

THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

www.floralheightschurchofchrist.org

Floral Heights
Church of Christ
1814 Buchanan
Wichita Falls, Texas
76309
(940) 322 - 1650

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Our Elders:

Mike Chancellor
(322 – 6374)

Tom Witherspoon
(923-6479)

Deacons:

Joe Cronin

Jim Hall

David Witherspoon

Preacher:

John C. Robertson

A soft answer turns away wrath

Proverbs 15:1

by Jeff Smith

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The actor in the old western would kick back his chair, leap to his feet and growl, “Them’s fightin’ words.”

What followed usually involved fisticuffs, firearms and deliciously violent choreography. Someone ended up with a bloody nose or worse. John Wayne always survived to fight another day. Which he always did.

While the Old West is gone, its ways persist today, especially in the streets and playgrounds where young people and the young, not at heart, but in mind, congregate and settle their disputes. Not surprisingly, their vocabularies are filled with fighting words. Insults, jabs and epithets are slung about and the usual response is to ratchet up the vitriol until it boils over and a fight is joined.

While the children of God are rarely given to such violence, the occasional disagreement sometimes evolves into name-calling and ugliness (see Matthew 5:21-26). Heated words, poorly chosen at that, exaggerate the conflict until there seems to be no turning back.

What if human beings did not have to respond to unkindness like cornered animals, though?

God’s wisdom suggests they can do better: “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1).

Think about it: Someone has approached you in an obvious snit and what you really want is for him to calm down and think

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors:

We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please do come back at your every opportunity!

Please keep the following members in your prayers:

Cindy Gray was to have her surgery on her shoulder in Fort Worth this past Friday. At the time of this writing it is unknown how it went. Let us all help the Grays in any way they need.

Women's Bible Study:

The women's Bible study concluded its final study this past Friday. The ladies are contemplating another class in the near future. So far the consensus is that they study the "bad girls" in the Bible so that they may learn from their mistakes.

Website Update:

We now have the class notes for Job and Judges on the church web site.

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home).

rationally. Is yelling back at him likely to accomplish that aim or make it impossible?

Here comes the justifiably angry spouse or parent, the demanding boss, the officious policeman. To placate, mollify and pacify is my goal – in the hopes of smoothing out the relationship, keeping the job or avoiding a ride to the pokey. Instead of dialing up the rejoinder, how about a soft answer?

Peter writes, "Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing" (First Peter 3:8-9).

Paul adds, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse" (Romans 12:14). Understand that when we return angry words to someone, it is usually just some elemental expression of vengeance, a prerogative that belongs exclusively to God (Romans 12:19). Losing your cool is more likely to exacerbate the conflict than resolve it. "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice" and "as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Ephesians 4:31, Romans 12:18).

A soft answer just might turn away someone's wrath.

*"Ah Lord God! Behold, thou
hast made the heavens and the
earth by thy great power and by
thine outstretched arm; there is
nothing too hard for thee"*

Jeremiah 32:17

Things that Save

The Bible reveals man's need to be saved (Matt. 24:13; Acts 4:12). People have a general anxiety over the issue of their salvation (Lk. 13:23; Acts 16:30). Some get so excited about the subject that they leave rational thinking and turn to their inward mind to invent shortcuts to be saved. That which governs many methods of madness is personal comfort and peace of mind. This lesson shall examine the subject of man's salvation. We shall approach the subject with the understanding that God's divine revelation is His own personal instruction book given to us that we might be saved from the consequence of our sins (I Cor. 15:1-2).

I. Things God Provides in Man's Salvation:

- A. The mercy of God (Titus 3:5)
- B. The grace of God (Eph. 2:5-8)
- C. The blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9; Col. 1:19-20)
- D. Gospel message (I Cor. 15:1-2)

II. Things Man Does to Receive Salvation:

- A. **Faith** (Acts 16:31) which is obtained by **hearing** the gospel message (Rom. 10:17).
- B. **Confession** (Rom. 10:9)
- C. **Repentance** (Luke 13:1-5)
- D. **Baptism** (I Pet. 3:19-21)
- E. **Faithful till death** (Rev. 2:10).
- F. Hope (Rom. 8:24)
- G. Calling on the name of the Lord (Rom. 10:13)

III. Drawing Erroneous Conclusions:

- A. Taking faith, confession, repentance, or baptism out of context.
- B. Beware: Rom. 16:17-18

IV. Holy Spirit Connects the Following Facts Together:

- A. Man's justification and faith with God's grace and Christ blood (Rom. 3:23-26).
- B. God's grace is connected with man's obedience, righteousness, sanctification, and eternal life (Rom. 6:15-23).

Conclusion:

Taking Bible instructions out of context will certainly ruin man's eternal existence. What would a pecan pie taste like if we decided to leave the pecans out of the recipe? What would Monopoly be if we decided to leave out the money? What would a Lego project look like if you left out part of the instructions? Ever get involved in a project that has instructions and come toward the end only to find that pieces do not fit because you had skipped a step? God has given His instruction manual, the Bible, and man must follow this complete guide if we want to achieve the end results; our salvation!