

Information and Reminders—

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Samuel Southall, and others with ongoing health battles or other trials, and our brethren who are travelling.

The men meet on the first Sunday of the month to discuss our work and duties. There is a sign-up sheet at the back for items needing their attention. The next meeting will be May 5 at 8:45AM.

We need your help—

Are you willing to help keep various Scriptures on our signboard, out by the road, for one month? Sign-up!

Are you willing to help prepare the Lord's supper for one month? Sign-up!

- Sign-up sheets are posted on the bulletin board at the back.

Our articles appear in *Arkansas Weekly* every other week. Many past and current articles are available at our website.

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

April 28, 2013

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WHERE WE PITCH OUR TENTS

Andy Diestelkamp

Is life stressful for you? Do you have time for a crisis this week? Most of us cannot imagine what it would be like to add to our already overly busy lives the pressure of taking a stand for what is right and then the stress of becoming the objects of our community's scorn. (Although that might free up some time for us.) Lot was a righteous man who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked among whom he dwelt. "That righteous man... tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds" (2 Pet. 2:7,8). Do you have time for this kind of torment?

As I attempted to collect and arrange my thoughts for this article (while seated comfortably at my dining room table with a cup of hot tea at my right hand, the wife of my youth industriously making supper preparations, and my new laptop responding so effortlessly to the patter of my keystrokes), I vacantly stared out the window and tried to just think. My meditation was interrupted by a van parking across the street. The upper-teen passenger exited the van, and—as she went up the walk to the house—she lowered her sweat pants to briefly expose her buttocks, turned to look back with a playful smile at the driver of the van, and once more repeated her cheeky revelation.

I considered this to be a providential nudge to pursue the course I was on with Lot and the culture of Sodom and Gomorrah. Do not hastily assume that this prudish preacher's kid has gotten his undies in such a wad that he is ready to rain down fire and brimstone on the neighbor for a little indecent exposure. Of course not! She probably doesn't know any better. She is a product of a culture that has been gradually losing its sense of shame about nakedness for at least a century now. Instead of blushing, she giggles.

It is interesting that Peter uses the adjective *righteous* three times in reference to Lot. It is even more interesting that—from the divine perspective—the torment experienced by Lot’s soul as he lived in the Sodomite culture was, in part, self-inflicted. Oh, certainly, it was the filthy conduct of the wicked among whom he lived that oppressed him; but *he* chose to move there, and—more significantly—to *stay* there and “day by day see their lawless deeds.” I understand that Peter’s immediate point in using the example of Lot is to demonstrate that God knows how to deliver the *godly* out of temptation (vs. 9). The grace of God is abundantly manifested in the story of Lot. However, if we think this means we are at liberty to carelessly graze in the well-watered “greener grass” on the other side of the spiritual fence (cf. Gen. 13:10), give our children into the hands of a godless culture (Gen. 19:8,12), and expect God to swoop in with some angels to save us from our carnal short-sightedness, then not only have we failed to learn from Lot, we haven’t read Peter far enough.

In times past God spoke to men in a variety of ways (Heb. 1:1). Some even entertained angels (Gen. 19:1ff; Heb. 13:2). But God has finally spoken through His Son (1:2) Who is so much better than the angels (vs. 4)! In God’s most glorious demonstration of grace to mankind, He didn’t send angels. He *personally* came in the flesh to deliver us from our sins. “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” (2:3).

In the larger context of Peter’s letter is a warning to those who had already *escaped* the pollutions of the world through Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 2:20). It is a warning about false teachers (vs. 1) who had forsaken the right way and gone astray (vs. 15). Such teachers speak great swelling words of emptiness and allure through the lusts of the flesh and thereby deceive even those who have already escaped (vs. 18). As Jesus succinctly warned in a similar context, “Remember Lot’s wife” (Lk. 17:32). *There* was a woman who had *escaped* but whose affections for a perishing world were stronger than her appreciation for the manifest grace of God.

How about us? Will *we* heed this divine warning in our own generation? Our nation does not appear to be listening. There is a host of teachers wearing the name of Christ who have taken up the mantle of Balaam (2 Pet. 2:15; Rev. 2:14). They are seducing many churches into feel-good harlotry. Many are more invested in the world than they are willing to admit. Most may fancy themselves too sophisticated to “moon” somebody, but many are still shamelessly uncovering their nakedness in socially acceptable ways. This is not leading but following. Are we blushing (cf. Jer. 6:15) or giggling?

For decades our culture has been redefining love to suit its lusts. Who can be surprised that it is also redefining marriage for the same reasons? Where will it stop? Without moral leadership, it won’t stop until the wrath of God is poured out. At least Lot used his position “sitting in the gate” of the city (Gen. 19:1) to hospitably protect his guests and finally had the courage to confront those who would molest them saying, “Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly” (vs. 7). Will we speak up? The pressure to conform is only going to increase, and, despite all the public talk of tolerance, the preaching of the Word is already “out of season” and soon will not be tolerated any more than were Lot’s feeble efforts (2 Tim. 4:2-4). “*This one came in to sojourn, and he keeps acting as a judge*” (Gen. 19:9). We, too, are all sojourners, right? In what direction is your tent pitched? Could you pull up stakes and not look back? Do you have time for that?

{THINK on These Things April-May-June, 2013 • Volume 44, Number 2}

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

Derek Chambers

“*For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace*” (Romans 8:6).

You are what you eat, we’ve often heard. Although it may not be quite that simple, physically speaking there is truth to this. Our bodies are composed in a sense of what we put in them and so it’s a good idea to put healthy things into our bodies. The same is true for our souls. In other words, you are what you think. If you, for example, think a lot about fleshly desires, that’s going to have an impact on your feelings, behavior, and what you may be tempted to do. If you think a lot about wrongs committed against you, you’re likely to develop a vengeful attitude. If you think a lot about how others have it better than you, you’re likely to develop an attitude of envy and resentment. Who we are all begins with how we think, and thus it is critical that we practice the greatest self-control within our own minds. It’s critical we learn to think on good things and shut out bad thoughts. It’s so critical that God’s word says it’s a matter of life and death.

www.knollwoodchurch.org/yr2013/b09_what_you_eat.html