

bling” (Phi. 2:12). The apostle Peter tells us to “give diligence to make [our] calling and election sure...” (2 Pet. 1:10). “Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not,” Paul exhorts in Galatians 6:9. Christ commands, “Lay up for yourselves treasures **in heaven...**” (Mat. 6:20).

God has a “retirement plan” for us, the likes of which we can’t begin to imagine. “The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:18). What are we contributing towards our secure, spiritual retirement?

— Andy McClish
Marietta, GA



The Northpoint Lighthouse

Volume 10, Number 50
December 14, 2014

THAT YOU MAY KNOW...

Let us pray for...

- Sheila Beauchamp** — recovering from shoulder surgery
- Tonya Thatcher** — difficulty with pregnancy
- Judy Reid** — treatment for auto accident injuries (sister in NJ, planning to move here)
- Lester Kamp** — fighting prostate cancer
- Mike Mallett** — fighting leukemia (faithful brother in Evant, TX)
- Ken Chumbley** — fighting cancer and other physical problems (Gospel preacher)
- Janice Ruffner** — fighting various physical issues
- Ann Henderson** — fighting cancer (Sheri Woodall’s aunt)
- Brian Ritter** — fighting rare autoimmune disease (son of Rick Ritter, Gospel preacher)
- Tim Smith** — fighting chronic physical problems from auto injuries (Gospel preacher)
- Richie Aidoo** — Joshua Aidoo’s 8-year-old son (fighting seizures)
- Samuel Bagsangi** — Gospel preacher in Philippines we help support
- Joshua Aidoo** — Gospel preacher in Ghana we help support

Records you helped make last week...

Bible Classes	12
Sunday AM Worship	12
Sunday PM Worship	13
Wednesday PM Bible Class/Worship	14
Contribution	\$4,517.00
Contribution average (2014)	\$902.91

Internet Sermon broadcasts...

Both sermons each Sunday are broadcast, beginning at approximately 10:45–10:50 a.m. and 1:12–1:15 p.m., via Internet through our Website, www.northpointcoc.com.

Assignments...

Bible class teacher for December	Jerry Smith
Chairman of Men’s Meetings (October–December)	Phil Smith
Preacher, <i>The Lighthouse</i> editor	Dub McClish

Northpoint Church of Christ
Greenway Plaza, 4224 N. I-35
Denton, Texas 76207
940.220.9931
northpointcoc@hotmail.com
www.northpointcoc.com
www.scripturecache.com

Sunday

Bible Class	9:30 AM
Worship	10:30 AM
Worship	1:00 PM

Wednesday

B.C./Worship	7:00 PM
--------------	---------

Franklin vs. Paine

Tom Paine was a colonial patriot, credited by some with being the “Father of the American Revolution.” He was given this moniker chiefly for his January 1776 pro-independence pamphlet, titled, *Common Sense*, which advocated revolution against the British crown. It quickly swept the colonies, selling 100,000 copies in three month’s time and an estimated 500,000 copies during the course of the Revolution (no small feat, given a population of only two million colonists). Several months later he published the first of three tracts, titled *The Crisis*, to inspire the Colonial Army in its battles with the British Red Coats. General Washington was so impressed he had the first of these read aloud to his troops. It began with the famous words, “These are the times that try men’s souls.”

Paine may be better remembered (unfortunately) for his later blasphemous book, *The Age of Reason*, in which he set forth his Deistic infidelity and exalted man’s reason apart from any revelation from God. Accordingly, he viciously attacked the Bible, the Christ, and Christianity. He remains a hero of atheists and humanists to the present.

Paine’s assault on the Bible turned Washington, who believed the Bible to be the Word of God and Jesus to be the Son of God, against him. Not only did *The Age of Reason* alienate Washington. It also called forth a stern warning from Benjamin Franklin, who was not exactly known for his piety and faith, as was Washington. Paine sent his manuscript of *The Age of Reason* to Franklin prior to its publication. Upon reading it, Franklin urged him not to publish it in the following unvarnished message:

I have read your manuscript with some attention.... The consequence of printing this piece will be a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and no benefit to others. He that spits into the wind, spits in his own face. But were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would

be done by it? ...Think about how great a portion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced, inconsiderate youth of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes habitual, which is the great point for its security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself.

