

A WORLD WITHOUT HOPE

Can you imagine a world that had never heard of Jesus Christ? What if He had never been born? Old Testament prophecies gave God's people, Israel, hope in the coming of the Messiah (Christ). Even Gentiles were "not without witness" (Acts 14:17), as seen in the visit of the wise men from the East (Matt. 2). God's word to all the world was: A King and Redeemer will be born who will die for man's sins.

Without the coming of Christ into the world, the world would be without hope. We would not have the abundant life, for He said, "I am come that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). The world is declared to be "guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19b), for "all have sinned..." (Rom. 3:23). The whole world would then be under condemnation, for "The wages of sin is death..." (Rom. 6:23a). If he had not come, there would not have been an acceptable offering for our sins, but Isaiah had prophesied of the Christ: "Thou shalt make His soul (life) an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10) Heb. 9:22 says, "Without the shedding of blood (His blood) is no remission of sins". But Jesus Christ has come, died for us, is risen, and one day will return.

Dare we to live as though He had never been born? Have you availed yourself of the hope that is in Christ?

(-Ron Bartanen, Minister for Arthur (IL) church of Christ, via The Sower, 12/17/2017)

ASK A FRIEND TO ATTEND

Volume 26

April 8, 2020

Number 7

CHURCH OF CHRIST
711 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 88
Carthage, TN 37030
RETURN SERVICE
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SMITH COUNTY 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)



MEETING PLACE OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

Sunday Worship

9:00 A.M.

6:00 P.M.

12:30 P.M. (5th Sunday)

Bible Study

Sunday Morning
10:15 A.M.

Wednesday Evening

7:00 P.M.

For Transportation to Services
615-735-0114 or 615-418-6637

Fax Number: (615) 735-0131

Website: www.carthagechurchofchrist.net

Sunday Services broadcast on YouTube

FREE Bible Correspondence Courses, Tracts or Home Bible Study/ Videos.
(615-735-0114 or 615-735-2462)

"VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME"

THE BLESSINGS OF AFFLICTION

Augustine once commented that "God had one Son on earth without sin, but never one without suffering." Life is no smooth road for any of us. Job says, "*Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble*" (Job 14:1). Man is always in the forge or on the anvil. Every life is shaped by its trials and afflictions.

I have noticed that it is affliction that proves one weak and another strong. A house built upon the sand is just as good in fair weather as the one built upon a rock. It is when the rain comes and the wind blows that the difference is established. If you would know whether a staff is strong or rotten, you must observe it when it is leaned on and the weight is borne upon it. A cobweb is as strong as a cable as long as there is no strain upon it.

The truly virtuous person is like good metal – the more he is fired the more he is refined. God polishes the jewels. He especially loves, and intends to make most resplendent with many sharp-cutting instruments and rough files. The diamond that has been cut most is the one that sparkles most. The brightest crowns worn in heaven will be the ones that are tried, smelted, and polished in the furnaces of tribulation.

Foremost among the Christian's blessings is that his heart has been caused to bleed. God allows tribulation to visit His children, but He tells its purpose – that "*tribulations worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope*" (Romans 5:4). For Jesus, the mount of transfiguration was on the way to the cross. For each of us, the cross is on the way to the mount of transfiguration. The cross-bearer on earth will be the crown-wearer in heaven.

(Edwin White, via The Voice of Truth International, Vol. 1)

NEGATIVE GIFTS

Thank you, Father, for tears, for hurts, for knots in hearts and lumps in throats. Thank you for concerns that keep us awake all night and demand to be given voice again and again through prayer. Thank you for times of longing, of unrest, even of despair.

If it were not for these gifts that seem so negative, how could we grow? (Betty Burton Choate, via The Voice of Truth International, Vol. 1)

FROM THE PREACHER'S HEART:

THE NEEDS OF NATIONS

The map of the earth highlighting each of at least 180 nations which have cases of coronavirus is quite impressive. It reminds one of Isaiah's imagery of "the veil spread over all nations" (25:7). This pandemic may serve to awaken masses from their spiritual indifference. As great as is the problem with COVID-19, sin is a far more serious one (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). Sin is fatal to the soul! What are some needs of all nations revealed in the Scriptures?

GOD. The Psalmist declares: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" (33:12); "The Lord is high above all nations" (113:4); and, "O, praise you the Lord, all you nations" (117:1). Nations should tremble at His presence (Isa. 64:2). God has "made of one blood all nations" (Acts 17:24-26), and He is the ultimate and eternal Judge of all those nations (Acts 17:31; Matt. 25:32).

HUMILITY. "The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts" (Psa. 10:4). This world needs a big dose of penitence. Pride is a huge problem worldwide. Pride brings shame (Prov. 11:2); contention (Prov. 13:10); *and* destruction (Prov. 16:18; 29:23). The "pride of life" withholds the approval of God (1 John 2:16). But the humble shall be exalted (Luke 14:11; 18:14). "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:6-7).

RIGHTEOUSNESS. God beckons: "Come near, you nations, to hear; and hearken, you people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it" (Isa. 34:1). When will we ever learn that it is righteousness, not riches, that exalts a nation (Prov. 14:34)? Adding "sin to sin" is never the solution (Isa. 30:1).

