

**Sunshine Baskets for 12/14/2008**

Those who are on the calendar to make sunshine baskets for this date (12/14/08) do NOT have to make them because we will be distributing the Christmas bags then. ☺

**Happy Birthday to...**

Isabelle Mabery (12/09), Neal Chaffin (12/10), Nellie Crabtree (12/10)

**Happy Anniversary to...**

Larry & Elizabeth Howell (12/12)

**Announcements & Upcoming Events...**

**December 14<sup>th</sup>:** Fruit baskets for the 65 & older will be distributed following our morning worship service.

**December 14<sup>th</sup>:** Nursing Home Services @ 2 pm. There is a sign-up sheet in the back of different areas of service that we need your help with in the nursing home services. If you are willing to help out, please sign up on the sheet in the back as soon as possible! Thanks for all you do for the Lord!

**December 21<sup>st</sup>:** Christmas dinner after morning worship with 1:00 pm worship service in place of the 5:00 pm service.

**December 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Tuesday mid-week Bible Study due to Christmas Eve.

**December 30<sup>th</sup>:** Tuesday mid-week Bible Study due to New Year's Eve.

**Challenge Youth Conference:** February 27-March 1, 2009 in Gatlinburg, TN @ the Gatlinburg Convention Center. For more details visit <http://cyconline.com/>

**\*\*\*If you are visiting with us today, we are so glad to have you here! Please fill out a card in the back of the pew with your contact information & either place it in the collection basket as it comes around or give it to any of our members so we can get to know you better and keep in touch with you. We hope you'll come visit with us again whenever you are able! ☺**

**Privileged To Serve December 14<sup>th</sup>**

- Ushers..... Roger Robinson
- ..... Alan Dawson
- ..... Mark Collins
- ..... Thurel Flatt
- Announcements..... Randy Duke
- Song Leader..... John Anderson
- Scripture Reading..... Austin Robinson
- Speaker..... John Mabery
- Opening Prayer..... Burton Young
- Closing Prayer..... Roy Flatt
- Oversee Lord's Supper . Greg Scott
- Prepare Trays..... Ben Young
- Scripture Reading..... Alan Burris
- Serve..... \*Jerry Young
- ..... \*Jeremy Mathis
- ..... \*Greg Scott
- ..... Blake Maberry
- ..... Benjamin Gentry
- ..... Glen Haney
- Alternate to Serve..... Rellon Burris
- ..... Randy Duke
- Dismiss Classes..... Charles Mitchell
- Count Contribution..... Charles Mitchell
- ..... Charles Whitaker
- ..... Dale Dennis
- ..... Robert Crabtree
- Response Card..... Roy Young
- Power Point..... Kevin Moss

**Sunday Night (12/14/2008)**

- Speaker..... Carl Call
- Scripture Reading..... Mike Martin
- Song Leader..... Jon Conner
- Opening Prayer..... Rellon Burris
- Closing Prayer..... Kevin Moss
- Power Point..... Blake Maberry

**Wednesday (12/17/2008)**

- Song Leader..... Roy Young
- Devotional..... Farlin Flatt
- Opening Prayer..... Jerry Young
- Closing Prayer..... Royce Jenkins

\*Take to the sick & shut-in.  
Let Jerry Young know if you can't serve.

**Elders:**

- Ted Ragland 268.9387
- John Mabery 268.0651
- Cell: 265.3835

**Deacons:**

- John Anderson 268.2406
- Billy Scott 268.0569
- Robert Crabtree 268.4417
- Raymond Haney 268.2493
- Rellon Burris 268.4738
- Carl Call 268.2040
- Sjon Gentry 268.3273
- Bobby Haney 268.2754
- Jerry Young 268.2215

**Ministers:**

- John Mabery 268.0651
- John Anderson 268.2406

**To Be Saved, JESUS Said We MUST...**

**Believe** Him (Jn.8:24; Heb.11:6)  
**Repent** of our sins (Lk.13:3, 5)  
**Confess** Christ (Rom.10:9-10)  
**Be immersed** in water for remission of sins  
(Mk.16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom.6:3-4)

