

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

- Week of July 24, 2022 -

Sunday Morning Service	-----	37
Sunday Evening Service	-----	27
Wednesday Eve., 07/27/22 Service	-----	11

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of July 24, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 1,431.56
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 07/24/22:	\$	1,431.56

- Week of July 17, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 1,252.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 07/17/22:	\$	1,252.00

- Week of July 10, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 1,149.27
Love Offering	-----	\$ 20.00
Church Gas Line Repair Fund	-----	\$ 1,548.28
Church Sign Repair Fund	-----	\$ 491.72
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 07/10/22:	\$	3,209.27

- Week of July 3, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 2,223.00
Church Gas Line Repair Fund	-----	\$ 30.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 07/03/22:	\$	2,253.00

- Week of June 26, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 1,329.68
Church Gas Line Repair Fund	-----	\$ 125.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 06/26/22:	\$	1,454.68

- Week of June 19, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	-----	\$ 1,389.00
Church Gas Line Repair Fund	-----	\$ 100.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 06/19/22:	\$	1,489.00

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.
3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.
4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).
5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, Who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.



THANK YOU For Your Continued Faithfulness In Giving!

During the early part this pandemic, we were unable to meet in the church-house. But - that did not mean that the expenses of having a church-house were suspended. We still had bills to pay - electricity, gas, water, trash pickup, phone, internet, facility insurance, copier lease, office supplies, etc., and, praise the Lord, His people kept praying, watching online, & supporting their church with their giving.

Sadly, some people only give when they are in attendance at church - sort of like paying for "services rendered" - but the truth is that they are robbing **THEMSELVES** of God's blessings when they withhold their tithes and offerings and only give when they are here (see Malachi 3:10). Thankfully, most of our people have remained faithful, in so many ways, during this crisis, including financially.

WE HAVE 3 WAYS YOU CAN GIVE:

1. **By mail** - 23 East Wells Blvd., Sapulpa, OK 74066
2. **Drop it off** - call the Church Office to arrange it. 224-1924
3. **Online** - Go to the link below and give electronically:

<https://tithel.y/give?c=433047>

**WE ARE GLAD WE CAN NOW GATHER TOGETHER TO PRAISE GOD & STUDY HIS WORD TOGETHER IN THE CHURCH-HOUSE!
YOUR FAITHFUL AND GENEROUS GIFTS WILL HELP US KEEP UP WITH THE BILLS AND CONTINUE OUR RENEWED OUTREACH EFFORTS!**

Church Directory

Todd W. White	-----	Pastor
Lois Mae Floyd	-----	Pianist/ Organist
Mickie Shatwell	-----	Evening Pianist
Derek Quinnelly	-----	Greeter
Larry & Mary Byars	-----	Outreach
Bertha Segebarr	-----	Custodian
GinaMarie Shufelt	-----	Flowers
Seth White	-----	Sound/Video

REMINDER



The Importance Of Spending Time With God

Your Relationship with God Withers When it Is Neglected

by Dr. Kevin Folger, Pastor Emeritus - Cleveland Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio

If I asked you a question about your own devotional life, would you be uncomfortable? Some Christians spend little—if any—time with the Lord on a daily basis. There are those who think if they read The Daily Bread or a verse or two out of the Bible and perhaps whisper a short prayer, they are being extremely spiritual. In their mind, that is enough to help them develop spiritually. Yet, many times that same Christian will spend forty-five minutes to an hour looking at social media sites or perusing news or sports sites. Perhaps they spend several hours watching television, listening to sports or talk radio, or reading some secular literature.

In John 15, we find some of Jesus' final words before His death on the cross. I think we realize that if a person knows he has a short time to live, he might speak some of his most important thoughts to those he loves. Jesus did that in the Upper Room and on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane. In this great chapter of John, Jesus speaks about the importance of abiding in Him. He likens it to a branch being attached to a vine. If the branch is removed from the vine, it withers and dies. It can only bear fruit as it is attached or abides in the vine.

