhetoric. Then, sadly a young man attempted to assassinate the former president last Saturday. Since then, the nation has been abuzz! Everyone is talking. Social media has exploded. Everyone is sharing their opinions. Some are angry. Some are re-energized. Some wish the assassin had a better aim, while others seek retaliation.

Because I have very little interest in politics, maybe it helps to keep me from the fray. But as I stood from a distance this past week, I had these thoughts.

- I wish more Christians would be as vocal about their Christianity as their politics.
- I wish Christians who have the zeal to go door-to-door, campaigning for their political party, would have the zeal to go door-to-door, telling people about Jesus.
- I wish more Christians would be willing to defend the doctrine of Christ like they defend their political platform and candidate.
- I wish more Christians were as committed to going to worship as they are going to vote.
- I wish more Christians would show more interest in heaven than they do their nation.
- I wish more Christians would realize their heavenly citizenship is far more important than their citizenship in the United States.
- I wish more Christians would be more upset by someone committing sin than they are with someone who didn't vote.

In a congregation not far from here, a brother in Christ dismissed the congregation where he worshiped with a prayer and closed the prayer by asking his favorite politician to "save us." Brethren, to ask for a politician to "save us" while speaking to the God of this universe is a demonstration of how some Christians are blinded by politics!

Let's keep our heads (2 Tim 4:5). Let's mind our manners (Matt 7:12). Let's remember where our citizenship is (Phil 3:20). Let's pray for our leaders to the end that we may be able to live a quiet and peaceful life (1 Tim 2:1-2). And remember, we can't serve two masters (Matt 6:24).

**ASK A FRIEND TO ATTEND**

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**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
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## LIGHT

*"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* (Matthew 5:16)



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**Sam Willcut**  
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**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**

**Sunday Worship**  
 9:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M

**Bible Study**

Sunday Morning 10:15 A.M.  
 Wednesday Evening 7:00 P.M.

**Youth Minister:**

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**"VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME"**

**GOD'S WORD**  
**Psalm 119:9-16**

Psalm 119 is an interesting piece of scripture. Not only does it have the distinction of being the longest "chapter" in the Bible with 176 verses, but it is divided into twenty-two sections with eight verses each and begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, evidently which the author arranged in a methodical manner to facilitate memorization. The entire emphasis of this eminent psalm is on God's word. Notice some lessons we can learn in the second section (*Beth*).

God's word can **cleanse** (119:9; cf. John 15:3). We are sanctified and cleansed "with the washing of water by the word" (Eph 5:26).

God's word **needs reading daily** (119:9-10). In seeking God with our "whole heart" and trying not to wander from His commandments, we need to be daily Bible readers.

God's word can **prohibit us from sin** (119:11). However, it can only work if God's word is in our heart (40:8; Rom 10:8; Col 3:16). It will do little good in prohibiting from sin if it is simply on the shelf, on the table, in our pew, or even in our hand. It must be in our hearts.

God's word **requires learning** (119:12). Just as the psalmist was open to learn God's word (119:64, 68, 108, 181), we likewise should be eager to learn. A knowledge of the word of God does not come naturally through osmosis but takes diligent study (cf. 2 Tim 2:15). As the Ethiopian nobleman answered the question from Philip concerning his understanding of the word of God, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" (Acts 8:30-31). Jesus quoted the prophets (Isaiah 54:13; Jer. 31:34; Micah 4:2) when He said, "And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45).

God's word **requires teaching** (119:13). After learning the word of God, we should be willing with our lips to declare "all the judgments of Your mouth." Jesus emphasized this in the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). The psalmist also said, "I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness in the great assembly; indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O Lord, You Yourself know" (40:9; cf. 2 Tim 2:2). God's word is valuable (119:14). It is "better to me than thousands of coins of gold and silver" (119:72). It is more valuable than "gold, yes, than fine gold" (119:127). The wise man spoke of the wisest investment one can make: "Buy the truth, and do not sell it" (Pro 23:23).

