

England and sailed to Holland (The Netherlands) to escape religious persecution. There, they enjoyed more religious tolerance, but they eventually became disenchanted with the Dutch way of life, thinking it ungodly. Seeking a better life, the Separatists negotiated with a London stock company to finance a pilgrimage to America. Most of those making the trip aboard the Mayflower were non-Separatists, but were hired to protect the company's interests. Only about one-third of the original colonists were Separatists.

The Pilgrims set ground at Plymouth Rock on December 11, 1620. Their first winter was devastating. At the beginning of the following fall, they had lost 46 of the original 102 who sailed on the *Mayflower*. But the harvest of 1621 was a bountiful one. And the remaining colonists decided to celebrate with a feast -- including 91 Indians who had helped the Pilgrims survive their first year. It is believed that the Pilgrims would not have made it through the year without the help of the natives. The feast was more of a traditional English harvest festival than a true "thanksgiving" observance. It lasted three days. Governor William Bradford sent "four men fowling" after wild ducks and geese. It is not certain that wild turkey was part of their feast. However, it is certain that they had venison. The term turkey" was used by the Pilgrims to mean any sort of wild fowl.

Another modern staple at almost every Thanksgiving table is pumpkin pie. But it is unlikely that the first feast included that treat. The supply of flour had been long diminished, so there was no bread or pastries of any kind. However, they did eat boiled pumpkin, and they produced a type of fried bread from their corn crop. There was also no milk, cider, potatoes, or butter. There was no domestic cattle for dairy products, and the newly-discovered potato was still considered by many Europeans to be poisonous. But the feast did include fish, berries, watercress, lobster, dried fruit, clams, venison, and plums. This "thanksgiving" feast was not repeated the following year. But in 1623, during severe drought, the pilgrims gathered in a prayer service, praying for rain. When a long, steady rain followed the very next day, Governor Bradford proclaimed another day of Thanksgiving, again inviting their Indian friends. It wasn't until June of 1676 that another Day of Thanksgiving was proclaimed. On June 20, 1676, the governing council of Charlestown, Massachusetts, held a meeting to determine how best to express thanks for the good fortune that had seen their community securely established. By unanimous vote they instructed Edward Rawson, the clerk, to proclaim June 29 as a day of thanksgiving.

October of 1777 marked the first time that all 13 colonies joined in a thanksgiving celebration. It also commemorated the patriotic victory over the British at Saratoga. But it was a one-time affair. George Washington proclaimed a National Day of Thanksgiving in 1789, although some were opposed to it. There was discord among the colonies, many feeling the hardships of a few Pilgrims did not warrant a national holiday. And later, President Thomas Jefferson scoffed at the idea of having a day of thanksgiving. It was Sarah Josepha Hale, a magazine editor, whose efforts eventually led to what we recognize as Thanksgiving. Hale wrote many editorials championing her cause in her *Boston Ladies' Magazine*, and later, in *Godey's Lady's Book*. Finally, after a 40-year campaign of writing editorials and letters to governors and presidents, Hale's obsession became a reality when, in 1863, President Lincoln proclaimed the *last* Thursday in November as a national day of Thanksgiving. And that is why we celebrate the Thanksgiving Holiday today. I personally feel we should give thanks to God everyday, and do.

Love in Christ Mary.

Pastor's Corner

Warning against the Modern Pharisees

The 23rd chapter of Matthew presents us with the Lord's view of religious dogma. This is just as applicable today as it was during Jesus' time. A modern day Pharisee can still make you twice as much the child of hell as he or she is. If you read this chapter it is impossible not to grasp the feelings of Jesus. Jesus gives us an outline of what to look out for in a church or "religious" organization.

The first thing Jesus points out is their need to be noticed and honored as someone special. He says **"They do all their deeds to be seen by men", "They love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues."** If this sounds like the man of God in your life I would suggest you look much deeper. We are to receive our honor from the Holy God and Jesus, not man! Jesus goes one step further and says that no man is to be called "Rabbi", master, or father on earth. Jesus did not want any man who claimed to be His, being elevated. This Sunday a very well known head of a worldwide ministry was being interviewed by mainstream television. He was asked several questions about the coming years under the Bush administration. He made comments like, "he will do what we want or we won't vote for them again," "My followers will have what they want!" This "man of God" stated that a certain governmental official hated God's people and God. The interviewer simply asked if that was harsh considering God's love. This man had the gall to say "Who are you to tell me what I should do as a Christian or not!" Not a great way to lead someone to the love of Christ. Even the worldly interviewer had more compassion than this "man of God". I can tell you I am not one of this "ego maniac's" followers I am a follower of Jesus Christ the Lord and Savior of this world. What ever happened to Jesus' words **"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."**

