

Great Expectations

"And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel..." (Luke 2:25, NASB95)

We spend a good part of our lives waiting. We wait for the time when we can ride a bike without help. We wait for when we can go to school. We wait for our first job. We wait for marriage, and kids, and grandkids. We wait for retirement. We wait for death. Luke introduces two people who had long awaited the arrival of Jesus: Simeon and Anna. They are present in the temple at Mary's purification and Jesus' dedication, forty days after his birth (Luke 2:22-24; see Leviticus 12:6-8; Exodus 13:2, 12).

Two things impress us about Simeon and Anna: their ages and their devotion. Simeon was near the end of his life (Luke 2:26, 29) and was looking for the arrival of the Messiah, "the consolation of Israel" (v 25). Anna was eighty-four years old, and had been a widow for

By Cloyce Sutton II years (v 36-37). Both were godly people. Simeon is described as righteous, devout, and full of the Spirit (v 25). Anna resided and served in the temple, and devoted herself to regular prayer and fasting (v 37).

Why were they so eager and excited about the arrival of this seemingly normal but obscure baby? Someone has said that atheists look for God the way thieves look for the police. In other words, what a person seeks reflects his or her character. Anna and Simeon sought a Savior. They sought the One who would bring salvation, light and glory into the world (v 29-32). In looking for this Savior, they found the child.

Simeon and Anna were awaiting the Messiah's first coming. Jesus' disciples today are awaiting his second coming.

What are you waiting for?



Classes This Week

Sun 5:15 PM Kids Class at Building	Monday 12 Noon Campus Study - Foy Cafeteria	Monday 7 PM Ladies Class at the Sullivan's	Tuesday 7 PM Bible Reading at Hannah Alexander's	Wednesday 10 AM Ladies Parenting Class at the Humphrey's	Thursday 12:30 PM Campus Study - Foy Cafeteria	Thursday 7 PM Revelation Study at Caleb George's
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Sick

Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Lori Holloway	Chuck Wade	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)	Philip Locke (Jeremiah Johnson's Uncle)
Josie Keith (Friend of Heath Fowler)	Grandparents of Mary Ann Roberts	Easton Alexander (Phillip Box's cousin's baby)	Jerry Sandlin (Megan Lee's Grandfather)
Richard Call Seth Humphrey's Uncle	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)	Mary Smith (Nathan Smith's Grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Dale Herd (William Herd's brother)	Larry Alexander (Friend of Phillip Box)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Stacey Harrell (Marcus Harrell's Dad)	Ann Robinson (Sharon Bailey's Mom)	Mike Reed (Friend of Long's)

September Birthdays

- 1 - Ryan Seymore
- 2 - Denise Davis
- 3 - Trenton Anderson
- 4 - Kevin Anderson
- 10 - BJ Winslett
- 10 - Matthew Sullivan
- 10 - Joshua Carter
- 10 - Keeley Porter
- 10 - Eleanor Weldon
- 11 - Sheryl Fowler
- 12 - Jared Johnson
- 12 - Heather Bethea
- 14 - Patsy Ogle
- 17 - Laura Weldon
- 19 - Kayti Persall
- 21 - Sarah Chandler
- 24 - Wade Winslett

News and Notes

- Let us remember Matthew Johnson, David Golden and Tim Morton in our prayers as they are deployed overseas.
- We are so thankful to have such a large number of students to identify with the church here!
- The membership committee will meet after services with those who have requested to become members.
- Our monthly Men's business meeting will be today at 3:30.
- Our monthly singing will be to-night!

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

Various Thoughts on the Church

By Forrest D. Moyer

A Growing Church...

A growing church does not just happen. It is like a garden that must be planted, cultivated, watered and cared for. A growing church is the result of planning and working the plan. It is the result of good people's reaching to others to bring them in. It is the result of careful concern for the word of God. It is the result of faithful, uncompromising preaching of that Word. If we want a growing church, we, too, must be as diligent as a farmer in his garden.

Conscientious Scruples

It was one of these "modern" churches of Christ, with recreation center, youth gymnasium, banquet room, and an inexhaustible program of picnics, youth rallies, ball games, and entertainments. But the Sunday attendance kept steadily declining. The elders and the preacher were much worried and put out a questionnaire to some of the most faithful of the saints who were becoming lax in their attendance, asking why they had ceased coming to church on

Which reminds me of the old saying: "If you have to get members by feeding them chicken, ice cream, and iced tea, they will be as dead as the chicken, as cold as the ice cream, and as weak as the tea." I concur with this assessment.

Sundays. They found out! Many of the saints said they had conscientious scruples against going to places of entertainment and amusement on the Lord's day.