God's word **requires meditation and respect** (119:15). Oh, how we desperately need both things today. We should spend time in daily meditation of the word of God today (Josh 1:8; Psa. 1:2; 63:6; 104:34; 119:78, 97, 148; 143:5). We also need a deep respect for God's word as the supreme authority for our lives (2 Tim 3:16-17).

God's word **requires remembrance** (119:16). We need to take heed to "never forget Your precepts" (cf. 119:93).

May God bless our treatment of this sacred book that He has bestowed to us as a blessing!

**--Sam Willcut**

### ***From the preacher's heart...***

We just finished a very successful week at JSCYC, but there is little rest for the weary, for the work of the Lord's church at Carthage continues forward, and there are some great opportunities soon!

Speaking of JSCYC, we are pleased to announce that they had one of their largest years in attendance, especially with adult staff. There were 150 campers, and 67 staff members, totaling 217 in all! As a result of the multiple daily Bible classes, daily lessons and devotionals, daily opportunities to hear the word of God taught, proclaimed, and discussed by godly teachers, preachers, and counselors, there were four (4) baptisms and twenty-seven (27) prayer requests for restoration. These prayer requests do not count the numerous requests for private prayers throughout the week, but only the public requests for encouragement and restoration. We rejoice with our very own Makenna Hassler, who responded last week and requested prayers to become a stronger young Christian lady! Thanks to everyone who supported this successful week of Bible camp!

The next event on the near horizon here at Carthage is our Annual Friday Night Singing, which will be August 2. A provided supper of hamburgers and hotdogs will be available at 5:30 PM, and the singing will begin at 7:00 PM. Everyone is not only invited to attend and enjoy this time of rich fellowship but is also encouraged to invite and bring guests! Many of our religious friends may not have enjoyed the beauties of acapella singing, and this would be a wonderful way to introduce them to the simplicity of worshipping God in this manner.

We are also gearing up for Bible Bowl, which is scheduled for Saturday, September 7; it is hosted by the Sycamore congregation in Cookeville and held on the campus of TTU. Our young people are beginning to study the book of Second Samuel in preparation for this intellectually enriching event. We appreciate those who have already signed up to provide supper for our young people in the next few Wednesday nights leading up to this event, and to the adults and parents who are studying God's word with them and committing this great Old Testament book (facts) to memory.

Speaking of such, I have committed to aid our young people in their knowledge of the book of Second Samuel by committing to preaching every lesson in the month of August (and the first Sunday in September) from the book of Second Samuel. The apostle Paul understood that "the things that were written aforetime were written for our learning" (Romans 15:4).

Finally, Melissa and I wish to thank you for your prayers on behalf of our recent travels to Texas (our oldest son graduated from SWSBS and got hitched!), and for welcoming our entire family as you have done, exemplified by the recent turnout at Christina's birthday. We have only been members for a matter of months, and you have treated us as if we have been members all our lives. Thank you!

I love you, and may God bless you.

***Sam Willcut***

### ***NEWS & NOTES:***

**SICK:** Ann Carter has requested prayers on behalf of her sister and brother-in-law, Jean & George Long, as well as their daughter, Patty Roberts. They are all struggling with health issues and need prayer at this time. Sister Ruby Fisher saw her doctor last week due to upper respiratory symptoms. Mary Jo Hackett will have another back surgery on Thursday, July 25 at Vanderbilt Wilson.

**CONGREGATION ACTIVITIES:** ***Bible Bowl Practices*** begin today and will continue each Wednesday evening beginning at 5PM. There is a sign-up list in the foyer to provide meals for these students each week. ***Congregational Outing*** to watch the Nashville Sounds baseball team will be Saturday, July 27. A sign-up sheet is in the foyer. ***Fellowship Meal*** will be Sunday, July 28 after the second worship service. Please make plans to attend. ***Magi Boxes*** There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer to bring in supplies for the Magi Boxes. Please sign up to bring some items in to fill these boxes. We will be packing the boxes on August 10 and having an outdoor movie. More details to follow soon. ***Annual Singing*** will be on Friday, August 2 here at the building. Hamburgers and hotdogs will be provided for the meal, but we will need help with sides and desserts. The meal will begin at 5:30 PM with the singing following at 7:00 PM.

