

# For What am I Working?

"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." (Matthew 6:33) **By W. Frank Walton** the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you" (Jn. 6:27).

Labor Day is welcomed holiday to pause and rest from our labors. It is good time to reflect on, "For what am I ultimately working?" Do I live to work? Or do I just work to live?

Jesus' teaching implies that each day we face a choice. Will I pursue God's agenda or my own foremost? Truly, "choices are the hinges of destiny." God's "kingdom" is His reign over my life. Does God control my life? His "righteousness" is following the rightness of His will, which I can only know by study of His Word (Psa. 19:8).

My attitude is a result of what I choose to focus upon. What I choose to focus upon depends on what I deem most important. What I deem most important depends on whether I'm seeking God's or my selfish desires above all. Jesus urges us to get in touch with the part of us that will live forever: "Do not work for the food which perishes, but for

The world surrounds us with a multitude of distractions, like "worries" or "the deceitfulness of riches" or "the desire for other things," which can "choke" God's word and work in my life (Mk. 4:18-19). A bumper sticker reads, "I owe, I owe, it's off to work I go." Am I making a living of temporary earthly stuff or making a life for God?

To be spiritually fruitful, I must focus upon and "welcome" God's truth into my heart as life's greatest priority (Mk. 4:20). Each day, I must decide if I will listen to God, which alone can strengthen my soul. Or, will I listen to the babble of worldly distractions, which will only delude and destroy my spiritual life, by consuming my life with earthly labor?

Let's remember that our greatest labor is seeking and serving God. This work of faith endures forever!



Sick			
Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Lori Holloway	Chick Wade	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Bill Rhodes and James Hall (Toni Herd's Uncles)	Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle)
Josie Keith (Friend of Heath Fowler)	Grandparents of Mary Ann Roberts	Easton Alexander (Phillip Box's cousin's baby)	Jerry Sandlin (Megan Lee's Grandfather)
Richard Call Seth Humphrey's Uncle	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)	Mary Smith (Nathan Smith's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Dale Herd (William Herd's brother)	Larry Alexander (Friend of Phillip Box)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Frank Johnson (Debbi Coleman's Uncle)	Ann Robinson (Sharon Bailey's Mom)	Mike Reed (Friend of Long's)

## August Birthdays

- 2 - Emma Miller
- 5 - Andrew Cagle
- 7 - Anna Leigh Peek
- 7 - David Golden
- 7 - Erin Dallas
- 9 - Elliot Weldon
- 10 - Sarah Tam
- 11 - Walker Davis
- 12 - Jon Coleman
- 18 - Lisa Armstrong
- 20 - Caleb Law
- 22 - David Crawford
- 27 - Stephen Ambrose
- 27 - Chip Freeman
- 28 - Larry Rouse
- 28 - Cole Johnson
- 29 - Blake Edwards

## News and Notes

- ☑ Let us remember Matthew Johnson, David Golden and Tim Morton in our prayers as they are deployed overseas.
- ☑ Make note of new addresses: **Jillian Petty**, 4315 Golf Club Dr., Apt 5003 (36830) **The Hahn's**, 1760 Roanoke Lane (36830) Bradley Seymore + Davis Fultz, 3050 Lee Rd 5B (36832) **The Roberts**, 202 Tallyho Dr. (36832)
- ☑ Our meeting with Dee Bowman will be Aug 21-24. Flyers are in the foyer.
- ☑ Signup lists are in the back of the foyer for all ladies classes. This will determine the number of books that will be ordered.
- ☑ College students will be arriving in the next week! There will be a welcome meeting on Aug 17th.

# The Auburn Beacon

A weekly publication of the University church of Christ in Auburn, Alabama



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

Volume 2, Issue 40

Aug 7, 2011

## "Don't Ask" Fellowship

By Al DiestelKamp



### Thoughts to Ponder

Any formal attack on ignorance is bound to fail because the masses are always ready to defend their most precious possession - their ignorance.

In recent years there has been much discussion about a "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy adopted by the military of our nation. It is an attempt to circumvent the official military regulation banning the practice of homosexuality.

It occurs to me that though I am not aware of any such mindset in the church regarding that particular sin, it does seem to be the approach many take regarding other "lifestyle" sins. This is especially evident in cases involving adultery that are the result of unscriptural divorce and remarriage.

Even some brethren who preach and teach vigorously against unscriptural remarriage appear willing to adopt a "Don't Ask" policy when someone in a questionable situation comes among them. Of course, I'm not suggesting that we greet every visitor or prospect with questions about their marriage, but because unscriptural marriage has become so commonplace we do need to address the matter before we

Even if our nation becomes more conservative politically, without a significant spiritual revolution, it is very unlikely that our society is going to become significantly more conservative on moral matters. That means that we are going to face increasing pressure to liberalize our views.

accept them into our fellowship. Otherwise we will likely find ourselves in the same condition as the church in Corinth that the apostle Paul had to reprove (1 Cor. 5).

