

Weekly Newsletter

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Preach The Word

By Steve Higginbotham

We are living in a time when outward success is sometimes preferred over faithfulness, when attendance numbers mean more than substance, when biblical exegesis takes a backseat to pragmatism, when preaching the gospel gives way to drama, special music and pop psychology, and when a sermon is judged, not by its content, but by its length and how it makes you feel.

What has caused such a sad state of affairs? I personally believe it is because some have forgotten just who it is that is sovereign. Our primary concern has shifted from pleasing God to pleasing the masses. This is the reason that worship services are becoming more entertainment oriented. This is the reason for the preoccupation with the length of a service. And this is the reason more and more faithful brethren are complaining about never hearing the distinctive preaching they used to hear.

What will we have accomplished if we woo the masses, fill our buildings, but then dispense truth in such small diluted doses that it lacks the power to convict one of his sins? What will we have accomplished if we gain the approval of man but lose the approval of God?

What is the answer? Return God to his rightful place of sovereignty. Stop catering to the consumer. Stop being so concerned about one's feelings and be more concerned about one's actual condition. Recognize that man's greatest needs are often unmet. Oppose the philosophy that believes salesmanship and marketing practices can bring people into the kingdom of God more effectively than clear preaching of the gospel. Preach the Word!

CHRIST IN *Youth*



Congratulations!

Congratulations are in order for Natalie Dugger. She has been accepted to the "People to People Student Ambassador Program." Natalie will tour England, Scotland, and Wales. Presently, she is trying to raise funds to allow her to make this trip in June. If you would like to offer Natalie some financial assistance, please speak to Jonathan or Amanda.

Also, Natalie was chosen last week to be WBKO's "Student of the Week." She is the first student from Eastern Elementary to ever be chosen. Way to go, Natalie!

Makin' Music



This year's Makin' Music at Freed-Hardeman University is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, April 13-14. We will be headed for FHU on Friday the 13th ☺ after school, and will attend the 2:30 p.m. performance on Saturday. The total cost, (tickets & motel) is \$35.00 per person. You can begin paying me anytime. Those attending are Catherine Beals, Cecily Smith, Aaron Shirley, Hannah Steen, Stephanie Walton, Pam Smith, Kim Higginbotham, Anne Marie Higginbotham, Adam Fife, Michael Higginbotham, Matthew Higginbotham, Zack Smith, and Steve Higginbotham.

The Beauty of Holiness

By Steve Higginbotham

t least in four Old Testament passages, the expression, “The Beauty of Holiness” is employed.

Holiness is indeed beautiful. As good as repentance, confession and forgiveness are, holiness is even better. We live in a time when the value and beauty of holiness is not recognized, and is not seen for what it is.

In fact, rather than focusing upon the “Beauty of Holiness,” we live in a time when people have flip-flopped this biblical expression and are being deceived by what they think is the “Holiness of Beauty.” Just look around. Take note of how the church seems more preoccupied with "beauty," rather than "holiness."

Want an example? How about congregational singing? Congregation singing is giving way in some churches to special group singing, praise teams, and choruses. Forget about the “Beauty of Holiness” in the cracking, failing voice of an aged Christian widow singing, "Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All," and make room for the perceived “Holiness of Beauty” in the melodic, trained voices of professional singers.

Forget about the “Beauty of Holiness” in the cracking, failing voice of an aged Christian widow singing, "Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All," and make room for the perceived “Holiness of Beauty” in the melodic, trained voices of professional singers.

Why do you suppose that mechanical instrumental music is heard in churches today? I am convinced that at least one of the reasons is that someone along the way decided that anything that sounded that “beautiful” must be “holy.”

Friends, don't misunderstand. There is nothing wrong with beauty. I like beautiful singing just as much as the next guy. I think we ought to do our very best to make our singing beautiful. But beauty is not our aim. Our aim is holiness, and the value of our worship is not in its beauty, but in its holiness. Remember we are to worship God in the “Beauty of Holiness” not in the “Holiness of Beauty.”

"Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name;
Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Psalm 29:2).

Family Matters

Sick List

- Autumn Harlow, great granddaughter of Norma Dial, is hospitalized at the Kosair Children's Hospital.
- Randy Turner, son of Randall & Betty Turner, is recovering from back surgery.
- Jim Dunaway is now at home.
- Beauford Fudge, father of Robbie Fudge, is now at home after being hospitalized last week.
- June Parker, sister of Carla Smith, is undergoing tests.
- Wendell Britt is in the Community Hospital.
- Dewey (Shorty) Watkins, brother-in-law of Charles Short, had a stroke and is in the St. Thomas hospital in Nashville.
- Continue to remember: Mary Anderson, Howard Bull, John Bull, Terry Burd, Doug Burgess, Shawn Bryant, Linda Cable, Ruby Cloyd, Dorothy Coffey, Eddie Gerald, Eugene Harlow, Sally Henry, Fred Hensley, Amanda Hinton, Caden Hodges, Carl Hutchinson, John Rogers Jones, Preston Jolly, Stacey King, Jeanette Krume, Art Lattanzi, Janie Martin, Rose Mesker, Denver Niemeier, Linda Pedigo, Kay Pickett, Stephen Pitcock, J.C. Polson, Cindy Proffitt, Nina Richardson, Gene Ross, Marian Smith, Shelley South, Mary Stephens, Dixie Strode, Sherry Tabor, Edna Vibbert, Ronnie Walker, Carrie Whitlow, James Williams and James Wooten.

Sympathy

We express our sympathy to the friends and family of Jean Tarry. She passed away on Wednesday, February 7. Funeral services were conducted Sunday. Jean was a friend of Margaret Garmon.

We express our sincere sympathy to the friends and family of Barbara Honeycutt. She passed away suddenly on Saturday, February 10. Funeral services were incomplete at printing time. Please continue to keep this family in your prayers.

Prayer Breakfast

The February Prayer Breakfast will be held Saturday, February 17, at 7:30 a.m. Everyone is invited, men and women. Sign-up sheets have been posted. Please add your name to one of these sheets so that adequate food preparations can be made.

Visitation Team #3

Visitation Team #3 will meet Sunday, February 18, following the morning worship service for a finger food meal and meeting. Team members are reminded to bring their visitation records to turn in. Team Leaders are Doug Frasier and Jim Searcy.

Thank You

We want to thank everyone for all the acts of kindness shown to us during our time of loss. The calls, cards and prayers meant so very much to us. We especially want to thank the ladies for the delicious meal that was prepared for the family. We are comforted by the love of our church family.

In Christian Love,
Doug & Frenchie Belcher

Teacher Training Workshop

A Teacher Training Workshop will be held at the Mt. Juliet Church of Christ on Saturday, February 24, from 9:00-12:00. The speakers include: Marlin Connelly, Adult Teacher Sessions, Mike McPherson, Teen Teacher Sessions and Suzanne Martin, Children's Teacher Sessions. If you would like to attend please turn your name in to the office.

Clarification

A little over a year ago, we made a change in our Ministries Program regarding singing at funerals. Due to a failure to communicate clearly, several people have been and continue to be confused by the change. So please accept this clarification. When we organized our Ministries Program, we initially had a ministry that involved members volunteering to sing at funerals and members volunteering to secure singers for funerals. Due to numerous factors that make this ministry difficult to administer, it was decided that we should discontinue this particular ministry. We certainly are not opposed to members singing at funerals. This is a wonderful act of service. The change that was made a little over a year ago was simply that the church would no longer organize this work as part of its ministry program.