Lets go on, Jesus tells us in verses 13 through 15 that these people will search the world to make proselytes and then make them **"twice as much the child of hell as yourselves"** In verse 13 Jesus goes so far as to say these leaders keep the people from getting into heaven. This is a very scary thought my friends. You should always

test what any preacher or man of God says by the word of God. If it will not stand the test of God's word it is not true. In verses 16 through 24 Jesus then gives examples of these false teacher's doctrines. Jesus calls these false teachers **"blind guides"**. Then in verses 16-22 Jesus lists several examples of their doctrinal errors. 1) They say swear by the gold of the temple and you are bound, but swear by the temple itself you are not. Jesus points out which is greater, the temple. 2) They say swear by the gift on the altar and you're bound, but swear by the altar and you are not. Jesus again points out that the altar is greater. Do you get Jesus' point here? These doctrinal Pharisees are more focused on the small things, but neglect the larger picture. If the man of God in your life is more focused on the keeping all the small things or elevates something above all others I would bet he is being a Pharisee. We must get the big picture. The other day I got a challenge from one Christian. Challenging me to find one place in the Bible where it is recorded that the disciples baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. He is a "Jesus only" baptizer. I don't have to search the whole Bible. Jesus said it in Matthew 28:19 and 20 **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: "** Jesus said it, therefore it is good enough for me. I have more important things to do for the Lord than splitting hairs. You will never convince me that our Lord and Savior is going to send someone to hell because they were baptized in the name of Jesus only or in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. That my friend is one of the purest examples of Pharisaism! We need to be about the weightier matters of the harvest and bring souls to Jesus. Jesus goes on in verses 23 and 24 to give another example of focusing on one thing and ignoring the larger view. Here he tells the Pharisees that they tithe but have neglected the weightier matters of the law , justice and faith. He says they strain out the gnat but swallow the camel. How many times do we get so wrapped up in some gnat sized piece of doctrine that we cannot see the camel stuck in our throat? I have seen denominations split because of a small disagreement on doctrine that became a "whole new" idea and eventually a new religious group based on the doctrine. Is that what Jesus wanted"? NO!

Finally Jesus tells us in verses 25 and 26 that the Pharisees will always appear on the outside as clean and pure. But when you look closer and get into their hearts you will find filth and rot. From my

personal experience you will find arrogance. One of the true tests of a Pharisee is to question their doctrine or authority. If they are a Pharisee, they will attack you, not talk to you. You are most likely to hear “who do you think you are? You are not even worthy to unlace the shoes of this great person, or I have years of Bible schooling and knowledge how can you even think to question me!” You will find just as Jesus did these modern day Pharisees are not open to correction. Verse 28 Jesus says “**Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.**” My friends the best way to see the truth about the man of God in your life is to examine his teachings in light of the word of God. The Bible tells us by their fruits you shall know them. Examine their fruits and see if they are in the will of God. If the most important thing in their lives is not the harvest, if the most important thing in their lives is not bringing one more person to Jesus, if their doctrine and denomination is more important to them than the word of God, then RUN! You are being fed by a Pharisee and he or she will make you twice the son of hell as they are.

Love in Jesus

Pastor Jay



From the Directors Chair

The Duty of Man

I was doing some research on the duty of man. This word duty is “to owe” or “what is due”. Due(ty).

The conclusion to the book of Ecclesiastes is found in Ch. 12:13, 14 and reads like this: Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

Jesus was asked which is the great commandment in the law and he said, “thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with

all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” (Mat 22:37-40)

Nothing is hidden from God. Jesus said that what was said in secret shall be shouted from the housetops. God knows us better than we know ourselves. There are no secrets with God. Amen! Hebrews 4:12 declares that God’s word discerns the thoughts and intents of our hearts. God’s word knows whether we fear God or fear man. He knows whether we are doing the commandments of God or substituting the commandments of men. What we do for God in secret shall be rewarded openly. And every work that is not of God shall be exposed and judged and be declared to be so.

