

The Stranger

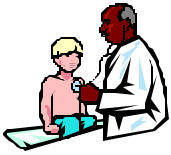
A few months before I was born, my dad met a stranger who was new to our small town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer, and soon invited him to live with our family. The stranger was quickly accepted and was around to welcome me into the world a few months later. As I grew up, I never questioned his place in our family. Mom taught me to love the Word of God, and Dad taught me to obey it. But the stranger was our storyteller. He could weave the most fascinating tales. Adventures, mysteries, and comedies were daily conversations. He could hold our whole family spellbound for hours each evening. He was like a friend to the whole family. He took Dad, my brother, and me to our first major league baseball game. He was always encouraging us to see the movies and he even made arrangements to introduce us to several movie stars.

The stranger was an incessant talker. Dad didn't seem to mind, but sometimes Mom would quietly get up—while the rest of us were enthralled with one of his stories of faraway places—go to her room, read her Bible, and pray. I wonder now if she ever prayed that the stranger would leave. You see, my Dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions. But this stranger never felt an obligation to honor them. Profanity, for example, was not allowed in house—not from us, from our friends, or from adults. Our longtime visitor, however, used occasional four letter words that burned my ears and made Dad squirm. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted. My Dad was a teetotaler who didn't permit alcohol in his home—not even for cooking. But the stranger felt like we needed exposure and enlightened us to other ways of life. He offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often. He made cigarettes look tasty, cigars manly, and pipes distinguished. He talked freely about sex. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and generally embarrassing. I know now that my early concepts of the man/woman relationship were influenced by the stranger.

As I look back, I believe it was the grace of God that the stranger did not influence us more. Time after time, he opposed the values of our parents, yet he was seldom rebuked and never asked to leave. More than thirty years have passed since the stranger moved in with us, but if I were to walk into my parent's home today, I would still see him sitting there waiting for someone to listen to his stories and watch him draw his pictures. His name? We always just called him TV.

Sick

Continue to remember in prayer:
**Marguerite Charles, Lyn Anderson,
Martha Keith, Miriam Majors,
Betty Jenkins, WJ Wood, Margaret
Kratz, Dee House, Betty Buckner,
Evelyn Scott.**



David Wilcox is at home after his stay at Rehab.

Levi Graves is in the hospital in Richmond.

Cora Akers, Kristie Jearls' grandmother, is home after her stay in the hospital.

Edna Stricklin, Jo Ann Edwards' grandmother, has been diagnosed with a form of lung cancer.

Judy Bowman, sister of Hazel Maness, is undergoing chemo treatments.

Several are out with the usual illnesses.

Sympathy is extended to the family of Steve Harrah who died last week. His funeral was yesterday.

Sympathy is also extended to EV Wimmer in the death of his sister, Ruby Harness. Her funeral was yesterday.

Happy Birthday this week to:

**Ryan Simms—3/15
Evelyn White— 3/17
Sandy Garby—3/17
Erika Reed—3/17
Betty Buckner—3/18
Evelyn Scott—3/21**



Happy Anniversary this week to:
Karen & Brian Munsey—3/16



Upcoming Events:

Team 2 (Garby) welcomes the Spring season with a colorful dining event on March 21 at 5:30. All dishes prepared will have a pastel color theme, so prepare your favorite dish and let your creative juices flow!



Team 3 (Valentine) will be having an April Fools Dinner on Wednesday, April 1, at 5:45. Jo's Catering will be providing the meal and the cost will be \$5 at the door and a clean joke! Sign up sheet located on the board—No foolin'.

Teens



March Dates
3/15—TBS

3/29—Young Men conduct services

The **2009 SW VA Bible Bowl** was a wonderful success last Saturday. Some 70 youth from 8 area congregations participated. A record number 11 Jr. and 7 Sr. participants scored 100% on their written test covering the first 25 books of Genesis. The second annual **Biddy Bible Bowl** had 8 participants, ages 5 to 8; both Caroline Harrington and Natalie Valentine from West Side participated. Thanks to all who studied so diligently and to everyone who helped make it such a great day. - Mike and Jeff

WOW

Next WOW meeting will be on Tuesday, April 14, at 10:30.

MARCH ITEMS FOR THE STAFFORDS:

Ink pens (Grip, medium Pilot and fine Zebra) and tic tacs—favorite is lime green. Give your items to Jeanny and she will ship them over!



For Your Information

Weekly Reminders

LADIES NIGHT OUT

The March LNO hosted by Velda Gearhart, Jeanny Gilpin and Jennifer Laplante will be on Monday, March 16, at 6:30 here at the building. Chili Supper is planned and a sign up sheet will be posted.

MEN'S RETREAT

The 20th Annual Men's Retreat will be on March 20 & 21 at the 4-H Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake. Registration forms are located in the tract rack in the foyer.

MENS FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

The monthly Men's Breakfast will be on Saturday, March 21, at 8AM at Famous Anthony's. Make note of date change!!

PRIMARY TEACHER MEETING

The teachers meeting will be on March 22 at 4:30. Song practice will be taking place and toddlers will be in charge of snacks! Change of date for the next one—May 17.

LECTURESHIP

The yearly MSOP lectureship starts on March 29. See Eddy for details!

FALL GOSPEL MEETING

Our Fall Gospel Meeting with BJ Clark has been rescheduled for October 25-28. Please mark your calendars now!!

Congratulations to Caleb Guard who has been awarded a graduate teaching assistantship at VT for the 2009-2010 school year. He will be teaching freshman English classes.

