

Would You?

by Robert F. Turner

Would You? Check your heart, and I'll check mine. A man/woman you have strong disagreement with is unaware of a car about to strike him. Would you put your life in danger to save that person? If the answer is "no", then we are not getting the principle of love for all men and have no way of appreciating what Jesus did on the cross for us. What if you knew that the person in danger is someone who hates you? Would you still try to push them out of the path of the car?

What if they hurt you really badly with words that undermine your worth and treat you as worthless? Would you still love and value them enough to try to save them from

danger? I am applying this test to you and me, and it is the test Jesus passed.

"For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." **(Rom 5:6-9)**

This is the test that Jesus is asking us to pass. Let's think of various ways we can begin passing such a test today and every day. Amen?



Classes This Week

Sunday Evening College devo at Brad Hartsell's, Douglas Bethea teaching.	Monday 7:00 PM ladies' class at Abbie Harrison's "Teach Me to Love"	Tuesday 10:00 AM Ladies' class at Becky Daniels' "Teach Me to Love"	Thursday 8:00 PM Truth Seekers #2107 in student center
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Lisa Carter (Luke and Daniel's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father)	Nell Holcomb (Ben's grandmother, Joannetta's aunt)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell	Ruth Addison (gmom of April and Julie)
Tori Colvin (sister of Case O'Dell)	Anna Price	Betty Bradford	Reba Patterson (Heath Fowler's mom)
Jean Buchanan (Abbie Harrison's grandmother)	Tina Atnip (Orie's cousin)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Abbie Harrison
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Arabelle Rich (Joannetta's aunt)	Jane Hunt (Chuck's mother)	Charles Hunt, (Chuck Hunt's dad)
Gay Ulrich (Emma's mom)	Toni Herd	Taina Acuff (Anna's aunt)	Shawn Lauderdale (Larry and Joannetta's son)

November Birthdays

- 1-Paulina Zacarius
- 2-Debbi Coleman
- 6-Troy Godwin
- 6-Bridgette Borden
- 7-Amy Godwin
- 8-Ashley Miller
- 9-Darla Hahn
- 11-Andrew Hahn
- 13-Toni Herd
- 13-Emerson Daniels
- 13-Dylan Bartlett
- 13-Ronaldo Henriquez
- 13-Jax Crawford
- 16-Nicole Pender
- 16-Alexander Dunaway
- 18-Alaina Bagents
- 23-Mary Ann Roberts
- 25-Olyvia Winslett
- 25-Silas Weldon
- 27-Scott Fowler
- 27-Ervin Zacarius
- 28-Will Harris
- 29-Tammy Tolliver
- 30-David Simpson

News and Notes

- ☒ - Please pray for Case O'Dell sister, Tori Colvin, who was just diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer. She began treatments this week and expects to have surgery in a few months.
- ☒ - We welcome our new members Case and Chelsea O'Dell!
- ☒ - We congratulate Joe and Cheryl (Makenzie) Carthel on their marriage yesterday!
- ☒ - Please pray for Terez Strickland's father, Billy, whose bile duct cancer has returned. Treatments will begin Friday.
- ☒ - Brooke Perkins' step-dad, George Willock, had successful surgery on Monday to remove a mass from his colon and was able to go home Friday!
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Emma Ulrich's mom, Gay, who remains in Nashville after her bone marrow transplant.
- ☒ - Keith Bailey's brother, Doug, will continue to have rehab to help him walk again.
- ☒ - Please continue pray for Katie Gentry's 2-year-old cousin, Austin Rush, as he is improving in rehab.
- ☒ - Please pray for our expectant mothers: Chelsea O'Dell, Paula Davis, Mallory Randolph and Suzanne Stagner.
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Keith Bailey's brother, Doug, as he continues rehab to help him walk again.
- ☒ - We rejoice that Ariah Strickland was able to come home from the hospital after battling respiratory issues!
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Shawn Lauderdale as he continues in rehab in TX and for Larry and Joannetta.
- ☒ - Larry is in a meeting in Montgomery at the Ashburnton Dr. church. Services will be at 7 Mon-Fri.
- ☒ - All audio is posted to www.auchurch.com immediately after services. CD's are available as well.