Jesus is saying that it should be the same way for believers. If we want to be truly spiritual and have fruit in the Christian life, then we must abide in Christ. We must do what Psalms 1:1-3 states—we must delight in the Law of the Lord and meditate on it day and night! When we do, we will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, bringing forth fruit, and we will truly prosper in the Christian life.

Here are a few things every Christian needs to do:

1. Spend some quality time with Christ every day and throughout the day (Matthew 4:4).
2. Memorize Scripture verses and let their truths rest in your heart (Psalm 119:11, Colossians 3:16).
3. Let those truths permeate your mind and think on them throughout the day (Psalm 1:2).
4. Put away, or quit, things that aren't pleasing to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit search your life and point out the things that God wants you to face and deal with (Psalm 139:23, Ephesians 4:22, Colossians 3:9).

If You Will Make this a Practice with a Heart That Longs for and Loves the Lord, You Will Truly Be Walking in the Spirit and Growing in Grace!

LISTEN TO -



ABIDINGRADIO.COM

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

☛ **BAPTIST UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN CONSIDERING SUPPORT FOR SAME-SEX “MARRIAGE”** - The Baptist Union of Great Britain is considering changing its rules to allow its ministers to contract marriage with people of the same sex.

“In a communication with its churches, it confirmed a request was made in 2020 by 70 members - the majority of which are ministers. The request asked that the Ministerial Recognition Rules be changed to remove a line which says that marriage is defined as ‘exclusively between a man and a woman.’

... In a long letter addressing the issue, Baptist Union general secretary Lynn Green said: ‘A number of conversations and a consultation will take place in the coming months but no time scale has been provided. The Baptist Union has, however, confirmed that no decision will be made at the Council meeting in October’” (“Baptist Union to Consider,” Premier Christian News, June 22, 2022). This measure probably won’t be officially approved, but it would not even be entertained if Baptist Union pastors were true Bible believers.

This is the same Baptist Union from which Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Pastor of Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, England, withdrew from in October of 1887. A few months earlier he wrote, “*Believers in Christ’s atonement are now in declared union with those who make light of it; believers in Holy Scripture are in confederacy with those who deny plenary inspiration; those who hold evangelical doctrine are in open alliance with those who call the fall a fable, who deny the personality of the Holy Ghost, who call justification by faith immoral, and hold that there is another probation after death. ... It is our solemn conviction that there should be no pretence of fellowship. Fellowship with known and vital error is participation in sin*” (The Sword and the Trowel, Aug. 1887).”

The Baptist Union has continued to pursue the path of apostasy. In the 1920s, 30s, and 40s, H. Wheeler Robinson, pastor of Baptist Union churches and principal of Regents Park College, denied the infallibility of Scripture, considered the Old Testament a product of religious evolution, and denied the historicity of Adam and original sin. He blasphemously claimed that Jesus was not right in everything He said. “[T]he language and the thought of a particular generation [are] stamped upon His sayings” (Robinson, Ancient and English Versions of the Bible, p. 287). In 1971, Michael Taylor, principal of the Baptist Union’s Northern Baptist College, addressed the London Baptist Assembly on the theme, “How much of a man was Jesus?” He denied that Jesus Christ is God. Though many protested the man’s heresy, the Baptist Union refused to discipline him or remove him from office. In 2013, Lynn Green became the first female president of the Baptist Union. She received a standing ovation for her inaugural sermon. She proclaimed, “I believe that our union is ready for generational change ... It is time to ... embrace a new way of being for the 21st century.”

This is the philosophy of the emerging church.

☛ **SBC SEMINARY PRESIDENT SUGGESTS WOMEN COULD PROBABLY BE ORDAINED AS PASTORS IN THE SBC** - Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary president Adam Greenway caused a stir on social media after posting Lifeway’s Study Guide on the definition of a pastor, suggesting that while the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 seems to relegate the position of “Senior Pastor” to men only, perhaps there is some wiggle room for women to take on certain pastoral roles.

