

May 3, 2020

CHURCH of CHRIST

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Public services are temporarily cancelled during the *Corona Virus* restrictions.

IN OUR PRAYERS: Jerry & Erma Endly, Cathy Jackson, Gary & Debbie Jones, Tina Keith, Rick Lambert, Kathy Mayo and Flavil Miller.

SHUT-INS: Audrey Burns, Jack Mitchell, and Shirley Patterson.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Nellie Richard, Weston Boulet, (great-grandson of Shirley Patterson), Dan Doudna (Wilma Roe's relative), Bob & Patty Eddy, Carmie Green (Flavil Miller's sister), Herb Hamilton (friend of the Starrett's), Bob & Donna Henthorn (Laura Jamiel's parents), Collene Keister, (Mo Smith's sister), Linda Potts (Joyce Starrett's sister-in-law), Erica Rich, Shirley Roe, Mona Stoffer (Flavil Miller's daughter), Mitch Vick, Bob & Marge Watson and remember to pray for **one another**.

Greetings, brethren and friends,

It is our prayer that you and yours are in the best possible health despite our current situation, and that you are coping with the restrictions in the spirit of our Lord. We are one more week closer to being past this plague and I encourage you to continue in hope and optimism as we endure together, but apart.

Tina Keith's dental procedure has been postponed yet again; they are saying sometime in June or July. However, she is first in line when things do return to something like normal.

I wish to thank the ones who have been mailing their contributions to the building. The bills have not stopped coming in and they must be paid for and by you sending your checks, our obligations are being met. The average, weekly contribution for April was \$2170⁰⁰.

I realize we have several folks who are in the "high-risk" designation and so I want to be cautious as we think about starting to meet again. Governor DeWine is opening things back up slowly—which is a good thing—but, it could also prove to be a dangerous thing for certain folks. I am hesitant just yet to set a date for coming back; as I see it, we are still at least a couple weeks out. I would welcome your input (either by phone call, email, Facebook, etc.) as we try to decide to best course to take.

Included this week is an article by **Roger Rush** of the *Sixth and Washington Streets church of Christ* in Marietta. He was scheduled to be in a Gospel Meeting with us this past week, but of course, we had to cancel it. We will be rescheduling as soon as things are more certain.

We miss you all and pray things only get better, God willing —JK

HOW BIG IS YOUR BIBLE?

Roger Rush

Some people's Bibles are bigger than mine and some are smaller. Those with bigger Bibles tend to legislate for God. They make demands the Lord did not make, and insist that their demands be accepted by all. In fact, they are sometimes more zealous for their additions to Scripture than for the Bible. Others have smaller Bibles. They have decided they know better than God, and therefore they have rejected those portions of the inspired text they find objectionable.

No man has the right to legislate for God. We cannot add to His book, nor can we take from it. Notice this warning from the Old Testament: "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2). "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 12:32). And then there is this warning in the New Testament. "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18, 19).

Paul specifically warned the churches of Galatia against accepting any other gospel than that which he had preached, and then went on to remind them that their aim should be to please God and not men (Galatians 1:6-10). In his last meeting with the elders of the Ephesian church he said: "I therefore testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26, 27). Peter, conveying the same sentiment, wrote: "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God..." (1 Peter 4:11).

In those areas where God has not legislated we have liberty, but where He has spoken our response should be, "Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears" (1 Samuel 3:9). How big is your Bible?

DON'T FORGET THE GOAL LINE

The freshman wide receiver had not played a down all season. In the final minutes of the fourth quarter the coach put him in. He ran his pattern and was wide open, and upon catching the pass he began jumping up and down with elation. His excitement and joy was short-lived however as members of the opposing team piled on and drove him into sod. You see, he forgot to run to the goal line.

We are facing a very unusual reality. It would be quite easy for us to get totally absorbed by the current crisis that we lose sight of anything beyond today. We cannot afford to allow ourselves to do this because today is not all there is. We have a judgment to face once times ends and eternity resumes. Remember this: we will exist a lot longer on the "other side" than we will on this side. Everything we say and do in this life should be done in light of the eternity we choose for ourselves.

How we respond to events around us is a most important thing for us to consider. Are we going to set back while life happens to us? Are we going to celebrate too soon? Are we going to follow Christ from a distance (Matt. 26:58)? Are we going to allow COVID-19 and the attendant circumstances weaken, or strengthen our faith?

I urge you to think on the things of Christ now more than ever—this can be a "make-or-break" situation. Hear the Apostle Paul and be encouraged:

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us (Rom. 5:1-5).

It is easy to forget about the goal line sometimes, but we have been promised an inheritance that is too much to lose. Live your lives one day at a time, but never ever forget about the goal! —*JK*