

The Brighton Light

BRIGHTON ARP CHURCH

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Number 3

We Do.....

¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home....Acts 16: 14,15a.

Every so often the question of "paedo" (infant) baptism comes up in Presbyterian churches. Most often the controversy is over whether such a practice is biblical and should be practiced at all. Those who believe in and practice credo (believer's) only baptism will not and cannot admit to any evidence in favor of the admission of infants into the family of believers. Those who believe in paedo baptism (generally) accept the effectiveness of both methods of acceptance into the body of believers. And there are compelling arguments on both sides of the debate, both with accurate Scriptural references and proofs. And, as scripture has seen fit to not make a definitive statement on the subject but has instead provided those texts to support both sides, it is quite probable that there will never be any universally accepted resolution to the question this side of heaven. Perhaps that is the way it should be amongst true believers.

A question that is not so commonly asked of those of us who adhere to covenant theology by believer's only baptism advocates is probably far more convicting of us as practitioners of the Word. That question concerns the actual practical results of the application of the covenant. If the baptized child is, indeed, admitted even symbolically into the visible church, where is the overwhelming evidence of generational salvation we should see as a multitude of the baptized children of believers become believers themselves? Sadly, this evidence does not always exist in the modern covenantal church.

At the time of the baptism of a child the parents are asked a series of questions concerning their own faith as well as their intention to raise the child in as reasonable a way as possible to bring him to saving faith in Jesus. Thus it is primarily the believing parents' responsibility to teach and raise the child in such a way that a later profession of faith is as likely as possible. But the final question of the baptismal service involves the entire congregation: *Do you the members of this congregation undertake with these parents the covenant responsibility for the Christian nurture of this child?* The proper accepted response from the congregation is "We do". And so it becomes incumbent on the leadership and membership of the church to be actively involved in the spiritual nurturing of the child.

It is common for the church to assume that the practice of providing Christian Education services such as Sunday School and VBS fulfill her responsibilities of the nurture of the covenant child. These are avenues through which the child may, indeed, be taught the gospel message if he is in attendance. But what are the responsibilities of the church when the covenant parents do not fulfill their vows given at the baptismal service, and ignore their commitment to raise the child to serve the Lord? As members of the church who swore to undertake "with these parents" the Christian nurture of the child we have a duty to reach out to that child and his parents, and to insist they either fulfill or renounce their vows. More common, however, is that the recalcitrant parents and their baptized child are allowed to slip away from the church and their vows without

even a mild reproach from the church.

The baptismal vows are just as solemn and binding for the parents of the infant as they would be for a new adult believer, and to enter into them lightly can be an invitation to condemnation. The apostle James states as much: *But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "yes" be yes and your "no" be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation. Js. 5:12.* The church does no one a favor by ignoring the backsliding example set by the parents. Their own headlong rush into condemnation usually drags the infant into that same miserable fate.

There is, of course, a proper and a wrong way to encourage the wayward parents to resume their vows made before God and the church on behalf of the child. It should never be done with an attitude of judgement or superiority. It must always be done with an eye to restoration and renewal. It must always be done with an attitude of love. It must always be done in humility, recognizing the church's own fault in the nurture of her children. But it must always be done. And if the backsliding parents refuse to renew their vows, then the church must turn her back on them and turn them over to the judgement of the God whom they have scorned.

Such an action seems harsh and "Unchristian". But is that not the result when the church allows the entire family to merely slip quietly away? It would seem far better for the church to be caught striving to call her negligent members back to her than to remain silent as they drift into Hell. And it would seem especially merciful when those slipping into condemnation are her infants. May God the Father of all the faithful grant us in the covenantal church the wisdom and the conviction to claim our baptized children as our own and as to truly treat them as covenantal children.