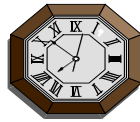
God knows that we are but dust. We ought to remember this as well, and not strive with God, with the Holy Spirit. Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth. (Ecc 12:1) Are you striving with God today? Is that flow of the Spirit overflowing in you today. You know that we can quench or stop that flow. Is joy still overflowing in you that Jesus washed your sins away. When we strive with God or harbor some besetting sin, when we are not walking in the fear of the Lord or love for God and man that joy will turn to grief, worry, and anxiety. Jesus said that if a man sins against you, rebuke him and if he repents forgive him; and if he sins against you seven times in a day, that you should forgive him seven times. God is waiting for us to return to the cross where Jesus blood washes sin stains. When we repent, allowing the light of God’s word to reveal sin, pray Jesus for that cleansing from all unrighteousness, the joy that was ours when we first believed returns because He has given us hope through Jesus Christ our Savior. This is the only payment for sin. We can do nothing to earn salvation; God will never be in a place where He owes us anything. We are only unprofitable servants and have only done that which was our duty to do, as Jesus taught in Luke 17:7-10. I read one commentary that said that the word ‘unprofitable’ meant nothing owed. God does not want to give us what we deserve, which is death and eternal separation from Him and to be cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. He wants for us to receive the free gift of eternal life through faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ the sinless Son of God, who was raised up on the third day. And because He was raised, we who believe upon Him shall be raised also.

To fear God, to love Him and our fellow man is only our duty. It's what we owe!

The bible that is falling apart at the seams probably belongs to a person who is not!

God Bless, Bro Scott

This Months Bible Moment



With Pastor Jay

The example of the Fig tree

No I have not gone off the deep end I am not going to talk about the garden of Eden. I find that in God's word there are so many deep truths that sometimes my mind cannot fully comprehend them without prayer and fasting. I am concluding a fast and I was just doing my usual of reading the Gospels to grow closer to Jesus. When I came across the story of the fig tree. Matthew 21:18-19 (KJV) ¹⁸Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. ¹⁹And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, **Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever.** And presently the fig tree withered away. ²⁰And when the disciples saw *it*, they marveled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

There are so many lessons we can learn from this story. This tree was growing and alive, it had beautiful green leaves shading the roadway. It was obviously old enough for Jesus to have expected to find fruit on it. But he did not. To everyone's eyes the tree seemed to be a good tree serving a purpose. But to Jesus' eyes it was a tree that was not fulfilling it's purpose, to bear fruit. This is the most important lesson, what happens to us when we do not bear fruit. We as Christians have two choices. Bear fruit for the Kingdom of God or do as Paul said in Romans bear the fruit of death. This fig tree was not bearing fruit. It was not serving it's God given purpose. Therefore Jesus said **"let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever"**. The disciples noticed that the tree withered away. But in Mark we are told Mark 11:20 (KJV) ²⁰And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. The fig tree had dried up from the roots. As one who loves the outdoors I have spent many, many days wandering God's wilderness. I have never seen a tree dry up from the roots. A tree that dies a natural death in the forest always dries up from the branches that are the furthest from the trunk first. The roots are the last to dry up.

Why do you think it is important to notice how this tree dried up, opposite of nature. What is our foundation? It is Jesus, in 2 Peter 1:1-11 Peter tells us to add faith to our foundation of Jesus and then virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and finally love. Peter then says if these things be in us we will not be unfruitful.

In many of the churches today there are many Christians that have beautiful green leaves. To the world and the unobserving eyes they are good Christians. They appear to be healthy and serving their God given purpose. But when we look closer we see that they have no fruit. Why? because their roots have dried up. They have a religion, not a relationship with Jesus. Oh, yes they are in church every Sunday, but their lives do not reflect Jesus in real life. Jesus said you shall know them by their fruits. That is how the world is to know we follow Jesus. Not by the abundant green leaves and the religious events in our lives but, by how we are to our fellow man. The first thing we should learn from the fig tree is no fruit, no life. Jesus expresses very clearly here how he feels about a non fruit bearing branch. It is cut off and cast in the fire. This fig tree did not bear fruit but it was taking the water and nutrients from the soil. Yet it produced no fruit. Oh, you might say but the tree was providing shade for the path. Yes, but its God given purpose was to provide fruit. This tree is like many of the non fruit bearing green leaf Christians. They use the resources of the body of Christ, they grow pretty green leaves, but no matter how long they are fed with the word of God or by the church, they never bear fruit.

