

Light and Life

Asleep in Christ

“I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope” (I Th. 4:13).

Paul wrote these words to the church at Thessalonica during a time of great affliction for Christians in that area. When the church there was established on Paul’s second missionary journey, “some of [the Jews] were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women” of the city (Ac. 17:4). However, “the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked” the church (Ac. 17:5). These Jews were not content to chase Paul and Silas out of their own backyard, but when they heard of the success of the gospel in Berea, the same Jews walked roughly 50 miles to cause problems there as well! Needless to say, the unbelievers surrounding the church at Thessalonica were zealous in their hatred for the gospel.

It’s clear from Paul’s letters to this congregation that he was concerned for their wellbeing due to the persecution they were having to endure (I Th. 1:6; 2:14-17; 3:1-5; II Th. 1:4-10). Yet, he encouraged them that if they had their minds and hearts focused on the right things, they had no reason to fear death. By a reminder of the hope they had in Christ, they could even be comforted at the deaths of their loved ones.

There are those who have no hope (I Th. 4:13). But “if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus... and thus we shall always be with the Lord” (I Th. 4:14, 17).

“Therefore, comfort one another with these words” (I Th. 4:18).

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Saved by Hope

Rom. 8:24 reads, "For we are saved by hope..." Hope only? Certainly not that; but the statement is true, and hope must have some place in our redemption.

Hope is not wishful thinking. It is "desire with expectation ... belief that it is obtainable." There is an element of trust and reliance in hope, for it looks to a source (or ground) outside us. As faith grows, it can become confidence, although it is yet in something unseen, unattained.

It seems to me the "creation" of Romans 8 is directly related to the flesh, which provides avenues of temptation; hence, it wars against the spirit of man. But there is also a sense in which creation is personified, and sighs for release from bondage. This suggests an affinity between man and his surroundings – all longing for something better.

It is significant that those who have no faith in God – hence, no hope – live in despair. One expositor remarks, "Sin brought this doom on creation; it made a pessimistic view of the universe inevitable."

“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Co 15:19). And what of those who do not have Christ, even in this life? They must feed upon corruption, cheats, failures; and find their so-called success is vanity. They dream of a mythical past, that was never as great as imagined. They sweat out the present and have only the grave for their future. It seems almost cruel to have to tell them of judgment and eternal punishment.

But Christians live on hope. It lifts their spirits, lightens today's load, genders optimism, and opens the grave. In Christ Jesus darkness becomes light. We are, indeed, saved by hope!

- Robert Turner (edited for space)

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

RADIO PROGRAM

The Bible Speaks



Sunday 9:00-9:30a.m.
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

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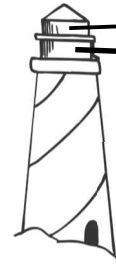
Gerald Walsh
1935-2023

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Joel Heiligenthal
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
Randy Shell



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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A Legacy

Dictionaries define ‘legacy’ in varied ways, but one stands out to me. A legacy is “the long-lasting impact of a person’s life.” It is not a word found in the Bible, but it’s certainly a Biblical concept. From Noah to Abraham to Paul, and from Sarah to Esther to Mary – the Bible is full of stories of those men and women who left a spiritual legacy.

Of course, not all legacies are good. The Bible also records the legacies of Cain and of Ahab and of Judas. But whether for good or ill, the “impact of a person’s life” is built, naturally, during one’s life. And that

should be a sobering thought every day of our lives – as we are busy constructing our own legacy.

Gerald left a legacy as well. As a member of the Downtown church since the 50’s, he served for about 10 years as a deacon, and then for about 40 years as an elder. Though he was battle-hardened through those years of service, he always maintained a good attitude and a loving heart for the Lord and the Lord’s people. It sounds cliché, but he will be missed.

I’ll see you soon, my friend – by the grace of God.

- *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: G&K Fletcher, T Tolbert, J&M Swim, J Marshall, S Shell, L&T Deen

Shut-ins: Betty Jo Young, Billie Pennington, Shirley Cole, Mary Lou Lewis

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

DATES TO REMEMBER – Our Vacation Bible School will be July 16-20 with Bret Hogland, and Youth Lectures are August 4-5 with David Banning.

OUR SYMPATHY – Our love is extended to the Walsh family at the recent passing of Gerald Walsh; but his influence on this congregation will live on.