

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” - Psalm 119:105

November 6, 2005

Following Him at a Distance

Heath Rogers

There is, perhaps, no lower point in the life of Peter (and Peter had some low points) than when he denied Christ. Peter and the other disciples were tired, they had fallen asleep while their Lord prayed in the garden. He woke them and told them that the hour was at hand. At that moment, Judas led a multitude into the garden to arrest Jesus. Peter tried to fight for his Lord, but Jesus rebuked him. All the disciples fled. Jesus surrendered Himself and was taken to the high priest.

Weary, confused, and frightened, Peter warmed himself by a stranger’s fire while His Lord was being tried. He was given three opportunities to confess his allegiance to Christ. All three times he denied Him. The third time a rooster crowed, which reminded him of the words of the Lord, *“Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times”* (**Matt. 26:34**). Peter went out and wept bitterly.

What caused Peter to do this? How could the man who was the first to confess that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, turn his back on Him? It is likely that different things contributed to his denial of Christ, but might I suggest that a major contributor can be found in **Matthew 26:57-58**: *“And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest’s courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end.”* Peter could boldly confess his allegiance to Christ as long as he was with Him. But when he put some distance between himself and the Lord he was able to do the unthinkable – deny Him three times.

The same is true for us. As long as we are reading and meditating upon the Scriptures, kneeling in regular and heartfelt prayer, and continuing in the company of believers (attending the services of the church), we do well. Isn’t it when we distance ourselves from God by neglecting Bible study and prayer and placing ourselves in the company of spiritual strangers that our faith begins to weaken? It is then that we, like Peter, find ourselves doing things that we said we would never do.

The apostle Paul warned, *“Therefore let him who think she stands take heed lest he fall”* (**1 Cor. 10:12**). Remember the admonition from **James 4:7-8** – *“Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”* Make Bible study and prayer a part of your daily life. Attend all the services of the church. Make friends of God’s people and associate with them often. Be determined that you will never follow Jesus “at a distance.”

The Love of Money

Troy Nicholson

“The love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs” (1 Tim 6:10). Let’s consider some examples of the “griefs” that have come with the love of money.

Achan. Israel’s great victory at Jericho was tainted by the defeat at Ai. Joshua had warned them, *“Only keep yourselves from the things under the ban, so that you do not covet them and take some of the things under the ban, and make the camp of Israel accursed and bring trouble on it” (Joshua 6:18);* but Achan did covet (:21) and bring trouble on the camp. His love of money led to the death of thirty-six Israelites (:5) and a terrible end to his family and him: *“And all Israel stoned them with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones” (:25).*

Gehazi. Elisha instructed Naaman how to be miraculously healed from his leprosy and refused to accept payment for what was done (2 Kings 5:1-19). Gehazi’s greed got the best of him, and he ran after Naaman to *“take something from him” (:20-24).* As a result of his greed, Gehazi inherited Naaman’s leprosy for himself and his family (:25-27).

Judas. Twelve men were blessed with the privilege of being by Jesus’ side throughout His ministry. Yet one of them allowed his love of money to get the best of him and betrayed the Lord (Matthew 26). Judas realized his grave mistake and tried to make right his wrong, and then he *“departed and went and hanged himself” (27:1-5).*

Ananias and Saphira. Christians were selling possessions and bringing the proceeds to help the needy (Acts 4:34-35). Two of them loved their money too much to bring all of their proceeds and lied about it, and as a result Ananias and Saphira both fell dead (5:1-10).

“Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have” (Heb 13:6). The Bible does more than simply give us this warning against loving money, it also gives us plenty examples of its danger. Do not add your name to the above list. Stay free of the love of money and all the grief that comes with it.

*“Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him.” – Psalm
85:9*

Family News

Neil Barker, Sandy Heyboer's father, has had some side effects from the arthritis medicine he has been taking. Overall he is not doing very well. He sees the doctor tomorrow and may be admitted to St. Thomas hospital.

Virginia Bryant is having more pain as the pain shot wears off.

Mary Burnett continues to do well.

Sandlyn Fultz, who used to attend here, had scans on Thursday. Everything went well. The brain MRI came back clear. The spine and pelvis MRI showed the tumor had not significantly grown. It is still believed to be a fibroma and not malignant. However, the MRI does show that the tumor is invading the spinal canal. It has involved two nerve roots and is causing terrible pain. The nerves are very irritated. Surgery may be an option. For now, they will consider a medication option which hopefully would help at least temporarily.

Sandra Hunt continues to not do very well (she has a high level of pain).

John Jenkins, Robert's father, has lung cancer and continues treatment. This past week he had some good days.

Al Johnson, Bob's father, was admitted to Skyline hospital this past week. He had an arteriogram on Thursday. This showed some blockage. He is scheduled to have surgery tomorrow to put in a stint. He remains in Skyline.

Remember **Debbie Kelley** who remains at Brandywood in Gallatin.

Allen Malone returns to Vietnam this Tuesday.

Fran Pickens remains at home.

Lyda Plank no longer has a mailbox at her home address and will be using the Goodlettsville Post Office. Please send any mail to:

PO Box 304

Goodlettsville, TN 37070

Remember **Dustin Simpson** who continues to serve in the Navy.

Georgia Taylor continues to not do well.

Fred Wenger, Teddy's father, remains in Brandywood. He is unable to walk.

Robert Wray continues to have various health problems.

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: **Malones** (Allen is preaching in AL)

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"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).