

News and Notes

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- David Brown** - Spring, Texas preacher, blood clots in leg.
- Sandy Craig** - Broken shoulder/kidney problems.
- Jo Ann McLerran** - Confined to home but doing much better.
- Glenda Marble** - Faithful Christian at Lexington, Okla. Heart problems.
- Debbie Post** - Wife of Doug Post, preacher in Salisbury, MD. Cancer.
- Sissy Craig** - For spiritual and emotional strength.
- Charles and Linda Pogue** - Congestive heart failure.
- Nancy Verkist** - Ellensburg, Washington. Suffering from Von Hippel Lindau disease.
- Don Smith** - Faithful brother in Christ persecuted for teaching fellow inmates in an Ohio prison.

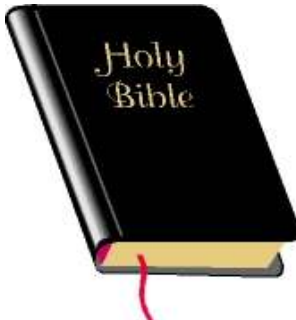
HEALTH UPDATE - Holley Brewer received good news on Thursday from tests for her low heart rate. Everything is fine. The doctor said the rate could be because she exercises a lot (she has an “athlete’s” heart rate). Other problems she had may have come from allergies. Sissy reported that Sandy’s kidneys are only functioning at 30 percent and they need to function at 70 percent. She saw a doctor in Oklahoma City this week and will have blood work done later at Duncan. Jo Ann has had back problems.

KENYA REPORT - Contributing to the Kenya fund this week, were Glenda Marble, Lexington, Okla.; Holley Brewer, Noble, Okla.; and Ron Skinner, Lexington, Okla. Concerning a gospel meeting just completed, Benard wrote, “I am happy to let you know that, the Nyamboyo gospel meeting was a success with brother Tom Omollo and Obadiah doing it and the attendance was so great. Thanks for standing with us in the Lord’s great work and may you all be blessed.”

GUEST PREACHER - Pat Craig, who preaches for the Eastside church in Lexington, will speak at Northeast on June 11. Jerry and Sherlene will be gone to the Bellview Lectures in Pensacola, Florida. They will travel with Jess Whitlock and he and Jerry will speak twice each on the lectureship. The lectures may be seen live (and later archived) on Bellview’s website at, www.bellviewcoc.com.

TRACTS - Tracts designed to teach the lost fill our rack in the foyer, but they do no good there. Please take some and distribute them wherever you go. Sow the seed of the kingdom.

<p>Those Who Serve Sunday Morning, June 4, 2017 First Prayer - Patrick King Closing Prayer - Dylan Brewer Communion - Patrick King Offering - Landry Brewer Sunday Afternoon, June 4, 2017 First Prayer - Earl Reed Closing Prayer - Jerry Brewer</p>	<p>Records - May 28 Attendance Bible Class.....16 Morning Worship.....17 Afternoon Worship.....16 Contribution.....\$189.00</p>
<p>Weekly Meeting Times</p>	
<p>Sunday Morning Bible Classes.....9:30 Sunday Morning Worship.....10:30 Sunday Afternoon Worship.....5:00</p>	



Sound Doctrine

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

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Derelict Elders

Jerry C. Brewer

Faithful elders are careful to watch for the Lord’s flock under their care. When Paul told the Ephesian elders to, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28), he used the word, *poimaino*, which is translated “feed.” The definition of *poimaino* from Strong’s Greek English Dictionary is “shepherd.” Paul told them—and, by extension, all elders—to “shepherd” the flock.

The shepherd’s responsibility is not to “feed” the flock. He leads it to pasture, where the sheep “feed” themselves. Shepherding the flock involves *much more* than providing provender. In fact, Paul went ahead and explained what he meant, saying, “...that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock” (Acts 20:29). He then concluded his remarks with the solemn injunction, “Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears” (Acts 20:31).

The elder’s gravest task is, “holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers” (Titus 1:9). Nothing else in the elder’s work matters as much as this. Expedient matters such as the time to meet, maintenance of the meeting place, and dozens of others, take a back seat to the elder’s responsibility to guard against false teaching. False teaching, believed and followed, will destroy the souls of the flock and false teachers within the congregation are the very wolves of which Paul spoke. The faithful elder will take his task seriously.

