

PRAYERS

Chanice – She is in Aberdeen Health and Rehab with kidney and leg issues.
Zack Opheim – Diagnosed with a hiatal hernia. Continue to pray for relief.
Dan Gallagher – Linda’s brother in law – suffered a stroke last week. He is back home now.

Congregation News:

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: Constructive criticism is when I criticize you--
destructive criticism is when you criticize me.

Those Privileged to Serve

Sunday Morning Service:

7/29/18

8/5/18

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| Bible Class | Colby Crawford | Paul Darling |
| Announcements | Colby Crawford | Tom Bright |
| Song Leader | Tom Bright | Paul Darling |
| Opening Prayer | Colby Crawford | Paul Darling |
| Lord's Supper | Tom Bright | Colby Crawford |
| Closing Prayer | Paul Darling | Tom Bright |
| Sermon | Paul Darling | Tom Bright |

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| Bible Classes | Sunday Morning | Wednesday Evening |
| Adult | Colby Crawford | Tom Bright |
| Children | Colby Crawford | Linda McBrayer |
| Toddlers | Cindy Bright | |
| Babies | Anissa Crawford | |

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| Birthdays & Anniversaries | Building Cleanup |
| | McBrayer |

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| Aberdeen church of Christ 1801 S. Lincoln St. Aberdeen, SD 57401 605-225-3621 www.aberdeenchurchofchrist.net | Bulletin Submissions If you would like anything added to the bulletin such as prayer requests, news, or events, please make submissions by Friday night to: tlbj@sbcglobal.net |
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Aberdeen church of Christ

July 29, 2018

How’s My Fire

... I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. (Jeremiah 20:9)

We have all likely heard people say “I don’t talk about religion.” This usually comes from someone who is living worldly (and to be honest about it if I was living as he I wouldn’t want to bring up the things of God either!). But, while such attitudes from those in the world ought to bother us, there is something that should bother us much more. How many Christians have come to the decision that we will no longer “make mention of Him” or “speak any more in His name?” Now some may say there are no Christians who have made such a decision, but let’s ask ourselves a few questions.

*When was the last time I told another I was concerned about their soul?
When was the last time I invited someone to our services or to a meeting we had?
When was the last time I tried to encourage one who had gone astray?
When was the last time I spoke up against some evil thing being done in my presence?*

If I have begun to realize that I have not done such I usually begin to think of all the excuses I have for not doing such things:

I work a lot of hours and just don’t have time ...
I am so busy with my family ...
I don’t know as much as others, they would be better ...
I am just too shy to speak up ...

I have done my part in times past, now it’s someone else’s turn ...
There are a lot of excuses we can think of aren’t there?! But, if we are honest, we will admit that it really comes down to one simple fact - if I am not doing these things ... if I am not “talking about religion” ... then the fire in my heart has gone out. It matters not what the “excuse” is, for God will not accept any. Jeremiah made a terrible decision not to speak, but he had a fire within him which could not let him maintain his decision to keep silent. What was that fire? Jeremiah tells us that “His Word was in mine heart.” If I have become a “watcher” instead of a “worker” shouldn’t I take the time to stoke the fire within my heart by returning His Word to it? The Lord needs workers who are “weary with forbearing” and can no longer keep silent about the wonderful way of salvation He has provided. The Lord wants me to have such a burning within my heart that I cannot refrain from speaking! We each need to honestly ask ourselves, “How’s my fire?”

Lost and Found

When I was growing up it was not uncommon for public places to set aside a location on the premises where lost items could be turned in with the expectation that the object could be reunited with its owner. That designated spot might be a room, a box, or just some isolated corner in the office of a clerk. It was called "Lost and Found!" If we were to be technical, that place should only be called "Lost," or perhaps, "Lost items," for once "found" by the original owner, the item was reclaimed and no longer a part of that which was lost.

The fifteenth chapter of Luke is what Hastings calls "The Lost And Found" chapter of the New Testament. That is exactly what it is! In three wonderful parables our Lord pulls back the curtain of God's amazing mercy and grace, the Lord's never ending efforts to find the lost, and the Holy Spirit's role in providing each of us the light that will help us, as God's instruments, to "find" the lost; even those in the remote recesses of the dark and dismal world of sin. Think with me about those two words: "Lost and Found!"

Lost!

Here is a word that is filled with dread. Men speak of having "lost" a game, or having "lost" some precious possession. Such does not compare to the lostness of the soul. Think on that word. For centuries men have meditated on that word, and have yet to find in it any consolation, any hope, or any encouragement. The word brings only a sense of foreboding. Most, if not all of us, have experienced the feeling of losing our wallet, or some precious ornament or keep-sake. Our hearts sink; our countenance droops. Immediately we begin the search to recover the object. No stone is left unturned. Time is no longer important, and those comparatively insignificant things that crowd our life are put on the back burner as we put forth every effort to find that which is lost.

Now consider the lost sheep. The sheep was lost due to its inattention. Sheep are like that. A person might be lost as the result of a shipwreck. The vessel may strike a reef and sink, taking with it those on board. I don't think Jesus is talking about being lost like that. In this parable the soul was lost, not as a ship floundering in the tempestuous seas, but as a wanderer missing his way. Here is someone who cannot find the way home; someone who, due to his ignorance and inattention, finds himself l-o-s-t!

Found!

It is notable that throughout these parables Jesus never said a word to indicate word to indicate that the situation was a hopeless one. Quite the contrary. In spite of the lost condition of the sheep, the coin, and the prodigal, we find the Father, and the Good Shepherd ever searching for that which was lost. Our Lord had a living hope for those who were lost. Because of His great love for the lost, and His hope for all men, He keeps searching. As one author put it, "He was the friend of outcasts whom even the outcasts cast out!" (Hastings, 427).

Even though men may lose their way, that way remains open for a return to God. So long as man has breath within him there remains that possibility of a return home and the sweet reunion with one's Creator. The journey home is not impossible, for when a man is lost and looking for his way home, he can be assured that he is being *looked for* by the Father. As Hastings put it, "This is the essential fact of the religious life - that the search of the soul for a path is met by the search of God for the soul."

Lost and found! The first of these words is filled with sorrow; the second with joy. One fills the heart with hopelessness, the second points us to a living hope. Study the parable again and see if you don't get that impression. Then let us shed a tear for the lost sheep and determine that we will allow ourselves to be instruments in the Father's hand to leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after that one lost, dying, helpless sheep. And when that lost, dying, helpless sheep is found, let us rejoice, not only for finding the lost sheep, but for being ourselves found by the Good Shepherd Who was willing to leave His heavenly home in search for us.

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see!"

Who Am I?

He was a Jewish scribe.

He received commission to rebuild the temple

He also was a priest.

Answer last week. **Boaz**