

TIME OF SERVICES

Sunday:

Bible Classes 10:00 A.M.
Worship Service 11:00 A.M.
Worship Service 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Classes 7:00 P.M.

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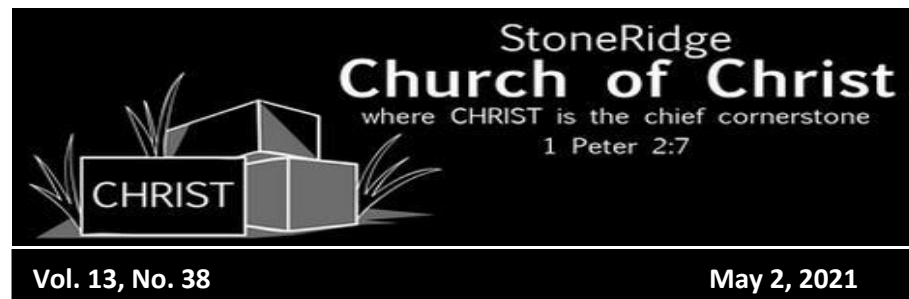
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THE BIBLE AND THE BIBLE ONLY, MAKES CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANS ONLY. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS COMPOSED OF CHRISTIANS WHO HAVE NOT JOINED A DENOMINATION.



“Remember The Poor”

“THEY DESIRED ONLY THAT WE SHOULD REMEMBER THE POOR, THE VERY THING WHICH I ALSO WAS EAGER TO DO” Galatians 2:10.

“Get as job!” There are organizations to help.” “This violates my economic or political philosophies.” “Oh no, another scam.” Are these our thoughts when we hear, “remember the poor?” Beware, lest we close our eyes and minds to God’s will that we remember the poor.

Remember Means: See. It is easy to live a life that is insulated from the poor. We can live and work and shop where the poor do not frequent. Their absence can make us unfamiliar with them and their suffering, and it can affect our thinking toward them.

“Who is like the Lord our God, Who dwells on high, Who humbles Himself to behold the things that are in the heavens and in the earth? He raises the poor out of the dust and lifts the needy out of the ash heap, that He may seat him with princes – with the princes of His people” (Ps 113:5-8). God “humbles Himself,” “stoops down (NIV) to see things as they are, and we must be willing to do the same. We are called to be “rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share...” (1 Tim 6:17-19). “Remember the poor” means we go to them to see the poverty and need.

Remember Means: Think Differently. “Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven” (Lk 6:20). This was Jesus’ radically different way of thinking about the kingdom. Jesus Himself was unexpected: “...though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Cor 8:9).

Instead of seeing the poor as a burden, we need to think of the poor as →

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opportunities to serve and to “lend to the LORD” (Pro 19:17). We need to invite and serve those who can’t repay (Lk 14:13,14), giving them the seat of honor (Js 2:3-5).

Remember Means: Have Active Faith & Love. *“If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,’ but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what **does** it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (Js 2:14-17). “But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him, My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth, And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him” (1 Jn 3:17-19).*

James says that not helping a poor brother or sister is faith without works. John says God’s love doesn’t abide in such a one. It’s the failure that Jesus envisions at the judgment in Matt 25, *“...I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take me in, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me...inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me” (Mt 25:42-45).* We need to avoid things that signal unloving superiority, reluctance, or acting only out of obligation. How we talk about poverty in other situations or on social media must not communicate an unloving, uncaring spirit: *“He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker; he who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished” (Prov 17:5).*

Remember By Being Eager. Paul was “eager” to “remember the poor” (Gal 2:10). Materialism or “self-made” success may make us reluctant. Bad experiences with others may make us reluctant. Organizations, charities, and government programs may make us reluctant. Social movements which hijack the needs of the poor may make us reluctant. Our commitment of faith and love should push us past the things that make us reluctant to see what is really needed and find the right way to help.

God is not calling His people to do just anything. Serving is never supposed to be “zeal without knowledge” (cf. Prov 19:2; Rom 10:1,2). It is tempting for God’s people to jump on bandwagons and social movements to just do something. Instead, we need to go to God’s word and look for applications.

“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world” (Js

1:27). *“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Gal 2:10).* Each of us needs to “remember the poor” by being personally involved with our neighbors, communities, and churches to know the needs and to work to relieve them. We need to resist the temptation to rely on organizations, institutions, and government programs to completely relieve us of our responsibilities to the poor.

Thoughtful eagerness will use church funds for “saints” as is consistently shown in the NT (Acts 2:44; 4:32-35; 6:1-6; 11:27-30; 1 Tim 5:16; Rom 15:25-31; 1 Cor 16:1-3; 2 Cor 8:4; 9:4). However, let us avoid overreacting to abuses by being reluctant to relieve the needs of Christians or allowing a stigma of shame to hover over Christians receiving relief from the treasury. Don’t hold to the truth on this controversial issue but then refuse to “remember the poor” among us.

News/Notes/Quotes

THE SICK. **Virginia Bishop** was finally able to go home from the hospital on Friday. We are happy for her... **Betty Bradsher** went home from the hospital last Thursday but was re-admitted Friday with pneumonia. Please pray for her... **Phil Cullison** is in NEA Baptist Hospital. His cardiologist is trying to help solve some of Phil’s health problems... **Brandi McGregor** has requested prayers for her cousin’s wife, Stefanie, who is hospitalized for kidney stones and sepsis.... **Janis Glover**, JaNae Moody’s step-mother, is in St. Bernard Hospital. She had open-heart surgery last week...

Shutins: **Beverly Allen** is confined at home... **Charles Bradsher** is at St. Elizabeth’s Place... **Gail Brooks** has been unable to assemble... **Shirley Coots** is confined at Walnut Ridge Nursing Home... **Elizabeth Keller** is at The Springs Nursing Home. **Editha Kern** is at Liberty Park Assisted Living....



Rumor is one thing that gets thicker as you spread it.

