

Keeping Our Focus

The story is told of a wicked young man whose father, the king, had condemned him to death. Surprised by a noticeable change in the young man's countenance, the king pardoned his son. Asked how he made such a transition,

the son replied, "How could I not change when each passing day brought me closer to death?"

Pleased with his son's reply, the king charged his son that he must maintain such vigilance the remainder of his life. To help his son to do this, the king ordered a vessel full of oil to be brought for his son to carry along all the streets of the city. Following him were two soldiers with sharp swords whose orders were to decapitate the son if he spilled a single drop. With light, careful steps he walked along all the streets, the soldiers accompanying him, but he did not spill a drop.

When the son returned to the castle, the father asked him what he saw while he was walking through the city. His son replied, "I saw nothing."

"What do you mean, 'nothing'?" asked the king. "Today is a holiday; you must have seen the booths with all kinds of trinkets, many carriages, people, animals..."

"I didn't notice any of that," said the son. "All my attention was focused on the oil in the vessel. I was afraid to spill a drop and thereby lose my life." The father then admonished the son to keep this lesson in mind for the rest of his life and to be a vigilant over his soul as he had been over the oil in the vessel.

Jesus Christ had one objective in mind when He entered into this world of sin and sorrow: to accomplish the eternal will of His Father (John 4:34). The details contained in that objective primarily were to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10) and to glorify the Father on earth (John 17:4). Amidst the distractions that would try to thwart God's plans, Jesus kept His focus until the very end.

Have we become distracted by the attractions of this world and "spilt" our oil? Someone once admonished a classroom of young preachers, "Preach like a dying man to dying people, and you will (continued)

"When Wisdom Entereth"

This particular phrase is found only once in the Bible. As you might guess, Solomon is the writer of these words. This phrase opens the thoughts to a paragraph that involves some 13 verses. Solomon's initial words are, "*When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul*" (Proverbs 2:10). The reoccurring thoughts following this statement are the results of wisdom entering into the heart. Just what occurs "when wisdom entereth"?

First, *discretion preserves*. Solomon's next statement reveals, "*Discretion shall preserve thee*" (Proverbs 2:11a). The original word here translated "discretion" is somewhat enigmatic. When used in the plural it is at times found to carry a negative connotation. For example, in Proverbs 12:2 and 14:17 it is translated "wicked devices". However, when it occurs in the singular (as here in Proverbs 2:11), "it is consistently positive" (The Complete Word Study Old Testament, Zodhiates, p. 2331). Our English word means cautious and correct judgment.

Second, *discernment upholds*. Solomon follows this thought with the next portion of this Hebrew parallelism, "*understanding shall keep thee*" (Proverbs 2:11b). The word translated "understanding" is a word meaning "insight, intelligence, prudence, understanding, discretion, reason, skillfulness, wisdom" (Zodhiates, p. 2379). The English word means intellectual apprehension, mental discernment, comprehension. The phrase "keep thee" is from a word meaning "to guard, protect, maintain" (Zodhiates, p. 2342).

Third, *deliverance occurs*. Solomon next reveals the ones from whom discretion preserves and discernment upholds; namely, *the evil man* and *the enticing woman*.

—Verses 12-15 describe the evil man. He speaks things of subversion (Vs. 12), he strolls paths of perversion (Vs. 13) and he savors wicked excursion (Vss. 14, 15). To say the least, he is unsavory company. (continued)

Keeping Our Focus (continued)

succeed in your ministry. *"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God"* (Colossians 3:1-3). Let's keep our focus on God's mission. — Howell Ferguson

"When Wisdom Entereth" (continued)

—Verses 16-19 describe the enticing woman. She flatters with her gabble (Vs. 16), forsakes her guidance (Vs. 17a) and forgets her God (Vs. 17b). The route to her is fatal (Vs. 18) and a return from her is futile (Vs. 19).

Fourth, *devotion is observed*. When one has inclined his ear to know the right way, the direction of wisdom is apparent (Vss. 20, 21), and the destiny of the wicked is evident (Vs. 22). *"When wisdom entereth"* the ways of the world must depart. Eddy

Eight Vacation Suggestions

1. Notify someone at church when you will be away so we will not have to wonder about your welfare.

2. Notify those in charge if you are scheduled to take part in a worship service so they can replace you. If you teach or help in a Bible class, be sure to secure a substitute.

3. Take your Bible with you. While the body is relaxing, you will want to feed the spiritual man by reading and meditating on God's Word.

4. Plan to assemble with Christians wherever you may be. Don't try to leave God at home, but keep in tune with Him by worshipping with others.

5. Remember the financial obligations of your congregation continue while you are away. Leave your contribution with someone, or make up the Sundays you missed when you return. Don't let the Lord's work suffer because of your vacation.

6. Take note of effective ways that others are serving the Lord or accomplishing certain tasks.

7. Drive carefully. Life is precious for you, your family and those you meet on the road.

8. Return with new vigor and deeper insight into the spreading of the Lord's church, determined to be a more effective Christian.

