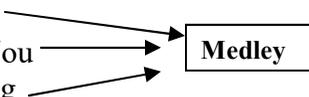


TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor /Opening Prayer by: Ken Coleman

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Michael Simmons

#387 Tell Me the Story of Jesus
#738 Take the Name of Jesus With You
#121 Come Let Us All Unite to Sing
#349 Ten Thousand Angels



Scripture Reading by: Joseph Girard
Let Him Have His Way With Thee
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#852 When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder
Sermon: "Love Your Enemies"
Matthew 5:43-45

#797 Lord, We Come Before Thee Now
#875 Home of the Soul

Closing Prayer by: River Lucy

Welcome by Don Taylor

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Michael Simmons

#615 He Keeps Me Singing
#613 Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Scripture Reading: Tristan Strickhausen

Opening Prayer: Phillip Strickhausen

#570 Living by Faith

Sermon: "His Life: In the Beginning"
John 1:1-3

#945 Knee at the Cross

#948 I Am Resolved

Closing Prayer: Wayne Noonkester

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship

Wednesday: 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

Jan. 5, 2020

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

Galatians 5:1

4 Things Christians Should Do When Tragedies Occur

By now, all of us know about the tragic attack at the West Freeway Church of Christ in White Settlement, Texas last Sunday. Reactions have run the gamut from grief to shock to fear to anger. All of those, and more, are understandable, but not all responses are appropriate for Christians. What should we do? This article by Wes McAdamas addresses the question as well as any I've ever seen. It is slightly abridged here; you can access it in its entirety at radicallychristian.com. BP

1. Pray. When horrible things happen we need to pray. Notice I didn't say, "Post a status update that you're praying." It's fine to let people know you're praying and encourage others to do the same, but let's make sure our motives are pure and that we actually are praying.

And perhaps we should consider the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (**Matt 6:5-6**) and how these words might apply to the way we rush to social media. *And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.*

Spend time sincerely, quietly, and fervently praying for the victims and their families. Really pray for them. Pray for their comfort, for their healing, for their spiritual lives, and for their futures. It's not wrong to say that you're praying, but make sure it's true and rightly motivated.

2. Empathize Before You Politicize. We appear pretty heartless when we post political commentary immediately after some horrible tragedy occurs. Whether we mean it as such or not, it comes across like we just see the event as an opportunity to say, "This proves my point. If you people would just accept my political viewpoint, these kinds of things wouldn't happen."

When people have lost their lives or lost loved ones, when people are in critical condition in a hospital somewhere, it's probably not the time to play the I-told-you-so-game. Tragedies are a time to consider the frailty of life, a time to ask how you would feel if you were in their shoes, a time to *weep with those who weep* (**Romans 12:15**).

Absolutely **nothing is solved by over-simplifying complex political issues and de-humanizing the victims**, just so we can make political points. Chances are, the causes of the tragedy – and the solutions – are multi-faceted. Not only is our timing often inappropriate, but our understanding of the situation is extremely limited.

You have every right to make a political point, but you should ask yourself, "Is this the right time? How would I feel if it were my child or my spouse lying in a hospital bed – or a morgue – somewhere? Do I really understand the ins-and-outs of the situation as well as I think I do?"

3. Don't Feed the Fear Machine. Politicians and news networks capitalize on fear. News networks know fear keeps people watching. Politicians know fear gives them the opportunity to look like a hero.

Our Sick

Derrick Loften is at home recovering from burns.

Continued Prayers

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, Gary Nielsen, Harold & Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Jackie David, Frank & Tina Garcia, Dayla Hale, Doris Trahan, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Barry Johnson, Kelly McCain

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Dr. Ronald Davis, Larry Hicks, Mark Wilcox, Bill Lunceford, J. P. Williams

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Plastic Bags

The Food Bank is in need of plastic grocery bags and **egg cartons**. A barrel is in the foyer.

Upcoming Activities

Deacons meet today at 4:45 p.m.

Elders, Deacons, Minister meeting Monday, Jan. 6th at 7:00 p.m.

We will a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, Jan. 7th at 8:00 a.m.

Ladies Bible class resumes Wednesday, Jan. 8th at 10:00 a.m.

Singing at Magnolia Place Health Care Sunday, Jan. 12th at 4:00 p.m.

| <u>Elders</u> | <u>Deacons</u> | <u>Minister</u> |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Ken Coleman | Daniel Balch | Bryant Perkins |
| Bobby Rader | Danny Balch | |
| Don Taylor | Shannon Smith | |
| Robert Ward | Phillip Strickhausen | |

Privilege to Serve

Sunday, Jan. 5th

Communion Preparation: Mickey Noonkester

Nursery Attendants: Chelsey Frazier

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Jan. 12th: Linda Nunan

Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Jan. 12th: Melony Hicks/Ashley Balch

continued from front page

Yes, even politicians in your political party capitalize on fear. It doesn't mean they're necessarily wrong; but it does mean the more people are afraid, the more they stand to gain by swooping in to "save the day."

We need to learn to keep things in perspective. When a nation, a gunman, or a handful of terrorists make Christians quiver in fear, **it's obvious we don't have a biblical perspective**. All throughout history, God's people have lived in the midst of "wars and rumors of wars." It's always been that way always will be. **The key is knowing that our God makes our enemies look puny!**

I have always found **Isaiah 40** to be a chapter to help me put things in the proper perspective. Our God is so big that He can measure all the water of the earth in the hollow of His hand and measure the Universe with the width of His hand (**v.12**). All the nations of the earth are *like a drop from a bucket* to Him (**v. 15**). And *all the nations are as nothing before him*. (**v. 17**).

When tragedies occur, we must resist the urge to fan the flames of fear. We must remember – and help others remember – in comparison to God, evil men are laughably small and weak. This is the overwhelmingly consistent message of Scripture.

4. Keep the Faith. In other words, do the right thing. Be obedient. Stay the course.

For some reason, we sometimes think Jesus' instructions on how to live our lives only apply to ordinary situations, but not to extraordinary situations. Extreme situations are not excuses to abandon our principles, **they are the true test of whether or not we actually live by Christian principles**. Jesus is not concerned about us maintaining our comfortable way of life (or even maintaining our lives), but He is concerned about us keeping the faith when our lives or lifestyles are threatened.

Keeping the faith doesn't just mean going to worship on Sundays; it means living out the teachings of Jesus (even in extraordinarily difficult circumstances). Keeping the faith means:

- Loving our neighbors...even when they are complete strangers, foreigners, or someone of another religion (**Luke 10:25-37**).
- Loving our enemies...even when they want to kill us (**Romans 12:14-21**).
- Honoring our nations' leaders...even when they enact policies with which we disagree (**Romans 13; 1 Peter 2:13-17**).
- Loving our brothers and sisters in Christ...even when we disagree (**Romans 14**).

The bottom line is this: when tragedies occur, let us conduct ourselves as Christians. Let us remember that Jesus is Lord and that should not only give us great comfort, but also help us to remember we must be obedient and faithful, no matter what is happening in the world.

Bryant Perkins

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

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