

The Lakeview Lamp

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

October 8, 2006

Simply Christians

Gene Taylor

Many people are growing disenchanted with present religious forms which originated in the middle ages and have become meaningless. There is displeasure with denominational structures and dogma. Some, because of such views, have even decided that “Christianity” is not relevant today. We believe they have made that decision because they are not sufficiently acquainted with the Scriptures to be able to distinguish between the gospel of Christ and what men over the centuries have attempted to add to it.

If some of these things have troubled you and you have felt a yearning to return to the simple, uncomplicated religion of Christ, stripping away all the nonessential elements of religion and simply abiding by the truths of Christ, truths which transform the soul and bind it to God, let us suggest that it can and has been done.

The Bible is God’s word to man and presents Jesus Christ as the Son of God. He was foreshadowed and predicted in the Old Testament which God used to govern His people until Christ should come and establish the New (**Jeremiah 31:31-33; Galatians 3:19, 23-24**). That New Testament reveals the religion of Christ. By studying it we learn all there is to know of the way of Christ.

We learn that among the followers of Christ there existed no denominational organizations whatever. All began at a later time. In the New Testament we see people hearing the gospel and obeying the conditions of God’s grace. Being thus saved, they were added to the Lord’s people, the church (**Acts 2:36-47**). As the gospel spread, we find them assembling together in congregations in various localities. Each congregation was under its own elders (**Acts 14:23**) and no one else on earth. These elders could not make laws and be masters. They were given the responsibility of tending and caring for the congregation as shepherds would a flock (**Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-3**). The only headquarters those disciples knew was heaven, where their head, Jesus Christ, was and is (**Ephesians 1:22-23**).

Their worship was something in which to participate, not something to watch. On the first day of the week, for instance, they would eat the Lord’s Supper and hear preaching (**Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29**), they would all sing (**Ephesians 5:19**), they would all pray with various ones leading (**1 Corinthians 14:15-16**), and they would share in their mutual responsibilities by sharing their prosperity (**1 Corinthians 16:1-2**). We find no contributions being collected on any other day than the first day of the week and no hierarchy taxing them or telling them how much to give. They had no organizations clamoring for their support. They gave as they individually purposed in their own hearts (**2 Corinthians 9:6-7**). In all this they were all necessarily involved, for each saved person was a priest (**Revelation 1:5-6**). No one could perform his service or worship for another.

They lived godly lives. They cared for their poor. They taught others. They sent out preachers to teach others in far communities. With simplicity of faith and fervor there was no need of centralization. Without organized machinery, the gospel was preached to the whole of civilization in a short time (**Colossians 1:23**). These disciples of Christ were known as Christians (**Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16**). They wore no

sectarian names. Their religion was not materialistic or sensual. They did not seek to impress men with pious ceremony; rather, they sought to impress God with the only thing that has ever impressed Him — contrite obedience (**2 Samuel 15:22**). Their appeal was not social or recreational. They offered the gospel, for they knew it was God’s power to save (**Rom 1:16**), and any other appeal was beneath them.

Many sigh, “Oh, if only such could be today.” But it is! Free men and women over the earth have despaired of denominationalism, seeing in it neither necessity nor relevance but only a cause of division. They desire the simplicity of what Christ authored, and their number is increasing. How many have taken such a stand? Who knows! They are related and connected only in Christ and not in some organization with machinery to keep a tally. We will not fly to number them. What is important, though, is that a group of such people meets within minutes of where you live.

They are just Christians. They worship and serve God in the same way the early disciples did. Christ is their only creed and the Scriptures their only guide. They are not members of any human organization; they are simply a congregation, or church, of Christ. They, in turn, would like to share Christ with you and with the entire world.

You too can be just a Christian and serve God without belonging to any denomination, bound by denominational laws or obligations. If such freedom appeals to you, please contact us.



Preacher’s point – This article was not written by someone here at Lakeview, but it expresses where we stand. Will you stand with us?

“The righteous... will still bear fruit in old age.” – Psalm 92:12, 14

Family News

Bonnie Sue Brown is better.

Remember **Mary Burnett**.

There is a new report in the back from **Wilson Copeland** (China). He returns home this week.

Dorothy Davis, Troy's grandmother, left the hospital and is back in the nursing home. While some better, she still cannot swallow or speak.

Metty Fain hurt her hip by putting weight on it (pin moved). She may need surgery. Address: Room B2, 215 Highland Circle Dr. Portland, TN 37148.

Barry Fultz is scheduled to go to the Mayo Clinic on November 6th.

We are glad to announce that **Katherine (Katie) Greene** has placed membership. Her contact information is- Phone: 330-692-3885; email: greenekj2000@yahoo.com; Address: 231 New Shackle Island Rd, Apt 114. Hendersonville, TN 37075

Estelle Hayes had a cousin pass away and the funeral was this past week.

Sandra Hunt started her shots two Fridays ago. It was effective for a little while. She is again in a great amount of pain. Next shot is not very soon.

Sara Hurt, who used to be a member here, is currently receiving rehabilitation. Although she is not doing great, she should go home on Tuesday. Address: 5989 Alff Way Cookeville, TN 38506

Larry Miller, Candy Jenkins' father, is in Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne, IN. He is now in a regular room and is much, much better. He hopefully will go home this week.

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

Cotton and Nancy Read are both doing better this week.

Remember **Laura Reed**. She remains about the same (weak, no energy).

Ame White is in the middle of a long series of doctor visits/check ups/tests.

Robert Wray returns to the eye doctor on Tuesday.

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: **Janis Daniel** (Chattanooga); **John Hunt** (preaching @ Skyview in am, here in pm).

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