*If you are not a Christian everywhere,
You are not a Christian any where!*

*The person who cannot live Christ in the
home has no business preaching Christ
abroad.*

"They Won't Miss Me"

"They won't miss me," said the father as he deserted his family and left a broken home with broken lives behind.

"They won't miss me," said the mother as she repeatedly left her children for continued rounds of teas and parties; then she wondered why her children never obeyed the gospel.

"They won't miss me," said the policeman as he skipped a round of his patrol for a game of poker; but that night a store was robbed.

"They won't miss me," said the soldier as he went AWOL. But he spent thirty days in the guardhouse after that.

"They won't miss me," said the man on the assembly line, as he slipped away without permission. But the airplane crashed and killed his brother.

"They won't miss me," said the sentry as he slipped away from duty. But the enemy surprised and massacred his comrades that night.

"They won't miss me," said the church member as he, with no feeling of responsibility to the congregation that counted on him, left to be somewhere else on the Lord's Day. But he wondered why his home congregation did not grow and make the progress that it should have made.

We depend on you here. The congregation which you visit does not depend on you. The church is weakened by your absence; the church where you visit is able to count you only as a visitor, thus adding no real strength to them. So, when you are away from your home congregation, your responsibilities for doing good are greatly decreased. If you are a teacher, or have other duties in the service of the church, please do not be absent except when absolutely necessary; and then make it a point to hurry back to us. —copied

Are You Faithful?

If your car starts one out of three times, do you consider it faithful? If your paper boy skips the Sunday and Thursday editions, would they be missed? And would you call him faithful?

If you fail to come to work two or three times a month, would your boss consider you faithful? If your refrigerator quits a day every now and then, do you excuse it by saying that it works most of the time? Would it be faithful? If your water heater greets you with a cold shower one or two mornings a week, would it be faithful?

If you missed a couple of house payments a year, would your mortgage holder say that ten out of twelve wasn't bad? If you miss Wednesday night Bible class and worship services now and again, would the Lord consider you faithful?

"...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10b). — selected

SICK

Charlene Guard spent the night in the hospital for heart palpitations and weakness; CT scan showed a hiatal hernia. **Susan Mountcastle** had a heart catheterization on Thursday; report was very good; no sign of heart problems. **Grace Myers** spent time in the hospital last weekend for an erratic heartbeat; is on a new medication. **W.J. Wood**, 334, LGH; CHF, slight fever. **Sammy Melton**, 8-yr. old grandson of a friend of Jo Hartman, has a brain tumor. *Continue to remember: Mary & Lynn Anderson, Bobby Argabright, Exel Aultman* (surgery was successful; malignancy was confined to the tumor), **Norma Biller, Betty Buckner, Willard Campbell, Marguerite Charles** (bladder infection), **Dotty Collins, Jim Dorsett, Francis Edelhouser, Paul Faw, Collin & Luetta Gregory, Patti Gwaltney, Dan Hudgins, A.C & Mickie Janney, Betty Jenkins, Martha Keith, Eddy King, Margaret Kratz, Oliver & Miriam Majors, Ocie Mayhew, Sophia Mays, Donnie Mountcastle** (heart catheterization on Friday at UVA in preparation for surgery to remove abdominal aneurysm on 6/27), **Jo Musgrove, Joan Neighbors, Larry Phillips** (echo cardiogram, possible heart catheterization on 6/30, VCU, in preparation for kidney transplant), **Charlie Puckett, Fred Sabarbaro, Murphy Scott, Annette Shrader, Ruth Stanton, Ken Upchurch, E.V. & Effie Wimmer, Jerry Wood, Tom Wood**

SYMPATHY: We extend our love and sympathy to the families of our brother **Joe Myers** whose funeral was held on Wednesday; to **Donnie & Susan Mountcastle** in the loss of Donnie's sister, Cathy Hendrix and to **Steve Hall** in the loss of his aunt, Betty McCulley.

MISSIONARIES: the **Pearsons, the Staffords** and the TZ2000 team.

MILITARY: **Ty Stricklin, John Shannon and Gabriel Hayes** who are in Iraq.

OTHER: On-going Bible studies; "Restore 2006"

THIS WEEK AT WEST SIDE

Today: Elders/Deacons/Preachers meeting, 4pm. TTT Planners meeting, 4:30pm

Monday: Happy birthday to **Charlene Guard!**

Tuesday: Happy anniversary to **Randy & Charmaine Bush!**

Wednesday: Photos for directory, 3pm. Dinner, 4-6:30pm. Bible Study, 7pm.

Thursday: Photo session, 3pm-10pm. Bible study, Teen Center, 7-8:30pm. Happy birthday to **Eric Earnhart!** Happy anniversary to **Tom & Glenna Richardson!**

Friday: Happy birthday to **Bob Garby & Austin Whitlow!**

Saturday: Men's Fellowship Breakfast, Famous Anthony's, 8am

Sunday, 6/11: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praise unto thy name, O Most High:" (Psalm 92:1).