Where are you my friend? Are you a Christian that everyone on first glance sees the beautiful green leaves and it seems you do all the right things. Or are you in the trenches bearing fruit for the Lord. Be warned that there are many, many, many places in the Bible that speaks of the punishment of the Christian that is lukewarm and does not bear the fruit of their God given purpose. The most well known is Rev 3:16 ¹⁶So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Where are you my friend, producing leaves or fruit? Matthew 7:19-20 (NASB) ¹⁹“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰So then, you will know them by their fruits.” Only you my friend and Jesus can answer that question. The time is short the hour is near how is your relationship with Jesus. No, I am not asking how your religion is. I am asking how is your relationship with Jesus, do you love Him more than life itself, do you live to do His will, do you owe everything you are and have to His love? Again only you can answer these questions. But be warned we must get closer and closer to Jesus to survive these troubled times.

In this holiday season know that my heart and thoughts are with you in prayer. May our Lord draw you closer to his heart the coming year. Pastor A. J.

TEACHING OF THE MONTH

ALL THINGS ARE WORKING OUT FOR YOUR GOOD

According to the Bible God's revealed will for us in Romans 8:28, all things are working out together for good. Whether good or bad, **all** things are working out for your good. And ALL THINGS mean all things. Thus, the total sum of all the events and circumstances of your life put together will equal to your good as long as you love the Lord and are called according to His purpose. Your joys and sorrows, your tears and laughter's, your profits and losses, all put together will bring good to your life. Actually, I feel God leads me to say to someone outside there reading this teaching that the flood that the devil has brought into your life has not come to consume you, but this flood is meant to bring with it goodness in your life. At the end of that storm you are going through you will thank God it came. Child of God, I want to encourage you that things no longer happen in your life by chance or accident from the very day you gave your life to the Lord and you became His property. You belong to Him and He has purchased you with a price. Therefore, the devil can no longer take chances in your life. Satan has no more right to trespass. You have been marked for and by the Lord and he says to you, "You are mine" says the Lord. You are no longer an easy target for the devil my brother, my sister. You belong to God who is a God of plan, design, and purpose. He is a God of foreknowledge declaring the end from the very beginning. He knew you would go through what you are experiencing now, and He permitted it to come. He is at the beginning and at the end. He is the Alpha, and the Omega. The Beginning, and the End. Without beginning and without end. Because He is all knowing, whatever has happened to you has come by permission from Him, and it is for a plan and good purpose in your life. He is not mad at you, He has not called us to fail or forsake us. He is not holding a big stick to hurt us! Jeremiah 11:29 [says for I know the good plans that I have for you. Plans of a good future and to give you an expected end.](#) There was a time I was struggling with the will of the Lord in my life when He asked me to hand over the Church that I first planted in one of our towns called Mbale. After I had struggled with this Church for a couple of years bringing it to a Congregation of 400 members. He ministered to me and through that scripture, and I know he was not mad at me, and had a good plan for my life. When I finally obeyed His will and ordained the Pastor and leadership and handed the Church over to this Pastor and the eldership, many of the Pastors in that town and some members in the congregation came and sat me down saying it was not the will of God that I handed the Church to the Pastor I had raised and the leadership. Today I don't regret for having obeyed the Lord, that Church has grown to a membership of 900 people today. I am glad I obeyed, though it wasn't easy for me at the time I was doing it, but I knew there is always pain in doing the will of the Lord. He will not tell us to do what we want, but what He wants because He is the Lord and we are His people. No matter what you are going through today your tomorrow

