

Galatians 6:10 *“Therefore as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those of the household of faith.”*

March 20, 2011

Remember in your prayers:

- Our sympathies and prayers go to **Mildred Gilbert** and **Itra Brasfield** in the death of their sister, **Mavis Bush Gurganus**,
- Truman's sister, **Bessie Sides** had successful knee surgery and is now at home.
- **Tacoda Goshee, Bessie Sides, Xabien Hall, Paul Odom, Paul Foreman, Conard Rice, Chera Deane Waits, Barbara Addington, & B.J. Parker** as they battle cancer.
- **Rhonda Knowles** continues to need our prayers.
- **Heather Flowers, Laura Russo** and **Murry Hyman** who are away at college. **Robert Langley, Jeremiah Hughes** & all of **our servicemen** who are defending freedom. **Our nation** and its leaders.
- **Those that preach and teach the gospel**; especially those who labor under hardships.

BLACK CREEK UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Summer Bible School Meeting:** Sunday, today @ 4:15
- **Ladies and Men's Bible Classes:** Ladies Class Monday @ 6:00; Men's Class, Tuesday @ 6:30
- **Annual Orientation Session** for those attending the prison will be tomorrow night at 7:00 PM

Area Gospel Meetings:

Edward's Lake church of Christ.....Bill Hall.....March 20-25.....10:30 A.M.& 7:00 P.M. Mon. - Fri.
Helena church of Christ.....Buddy Payne.....March 25-27.....7:00 P.M. Fri. - Sat.



CHANGING THE STANDARD

Conductor to orchestra at the beginning of a rehearsal: *"Please get your pencils out . . . we have some marking to do on this score:*

The first two bars are in 3/4, not 4/4 as written.

Next, in the 5th bar, change it to 7/8 and this remains to the end.

Now, in bar 7 we lower the pitch 1/2 step.

In bar 13, lower the pitch one whole step and this will remain to the end.

Thank you. Now, let us begin."

Soprano soloist: *"Excuse me, Maestro. What would you like for me to change?"*

Conductor: *"Nothing, madam. Just sing it exactly as you did yesterday."*

When we vary from the standard, there are two things we can do. We can alter our lives to meet the standard, or (as in the story above) we can alter the standard and expect everyone else to meet this new flawed standard.

The spiritual application should be readily apparent. What should we do when someone is teaching that which is not according to the Word of God, our spiritual standard? Do we hold to the standard and require them to comply, or do we attempt to change the standard?

There can be no choice -- the standard cannot change. Breaking the scale won't fix our weight problem, and changing (or ignoring) God's Word won't make our sinful behavior acceptable.

- by Alan Smith

The Banner of Truth

Black Creek church of Christ
1235 Alliance Rd; Alliance, Alabama
436-4477

“You have given a BANNER to those who fear you, that it may be displayed because of the TRUTH. “ Psalms 60:4

Editor:

Van Cooper

Schedule of Services

Lord's Day

10:25 A.M. Worship

5:00 P.M. Worship

Elders

436-3055 Philip Jacks
483-7016 Truman Wallace
491-9695 Van Cooper

Evangelist

497-9800 Sammy Bynum

Wednesday

**7:00 P.M. Second Wed.
(Singing)**

Deacons

491-1596 Keith Chaney
491-3723 Roger Key

Who We Are: The Black Creek Church of Christ is simply a group of Christians dedicated to serving God. We believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God and it is to be our sole guide. We are committed to preaching the gospel of Christ, which is man's only hope for eternal life.

We are interested in helping anyone who is searching for the way to God. We welcome the opportunity to privately study the Bible with you. If you would contact us, we would be happy to meet with you. In addition, you are invited to visit one of our public assemblies (information is above). At our public Bible studies, we have classes for adults and children of all ages. If we can help you in knowing more about God and His Word, then please visit, call, or write us.

(Visit us on-line at (WWW.blackcreekchurch.com)

TAKING SIN SERIOUSLY

“Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.” (Matthew 18:7-9)

Jesus starts off this passage by condemning those “by whom the temptation comes.” Are we the one Jesus refers to here that tempts others? We can tempt others to sin with cross words that provoke anger, offering people opportunities to do things that go against their conscience, our immodest dress, making inappropriate humorous remarks, etc. Perhaps we are doing it without even realizing it. We need to be ever aware of the influence that we have, especially with the online presence so many of us have today, that makes our influence so far reaching. Let us not be the one who someone else has to “cut off” or “tear out” from their lives to keep them from sinning.

Jesus also points out in verse seven that temptations are necessary. Temptations serve a purpose. When we overcome a trial or temptation, good

things result. James 1:2-3 says that we should rejoice in trials, because when our faith is tested, it produces steadfastness. Similarly, Romans 5:3-4 says, “More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.” From these two verses, we see that overcoming trials is a part of the development process of a Christian. When we draw strength from Christ and overcome trials, we become stronger and more resilient to trials in the future.

In verses 8-9, we can assume that Jesus is not literally talking about the cutting off of our arms and legs, or tearing out our eyes. Jesus figuratively talks about hands, feet and eyes as causing a person to sin in this passage, just as he uses figures and parables throughout the gospel accounts. We know that these things don’t literally cause people to sin. James, however, tells us what does:

“Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death” (James 1:14-15).

Sin results when we give in to our desires of our hearts. Jesus uses this graphic language in Matthew 18:8-9 is to emphasize how important it is to rid ourselves of those things around us that can have a bad influence on us and feed our desire to sin. This type of

language should catch us off guard a little, being so graphic, and make us realize this is a very important issue that Jesus is teaching on. It’s vital that we wrap our minds around how seriously God views sin. We should be willing to do whatever it takes to rid ourselves of unholy and sinful conduct. We all know what our weaknesses are, and if we were honest with ourselves I think that we can sit down and figure out ways that we can go on the offensive by consciously reducing the number of opportunities that we have to sin.

Our purpose in this world is to serve God, not our own desires. With this all important fact in mind, it makes giving up those things that encourage sinful behavior much easier. If we drop the self-centered attitude, getting rid of things in our lives that lead to sin becomes much easier, as does serving God in general. When we are serving God, we can’t serve ourselves (Matthew 6:24). Let’s strive to get to the point where we don’t care that we have to give up things that can cause us to sin, even if we like them. Let’s be a people that does whatever God commands no questions asked, because we want to. We want to because we realize that a home in heaven is worth so much more than whatever fleeting momentary pleasure things in this earth provide.

The list of things that nurture our desires to sin is endless, but whatever that thing may be, from an obsessive hobby to a worldly boyfriend/girlfriend,

we have to kick it to the curb with the conviction that it will be worth it in the end when we are with God in heaven. Jesus said it will be: “It is better for you to enter life...than...to be thrown into the hell of fire”.

We should get to the point where we take sin seriously like God does. This is a big problem; that we simply don’t understand, or don’t want to understand how serious sin is. We may even take the blood of Jesus and count it as a common thing, saying to ourselves that we will repent and ask for forgiveness later. This is a totally wrong mindset. Paul comments on this attitude in Hebrews 10:27: “For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.”

Perhaps the best way for us to understand how serious God views the issue of sin is to remember the reason Jesus came to this earth. God takes sin so seriously that he sent his only son to die as a sacrifice for us. Jesus died a terrible death to make atonement for the sins of the world. Hopefully, this sobering reminder will help us to think twice next time we are tempted, and beyond that, will help us to do all we can to eliminate that temptation from happening again. - **Bret Cox**