

~ Kevin's Kolumn ~

Serve with purpose

Many of you know how much I like to ride my bicycle. If you were to look in my basement, you'd see at least six bicycles hanging on the wall. Actually, only two of the six are mine. I have one bicycle I use on the trail and one I ride on the road. The other bikes belong to my family. Cycling allows me the opportunity to 'reboot' my mind. It affords me the chance of releasing any pent-up aggravations I might be carrying from the stresses of life. One of the hardest things I've found in what I do is disconnecting myself from the hurt others experience. Cycling became that disconnect for me many years ago. I've read articles on how to improve my time as I ride. I've purchased special shoes, clothing, helmets, cyclometers and gloves to make the experience enjoyable. I've even scheduled rides that have spanned over the course of weeks at a time. But have I really plugged into what riding is all about? Years ago I rode to win races. I rode for bragging rights; to show others I could compete and win. Those days are long gone. I've been humiliated by others older than me reminding me of my limits. I share this with you to point out something we may have missed in regard to Jesus' Great Commission in Matthew 28: 18-20. Jesus told his disciples, ***"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*** There are some who have become a Christian simply because they don't want to go to hell. There are sort of like the bike riders I've encountered who ride just to avoid being ridiculed by their peers for *NOT* riding. Then, there are those who ride because they know they have to do *SOMETHING* to stay in shape. They can't see themselves running. They don't like to swim or lift weights, so this is the obvious choice. These are the Christians who come to church because they know it's the right thing to do; who do things because they know they have to do *something*. And, then, there are the dedicated riders. They ride 100+ miles a week. They eat stuff that would make a dog puke. They take supplements and vitamins to get the most out of their training. These are the Christians who understand what Christ did for them on the cross. These are the ones so thankful to God for saving them that they are willing to give up the passing pleasures of sin for a season in order to experience the joy Christ offers. They go the extra mile. They spend time training to perfect their testimony. The person they compete against is *themselves*. They're not out to shame others. They're out to improve on their own time. So too is the conscience Christian. He grows through study. He serves willingly, not out of compulsion. He betters himself so as to serve Christ and not others. I close with the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 9: 26, ***"Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize."*** Don't serve the Lord out of compulsion. Serve out of appreciation and willingness.

Have a blessed day and remember the One who gave it to you!

Kevin

Thank you for worshiping with us this morning!

News and Notes

Free Market – Our annual Christmas Free Market will be held on Saturday, December 3rd. If you would like to donate items, please leave them in the Upper Fellowship Hall. PLEASE NO TELEVISIONS!! If you have any questions or would like to help, see Mary Lough.

Sunset International Bible Institute Classes – We will NOT be having class during the month of December. We will resume on January 5, 2017 from 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM. Topic of study will be the book of Ephesians (12 week class) and the book of Isaiah (24 week class). If you would like more information, please see Darrell Conaway. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Congratulations to Rex Bartlett on his retirement at the end of the year!

Prayer Requests

♥Pray for each of the following: Joann Hall, Margret Brand, Darrell Freeman, Noah Miller Jr., John Pheasant, Marsha Kisner, Sharon Little, Dallas Shaffer, Kaylyn Lipscomb, Buck Osborne, Edith Gull, Robert Moore, Edwina Summers, Rolle Sullivan, and Nicholas Lough.

♥Pam Jackson had surgery on Thursday, the 10th. Keep her and the family in your prayers as she begins her treatments to eradicate the cancer from her body.

♥Continue to pray for Asher Deaton. Asher is Judy Compton's 2 year old great nephew who is battling cancer.

♥Judy Securro asks that we keep her son, Jimmy in our prayers at this time.

♥Kim Osborne will be having an MRI on her back in the coming days. She has suffered from back pain for quite some time now and hopes to get some relief.

♥Gerry Wyer (Dianne Tonkery's mother) will be starting her cancer treatments soon.

♥Mandy Rennix asks that we keep her grandfather (Lester Hurst) in our prayers as he will be receiving a pace maker soon.

♥Linda Gooden in room 5321 of UHC after a surgery to repair the femur bone in her leg.

♥Jeff Tucker asks that we keep a manager at Walmart in our prayers. Kenny Brown suffered a massive heart attack Doctors said Kenny had a 98% blockage. He was scheduled to come off vent this past Wednesday, but damage to his heart is irreparable.

♥Mandy Rennix suffered a fall from a ladder and is bruised pretty badly. Keep her in your prayers.