But there is a class of men in the eldership who have no backbone when it comes to

defending the faith against false teachers. These are the sweet-spirited milksops who desire “peace” at any price who are derelict in their duty to God. Such an eldership was brought to my attention this week by a young man who is a faithful Christian in an African country (not Kenya). A preacher where he worships preached blatant Calvinism from the pulpit and the young man wrote to the elders expressing his concern over this false doctrine. He wrote, in part,

Brother Martin Oppong began his lesson by speaking about “The goodness of God’s creation and man’s fall”, “the definition of sin” and “the nature of sin”. These he explained masterfully till he reached “the universality of sin”. Under this section, brother Martin Oppong advocated a host of unscriptural doctrines. He made statements like, “Everyone who has been born and yet to be born into this world possesses the sinful nature”. “In Adam all received the sin nature and the death it brings”. “You don’t need to sin to become a sinner. You are already one and possess the sinful nature which produces the acts of sin”. He made these statements, quoting passages like Romans 5:12, Psalm 51:5 as proof texts. This is the doctrine called “Total Hereditary Depravity”, in religious circles.

In the first place, faithful elders would have stopped the preacher during the sermon and corrected him then and there, but they obviously did not. They were derelict in their responsibility. Not only were they derelict in stopping the mouth of a false teacher, but they chastised the young man for writing about the matter. Here is one elder’s reply to him:

We hope that this mail finds you in peace and good health. The elders are in receipt of your concerns about Minister Martin Oppong’s sermon and certain statements made baffles you. In as much as we commend you for your boldness to ask questions that bother you, we are unable to commend you for the approach you have adopted. You should have first discussed the issue with the Minister as a brother and then if not satisfied, approach the elders but rather you chose to come to the elders directly with your concerns. Your approach makes your letter to us a complaint against the Minister and that is not the prescribed Bible way of resolving misunderstandings. We find it strange that you copied Minister Shadrack Oppong without copying Minister Martin whom you have an issue with. The tone of your letter and the conclusions you draw may not be fair to the Minister. Why not give him an opportunity to explain or clarify issues? We advice (sic) that you go to Minister Oppong with your concerns for further discussions and clarifications. That is the most appropriate way to go. Let the brotherly love continue uninterrupted. Shalom
Signature

Although only one elder signed the letter, his use of “we” indicates he wrote for them

all. The young man asked them if this Calvinistic doctrine was the position of the church there, but they did not answer him. They took the coward’s way out by misapplying Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 18:15-18, saying, “You should have first discussed the issue with the Minister as a brother...” They further muddied the issue, writing, “Your approach makes your letter to us a complaint against the Minister and that is not the prescribed Bible way of resolving misunderstandings.” This wasn’t a “misunderstanding.” It was blatant false doctrine and the elders were too spineless to shepherd the flock. By their reasoning, they have absolutely no responsibility to monitor preaching from their pulpit.

Their greater love for “peace” than for opposing false doctrine is manifested in their final statement to, “Let the brotherly love continue uninterrupted,” and the word, “Shalom” above the signature. “Shalom” means “peace.”

As the Lord’s plaint against the shepherds of Israel, so is His indignation against derelict shepherds of the church today.

As I live, saith the Lord God, surely my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock... Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock (Ezek. 34:8, 10).

There are far too many “elders” today who are *not* elders and those above are a prime example. They may enjoy the “prestige” of being an elder, but they will have their reward. They feed not the flock, but their own bellies and cry, “peace, peace” while wolves ravage the flock. Shame on them all!

Bible-Centered Preaching

Franklin Camp (Deceased)

Another root of the restoration was Bible-founded and Bible-centered preaching. The men that set about to call man back to the Bible knew the Bible and preached the Bible. The Bible was their textbook. This root is fast drying up. There is too much preaching today that has everything in it but the Bible. I may not know whether a man is quoting from Norman Vincent Peale, or not, but I know enough about the Bible to know when a man is quoting from it. It is a tragedy for a man to get up in the pulpit with a Bible and then never use it. Some would do the church service if they left their Bible at home and got into the pulpit with a stack of magazines and Dale Carnegie’s books so the man in the pew would know what was taking place. It is high time we put the preacher back in the study with his Bible and let him know we expect him to “get with it and preach it.” Some sermons I have heard recently would not have been tolerated in the country church where I grew up. He might have preached one, but that would have been the limit. They wanted the Bible and a man either preached that or he did not preach. **(The Beacon, Bellview church of Christ, Pensacola, Fla., Oct. 1, 2012).**