**Continue to pray for the following:** Dimple Hicks; Louise Eldridge; Barbara Silcox; Barbara Jenkins; Brenda Copeland; Faye Maberry; Lola & Bobby King; Jimmy Fisher; James Spivey (Faye Maberry's brother-in-law); Jerry Martin (cancer); Sherrie Lawrence; Michelle Allen; Eva Louise Holt; Mary Ann Herd; Scott, Jennifer, and Stephen Johnson; Brenda Boyd; Linda Myers; Mikel and Janice Hicks; Cynthia Gibbs; Josephine Fitts; Brenda Fitts; Jerry & Mary Phillips; Hudson Anderson; Tom & Sherry Culver; Sharon Halliburton; Scott Bane; Patricia Brooks; Dayton Jamison; Janet Rose; Ruby Anderson; Joe Armistead; Todd Smith; John Jones; Brenda Forrest; and Bea Davis. Please let Kristi know if there is anyone that needs to be added or removed from this list.

**NURSING HOME/ ASSISTED LIVING/ SHUT-INS:** Ricky Branham (SCHR); Lonetta Bains (Pavilion – Lebanon); Pat Paysinger (Shut-in).

**THE MILITARY:** Korrey King – USMC (Grandson of Bobby & Lola King); Jana Watson, Ann Carter's granddaughter (Army); Benjamin Gentry (USMC).

**“Show me Your ways, Lord, teach me Your paths.” Psalm 25:4**

**AREA EVENTS:** ***Gospel Meeting*** at the Rome church of Christ July 26-28 with speaker Tyler Alverson. ***Gospel Meeting*** at Richmond Chapel church of Christ July 28-31 with speaker Drew Stafford. ***Men's Fellowship*** at the Clearview church of Christ Saturday, August 10 from 9AM-2 PM. ***Upper Cumberland Men's Day*** at the Sycamore church of Christ with speaker Willie Franklin Saturday, August 24. Breakfast will be served at 7:30 AM, sessions starting at 8:15 AM, and lunch provided at 11:30 AM. \*\*Flyers for all these events are posted on the bulletin board in the foyer.

**EVENTS CALENDAR:** ***SCHR Devo:*** First Sundays of Feb, May, Aug, and Nov. ***Annual Singing*** will be held here at Carthage on August 2. Meal at 5:30; Singing at 7:00 PM. ***Bible Bowl*** September 7 at TTU. ***Gospel Meeting*** with Brother Charles Williams will be October 27-30.

### **No One Came to Our Party**

After a few days of hard work, all the preparations had been made and it was time for the party. The tables were ready, filled with stacks of paper plates, plastic flatware, and cups. Cold drinks were iced and ready while the grill belched out smoke with the smell of cooking steaks. There was sliced fresh watermelon, homemade ice cream and apple pie. Hanging decorations moved gently in the breeze while tunes played from the Bluetooth speaker. It was time for the party!

As the time for the gathering came and went none of the invited guests arrived. Perhaps the traffic was bad or other distractions were holding up the party goers. But as an hour passed, it soon became evident that no one was coming. The time, effort, and expense that had gone into getting ready for the party was all for nothing. The host felt disappointed and embarrassed. "No one came to our party."

Jesus told two similar stories, one about a wedding, the other about a great supper. (Matt. 22:2-14; Luke 14:16-24) Both had been prepared but some guests made excuses as to why they could not come while others "made light of it and went their ways..." (Matt. 22:5).

Each week, the preparation for worship to God has been made for all of us. We may believe that our lack of attendance doesn't affect anyone but ourselves. However, by my absence I may be discouraging those who have worked diligently in preparation for me to experience the blessing of worship. Just as in our previous example, the bible class teacher may sit in an empty classroom and say, "No one has come." Let us all consider those that work so hard to make it possible for us to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth.

Jay Launius – 2024 Maud church of Christ Maud, Texas