

NEWSLINE

Great Smoky Mountains Church of Christ

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Second Guessing God

I was always a curious child. Always asking "why?" Dad must have had the patience of Job. He would answer my questions again and again. One day I must have been particularly bothersome with my endless questions because dad shook his head and asked, "Why do you always ask 'why?'" I remember thinking to myself, "Because I want to know the answer!"

Sometimes we question God, not so much for answers, but to scrutinize His will for our own advantage. Like a rebellious adolescent who badgers his parents as to why they have made a certain decision, we find ourselves arguing with God. "God?" we ask, "Are you sure this is what you are expecting of me?"

When Satan came to Eve in the Garden of Eden he used a similar approach. First, he questions what God had really said. Then he questioned the accuracy of the information God had given to Adam and Eve. "Has God said, 'You will die?' He knows you will not die and that if you eat the fruit you will become like God, knowing good and evil." With a little encouragement and the promise of real enlightenment, Eve ate of the forbidden fruit.

Our religious world actually encourages a similar approach to God. When faced with critical information about God's will regarding salvation, questioning the necessity of following God's Word implicitly is standard venue. Does God really expect complete obedience? Is there a shortcut? Why would God care if we made a few changes or additions along the way?

Although the New Testament recognizes the unity and singularity of the body of Christ it is customary today to acknowledge any "Christian" organization as being a part of that body. Our minds create and accept a cognitive dissonance (conflicting awareness) when it comes to religious thought. We can validate diametrically opposed interpretations of Scripture and trick our brains into believing there is no difference.

When Jesus came into our world, even His own people, who had anticipated His advent for centuries, did not recognize Him as the Messiah because they had developed their own vision of God's will. To them a lowly Carpenter from Nazareth did not fit the qualifications. A miracle working peasant who could heal the sick and raise the dead wasn't their idea of a King. Their Messiah was to destroy Rome's dominance and restore Israel to power. With their minds already made up, they lost sight of God's simple promise. We must not make the same mistake...eternity depends on it.

—Al Behel

Other News/Sick:

Carol Fromke, wife of Vince Fromke, M.D. (one of Al's associates), diagnosed with advanced lung cancer. Cards may be sent to Carol at Livingston Clinic, 500 West Main Street, Livingston, TN 38570.

Dan and Sheryle Elkins—daughter-in-law's (Regina) mother, **Ila Jenkins**, had a stroke last Wednesday.

Kenneth Williams, brother of Priscilla Dick, is very ill in Abilene, TX.

Baby Shower—for Sara Teal today in fellowship hall, 2-3:30. Hosted by Priscilla Dick and Donna Walker.

Graduation Celebration and Pot Luck—May 18 after evening services in fellowship hall. Graduates are Hunter Haynes, Hunter Callon, Abby Lee, Caleb Bremer, and Scott LaFollette.

Paul Huston, son-in-law of Gary and Priscilla Dick, deployed to Egypt for one year. Prayers appreciated.

Meetings Today: Men and Ladies monthly meetings today at 4.

Elder Contact for Month: Dan Elkins, Phone No. 865-548-9852

Sermon Topics: A.M.—"Jesus Christ, No Ordinary Man—No Ordinary Power"; P.M.—"At Home In The Psalms"

Interpreter for deaf and hearing impaired available for AM and PM worship

Our Known Sick

Dez Anderson—suffers from many health conditions. She has recently battled blood clots and internal bleeding but is at home slowly improving.

Ron Sommerville—lots of pain as he recovers from back surgery.

Deb Elkins—difficulty stabilizing medications for anxiety.

Bill England—his cancer markers are low. We rejoice with him.

Debby Bryan—battling cancer at home. She is not doing well at this time. Keep praying.

Johnny Bryan—was released from the hospital and is now at home.

Clara Mayberry—still confined to home.

DeEtte Alexander—battling an infection.

Kathy May—ill in Baxter. You can send her a card at P.O. Box 465, Baxter, TN 38544-0463.

Larry Valentine—began chemo on March 24

Wyatt Cox, infant son of Heather and Alan Cox—recovering from his second heart surgery. Home address: 3334 Oma Lee Dr., Sevierville, TN 37876.

Angie Daimwood—suffering agitation due to advancing dementia. She is back in Wellington Place.

Friends and Family

Christopher Howell (grandson of the Littletons-spinal cord injuries suffered in automobile accident).

Charlotte Powers, visitor from Virginia, prayers for upcoming shoulder surgery.

Arania Blount (Brenda Scott's sister)—battling cancer and is now receiving hospice.

Robin McCollum and Peggy McCollum (Al's nieces—both battling cancer).

Sue Mercer's sister, **Connie Browning**, treated for breast cancer.

Rick Cliett's brother, **Ken Cliett**, is battling Ascites and kidney failure.

Mark Baker, brother-in-law of Coleen Thomason, dealing with complications from abnormal blood vessels in the brain.

Leah's neighbor's (Miss Rose) son, **Jimmy Lee**, is being treated for brain cancer.

Jerry Ellison, Brenda Scott's brother-in-law, failing lungs with no further treatment available.

Al's brother, **Tom Behel**, recovering from hip surgery and stroke.

Sue Hayes' sister, Joyce - she fell and broke her hip

Madison Stanley, granddaughter (age 7) Cliett's friends—stage 3 cancer—undergoing aggressive chemo and radiation.

Gayle Raines, a frequent visitor and minister, is suffering from Stage 4 cancer of the jaw. Please keep him in prayer.

Sunday Adult Bible Study

"Rejoicing In the Lord"

A Study in Philippians

Rise & Shine: Sundays, 9:15

LADIES CLASS

1st and 3rd Tuesdays. Theme:

"Apples of Gold"

Times of Services

Sunday A.M.

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Sunday P.M. 6:00 PM

Wednesday 7:00 PM

Building Fund

Loan balance as of 05/01/14 is **\$1,146,072.68**. Extra contributions to reduce the loan debt are needed and appreciated. Envelopes are available in the pew.

Nursery

Located across main foyer. Closed circuit TV allows viewing and participation in worship.

CDs and DVDs of Sermons are available free at sound booth. Also available on the website at: www.greatsmokymountainschurchofchrist.com.