

THE POWER OF FAITH

Many of us have wondered aloud, "How can a nation so apparently religious as ours be so morally deficient?"

We have more church buildings than any other nation in the world, yet we also have a higher percentage of our citizens incarcerated than any other country. Over 90% of Americans claim to believe in God, yet violent crime has doubled since 1960. We say Americans are religious people, but it appears that too many have aggressively embraced secular values and lifestyles.

A team of sociologists may have come up with the answer: *American faith is mostly lip-service*. One member of the research team explained that "most people believe voting or going to church is a good thing to do and, when surveyed, often say they did vote or go to church even when they didn't." The claim is that fully half of the people who say they go to church on Sundays simply aren't telling the truth.

Another piece of research from the Ray C. Bliss Institute confirms this suspicion. It claims that only about 19% of adult Americans regularly practice their religion. Using rather minimal standards to define the "committed," slightly under one-fifth of our people are serious about basing their attitudes and behavior on the tenets of religious faith — whether Christian, Muslim, Jewish, or any other.

The life situation of serious Christians in today's America is roughly the same as that of their counterparts in the first-century world. Such persons are a minority group. They have limited impact on public policy and public institutions. Therefore, it would be a fatal mistake for them to put their hope in such things.

Before you begin to feel too desperate in light of these findings, you need to realize that it has always been this way. The power of righteousness is not in the number of people affirming or embracing it. It has its own internal power, supplied by God. Truth is like light, goodness like salt, and a godly example like leaven.

God's people are called to live with integrity and power in every generation. The impact God's people have in their world is not limited by their minority status, but rather our impact is in direct proportion to our obedience to God. One person with God still makes a majority.

Don't get discouraged about the deepening darkness in our culture. Instead remember how bright the glow of just one candle's flame looks in such an environment. Wherever you are today, that is the place where you can be heaven's instrument of holiness.

Grace & Peace
Derek

Sunday Conference call:

To listen to our Sunday morning service live,
call 1-800-914-8405 followed by 4896244
YOU MUST MUTE YOUR PHONE

Family News & Notes

- **Lois Melton** is recovering from a heart procedure on Tuesday.
- **Dean Hasler** will be traveling back and forth to Texas.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

HEALTH ISSUES: Joe Albritton, Cindy Caldwell, Herman Davis, Jim Hertter, Ken Joines, Misha Kimbell, Peggy McGowen, James Neal, Jerry Richardson, Jamie Vorhof, Betty Walker, Linda Weatherford, Eddie & Margaret Whalen, Lula Whittle, Jane Winstead

HOSPICE CARE: Katie Culley, Robert Coleman

REHAB: Margaret Whalen

SHUT-INS: Valeria Canada, Lorene Edge, Cora Epperson, FM Hylander, Evelyn Fowler, Sallye Giles, Irmagene Hall, Margaret Jones, Jackie Lorensen, Dot McEwen, Billy & Betty Moore, Dorinda Murphy, Louise Schmittou, Helen Weathers

FAMILY: Jeanette Barnes, Maxine Drewery, Mike Hasler, Zayden Huffman, Melanie Keffer, Judy Lee, Terrance Simmons, Ray Yearwood

THANK YOU!

The elders were greatly encouraged by the generosity shown in October's Fifth Sunday contribution. Your giving spirit has allowed us to double the amounts we've sent to the Baxter Institute, the Mexico City earthquake relief effort, and the Puerto Rico hurricane relief effort. May this money be used to the praise of His glory! **Dean Hasler**

TLC'S

The TLC'S will have their First Friday Fellowship, **Friday, December 1**, beginning at **6:00PM**.

EL SALVADOR MISSION TRIP

Our El Salvador mission team will leave **Friday, December 1** and return home **Saturday, December 9**. Please keep all of our team members in your thoughts and prayers for safe travel and a successful work week.

PARAGOULD'S ANGELS

Members are welcome to join us **Saturday, December 9, from 11:30AM until 3:00PM** when our kids from Paragould's Children's home come to receive their angel tree gifts. We are asking those that stay for lunch for a donation of \$2. Please have your angel's gifts in one LARGE gift bag with their names on the front. Have them here no later than **Wednesday, December 6** and place them on the stage in the auditorium.



Reminders . . .

Remain cautious in the construction areas.

INVITE A FRIEND TO WORSHIP

MAKING A MEANINGFUL LIFE

Starting in December, our **Wednesday night adult classes** will be studying how to make life more meaningful. Using the tools God gave us in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, we are going to have a three month training session in character development. Our mission is to make and mature disciples and these two books of wisdom will help us mature as disciples and bring God's kingdom into DeSoto County and deeper in our own lives. **Marty Brownfield (room 24) and Matthew Crowe (room 20)** will be leading this exercise in wisdom. They look forward to seeing you on **Wednesday, December 6**.

LIVING WITH ADDICTION

We are offering a class on **Wednesday nights for our Winter Quarter** titled *Living with Addiction*. This class will be hosted by Bill Walker and family. This class will share experiences from their 10-year journey of what worked and what didn't work, things to expect when someone you love is an addict, etc... .

The purpose of the class is to offer support and help people cope with the **everyday stresses** associated with someone you love dearly being enslaved to addiction. The typical class format will be a short time of orientation followed by a forum where questions are welcomed and encouraged. This class will meet in **Room 1 on Wednesday nights**, beginning **December 6**.

YOUTH NEWS

TEEN GROUPS

Tonight, November 26, we will have our teen groups at the McCormick's house. Teens can show up as early as **4:45PM** and we end at **7PM**.

AREA WIDE

Our next area wide will be **Sunday, December 3**, at the Friendship Church of Christ. The plan will be to meet at their building. The area wide starts at **5PM** and will end around **7PM**. If you need a ride please let **Jared** know.



POINSETTIA'S FOR CHRISTMAS



If you would like to purchase a poinsettia in remembrance of a loved one, please fill out the form below, cut it out, place it in an envelope provided on the desk in the Welcome Center and deposit it in the poinsettia box. The cost will be **\$8** per pot. All orders must be received by **Sunday, December 10**. If you have any questions please contact the office.

NAME _____

QUANTITY \$8 each _____

IN MEMORY OF _____



