

# The Lakeview Lamp

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

## July 29, 2007

### *Are You Mental?*

Jason Malham

Used to, younger people would goad each other playfully by asking the question, “*Are you mental?!*” This was a colloquial way of insinuating that the person was kind of bonkers. It was the equivalent of asking, “*Are you crazy?!*” I would like to return the word to its native meaning to suggest to you that Biblical faith is *mental*. The concept of faith has taken an arduous journey through sectarian creeds that has ended in metaphysics. That is, people have turned the Biblical doctrine of faith into something that’s *felt* or *experienced*, instead of what it is - something acquired through learning. In short, Biblical faith is mental.

**Faith is Necessary.** Without faith, it is absolutely impossible to please the God of heaven. (Heb.11:6) The eleventh chapter of the New Testament book of Hebrews brims with examples of those who pleased God because of their abounding faith. Such faith is necessary of those who would be converted to Jesus Christ. In particular, one must believe that Jesus is the Son of God. He Himself said, “*Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins*” (John 8:24).

**What Faith is Not.** As I mentioned, some have the idea that faith is some kind of supernatural and celestial concept that cannot be described. Most people in the religious world believe that faith is a mystical process by which a person accepts or receives Jesus into his heart. Good reader, think it not rude if I tell you that the Bible nowhere teaches this concept of faith. The good book of God nowhere teaches that faith is some experience that can be felt, but not described. Folks “got faith” when they got taught. It was a mental process (Compare Acts 2:22-37, especially verses 36-37.).

**What Faith Is.** According to the Bible, faith is that which involves the change in a person’s intellect. Nothing more. Nothing less. Faith involves the changing of a man’s knowledge. It’s that which entails a change in the understanding that a person has – in this case, his understanding about spiritual things. And it is a completely normal and natural concept.

Faith is that which causes a person to believe a thing *before* they’ve seen it. “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*” (Heb.11:1). Even though I personally have not *seen* New York City, the *evidence* in support of such a city existing is so overwhelming that it cannot be denied. That’s what faith is all about – believing in light of evidence that is so strong that you just have to believe or deny the obvious. So it is with Jesus, the Christ. A person’s understanding changes. They accept evidence they have learned and believe in Him on the basis of that evidence.

**Get Mental!** The only way to reach people, then, and instill faith is not to pray for some *experience* to befall them but to become the experience ourselves. The way to compel people to believe is to *get mental* with them. We must sow the seed of God’s word into their hearts and allow God to give the increase (1Cor.3:5-8). We must “...*so (speak) that a great multitude... believes*” (Acts 14:1).

# *Burnout*

Allen Webster

Exhaustion often leads to burnout in both business and sports. Occasionally in the church, members work very hard and receive little appreciation. They may begin to feel tired, unappreciated, used – even abused. The slightest criticism of this person can set off a disproportionate response – he may quit his pet project, become slack in attendance, and ultimately lose interest in the church entirely.

Those who lead need to be sensitive to hard-working volunteers, as Jesus was (**Mark 6:31**). They need to feed them Bible teaching (**Acts 20:8-32**), water them with appreciation (cf. **Phil. 1:3**), and bolster them with prayer (**Luke 22:32**). No one can go long with only manipulation and guilt-trips. Those who feel they cannot live up to expectations or cannot please everyone eventually quit trying.

On the other hand, we should stop for self-examination if we begin to feel sorry for ourselves (**2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Kings 19:4**). Most of us probably are doing too little instead of too much. When we compare ourselves to Paul and his hardships (**2 Cor. 11:23-28**), and to the early Christian martyrs who faced ridicule, loss of property, torture, and sometimes death (cf. **1 Cor. 4:9-13; Heb. 10:34; 12:1-4**), it makes our “sacrifices” seem puny.

## **Family News**

**Betty Chapman** has received good reports, with all scans being clear.

**Quinton Coppage** was in the hospital Tuesday for tests.

**Elmo Ferrell** remains in room 101aA at NHC for therapy.

**Jim McDougal**, Mary Burnett’s son-in-law, had surgery yesterday on his hip at Sumner Regional.

**Aidan Neighbours** was taken Wednesday to Vanderbilt with a fever. Everything now seems to be under control, and he is back home.

**Neal Williams**, Randy’s dad, fell recently and is bruised but is doing better. The Williams’ family sends their love.

**New Reports from men we support:** None known.

**Out of town, traveling, or visiting:** **Walter Boyd, Malone’s** (Memphis AM, here PM), **Jennifer Nicholson and kids** (AL AM, maybe here PM)

**Note** – If you have any news for the bulletin (out of town, sick, etc.), then please let me know. I will be printing it most weeks on Saturday night, so please get the news to me by then. Thanks! – Troy

# Lakeview church of Christ

132 New Shackle Island Road

P.O. Box 514

Hendersonville TN 37077

Building: 615-824-1376

[www.BibleSaints.com](http://www.BibleSaints.com)

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Troy Nicholson  
[troyjenn@bellsouth.net](mailto:troyjenn@bellsouth.net)

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