



The Barnesville Lantern

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Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Psalm 119:105).

The Pastors' Spotlight

One of the most important questions that anyone can ask you is found in the book of Acts, chapter 16. Read the following Scripture and pick out the question. The narrative picks up with Paul and Silas in the Philippi city jail:

"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, 'Don't harm yourself! We are all here!' The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God--he and his whole family."

What was the question? What was the answer? Why was the jailer filled with joy? How did it affect his family? This man and his family were some of the first members of the church Paul and Silas established in Philippi. You and I encounter people nearly every day who want to ask this question. And, we encounter some who are searching for God but do not know what question to ask. When you have an opportunity to share the simple gospel of Christ with a friend, family member or stranger, pray for the Holy Spirit to empower your witness. *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13).*

God Bless,

Your Pastors



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Upcoming Events

March 3 Business Meeting
March 10 Sunday School Teachers' Meeting
March 12 Parents' Night Out
March 17 St. Patrick's Day
March 19 Lunch with Watkins Cabinet Friends
March 20 Spring begins



*"For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these **three are one**"*
(I John 5:7).

[St. Patrick used the shamrock to teach the Irish about the doctrine of the Trinity]

The Pew Perspective

Lee Michael

I am rather surprised by the amount of controversy surrounding Mel Gibson's new film, *The Passion of the Christ*. Although I haven't seen this movie, I have read the Book. Many critics warn of potential anti-Semitism due to a fear that the depiction of Jesus' crucifixion will stir people to hatred against the Jewish people for their ancestors' role in those events. If any animosity results from this film, no support from Bible will be available: Scripture clearly teaches of God's love for the Jews, and how Jesus' crucifixion was God's plan to show His love for the Jews and all mankind.

From *Genesis* to *Revelation*, God reveals His eternal love for the Jews. He told Abram, father of the Jewish nation, "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (*Genesis 12:3*). The prophet Balaam was not able to curse the Hebrews, but instead had to testify, "He [God] has not observed iniquity in Jacob, nor has He seen wickedness in Israel. The Lord his God is with him..." (*Numbers 23:21*). God again reaffirmed His love for the children of Israel by telling Moses, "For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a special people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth" (*Deuteronomy 7:6*). From cover to cover, the Bible plainly shows God's abiding love for Israel. Let us not forget that Jesus, the apostles, and the early Church were all Jewish. "For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah..." (*Hebrews 7:14*).

Jesus' death was God's plan, and would have occurred with or without the involvement of the Sanhedrin and the Roman government. The only reason Jesus was born into this world was so that He could serve as the substitutionary sacrifice for our sins, thus satisfying a holy God's requirement that sin be punished, and also demonstrating a loving God's desire that reconciliation between Himself and man occur. Jesus willingly offered Himself up. He told His disciples, "I am the good shepherd...I lay down My life for the sheep...I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father" (*John 10:14-18*). Jesus stopped His disciples from preventing His arrest, as He wanted His Father's will to be done, even though He could have immediately rescued Himself, "...Do you think that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels" (*Matthew 26:53*)? Even as Jesus suffered on the cross, He absolved those who condemned Him to die. "Then Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (*Luke 23:34*).

If anyone is guilty of Jesus' death, it is us ourselves, whose sins made His sacrifice necessary. That guilt can not be leveled against modern-day Jews, and bigotry against them is without justification in the Bible. Jesus was born and died so that God's love to the Jews, and even the Gentiles, could be manifested. Mel Gibson's *Passion* is indeed provocative, not of hate, but of repentance and gratitude for God's love.

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"
(*Romans 5:8*).

Baptist Faith and Message, Part XVIII

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

March Birthdays

5 Stape Shields
18 Steve Bennett
Charles Fowler
24 Janice Cole
25 Virginia Shreve
26 Nevada Pleasants
27 Sharon Davidson
28 Jack Hough
Todd Marsh
29 Sarah Marsh
31 Ted Burriss
Robert Shreve



Prayer Concerns

Charles & Dot Fowler
Ben & Laura Bennett
Pat Elam
Annie Cooley
Virginia Shreve, at the Sunrise Retirement Center
Kathleen Cole, Peter & Marva's niece, cancer
Mike Smith, brain tumor
Louis MacNaughton, Ann Carroll's father in Pensacola, Florida, congestive heart failure
Walt Rohwer, nerve disorder
Margie Stream, recuperating from hip surgery
Mike & Debbie Dennis, missionaries in Guatemala
Todd Marsh, recovering from back surgery
Marge Grant
Matt Cole, Lyme disease
Dale Willis
Jack Cole, Peter's father, prostate cancer
Charles Williams
Scott Wyatt
Roberta Richards, Jamie Thomas' mother, broken leg
the family of Charles Garrett Cooley
the family of Julia Safford, Suzanne Neal's mother
Laurie Swank, Doug and Barbara Ann's daughter-in-law
Our Nation and its leaders
All of our military men and women

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).



"A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing."



