

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“When We Forget God...” #3

By Brian Meade

People who are important to us are people we should never forget; especially if they have done something great in our behalf. God was so good to Israel at many times and in so many ways— yet God said, “*Can a virgin forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number.*” (Jeremiah 2:32) Let’s look at some areas that we definitely must not forget God in our lives today.

III. In Times of Financial Prosperity.

God said these words to the nation of Israel before they were to enter the promised land—“*For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; ⁸ a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; ⁹ a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰ When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.*” (Deuteronomy 8:6-10) Israel had been wandering around in the wilderness for forty years. They had been just surviving by God’s provision and care, but now they were to inherit great prosperity that the land of promise would provide. They would go from want—to plenty by entering the land of Canaan. And it is precisely why God wanted the people to remember that all these great and wonderful blessings came from Him. They were about to go from the harsh conditions of the wilderness to the comfort and prosperity of the promised land of Canaan. While the wilderness caused them to see the need for God’s provision in their survival— sudden prosperity can have the opposite effect. God knew that along with prosperity comes the temptation to forget Him.

That is why Moses warned them in Deuteronomy 8:11-14, “*Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, ¹² lest—when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; ¹³ and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; ¹⁴ when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt.*”

Sadly, Israel would later forget the God who loved and provided so much to His people. They did exactly as God had warned them not to do, in Deuteronomy 8:17, “*Otherwise, you may say in your heart, ‘My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.’*”

When we come to the New Testament teaching on prosperity, Jesus took the occasion of one brother asking Jesus to make his brother divide his family inheritance with him to teach on the dangers of covetousness and prosperity. (Luke 12:13-15)

“*Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. ¹⁷ And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ ¹⁸ So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.’” ²⁰ But God said to*

him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'
21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:16-21)

In this familiar parable often called *the rich farmer* or *the rich fool*, Jesus is warning us about the dangers of becoming self-sufficient in our wealth & prosperity. The rich man in this parable was only thinking of himself and how he could live in comfort. Six times he uses the word "I" in reference to his own desires and plans, without even thinking of others— such as the poor or any duty toward God. With riches, come the great responsibility to remember our commitment to spiritual duties to God (I Timothy 6:17-19). Our life here on the earth, is more than just our physical needs of the moment (Ecclesiastes 12:13; Matthew 6:25). As Jesus said before beginning the parable, "*Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.*" (Luke 12:15)

There are unseen dangers of prosperity that many do not consider when they are blessed with material wealth or riches. When someone suddenly inherits the family fortune or wins the lottery— it can change their life in ways that are not for the better, but for the worst. They will often change into people who are radically different than the person they were before the money came into their lives. They may even become selfish, arrogant, proud, self-centered, self-sufficient, and greedy people!

And many fall into the dangers that Paul outlines for us in 1 Timothy 6:9-10, "*But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.*"

How many lottery winners have had their lives ruined by the windfall of prosperity, and then tragedy to follow? Not to mention all the friends, neighbors, and family members who call just to ask for something for themselves. Most people in those circumstances have wished they had never won the money in the first place! The child of God will never have to worry about that happening, as we know gambling is sinful and fruitless to begin with.

Truly the Bible teaches, "*Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and turmoil with it.*" (Proverbs 15:16)

**GOSPEL
MEETING**

**Kevin Kay
April 22nd–27th
7:00 PM Nightly**

“Let The Church Be The Church”

By George W. Dehoff

The business of the church is to preach the gospel of Christ. It exists for this purpose. Without the gospel men are lost. The gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). There is nothing else that the church does that is secondary to preaching the gospel. Moreover, there is nothing else done by the church but that some other organization is doing the same thing— and sometimes doing it better! If the church is not going to conduct a militant campaign of preaching the gospel, it had as well go out of existence, and that is what it will do unless it preaches the gospel.

It is NOT the business of the church to operate colleges and universities, soup kitchens, relief stations, summer camps, youth centers, entertainment bureaus, ball teams, and such like! The church MUST preach the gospel and "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." If the church goes into the entertainment business in an attempt to reach people (reach them with what?), men and women of the world will say, "That is real Christianity." If the church opens a soup kitchen, worldly people (who believe that men are saved out of the church as well as in it and who do not know what it's all about anyway) will say, "That is real Christianity."

But if the church preaches the gospel, men of the world will be displeased— that is the purpose of gospel preaching: to cause them to become displeased with their condition and to become Christians.

Every inch of the ground which we now occupy has been gained by gospel preaching, by a campaign of teaching **FACTS TO BE BELIEVED, COMMANDS TO BE OBEYED, AND PROMISES TO BE RECEIVED!**

Every Christian should teach, preach, dispute, refute, rebuke, exhort, and whatever is necessary to get men to see the **TRUTH and ERROR!** This is the work of the church.

(July/August 2002 issue of For A Better Understanding)

News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Betty Hurst, Steve Switcher, Gail Armstrong, Nicky Curtis, Janis Johnson, Elmo Wilson, Martha Little, Martha Norvell (in Ripley Rehab), Charlene Newborn, Delain Doles, Penny Carmichael, Daniel and Barbara Holloway, Brandi Meade's Uncle Greg Fields.

Local Meetings:

Our Gospel Meeting is coming up **April 22-27**, with Kevin Kay from East Columbus. 7:00 PM Nightly.

A **Singing** will be held at the Middleton, Tn. Community Center on **May 12th** at 2:00 PM. Jim Deason will be leading the service. For additional info, please contact Dwain Barnes.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Chris Callahan
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon: "The Misunderstood Christ"

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service: Fred Johnson
The Book of Luke (Mike Willis)
Page 76, Question #17

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Paul Busby
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Fred Johnson
Psalm 89:5-8
Song Leader: Dan Cottrell
Lord's Table: Paul Johnson
Assisting: Dan Cottrell & Lee Busby
Singing Service: Men leading Singing praises to God
Invitation: Jerry Kennemur
Closing Prayer: Brian Meade

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

March 28th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Brian Meade
1 & 2 Samuel (Mike Willis)
Page 46, Question #6
Invitation: Chris Callahan
Song Leader: Russell Briggs
Closing Prayer: Paul Busby