This revelation comes a month after the SBC’s annual meeting, where the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Credentials Committee revealed they were not going to remove Rick Warren’s Saddleback Church from their roles after he famously and unapologetically started to ordain women pastors.

The Credentials Committee suggested that the title and function of pastor can be separated, and while it’s true that only men can hold the “office of pastor,” perhaps women can have the “title of pastor” without having a church that is rife with pastrixes to be being disqualified or found not to be in cooperation with the Baptist Faith and Message. They noted that “(we found)...little information evidencing the Convention’s beliefs regarding the use of the title of ‘pastor’ for staff positions with different responsibility and authority than that of the lead pastor.”

Instead, the Credentials Committee said they were “unable to form an opinion regarding the relationship of Saddleback Church to the Southern Baptist Convention until clarity is provided regarding the use of the title “pastor” for staff positions with different responsibility and authority than that of the lead pastor.” They promised to study the issue and get back to the convention next in 2023.

In response to the initial controversy, SBTS President, one of the BFAM2000’s original authors, repudiated the notion that women would ever be biblically qualified to be ordained or that their doctrinal statements allow for it by posting a statement made by other originalist crafters.

[PASTOR’S NOTE: There is no such thing in the Bible as a “Senior Pastor” or “Lead Pastor”. These are terms that have been appropriated from the secular world and applied to the church.]

☛ **SOUTHERN BAPTIST SEMINARY PRESIDENT WHO SUPPORTS WOMEN PASTORS FIRES CONSERVATIVE DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF PREACHING** - Adam Greenway, the President of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth, has been on a crusade to undermine the Southern Baptist Convention’s (SBC) long-held doctrinal position on women pastors. Greenway has been on social media for the last several weeks since the SBC’s annual meeting in June attempting to persuade Southern Baptists that the denomination’s statement of faith, the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 (BFM2K), allows room for cooperating churches to ordain women to the pastorate.

Greenway - who ran a public relations campaign for serial plagiarist and former SBC president, Ed Litton during his tenure as the denomination’s leader - took it a step further recently and

even attempted to use the words of Al Mohler, one of the framers of the BFM2K, against him knowing that Mohler’s position on women pastors is completely opposed to his.

Shortly after this debacle, Dr. David Allen, an 18-year tenured professor at Greenway’s Southwestern Seminary announced that he had been fired. Allen, a conservative and credentialed professor, served SWBTS for 18-years and held the title of “Distinguished Professor of Preaching.”

According to a press release on Allen’s Facebook page, Allen will not be retained past July 31st and will be stripped of his title for a lesser title that the press release states is a retirement position that is “void of full-time salary and benefits.”

“On May 28th,” the press release read, “Allen informed Dr. Greenway and the SWBTS’s Board of Trustees in a nine-page letter that he had no intention to retire or resign from his Distinguished Professorship at the Fort Worth, Texas seminary.”

“My full-time employment was terminated by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary,” Allen said, according to the release. “Dr. Greenway’s letter states that my full-time status ends July 31st.”

Allen had “recently completed a year-long sabbatical after receiving an ‘excellent’ rating for his faculty evaluations over the previous two academic years.”

One has to wonder what the motivation is for firing a conservative, distinguished professor who has served the school for more than 18 years and even served on the board of trustees. Texas pastor, Tom Buck noted that Greenway’s “big tent” ideology is big enough for women preachers, but not big enough for Dr. Allen.

God’s hand of judgment on the SBC is long overdue and that it hasn’t completely burned to the ground is a demonstration of His mercy and grace.

☛ **WESLEY’S FIRST METHODIST CHAPEL TO ALLOW SAME-SEX “MARRIAGE”** - The New Room in Bristol, the first Methodist chapel established by John Wesley, has announced that it supports same-sex “marriages.” In a Facebook post, the church said, “We are delighted to announce that John Wesley’s New Room is now available to host, officiate, and celebrate same-sex weddings!” (“John Wesley’s First Methodist Chapel,” Premier Christian News, June 30, 2022).

