

# Ruined by Bitterness

“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” (Eph 4:31-32)

Author Unknown

He was a man nobody liked--hard, sullen, taciturn, and sour. If you met him on the street and wished him good-day, he would keep his eyes straight in front of him, grunt sulkily and pass on. He lived in a tumbled-down old hut away back in the bush. He spoke to nobody, and he made it perfectly plain that he wished nobody to speak to him. Even the children shunned him.

Some said he was a hermit; some that he was a miser; some that he was a woman-hater; some that he was a fugitive from justice, a man with a guilty secret. But they were all wrong. The simple truth was that in his youth a companion had done him a grievous injury. “I’ll remember it to my dying day,” he hissed, in a gust of passionate resentment.

And he did. But when his dying day actually came, he realized that the rankling memory of that youthful wrong had soured and darkened his whole life. “I’ve gone over it by

myself every morning,” he moaned, as he lay gasping in his comfortless shanty, “and I’ve thought of it every night. I’ve cursed him a hundred times each day. I see now,” he added brokenly, a suspicion of moisture glistening in his eye, “that my curses have eaten out my soul; they’ve been like gall on my tongue and gravel in my teeth. My hate has hurt nobody but myself. But it’s turned my life into gloom and misery!” It was true.

The man at whom he had spat out his venomous maledictions, having done all a man could do to atone for the suffering that he had thoughtless caused, had dismissed the matter from his mind a generation back. Upon him the gnarled old man’s bitterness had produced little or no effect. It was the man who cherished the sinister memory who suffered most. It shadowed his life; it lent a new terror to death; it expelled every trace of brightness and excluded every ray of hope; and at last, a grim and ghostly companion, it lay down with him in his cold and cheerless grave.

May we each learn the healing power of forgiveness -- before it is too late!



**Classes This Week**

<b>Sunday 5:15 PM</b> Kids Class in Auditorium	<b>Sunday Devo and Singing</b> Blake Edwards will lead the Devo at Ryan Hasty's home!	<b>Monday 7 PM</b> Ladies study on "History and Geography" at Denise Davis' home	<b>Tuesday 8 PM</b> Truth Seekers class in Student Center Room 2216
---	--	---	--

**Sick**

Sam Cox (Friend of Anna Stallings)	Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son)	Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad)	Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Kate Miller (Daughter of Brandon and Erin Miller)
Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother)	Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother)	Andrew Westphal	Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman)
Betty Bradford	Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Bonnie May (Wife of Ben May)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Patty Herd (William's sister-in-law)	Emily Stallings (Anna's sister)	Madi Wise (Friend of the Robert's)
Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Joe Perkins (Scott Perkin's Dad)	Toni and William Herd	Tom Davis (Walker Davis' Uncle)

**November Birthdays**

- 1 - Holly Allamel
- 2 - Debbi Coleman
- 6 - Troy Godwin
- 6 - Lauren Ledford
- 7 - Amy Godwin
- 7 - Leah Donahue
- 8 - Ashley Miller
- 9 - Darla Hahn
- 11 - Andrew Hahn
- 12 - Randal Porterfield
- 13 - Toni Herd
- 13 - Emerson Daniels
- 13 - Dylan Bartlett
- 13 - Ronaldo Henriquez
- 15 - Jon Hornback
- 16 - Nicole Pender
- 16 - Alexander Dunaway
- 16 - Victoria Dunaway
- 20 - Craig Bassett
- 23 - Mary Ann Roberts
- 24 - John Burns
- 25 - Silas Weldon
- 25 - Olyvia Winslett
- 27 - Scott Fowler
- 28 - Will Harris
- 29 - Tyson Dembowski
- 30 - David Simpson

**News and Notes**

- ☒ - There will be a congregational meeting on today at 4 PM. This will be a time for communication and feedback with our Elders and deacons.
- ☒ - Owen Mauldin came home from the hospital this week!
- ☒ - David Hartsell is now at home.
- ☒ - Ken Sullivanne is awaiting further treatments for his heart.
- ☒ - Let us continue to pray for Scott Fowler's mother who is recovering from a car accident this week.
- ☒ - All audio is available on www.aubeacon.com and also on CDs in the foyer.

# 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)

Volume 5, Issue 2

November 17, 2013

## Press Along to the Goal

By Bubba Garner



**Thoughts to Ponder**

Life has burdens that no one can escape. Christianity does not remove the load: it teaches us how to bear these burdens.

She fled from the rising waters of the tsunami. Visions of her family, a husband and five children, flashed through her mind. She had to live—not just for her, for them. As she climbed a tree, she was bitten by a snake. Then came the fire ants. They stung her legs, arms, face, even her eyes. Still, she climbed. This woman had one goal, survival; it was her only option. The reunion with her family would be worth it.

You have to press on for the prize. The athletes in the First Century competed for a prize, a wreath of victory. And no one received an award just because they entered the race or ran for a little while. They had to finish to get it.

Setting goals is a part of life. Achieving them, however, is not quite as common. And many times, the difference between setting marks and reaching them is the reward that waits at the end. When two teams battle and fight their way through a close championship game, what do we usually say about the one that finally finishes on top? “They were just hungrier; they wanted it more.” At the beginning of the season, they didn’t just set their minds on winning. Their goal was to win it

all. They knew that the reward at the end would be worth it.