will be good in Jesus' Name. That is not the end of you, you are simply in a TRANSITION. God is not yet done with you. Therefore, never underestimate what the Power of God is that worketh in your life. And that Power can do anything wondrous at any time in your life. That is one reason why David said in Psalms 34:1 " I will bless the Lord at all times and His praises shall continually be in my mouth". David made a choice and his decision was to BLESS THE LORD AT ALL TIMES! That wasn't an easy decision to make, but he made it anyway. I have discovered that life is all about choices and decisions we make and not chances. There are those of us who will never make a decision, but will only be swept here and there by the storms of life. They do and say what they shouldn't have said or done, but because of the peer pressure around them and the next time they are in regrets. They make wrong permanent decisions over temporary situations. No situation has come to stay. It will pass away, because it came it will pass. Mountains and the hills shall move but His mercies shall not be taken away from us. Therefore, David made a decision to bless the Lord at all times. In good and in bad times. Not moody today because of what he is going through and complaining and happy the next day because things are now ok. Non conformer to the prevailing situation. His joy came from the Lord and not the material wealth etc. It came from above and not beneath. Paul in 1Thes... 5:18 says in all things give thanks to the Lord for this is the will of God in Christ concerning you. The Bible says a merry heart does good like medicine. We can maintain our Joy in the Lord no matter what we are going through. It is simply a choice, it is simply an attitude. In the midst of your situation remain optimistic. Lift your head higher than the floods see the Lord bigger than your mountain , stronger than the storm you are going through. See the hand of the Lord in the midst of the storm coming to promote you. God must sometime use storms to move us on because we are not easily willing to let go of the present and the familiar to the next and the unfamiliar. By nature man resists change. We get so comfortable with where we are, the setting of things where we are, that we sometimes sleep in the storm. Someone once said " men don't want change until the pain of staying the same is stronger than the pain of bringing change". We are supposed to remain optimistic and not pessimistic as Christians. See your challenge as an opportunity to get promoted. These challenges are God's riddle sent to us for interpretation. You remember Samson with the riddle, " out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." The challenge is the young (strong) lion that Samson slew and you know what? The next time he checked on the carcass of the lion there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of his challenge. Your solution is within your circumstance. Your miracle is within your problem and may God help you to see it. Within what has come to eat you lies your meat. You have cried a lot, but within your tears lies your laughter. Your sweetness lies within that strong enemy that has come confronting you. God turns our tears into laughter, and our mourning into dancing. God uses the very situation the enemy sends against us for our good.

Finally, brother Joseph in the Bible said, " what his enemies, his brothers intended for evil by throwing him into the pit, selling him to the Arabs, God turned

it for his good to bring salvation to many people." Joseph knew and saw the hand of the Lord as the power of influence behind all that happened to him. Just a pose and look at the suffering he went through. Yet God used the jealousy of his brothers to take him to where He wanted. Nothing accidental, all planned by God. Finally we see Joseph elevated in Egypt.

How about Saul the son of Kish of Benjamin God used the loss of his father's ass to take him to Samuel the prophet who made him sit on the high table. Look at a shepherd boy who for desperateness of his father's animals having sought the whole bushes around for days finally makes up his mind to go try this prophet perhaps he can help tell them where the asses are. Not knowing that God had an appointment with him and that he was falling right into God's plan for his life and the whole nation Israel. Finally we see him anointed as King of Israel. Paul writes to the Philippians in Chap 1:12 that all the things that happened to him fell out rather to be for the furtherance of the gospel.

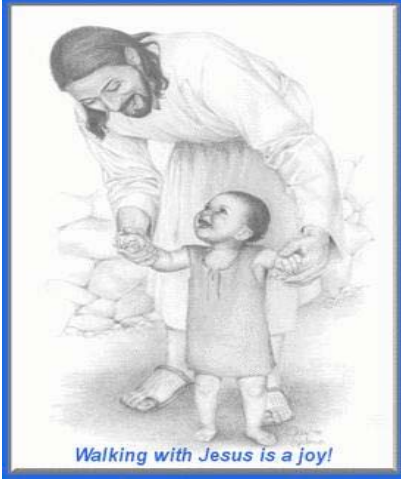
Allow me to wind up here by saying " ALL THINGS ARE WORKING OUT FOR YOUR GOOD."

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A SAVIOR IS BORN

For unto us this day was born, unto the lost and the forlorn,
A Savior which is Christ the Lord, to pay what we could not afford,
And this shall be a sign to you, a baby who is pure and true,
 Wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in sweet repose,
So lovely the Christ child sleeps, God's wondrous promises He keeps,



 The wise men traveled from afar, following the
 eastern star,
The shepherds too arrived to see, the gift of all
 eternity,
Such treasure wrapped in flesh behold, Worth
 much more than gold,
 Glory to God the angels sang, oh how their
 voices rang,
 Peace on earth good will to men, Grace born
 and found in Him,
 Mercy streams from Holy light, shining through
 the darkest night,
A Savior is born a gift given, our one way ticket
 into heaven,

Rejoice! Rejoice! Gladly sing, the manger of Bethlehem,
Held our King.