The Auburn Beacon



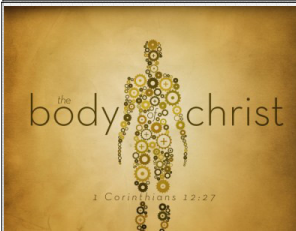
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **(Matthew 5:16)**

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Social Relationships in a Local Congregation

by Larry Rouse



Thoughts to Ponder

If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. **(1 Cor 12:26)**

The Lord's design for His people is that they be "knit together in love" **(Col 2:2)**. "If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it" **(1 Cor 12:26)**. We cannot serve God and be separate from people, but rather we are called to serve others. The power of love was such a firm purpose of our Lord that He described this characteristic, above all others, as the identifying mark of His people. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" **(John 13:34-35)**.

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday

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

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

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Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Only the gospel has the power to bring Jew and Gentile, slave and freeman, the rich and the poor into the same local congregation and make that group a close-knit, loving family **(Gal 3:28)**. When men are humbled and see the gospel as their only identity, then educational differences, racial differences and any other man-made distinctions will be laid aside as rubbish—they view their brethren not just as equals, but as better than themselves. It is in this spirit that service to others becomes a privilege! "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each es-

When men are humbled and see the gospel as their only identity, then educational differences, racial differences and any other man-made distinctions will be laid aside as rubbish—they view their brethren not just as equals, but as better than themselves.

teem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" **(Phil 2:3-4)**.

The Ideal versus the Real

Have you been a member of a church that abounded in love for each other? There have been times in my life where the congregation that I attended was approaching this spirit of service and love. I have also learned that it is a great challenge to find and maintain that spirit. There are so many pitfalls and temptations that can easily turn a church from a place of edification to a place of discouragement. Consider some common problems that we face in working with our brethren.

(Continued on page 2)

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(Continued from page 1)

On the Outside Looking In

It is crucial that every member understands that he truly belongs and is cared for. When a Christian believes that he is an outsider among the brethren he assembles with, he becomes vulnerable to many temptations. It is easy in that situation to give into jealousy, bitterness or to be overwhelmed by guilt (**2 Cor 2:7-11**). Good people can become careless and fail to see the needs around them, especially when they are satisfied with the associations they have.

Certain Visitors Not Welcome!

A few years ago I was working with a couple that showed great interest in the gospel. They started attending services where I preached and also began a home Bible study with me. It was not very long until they privately began referring to the church as “the clique.” This concerned me, since I had a good relationship with them. At the end of one service I decided to step back and observe the interaction of others with this couple. At the dismissal of services, I watched as this couple waited for some time near the back of the auditorium at the place where everyone would exit. My heart ached as I observed how on that day very few spoke to them, while most Christians were rushing to visit with the ones they always talked to after services. My brethren, while not realizing or meaning to, communicated very clearly that this couple was not welcome.

The Haves and the Have-Nots

The divide between those who are “rich in this world’s goods” and those who are not can provide a great challenge to a local group. It is far easier to associate only with those who have your tastes and can do the things that you do. It also is very easy to look down upon those who have less and even harden your heart toward them. “But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?” (**1 John 3:17**).

I have seen churches where groups of couples go on trips to ski resorts, cruises and other expensive trips. It is not wrong to do this, nor should one stop this because others cannot afford it. However, it is important to make every effort to do things that will also allow you to associate with

those Christians who have less than you! If you exclusively associate with the rich, then you do not have the heart of our Lord (**Mt 11:5**).

Attitudes from Parents to Children

Unfortunately children too can display a cruel tendency to exclude and even punish those who are different. Christian parents must remain alert for these attitudes, challenge them and correct them. What a great lesson for parents to teach their children—giving to “unlovable” people the love that they need. It is in the home that we teach our children to include others that are “difficult” in our activities because that is exactly what our Lord wants us to do! “For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?” (**Mt 5:46**).

Sadly, I have also seen where a mother became bitter towards another couple or even towards a child, and in both spoken and in unspoken actions encouraged their children to snub and exclude other children. It is a far greater hurt for a parent to consistently see their child excluded from group plans than if that same action was taken towards them as adults. It becomes very difficult for a parent to instill faith in their child when the actions of others are so contrary to the gospel of Christ. When this scenario occurs and is not corrected, that congregation will likely lose an entire generation of young people.

Putting a Wet Blanket over the Assembly

When problems arise in a local church in the relationships between Christians, it is crucial that the leadership address these issues with haste. When these problems are ignored, they will only grow until the assemblies of the church become stressful and strained, and in some cases contrary to the encouragement it ought to be.

The early church successfully faced challenges like this. The neglect of the Greek widows in the church at Jerusalem was quickly recognized and corrected (**Acts 6:1-7**). The apostles were quick to point out occasions of neglect and preference by strongly rebuking and correcting these attitudes (**Phil 4:2-3; 1 Cor 11:20-22**).