In his commentary on Romans 1, John Wesley made the following statements about homosexuality: “*Therefore God gave them up to vile affections--To which the heathen Romans were then abandoned to the last degree; and none more than the emperors themselves. Receiving the just recompense of their error--Their idolatry being punished with that unnatural lust, which was as horrible a dishonour to the body, as their idolatry was to God. God gave them up to an undiscerning mind--To do things not expedient--Even the vilest abominations, treated of Rom. 1:29-31.*”

☛ **EVANGELICAL COLLEGES DESTROY STUDENTS’ FAITH** - The following is excerpted from “Christian Colleges Destroyed Children’s Faith,” Lighthouse Trails Research, June

27, 2022:

“I am a Westmont College grad from the early 70s, and, with my husband, a Multnomah University alum as well. I grew up in a church closely associated with Multnomah when its slogan was: ‘If you want Bible, you want Multnomah.’ But no longer. We live near the school and have seen the apostasy firsthand. It breaks our hearts. Westmont was beginning to crack while I was there. Most of the older faculty were still OK but the administration was caving in to vocal students who were very rebellious, especially toward the Christian stance of the school. We sent a daughter to Trinity Western University in Langley British Columbia, in 2000, back when I still believed printed doctrinal statements. She went from respecting the Word of God and loving her parents to becoming a radical socialist activist who excises out of her life anyone who doesn’t support her current values, including us. I don’t know of any of her friends from there who haven’t followed the same path, either becoming indifferent to, or antagonistic toward, biblical Christianity. She goes to a social justice episcopal church. My niece, a pastor’s daughter, went to Texas Christian University, graduating around 2006. She became a Unitarian a few years ago. The daughter of my husband’s boss is an enthusiastic Biola grad. She is also a shaven head goth who spoke at her grandfather’s funeral, calling up his spirit and having a lovely visit with him over a glass of wine! We pray for their salvation. I believe the reason our other children still walk with the Lord is because they eschewed college (and debt) for other kinds of career training. The Lord is blessing them.”

[Concluding Note: Biola, originally the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, began in 1908 as a fundamentalist school. The first Dean, W.E. Blackstone, was the author of Jesus Is Coming. The next Dean was R.A. Torrey (1912-1924). Today, Biola has a same-sex attraction club on campus.]

☛ **FORMER TRANS “WOMAN” DESCRIBES HOW YOUTH ARE LED INTO TRANSSEXUALISM** - The following is excerpted from “Trans Woman returns to life as man,” New York Post, July 11, 2022:

“‘Coming out of my transition was like leaving the Twilight Zone, but the rest of society is still in it.’ After living nearly a decade of his life as a transgender woman named Brianna, Brian Wagoner ultimately came to realize his transition had been a mistake. ...

‘There’s a lot of money to be made by doctors here. They see the dollar signs, and in the end, money talks.’ Wagoner reached out to The Post after reading an article in June that profiled two young women who regretted transitioning to men in their teens.

... As a closeted teen, Wagoner began dabbling in drugs, and by the time he transferred from a junior college to the University of La Verne in California to study sociology at age 20, he said, he was regularly using marijuana, ecstasy, Adderall and cocaine that he got from friends and dealers at his school.

... Gay porn led him to transgender fetish content--which sparked a sudden feeling of gender dysphoria, also described as

a discomfort within one’s body. ‘Before I discovered this bizarre subgenera of pornography, the idea of being a woman never crossed my mind. Never. It just came out of nowhere, really,’ he said. Desperate for a lifeline, in early 2012, he started searching for information about the transgender movement on YouTube and found a clinical social worker based in Los Angeles who made videos about trans people. He made an appointment to see her. During their first in-person session, he said, she immediately told him he could be transgender. After just a couple therapy sessions, the therapist gave Wagoner, then 22, a referral letter to see a doctor in Hollywood who wrote him a prescription for estrogen on his first visit. ... He was also rewarded socially for transitioning to a woman at college, where he remained a student until he was 25. ‘At my college, I was basically like a minor celebrity for being trans.’