Business Meeting Briefs

Report from the Monthly Business Meeting in February:

- The Church passed a motion to authorize the Groundsmen to solicit a quote to install a toilet and sink in the furnace room area of the basement.
- A motion to accept the gift of a stair glide lift was approved.
- A motion to allow the Groundsmen to permanently illuminate the church building at night was adopted.
- A discharge motion to fund various missionaries and ministries through the Church budget was passed.
- A motion to respond to the safety recommendations of the Church's insurance carrier was referred to the Internal Administration Committee.

Expected at the March Business Meeting:

- The Select Committee on Auditing will give its report on the 2003 fiscal year.

BFM Reflection: "The Family"

Randy Gilliam

This reflection closes our 18-part series on the Baptist Faith & Message—those basic statements of faith that Southern Baptists hold as important to our faith and distinctive to our denomination. We conclude with a look at the institution of the family...

*If man were made perfect-- complete as could be—
Then God would have never created the 'she'.
For man is the trunk and the branch and the root--
While woman's the blossom, the leaf and the fruit
--from Rivers of Thought by Martin Buxbaum, 1960*

I was listening to a professor recently who suggested that all men and women should have a list of priorities in their lives so that decision making would be easier and that we would not confuse the most important things with less significant issues. Here are his top four priorities: 1) God; 2) spouse; 3) children; and, 4) extended family. Everything else comes after God and family. Obviously not everyone has a spouse so siblings and parents could be in the list. The point is that the family is a God-ordained unit. It also follows that if each family member is willing to give and receive love and forgiveness freely and openly, then God is honored. Wouldn't the home atmosphere be something if we all tried to outdo each other in service and submission with an attitude of appreciation for the others' lives and uniqueness. Wow! That is probably what Christ-likeness is all about.

Our families are not perfect. Pray for your spouse and your children. Children, pray for your parents. God desires to grow such a love in your family relationships that it spills over into your other friendships, into your church, so it is a constant reminder of His great love for you. God alone brings peace and reconciliation in the home. Let Him make your home a place where others see Christ lived out daily.

News You Can Use

Weather clears for the Men's Breakfast. The snow and ice of January abated enough to allow for the rescheduled Men's Breakfast on Feb. 1. Over 50 people showed up to enjoy the men's smorgasbord of eggs, pancakes, and other dishes. During the morning worship, the men continued to serve in observance of Baptist Men's Day. The "MOB", or Men of Barnesville, gave the Choir a break, and sang "Victory in Jesus" as their keynote hymn. David Bennett and Doug Swank both spoke about God's ability to teach and guide them through adversity.

Pastor Joe's eye surgery went very well. Pastor Joe reports improved vision after his most recent operation on Feb. 12. We praise God for His faithfulness to our Pastor over the last few years.

Valentine's Day dinner ends with a big announcement. On Feb. 14, the Church met for a fried chicken dinner, which was festively decorated thanks to Mary Yates. After the meal, the Church learned that David Bennett and Ann Carroll are engaged to be married, on April 25, 2004. Congratulations, David & Ann, on your engagement!

Lee Michael preached on Feb. 15. Pastor Joe asked Lee to speak on what is like to be a Christian in this modern age. Lee used *Acts 17:16-34*, which told of Paul's message to the Athenians at the Areopagus, as a model for us to reach out to those in the world around us with God's unchanging truth.

Sunday School workers will meet. There will be a meeting for all Sunday School workers on March 10, at 7:00 pm in the Church office. Anyone who might be interested in serving in the Sunday School as a teacher's assistant, substitute teacher, or perhaps as a teacher is also invited to attend.

Volunteers needed for monthly cleaning. If you have not done so already, please consider volunteering to serve in this ministry opportunity. We rely on our members to help keep the church clean. The signup calendar is located in the foyer. If you haven't done this before, there is a weekly cleaning schedule checklist of various things to help you know what to do. All the materials you need are provided. Sometimes families or church members team up and do this together as a time of service and fellowship.

Important meeting for men coming April 17. Mr. Jim McBride, a BCM/D worker, will be here to talk to the men of BBC about organizing for men's ministry. Breakfast will be served! Men, please put this Saturday meeting on your calendar. Wouldn't it be great to have someone start an RA chapter here at BBC again! Many men in this fellowship "grew up" in RA's!

VBS Alert. Tentative dates for Vacation Bible School are July 26-30. If you would like to work in VBS or have suggestions about improving VBS please contact Mary Yates or Pastor Randy.

Sunday School Update

Sunday School means a lot of different things to different people. Sometimes we think it is mostly for children, that it isn't important, that it is a relic of the past, or it is something we do out of habit. Your church leadership would like for you to take a good look at the potential for Sunday School in your personal Christian development and in the present and future life of your church. Here is a useful definition of Sunday School for a new century: *"Sunday School is the foundational strategy in a local church for leading people to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and for building on-mission Christians through open Bible study groups that engage people in evangelism, discipleship, ministry, fellowship, and worship"* (10 Best Practices, Lifeway, 2001).

Your Pastors and Sunday School workers would like for each member and friend of BBC to begin praying that during this church year the Sunday School will become an effective discipling and outreach arm of the church. We must be prepared to take the message of Jesus Christ to a secular world that has lost its moral and spiritual compass.

"It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-13).

Baptist Press Cartoon

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



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