

# The Lakeview Lamp

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

**Jan 10**

**2010**

## *Getting Priorities Straight*

Troy Nicholson

Some people would consider Urban Meyer, the University of Florida's football coach, to be on top of the world. In only five seasons he has two national championships. He recently received a contract extension worth \$24 million over six years. How did he recently celebrate all that he has accomplished?

By resigning.

What would cause a man to give up all that he has achieved?

Chest pain.

After losing the SEC Championship Game on December 6, Meyer admitted himself to a hospital, where he was treated for dehydration and chest pain. Three weeks later he resigned. Granted, the next day he announced that he would not resign but instead would take a leave of absence, but consider why he said he made his initial decision: "I have given my heart and soul to coaching college football...I have ignored my health for years, but recent developments have forced me to re-evaluate my priorities of faith and family." As an AP reporter put it, "In so many words, he said he needed to get his priorities straight."

To what have you given your heart and soul? Is there something more important that you have ignored? How about your spiritual health? Do you need to get your priorities straight? What will it take to get you to reevaluate?

Jeremy Foley, the athletics director at Florida, said, "But the bottom line is that Coach Meyer needed to make a choice that is in the best interest of his well-being and his family." That is exactly what Joshua did when he made his famous statement: "...choose for yourselves today whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (**Joshua 24:15**).

Jesus asked a sobering question when He asked, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (**Matt 16:**). No amount of prestige, money, or anything else this world has to offer is worth losing your soul. If you have given your soul to anything of this world, then take it back and give it to God before it is eternally too late. Ignore your health no longer.

# Identification vs. Participation

Troy Nicholson

Last Sunday's *Tennessean* (1-3-10) contained an article about a new report from the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. The report revealed that 84 percent of those surveyed in Tennessee said they believe in God. While 100 percent would be better, Tennessee ranks as fourth highest among states.

Before getting too excited about this high percentage in the state who believe in God, consider some lower numbers. 72 percent said religion is important in their lives. This means that 12 percent who believe in God do not do anything about it. 70 percent said they pray daily, meaning that 14 percent of those who believe in God do not talk regularly to Him. For an even lower number, consider that only 54 percent said they went to a worship service weekly. So 30 percent of those who believe in God do not bother to worship Him weekly.

Ed Stetzer, president of Nashville-based Lifeway Research, explained the disparity by saying, "There's a gap between religious identification and participation." In other words, there is a difference in believing in God and seeking Him.

James wrote that believing in God is not enough, that belief must lead to action. "*You believe that there is one God. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder*" (**James 2:19**). Simply believing in God makes us no better than demons, who also believe in God. It is what we do about our belief that makes the difference. "*What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?*" (:14). The implied answer is no, because "*faith, if it has no works, is dead*" (:17).

James went on to write, "*You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works*" (:18). Answering a survey that we believe in God does not matter to Him as much as us demonstrating our belief in Him by how we live. "*You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone*" (:24). On the day of judgment God is not going to ask if we believe in Him, but instead what did we do for Him.

To truly identify with God, we must also participate with Him in our lives. Put your belief to work, turn it into action. Believing may get you on a survey, but it takes works to get you into heaven.

# News and Notes

## Members:

- \* Ken Berry has costochondritis, an inflammation in his ribs, and is on antibiotics. He is having a stress test this week, followed by a breathing test next week.
- \* Vickie Berry is slowly improving from her surgery and is able to be up for longer periods of time. She is hoping to try going back to work tomorrow.
- \* Margie Frizzell got her brace Wednesday and will wear it for several weeks before feeling any results.
- \* Thelbert Frizzell had a bad week this past week.

## Friends and Family:

- \* Bruce Diamond, friend of John Moore, is undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments.
- \* Dorothy Dixon, friend of Sandra Boyd, is in Vanderbilt Hospital for cancer treatment. She is undergoing experimental stem cell treatment.

Absent: Virginia Bryant (weather), Geneva Copelin (weather), Estelle Hayes (weather), Pat Richards (weather).

New Reports: Gary Hunt (NY), Chad Lynn (WV).



*“Your statutes are my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. O LORD, I remember Your name in the night, and keep Your law. This has become mine, that I observe Your precepts.”*

**Psalm 119:54-56**