

God's Plan

by Dan Jenkins

Last week, we asked the question, "What would this world have been like if God had not intervened?"

Noah's world gives some insight into this when every thought of mankind was continually evil. God did not leave this world without hope and revealed His expectation of holiness through Moses and the prophets. Yet, in spite of this, the world almost totally forgot about Him. Had God's people listened, the history of mankind could have been so different.

It was God's plan for the Levites to teach His ways to Israel. When the Promised Land was divided among the Jews, the priestly tribe was not given a portion. Instead, they were scattered throughout Israel in 48 cities. Moses described their work in these words, "They shall teach Jacob Your judgments..." (Deut. 33:10). Read the history of the Jews to see what happened when Israel was not taught God's word.

It was God's plan for parents to teach His way to their children. Deuteronomy chapter six showed that God intended for the homes of Israel to be a place where families openly talked about God—when sitting in their houses, when walking outside their homes, every night and every morning.

What happened when the first generation after Moses gave these words failed to do them? The first two chapters of Judges showed that the generation

after Joshua was untaught, and the nation left God in one generation! The history of Israel showed what happened when Israel was not taught God's word.

It was God's plan for the entire nation to assemble and read the entire Bible together. One of the annual feasts of the Jews was the Feast of Tabernacles. Every seventh year they were commanded to assemble and live in booths made of tree branches and publically read the Bible. This included all the men, all the women and all their little ones (Deut. 33:11-12).

How did this turn out? Nehemiah chapter eight reveals that for the next 900 years after Joshua this was not done! Read the history of the Jews to see what happened when Israel was not taught God's word. Imagine what would happen if our nation devoted time to read the Bible publicly together!

It is God's plan for us to teach His ways to the world. Our holy God did not leave this world without direction, but those most trusted with being part of the plan failed. Having looked at God's plan for His words to be taught, next week we will take time to specifically look as His plan for you to help Him. The history of the Jews shows what happened when Israel was not taught. There is an amazing parallel in the history of untaught America. Think about it!

No Pain No Gain

by Kevin Cauley

There is an expression among those who exercise regularly, "No Pain, No Gain." The expression basically means that if you are not willing to work hard and suffer a little for your efforts, then you are not going to accomplish very much. Just doing the easy and simple exercises that don't challenge one's body won't lead to lasting results. The same principle is true in life as well. In order for one to be productive in business, for example, one must be willing to make sacrifices of time and money; one must make an effort in order to do well. In our personal relationships also, we understand this to be true. The more we put into a relationship the better it is going to be. The parent who makes an effort to spend time with his children is going to have a better relationship with his child than the parent that doesn't. The husband who spends more time with his wife will have a better relationship than one that is always gone.

Should it cause us to wonder, when we come to the spiritual world, that if we don't make an effort at serving the Lord that we're not going to get anything out of our relationship with God? The same principle is true here as well. "No pain, no gain." Sometimes I think that people expect church to be some kind of spiritual playground where we can just relax and have fun in the glow of God's goodness. While I certainly believe that coming to church can be rewarding, it doesn't quite work like a playground. Our worship and service requires of us some effort, both mentally and physically. The more effort we put into our worship and service, the greater our relationship with God will become.

Our efforts must start with our attendance. If we don't attend services or if our attendance is sporadic, then we're not going to get very much out of it. Attendance to the worship services is where we get our encouragement to continue to live godly lives and be faithful to the Lord (Hebrews 10:25). It is absolutely critical to our relationship with God. It is as important as

families having dinner together on a regular basis. To miss such an appointment is to undermine one's relationships.

We continue our efforts with how we worship. We must engage our minds to worship God (John 4:24, Matthew 22:37). That means we need to listen attentively to the prayers and the sermon (1 Corinthians 14:15). We need to sing with all of our heart to the Lord (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16). We need to give with purpose and thanksgiving in our hearts (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). And we need to remember the death of Jesus as we partake of the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:19). How many times do we catch ourselves thinking about what is for lunch or what we're going to do later in the day instead of focusing on the worship. We cheat ourselves out of a relationship with God when we don't engage our minds in worship.

When we leave the church building our efforts must continue. If we simply leave what we've done at the building behind, then we are going to limit our relationship with God. However, if we take what we've learned and tell others about it, we will not only help others but ourselves as well. This may mean doing good to those who are in need (Galatians 6:10); it may mean being a good example to our children (Ephesians 6:4); it may mean teaching someone about the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20); it may mean setting an example of model behavior for our coworkers (Ephesians 6:6). Regardless who we influence, there must be the effort of influence.

