

The Lakeview Lamp

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

December 30, 2007

"No Man Asked, 'What Have I Done?'"

Clem Thurman, edited

The prophet of old, looking at the rebellion and the indifference of God's people, wrote: *"Thus saith Jehovah...I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repenteth him of his wickedness, saying, 'What have I done?' Every one turneth to his course, as a horse that rusheth headlong in the battle"* (**Jer. 8:6**).

This is the time of year when business men take inventory, checking their books and their goods to find out what they have done during the year. Thus, they can better plan the new year. But, in the spiritual realm, shouldn't we also take inventory? As we look back over the year, shouldn't we also ask the question of ourselves, "What have I done?"

What have I done for the Lord?

As I conclude this year, can I honestly say that I have improved in my service to the Lord Jesus Christ? There are ways to get the answer to that. When Jesus pictured the scene of the judgment, as recorded in **Matthew 25**, He said, *"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world..."* (Read **Matt. 25:34-46**).

I can easily test "what have I done" for the Lord by looking at what I have done for other people. In our world there are the depressed, the lonely, the sad, the troubled, the bereaved, the sick, the abused, the hopeless, the neglected. Should we not look at those people, and then ask ourselves, "What have I done" for those folk? How I can claim to be a follower of Jesus, if I look the other way while these people are suffering? The Lord *"went about doing good"* (**Acts 10:38**). So must I.

What have I done for my spiritual growth?

Am I at the same level of spirituality as last year at this time? Then shame on me! The Lord expects me to grow. *"Be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus...But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord...Be no longer children, but grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ"* (**2 Tim. 2:1; 2 Pet. 3:18; Eph. 4:14,15**). Have I done that this year?

The apostle Paul says, *"Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves"* (**2 Cor. 13:5**). As in the physical realm, so in the spiritual, there are two things vital to growth: food and exercise. The apostle Peter writes, *"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby"* (**1 Pet 2:2**). And the apostle Paul exhorts us, *"Exercise thyself unto godliness"* (**1 Tim. 4:7, 8**). If we imbibe of the word of God and live by it, then we will grow in Christ.

What have I done for the church?

Jesus promised, “*I will build my church*” (**Matt. 16:18**). The apostle Paul declared that He “*purchased the church with His own blood*” (**Acts 20:28**). The Lord adds the saved to that church (**Acts 2:47**). Shouldn’t that church be important enough, then, to have priority in my life throughout the year? Jesus said, “*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness*” (**Matt. 6:33**).

As a member of a local church of Christ, what have I done? Let us look back over our lives in this year and “try ourselves.” Have I attended all of the services of the church? Have I encouraged the leadership and prayed for them? Have I given liberally of my income to fund the work of the church? And have I constantly “talked up” the church of which I am a member and which affords me so many blessings?

Jesus Christ “*came into the world to save sinners*” (**1 Tim. 1:15**). Because He came to “*seek and to save the lost*” (**Luke 19:10**), so must I. I hear His words, “*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*” (**Mark 16:15**). That gospel is still “*the power of God unto salvation*” (**Rom. 1:16**). If the lost do not hear, how shall they believe and be saved? And if I do not tell the story of Jesus, who will? As the apostle Paul wrote, “*We believe, and therefore we speak*” (**2 Cor. 4:13**). The cry of the inspired psalmist rings in my ears: “*Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!*” (**Psalms 107:2**). Let us do more in the year ahead!

“Bless the Lord, all His works, in all places of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul!”
– **Psalm 103:22**

Family News

A “rough draft” of our **2008 directory** is on the credenza in the back. Please make any needed changes. Final copies will be ready next week.

Jack Dalton, Tanya Stubblefield’s dad, is back in the nursing home after a stay in the hospital. CT scan was clear, but he has a decreased mental status.

Elmo Ferrell remains in room 101-A at NHC.

Michael Gillihan, once member and son-in-law of the Jenkin’s, has been having some gastrointestinal problems lately. Doctors do not know why.

Sue Hampton, Ame White’s son-in-law’s mother, is suffering from heart problems but is home for now.

Al Johnson, Bob Johnson’s dad, is in a nursing home for four more weeks of therapy, and he may be moved to a different nursing home then.

Earl Lanning had his staples removed Thursday and now has a more mobile brace. He plans to be here for worship.

Cotton and Nancy Read continue to have trouble getting their breath.

Paul Stearns, Ame White’s adopted brother’s dad, died last Sunday in Ohio and was buried Thursday.

Robert Wray remains in room 406 at the Smith County Health Care Center, 112 Health Care Dr., Carthage, TN, 37030.

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: **Bonnie Brown** (sister’s), **Michael and Michaela Nicholson** (FL), **Stubblefield’s** (GA, then FL).

New Reports from men we support: **Allen Malone** (Indonesia).

Note – If you have any news for the bulletin (out of town, sick, etc.), then please let me know by Saturday night. Thanks!
– Troy

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