... After he started tuning out ‘woke political beliefs’ on social media and listening to contrarian media figures like Jordan Peterson and Joe Rogan, Wagoner said, he realized he no longer wanted to be Brianna. ‘Once I got off drugs and got a real job, I just had a clear head and started feeling a new gender dysphoria all over again,’ he said. ‘I was looking at myself in the mirror and looking at my childhood photos as a little boy and started thinking, What have I done?’”

CONCLUDING NOTE: This man’s story is very telling. America’s pop culture is a wicked, unhealthy thing, and this young man is a sad product of it. Not possessing the life-changing power that comes by a personal relationship with his Creator through faith in Jesus Christ, and lacking the wisdom that comes by God’s supernatural Word, he was a pawn in the hands of the demonic pop culture, its lies, and its fatal attractions: evolution, atheism, humanistic psychology, moral relativism, yogic mysticism, the glorification of sexual freedom, unisexuality, occultism, the drug culture, pornography. It’s a conspiracy, but not man’s, and it cannot be defeated with human weapons. It’s the devil’s mystery of iniquity. He laughs as his victims are enticed, trapped, defiled, corrupted, ruined, and sent to the depths of hell. I thank the blessed God for the saving gospel of Jesus Christ which is the power of God unto salvation for all sinners, even those who are in the depths of moral depravity.

☛ **MOUNTING NUMBER OF ECWA CHRISTIANS ABDUCTED, SLAIN** - Suspected Fulani herdsmen and other terrorists in Nigeria have killed six pastors and kidnapped 27 Christians of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) in the past seven months, according to an ECWA report.

Among the 27 Christians kidnapped from January to date were six pastors, including one abducted in Kaduna state on Monday (July 25), Pastor Moses Dikko Usman.

James Saleh, a coordinator of ECWA’s Evangelical Missionary Society (EMS), reported that among the six pastors slain was the Rev. Ezra Shamaki, an ECWA missionary killed on June 21 in the Kurmin Musa area of Kaduna state.

“Ask God to comfort the family of the late Rev. Ezra Shamaki, our missionary serving in Kurmin Musa DCC, who was shot dead

by terrorists,” Saleh said. “The terrorists kidnapped his wife, and they are yet to make any contact.”

Mac Philips, another EMS coordinator, said that 15 other women and five men were also abducted in the June 21 attack.

Though Shamaki was dead, one of the herdsmen shot him again with an AK-47 assault rifle, he said.

“The herdsmen then abducted all the women in the church, and many other men and women in the community, and left,” he said. “Continue to pray for God’s protection upon our missionaries who are constantly in the line of fire, yet they have remained courageous to continue serving Him in various mission fields.”

On July 5, terrorists killed the Rev. Adamu Buba in Iburu, Kasuwan Magani, Kaduna state, Philips said. Saleh added that Pastor Buba leaves behind a wife and seven children.

Northern Nigeria is engulfed in terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists who invade predominantly Christian communities, he said.

Christian leaders in Nigeria have said they believe herdsmen attacks on Christian communities in Nigeria’s Middle Belt are inspired by their desire to forcefully take over Christians’ lands and impose Islam as desertification has made it difficult for them to sustain their herds.

Nigeria led the world in Christians killed for their faith last year (Oct. 1, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2021) at 4,650, up from 3,530 the previous year, according to Open Doors’ 2022 World Watch List report. The number of kidnapped Christians was also highest in Nigeria, at more than 2,500, up from 990 the previous year, according to the WWL report. Nigeria trailed only China in the number of churches attacked, with 470 cases, according to the report.

In the 2022 World Watch List of the countries where it is most difficult to be a Christian, Nigeria jumped to seventh place, its highest ranking ever, from No. 9 the previous year.

☛ **BIDEN ADMIN. THREATENS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL’S LUNCH MONEY OVER BIBLE-LGBT ISSUE: SUIT** - The Biden administration and the Florida Agriculture commissioner are threatening to pull lunch money from a Tampa, Florida, Christian school over its biblical stance on marriage and sexuality, according to a new lawsuit.

