

# The Lakeview Lamp

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

**March 5, 2006**

## *Wednesday Night*

Sewell Hall

I plead innocent to the charge of legalism. I understand that the Scriptures nowhere require – either by command, example, or necessary inference – a mid-week service, much less one on Wednesday night. I have worshipped with churches where the mid-week service was on Tuesday nights, and I felt no conscience problem in missing “Wednesday night.” I have sometimes been traveling and missed mid-week services altogether, still with no compunction of conscience. I would not accuse a church of being unscriptural if it had no mid-week services. In fact, I once encouraged a church to discontinue mid-week services at the building in order to encourage home studies in the widely scattered communities from which the members came.

At the same time, I feel pretty strong about attendance at mid-week services when I am at home or in some other place (even a foreign country) where the saints are meeting for a service.

It’s a matter of priorities. If an opportunity should arise to serve the Lord better in some other way on a Wednesday night, I might choose to miss the service – provided, of course, I could not do both. But if the choice is between meeting with the saints and some temporal pleasure or unnecessary secular involvement, I feel that I should attend the service. And I would be concerned about my spiritual values if I should choose otherwise.

I know a lady who was honored to be chosen as citizen of the year in the town where she lived, but she turned down the honor because it involved a ceremony on Wednesday night. I know high school graduates who have chosen to miss their graduation exercises because they were conducted on Wednesday nights. How do you feel about those decisions? Do you consider them extreme? What do you think the Lord would say about them? Somehow, I feel that He would say what He said of one who chose to hear Him rather than preparing an extravagant meal: *“Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her”* (**Luke 10:42**).

At this point, we are often challenged: “Do you think it is a *sin* to miss on Wednesday night? Do you think one will go to *hell* who does not attend?” Now who is the legalist? Is serving the Lord a matter of keeping certain rules and obeying certain laws which serve as minimum requirements so that we can then refuse to take another step on the ground that “we have done our duty”? Is Christianity not a matter of seeking *“first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”*? Is it not a matter of loving the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength?

Paul prayed for the Philippians: *“That your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and in all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense until the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God”* (**Phil. 1:9**). I believe that the persons mentioned above, who gave priority to Wednesday night services over secular honors were showing spiritual discernment and approving the things that are excellent in contrast with things which may be innocent but strictly temporal in their nature.

Frankly, I worry about Christians who choose not to attend *any* service when they could do so. These are the people who are most likely to grow weaker and weaker and eventually leave the Lord. I am concerned about those who feel no inclination to set aside secular pleasures to attend all of the services of a gospel meeting. I am disturbed by those who miss Sunday morning Bible classes, or choose to spend all of Lord's Day morning sleeping or traveling, even if they do "take the Lord's Supper on Sunday night." I am also troubled by Christians who choose to spend Sunday evenings visiting or watching television (even the "Super Bowl") rather than attending the services. I do not advocate "withdrawing fellowship" from such people, but I do believe that they are weak and need to be helped to develop stronger spiritual values.

I will admit that I am also concerned about Christians who attend "every time the doors are opened" simply because they feel it is some kind of "legal requirement." I have seen such people actually resent any additional classes that are announced, or any projects planned which will take another night out of their week. But at least, by attending, they are in better position to learn the true meaning of Christianity than if they stay at home.

What an encouragement those Christians are who do attend all the services! Especially those aged and infirmed ones whom all of us would excuse if they did not come, but who come simply because they would rather be there than anywhere else in all the world. They preach powerful sermons, just by their presence.

*"You, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger,  
abounding in love and faithfulness." – Psalm 86:15*

# Family News

**Neil Barker**, Sandy Heyboer's father, was transferred from the hospital to room 12 at Harpeth Terrace (a nursing home in Franklin) Thursday afternoon. He should begin therapy tomorrow. Overall, he is doing much better.

**Mary Burnett** was in the hospital the week before this last week. She has been home since then. She was doing well until she recently caught a very bad cold.

**Linda Clark**, James Fuller's mother, has very severe breathing problems.

**Connie Cobern** pulled a muscle this past week. She was in very bad pain and is now on some pain medicine.

**Elmo Ferrell** went to the doctor on Monday. They removed some skin spots. He should get test results on Tuesday (they are probably not cancer).

**Sandlyn Fultz** is scheduled to have three CT scans tomorrow (the results should be later this week). She will then have a GTube replacement and two more yearly check-ups (all of which is also scheduled for tomorrow).

There is a new report from **Gary Hunt** (NY NY) in the back of the auditorium.

Tomorrow the doctor should read **Jimmy Hunt's** heart monitor results. He has a doctor's appointment this Thursday afternoon. He may have sleep apnea.

**Sandra Hunt** is not doing well. She returns to the doctor this month.

**Jean Jenkins**, Jerry's mother, passed away yesterday morning. She had been receiving Hospice care at home for non-Hodgkin Lymphoma. Arrangements at Spring Hill Cemetery are as follows: Visitation today 1-6 pm, Funeral tom. 10 am.

**John Jenkins**, Robert's father, has cancer. He continues to sleep a lot.

**Allen Malone** remains in Vietnam. There is a new report from him in the back of the auditorium. This reports mentions that Allen left Thursday for the area of Vietnam that has been hurt by typhoon and flood. This is also an area where there is more persecution. This report also updates us on **Dong** who has very advanced cancer. He is not doing well and is in constant and excruciating pain.

There is a new report from **Fred Newman** (Slovakia) in the back of the auditorium.

**Fran Pickens** has not been feeling well recently.

**Georgia Taylor** continues to have many health problems.

**Ame White** remains about the same. She went to the doctor this past week (he released her) and will go to a different doctor later this month.

# Lakeview church of Christ

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## Sunday:

Bible class 9 am

Assembly 10 am

Worship 6 pm

## Wednesday:

Bible study 7 pm

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