

Teen News

Thanks to all the teens that helped out with fruit baskets last Sunday. The Widows and Widowers were very appreciative.

We will be having the youth group Christmas party tonight after the evening worship service. It will be at the home of Josh and Chanta. If you are planning on coming, I need to know so I can plan for food and for the ornament exchange.



TUESDAY LADIES

The Tuesday morning Ladies Bible Class and the Visual Aid Brigade will meet for the last time this year, this Tuesday. We will return on January 4th, 2011. Please mark this on your calendar.

LORD, GIVE US WISDOM

This statement occurred in Paul's last writing not long before his execution (2 Timothy 4:6-11). There are more questions to be asked about the statement than there are affirmations made in it. Yet, we tend to base much of a theological position on the verse. Remember, the statement is an encouragement from one preacher to another. The immediate context of the verse is nestled sandwich-style between two statements: (1) Do not wrangle about words because such wrangling uselessly ruins hearers, and (2) Avoid empty chatter because it will produce ungodliness. The direction is from an older preacher who is about to die as a result of his preaching to a younger (but experienced) preacher who risks discouragement through the execution of his close mentor. Printing had not been invented. The only access to scriptures seemed to be in synagogues. Very few individuals could afford a hand-copied book of what they understood to be scripture. All indications suggest that the scriptures of the early church is what we, today, would call the Old Testament (Hebrews 1:1, 2). The burning issues of the first century: (1) Was Jesus the Christ that God promised the Jewish people [consider the sermon in Acts 2:14-36]? This was of basic interest to a Jewish audience. (2) Was there a resurrection from the dead [see Acts 17:16-32]? This was of basic interest to most of idolatrous background. In (1), preachers often appealed to the Old Testament to prove Jesus was the Christ. In (2), preachers often discussed the nature of God. Those are hardly the burning issues of today! It was easy to get so focused on words, myths, and legends that one lost sight of the questions! Paul said, "Timothy, do not do that! Found your discussions on the word of truth!" The foundation of the discussion commonly determines the conclusion. Paul urged Timothy to discuss the word of truth, and not to discuss things that would produce more hurt than understanding. Beware of making scripture to say things it does not say. Beware of thinking human opinion is scripture. Beware of defending today's church instead of the Bible's God.

DOOR GREETERS— December 19, 2010

Lorelee Reeder

COMMUNION PREPARATION

December 19, 2010
Sheila Link

Gospel Worker

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MINISTERS

Dan D. Manuel
Pulpit Minister
Joshua Shellenbarger
Youth Minister
Bernie Baur
Associate Minister

ELDERS

Dan D. Manuel
Dale Sparks

DEACONS

Henry Baker
Sam Ellis
Dwight Franklin
Adam Harding
Kyle Lock

SECRETARY

Lorelee Reeder

MISSIONS & OUTREACH

Brown Trail School of Preaching, Bedford, TX
Jose Cuadras—Mexico School of Preaching
Hershel Bearden
India Mission
Ken Upchurch
Tanzania Africa Work
Central TX Children's Home Buda, TX
Tipton Children's Home Tipton, OK
Gospel Broadcast Network

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sun: 9:30 AM Class
10:30 AM Worship
6:00 PM Evening

Who Was Baby Jesus?

It is interesting how controversial nativity scenes are during the holiday season. So many people get so upset regarding such displays, especially if the nativity scene has been erected on public property. New shows are full of people representing various organizations and causes, ranting and raving about the separation of church and state, or about their right to display their own anti-religious display at the same site. The reality is that all of these protesters don't believe Jesus is Lord or the unique Son of God. To them Jesus was just another baby born 2,000 years ago. So, why do they care? Why are they so threatened if religious people want to adore a little baby one season out of the year? It would seem more consistent with their own beliefs regarding Jesus, if they just shrugged their shoulders and dismissed the scene all together. Their actions give credibility to the opposing viewpoint that Jesus must have been more than a simple baby in a manger. Christmas time or not, the most important and pressing question humanity has ever faced is who was that baby who came into our world so many years ago? Even though we do not recognize Dec. 24th as the day that JESUS was born. His birth is truly significant. The invasive and probing question that those who deny his birth at all can't tolerate a scene remembering his birth! In other words, they don't want to deal with the question the birth of Jesus poses to all of us. I propose to you that you cannot escape the question. The very trajectory of history has been altered by the birth of this tiny infant two millennia ago. The question will follow you wherever you go. Who was Jesus? You can't remove enough nativity scenes to avoid it. You can say baby Jesus grew up to be a religious leader and moral teacher. You can say he was a deceiver and a criminal. You can he was God in the flesh. But an answer you must give, even if it isn't until you are before the Almighty on judgment day. Here's hoping it doesn't take you until then to answer life's most important question.