ACHIEVEMENTS LIST

Once again we will be making a bulletin insert to honor our young people's achievements during the past academic year. If you'd like your child included in the list, please list the name, school, grade and achievement on a paper and put it in the box on the Audio Room door **by Sunday, June 11.**

NEW TEACHING QUARTER BEGINS TODAY

Adult classes will be held in the auditorium: Sunday: Eddy will teach "The Parables", Part II; Wednesday: Our Summer Series begins w/**Dennis Curd** of Christiansburg.

PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

Pictures for a new directory will be made on June 7-8 from 3-9:30pm. Sign up on the sheets in the foyer. See **Tom Duff** or **Jim Harrington** if you have questions. **We need 100% participation!!!!** PLEASE PARTICIPATE. —the Elders

WEDNESDAY FELLOWSHIP MEAL

The monthly Wednesday fellowship will be on June 7. As we will be having pictures taken this day, also, dinner will be ready at 4:00pm and we can eat and have pictures taken any time between 4 and 6:30pm. Dinner will be a picnic with all the fixin's! Sign up by June 4 and pay and elder \$5.00.

ATTENTION, LADIES/RE: THE CHURCH LIBRARY

The men have done their part of the work of getting the church library in order. Now it's our turn to add that special touch to it. Here's a list of things I've come up with that I think would help make the library an inviting and relaxing place. If you'd like to donate, make or purchase any of the following, please e-mail me or let me know at services. I thank you for your help! Items: curtain/valance for the window in colors that compliment carpet/walls; 2 small end tables that compliment the library table; silk plants—ivy or small tree; children's books (The children's section is sorely lacking. If you have any lying around, we'd love to put them to use.) a nice stepstool (I'm so short). E-mail: ellenmearnhart@yahoo.com —Michelle Earnhart, Librarian

UPCOMING IN JUNE:

- Elders/Deacons/Preachers Meeting, 4pm, June 4
- Turn, Turn, Turn Planners meeting, 4:30pm, June 4
- Wednesday fellowship meal, June 7, 5:45pm.
- Photo directory photos to be taken, June 7-8.
- Men's Fellowship Breakfast, Saturday, 6/10, 8am, Famous Anthony's
- D-Day Memorial trip; meet at Dale Ridge parking lot, 10am. Lunch follows at Olde Liberty Station Restaurant in Bedford.
- W.O.W. meeting, Tuesday, 6/13, 10:30am
- VA Christian Camp, 6/18-24

NEEDED FOR VCC

18 small squeezable bottles of syrup; give to **Velda Gearhart**. They also need 2 male counselors. See **Lyn Shrader** or **Eddy Gilpin** if you can be one.

ITEMS FOR STAFFORDS—June

Stroganoff mix, Italian dressing

*The only people
you should try to get even with
are those who have helped you!*

Opportunities to Serve **June 2006**
Announcements. Charlie Gwaltney
Reader (PM). Kirk Gilpin
Preside. Tom Rogers
Serve. Andy Duran, Adam House, Bobby Martin, Grat Tucker
(PM) Mark Brooks, Paul Mays

Opening Prayer
6/4. Tom Duff, (PM) Jeff Durham
6/11. Gene Benefield, (PM) Glenn Hartman
6/18. Jerry Anderson, (PM) Charles Maness
6/25. Squeaky Valentine, (PM) Wayne Dixon

Closing Prayer
6/4. James Cooke, (PM) Murphy Scott
6/11. Charlie Puckett, (PM) Mitch Jearls
6/18. George Mellon, (PM) Barry White
6/25. John Black, (PM) Fred Altizer

Greeters. Earnharts, Sartains
Open/Close Building. Bob Garby
Care of Communion. P. Paxton, M. Janney; alt. E. Greene

Song Leaders
Sunday. ... (AM) E. Earnhart, (PM) J. Durham. ... (Wed.) O. Boyd
Care of Baptismal Garments. Jackie Dixon
Ushers. Greg Edwards, Norris Gearhart
Nursery. Melissa Rogers, (PM) Charlene Guard
Alternates. Tom Duff, Gary Sartain
Handouts. Tom & Preston Duff; John & Jacob Hawks

OUR RECORD. 5/24, 28, 2006
Wednesday. 148
Sunday Bible Study. 142
Sunday Morning Worship. 179
Sunday Evening Worship. 141
Contribution. \$4,988.00

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My Absence...

- Made some question the reality of my religion.
- Made some think I was a pretender.
- Made some think I regarded lightly my spiritual welfare and that of others.
- Weakened the effects of the service and the preaching.
- Made it harder for the preacher to preach.
- Discouraged the brethren, and therefore, robbed them of a blessing.
- Caused others to stay away.
- Made it harder for me to overcome temptation.
- Gave the devil more power.
- Encouraged the sin of forsaking (Hebrews 10:25).

*Plan to have the entire family
in worship on the Lord's Day.*