

The Lakeview Lamp

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

April 23, 2006

At What Are We Looking?

Mike Benson, titled

An English writer has said, "The early Christians did not go around saying, 'Look what the world is come to.' Rather they went out with great joy and said to all men, 'Look what has come to the world!'"

There is a great difference between these two attitudes. Yes, the world is in bad shape – but read the second chapter of Romans and you will find that the world was in an awful condition in Paul's time. Nearly all thoughtful men agree that man is in a terrible predicament, but the unique Gospel of Jesus Christ offers the solution to man's problems. Look! See what has come into the world – God's revelation of Himself in all His power, wisdom, and love through Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son. This is indeed glorious news! This is a message which we cannot keep to ourselves, but we must tell everybody about it. No wonder Christians are radiant with joy. They have found the treasure all men are seeking. They have seen what has come into the world in the advent of Jesus Christ, and they are working for the advancement of His kingdom until He comes again. *"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him"* (1 John 4:9).



Preacher's Point – At what are we looking? Are we looking more at the problem – all the sin and wickedness in the world, or are we looking more at the solution – Jesus as the cure for all the sin and wickedness in the world?

Paul made his readers look at the problem, but he also told them to look at the solution. He made clear the fact that *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23), but he was also quick to say that all *"are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus"* (3:24). He said that *"the wages of sin is death,"* (6:23a), but he then pointed out that *"the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (6:23b).

Our awareness of the problem ought to lead us to focus on the solution. The more we see sin, the more thankful we ought to be for the Savior. The more we see what the world is coming to, the more we ought to see the need to help the world come to Him.

Wrestling in Prayer

Troy Nicholson

When you think of wrestling, what comes to mind? For some it may be the WWF (World Wrestling Federation) and other such groups who have developed quite an entertainment business out of their form of wrestling. For others it may be the organized school sport that places two young men of identical size in a small circle with a referee. Some people may simply think of two kids in the back yard with a firm grip on one another rolling in the grass. Does prayer come to mind?

In **Colossians 4:12** (NIV) Paul said that Epaphras “*is always wrestling in prayer for you.*” Other versions say that he labored earnestly or fervently for them in his prayers. We get our English word “agonize” from the Greek word translated these ways. The Greek scholar Thayer defined the word as: “1) to enter a contest: contend in the gymnastic games 2) to contend with adversaries, fight 3) metaphorically to contend, struggle, with difficulties and dangers 4) to endeavor with strenuous zeal, strive: to obtain something.” The word is translated in some passages as fighting (**John 18:36; 1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 4:7**). Paul also used it to describe competing in athletic games.

Could these words ever be used to describe your prayer life? Do you think of prayer as something at which you contend, fight, labor, struggle, or wrestle? Epaphras did. In fact, he regularly wrestled in prayer for others.

What would cause us to wrestle in prayer for someone else? Thinking of them the way that Epaphras thought of others. He had “*a deep concern*” (NAS), “*a great zeal*” (KJV, NKJ), for others (:13). He wanted them to “*stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God*” (:12).

If we realize the power of prayer as Epaphras did, then we will be so earnest in our prayer life that it could be described as wrestling in prayer. If we have the same concern and zeal for others being right with God that Epaphras had, then we will wrestle in prayer on their behalf.

You don’t need a catchy name and costume or to stay in a certain weight class to wrestle like Epaphras did. All you need is a genuine belief in prayer and a fervent love for others, and your wrestling career will be off to a great start.

“The heavens praise your wonders, O LORD, Your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones.” – Psalm 89:5

Family News

Elmo Ferrell has a bad back and has been in pain recently.

Barry Fultz, who used to be a member here, had MRIs of his brain and lower spine on Thursday. He should get results sometime this week. As before, you can get updates regarding **Nathan** and **Sandlyn** on the internet. Just go to: caringbridge.com/visit/nathanandsandlyn

Sandra Hunt is scheduled to see an orthopedic doctor on Tuesday. This is to check on options for her right shoulder and arm (still in pain).

John Jenkins, Robert's father, has lung cancer. He remains about the same.

Ruth Kelly, who used to attend here, has cancer in several major organs.

Jennifer Lindzy, Connie Cobern's 33-year-old niece, has cancer. She had surgery on Wednesday. They may start chemotherapy tomorrow. Currently she is not doing well and remains in room # 6120 at Baptist hospital.

Shirley Merritt, a friend of Joyce Werner, had successful heart surgery on Monday (it took seven hours). She is now recovering at home.

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

Helen Pye, who used to be a member here, is now in NHC across from Hendersonville Hospital. She was in the hospital part of this past week (**Brother Pye** was also in the hospital). She is not doing well.

Laura Reed continues to be about the same.

Jack Reiger had successful sinus surgery (outpatient) on Wednesday.

Georgia Taylor continues to be about the same. Her birthday is Tuesday.

Ame White had a CAT scan this past Monday. She is scheduled to get the results this Thursday.

Robert Wray continues to be about the same.

Michael Zoladz, Joyce Werner's 46-year-old nephew, has brain cancer. He is not doing well, but his pain is being controlled with pain medicine.

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: **John Hunt** (out in AM, here in PM), **Allen Malone** (preaching in a meeting, he will be home on Thursday).

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