

WORSHIP—SUNDAY—6:00 PM

Announcements.....Jacky Carver, Sr.
Song Leader.....Glen Reece
Scripture Reading.....John Leonard
Opening Prayer.....George Clay
PM Sermon.....Travis Thomas
Lord’s Supper...Mitchell Brooks & Dallas Eddie
Closing Prayer.....Justin Draper

BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAY —7:00 PM

Announcements.....Jacky Carver, Sr.
Song LeaderGlen Reece
First Prayer.....Roger Draper
Opening Prayer.....George Clay
Invitation.....Sam Willcut
Closing Prayer.....Dallas Eddie

Prepare Communion for **JANUARY**—Karen Halliburton & Diana Preston

Suggested Daily Bible Reading for January —**James 1-5**

PRAYER LIST

Opal Agee (Concordia Nursing and Rehabilitation of Smith County, Carthage, Room 705B), **Patti Birdwell** (sister-in-law of Mel Smith, upcoming surgery for brain aneurysm), **Raymelle Cole** (mother of Lesa Leonard), **Elizabeth Dinwiddie** (grandmother of Melissa Willcut in Houston, TX), **Eleanor Gibbs** (knee surgery on January 3), **Billy Halliburton**, **Wade Kellam** (brother-in-law of Vicki Russell in Stallworth Rehab), **Linda Phillips** (friend of Janice Pinckley & member of Willow Avenue who has pancreatic cancer)

OUR RECORD OF LOVE FOR CHRIST

The week of 12/30/18
Worship Sunday AM.....84
Bible Study Sunday AM.....74
Daily Bible Readers.....47
Worship Sunday PM.....66
Wednesday (12/26/18).....60
Offering.....\$13,206.23

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

January 6—Nursing Home Service, 2:00 PM
January 6—Elders, Deacons & Preachers’ Meeting after PM worship
January 20—Annual Treasurer’s Report

January 27—Fourth Sunday Fellowship Supper

AREA EVENTS

January 20-23—Gospel Meeting with BJ Clarke, Willow Avenue, Cookeville, TN, 7:00 PM

January 25—Mid-TN Friday Night Singing, Corinth Church of Christ, Portland, TN, 7:00 PM

February 2—Young Men’s Seminar, East Main, Murfreesboro, TN

February 22-24, CYC, Gatlinburg, TN

Pantry Item: Canned Meat & Mayonnaise

Things a Blind Man Saw

In Acts 9, we have the conversion of a young man named Saul of Tarsus. Luke introduces us to him in Acts 8 as we see him consenting unto the first death of a disciple of Jesus Christ (Stephen). As a devout Pharisee (Philippians 3:5-6), he quickly began persecuting the church that Christ built upon the foundation of His apostles in Acts 2. Yet, one day as he was near the city of Damascus, he saw a heavenly light that was brighter than the Palestinian sun. Upon his conversation with his Lord Jesus Christ, he waited for instructions from Ananias to comply with obedience to the fact that Jesus selected him to be one of His apostles. Luke writes, “*And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink*” (Acts 9:9). Nevertheless, while Saul was blind for three days, he did see some very important things in his life.

He saw that one could be honest, sincere, conscientious, religious, zealous and still be dead wrong! Concerning the early part of his Jewish life, he wrote to Timothy that he did things “*ignorantly in unbelief*” (1 Timothy 1:13). From the aforementioned passage in Philippians 3:5-6, he deemed himself to be very devout and zealous. Yet, none of these mattered on that road to Damascus. He was still an enemy of his Lord and needed obedient faith. Many follow in these footsteps today.

He saw that one could be mistaken completely and thoroughly as to the identity of the people of God. At the time, he still thought that the Jews were the people of God; at the time, he thought that God was pleased with his actions. Yet, he was mistaken, and many people today are mistaken as to the identity of the people of God.

He saw that to persecute the people of God is to persecute Christ Himself. While he was persecuting the church (Acts 9:1-2), Jesus asked him, “*Why persecutest thou me?*” (Acts 9:4). He later learned the association between the people of God and Christ (cf. Matthew 25:31-46).

He saw that one cannot obtain salvation by faith alone, but saving faith is obedient faith. While he addressed Jesus as “*Lord*” in Acts 9:6, even to the point of asking, “*What wilt thou have me to do?*”, Jesus did not reply that his faith had saved him without any need to do anything else (as many teach today). Rather, he told Saul to go to Damascus and wait for further instructions

(which he would need to obey), which came through a called disciple named Ananias. We also need to see that saving faith is obedient faith (cf. Hebrews 5:8-9).

He saw that salvation demands genuine repentance. Once he realized what he had done (cf. Acts 9:4-5), his demeanor changed. He was “*trembling and astonished*” (Acts 9:6). The fact that he fasted for three days (Acts 9:9) is generally a sign of repentance. Jesus demanded, “*And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations*” (Luke 24:47), which Peter began in Acts 2:38.

He saw that only the Lord could tell men what to do to obtain salvation. Jesus told him to go to Damascus and wait for further instructions (Acts 9:6), which he did (Acts 9:8-9). When God called Ananias to go to Saul, Ananias said to him, “*Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest hath sent me*” (Acts 9:17). Thus, he knew that the instructions he would receive from Ananias ultimately came from God. Only God can tell man what to do to obtain salvation!

He saw that even a persecutor and a blasphemer could obtain salvation by the grace of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the very point he would make to Timothy in First Timothy 1:15-16. Anyone can become a child of God by His grace when he complies with the gospel.

Therefore, the whole world needs to see these things that a blind man saw!

—*Sam Willcut*

Are You a Godly Person or an Ungodly Person?

If godliness is being as God, the industrious and working person is to that extent a godly person; the person who does not work (and has an aversion to it) is ungodly. The Bible presents God as an Omnipotent and Energetic Being at work, creating everything, bringing it into being, and now upholding it by the word of His power. In reference to His work of creation, rest (or pause) came only after His work had taken place.

God created humanity in His own image and likeness. Then “*the Lord God took the man, and put him in the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it*” (Genesis 2:15), not to idly pass the time of day doing nothing. Man having to work is not the part of the curse of sin; the curse involves the aggravating conditions surrounding work. Thus, the person who works is to that degree as God—he is godly; pause or rest is in order only after work has taken place, and the purpose of rest, humanly speaking, is to be revitalized for more work.

Yes, work within itself is honorable, because the work ethic is of God. Man was originally placed in the Garden of Eden—paradise on earth—and the name “*Eden*” means “*pleasure garden*.” As stated, he was placed there to work and to take care of it—that was the source of his pleasure. There is much personal satisfaction and enjoyment to be found in employment. In this day of the deification of leisure and of non-productive slackers, let us not forget that in working, we are being as the God who made us. Therefore, let us never forget the God who made us: “*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men*” (Colossians 3:23), for even that which is right becomes wrong when God is left out!

—Author Unknown