

Look Inward

by Dan Jenkins

Paul's words that we should "...walk circumspectly" (Eph. 5:15) would be easily understood by those who first read this in the King James Version. It simply means that as we walk we should be looking about and carefully considering all that is happening. It begins with us looking upward, to establish the right relationship with God. Then we should also look around us, to see opportunities to let our lights shine before others. The first and second greatest commandments are summed up in these two actions. However, we must never forget the third direction to look—look inward.

We should look inward because it is the source of outward actions. The greatest commandment about loving God is tied to the core of our souls. We are to love Him with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind and all our strength (Mark 12:30). Service to God without involving the entirety of the inward man misses the mark. Walking circumspectly (looking around us) demands we look inward to measure the depth of our devotion to the Master.

We should look inward because it is the entry step to becoming a perfect (mature) man in the eyes of God. James speaks of the extreme difficulty of controlling the tongue and then adds, "If anyone does

not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body" (James 3:2). Jesus said, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matt. 12:34). The road to spiritual maturity is obvious. Look inward, bridle the tongue, and spiritual maturity lies before you.

So this week as you commune with the Lord at His table, look inward to examine yourself as you eat and drink with Him (1 Cor. 11:27). Obviously, when we eat together, we look backward to the cross remembering Him. We look forward to His return as we show His death, but perhaps most important is that self-examination we do. In His wisdom He has given us a regularly appointed time to look inward.

Paul also urged the Corinthians to look inward for another reason. "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves" (2 Cor. 13:5). Our walk with Him involves far more than knowing the faith, it demands we walk in it. Look inward! Are you walking in the truths of His word.

Our songs often describe our lives as we walk looking about. We may struggle and sing of our determination to walk one step at a time. Yet, we make each of those steps. One day the final step will be taken and that step is into our eternal home. God help us to "... walk circumspectly."

Confusing Leaders

by Robert Notgrass

Churches of Christ are technically “elder-led” (1 Peter 5:1-3). They use various Scriptures to point out that it is the elders that shepherd the flock and guide them in their walk with God, during worship and also keep an eye on the souls of those that they lead. Elders are selected by the congregation who feels that certain men meet the various characteristics laid out in the Scriptures (Acts 6; 1 Timothy 3). But, sometimes elders are not chosen based on their godliness (Acts 20:29-30). Some are appointed and accept the position as just a representative of the church. Some unsound elders believe they must make every decision about everything. Some questionable elders do not listen to a godly congregation, nor do they listen to godly deacons nor a minister and they do not seek advice from anyone. Sadly some want the preeminence (3 John 1:9; 1 Peter 5:3). But, why would any elder and/or eldership seek to lead in this fashion?

When we look out among the Church of Christ, we find problems. But, you will find problems no matter where you go. Still, there are many problems that arise simply because less spiritually mature Christians know they are in charge. What do I mean by this? There are leaders who love to raise a stink about trivial things (Titus 3:9). There are leaders who dominate others and cause pain and suffering to good brethren (Romans 16:17-18). There are leaders who refuse to help anyone from the church treasury or support any works even when they are into a massive abundance of wealth (1 John 3:17). In some cases, leaders act like little children when they don't get their way (Luke 7:31-35). Why?

Now on the other hand, there are leaders who tend to only listen to the will of the people (Colossians 2:1-4; 1 Jno. 4:6; 2 Tim. 4:4). Why? Why are some leaders toss about with every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14)? More importantly, why do some eldership lead by not “wanting to rock the boat” or to get people upset and so, they will settle for watered down Gospel preaching (John 12:37-50). Does this really challenge the body of Christ to grow? No. And, while I have a great respect for leaders in the church, some are simply afraid of their own shadows. How can leaders in the church be apathetic? Is it because they have forgotten whom they serve (2 Peter 2:20)? As a result, there are congregations that are going nowhere. They

are not improving themselves as the body of Christ. They are not growing spiritually nor numerically. Why? Why are many local congregations declining in size and are getting older. Could it be that we have apathetic Christians and leaders who encouraged them to be this way by their example and leadership?

Now, this may be a lot of negativity. But, all positive writings do not help us face things that we must improve upon because the church is very frustrated. We are no longer acting like the body of Christ. Some are acting no better than a business. Others are imitating denominations. Why? And, why are we not doing more? Does not the Bible tell us to be better than the world (James. 2:14-26)? Does it not tell us to reach out and teach (Matthew 28:19-20) and to restore (Galatians 6:1-4)? We all need to be working together for good. We all need to stop frustrating each other. We need to encourage people to not leave the church or to go elsewhere just because of a tradition we refuse to give up or an un-Christ-like attitude we refuse to change. Christians are so beautiful when we are not acting like the world. So, let's work on these things. Stop being so judgmental. Stop the plate-spinning ministry and let us pray for more unity (John 17).

