

Those to Serve

(B) Judd Wall
(FV) Jorge Garza
(O) Doug Pruett
(A) Keith Stifflemire
1st prayer Mike Mallett
2nd prayer Calvin Burks
Announcements: Jack Wall
Singing: Kevin Grant

December 6th

Mission Sunday

December 7th

Pearl Harbor Day

December 21st

Winter Begins

December 25th

Christmas

December 31st

New Years Eve

Happy Birthday

Linda Houts Nov 28th

Lynette Vann Dec 14th

Virginia Lovell Dec 19th

Kevin Grant Dec 24th

Letha Sheldon Dec 25th

Will Vann Dec 26th

Prayer List:

David Jones
Virginia Lovell
Janell Houts Hall
Odell Mallett
Dora Martinez
Mona Lancaster
Willis Hughes
Letha Sheldon
Ruby Jones
Pray for our Nation
Our Troops
Law Enforcement
Rescue Personnel

Generous Giving

The story is told of a farmer who was known for his generous giving, and whose friends could not understand how he could give so much and yet remain so prosperous.

One day a friend said: "We can't understand it. You give far more than any of the rest of us, and yet you always seem to have more to give."

"That's easy to explain," the farmer said. "I keep shoveling into God's bin, and God keeps shoveling back into mine, and God has the bigger shovel."

- Source Unknown

Edifier

Evant church of Christ

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Evant, TX 76525

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Attending church services regularly is like making a path through the forest: the more often you use it, the less obstruction you find in the way."

Sunday Worship:

9:30 am Bible Study

10:20 am Worship

12:30 pm Afternoon

Wednesday Night

6:00 pm

Will Vann, Preacher

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My Deep Concern for all the Churches

Paul presented evidence to prove the authenticity of his apostleship (2 Corinthians 10-12). Among the evidence were all the signs, wonders, and mighty deeds he was able to perform (2 Corinthians 12:12). Paul also presented evidence to prove the sincerity and conviction of his faith and apostleship. Included in that is a list of those ordeals and difficulties he was willing to suffer. His endurance of such torments proved the true conviction of his heart, and supported his claim to be a genuine apostle of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 11). An interesting statement regarding the churches is found in Paul's list of that which he suffered. Paul said, "besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches" (2 Corinthians 11:28). This concern for all the churches is listed among that which Paul suffered.

Paul's deep concern for all the churches weighed heavily upon him. Much of this concern was the result of Paul having to fight against Satan's many attacks against the early church. In his letter to the church at Rome, Paul warned the brethren to "note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them" (Romans 16:17). The continued attacks against the church through false teachers was no doubt a part of that which caused Paul's deep concern for all the churches.

In his two letters to the church at Corinth one can see numerous ways in which Satan was able to sow discord among brethren. They fought over elevating certain men above others, they fought over law suits, they fought over matters of liberty (expediency), and they fought over miraculous gifts. This constant struggle with discord and immorality (1 Corinthians 5) in the church at Corinth must have been included among the lists of issues regarding the churches that caused Paul to suffer with deep concern.

The book of Galatians was written to churches in the region of Galatia that had been strongly influenced by false teachers. Paul expressed his disappointment at their quick departure from the truth (Galatians 1). His fight against the binding of religious error upon Galatians Christians even brought him into a position of being at odds with Peter and Barnabas (Galatians 2). Regarding Peter, Paul said, "I withstood him to the face" (Galatians 2:11). Even well-known, typically sound and strong leaders in the church like Peter caused a problem for Paul. Paul's letter to the Galatians spoke of how people who had once been his friends had been turned against him by false teachers. The false teachers were "zealously courting" these brethren so that Paul even feared that those who had once loved him now consider him to be an enemy (Galatians 4).

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My Deep Concern for all the Churches

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Paul was constantly working to help congregations maintain their unity despite attacks from false teachers, the binding of opinions, and the cultural/racial battle between Jews and Gentiles in the church. In Ephesians Paul encourages unity among Jews and Gentiles in the church. In Philippians Paul encourages unity in the church through humility (Philippians 2:1-11) and even mentions two women who needed help getting along (Philippians 4:2-3). Paul worried the church at Colosse would be deceived with persuasive words (Colossians 2:4). Paul warned Timothy of those who desire to be teachers but really don't understand what they want to teach (1 Timothy 1:7). He even went so far as to name two individuals who had made shipwreck of the faith (1 Timothy 1:19-20). In the first letter to Timothy the inspired apostle recorded the express warning of the Holy Spirit "that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, have their own conscience seared with a hot iron..." (1 Timothy 4:1-2). Paul gave strong warning to Timothy of these kinds of men in the second letter as well (2 Timothy 3:1-13). Such men would cause the faithful to be persecuted, and would grow worse and worse, but Paul told Timothy throughout all of this he must continue in that which he had learned, which was the Holy Scripture (2 Timothy 3:12-17).

The early church was not at peace from outside persecution for long. Neither was the early church at peace within from false teachers and arrogant trouble makers for long. Surely these are the problems that caused Paul to list his deep concern for all the churches among those things which we suffered for his faith, his apostleship, and his Lord (2 Corinthians 11:28).

Brethren, the church is no different today. Churches of Christ are constantly forced into times of turmoil and trouble by arrogant men. Numerous false doctrines are used by Satan to attack congregations. Entire methods and manners of thinking have been distorted by the devil to cause unrest, distrust, and a lack of unity among churches. This is the way it has always been, and this is the way it always will be. Our responsibility in all of this is to "Hold fast to the pattern of sound words..." (2 Timothy 1:13). We must stay with the word even in such times when men do not endure sound doctrine, but would rather have teachers tell them the lies they want to hear (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

By Kevin V. Rutherford