The apostle Paul likened Christianity to running a race when he said, “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:14). That suggests some things about the determination and vision necessary as we make our journey to our own reward.

You have to press on. This race is not a sprint or a dash but a marathon, one that must be “run

(Continued on page 2)

**Elders**  
Walker Davis  
(334) 703-0050  
Larry Rouse  
(334) 734-2133

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**  
**Sunday**  
Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM  
**Wednesday**  
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM  
E-Mail:  
larryrouse@aubeacon.com

Larry Rouse  
Evangelist and Editor

**Check Us Out On the Internet: [www.aubeacon.com](http://www.aubeacon.com)**

*(Continued from page 1)*

with endurance” (**Heb. 12:1**). It is filled with obstacles, detours, and difficult turns, things that the devil will use to discourage you from running. Many passages warn about falling prey to our great adversary, hence falling out of the race (**1 Pet. 5:8; Eph. 6:11; 2 Cor. 11:14**)? He wants you to fail. You have to press on.

And when the struggles are internal, from within, you have to get through those, too. There will be times when you feel like you can’t take another step. There will be times when you see people you love stop running. There will be times when you lose your focus and trip and fall. “And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner” (**1 Pet. 4:18**)? That indicates that you have to work through conflicts and strife and treacherous roads along the way. Through all the pressures, you have to press on.

You have to press on toward the goal. The goal is the finish line. It’s the reason you start running in the first place. No runner begins a race that he doesn’t intend to complete. When Paul was at the end of his life, he said with confidence, “I have finished the course” (**2 Tim. 4:7**). That is, he had plenty of opportunities to quit but he wasn’t about to stop running or even slow down until he felt the tape break across his chest at the finish.

You’re not finished yet. You still have a race to complete. Otherwise, it doesn’t matter how a man lives or what a man does after he is saved, just so long as he was once saved. But the Bible makes it clear that we must keep pressing on toward completion. The writer of Hebrews said that we become partakers of Christ,

“if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end” (**Heb. 3:14**). Peter encouraged Christians to stay strong, “obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls” (**1 Pet. 1:10**). It’s the outcome, the end, the result, the goal. Keep pressing toward it.

You have to press on for the prize. The athletes in the First Century competed for a prize, a wreath of victory. And no one received an award just because they entered the race or ran for a little while. They had to finish to get it. And however difficult it was to pull the next hill or work through the pain, their minds were firmly fixed on the reward that was waiting at the end of the road.

The stakes are much higher in the race that is set before us. “They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable” (**1 Cor. 9:25**). We press on for the crown of life, the prize of eternal fellowship with God. That was certainly Paul’s motivation for fighting the good fight, for finishing the course, for keeping the faith. “In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day” (**2 Tim. 4:8**). Notice that he had not yet received his reward. That was the very reason he kept pressing on. Heaven will surely be worth it all. Just remember, you’re not there yet.

“To reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it—but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor” (Oliver Wendell Holmes). Surviving a natural disaster and winning a national championship both involve courage, resolve, strength, and inspiration. But they are not worthy to be compared with the reward of a race run well. Set your sights on the city and press on, not off.



## The Church’s Purpose

By Bill Hall

What is the purpose of the Lord’s church? Is it to eradicate poverty, disease, social injustice, illiteracy from among men? Is it to bring about a cessation of war and conflict? Is it to campaign for a temptation-free society for Christians to live in?

If the church had as one of its great goals the eradication of disease, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish that goal. Could not the same power that enabled one blind man to see have enabled all blind men to see; that enabled one lame man to walk have enabled all lame people to walk; that cured many people of varied diseases have cured all people of all diseases? And could not this same power have been given to the church in all generations?

If the church has as one of its great goals the eradication of poverty, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish this purpose. After all, He fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. He similarly fed four thousand on another occasion. Could not He who did these marvelous works have enabled His church in all generations to feed, clothe, and shelter the impoverished masses of the world through miraculous powers?

If the Lord had wanted His church to become a lobbyist group to apply political pressure toward a temptation and persecution-free society in which to live, He would have given instructions in that direction. He did not even lead His church into a direct effort to de-

The church’s purpose is to save souls and prepare people for eternity--It holds out to the impoverished the hope of some day walking a street of gold; to the suffering a time when there will be no pain; to the sorrowing a moment when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

stroy slavery, but taught the Christian slave to be a better slave and the Christian master to treat his slaves as he would have his heavenly Master treat him (**Col. 3:22-4:1**).

The church’s purpose is to save souls and prepare people for eternity--It holds out to the impoverished the hope of some day walking a street of gold; to the suffering a time when there will be no pain; to the sor-

rowing a moment when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." It tells the tempted and persecuted that there is value in these afflictions, that the testing of their faith is "more precious than of gold," and to rejoice -- It tells all to live godly lives in whatever environment they find themselves. It seeks to change people through the power of the gospel, not society through the coercion of legislators -- Its weapons "are not carnal, but are mighty through God." Its motivating theme: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

When churches become involved in hospital and health clinic work, or when they build schools for the education of their children, or when they see as one of their great missions to provide for the world’s poverty, or when they feel obligated to create social upheaval and campaign for human rights, or when they feel called upon to express their views on the government’s use of nuclear armaments or whatever, they have a distorted view of the purpose of the church.