In HIS Service,
Richard Moore



Prayer List:

Armour, Mark – (Robyn Scott's step dad) Cancer
Bennett, Mary F – Shut in
Billings, Richard – (Denise's Dad)Cancer/Heart
Boswell, Charles - Cancer
Boswell, Mike – Health issues
Bryant, Ty – Infant, Heart
Cavin, Flora – (Meredith's Mom)Nursing home
Chisolm, Jean – Broken Pelvis
Cothran, Bill –(Rhonda's dad)Rehab in Ripley
Culver, Anthony – (Molder's nephew)Health issues
Culver, Michael – (Molder's nephew)Health issues
Goulder, Helen – Shut in
Goulder, Gwen – (Rhonda daughter in law)Cancer
Goulder, Martha Jean -
Hill, Dana – Health issues
Kiphart, Ron – Nursing home
Lineberger, Rachael
Locke, Mike - (Vickie's brother)Health Issues
London, Peggy

Lupinsky, Logan
McCain, Pat – Health Issues
Mitchell, Marsha – Cancer
Moncla, Luke
Moody, Lauren – (TRA student) Bone Cancer
Moore, Martha Lou – Shut in
Moss, Charlie
Motes, Robert – (Denise's cousin) Heart
Otis, Mike
Pugh, Kaleb – (Laura Kiphart's grandson)
Rhoades, Geraldine – Shut in
Stitt, Sam – Health issues
Tyler, Jean – Shut in
Wanda, Pat's Sister - Cancer
Wells, Whit – Health Issues
Williams, Sandy – (Huffman family)Cancer
Wilson, Glenda – Bone Cancer
Winford, Sherry – Health issues

Military

Donahoo, Tim
Dooley, Rod
Hill, Debra

Hair, Colton
Heathman,Matthew

Hunt, Boyce
Young III, Robert "Trip"

Missionaries

Coad, Jim & Gala

Rebekah Carson

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

March 15 Mr. and Mrs. Brad Templeton
March 28 Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Yarbro

FLOWERS FOR THE MONTH

Margaret Sherrill

Mar. 13 Alsbrooks & Heaths
In Honor of
Margaret Huffman

CHILDRENS SERMON

Mar 6 Nick Goulder
Mar 13 Kevin Heath
Mar 20 Amy Maxwell
Mar 27 Easter

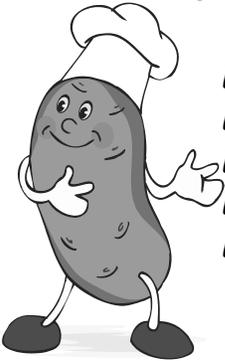
NURSERY ATTENDANTS

March 6 Helen Woods
March 13 Stephanie Williams
March 20 Ashley Goulder
March 27 Amanda Heath

March Menu

Mar 2 Sloppy Joes
Mar 9 Spaghetti
Mar 16 Sandwiches
Mar 23 NO SUPPER
Mar 30 Pizza

Cost: \$3.00 person
\$10.00 Family



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 Helen Woods	14 Wanda Starnes
3 William Clayton Pannell	16 Sherri Bailey
5 William Pannell	17 Whitney Smith
6 Clay Yarbro	19 Joanna Simonton
Leyna Cannon	20 Keith Trotter
9 William Carter	21 McCallie Ruffin
10 Andrea Trotter	23 Jimmy Trotter
Joni Glass	25 Peggy Huffman
11 Cathy Morgan	27 Pam Yarbro
Floyd Columbus	Zac Scott
Margarette Huffman	

Upcoming Events / Announcements

PLEASE NOTE: If you have any ideas or suggestions for the church website, please contact Chris Gravley, webmaster, at 901-674-3851 or e-mail at chris_gravley@bellsouth.net.

THE DEACON OF THE MONTH is Scotty Gladney. If you have any requests for the deacons, please contact Scotty at 901-828-5342

PLEASE NOTE The Men's Prayer Breakfast will be Saturday Morning March 5th at 8:00 a.m.

MAUNDY THURSDAY Services will be March 24th at 7:00 P.M. The Lord's Supper will be observed during this service. Please come and take part in this time of worship as we celebrate this Easter season.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL Easter Egg Hunt will be Saturday, March 20th at 2:00 P.M. The age group is toddler to 4th grade. Each child is to bring 3 plastic filled eggs

SONRISE SERVICE There will be an Easter Sunrise service on Sunday March 27th at 7:00 a.m. Breakfast will be served afterwards.