

# The Lakeview Lamp

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

**January 27, 2007**

## *Afraid of the Unknown*

Mike Thomley

I remember a teacher whose mere presence, at one time, invoked fear and trembling in the hearts of children. When I was in the second and third grades, I was "scared to death" of Mrs. Corbitt, one of the fourth grade teachers.

I distinctly remember my eight-year-old conception of her. She was old, wore funny glasses, had a large nose and was obsessed with details. She had no fear of reservations about reprimanding students, even if they were not in her class.

My only actual confrontation with her came after school one day in my third-grade year. A couple of my friends and I went into the school building after classes were over for the day (a practice that was unquestionably against the rules). We wanted to use the restroom and get some water. The restrooms and water fountain were directly across the hallway from her classroom. It was inevitable – we were caught! She lined us up against the wall (for what we thought would be our execution) and severely lectured us. We would never be so bold as to break that rule again.

One of the strongest wishes and prayers of my young life was that I not be assigned to Mrs. Corbitt's class when I entered the fourth grade. But as childhood often seems to go, I saw my worst nightmare come true. My name was down near the bottom of the list innocently taped to the door of her classroom. It was my death sentence. "I'll never survive," I thought, "I'll never live to be 9 years old."

Strangely enough, however, once the class began and as time progressed, I found Mrs. Corbitt to be one of the grandest women I have ever known. As a teacher she ranks among the very best. Her "old school" approach to education proved to be a well-seasoned, experienced learning method. She encouraged us to be creative, to write, to think on our own. It was in her class room that I wrote my first newspaper article (which was later published in the state teacher's association journal).

Through her I was introduced to timeless characters of literature like Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn, Old Yeller, and a host of others. She wielded our attention with her personal account of Dec. 7, 1941. Mrs. Corbitt has remained in my heart and memory as one of the best teachers I have had.

It is amazing to me how the unknown and the partially known can be misleading and frightening to almost everyone. But when we gain a fuller understanding, what once was frightening becomes wonderful.

This principle is true regarding God and His word. To someone who knows little or nothing about God, He becomes a great mystery, a vociferous listing of do's and don'ts governed by an unseen, cold, and dictatorial being who uses us as nothing more than human chess pieces. God is nothing more than a powerful ogre waiting to strike down any man who dares to disobey Him.

And to others, God and His word become an impotent, useless antique for man to place on a shelf and admire for historical value, but certainly not for any power, authority, or respect He might possess or deserve. To many, God is a literary classic with strong ties in ancient civilizations, but He has little influence in our modern society.

If we take the time to get to know God and His word, we will find that neither of these extremes is true. Our God, the God of the Bible, is a God of wrath, vengeance, and justice (**Hebrews 10:26-31**); but He is also a God of love, grace, and mercy (**Ephesians 2:1-10**). God the creator is also God the destroyer (**2 Peter 3:10**); and He is God the savior as well (**2 Corinthians 6:2**).

What we believe about God is based upon what we know about Him. We gain knowledge from studying His revealed word. Our lack of belief, our fear of the unknown, stems from a lack of knowledge of God and His word.

We don't have to live in fear (trembling apprehension) about an ambiguous, unloving being who exercises total control over us. We can come to know a loving, caring, merciful God, who warns us of the consequences of disobedience, yet allows us to make the choice ourselves. God should not remain unknown, or a mystery in our lives. We should be able to affirm as Paul did, "...*For I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day*" (**2 Timothy 1:12**).

*"...for in Him we live, and move, and have our being... for we are His offspring... The times of ignorance, therefore God overlooked; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent; inasmuch as He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead"* (**Acts 17:28, 30, 31**).

*"O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your possessions."* **Psalm 104:24**

## **News and Notes**

The last session for our **small groups** (different groups for men and women) began this month. See Jerry Jenkins for details.

There will be a **singing** tonight after worship at the Nicholson's house. All are invited.

**David Bansemer** is scheduled for surgery concerning his diverticulitis this Tuesday. He will then be out for two weeks.

**Mary Burnett** had two more spells this past week but is doing better now.

**Frank Chumley**, whom some of you know from the area, has a cancerous mass around his lungs. He has an appointment on Wednesday to talk about a treatment plan.

**Quinton Coppage** is still at Imperial Manor on Due West, room 420.

**Cotton Read** is still having breathing trouble.

**Nancy Read** has eye surgery scheduled for this Tuesday.

**Ame White** has three different doctor appointments this week, one on Tuesday and two on Wednesday.

**Bill White** has been diagnosed with neuropathy in his right foot and leg.

**Out of town, traveling, or visiting:** None known.

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

**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).*