

The Lakeview Lamp

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

Oct 26

2008

"Be Imitators of God"

Troy Nicholson

The fifth chapter of **Ephesians** begins by saying, *Therefore be imitators of God...*” (**5:1**). In what ways are we to be imitators of God?

Forgiveness. One verse earlier Paul says, “...*forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you*” (**4:32; Col 3:13**). God is willing to forgive us so abundantly, and so are we to imitate Him in our forgiveness of one another. In fact, Jesus says that God’s forgiveness of us is conditional upon our forgiveness of others (**Matthew 6:12, 14-15**).

Love. Right after saying that we are to “*be imitators of God,*” Paul says, “*And walk in love, as Christ also has love us and given Himself for us*” (**Eph 5:2**). A few verses later he says to husbands, “...*love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her*” (**:25**). Among some of His final words, Jesus said, “*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another*” (**John 13:34**).

Acceptance. Paul says, “*Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you*” (**Romans 15:7**). God shows no partiality and is willing to accept everyone (**Acts 10:34-35**), and we must be the same in our acceptance of others.

Perfection. Jesus says, “*Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect*” (**Matthew 5:48**). Paul preached the perfect word of God “*that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus*” (**Colossians 1:28**).

Purity. John says, “*And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure*” (**1 John 3:3**). Christ “*committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth*” (**1 Peter 2:22**), and we “*should follow in His steps*” (**:21**).

Our challenge in all things is to live as John says of God when he says, “*As He is, so are we in this world*” (**1 John 4:17**). When we do, he says “*that we may have boldness in the day of judgment.*”



When Is Jesus Coming Back?

J.S. Smith

For those who believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, there is no sweeter thought than being reunited with him. In every generation, millions wonder, “When is Jesus coming back?”

At his ascension, “two men stood by [the disciples] and said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw him go into heaven’” (**Acts 1:10-11**).

Yes, but when?! The question resonated throughout the New Testament. The church at Thessalonica become so convinced that Christ’s return – his parousia – was imminent that they forsook the elements of daily life simply to wait. And they waited and waited while less impulsive brethren felt compelled to feed and provide for them. Finally, the apostle Paul wrote and disabused them of the notion that Christ’s return was definitely imminent. As Jesus predicted, his second coming would be “as a thief in the night” (1 Thess. 5:2), without the kind of warning events that preceded the fall of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:1-35).

In a second epistle, Paul confessed that the Lord Jesus would be revealed from heaven on the Day of Judgment (1:3-10), but only after “the man of sin is revealed” (2:3-4). The day of Christ had not yet come (2:2); therefore, those idle, hopeful saints needed to get back to work (3:6-15).

When Jesus commented on his eventual return, he contrasted its circumstances with those of the fall of Jerusalem. In the case of his return, there would be no signs, for “of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but my father only” (Matt. 24:36). The wars and rumors of wars and other signs all occurred in the seventh decade of the first century and pointed to the coming Roman desolation of Jerusalem. They have nothing to do with the second coming.

While Scripture sets no date and offers no signs, certain things did have to occur before the second coming even became possible. Essentially, the prophets foresaw a great widespread apostasy, evidenced by a man of sin who is served as if he were God and the presence of antichrist teaching in the church (1 John 2:18-19). Such apostasy is clearly in the world already and antichrist teaching is present likewise.

We sometimes sing, “Jesus is coming soon, morning or night or noon” but in reality we have no indication at all that he is coming soon. The Watchtower folks and other Premillennial thinkers have pretty much given up on trying to set the date after so many notable failures. Their predecessors were off in 1874, the Watchtower missed out on 1914 and dozens of preachers were disappointed by Y2K.

We simply cannot know when Jesus will return. The result is that we must always be prepared to meet him in the clouds (Matt. 25, 2 Cor. 5:9-11).

News and Notes

Members:

- * Mary Burnett will soon be moving back in with her daughter and son-in-law. We will provide her new contact information at that time.
- * Metty Fain remains in Highland Manor Nursing Home; Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN 37148.
- * Nancy Reed is receiving drops for an ear infection and will not see the specialist until next month.

Friends and Family:

- * Vernon Guest has been having prostate problems.

Absent: Troy Nicholson (Portland).

New Reports: None known.



“Praise the LORD! How blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who greatly delights in His commandments.” – Psalm 112:1