You Know You’ve Had Too Much Coffee When . . .
* You can type sixty words a minute with your feet.
* Instant coffee takes too long.
* You chew on other people's fingernails.
* You answer the door, before people knock.
* You sleep with your eyes open.
* You go to sleep, just so you can wake up and smell the coffee.
* You don't even wait for the water to boil anymore.
* You're the employee of the month at Starbucks - and you don't even work there.
* You help your dog chase its tail.
* You lick your coffeepot clean.
* You go to AA meetings just for the free coffee.
* You're so wired you pick up FM radio.
* You have a picture of your coffee mug, on your coffee mug.

I suppose that it is true that you can “have too much of a good thing!” In many ways that’s true in religion as well. Paul wanted the brethren at Corinth to discipline the man that had his father’s wife (1 Cor 5:1,5). It was a “good thing” to do, for the sinner and the saints. But Paul warned them not to be “too severe” and that the punishment inflicted by the majority “is sufficient for such a man.” (2 Cor 2:5,6)

Paul told Timothy to “use a little wine for your stomach’s sake...” (1 Tim 5:23). Notice that he said to use a “little” wine. Moderation was the key and it was for medicinal reasons. “Do not be drunk with wine, wherein is excess...” (Eph 5:18). Timothy was to be careful lest he partake of too much of a good thing!

In this life moderation is often the best habit to have. “Let your moderation be known to all men...” (Php 4:5 KJV). Part of the fruit of the Spirit is temperance or self-control (Gal 5:23). Sleep is a good thing. So is food. But too much of either will make you a “sluggard” or a “glutton.” Even when it comes to correcting an erring brother, restraint is called for (Gal 6:1).

I suppose that I can reluctantly admit that you can drink too much coffee. Let’s all make sure that we are not getting “too much of a good thing” in this life... “the Lord is at hand!” (Php 4:5)

Have a great week!

Ben May

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine..." Prov 17:22

From our Heart to Yours
As with many, this is one of our most favorite times of the year. Between Thanksgiving and Christmas, we get to see seldom seen family members, have extra times to gather with friends and loved ones, enjoy good food, exchange gifts and hopefully, “count our many blessings.” As we reflect on our many blessings, it is also a good time to make sure that we are a blessing to others. As we approach the new year, may we all look for opportunities to do good unto others. To encourage, uplift, pray and share God’s love with all. “Every good and perfect gift is from above” and comes from our Father (James 1:17). Let’s share His gifts to us with others.

Ben & Jen

Current Happenings & Concerns
Prayer: Ann Pollock continues to be in a lot of pain due to her recent fall; Bobby May, Ben’s dad, is about the same. Still can only whisper and is homebound with COPD; Bobby King and his family need the Father's comfort and our prayers due to the loss of their daughter; Wanda Crow's sister, Mary Moore, fell and broke her hip last week; Jerry Durham was released from the hospital and is back in the Signature Nursing Home in Columbia;

Continue to Remember:
Alvie Pickford’s sister, Jewell (cancer treatments/difficult time eating or drinking) & her sister Sue Novogurski (cancer);

2017 Church Directory: Please let Alvie or Ben know of any updates for next year's directory. Be sure to include your email address and cell phone numbers.

Daily Bible Reading Schedule for 2017: An easy to follow plan that will have you reading the entire Bible in 2017 is available in the foyer.

Last week’s contribution & attendance: Contribution: 836 Attendance: 24/19/19
Give Me the Baby, Not the Man  
By Ben May

For many, Christmas is their favorite time of the year. Many "Deck the Halls", sing of the "Silent Night" and proclaim "Joy to the World." Kids can't wait for Christmas morning and, if truth be told, neither can we parents! Notwithstanding recent controversies, nativity scenes abound, lights are strung and lawns and homes are covered with festive decorations. This season centers around a little baby, born into humble surroundings, but announced with great fanfare! The angel said, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:10,11)." Now there is a message we can grasp on to and embrace! The heavenly host proclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men! (Luke 2:14)." Sadly, for many this is all they know about the Christ. A sweet, innocent child bringing peace and hope to the world. And after all, who can resist a baby? In this wonderful story, we find no call for repentance, no hint of change, no mention of commitment. So, for many, Christmas is a favorite time of the year, even to those who do not profess to be very religious.

