

Hypocrites in the church

People often say they are repelled from Christianity by their experiences with Christians. They might say they respect Jesus but don't like his followers. Or they avoid church because of the hypocrites they find there.

I understand this sentiment. Who wants to be part of a group where there is arguing, pride, and people jockeying for prominence? I know of one such group where the treasurer was skimming off money for himself, and one of the leaders was overheard in public cursing and swearing. These same folks often failed to grasp, let alone live out, the most basic teachings of Jesus.

By Eric Reynolds

Would you want to join that group? The people I'm thinking of were the twelve that Jesus chose to be his ambassadors. If you look at the disciples themselves, you might be excused for wanting nothing to do with their group. But those who joined them did so because they were drawn to their Leader more so than his followers. People were converted to Jesus the Son of God, not his church. They joined the church, not because they had found the perfect group of people, but because they found people who shared their faith in the one perfect Person.



Lisa Carter (Luke's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Virginia Box (Sarah Norman's grandmother)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Jamin Hymel (Chad's son)
Terri Moore (Joey's aunt)	Artina Hunt (Esther's friend's sister)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Ricky Tucker (Tyler's cousin)	Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Bernice Martin (Will Harris' great-grandmother)	Brian Myers (Kimberlee's cousin)	Eva Jean Cavender (Matt's grandmother)
John M. Rhodes and Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's Granddad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	Maria Aragon (Liseth's Mother)

June Birthdays

- 3-Philip Stephens
- 4-Alexander Nam
- 5-Cheyenne Redus
- 6-David Eison
- 7-Spencer Borden
- 8-Joanetta Lauderdale
- 9-Kay White
- 10-Joah Green
- 12-Orie Cecil
- 14-Jeremiah Johnson
- 17-Brooks Pender
- 17-Sarah Norman
- 18-James Long
- 22-Paul Tam
- 24-Justin Bice
- 25-Corey Hunt
- 26-Katie Gentry
- 27-Ada Owen
- 27-Kelli Huggins
- 28-Craig Davis
- 28-Julian Reid

News and Notes

- ☒ - We welcome the Green family as new members of the University church! Let us get to know Josh and Tiffany and their children Joah and Grace.
- ☒ - The Ladies' class will meet Thursday night at 7:00 p.m. at Belinda Hartsell's house to study "Aquila and Priscilla."
- ☒ - Postcards are available to invite others to VBS, June 6-9, on the "journeys of Paul."
- ☒ - Please pray for Toni Herd as she has been in the hospital this week and hopes to come home today.
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Ken Sullivan as he recovers from surgery.
- ☒ - Please pray for Mary Ann Roberts' sister, Tamora Cornelius, who has some testing being done on a vocal cord and lung.
- ☒ - Congratulations to Keith Bailey on the birth of his new grandson, Wallace Andrew!
- ☒ - Please pray for the family of Debbi Coleman's cousin in the loss of his daughter, Jennifer Malone, who leaves behind her husband, Mark, and daughter, Alexandra.
- ☒ - Please pray for Makenzie Reynolds' cousin, Sasha, who is undergoing tests for unexplained health issues.

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

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Sin, Repentance, and Judging Others

By Doy Moyer



Thoughts to Ponder

"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent... (Acts 17:30)

Some discussions just seem odd to me. One such oddity goes along these lines (and it seems to happen over and over, especially on social media, so this is not a reference to one particular discussion): Person A: "People who engage in this activity are in sin and need to repent." (What the specific sin is differs from case to case, and it is irrelevant for this point.)

Person B responds: "We shouldn't judge others because we are all sinners who need forgiveness."

By this response, person B sweeps away the point made by person A because we all sin and we don't want to be judgmental of others. Now it is true that we all need forgiveness, and it is doubtful that many will deny this; no one is claiming perfection here. However, that does not negate the fact that we still need to call attention to sin and the need to repent. Recognizing that we are all guilty of sin is not a reason to

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think, "Therefore we should never tell anyone else that they ought to repent."

Consider the case of Isaiah, who, overwhelmed by God's glory, confessed his own sinfulness and the sinfulness of those around him. Upon receiving forgiveness, he was then ready to go preach to stubborn people who wouldn't listen to the message of repentance (Isa. 6). The point is that Isaiah did not refrain from preaching about sin and

(Continued on page 2)

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Sunday
Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM
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(Continued from page 1)

repentance based upon the fact that he himself needed forgiveness.

How do we know we are all sinners who need to repent unless someone first tells us about sin and God's will for repentance (**2 Pet. 3:9; Acts 17:30-31**)? Shall we just assume everyone knows this before they are told? If we are all sinners who need to repent, then someone told us at some point, and this assumes an understanding of sin and repentance. Shall we not give others this same message at the risk of sounding too judgmental? Shall our fear of sounding judgmental overcome our need to love others enough to present God's message to them? Are we showing real love if we ignore the sin, fail to point people toward repentance, and just embrace their situation no matter what? Is that the godly thing to do? Jesus didn't die in order to silence the message of repentance. His death provides the hope that is attached to the message, and we need to be preaching it with clarity.

