

PRAYERS

Chanice – She is in Aberdeen Health and Rehab with Kidney issues.

Zack Opheim – Continued digestion problems. More tests have been run and they will get results this month.

Congregation News:

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *“In the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon...” (Luke 4:33)*, but that did not keep Jesus away from the synagogue. Would you let it keep you from the worship?

Those Privileged to Serve

Sunday Morning Service:

7/22/18

Bible Class	Tom Bright
Announcements	Paul Darling
Song Leader	Tom Bright
Opening Prayer	Paul Darling
Lord's Supper	Paul Darling
Closing Prayer	Colby Crawford
Sermon	Colby Crawford

7/29/18

Colby Crawford
Colby Crawford
Tom Bright
Colby Crawford
Tom Bright
Paul Darling
Paul Darling

Bible Classes

Sunday Morning

Adult	Tom Bright
Children	Colby Crawford
Toddlers	Cindy Bright
Babies	Anissa Crawford

Wednesday Evening

Tom Bright
Linda McBrayer

Birthdays & Anniversaries

July 24th – Chanice Shanks

Building Cleanup

McBrayer

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Bulletin Submissions

If you would like anything added to the bulletin such as prayer requests, news, or events, please make submissions by Friday night to: tlbj@sbcglobal.net

Aberdeen church of Christ

July 22, 2018

CRITICISM

I believe it was Benjamin Franklin who once remarked, “There are only two things in life that are certain: death and taxes.” Far be it from me to argue with a scholar such as Benjamin Franklin, but there is one other unpleasant certainty: criticism. No one escapes criticism entirely, and often our careers, emotional stability and happiness all depend on how we react to criticism.

Criticism should mean one thing to all of us--the opportunity to grow. If we are to grow from criticism, we must face up to it on three levels: **1)** Emotionally. That is, we must force ourselves to be dispassionate. That is hard to do, but it can be done. **2)** Rationally. Take up the criticism and examine it objectively. As someone has said, “We can learn much from the disagreeable things people say, for they make us think--whereas the good things only make us glad.” **3)** Practically. To try to help your critic. The Bible says we are to “*render to no man evil for evil*” (**Rom. 12:17**). This is not some pious nonsense--kindness is always stronger than malice.

When we are criticized, our reaction should be: **1)** To do right in spite of what is said. **2)** To profit from the criticism and to grow. **3)** To try to live so that the critic’s words will not be justified.

The person who is continually open to criticism should remember the words of Abraham Lincoln: “If I tried to read, much less answer, all the criticisms made of me and all the attacks against me, this office would be closed for all other business. I do the best I know how, the very best I can. I will keep on doing this down to the very end. If the end brings me out all right, then what is said against me now will not matter to anything.” Abraham Lincoln was a wise man in more ways than most are!

Did you ever hear the story of the two taxidermists who stopped before a shop window in which an owl was on display? They began to criticize its mounting. Its eyes were not natural- -its wings were not in proportion--its head and features were not neatly arranged--and its feet could be improved upon. On and on they went. When they finally finished their criticism, the owl turned its head and winked at them! They had been criticizing a “stuffed” owl that actually was alive! Think about that.

A Slippery Slope To Man's Decisions

In the New Testament, one of the words for sin comes from the Greek word "hamartano." The word means "to sin, to miss a mark on the way, not to hit the mark" (The Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament). As Creator, God is the standard of truth and reveals His truth through Scripture. "Sanctify them in your truth: Your word is truth" (John 17:17). The Bible is God's pattern or standard, the mark we are to hit for human conduct. "Your word I have treasured in my heart that I may not sin against You" (Psalm 119:11).

"Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness." (Romans 6:16-18)

How well has humanity done in following God's commandments? Throughout history, not very well. Paul, shortly after teaching the truth of salvation and Christian living to the churches in Galatia, wrote to them, "I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ" (Galatians 1:6-7). It is part of the human experience, once influenced by sin, to want to determine for oneself what is right and best. It also applies to the decisions made by nations, once God's perfect will is rejected in favor of the ideas and desires of humanity. Sin always leads one on a slippery slope into more sin and the negative consequences that accompany it. Paul reminded the church in Rome of this attribute of sin, one which, in their own lives, they had experienced. "I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification" (Romans 6:19). The phrase "resulting in" comes from a term that refers to motion toward a direction. Here, it means sin only leads to more sin. In reality, it is a death spiral, deeper and further into sin, which leads to death (Romans 6:23). Unless the process is arrested, as was the case by their renouncement of sinful practices and turning to the righteousness of God, it only gets worse, never better. The very nature of

sin leads to more sin, to worse sin and to the devastation that follows in its wake.

Sin creates dissatisfaction, and whatever is established in it will just lead to a greater influence of it in life. "They are darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them and because of the hardness of their hearts. They became callous and gave themselves over to promiscuity for the practice of every kind of impurity with a desire for more and more" (Ephesians 4:18-19). Without the influence of God's divine will, there is no real authority for right or wrong, except in the changing conditions of society, which is no real authority at all. We can experience God's blessings by living according to His parameters, or we can substitute the whims of the flesh, which constantly change and bring negative consequences to life. Are we willing to take a slippery slope that can ultimately consume us? "Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

Who Am I?

Kinsman of Elimelech's.

Took Ruth to be his wife.

He was the grandfather of Jesse.

Answer last week. **Nicodemus**

Welcome to our Assembly. . .

Whether you are a first time visitor or a long time member of this congregation, we are happy to have you with us this morning. For those visiting, please make yourself comfortable. A good deal of information about this church and its activities can be found on this sheet. We encourage and invite anyone interested to participate in the activities offered throughout the week. If you have any questions about the facilities, our worship service, or want more information about the church, feel free to ask anyone present. Someone will be glad to help you!