Directory Updates:

Tom Richardson—

Peggy Grubb—

Jason & Melissa Oldham—

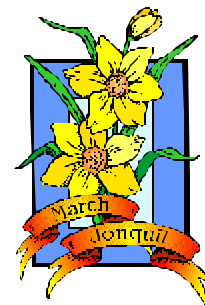
Please update these numbers in your directories!

Prayer list:

Lyn Anderson
Marguerite Charles
Dee House
Betty Jenkins
Martha Keith
Margaret Kratz
Miriam Majors
Ben & Michele Nikkel
David Wilcox
Raymond Clark
Luke Guard
Cora Akers
Ed Hanberry
Edna Stricklin
Levi Graves
Judy Bowman
Evelyn Scott

Activities:

TBS—3/15
LNO—3/16
Men's Study WKD—3/20&21
Team 2 Dinner—3/21
Primary Teachers—3/22



“I Hope He Fails”

Syndicated radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh has received both criticism and accolades for his response regarding Barack Obama’s policies. Concerning what President Obama has in store for the country, Mr. Limbaugh said, “I hope he fails.” He went on to explain that in his opinion the Obama policies are bad for the country. Therefore, in saying he hopes Mr. Obama fails Limbaugh was saying he hopes his agenda, and not the country, fails.

In our day of everything-is-alright-and-nothing-is-wrong, for anyone to criticize anyone (with the exception of speaking out against those who hold to moral truth and conservative principles), it is not fashionable to convey the idea that anything is “wrong.” To say even further, as Limbaugh did, that one desires another’s agenda to fail is indeed taboo in a go-along-to-get-along society.

In the religious world (particularly what is referred to as “Christendom”) it is also wrong to say that anything is wrong. The trend in religion is to accept and promote anyone and (practically) anything. To question a doctrine, preacher or group is tantamount in the eyes of many to questioning God Himself. To speak out in opposition to such is really crossing the line. However, the Bible reveals that truth is not contradictory and that which violates Scripture is unacceptable to God (Ps. 18:30; 119:160, 172; Jn. 8:31, 32; 12:48; 17:17; Rom. 10:17). We are commanded to “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3). The Lord requires us to “judge righteous judgment” (Jn. 7:24). We must obey His will and not man’s (Heb. 5:9; Acts 4:19, 20; 5:29).

Therefore, it is quite appropriate to point out that some things in the religious realm are wrong. In fact, all things not authorized and approved by God’s word are wrong. That includes every religious group not authorized by Him (and there is only one such church- Mt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4), every doctrine that is contrary to His and every individual who teaches and upholds such doctrines (II Jn. 9). Because those matters are not approved by God we should hope they do not succeed (regardless of the “good” they accomplish). For such practices and people to succeed would be and is devastating to the souls of men. We should hope that all practices opposed to the Will of God fail, for their success means the condemnation of man.

-Eddy

Mar. 15 (Acts 18)

- Read Acts 18 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Acts 18—Paul at Corinth
- Paul’s 3rd missionary journey begins
- Apollos taught the word of God more perfectly by Aquila & Priscilla
- Write a note or card this week
- *Increase your contribution by \$1 today

Mar. 16 (Acts 19)

- Read Acts 19 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Acts 19—12 Ephesian men rebaptized by Paul
- Ephesians burn their sorcery books
- Ephesian uproar (goddess Diana)

Mar. 17 (Acts 20)

- Read Acts 20 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Acts 20—Lord’s Supper at Troas
- Eutychus falls; Paul brings him to life
- Paul speak with Ephesian elders at Miletus

Mar. 18 (Acts 21)

- Read Acts 21 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Acts 21—Agabus warns Paul not to go to Jerusalem
- Paul goes to Jerusalem
- Paul’s vow
- Jews of Jerusalem attempt to kill Paul
- Paul arrested by the Romans

Mar. 19 (Acts 22)

- Read Acts 22 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Acts 22—Paul relates his conversion to the Jews at Jerusalem
- Paul brought before the council

Mar. 20 (Acts 23)

- Read Acts 23 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Acts 23—Council divided by Paul’s comments
- Plot against Paul’s life revealed
- Paul’s journey to Rome begins (taken to Caesarea)

Mar. 21 (Acts 24)

- Read Acts 24 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Acts 24—Paul’s defense before Felix
- Festus replaces Felix

Those to Serve in March

Announcements: Roger Mays

Preside at Communion: Jason Oldham

Opening Prayer: Jeff Durham

Next Week: Barry White

PM Song Leader: Sam Valentine

Opening Prayer: Walter Jenkins

Next Week: Jerry Anderson

Serve Communion: Nathan Pelfrey, Tanner Reed

Wednesday Song Leader: Garrett Durham

Open/Close Bldg: Mike Durham

Ushers: Danny Guard, Curtis Oakes

Greeters: Hartman/Laplante

Last weeks attendance (3/8&11/09)

Bible Class: 148 Worship Service: 176

Contribution: \$5414

Song Leader: David Brown

Serve Table: Fred Altizer, Greg Edwards
Jim Harrington, Cameron Brown

Closing Prayer: Murphy Scott

Next Week: Josh Whitlow

Scripture Reader: Caleb Reed

Closing Prayer: David Brown

Next Week: Jeremy White

Prayer: Ethan Rogers

Prepare Communion: Lowe/L. Maness

Cards/Pencils: S. Durham/O. Valentine

Nursery Attend: M. Halling/K. Jearls

March 15, 2009

Number 3011