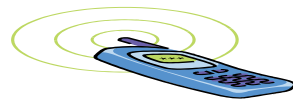


**Holiday Party
brings joy to many.
Great occasion for all.**

FROM DAN'S DESK..

Our thanks to all who attended the Holiday fellowship last Tuesday night. It was a great evening and everyone had a wonderful time. The food was excellent and fellowship equal to it. Thanks to AUDREY MANUEL for the beautiful decorations. Thanks also to Sandy Singleterry who made wassail for all who came. It was a great night. Thanks to Scott Johnson who played SANTA CLAUS. Even though we do not celebrate Dec. 25th as the time of Jesus birth, we can celebrate the event itself. No one knows for sure just when our Saviour was born, but the event is recorded in the Word of God and for that we should always remember the night that the Angels made the announcement concerning the birth of Jesus. We had a wonderful attendance at the fellowship and it too, was a memorable event. Thanks to the fellows: (Dale Sparks, Jeremy Gipson, Adam Harding, Gregg Gurganus)who helped set up tables last Sunday night following services for the fellowship. Thanks to anyone who had a part in planning or helping with the gathering this year. If you are visiting with us this morning, we are glad you are here. We hope you will come again when you have the opportunity. See you tonight.

**PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES
OR PUT THEM ON VIBRATE.**



THOSE WHO ARE ILL

**PLEASE REMEMBER THESE
IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:**

CLINT ELLIS will have a biopsy on his kidney on Dec. 16th in Tyler. CHERYL ELLIS', father ELRED COOPER, has been in St. Joseph hospital in Bryan for treatment. Others who have been ill are better.

SYMPATHY



Our sympathy is extended to Cecil Stanaland in the death of his brother in Tomball. Memorial services were held this last week. We want to continue to remember the Stanaland family in our prayers, during this time of sadness.

SPECIAL INVITATION



Everyone is invited to the home of DAVID AND JENNIFER SPARKS next Sunday night following the evening worship service. You are asked to bring your favorite finger food and join us for the wonderful fun and fellowship. It will be a great evening. Thanks to David and Jennifer for opening their home.

**IN RIGHTEOUSNESS,
SORROW OFTEN AC-
COMPANIES JOY**

It is unlikely that any time of the year is more associated with joy than the Christmas season. The Christmas trees, lights, food, and gifts all declare joy. One of the most popular songs of the season declares, "There is no place like home for the holidays." Weeks are devoted to "peace on earth, good will toward men." Churches talk ceaselessly about the wonders of God sending His son. Both talk and pageants include Mary, Joseph, the baby, the wise men, the angels, the shepherds, and even the animals—all declaring the joy of this wondrous event. If one heard only what we say about Jesus' birth, he/she might conclude it was all joy. That would be concluded only if he/she heard our version of the story and ignored all other sounds from Bethlehem. The rage of a godless man is immune to the sounds of sorrow. Herod the Great was so insensitive, paranoid, and jealously protective of his position that he killed babies. When this crafty man angrily realized that the magi would not make it easy for him to pinpoint his opponent, he killed male infants two years of age and under. He took no chances! He did not stop at Bethlehem! He also killed male infants in the surrounding area! Because of the insecurity of one adult, infants were killed! Do not talk to the grieving parents of Bethlehem about the joys of Jesus' birth! The sorrow and grief created by the loss of a child is unique! In that ancient world—without our modern medicines and procedures—the male infants survived nine months of pregnancy, birth, and perhaps several months of life. For what? Only to be torn from the arms of grieving parents to satisfy the cruelty of an insecure man! Can you hear Bethlehem's grief? Can you hear the sorrow created by the flash of a sword or the thrust of a spear as a family's next generation needlessly disappeared? In the words from Jeremiah 31:15 the author quoted this poignant statement: "... she refused to be comforted, because they were no more." As often is the case, when God gives us a great moment of joy, Satan gives us a great moment of sorrow. Yet, Satan's sorrow is never stronger than God's joy! Never forget your joy is in the Lord—and keep your joy in the Lord!