The gospel is about grace and forgiveness, but knowing about that grace only works when we first understand why we need grace and forgiveness. If we don't know about the sin, we won't know about our need to repent. If we don't know of our need to repent, we won't know we need grace and mercy. Again, how can someone say, "We shouldn't judge" based on the fact that we are all sinners, unless that person first knows the problem of sin? If not careful, the "we shouldn't judge" mantra can become a mask that veils the fullness of the gospel.

We are not being self-righteously judgmental by expressing what God has said about sin and repentance; we are being

true to His word. Our message is not, "You need to repent and I never have to." We are all indeed in the same boat. We can show the problem of sin while recognizing our own guilt and need for God. We can do this with humility and grace. We can speak the truth in love (**Eph. 4:15**). Calling out sin and the need to repent is not automatically unloving and self-righteous, and we must not assume that one who calls attention to sin is being some kind of prudish, holier-than-thou hypocrite. (We could point out that Person B is, in fact, judging person A for the perceived sin of being judgmental, with the implication that he ought to repent and quit being judgmental. Is that ironically unloving and judgmental?)

Paul knew of his own sins, but that didn't stop him from rebuking Peter (**Gal. 2**). Peter surely was aware of his own weaknesses, but that didn't stop him from rebuking Simon (**Acts 8**). Both Paul and Peter repented of sins, but they still told others what was necessary.

Show love. Show grace. Show kindness. But don't, for a moment, think that these are in contradiction to calling out sin for what it is and pointing people to God's message of repentance. Yet while doing this, let's never stop short of sharing the answer to the problem — the blood of Jesus through which we find grace and forgiveness. Repentance is not an end in itself; salvation is the goal. Our purpose in calling out sin and showing the need to repent is not to condemn, but to point the way to that relationship with Christ in which there is "no condemnation" (**Rom. 8:1-2**).

"Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord..." (**Acts 3:19**).



The Lord's People -- The Church

By Lowell Blasingame

Vine defines "ekklesia" "from ek, out of and klesis, a calling (kaleo, to call)," (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, Vol. 1, pg. 83). This is the word which is commonly rendered "church" in our English versions of the New Testament where it occurs 115 times. Once it is used of Israel (**Ac. 7:38**), which had been "called out" of Egypt and, at the time, was in the wilderness making her way to the land which had been promised to her as an inheritance. Three times the word is translated "assembly," once of the group called out by Demetrius, the silversmith (**Ac. 19:32**) and twice of an assembly convened by the town clerk (**Ac. 19:39, 41**). This leaves 111 times that it occurs either in its singular or plural form of the Lord's people and we should be impressed by the Holy Spirit's giving us so much information about the Lord's "ekklesia."

While the word identifies us as His called out, this word doesn't tell us how or by what we are called. People have strange ideas about how the Lord calls people. Some recite strange or unusual experiences which they have had which they interpret to mean is a call from the Lord. Usually, this will be an emotional sensation which they haven't experienced before. Or it may be something strange which they hear or see and they interpret this to be a call from the Lord. Since the Lord isn't a respecter of persons (**Ac. 11:34-35**) and isn't willing that any perish (**2 Pet. 3:9**) but wishes that all come to repentance, it would appear that He would call all in the same way.

The Scriptures teach us how the Lord calls us. Paul said, "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (**2 Thess. 2:14**) and "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present life" (**Tit 2:11-12**). So the medium through which God calls is the gospel, which is "the word of His grace" (**Ac. 20:32**) and the gospel is to be taught

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to all nations or every creature (**Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15**). Without exception, each case of conversion related in the book of Acts has persons first being taught.

Ekklesia identifies us as the Lord's "called out" but the word doesn't tell us "out" of what or "into" what we are called. But the Scriptures do. They tell us that sin severs our spiritual relationship with God making us "dead in trespasses and sins" (**Eph. 2:1**) and, by such, we

become "servants of sin" (**Rom. 6:17**) and need to be "delivered from the power of darkness" (**Col. 1:13**). It is by our obedience to the gospel or response to God's call that we are delivered from the power of darkness and "translated into the kingdom of His dear Son" (**Col. 1:13**), or "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (**Rom. 6:18**). The consummating act of obedience to this form of doctrine is obedience to the command to be baptized. In this act, we enter Christ (**Gal. 3:27**), where we become "new creatures" (**2 Cor. 5:17**) and we are buried and raised "to walk in newness of life" (**Rom. 6:3-4**). So, we are called out of an old relationship of alienation from God into one in which our union with Him is restored.

Ekklesia tells us that we are called out but not the reason or why we are called out. But the Scriptures tell us this also. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (**Col. 1:13**) and that "ye should show forth the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (**1 Pet. 2:9**). This ought to motivate one to respond to the call of the gospel and thereafter to live faithfully for the Lord. Think how wonderful it will be to hear Him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (**Matt. 25:34**). This will come only to those who respond to the call of the gospel.

