

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

April 3, 2011

Remember in your prayers:

- **Ruby Gilbert's** condition is no better. Please keep her, Charlotte and Terry in your prayers.
- Brother **Billy Norris** (Bunny Richardson's father) is doing the same. His condition is grave.
- The doctors for **Sarabeth**, still are undecided as to what is causing her problems.
- **Randy Kiker** will have a very dangerous surgery Wednesday. Pray for a successful correction to his condition. The recovery time will be four to six months.
- **Joe Hogan**, Carl Hogan's brother, suffered a heart attack and passed away. Joe and his wife Doris visited Black Creek on many occasions. Please keep the family in your prayers.
- **Knox Cooper**, an infant who is experiencing kidney problems.
- Our sympathies to the **Jonathan Ford family** in the loss of Jonathan to a heart attack this week.
- **Tacoda Goshee, Bessie Sides, Xabien Hall, Paul Odom, Conard Rice, Barbara Addington, B.J. Parker & Lea Cooper**, 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:

- **Ladies Class**, April 11th @6:00----- **Men's Class**, April 12th @ 6:30

Area Gospel Meetings: Springville church of Christ.....Joel Mark Ellis.....April 8-10.....Fri.-Sat. 7:00 P.M.
North Gardendale church of Christ.....Paul Earnhart.....April 3-6.....Mon. - Wed. 7:00 P.M.
Gardendale church of Christ.....Gospel Singing.....April 8.....7:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

“BY FAITH THE WALLS OF JERICO FELL DOWN”

The fall of Jericho stands as a testament to the power of faith. *“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down”* (Heb. 11:30). Jericho was an ancient, fortified city located just a few miles from the Jordan River. Here Joshua led Israel to face a challenge which had frightened their fathers. It was an untested army against a city with walls. They never stormed the walls. Instead, *“The LORD said to Joshua: ‘See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor’”* (Josh. 6:2).

The faith of Israel pleased God who, in turn, caused the walls of the city to collapse. The Hebrew writer shows us cause and effect. The cause was the peoples' faith, and the effect was the collapse of the walls. Hebrews 11 shows several examples of things people did in faithful obedience to God's instructions (Abel offered, Noah prepared, Abraham obeyed, Moses forsook, etc.). Now consider the marvelous things which God has performed because the Almighty was pleased with the faith of men. If you have faith, God will be pleased with you. Have you thought about the power of having God's favor in your life?

Now consider the last part of the verse: *“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days”* (Heb. 11:30). The walls fell down “after” the people had completed all of the conditions God had revealed. Admittedly, they could have marched around the city for the rest of their lives and the walls would not have fallen down without their faith. Nevertheless, the walls did not fall down until the marching and shouting of the seventh day was completed.

God has promised us a city, but He has told us to perform certain things to receive it. People need to understand that they can only receive the city “after” they have faithfully completed what God has set before them. Consider yourself. Have you completed what God wants you to do to become a Christian? Are you an incomplete Christian? Many have stopped marching prematurely. Some are too busy, some are intimidated by the strength of the enemy, and others would rather make peace. Israel was convinced that they wanted the city and that God could give it to them. Can we afford to be any less convinced? By **Jeff Herrin**

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

Wednesday

7:00 P.M.

Deacons

491-1596 Keith Chaney
491-3723 Roger Key

Evangelist

497-9800 Sammy Bynum

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)

Get Up! Quit Praying!

“So about three thousand men went up; but they were routed by the men of Ai, who killed about thirty-six of them. They chased the Israelites from the city gate as far as the stone quarries and struck them down on the slopes. At this the hearts of the people melted and became like water. Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell facedown to the ground before the ark of the LORD, remaining there till evening...And Joshua said, ‘Ah, Sovereign LORD, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us?’” Joshua had a terrible problem! But, of course, he knew exactly what to do. He fell on his face in prayer. Right? After all, it is always good to pray, right? Wrong! God did not think so! Just listen to God’s estimate: “The LORD said to Joshua, ‘Stand up! What are you doing down on your face? Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant,...they have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied,... That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies; they turn their backs and run...I will not be with you anymore” (Josh 7:4-12). God’s verdict? “Get up! Quit praying.” It is not a time for prayer – for whining, for moaning. And it is surely no time for complaining about God failing them. This disaster is not his fault!

If this is not prayer time, then what? Sin is in the camp – someone has stolen from God, lied to God, ignored

God’s instruction. Prayer is useless! – until they repent! Repentance precedes prayer. This principle applies in all ages. Much later, examine Simon the Sorcerer’s case. He sinned offering to buy the Holy Spirit’s power. What did Peter tell him? Pray? No! It is not yet time to pray! It is time to repent! “Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you”(Acts 8:22). “Pray God” follows “repent,” not before. The door to the throne of grace is closed to rebels.

No one worships before repentance. “Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all?”(Ezek.14:3). God rejects their prayer – and the prayer of any who “set up idols in their heart.” Correction is clearly defined by God, and it is not prayer. “Therefore, say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Repent! Turn from your idols and renounce all your detestable practices!”(v.6). Until then –and not before – do not expect God to listen! “Stand up! What are you doing down on your face?” How can anyone’s song or prayer honor God – be worship – while ignoring God’s dominion? No one approaches God without repentance. “For anyone of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who separates himself from Me and sets up his idols in his heart and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, then comes to a prophet to

inquire of him concerning Me, I the LORD will answer him by Myself. I will set My face against that man and make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of My people. Then you shall know that I am the LORD”(v.7-8).

No blessing comes without repentance. Ask Haggai. “You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes”(Hag.1:6). Hard times! Time to pray, right? Wrong! “You looked for much, but indeed it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? says the LORD of hosts”(1:9). Why indeed! – except they excluded God from their lives. Prayer is not their solution – repentance is. It is time to turn to God whom they ignored. “Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified,” says the LORD. Malachi applied the same principle. “You are cursed with a curse” Ah, better get on your knees, right? Wrong! God says “Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face?” They were cursed because “you have robbed Me, even this whole nation”(Mal.3:9). God cursed them! Why expect God to hear prayer? There was no blessing – no acceptable prayer until they repented.

However, continue to listen to Malachi: “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,... And try Me now in this,’ Says the LORD of hosts” What then

can be expected? See if God “...will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it” (:10). Shall not the whole principle apply to us? “Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Tim 2:19). When we turn from sin – clean house, repent of rebel ways, conform ourselves to God’s will – just watch what God will do for us and with us. He starts by hearing our prayers – no more “Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face?” Instead we will have free – welcome – bold access to the throne room of his grace in time of need(Heb.4:16). Expect windows of heaven to be open – blessings greater than we can receive. In fact, he gives all spiritual blessings – to say nothing of his gracious blessings of this world. But first, we must “get up” and repent.

***“I keep Your precepts and
Your testimonies, for all
my ways are before You.”
– Psalm 119:168***

By **Joe Fitch**