Contrast the focus that most place on Christmas to the reality of why Jesus was born into the world. Now, here is where we start losing many who find great pleasure in the Christmas season. Jesus didn't come into this world to be remembered as an infant. In fact, it was some 300 years after His death that His birth began to be celebrated. This is why we, as a congregation, do not incorporate the celebration of Christmas into the work and worship of the church. It is a man-made holiday and one which the Lord never told us to observe. Jesus came to "seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10)." In foretelling His death on the cross Jesus said, "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this purpose I came to this hour (John 12:27)." Jesus came to die on the cross and based on His death, burial and resurrection to bring people back to God. "And if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." (John 12:32) The apostle Paul focused on the Lord's crucifixion when he proclaimed the gospel. "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2)." After all, "If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins! (1 Corinthians 15:17)."

Yes, the tender story of our Savior being born in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes can easily be embraced. But this, in and of itself, demands nothing of us. Just before our Lord was crucified Pilate allowed Jesus to be severely beaten, mocked and spit on. Then he brought Him back out to the people and said "Behold the Man! (John 19:5). Are you of those who seem to say, "No, no, no! Just give me the baby, not the man!"

The heavenly host proclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men! (Luke 2:14)." Sadly, for many this is all they know about the Christmas season. Jesus didn't come into this world to be remembered as an infant. In fact, it was some 300 years after His death that His birth began to be celebrated. This is why we, as a congregation, do not incorporate the celebration of Christmas into the work and worship of the church. It is a man-made holiday and one which the Lord never told us to observe. Jesus came to "seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10)." In foretelling His death on the cross Jesus said, "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this purpose I came to this hour (John 12:27)." Jesus came to die on the cross and based on His death, burial and resurrection to bring people back to God. "And if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." (John 12:32) The apostle Paul focused on the Lord's crucifixion when he proclaimed the gospel. "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2)." After all, "If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins! (1 Corinthians 15:17)."

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In order to understand the Bible, we must approach a study of it with the right attitude.

First, we must realize that it is absolutely necessary to know God's Will, if we are to obey Him and be saved. Jesus told the Sadducees: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures..." (Matt. 22:29). He also said: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Jno. 8:32). We must know the truth in order to have faith. (Rom. 10:17), to give us a reason for our hope, (1 Pet. 3:15), to teach others, (2 Tim. 2:2), and to be saved eternally (Rom. 1:16; Jas. 1:21). We shall all be judged by Christ's Word at the last day (Jno. 12:48; Rev. 20:12).

Secondly: we must realize that the Bible was written by holy men of God, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16,17). Thus, we must respect the Bible as a revelation from God. We dare not trifle with its contents by adding to, taking from or substituting for it. (Rev. 22:18,19; Jas. 1:25; 2 Jno. 9, 1 Cor. 4:6). We must remember that it is God's Book! We can know God's Will only as He has revealed it in His Word. (1 Cor. 2:1-16).

Thirdly, we must have a love for the truth. (2 Thes. 2:10-12), and a receptive heart, (Jas. 1:21). We must be willing to do God's Will after we understand it. (Jno. 7:17; Matt. 7:21).

Fourthly, we must study, that is, give diligence, NOT merely read it. (2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:11). Most people fail to get this point.

Fifthly, we should always consider the context of a passage. Observe who is speaking, to whom he is speaking, or writing: the purpose in view, and under which dispensation the passage was spoken or written.

Sixthly, we should study and consider all that has been revealed in the Bible on each subject. We should never isolate one passage on a subject from other passages dealing with the same subject. For example, do not isolate Acts 16:31 from all other passages on salvation and do not interpret it to mean something that will contradict what is spoken in such passages as Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal. 3:26,27, etc...

I can't help but think that many are demonstrating their "love" for Christmas, but not for the Christ. Just before our Lord was crucified Pilate allowed Jesus to be severely beaten, mocked and spit on. Then he brought Him back out to the people and said "Behold the Man! (John 19:5). Are you of those who seem to say, "No, no, no! Just give me the baby, not the man!?"