What will happen if we engage ourselves in the work of God? We will grow as individuals. The church will also grow; others will see the wonderful things working in our lives and they will want to be part of it. Our efforts will not go unnoticed, and we, as individual Christians, will not be the only ones to benefit from our work. "No pain, no gain" means that if we want more out of our relationship with God we need to work harder at it. Let us all resolve to renew our efforts to serve God in all things.

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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

La Poynor Prison Ministry - Steve & Carrie Handley

Foreign Works

Four Seas Bible College, Singapore - Peter & Pooi Fun Chin

New Zealand Harvest Missions - James & Emily Cammock

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Cory Myers - 512.627.6672 (Youth & Family)

Tim Cooke - 903.641.5515 (Seniors)

Prayer List

Helen Strange's nephew, Mike Cornett and wife Jackie, lost their daughter, Brooke, in a tragic car accident in Lubbock, TX on Monday night.

Sandra McCullough's cousin, Riley Rhodes, passed away in Oklahoma City last Sunday, and his wife, Mary, needs prayers.

Paul Loosier passed away Wednesday morning. His service was held yesterday.

Delores Bess' mother, Mary Ferrell, is at Heritage Oaks West room 408 for rehab after hip surgery that was required from a fall she had.

Janet Earles' friend, Lois Douglas, passed away last Saturday.

Sabrina Zamzow's dad, Jackie Coker, injuries are healing and masses are being looked at, however, his father passed away last Monday evening.

Bobbie Robert's niece, LeAnn Curry, cancer returned. Had a successful first treatment, but will remain in hospital for remaining four treatments.

Jaxsen Mahoney is scheduled for ear surgery on Nov. 17 at Baylor in Dallas.

David Baumgartner's mother, Judy, will have surgery on Nov. 22 to remove cancer that was found.

Bud & Barbara Moore's son-in-law, Kent Rathbun, was in a very serious utility vehicle accident and is in Parkland Hospital floor 5 room 631.

Continue to Remember: Julie Dilbeck, Meagan Gould, Vera White, Ruth Moore, Gayle Garner, Beverly Heathcote, Wanda Horner, Beverly Heim, Eugenia Sosa, Patty Williams

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

Announcements

Baby Shower for April Myers is today following evening worship service. Please come and join us to help prepare for the arrival of Titus Ray! *April is registered at: Amazon, Walmart, Target, The Children's Shop, and Babies r Us for shower gifts.*

Jr. High and High School will each have a **devo** on Sunday, Nov. 20, immediately following the morning service, so they will eat lunch here together.

To all my Brothers & Sisters, Thank you for the prayers, kind words of expressions and for attending the viewing and funeral for my brother, Bill Brown. We truly are blessed and loved here at Westhill. Thank you so much. **Carolyn Milton and family**

Plan to spend **Thanksgiving Day** with your Westhill family (Nov 24 at noon in the Outreach Center). Turkey, ham, dressing and gravy will be provided, but sides and desserts are welcomed. Come alone, or bring your entire family! **Don't forget to sign up!!!**

Birthdays This Week

- November 13 - Mark Blaylock
- November 15- Steven Phillips
- November 16 - Ken Green
- November 18 - Audra Jennings
- November 19 - Barry Heathcote, Dee Murphy & Martha Olsen

Next Week's Adult Class

"The Life of the Apostle Paul"

Records for November 6, 2016

Bible Class	166
AM Worship	232
PM Worship	137
Wednesday	150
Contribution	\$10,519.25

Privileged to Serve

Song Leader	David Baumgartner
Opening Prayer	Wade Hall
Communion Leader	Zach Drain
Communion Servers	
Scott Barham	James Olsen
Lynn Webster	Robby Thomas
Mike Wylie	Kyle Slaughter
Greg Olsen	Buck Murphy
David Dilbeck	Wade Hall
Tanner Bearden	Thomas Saunders
Closing Prayer	Dalton Shastid
Nursery	Korri Owens & Sloane Slaughter
PM Song Leader	David Dilbeck
PM Opening Prayer	Eric Olsen
PM Closing Prayer	Hank Jett
Wed. Song Leader	Justin Mahoney
Wed. Devotional	Darwin Thomas
November Contact Elder	Paul Slaughter