Students at Grant Park Christian Academy in Tampa receive free meals from the school’s lunch program through the federal National School Lunch Program administered by Florida Commissioner Nikki Fried, according to the lawsuit.

But Fried now is telling the school it must comply with a Biden administration interpretation of Title IX, a 1972 law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. The Biden administration interprets Title IX as also prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

“Based on this redefinition, Commissioner Fried is poised to block Grant Park Christian Academy’s funding for school lunches this year,” the lawsuit says. “... Commissioner Fried’s office gave the school one option when the school objected to violating its religious beliefs – ‘your school is not required to

participate in the National School Lunch Program.”

The school, according to the lawsuit, serves children from a low-income, minority community in Tampa. For many children at the school, the lunch they eat is “the best meal they eat all day—and sometimes, it’s the only meal,” the suit says.

“But Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried and the Biden Administration are threatening Grant Park Christian Academy’s ability to feed hungry children,” the suit says.

The school’s ministry statement says the word “marriage” has only “one legitimate meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman.”

“The Biden administration is threatening to take away lunch money from low-income children simply because they attend Christian schools,” said ADF legal counsel Erica Steinmiller-Perdomo. “Grant Park Christian Academy is working to revitalize their historically underprivileged community, and offering children nutritious meals is a vital part of their service. The Biden administration is ignoring the law and forcing this wonderful school to make an untenable choice: violate its religious beliefs or stop providing lunches to children.”

The lawsuit claims the policy violates federal law and the school’s free speech and religious liberty rights under the U.S. Constitution.

☛ **CANADA’S TRUDEAU DECLARES WAR ON FERTILIZER, FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF SRI LANKA** - Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau ignored cries of anger and desperation from farmers and provincial officials last weekend by pressing ahead with a climate change agenda that will dramatically reduce Canada’s use of fertilizer — the same ruinous strategy that drove Dutch farmers into revolt and destroyed the agriculture of Sri Lanka.

Although Canadian farm organizations warn the Trudeau plan will significantly reduce crops, slash the income of farmers, and increase Canadian grocery prices, Trudeau officials essentially said farmers would get used to their reduced allocation of fertilizers and devise new methods of growing “sustainable food.”

The Toronto Sun noted Trudeau’s plan is similar to the one that touched off massive protests from farmers in the Netherlands. The Dutch, in turn, took a page from the “Freedom Convoy” protests against vaccine mandates in Canada, using their farm vehicles to block highways and city roads.

Canada’s Post Millennial (PM) saw the Dutch revolt as “a warning sign to those across the pond in Canada for what might come if Trudeau gets his way.”

PM cited reports that estimated Canadian farmers could lose \$48 billion by 2030 if Trudeau’s plan is implemented, due to both lost income from reduced crop yields and the increased cost of using “green” fertilizer.

An even more disturbing example is Sri Lanka, whose corrupt and incompetent socialist government banned chemical fertilizers on environmentalist grounds last year, bankrupting farmers and leaving the once-bountiful island on the brink of starvation.

Much as Trudeau officials have done, former Sri Lankan

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa rhapsodized about the wonders of organic farming and sustainable agriculture – while rice yields plummeted and farm families went bankrupt. The green agriculture scheme was such a disaster that farmers thought it might have been a ploy to drive them off their land so Rajapaksa and his cronies could buy it for pennies on the dollar.

International media aligned with the Green movement prefer not to dwell on how Sri Lanka’s deranged fertilizer ban contributed to the complete collapse of its government and economy – but the Sri Lankan people most certainly remember, banging their empty pots and pans together during massive street demonstrations to protest food shortages. The protests became known as “kitchen laments” and “farming Fridays.”

7 GOOD REASONS TO MISS CHURCH

1. The Ceiling Might Fall On Us! This happens often! It’s always in the news: “Church ceilings falling everywhere hundreds killed each Sunday.” Our church has a fulltime crew, of men that do nothing but fix our ceilings because they are always caving in on people. We may have to go to openair meetings soon.