Franklin argued only from the practical standpoint that men need an objective standard of conduct, implying that the Bible Paine inveighed against was just that. Whether or not Franklin was aware of it, he basically argued what Jeremiah long before had stated by inspiration: "O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23).

Modern disciples of Paine (Secularists, Humanists, assorted infidels) who vilify the Bible and despise the Christ and His religion would do well to heed the words of both Jeremiah and Ben Franklin. The world "unfettered" from belief in the Bible declines into the anarchy of "might makes right." The further our nation drifts into Biblical illiteracy and unbelief, the more evil abounds all about us.

Atheistic and Secularist forces—through such agents as the American Civil Liberties Union and tenured university professors—are seeking to eradicate every vestige of Biblical influence from the public consciousness. They truly have no concept of the disaster they are promoting. Since the world is so wicked and violent while possessing the Bible, it is difficult to imagine its degradation and depravity without it. How badly does our nation, yea the world, need God's Word and the Savior and salvation it reveals!

—Dub McClish
Denton, TX

Rejecting Truth

In admonishing Christians of their responsibility to continue to speak the God-saving Truth that they may grow thereby (1 Pet. 2:2), the apostle Peter reminds them of how the Jews did not accept Jesus as the only begotten Son of God. Peter declared: "They stumble at the word, being disobedient" (1 Pet. 2:8). We learn from the Greek word translated *being disobedient*, that its meaning is not to allow oneself to be persuaded. (see *Thayer* or any reputable Greek lexicon).

Implied is the fact that man has the power to reject obvious Truth. He can close his understanding to adequate evidence if he does not love the Truth above everything else (2 The. 2:10-12). When the Truth is offered to an honest man in error, one of two things can happen:

1. He will keep his honesty by giving up his error and embracing the Truth, **or**
2. He will reject the Truth, give up his honesty, and keep his error.

Speaking for God, Isaiah said to Israel: "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isa. 1:18). God created man a rational creature and has never bypassed man's rationality in seeking to lead and guide him. God does not force Himself upon man against his will (Rom. 1:28). If men will not receive the abundant and adequate evidence regarding their spiritual needs, God will not force it on them.

The people in Isaiah's day were unreasonable and would not accept God's Word. They simply would not allow themselves to be persuaded (Isa. 6:9-13). Thus, they lost their honesty and retained their error. In the words of Peter: "They stumble[d] at the word, being disobedient." Hence, Paul's request to the Thessalonians that they pray "that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith" (2 The. 3:2).

If you want to become wicked, just stop being reasonable. In doing so, you will lose your honesty and harden your heart as you embrace the strong delusion of error.

—David P. Brown
Spring, TX

Retirement

Financial experts will tell you that if you don't participate in an IRA, a 401k, or **some** type of financial investment program for the future, then you're not really building much security. It's becoming increasingly common these days for people to take personal responsibility and plan now for a stable and secure retirement.

It's important to realize that there is nothing un-Christian about preparing and planning for the future by saving some of our money today. In 1 Timothy 5:8 we read that "if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." Likewise, Christ laid down the principle of the importance of counting the cost in Luke 14:27-33. Granted, He was talking about counting the cost of following Him, but the principle is no less true of any other worthwhile endeavor. There's nothing inappropriate about managing our money practically and wisely. It's simply a part of good stewardship.

However, with all the current emphasis on retiring comfortably in **this** life, is it possible that we are forgetting about **another** retirement that we all have to face some day? More to the point, are we planning for our spiritual and eternal retirement, or is that something we'll take care of "one of these days?"

Because of the immeasurable sacrifice that the Son of God made, every one of us can have a **spiritual** "individual retirement account." His contribution to it is beyond our comprehension. What we contribute to it is up to us, but the Bible's teaching on this subject is so clear that we have no excuse for not being prepared for the next life. We are to "work out [our] own salvation with fear and trem-