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Mission Works

Westhill Works

Benevolence Program

Local Works

Cherokee Children's Home - www.chc4kids.org
House to House, Heart to Heart
In Search of the Lord's Way
Preaching Students - Southwest School of Bible Studies
The Truth in Love - www.ttil.tv
WVBS Online School - school.wvbs.org

Prison Works

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Cory Myers - 512.627.6672 (Youth & Family)
Tim Cooke - 903.641.5515 (Seniors)

Prayer List

Mary Beamon was taken to ICU Thursday. She will return to Heritage Oaks and be in Hospice care.

Our Love & Sympathy are extended to the family of Buster Hayes at his passing. Please, keep Charlotte, Teresa, Libby, and their families in your prayers.

Our Love & Sympathy are extended to Donna Brooks and her family at the passing of her uncle, Adrian Chilcoat.

Marcus Valdez responded to the invitation last Sunday night requesting the prayers of the church.

Continue to Remember: Gwen Culwell, Neta Marshall, Velma McDougald, Bud Moore, Henry & Eula Parrish, Barbara Shore, Paula Spillyards, Patty Williams, Anna Bolton, Meagan Gould, Frankie Torres

Service Men: Clay Bayes, Jason Book, Alston Compton, Robert Johnson, Ryan Payne, Douglas Ramsey, Ryan Stewart, Morgan Weaver, and Payton Weaver

Announcements

"Your prayers, your visits to our mother, your calls, cards, comforting words, and hugs helped us through our loss. The wonderful luncheon after the services was a perfect, peaceful time with family." Thank you, the family of Gay Wright.

"Dear Westhill Family, I wanted to thank each of you that prayed for my uncle, Adrian Chilcoat; he passed from this life last [Sunday]. It is a comfort to know that my Westhill family will carry his name before the throne of God. May God bless you all for your concern. Love in Christ, Donna Brooks

Congratulations to George & Marilyn Schmidt on their recent wedding. Their address is 1600 Woodcrest, Corsicana, TX 75110.

Bountiful Baby Baskets at the back of the auditorium for Gina Orosco and baby. Gender neutral gifts appreciated. Baby is due May 16.

Ladies Birthday Lunch this Wednesday, April 13, at 11:30 AM at Cotton Patch. All ladies are invited ESPECIALLY those with April birthdays.

No Open Door Thursday this week. We will meet again next Thursday, April 21.

Going Away Ice Cream Supper for James & Sue Welch next Sunday evening, April 17. Please, join us to let James & Sue know how much we love and will miss them as they make their new home in Mabank.

Annual Mabank Lectures coming up April 15 - 17. The theme is: "Be Not Deceived."

Youth Night at Mabank this Friday, April 15. We will leave at 5:30. Please, sign up at the back of the auditorium if you'd like to go.

Prom Alternative will be April 30. **We need a commitment today,** if you plan to come.

Senior Graduation Banquet is set for Thursday, May 26 at 6:30 PM. **Please, sign up at the back.**

Birthdays This Week

April 10 - Dan Dominy, Kaylee Nicholson, Jon Southard

April 11 - Angela Dunnahoe

April 12 - Teresa Young

April 14 - James Olsen

April 15 - Mollie Southard

April 16 - Lynn Webster

Next Week's Adult Class

Exodus of Disciples

(John 6:25-71)

Records for April 3, 2016

Bible Class	105
AM Worship.....	249
PM Worship.....	141
Wednesday	160
Contribution	\$6,979.82

Privileged to Serve

Song Leader	Zach Drain
Opening Prayer	Tim Cooke
Communion Leader	Greg Olsen
Communion Servers	
Bryan Bearden	Carter Bearden
Dan Gibson	Ricky Jennings
David Mahoney	Percell Milton
Darrell Olsen	Eric Olsen
Brody Owens	Austin Roughton
Billy Roughton	Larry Rowden
Jose Sosa, Jr.	
Closing Prayer	James Horn
Nursery	Kerri Barham & Faith Beamon
Security	Scott Barham, David Baumgartner, Brian Hand
PM Song Leader	Brody Owens
PM Opening Prayer	Dalton Shastid
PM Closing Prayer	George Schmidt
Wed. Song Leader	Jimmy Horn
Wed. Devotional	Rusty Owens
April Contact Elder	Paul Stewart - 903.872.3464