

News and Notes

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Vicki Hightower - Wife of gospel preacher, Terry Hightower. Stage 4 Cancer.
David Brown - Spring, Texas preacher. Serious blood pressure problems and asthma.
Pam Patrick - Serious vision and other problems.
Samuel Otieno - Magunga preacher student. Fractured leg, but healing.
Sissy Craig - Pray for her spiritual and emotional strength.
Sandy Craig - Health and other issues.
Charles and Linda Pogue - Congestive heart failure.
Nancy Verkist - Ellensburg, Washington. Suffering from Von Hippel Lindau disease.
Janice Ruffner - Pneumonia/ongoing health issues.
Don Smith - Faithful brother in Christ persecuted for teaching fellow inmates in an Ohio prison.

KENYA REPORT - Contributing this week to the Kenya Fund this week were Gary and Jacque Rogers, Quanah, Texas; the Bellview church, Pensacola, Fla.; Chuck and Nancy Verkist, Ellensburg, Wash.; Jess and Terry Whitlock, Denison, Texas; the Eastside church, Lexington, Okla.; the Berea church, Rives, Tenn.; and the Morton Street church, Denison, Texas. The generosity of these individuals and congregations enable us to carry on the good work of supporting the Lord’s cause in Kenya, and we are deeply grateful to all of them.

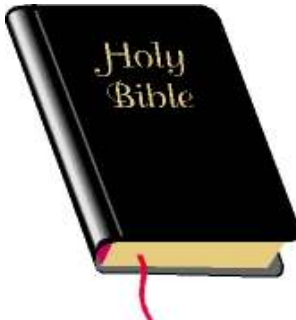
NEW GRANDSON - Earl and Nancy Reed have been in Eastern Oklahoma this week to see their new grandson, Jaxon Lee Reed, who was born on Monday.

PREACHING JAN. 15 - Patrick will preach at both worship periods on this Lord’s Day. Car trouble prevented them being here last week.

TRIP POSTPONED - Jerry and Sherlene have cancelled their trip to Denison, Texas to visit the Whitlocks. Forecasters are calling for freezing rain, sleet, and snow from Thursday through Monday in our area, and Jess said the same is being forecasted for Denison.

YOU TUBE CHANNEL - New short videos in our “Words of Life” series have been added to our You Tube channel. Check the channel regularly and encourage others to visit and subscribe to it. The URL is www.youtube.com/channel/UCjd5rSEV1vXCNx52ouOrXoQ.

Those Who Serve		Records - Jan. 8	
Sunday Morning, Jan. 15, 2017		Attendance	
First Prayer - Landry Brewer	Closing Prayer - Patrick King	Bible Class.....	11
Communion - Patrick King	Offering - Landry Brewer	Morning Worship.....	11
Sunday Afternoon, Jan. 15, 2017		Afternoon Worship.....	9
First Prayer - Dylan Brewer	Closing Prayer - Earl Reed	Contribution.....	\$195.00
Weekly Meeting Times			
Sunday Morning Bible Classes.....		9:30	
Sunday Morning Worship.....		10:30	
Sunday Afternoon Worship.....		5:00	



Sound Doctrine

“But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1)

Published Weekly By The Northeast church of Christ
P. O. Box 267, Elk City, Oklahoma 73648

Volume 11, No. 45 Jan. 15, 2017

A Modern Rationale For Sin

Jerry C. Brewer

The scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day were experts at finding what they perceived as “loopholes” in God’s Law to rationalize their own sins and entrap the Lord. They attempted this in questioning Him about plucking grain on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:1-8), the washing of hands as a religious rite (Matt. 15:1-9), marriage (Matt. 19:3-9), His authority (Matt. 21:23-46), civil government (Matt. 22:16-21), the resurrection (Matt. 22:23-33), the “greatest commandment” of the Law of Moses (Matt. 22:34-40), et al. “There is no new thing under the sun.” Modern proteges of those ancient Pharisees *still* rationalize their own sins by appealing to what they believe are “loopholes” in the New Testament.

“Don’t Judge Me”

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye: and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye (Matt. 7:1-5)

Other than John 3:16, this passage may be the only one in the entire Bible that many people know, and it is a favorite to hurl in the face of those who preach the Truth and condemn sin in men’s lives. The retort is usually, “Don’t judge me! The Bible says, ‘Judge not.’” Let’s take a close look at this “rationale” for men’s sins in our day.