Societal attitudes toward moral issues have changed so much in recent years that it is not surprising that most sectarian churches, always yielding to the will of the majority, have pretty well abandoned any attempt to demand true repentance. I have to wonder if the motivating force behind the laxity on moral issues is the desire

(Continued on page 2)

**Do You Have a Bible Question?**  
Call (334) 734-2133 or  
E-mail:  
[LarryRouse@aubeacon.com](mailto:LarryRouse@aubeacon.com)

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**  
Sunday

Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

**Wednesday**  
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

**Larry Rouse**  
Evangelist and Editor

**Check Us Out On the Internet: [www.aubeacon.com](http://www.aubeacon.com)**

(Continued from page 1)

for more members, which translates into more money to support the elaborate facilities and highly paid personnel.

What have surprised me are the brazen attempts by some to continue in sinful relationships while seeking to be part of congregations of the Lord's church. There was a time when our "stand" on these issues was so well known that seldom would anyone even attempt to do so.

Just within the past five years, within the congregation where I work and worship, we have seen no less than four attempts by five erring brothers and sisters to continue in sin while worshiping with us. One was an admitted adulterer and the others were openly enjoying, outside of marriage, the benefits God intended for husbands and wives. Had we adopted a "Don't Ask" policy that "little leaven" might still be leavening "the whole lump" (**1 Cor. 5:6**)?

Believe me; I fully understand the temptation to avoid the issue. There is nothing I can think of much worse than having to confront people on this issue. It would be much more comfortable to look the other way, especially when the people involved are happy in their current families and are otherwise spiritually minded. When it becomes necessary to do so, I have to remind myself that my comfort is not what is most important.

*"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

*Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them."*

- **Ephesians 5:3-7**

Nathan, one of God's prophets, might have been more comfortable with a "Don't Ask" policy when he was sent to King David to confront him with his sins (**2 Sam. 12**). John, the baptizer, wouldn't have lost his head had he employed that policy in the "sticky" situation involving King Herod's adulterous marriage (**Mark 6:17-18**).

The Lord, Himself, lost a potential follower when he "loved" a man enough to tell him to get rid of the one thing that stood in his way of eternal life (**Mark 10:21**).

Without doubt, we are in the midst of a cultural war. Even if our nation becomes more conservative politically, without a significant spiritual revolution, it is very unlikely that our society is going to become significantly more conservative on moral matters. That means that we are going to face increasing pressure to liberalize our views. When we don't, we will be labeled as "bigots" or some other epithet intended to vilify us.

There will even be some from "among us" who will try to convince us that we are being "judgmental" when we withdraw ourselves from, or refuse to extend fellowship to fornicators, adulterers and other unrepentant sinners.

We must not yield to the pressure (whether from without or within) to "conform to this world" (**Rom. 12:2**). Whether it be a moral issue or some other sin, we are not showing love for the sinner by ignoring the matter and allowing them to "enjoy the passing pleasures of sin" (**Heb. 11:25**) while maintaining fellowship with God's people.



## Overcoming Obstacles to God's Mercy

By David Hartsell

The saving message seems simple, and intellectually it is. However, man must be able to see himself as a sinner, hopeless and helpless, without God. Until one does he can't humbly turn to The Lord.

Jesus told a story about a servant that owed his master 10,000 talents and could not pay back this massive sum (**Mt18:21-27**). The master forgave him the entire debt. What a tremendous master! Of course, the master represents God and the indebted servant describes us, sinners who can't erase one sin much less all of them. God's loving mercy overwhelms the sinner's ability to understand it. Obstacles exist for those who long for and need God's forgiveness. These hindrances endanger the grace and mercy we long for.

Sin offends God! It destroys man's relationship with the Lord. He grieves over the great chasm of sin that separates all men from him. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (**2 Pet.3:9**). Mankind can regain their close fellowship with God but only through a special type of faith that involves genuine repentance and commitment to The Lord. Without this faith we are lost (**Mk.16:15-16 and Lk.13:3-5**). The saving message seems simple, and intellectually it is. However, man must be able to see himself as a sinner, hopeless and helpless, without God. Until one does he can't humbly turn to The Lord. Too many proud people try to deny or excuse their sins, only to later confess them in some general way. King Saul demonstrates this pattern perfectly. The Lord instructs Saul to fight and completely destroy the wicked Amalekites with their flocks and herds. Instead, Saul returns with Agag, Amalek's king, and the best of the ani-

mals. When confronted by Samuel regarding his disobedience Saul first said he did obey, next he excuses his actions by blaming the people, and finally he says, "I have sinned" (**1 Sam.15:19-30**). One of the greatest obstacles to truly turning to God is human pride. Unless and until one can see himself as a sinner he is lost!

Sinful attitudes and activities also obstruct people from becoming true followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus lays down simple but strict requirements for discipleship. "Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (**Lk.9:23**). Two things can prevent us from tasting of God's mercy. The force of habit causes people to do many things without thinking them through: drinking alcohol, bad language, or inappropriate literature. Habit feels comfortable and easily can sweep us away from our Savior. Habit practiced too long becomes character. Also, pleasure can enslave people. Obviously the works of the flesh often controls one's heart and diverts them away from God's saving mercy (**Rom.1:18-21**). Sometimes fleshly sins involve transgressions with our heart and our mouth, these are just as condemning (**Gal.5:19-21 and Eph.4:24-29**).

Salvation by God's mercy is free but it places great obligations on us. To be children of God means first seeing ourselves for what we are, "sinners." Only then can we humble ourselves to allow our Lord to save us from the evil one (**1 Pet.5:8**).