2. We Don’t Have Anything To Wear. Yes, we all have clothes for work and play. We can find clothes to wear for an occasional funeral or wedding. We have plenty of clothes for school or business or to go shopping with each week, but clothes for church are a scarce commodity. Stores just don’t sell them these days. Well, what are you gonna do, huh?

3. We Don’t Have Any Time - After All Week At Work, Sunday Is The Only Day We Have For Ourselves. So what if there are 168 hours in a week. Does God expect us to use 1 of those hours to go to church? That would only leave us with 167 hours to do all the other things we have to do! Are you nuts??? Doesn’t God know we work full time? That’s 40 hours a week! That only leaves us with 128 hours of free time. No way, Jose! We’re too busy for church. God will have to understand.

4. All They Want Is Money. That’s absolutely the only reason for the existence of the church in our town - to take our money! Our Pastor preaches over 150 sermons a year and **every one of them** is entitled, “Give us your money!” The stores and the service stations, the bars and the movie house, the fuel company and electric company, the phone company and the water authorities, the government and the post office, the florist and the printer, the carpenter and the mechanic, the insurance company and the recreation areas never ask for money. Why shouldn’t the church operate for nothing too? Who do they think they are, any ways?

5. There Are Too Many Hypocrites At Church! Sure the church is half empty, but there are still too many hypocrites there. Everybody, to some extent, is a hypocrite, but they shouldn’t be allowed in church. Churches should have desks at the door where trained specialists can identify hypocrites trying to sneak in. They should be turned away and barred from going into the service until they’re perfect, Of course, the best place for a hypocrite to be is inside of a good church where they will learn to be honest,

sincere Christians who practice what they preach, but until they get rid of the phonies, we're not going there!

6. Nobody Invited Us Anyways. Why should you feel as though churches care about YOU? Has the Pastor ever come to your house and given you a personal invitation? Sure, there are 25,000 people living around us, but come on! You're special! Sure, they advertise just like the stores we patronize and try to help the community just like the businessmen we deal with, but church is different. Until they come to your house personally, DON'T GO!

7. We Can Be Close God Anywhere. The Scripture tells us that God shed His blood for the church (Acts 20:28,) but that's no big deal. We'd shed our blood for things that aren't worthwhile to us either. Blood donors don't give blood to help people. They just don't have anything else to do. It's not important to them! We shed our blood for insignificant things all the time, don't we? Just because we shed our blood for something, doesn't mean it's important to us. Same thing with God. Why should we think His church is important to Him? I'm sure He understands. We can be as close to God at home as we can be at the church.

Now, Let's Be Serious For A Minute -

Some of these reasons seem humorous or silly, but as a Pastor, I hear these and so many others all the time. Friends, the church is not perfect; neither an I, and neither are you. The word "Church" means "a called out ASSEMBLY." It comes from the Greek work "Ekklesia." It appears in the Bible 80 times. Of those 80, 58 times it refers to a local church in a local town somewhere in the world. The word "churches" appears in the Bible 35 times, meaning there is more than one, and in some towns there needs to be more than just one. The church is an institution of God that is to be operated in different towns.

A true church is comprised of people who have been saved



first, baptized second, and added to the church third. Notice this in Acts 2:41, ***“Then they that gladly received His word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”*** Acts 2:47 adds this, ***“And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”***

Its main obligation is the preaching of the Word of God. Titus 1:3 says, ***“But hath in due times manifested His word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour.”*** God's method of doing this is by saved, ordained Pastors. Jeremiah 3:15 says, ***“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”*** Isn't it time for you to set aside all the excuses and be saved? Those who wait for the 11th hour to repent usually die at 10:30!

Come to the Lord Jesus Christ as you are. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and call upon Him right now, where ever you are, to be your Saviour. Ask Him to have mercy on you and save you. (See Acts 4:12, John 1:12, John 14:6, Romans 10:13) Pray from your heart: ***“Heavenly Father, I do today receive Jesus Christ as my Savior from sin and its penalty. I believe He died for me and was buried and rose again and trust today in His sacrifice and shed blood for the forgiveness of my sin. Please come into my heart and give to me eternal life. In Jesus' name, Amen.”***

Now, **GO TO CHURCH.** Find a Bible preaching, teaching and practicing church. The Bible is God's Word to man that reveals His mind and His will for us. Find a church where the Bible is studied from cover to cover and not just read.