Let love reign in the place you assemble! Why not make plans now to include a brother that is not in your normal group of associates? You will find that the more you give to and involve others,



“Abraham Believed God”

By Robert F. Turner

To be justified is to be pronounced “free of guilt,” and this condition can be attained before God in only two ways: obey law so perfectly that you never sin (**Rom. 2:13; Gal. 3:10ff**); or having sinned, to receive God’s forgiveness. Since “all have sinned” (**Rom. 3:23**), to seek justification via a “law” system is to place oneself under the curse (of demanded perfection). Salvation must be found in Christ who redeemed us from the curse of law, “being made a curse for us” (**Gal. 3:13**). But this calls for “faith” in Christ (**Rom. 2:34-26**). This is the setting for Paul’s conclusion: “a man is justified by faith without... deeds of... law” (**3:28**). He assures us this does not “make void... law,” but “establishes... law” (**3:31**; no “the” in the Greek text).

When Paul presents Abraham as an example of one justified by faith (**Rom. 4:1ff**), he is contrasting humble trust in God’s mercy (for forgiveness, **4:6-8**) with arrogant trust in self (to obey law perfectly, **4:4**). Note: “if Abraham were justified by works he hath whereof to glory;” and “the reward... reckoned... of debt” (**verses 2, 4**). In this context, “to him that worketh not” refers to one who realizes his imperfections, and does not claim justification on a “law” basis, but “believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly” (**vs. 5**). All is clear if taken in context. But to those who believe man is totally depraved and must have some miraculous regeneration, Abraham’s “faith” becomes an “experience,” or “faith only,” and “not by works” is thought to negate the relation between obedience of faith and righteousness. If we would have faith like Abraham, we must understand the quality and character of this faith.

Before Abraham left Mesopotamia, God appeared to him with a call and a promise, **Acts 7:26**. Abraham “obeyed” and “went out” by faith, **Heb. 11:8ff**. Later, at age 75, he left Haran for Canaan, **Gen. 12:4**. God appeared to him at Shechem, and we are told he built an altar to the Lord and “called upon the name of Jehovah” (**12:7-8; 13:4, 18**). When war broke out and Abram rescued Lot, he paid tithes to Melchizedek, priest of God; and Melchizedek, a type of Christ, “blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High” (**14:18-19**). All this BEFORE it was said of Abraham that he “believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (**Gen. 15:6**). Clearly, that particular testimony does not mark an initial “experience of faith.”

In fact, the statement “he believed... and He reckoned it to him for righteousness” is made at three very different periods in Abraham’s life. (1) In **Gen. 15:6**, when told he would have innumerable descendants, he demonstrated a continuation of faith long established (above). (2) **Rom. 4:19-22** tells us that near age 100 he believed God relative to Sarah’s having a child, “and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.” (3) Again when Isaac was a “lad” (old enough to carry firewood into the mountains with his father – **Gen. 22:6**), Abraham’s faith was tested and it was said he “believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness” (**James 2:23**). The “faith” of Abraham was no miraculous experience. It was a life of humble obedience and service in keeping with God’s revealed will. Justification was no single event in time, but kept pace with Abraham’s faith throughout his life.

Abraham did not earn or merit justification, nor was Christ’s perfect life “put to his account.” **Rom. 4:3** says “it [his faith] was counted unto him for [Greek: EIS, unto] righteousness.” This “blessedness” is then defined as the forgiveness of his sins, **4:6-8**. The procuring MEANS of our salvation is Jesus Christ, the OPERATION is forgiveness, and the CONDITION is faith as defined and exemplified in the life of Abraham. We come into Christ “by faith... for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” and become Abraham’s seed (**Gal. 3:26-27**). When our faith is enough like Abraham’s that we do His bidding, we are forgiven of past sins. As we continue to walk in the path of faith, confessing sins and praying for forgiveness, we have Christ as Advocate and means of further mercy, **1 John 1:5ff**.

Note the characteristics of Abraham’s faith in Heb. 11. (1) It was centered on God, not on himself. (2) It led him to obey, “not knowing whither he went.” (3) In faith, he sought a heavenly city and eternal goals. (4) His faith was such that he did not waver, looking back. (5) It enabled him to meet the rigid test of offering his son. Little wonder it was said repeatedly that his faith was counted to him for righteousness. And Paul told the Romans, “It was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead” (**4:23-24**).

