

NEWS

Wanda Sikes is going to be moving to be moving to the Villa here in Mt. Pleasant to live in the assisted living part of it. When her contact information is available, we will put it in this bulletin—**Kenny Ferguson** had successful surgery to repair his knee last Wednesday. He goes back to the doctor on the 28th to find out what the next step in recovery is—**William White** is still suffering with back pain and needs our prayers—Let's always keep in mind those who are struggling with disease and difficulty: **Relda Marshall, Pat Brown, Deborah Brown Reed, Dana Welch Crawford, Tammy Willeford** (cont on p. 3)

ELDERS:

Bob Arnold 572-1219
Leon Goff 572-6809
Kendall Johnson 572-9306

DEACONS:

Ron Burns 577-9978
Ricky Davis 572-9428
Ken Ferguson 572-4135
Pat Marshall 572-9347

SERVICES:

Sunday

Bible Study 9:45 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:00 PM

PREACHERS:

Ronald Stringer 717-8603
Leon Goff 572-6809

ASSIGNMENTS FOR:

May 25, 2013

Serving The Lord's Supper

Sunday Morning

Scripture: **Leon Goff**
Thomas Hockaday **Ron Burns**
Austin Fulmer **Bobby Burns**

Sunday Evening

Thomas Hockaday **Ron Burns**

PRAYERS

Sun. AM—**William White** (Opening)
—**Kenneth Amerson** (Closing)
PM—**Ken Ferguson** (Opening)
—**Pat Marshall** (Closing)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A.M.—**Bob Arnold**
P.M.—**Paul Chapman**

(call Pat Marshall if unable to serve)

Think It Over—If you were to die today...Where would you spend eternity? To all who love God, and to those who do not, but should, to all who are weary and heavy laden; to all who are lonely and sad; to all who sin and need a Savior, and to whosoever will come a hearty welcome is extended.

Southside
Church of Christ
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Southside Church of Christ

Bulletin

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Volume XX

May 19, 2013

Number 20

The Dark Path of Bitterness

By *Larry Rouse*

How is it possible for Satan to defeat and capture a child of God who has previously escaped his grasp? In conversion Satan is exposed for the deceiver that he is. Jesus described him as having “no truth in him” and as being a “liar and the father of it (**John 8:44**).” While it is inconceivable for a Christian to ever imagine himself as willingly placing his life under the control of the “evil one,” Satan in fact has a strong track record of accomplishing this very thing. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (**1 Peter 5:8**).”

Satan's goal is to cut off the word of God from your heart and then drive you by your emotions. The Bible frames this struggle in this way: “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (**Romans 8:12-13**)” Over the years I have witnessed many of my brethren destroyed in this manner, and the vast majority were overcome with bitterness and anger.

There is a place for anger! When Jesus asked a straightforward question and received no reply, He looked into their hearts and responded in this way: “And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts... (**Mark 3:5**).” My Lord was angry, and my Lord never sinned. There is a place for anger when it is under control and directed by the principles of God's word. “Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil (**Ephesians 4:26-27**).” We need to be angry when we see sin! But always remember this warning “do not let the sun go down on your wrath,” because a failure to do so will give

will give the devil a place in your heart and be assured, he will take advantage of it.

Why do so many of my brethren not take uncontrolled anger seriously? I know of too many men that laugh about their temper and others who laugh with them saying “that’s just the way he is.” What does the Bible say? “Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him (**1 John 3:15**).” Does this verse get your attention? My eternal life is no laughing matter and anything that could come between me and my God has my attention.

Consider the works of the flesh: “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, **hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, rev- elries, and the like; of which I tell you be- forehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God (**Galatians 5:19-21**).**” Did you notice the “anger family” in this verse? While we hear many good sermons on immorality and false doctrine, do we hear that same empha- sis on uncontrolled anger? Remember “those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

The Bible plainly tells us of the dif- ficulty of controlling our anger. “He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city (**Proverbs 16:32**).” Moses was com- mended by God above all others for his

ability to control his spirit (**meekness – Numbers 12:2 ASV**), but in a moment of anger he spoke rashly and thus sinned. “They angered Him also at the waters of strife, So that it went ill with Moses on ac- count of them; ³³ Because they rebelled against His Spirit, So that he spoke rashly with his lips. (**Psalms 106:32-33**).” While Moses went to the ultimate Promised Land of God, heaven, he was not able to enter the physical Promised Land because of this one moment of anger.

When we begin to dwell on our hurts and nourish our anger, we are placing ourselves firmly in the hands of Satan. Have you ever tried to reason with an angry person? When you give in to a life of anger you also give up your ability to reason. “A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle (**Proverbs 18:19**).” The corrupt politician and the false teacher spe- cialize in slander designed to shut down the thinking process. There are many Chris- tians that I have known who, because of their anger towards a man, have quit serv- ing God. What sense does that make? It is like getting mad at the dog and kicking the cat! In short your anger will make you a crazy person, unwilling to listen or reason, and ready to fight anyone or anything that gets in the way of your desire for revenge.

Local churches can be devastated by just one man who plants seeds of bitter- ness. We are warned in the scriptures to be “Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this

many become defiled (**Hebrews 12:15**).” Bitter people often try to build their own personal kingdoms that one has described as “the fellowship of the miserable.” You will be received and flattered by this group as long as you hate whoever the leader hates. I personally have been attacked by such groups for doing nothing more than showing kindness to someone that was an object of another’s anger.

Bitter people will be lost if they do not repent. The greatest evangelists for Sa- tan today are those Christians who plant the seeds of hatred in the church of our Lord.

In time bitter people will burn themselves out and their kingdoms will disband. Sometimes the bitter person will repent and return to the grace of God. Sadly, however, they often are unable to reverse the effects of the angry seeds they planted in the hearts of those that were closest to them. It is in the lives of their friends and especially in their children that the harshest fruits of planted bitterness will be seen.

There is a better way. “Let all bit- terness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender- hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. (**Ephesians 4:31-32**)” You will never regret releasing the desire for vengeance upon those who have hurt you. Our God has pleaded with us in this regard: “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord (**Romans 12:19**).”

Do you really believe in God? Are you really a Christian, willing to follow in the footsteps of Jesus? Look carefully at the specific footsteps our God has placed before us: “For to this you were called, be- cause Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but com- mitted Himself to Him who judges right- eously (**1 Peter 2:21-23**). The next time you are tempted to inflict punishment upon your enemy, I hope you will remember the pleading voice of God where he said “vengeance is mine.” If you really trust God then you will let it go. Please do allow Satan to do his work through you.

-via *aubeacon.com*

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David Hill

David passed away last Tuesday; his fu- neral was Thursday. We are grateful that he confessed his sins and repented before he passed away!

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Upcoming Events

- *Ladies class-May 20th; 6:00 PM; Jenni- fer Arnold’s home
- *Work day-May 25th at 9:00 AM

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NEWS (cont. from back page)

Shirley Ferguson, Dorothy Kyle and Ronald Stringer—Let’s also remember our **Shut-ins:** *Clayton Bellamy, Loyd Clark, Irma May, Lelda Thompson, Dee Ellis, Maurine Lee & Joan Tosh.*