

Schedule of Meeting Times:

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM
 Study Sunday 10:00 AM
 Worship Sunday Morn 11:00 AM
 Worship Sunday Eve 5:00 PM
Singing every 2nd Sunday evening
 Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

Preacher / bulletin editor:

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"...He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me,"

—2 Corinthians 12:9

**Servants during January:**

Songleader: Larry (5), Dwight (12), Stanley (19), Larry (26)

Reading: Mike M

Announcements: Stanley

Table: Larry, Marty, Mike M

Wednesday Lesson: Stanley (1), Kris (8), Larry (15), Stanley (22), Kris (29)

Area Meetings:

South Cullman, 17-19, Jeff Wilson
Fourth Street (Cullman), 2/7-9, Colby Junkin

Hays Mill church of Christ

21705 Hays Mill Road
 Elkmont, AL 35620

The Bible . Examiner

"Examine everything carefully..." 1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

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*"...Pray That I Won't Waste
 All This Suffering."*

By Kenneth Chumbley

It is important to distinguish between suffering and punishment. In Luke 23:39-41, a thief said of himself and another, "We receive the due reward of our deeds," but of Christ he said, "this man hath done nothing amiss." All of the crucified were dying the same horrible death, but there was something qualitatively different about their traumas—while two were in agony as punishment for their crimes, one was in anguish despite his innocence. Evil visited upon the innocent is what I mean by suffering. It is hurt that "cannot be traced to ourselves" (C.S. Lewis), which can result from moral (Lk 13:2) and natural (Lk 13:4) causes. It is such hurt—such suffering—that is behind the worst of our perplexity and distress. It is such suffering that causes us to ask why, Mt 27:46. And it is with regard to such suffering that we most struggle to find a balanced response.

Denominational author Warren Wiersbe tells about a family friend who

was hit with serious trouble. Her husband had gone blind and had then come down with an incurable disease. While trying to deal with this crisis, she had a stroke that forced her to retire from her job. Although they had many friends, they had no children. One day while visiting, Wiersbe sought to encourage her by saying, "I want you to know that we're praying for you." In response she said, "I appreciate that, but what are you praying for God to do?" This caught Wiersbe off-guard, as he had never been asked this question before. Trying to come up with an intelligent response, he said that he prayed for her healing and strength, and for mercy to deal with her pain. To this she replied, "Thank you, but please pray for one more request. Pray that I won't waste all of this suffering."

When I read this it hit me right between the eyes. In seeing her problems as an opportunity, this lady had a perspective on suffering that is thoroughly biblical, but is one, I'm


ashamed to say, I have too often lacked.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 says something important here. On three occasions Paul prayed that his thorn in the flesh (a metaphor for his suffering) be removed (ironically, not only was Paul's suffering not traceable to himself, but resulted from a blessing given him by God, 2 Cor 12:1-4,7. The Lord's answer to this was, "My grace is sufficient for thee." It is my opinion that Paul's thorn (v7) and Christ's grace (v9) here refer to the same thing. This wasn't a case where Paul was suffering, he prayed about it, and although the Lord didn't remove his suffering, He did send him some sort of blessing (grace) that made his suffering bearable. No, I believe the Lord is telling Paul that his thorn in the flesh was a manifestation of His grace! What Paul called a grievance, the Lord called a gift. What Paul saw as something the Lord needed to remove, the Lord saw as something Paul needed to receive.

Christ's answer put Paul's problems in a radically different light.

And when Paul saw them in this light, and learned that his suffering was, rightly understood, grace from his Lord (which, among other things, was meant to keep him from soul-destroying pride, v7), he started viewing his problems as something not to be wasted—and his pleading turned into praise, v9-10.

In the book The Problem of Pain, C.S. Lewis makes two points that are worth passing along. First, if God is truly wiser than we, it follows that His judgment may differ from ours on many things, so that what seems good to us may not seem good to Him and what seems bad to us may not seem bad to Him at all, p37. Second, given God's wisdom, we should never doubt that when there is a discrepancy between Him and us concerning what is best for us, what He thinks and determines is always in our best interest, p39.

If we can just wrap our heads and hearts around such things, maybe we'll learn what a waste it is to waste suffering. 

What Kids Can Teach Us: Things I've Learned from My Children

- There is no such thing as child-proofing your house.
- If you spray hair spray on dust bunnies and run over them with roller blades, they can ignite.
- A 4 year-old's voice is louder than 200 adults in a crowded restaurant.
- If you hook a dog leash over a ceiling fan the motor is not strong enough to rotate a 42 pound boy wearing Pound Puppy underwear and a Superman cape.
- It is strong enough, however, to spread paint on all four walls of a 20 by 20 foot room.

- Baseballs make marks on ceilings.
- You should not throw baseballs up when the ceiling fan is on.
- When using the ceiling fan as a bat you have to throw the ball up a few times before you get a hit.
- A ceiling fan can hit a baseball a long way.
- The glass in windows (even double pane) doesn't stop a baseball hit by a ceiling fan.
- When you hear the toilet flush and the words "uh-oh," it's already too late.
- Brake fluid mixed with Clorox makes smoke, and lots of it. (Editor's note: Actually, it can create a raging fire.)
- A six year-old can start a fire with a flint rock even though a 36 year-old man says they can only do that in the movies.
- A magnifying glass can start a fire even on an overcast day.
- If you use a waterbed as home plate while wearing baseball shoes it does not leak—it explodes.
- A king size waterbed holds enough water to fill a 2000 square foot house four inches deep.
- Legos will pass through the digestive tract of a four year-old.
- Duplos will not.
- Play Dough and Microwave should never be used in the same sentence.
- Super Glue is forever.
- Mcgyver can teach us many things we don't want to know.
- Ditto Tarzan.
- No matter how much Jell-O you put in a swimming pool you still can't walk on water.
- Pool filters do not like Jell-O.
- VCR's do not eject peanut butter and jelly sandwiches even though TV commercials show they do.
- Garbage bags do not make good parachutes.
- Marbles in gas tanks make lots of noise when driving.
- You probably do not want to know what that odor is.
- Always look in the oven before you turn it on.
- Plastic toys do not like ovens.
- The fire department in San Diego has at least a five minute response time.
- The spin cycle on the washing machine does not make earth worms dizzy.
- It will, however, make cats dizzy.
- Cats throw up twice their body weight when dizzy.
- Quiet does not necessarily mean "don't worry."
- A good sense of humor will get you through most problems in life (unfortunately, mostly in retrospect).

...By Kevan Moore who is at South Fayetteville. He got it from Edward Bragwell, who got it from someone else.



Remember in Prayer

Mike B's specialist thinks that his difficulty breathing is simply from the flu, and that the mass in his lung has not grown—this is good news! Pray also for

Barbara; Betty; Carolyn; Faye; Hazel; Joshua V; Kathy M; Kaylee; Mark Horton; Mike B and his family; Pam; and the Pollard Family. 