

WHAT BENEVOLENCE DOES

Throughout the New Testament, Christians are taught to be benevolent people, even though the words “benevolent” and “benevolence” are not found in the Scriptures. Benevolence is defined as “disposition to do good; act of kindness; a generous gift” (Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary). In Galatians 6:10, Paul commanded, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Peter said, “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous” (1 Pet. 3:8). The story of “The Good Samaritan” teaches clearly the need for Christians to show compassion, love, and pity toward others, including to those of other races (Lk. 10:29-37).

To be a person of compassion means that one has pity on the less fortunate, the sick, the distressed (physically, emotionally, and financially), the bereaved, and the lost. Compassion also means “a feeling of distress at the ills of others; to suffer with another; to be touched; to have mercy; to show kindness; assistance” (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W.E. Vine). No Christian can be faithful to God without this valuable, important, and necessary trait. We are further commanded, “Distributing to the necessity of the saints; given to hospitality....rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep” (Rom. 12:12, 15). The book of Acts is replete with examples of benevolent and caring Christians. When there was a need to care for the Grecian widows, provision was made for them (Acts 6). When the new Christians in Jerusalem had needs, others sold their possessions and lands, and parted them to those who had need (Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-37). When a famine arose in Judea and the saints fell into want (Acts 11:27-

30), other Christians throughout Asia Minor came to their aid (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8-9).

The Christians in the First Century understood their duty to their fellow man because of the great example and teaching of their Saviour, who was also their Divine Example and Master Teacher (1 Pet. 2:21; Matt. 7:29). We read of the compassionate heart of Jesus who was moved by the multitudes and healed the sick and fed them when they were hungry (Matt. 14:14; 15:32; Mk. 1:41; Lk. 7:13; Mk. 6:34; Matt. 9:35). His compassion moved Him to teach them the truth. He taught the disciples of their need to be giving, compassionate people. He pointed out that after He was to ascend to the Father, the disciples could continue to show their love for Him by expressing concern for their fellow man (Matt. 25:31-46). In regard to providing for the needy, the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick, the imprisoned, He said that if we provide for these we are providing for Him. How are we treating Jesus?

Helping to supply the needs of others who truly have need should be a natural part of Christian living. In fact, it should become “second nature” to us to be a benevolent people. James declares that “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (Jas. 1:27). In order to practice “pure religion” (the only kind of religion which is pleasing to God), one must “visit” or inspect, help, and care for those who are in need. To refuse or fail to obey this command of the Lord is to be displeasing in His sight.

The personal benefits or rewards of reaching out to others is immeasurable to the one showing compassion as well as to the one receiving help. There is the personal satisfaction of knowing that we have obeyed God, that we

have practiced pure religion, and that we have truly helped another in need. The emotional rewards are tremendous and serve as incentive for continuing to do good works. We are told by psychologists that such deeds will aid in better mental health on the part of those who render aid. The benefits received are also important and often more far-reaching than we may know. The result of rendering aid to those in need may be the salvation of the soul of a person who has either been recipient of the goodness of Christians, or of one who has observed such loving kindness. Lest we forget, the main reason why we practice benevolence is because of our love for the souls of men. The work of the church is to SAVE SOULS, and to this end we evangelize, we edify the saints, and we practice benevolence. The Christian influence has far-reaching effects (Matt. 5:13-16).

Benevolence is not a trait to be held only by a few in the church. All Christians must possess the heart of compassion in order to go to heaven. John said, “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth” (1 Jn. 3:17-18). Being caring toward our fellow man will bring eternal rewards. It is not enough just to indicate interest in others by asking about one’s welfare, we must be participants in the care of such a one.

Stephen P. Waller *from Sapulpa Bulletin*

“...remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
Acts 20:35b

ANNIVERSARY

Chris and Sarah Edwards, 12-29.

BIRTHDAYS

Curtis Stillwell, 12-23; Tammy Marcum, 12-27.

ILL

Sunday: Jennifer Carter, Allen Scott, Lindsey and Lauren Brown (PM).

Cleo Stone had several treatments at Olathe Medical Center last week. Bob Adams had an outpatient procedure last week. Allen Scott continues to recuperate and is able to be out occasionally.

Those battling cancer: Jamal Abyad, David Cole, Ledgia Campbell and Betty James. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Millie Robertson, Allen Scott, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

HOME BOUND

Bob Adams resides at Room D-4 of the Johnson County Nursing Center in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

OUT OF TOWN

The Thrasher's are visiting with relatives this weekend. The Brown's will be visiting relatives in Texas over the holidays. Robin Brown was away on business last week. We had some who were absent last Sunday due to inclement weather, among them were: Dee Adams, Kathleen Camp, and Tom Tucker.

GUEST SPEAKER

Brother Jim O'Connor will be our guest speaker this Sunday. We are grateful to have Jim and Judy with us.

ATTENDANCE

Sunday AM, 44; Sunday PM, 32; Wednesday PM, 35.

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." **2 Corinthians 9:7**

Those To Serve

December 23, 2007

BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Nemechek

MORNING WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS..... George Thomas
SONG LEADER..... Steve Brown
OPENING PRAYER John Dodson
PRESIDE..... Chris Edwards
ASSIST..... Trent Thrasher
ASSIST..... David Parish
CLOSING PRAYER..... Jared Nelson

EVENING WORSHIP

OPENING PRAYER Jeff Nemechek
CLOSING PRAYER..... John Cody Carter
LORD'S SUPPER..... Chris Edwards

WEDNESDAY 26th

SONG LEADER..... George Thomas
INVITATION Jeff Nemechek

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Morning Worship 10:30 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Ladies Bible Study 10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher

Phone: (913) 764-2325

E-mail: olathecoc@sbcglobal.net

CHURCH OF CHRIST

515 WEST PARK

P.O. BOX 482

OLATHE, KANSAS 66051

www.kc-cofc.org/olathe.htm

www.oabs.org/olathe.asp