

The Lakeview Lamp

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

April 1, 2007

What Are We Building?

Troy Nicholson

Last Sunday's (3-25-07) "Sumner AM" section of *The Tennessean* contained an article entitled "First Baptist building 600-foot banana split." The article began by saying that the church "will use ice cream to bolster its membership." The Lord has given us something much better than ice cream to "bolster membership" – the gospel. Paul said, *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek"* (**Romans 1:16**). The apostles put the power of the gospel to work on the day of Pentecost when the membership at Jerusalem was bolstered by 3000 souls (**Acts 2:41**), and it has worked to accomplish the same thing ever since.

In fairness to the church, the article said, "For church officials, the real focus will be on the message and not a record-setting desert;" but we need to consider what method God has authorized to attract people to the message. In **Acts 2** the drawing power was sent directly by God in the form of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (:1-12). When Jesus did provide food, it was after the people had followed Him long enough to be hungry (**Matthew 15:32**). It was also without prior notice – never was an ad placed in *The Jerusalem Times* to advertise that food was being provided. When people came to Jesus for food, He did not feed them and said they were seeking Him for the wrong reason (**John 6:25-27**).

The director of the church's youth ministry said, "It is always a challenge to come up with something new that will get young people excited." Our responsibility is not to come up with something new to get young people excited, but instead to get them excited

in something “old.” When the nation of Israel drifted away from God after the death of Joshua, the problem was not a lack of banana split building, but instead a lack of faith building. After Joshua died, “*another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel*” (**Joshua 2:10**). What we must do is get young people excited about God, constantly reminding them – and ourselves – of the awesome things He has done.

This article is not intended to simply “bash the Baptists” for using unscriptural methods to bolster membership. It is also intended to ask if we are using any method at all. The Lord gave us the method to use when he gave us the gospel, but are we using it? If not, are we any more pleasing to God for not using the scriptural method than someone else who is using an unscriptural method?

The director also said of building the 600-foot banana split, “This will require an army of volunteers.” Providing young people with what they really need in the church also requires an army of volunteers – not only in army numbers (which are very important, because teachers are constantly needed), but also in army mentality. An army realizes there is a war at hand, and that is what we as Christians must realize as well (**2 Cor 10:3-6; Eph 6:10-20**). We need teachers who are willing to dedicate themselves to helping our young people win the war against Satan. We need parents who realize what is truly most important for their children to achieve – not athletics, academics, or any other such thing, but instead being right with God – and then take the appropriate action to help them achieve it. We all need to be able to sing the children’s song together, “I’m in the Lord’s army” (**2 Timothy 2:3**).

What are we building? A giant banana split? No, something far more important. “*But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*” (**Jude 20-21**). This is where our building efforts must be focused.

Value and Conduct

Steven F. Deaton

When we pay a lot for something, we have high expectations, whether it is a car, computer, house, tool, animal, etc. If it fails to perform the job we desire, we become upset, even angry at times.

Christians have been purchased at a high price, the blood of Christ (**1 Cor. 7:23; Acts 20:28**). As such, they are valuable and a certain level of “performance,” or conduct, is expected of them (**1 Cor. 6:19-20**). Not all are required to produce a “hundredfold,” but all are expected to live up to their potential (**Matt 13:23; 25:14-30**).

Christian, are you conducting yourself in a way that reflects the price paid for you? Do you resist temptation (**James 4:7**)? When you sin, are you remorseful and repentant (**2 Cor. 7:10**)? Are you searching the scriptures and growing in faith (**Acts 17:11; 2 Peter 3:18**)? Have you tried to reach the lost (**Luke 19:10**)?

*“Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! Tremble
before Him, all the earth.” – Psalm 96:9*

Family News

Connie Cobern was taken to Hendersonville Medical Center Thursday with respiratory problems. She was in CCU but is now in a regular room.

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

Barry Fultz continues physical therapy. He is having significant issues with his left shoulder (he may need an MRI). He is scheduled to return to MN in April. Visit caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn for more detail.

Sandra Hunt has pain in her right shoulder and arm. No improvement.

Earl Lanning entered Hendersonville Medical Center last night seeming to have heart problems, but it turned out to be pneumonia.

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 Read's eyes are better. **Nancy** continues to have eye trouble and breathing problems.

Laura Reed is receiving some therapy on her arm.

Jack Reiger is scheduled to have surgery to remove cancer tomorrow.

Ame White is scheduled to go to the pain clinic this week, maybe Tuesday.

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

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: **Robert & Candy Jenkins; Allen Malone** (Vietnam).

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