Get yourself a Bible, and read it, then heed it.

- Art Kohl

MEMORY VERSE JOURNAL MEDITATION PLAN

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

- Psalm 1:1-3

If there is one thing we can do to strengthen the churches it is to seriously strengthen the biblical depth of the congregation. ***“For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil”*** (Hebrews 5:13-14). In my experience and observation, the vast majority of church members even in the most conservative churches are not serious Bible students. They are not skillful in God's Word and do not have their senses exercised. If the people would become skillful in God's Word, they would be more spiritually minded, more serious in prayer, more faithful to the house of God, more separated from the evil things of the world, wiser in every aspect of living, wiser in building godly homes and training their



children, more zealous for the salvation of souls and the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission. The Word of God has the power to do all of this.

The goal of the memory verse journal is to help the believer hide God's Word in his heart (Psalm 119:11) and to meditate on it in an effectual, practical way. God doesn't want His people to read and memorize the Scriptures in a robotic or parroting fashion. Everything is to be done with understanding. See Psalm 47:7; I Corinthians 14:15, 19; Colossians 1:9; 3:16.

Meditating on a verse or passage of God's Word effectually begins with understanding its meaning. This requires the application of the fundamental principles of Bible interpretation (e.g., context, comparing Scripture with Scripture, defining the words, literal vs. allegorical, understanding figures of speech) and the wise use of Bible study tools (e.g., dictionary, concordance, Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, commentary). A basic education in these things can be obtained from The Effectual Bible Student. This 12-hour video course, accompanied by a printed manual, is available for free viewing and download from www.wayoflife.org. It is also available for purchase on DVDs. The more the child of God invests in pursuing this type of education, the better he will understand the Bible.

Memorization and meditation go together. By memorizing a verse, the believer can then meditate on it as he goes about his daily life. He can ask himself, what does this verse mean? What are its main lessons? What does this mean for my daily life?

The journal is accompanied by a five-year weekly memory verse program (one or two verses per week). The verses are carefully selected for edification and exhortation.

The journal and the weekly memory verse program can be used by individuals, families, classes, and churches.

Whoever is overseeing the memory verse journal program should teach the students to do the following things:

1. Print a copy of the worksheet for each week of the program. We print out 52 copies of the worksheet and bind them together with the introduction and memory verse list. That makes a one-year journal.
2. Each week, the first thing is to write out the memory verse. The act of writing has an important role in memorization.
3. Memorize the verse as quickly as possible, the first day preferably. This is so the student can meditate on it throughout the rest of the week. Memorization and meditation aren't the same, but they are intimately associated.
4. Use the journal daily, trying to add more answers to the questions. Don't be content with spending only a few minutes each week answering the questions. The more you put into this, the more you will get out of it.
5. First answer the questions as best as you can on your own. Only after you have done your best should you get ideas from others.
6. After you have tried your best, don't hesitate to seek help if you don't understand something. Take the initiative to learn. Don't be content with not understanding. Be a zealous Bible student, and it will pay great dividends.
7. Get a partner to whom you can repeat your memory verse each week. You can discuss the journal together and learn from one another.

In our church, each week in the main service we have someone read from their journal from the previous week to give the people ideas about how to answer the questions. We choose individuals who are most capable of performing this task. We urge all of the people to bring the journals to the service and jot down new ideas they get from others. Then, as a congregation we repeat together the verse for the coming week several times.

Memory Verse Journal:

https://www.wayoflife.org/free_ebooks/memory_verse_journal.php

RELIGION

emphasizes the importance of sacrifice, devotion, ritual, & how much people should do for God

THE GOSPEL

emphasizes the importance of the sacrifice & work of Jesus Christ