If Jesus had stopped at the end of verse one and never said anything else, the rationale would be valid. But He didn't. A consideration of the context indicates that He does *not* condemn all judgment, only *hypocritical* judgment. In so doing He used a hyperbole to illustrate the hypocrisy of the kind of judging He meant.

He asked, "...why beholdest the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest the beam that is in thine own eye?" A "mote" is, "a dry twig, or straw," and a "beam" is from a Greek word with a primary meaning of "holding up; a stick of timber: - beam" (James Strong, *Greek Dictionary of The New Testament*). There is a vast distinction between the two. The mote is a tiny particle. The beam is as we describe a huge piece of timber today, holding up a wall or ceiling. Thus, Jesus uses hyperbole (exaggeration) to teach a lesson. A person with a 6 by 6 beam of wood protruding from his eye approaches his brother, and with his sight weakened by it, says, "let me get that splinter out of your eye." That, Jesus said, is hypocritical.

But, He continues, saying, "first cast the beam out of thine own eye: and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." He does not condemn the man with the beam in his eye for seeing the mote in his brother's eye. He only condemns the hypocrisy of trying to correct another when a like—or larger—problem afflicts the one doing the correcting. It is *not* wrong, or hypocritical, to correct another. Jesus was not dealing with judgment on the part of men. He dealt with *hypocrisy* in judgment. In fact, he *commanded* "righteous judgment" in another passage: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). These passages in Matthew and John *require* judgment. They do not condemn it.

What constitutes hypocritical judgment? Does one have to live a sinless life in order to preach the judgment of God on sinners? When hypocrisy is understood, the answer is a resounding *no*. The word "hypocrite" means, "an actor under an assumed character (stage player)" (Strong). Actors are literally hypocrites, and hypocrites are literally actors. They are real persons who "pretend" to be someone else in their performances. James Stewart was not *really* George Bailey in *It's A Wonderful Life*. He was James Stewart, but portrayed someone else. The person with a beam in his eye portrays a person with clear eyesight, but he is not. That makes him a hypocrite. But Jesus did not prohibit him from removing the mote from his brother's eye. He commanded that he first remove the beam from his own eye and *then* he would no longer be a hypocrite, *pretending* he was righteous. A person may commit adultery and try to correct that sin in others' lives. He is hypocritical (an actor) *only* if he is *still* an adulterer. If he has repented and been

forgiven of that sin, he is *not* a hypocrite, and has every right to preach against adultery in others' lives. Matthew 7:1-5 does not prohibit one from passing *any* judgment; only that which is hypocritical.

Deity Has Never Been At A Loss For Words

Ron Cosby

Public speaking experts strongly suggest that speakers avoid introducing their speech with a definition. However, in Romans 8:26, defining "groanings which cannot be uttered" makes clear to students that Paul could not be saying that the Holy Spirit is the one groaning. And, since He is not the one groaning, then He is not the one making intercession. A host of translations and dictionaries give us the point that the word used by Paul does not mean "unspoken" but "unutterable." It is groanings (or sighs) that baffle words.

The King James, the American Standard, and the New King James say, "groanings which cannot be uttered." In 1850, Wilhelm Heinrich Dorotheus Eduard wrote, man "cannot, in the fulness of the emotion, express his burden in words, and can only relieve his oppressed heart by silent groanings." The concept is that, in troublesome events, humans do not have the ability to express their feelings. Simply stated, they are at a loss for words. David found himself in such a situation: "My spirit was overwhelmed ...I am so troubled that I cannot speak" (Psa. 77:1-4). Such a phrase cannot be said about the Holy Spirit. He is never at a loss for words—*never*.

A number of Greek Scholars have provided an excellent understanding of the meaning of the phrase. A.T. Robertson says the meaning is "inarticulate cry" (Galatians 4:6, Word Pictures in the New Testament). Inarticulate means "incapable of speech." Fritz Reinecker gives the meaning as "sighs that baffle words." (see also Steinle, Strong and Thayer). This faulty characteristic cannot be describing the inability of Deity. The Holy Spirit has no trouble articulating any concept. However, "the spirit itself" in Romans 8:26 does not have the capability to express itself. Therefore, the spirit cannot be the Holy Spirit. Since it is not the Holy Spirit groaning, then He is not the one making intercession.

You may be asking, "What spirit is doing the groaning?" In the context, Paul has taught us of one man who is made up of two men: the inward man and the outward man—the flesh and the spirit. We conclude, therefore, that the spirit that is groaning is the human spirit within the man.