

# The Lakeview Lamp

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

March 22

2009

## Don't Fence Me In!

Glen Young

Several years ago, a study was done of playground behavior in young children. A cross section of several different schools was used. Each school had essentially the same size play area and the same ratio of teachers to students. The one variable between the two types of schools was that one group of schools had a fenced playground. The second group had a play area with no fence. The study showed that students where there was a fenced playground exhibited more cooperative play, had fewer playground fights, and displayed lower levels of anxiety during recess. It was also determined that the same group used more space on the playground and had better attitudes toward schoolwork following recess.

What conclusion can be drawn from this study? That children who play behind the protective boundaries of a fence are happier at play and better adjusted in the classroom. Children playing inside a fence feel a security that other children do not.

Years ago, Roy Rogers sang a song that became an instant hit. It was titled, “Don't Fence Me In.” It lauded the notion that wide open spaces without boundaries was preferable to being restricted by barriers. I believe it became popular because it expressed the American idea that we will not be dominated by anyone. The question is, can those who would be Christians, reject the fence of God's commandments?

“Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son” (2 John 1:9). In this simple little verse, John tells us that God has built a fence around His children, a fence that we dare not cross. John explains that to cross this fence would mean separation from God (1 John 3:4 cf. Isaiah 59:1-2). Within the bounds of this fence are security (John 10:27-29), help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16), and the love of the Father (John 14:21). Is it any wonder that the faithful Christian has a joy unspeakable?

God's fence protects man, yet, he consistently rebels. If I were to choose a song which characterized this rebellion, it would be “Don't

Fence Me In!” Since the social revolution of the sixties, men feel put upon if they are somehow restricted. The cry began with “free love” and continues with, “So what if he had an affair, it’s his business. This is a free society, what a man does in private is not for the public to judge. Beside, no one was hurt. There is no law prohibiting sex between consenting adults, anyway.”

Yes, indeed, we are a free society. We are free to spend millions of dollars seeking happiness through things. We are free to put alcohol and drugs into our bodies to escape the realities of life. We are free to be depressed and live life in a Prozac induced fog. We are free alright, free to jump the fence into the wide open spaces of Hell!

God’s fence is there because He loves us. *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life”* (**John 3:16**; cf. **1 John 4:9-10**). God is not being mean spirited or overbearing to expect us to abide within His fence. On the contrary, His fence is there to give us a happy, fulfilled life (**John 10:10**).

I can partially understand it when people of the world trample God’s fence under foot. But, for the life of me, I fail to see the benefit derived from Christians bolting through the downed fence to the scrub grass which grows in abundance on the steep mountain slopes of Satan’s domain. There is only death and destruction waiting those who make such a foolish mistake.

Do you want a life filled with security and happiness? Then stop singing “Don’t Fence Me In” and begin singing “Give Me The Bible.”

## *A Moving Time* Frank Himmel

The invitation song is intended to be a time of movement. Those who have just learned God’s conditions for salvation should be headed for the baptistery. So should those who have known the truth but never obeyed it. Hopefully, something in the sermon struck them and they will make today the day of salvation. And Christians in the assembly who have wronged their brethren have an expedient opportunity to tell all of their repentance.

In many churches today this is not the kind of movement the preacher observes. Oh, there is plenty of activity, but it is of a different

# News and Notes

- \* The teaching seminar with Ken Weliever has been rescheduled for May 1-3. Mark your calendars and plan to be here.

## Members:

- \* Virginia Bryant injured the knee she recently had replaced.
- \* Cotton Read is having problems sleeping due to congestion. He may go to the doctor this week.

## Friends and Family:

- \* Dan Hayes, **Estelle Hayes' grandson in Snellville, GA, died Thursday** from kidney problems. He was 56. Estelle left with her daughter-in-law at 9am this morning to go. The funeral will be at 3pm Monday.

Absent: Katie Greene (OH), Estelle Hayes (GA).

New Reports: None known.

kind.

All the folks who are anxious to leave make their early exit as soon as we stand to sing. What's the rush? Are they out of time for the Lord? Do they have no interest in witnessing one being baptized into Christ? Are they perhaps trying to avoid speaking to others after the service? Must they beat the Baptists to the cafeteria?

In order to exit, these must make their way past the incoming crowd – all those who have wandered off to the restroom, water fountain, or have just been milling about doing who knows what. This bunch is suddenly ready to return now that the sermon is over. The preacher excitedly sees motion in the aisles, but his hopes are dashed as everyone coming forward disappears into one of the pews. Maybe next week the gospel will result in more productive movement.



*“What shall I render to the LORD for all His benefits toward me? I shall lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the LORD.” – Psalm 116:8-9*