Volume 7

December 7, 2008

Number 49

**If I Were the Devil's Preacher ...(Part XI)**

*By John Mabery*

*If I were the devil's preacher I would pervert the Biblical doctrine of Hell!*

<sup>22</sup> "And on some have compassion, making a distinction; <sup>23</sup> but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire,..." (Jude 1:22-23)

Many turn to the Lord because they fear Divine Judgment. In time, the devout will undergo a change of heart; i.e. their desire to *escape* the fire of hell is eclipsed by a greater desire – love for God! Fear will draw the attention of many people, but love for the Lord is what empowers the individual to overcome the world. Since some *will* be saved by fear, at least initially, it naturally follows that the devil will want to remove the *cause* of fear; i.e. *belief in hell!*

Even though the reality of hell is clearly set forth in the scriptures, there have always been some that were willing to assist the devil in casting a shadow of doubt over the reality of hell. Albert Einstein believed in some sort of God, but with regard to the God of the Bible he said,

*"I cannot imagine a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation."*

(Free Inquiry 1996/97, Vol. 17, No. 1; p.31).

Bertrand Russell, Britain's prized agnostic, said one reason for his being unable to become a Christian was because Jesus Christ "*believed in hell*". He charged that no person ...

*"who is really profoundly humane can believe in everlasting punishment"*

(Russell, Bertrand. 1957. *Why I Am Not A Christian*.

New York, NY: Simon & Schuster; p. 17)

Russell contended that *some* form of punishment is necessary and justifiable, but *everlasting* punishment was simply *unjust*. Apparently Russell felt that *he* was qualified to be the standard of morals and ethics, and *not* the God that formed him (Zech.12:1). Imagine that, the thing formed feeling morally superior to He who formed him. **Pride goes before destruction!** (Prov.16:18)

*Continued inside...*

**Center Grove Church Of Christ**

3857 Grundy Quarles Hwy.  
Gainesboro, TN. 38562  
931.858.7460 or 931.268.0651

**Schedule of Services**

**Sunday:** Bible Classes @ 9:00 a.m.  
Worship @ 10:00 a.m.  
Worship @ 5:00 p.m.

**Wednesday:** Bible Classes @ 7:00 p.m.

Our A.M. Service is **Televised** on Monday on Cable Channel 16 @ 6:00 pm

**Radio:** "The Lord's Word" on WLIV 920 AM 10:10 a.m. Monday - Saturday

(We broadcast Thursday, Friday and Saturday)

**Website:** [www.centergrovecoc.com](http://www.centergrovecoc.com)

**E-mail:** [centergrovecoc@gmail.com](mailto:centergrovecoc@gmail.com)

But even worse than that is the fact that some religious groups have also joined forces with the evil one, and strive to discredit what the **Lord** Jesus Christ said about everlasting punishment. For example, the Jehovah's Witnesses say the concept of everlasting punishment is an "unreasonable doctrine" that "contradicts the Bible" (*Make Sure Of All Things* 1953, 154-55). "Hell", they say, is merely "a place of rest in hope" (p.68). One wonders why Jesus would speak of the "danger" of hell, if hell is nothing more than "a place of rest in hope" (Mat.5:22)? Seventh-day Adventists teach that the idea of eternal anguish in hell is *not* biblical! Rather, they claim, the wicked will simply be *annihilated* after *appropriate* punishment (*Seventh-day Adventists Believe...* 1988, 369-72). Again, what's the "danger" of annihilation?

Sadly, some of the advocates of this devilish doctrine have arisen from within our own ranks. Edward Fudge produced his book, *The Fire that Consumes*. He denied what he calls the "traditionalist view" of eternal punishment, and instead suggests that the unrighteous will be raised, judged, *punished for a while*, and then banished to "total, everlasting extinction" (1982, 435-36). John

Clayton, a popular speaker among churches of Christ, highly recommended Fudges book and admitted, "*I have never been able to be comfortable with the position that a person who rejected God should suffer forever and ever and ever*" (Clayton, John N. 1990. *Does God Exist?* September/October; p.20). During the April, 1988 Pepperdine University Lectureship, F. LaGard Smith argued that God "*will destroy [the soul]. Not punish it. Not dangle it. Not torture it. Destroy it.*" (Jackson, Wayne. 1998. *A Friendly Review of F. LaGard's Smith New Book – Who Is My Brother?* Stockton, CA: Courier Publications) The positions these brethren took in 1982, 1990 and 1998 have been completely and thoroughly refuted. Unfortunately, rather than quenching this unbiblical stance, the very opposite has occurred; i.e. many have jumped on the proverbial bandwagon.