THE GOSPEL. This "good news" is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). He desires His glorious gospel be taught and preached to all nations (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47). The world needs a Savior and Jesus is heaven's choice. Come to Him (Matt. 11:28-30).

Edward L Anderson

NEWS & NOTES:

SICK: Gaye Yeaman has seen her doctors since our last issue. Faye Maberry begins chemo again this Friday. Beth Fisher, Ruby's daughter-in-law, had her surgery rescheduled for May. Gary Dillard, Joey's dad, remains in need of prayers. Eric Haynie had recent oral surgery. Barbara Anderson Williams (lung cancer), requests our prayers. (Members: Please call the building - 615-735-0114 - if you have news items for bulletin/services).

PRAYER LIST: Michael Parsons; Laurie Adcock; Wendy Williams; Mai Doris Barrett; Roslyn Fox Stout; Wanda Hailey; Denise Griffin; James Hix; Rylee Winfree; Josh Dillard; Gary Dillard; Rebecca Huffines Thompson; Tommy & Linda Ashburn; Cathy Findley; Jerry Hutchins; Danny Claire; Edna Shoulders; Bill Ross; Scott Bane; Wanda Hailey, Patsy Link; Tyrone Poynter; Mark Manning; Emily Moss and children; Lucas Wakefield; Linda Dennis; Gary Anderson; Brad Wilson; Shirley Henry; Roy Hicks; Ricky Branham; Bob & Donnieta White; John Conditt; Duane Hesson; Billy Woodard; Tammy Bush; Jerry Glenn; Bentley Cowan; David Lipe; Louie Gray West; Taylor & Spencer Keaton; Paulette Blackburn; Emily Allen; Judy Fox Jones; Will Gregory; Rick Blankenship; Debby Flatt; Ken Miller; Tom Brown; Alicia Haynes; Joey Black; Joe Kemp; Susanne Tisdale; Tim Smith; Pattie Birdwell; Mary Ellen Lawrence; Donna Kemp; Ray Hobbs; Wes Stafford; Sawyer Cole; Richard Rhoten; Buddy & Jan Chaffin; Troy Spivey; Janice Anderson; Earl Carter; Jennie Burnett; Arnold Rich.

NURSING HOME/ASSISTED/LIVING/SHUT-INS: Lovell Chaffin; Wilma Richardson; Judith Newberry; Mary Lou Smith; Frances Glosser; Ricky Branham (SCH&R); Loneta Bains (Pavilion); Horace Jones (NHC, Cookeville); Hattie Branham and Pat Paysinger (Shut-ins).

IN THE MILITARY: Jana Watson, Ann Carter's granddaughter (Army); Randy Carter's sons and Lacey Crockett's brothers, Derek (Army) & Landon Carter (Coast Guard); Benjamin Gentry (Marines); Camron Huff (Marines); Derek Brothers (Army National Guard – now in the Middle East), Ruby Fisher's grandson-in-law.

THANK YOU NOTES: The church has received and read "Thank You" cards/notes from Peggy and Brian Denton family/Horace Jones family.

SYMPATHY: Our deepest sympathy to the following families: Jerry Hudson (Kempville Community); Ola Birdwell Fox family (Gainesboro).

EVENTS CALENDAR: *Smith County Health Care/Rehab Center Devotional:* First Sundays of February, May, August, November, 2:00 PM; *Vacation Bible School:* June 8-12; *Jackson Smith County Youth Camp:* July 19-25; *Annual Singing:* Friday, August 7, 7:00 PM; *Bible Bowl:* September 12; *Run for Don:* September 19; *Retreat:* October 9-11; *Gospel Meeting:* October 4-7, with Clarence DeLoach.

AREA EVENTS: *Polishing the Pulpit:* August 12-20, 2020.

TENNESSEE CHILDRENS' HOME: We are collecting Cheerios, Paper Towels and Toilet Paper (if you can find any!) for TCC. The truck will be in our area Tuesday, April 14.

VISITATION: Thanks to all who assist with our visitation program. We may not be able to visit in person, but please call and check on the one you are assigned. Contact Josh Brown if you have questions.

REMINDER: Due to the Coronavirus pandemic precautions, our shepherds have decided to cease our public gatherings. We will be having on-line services/lessons (face book, you tube), on Sunday at 9:00 A.M., Sunday 6:00 P.M., and Wednesdays at 7:00 P.M. We will be giving updates on events, scheduling, sick, etc. at those times and viewings. Youth Unite and the fish fry are postponed until later dates. The three-lesson series on "The Bible Lands" planned for the Sunday evenings of May 3, 10, and 17 by Duane Gossett of Gainesboro, is still scheduled. The same is true with "The Ark Encounter", May 29-30. However, that may change. Those with keys may come **to the annex** and pick up communion supplies Saturday afternoon from 2:00 – 4:00 P.M. If you do not have a key, someone will probably be here to assist you, but if not call one of the elders or preachers. There will also be a basket for your contribution. Or, you can mail it to the church at P.O. Box 88, Carthage, TN. 37030. Current copies of the bulletins (Sunday and bi-weekly), and other reading materials will also be available. As for future events we will keep you posted via the bulletin, web site, and face book

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" (2 Peter 1:2).