

# The Lakeview Lamp

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

**March 18, 2007**

## *The Responsibilities of the Watchman - 2*

Tim Smith

Having been told to hear the word from the Lord, the prophet Ezekiel is then charged with the responsibility of giving the people to whom he spoke “warning” from God (**Ezekiel 3:16-21**). If one hears the word, but because of fear for salary or prestige or honor neglects to preach that message faithfully, the people who hear the message have not benefited from his efforts, and he has done himself no lasting service either. Truth believed is good, but not sufficient. The truth must be preached. A good knowledge of the Bible is of no use to the man who will not preach it. In the New Testament we are told: *“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (II Timothy 3:14-4:4)*. We must recognize the need for preaching the whole counsel of God, and we must take out all the stops to ensure that we do our part in doing it.

Ezekiel’s duty was not to go out unto his nation with a message of peace or comfort; but God had told the people that they were going to die! This prophet was to relay this message to a people that were dull of hearing, and of the opinion that they were too righteous to ever “die” for their sins. Oh, that some of our people would learn this lesson! Even though we think that we are “pretty good, all things considered,” we still stand in need of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and anywhere we stand amiss we need to be corrected by it. Had this prophet been seeking the award for “most popular prophet of the month,” he most certainly could not have preached what God told him to preach, for this the people did not wish to hear. I would imagine that God, being omniscient, realized that this message would hurt the image of his spokesman; but this did not change the message even one bit. Our lesson is this: Whatever the situation, and whoever is involved, the

word of the Lord is right! We must never be guilty of swaying to either the right or the left. Our's is a work of taking the message received from the Lord to the people; no more, no less, and nothing else.

Notice that God did not tell Ezekiel to warn only those of the world here, although they are mentioned (“the wicked” - :**18-19**), but also he was to warn “the righteous” (:**20-21**). There seems to be very little of this in the average “church of Christ pulpit” today. It has become rather popular to “dodge” and “avoid” issues and topics that would bring about controversy. Men seem to wish that certain parts of the Bible were not there. They do not like to be forced to upset the “main members” where they are located, for that would endanger their position (some people call this their “job”). However, if a man is in sin, he is in sin – no matter whom he might be. It would most assuredly be better to have fewer members who are living right than many who are living in violation of and rebellion to the will of God. God told the watchman to warn the righteous and the wicked alike.

If the prophet were to neglect the speaking of the Word unto the people, God stated that the people would die in their sins, but the watchman would be held responsible. This places a great burden on the hearts of many, for they know that they have compromised the truth, and that they have sold out to Satan for their job's sake. It must be difficult for them to sleep at night, knowing that they are leading men into an eternal Hell, prepared for the devil and his angels (**Matthew 25:31-46**).

Men need guidance. Jeremiah wrote, “*O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*” (**Jeremiah 10:23**). Men must have the word from the Lord to find the way of the Lord. If you are in a position of influence, ought not you to do all that is within your power to see that they get the word of the Lord? Indeed! The Psalmist declared, “*Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*” (**Psalms 119:104-105**). If we do not give them the word of God, though they are responsible for their sins, we are responsible for not doing all that we could to direct them away from destruction (**James 4:17**).

*“The Lord made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.” – Psalm 96:5-6*

# Family News

**Cindy Burch**, who Katie Greene knows, continues to recover from a car accident. She faces three months of rehabilitation. **Angela**, her daughter, had stomach problems, but has recovered very well.

**Mary Burnett** had a good week.

**Quinton Coppage** continues to improve after, and recover from, his fall.

**Metty Fain** is in Room B2, 215 Highland Circle Dr, Portland TN 37148.

**Barry Fultz** continues physical therapy. It has been helpful so far, however there remains much room for improvement. He is now working part time. Visit [caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn](http://caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn) for more detail.

**Susan Greene**, Katie's mother, was admitted to the hospital last weekend. She was having chest pains. Tests indicate she is well.

**Sandra Hunt** has much pain in her right shoulder and arm. She recently saw an orthopedic doctor. No real, different treatment was offered.

**Fred Newman**, whom we currently support in Bratislava, will soon end his work there after 7.5 years. He and his family are moving back to NC

**Fran Pickens** is doing all right.

**Cotton & Nancy Read** are both having trouble with their eyes.

**Laura Reed** is about the same.

**Jack Reiger** is scheduled to have surgery on Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Dustin Simpson**, who used to attend here, had a motorcycle accident early this year. He is well on his way to a complete recovery.

**Ame White** has a doctor's appointment this past week. They eliminated surgery as an option. Instead she is going to go to a pain clinic.

**Robert Wray** is having trouble with shortness of breath.

*New Reports:* **Allen Malone** (Vietnam).

*Out of town, traveling, or visiting:* **Allen Malone** (Vietnam); **Nicholsons** (Troy here, rest in AL); **Lyda Plank** (FL).

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