The Bible doctrine of hell isn't obscure or difficult (few doctrines are stated with greater clarity in the word of God). The doctrine has been obscured because of *human emotions!* Simply put, many people are *unwilling* to accept what Jesus Christ said about hell! Wishful thinking, however, doesn't affect reality, and hell is a reality! (cf. Mat.25:41)

According to some, the conscious spirit surviving the body has its roots in paganism. That is not true! Consider what the Bible teaches:

Man can kill the body but cannot destroy the soul (Mat.10:28). The Lord would not have said that if man is wholly mortal.

"*I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.*" (Rev 6:9) These "souls" had been "slain"; i.e. they were out of the body. They were "...*under the alter...*", suggesting that the "souls" were with God and their bodies were on earth. They *spoke* to God crying "*with a loud voice*"; i.e. they were conscious (v.10).

Some "believers" (if you can call a person that denies what the Bible teaches a "believer") deny the reality of hell, yet *accept* the reality of heaven. Therefore, the above argument proves nothing to them! These say the *unrighteous* spirit is annihilated, but the *righteous* live on! Again, that is not true! Consider what the Bible teaches about the fate of **unrighteous** souls:

*And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.*" (Dan 12:2) Notice that duration of "life" is equal to the duration of "contempt".

Speaking of the Judgment, Jesus said, "*And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.*" (Matt 25:46) "Punishment" implies awareness; this is why Jehovah's Witnesses' changed this word to "cutting off" (New World Translation; Watchtower Society). One should also notice that according to the Son of God, "punishment" lasts as long as "life".

Speaking of "... *those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*", Paul said, "*These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,*" (2 Thes.1:8-9). "Destruction" doesn't mean annihilation, it is "the loss of a life of blessedness after death, future misery" (Thayer, J. H. 1958. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark, 443).

Those who experience "*the wrath of God*" are tormented "*forever and ever*" (Rev.14:10-11).

Jesus spoke of "hell" more than any other person in the New Testament. He employed many figures of speech which demonstrate the conscious nature of hell's punishment, as well as its "everlasting" duration. The ultimate fate of the unrighteous is likened unto an "*eternal fire*" (Mat.25:41). Jesus said it is better to be physically maimed in this life (if that will keep one from sinning), than "*to be cast into hell fire--<sup>48</sup> where 'Their worm does not die [anguish continues on and on], And the fire is not quenched.*" (Mark 9:47-48) Hell is a place of "*outer darkness*" where there is "*weeping and gnashing of teeth.*" (Mat.25:30)

The question awaits an answer: "*what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Mat.16:26) **To be continued...**

Sandy Haney Ruby Dunn Zella Charles Roberta Hix Dorothy Burris Don Chaffin Charlie Ward Ruby Ward Delenn Strong Phil Johnson Randy Duke Cora Jackson Jerry Young	<b><u>Prayer List</u></b>	
	Hugh Young	Charles Mitchell
	Opal Pippin	Brody Garrison
	Anna Lou Flatt	Zola Flatt
	Reba Mayberry	Sheldon Warren
	Joann Ledbetter	Aline Whitaker
	Bill Wisdom	Marie Shoemake
	Bessie Young	Bobby Elkins
	Ozelma Martin	Mildred Elkins
	Chris Heady	Catherine Mabery
	Roy Jackson	Earl Crabtree
		Mary Nell Flatt
		Joy Hensley
		Joann Young

<b><u>Area Hospitals:</u></b>	
<b><u>Cookeville:</u></b>	Carol Wilson
<b><u>St. Thomas:</u></b>	Mary Nell Jones
<b><u>Area Rest Homes &amp; Rehab. Centers:</u></b>	
<b><u>NHC:</u></b>	Alice Pippin, Joe Anderson
<b><u>Mabry:</u></b>	Plytha Petty
<b><u>Mabry Assisted Living:</u></b>	Edna Roberts, Velvia Denson
<b><u>Bethesda:</u></b>	Donald Hensley
<b><u>Masters:</u></b>	Wynell Ballard