

# The Lakeview Lamp

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

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## *Moving Boundaries*

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This past Fall a friendly controversy began as a result of our efforts to improve the driveway by the church building. Our neighbors to the north got the impression that our gravel driveway had shifted over the years and was actually overlapping onto their property. Their curiosity got the best of them, and I found them digging into the gravel in our driveway one morning. “What are you looking for?” I politely asked. They explained that they had done some measuring and were guessing that there was a metal landmark placed in the ground there. They had dug down a few inches through the gravel and had found nothing. Later in the day I found them with a rented metal detector and a deeper hole in our driveway. Sure enough, there was a metal landmark. The controversy was over, the end of all dispute. Our driveway had widened by about two feet over the years. What was amazing to me was that a rusty piece of metal had two parties staring at it in total agreement on what it meant.

The following day was a work day at the building, and the easiest solution to the problem was to dig that landmark up and move it two feet to the north. Problem fixed! But that’s not what we did because that would have been unethical, illegal, and just plain wrong. If we had moved that marker and been caught by the authorities, we would have been written up in the local newspaper, prosecuted, and fined. It is wrong to move a landmark! Isn’t it amazing to think about how unanimous the decision against us would have been?

The Law of Moses was not just the spiritual law of Israel, but it was also their civil law. God legislated against the moving of landmarks and equated it with stealing (**Deut 19:14; 27:17; Job 24:2; Prov 22:28; 23:10**).

God’s word is authoritative. When mere men begin tampering with His landmarks, we are treading on holy ground.

What a story it would have been for the newspaper if I had moved that landmark! Imagine the outcry, the condemnation, the charge of hypocrisy that would have been heard if I had moved that landmark. My defense for such action? It’s just an old rusty piece of metal. It was put there a long time ago. Times have changed! Who’s to say that it’s the standard? Anybody could have put that there.

No court and no community would accept such a lame defense. Guilty! Yet, if men or churches want to move *God’s* landmarks, there is little objection. What kind of defense do we hear? It’s just an old ancient myth. It was written

a long time ago. Times change! Who's to say that it's the standard? Anybody could have written that!

Which landmark is more sacred, more holy: the city's or God's? We answer that by the reaction we have to their movement.

Moral relativism is like our drifting driveway. Ignore, misplace, forget, or remove God's landmarks and suddenly we can't draw any lines. Proof of this is seen in the issues being debated today. Is sucking the brains out of a nearly delivered baby a protected right? Should there be homosexual marriage? Is "consensual" pedophilia ok?

The problem is that the standard is disregarded and covered by hardened hearts that are ever-widening in their toleration. Even when some dig to find the standard and show it to the world, it is ignored as obsolete, unreliable, and some just boldly move the standards.

Shall I charge our neighbors with hate because they pointed out the landmark in our driveway? That is exactly what some do when we point to scripture to show what it says about homosexuality, fornication, divorce, remarriage, etc. (**Matt 19:9; Rom 1:24-32; 1 Cor 6:9-10**). People read that and just pull up the landmark and move it two feet north. No problem.

From moral issues to the plain teaching of Christ and His apostles on salvation, some are left scratching their heads and wondering just where that landmark is, while most just don't bother to dig, trusting that a loving God would not mind us widening the driveway.

How indignant we can become when anyone tampers with landmarks set by men. How apathetic we are when God's landmarks are ignored. Give honor where honor is due. Honor God's landmarks.



Preacher's point – I ran across this article in my files after reading the front page article in last Sunday's *Tennessean* (1-31-10) where some members and former members of churches of Christ say "Old Way Isn't Only Way."

When the paper says "old way" it means "since the early 1800's," when it implies "Churches of Christ" and "their approach to church" began. Now some congregations "have adopted a progressive view of their faith" and have added instrumental music and cooperate with other "faith groups." Others say they "have replaced real Christianity with a watered-down version." What they have really done is move the boundaries to where *they* want them to be.

Rubel Shelly "believes Churches of Christ will have to adapt in the future or lose their effectiveness." What does he mean by "adapt"? Move the boundaries God has established. Before we become concerned about losing our effectiveness, we need to be sure of what God has called us to do effectively.

# News and Notes

There will be a singing tonight **after worship at the Nicholson's.**

## Members:

- \* Ken Berry had a stress test last week with a follow-up heart check.
- \* Margie Frizzell now has some relief while wearing her brace.
- \* Thelbert Frizzell is having trouble with his heart rate.
- \* Devin and Aiden Neighbours are having stomach problems.
- \* **Sarah Neighbours'** back is still sore after a fall last Sunday.
- \* Cotton Read was taken to the hospital yesterday struggling to breathe. His tests came back fine, and he is now back home.
- \* Ame White is having problems with her kidneys. They are down to 17% effectiveness. She is having an MRI this week to try and find the cause.

## Friends and Family:

- \* Warren Coss, **Zachary Neighbour's brother in Florida, is off the paralyzing medicine but still on the ventilator.** Zachary is still there with him.
- \* Mike Read, **Cotton and Nancy's son who is having chemo for cancer in his hip, had a hip break last week.** He is in Skyline Hospital.
- \* **Cotton and Nancy's daughter** Cindy is home with the flu.

Absent: Chris Gertsch (Dresden, AM only), Zachary Neighbours (FL).

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

God established the church to be *“the pillar and support of the truth”* (**1 Tim 3:15**). As long as we uphold and support the truth, we have not lost our effectiveness. We may not be effective at drawing large crowds and solving the social issues of our day, but God did not establish the church to accomplish those purposes. We must be satisfied with leaving the church the way God wants the church.

*“Do not remove the ancient landmark”* (**Prov 23:10**).



*“The earth is full of Your lovingkindness,  
O LORD; teach me Your statutes.”*

**Psalm 119:64**