Which reminds me of the old saying: "If you have to get members by feeding them chicken, ice cream, and iced tea, they will be as dead as the chicken, as cold as the ice cream, and as weak as the tea." I concur with this assessment. Physical recreation and entertainment are necessary parts of our lives, but they are no part of the mission and

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Thoughts to Ponder

All growth that is not toward God is growing to decay

Do You Have a Bible Question?
Call (334) 734-2133 or E-mail: LarryRouse@aubeacon.com



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Check Us Out On the Internet: www.aubeacon.com

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work of the church of our Lord. I don't know the source of that quote, but it certainly is apropos. Let us always let the church be the church and keep secular activities in their place.

The Function of the Church

It seems that over and over again we must stress what the work of the church is. How often, indeed, do we see people with the idea that the church is a glorified country club designed to cater to the fleshly appetites of its membership. Are we thinking of pleasing the Lord or of pleasing ourselves? Are we after spiritual amenities or physical ones?

Just for the record, let us re-emphasize what the work of the congregation is.

1. Preaching the gospel to those lost in sin. This is, indeed, one of the fundamental reasons for the existence of the church. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (**1 Tim. 3:15**). Let us never forget why the church is here.

2. Edifying those who are Christians. Once we have obeyed the gospel of Christ, there is the constant need for growth. This growth comes through being taught the word of God. This is one of the great purposes of the local church.

3. Aid to saints in distress. When some emergency situation comes upon fellow-Christians, we all sustain a responsibility to give aid and help to those in need. The local church itself may enter into such work.

Brethren, this is the purpose for which the church exists.

Church, Assembly, or Congregation

Some have been writing lately that the word "church" is really not a good translation of the word ekklesia. They say that we should use such terms as assembly or congregation. Do they realize that usage in a given language

often determines what a word means? The word "church" has been used for centuries to refer to "an assembly of God's people" or "a congregation." We have come to understand that when "church" is used, it refers to an assembly or a group of called-out people. True, some other words might be better, but, so far as I can see, it is not wrong to use the word "church" if we understand what the NT teaches about it. Of course, it is not used in a denominational sense, nor to refer to a building; but it does describe the people of God.

Are You a Regular or Part-time Attender?

We have a good number of members here who are regular attenders. They attend every service! And then we have some who are part-time attenders. Which are you? Now it follows that the regular attenders will get regular benefits from their efforts, and the part-time attenders will get part-time benefits. Some get only one-third of the benefit that others do. Some may get two-thirds and some may not even get one-tenth of the benefits possible. Can't you see that you are the loser by your part-time action? In fact, you may be an eternal loser!

Now, we (the church) are not a police force and I (the preacher) am not a truant officer. It is my duty to warn you and to teach you what God says about slackers. But I will not camp out on your door-step to get you to come out for the benefit you can get nor will I try to pet people or coddle them to get them to attend. If the pure, positive preaching of God's word will not cause you to love the Lord enough to sacrifice for Him and to put forth the extra effort to be regular, I know of nothing else that will. I have no bag of "gimmicks" to use; there is no flambouyancy or super-showmanship on my part. But if you sincerely want to live a godly life and go to Heaven, I honestly believe that I (the preacher) and we (the church) can be of genuine help to you. Think it over!



On Being Battle Ready

By Gary Henry

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (**2 Corinthians 10:4,5**). Life in Christ can be describes and discussed in many ways. Many different metaphors are used in the Scriptures to illustrate the Christian's experience, and one of the most vivid of these is "warfare." While the Christian's life is one of PEACE, it is also one of **conflict**, and it is extremely important to understand this.

Being naive about the conflictual side of Christianity is nothing short of dangerous. We have a powerful adversary who is intent on destroying us, and we need to have our eyes wide open to the reality of what we're up against. Hence the Scriptures speak of our need to be sober-minded, alert, and vigilant (**1 Thessalonians 5:8; 1 Peter 5:8**). This world is being fought over, and living in it is a high-stakes affair. There is much to be gained by those who are paying attention — and much to be lost by those who aren't.

We also need to be filled with knowledge and wisdom. The warfare in which we are engaged is an IDEOLOGICAL struggle between truth and untruth. There is no winning this war — indeed there is no SURVIVING it — without mental prepar-

edness. So we need to know God's word and understand the truth by which we may be saved. Granted, some of us enjoy reading and studying and thinking more than others, but even if we're not inclined in that direction, there is a certain amount of truth that we must master. If we don't, we'll be casualties in the warfare in which we're engaged.

But in addition to knowledge, we also need courage. Fighting on the Lord's side is not for the fainthearted but for the daring. And we must understand one important fact: courage does not mean not being afraid; it means that we go ahead and do whatever needs to be done, despite our fear. In the face of fear, God would say to us, "Be courageous, be strong" (**1 Corinthians 16:13 RSV**). Day to day, we need to be "braced for action." The clash between God and His foes is going to impact our lives, so let us not be surprised. Let us expect that some fighting will have to be done.

"Recognizing that our cause is, and will be, combated by mighty, determined and relentless forces, we will, trusting in him who is the Prince of Peace, meet argument with argument, misjudgment with patience, denunciations with kindness, and all our difficulties and dangers with prayer" (Frances Elizabeth Caroline Willard).

