

# 2005 Proclaimer

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, .. to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord!" -Isa.61:1-2*

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A teaching and exhortation medium by members of the Carmichael Church of Christ, meeting at 6044 Sutter Ave. Carmichael, CA 95608

Homepages: [webs.lanset.com/carmichael](http://webs.lanset.com/carmichael) and [www.preachersnotes.com](http://www.preachersnotes.com)

(916) 483-9318

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## **ELDERS / EVANGELISTS**

Glenn H. Reagan - 721-9464; Ron Stewart - 771-2064; C. L. [Vern] Wilson - 961-6944  
<lareagan@lanset.com> <rstewcrr@lanset.com <vernwil@comcast.net

## **DEACONS:**

Frank Ayers, 966-4979; Bill Kizer, 745-1043; Carl Romine, 773-4402; Rick Rittenhouse, 728-5077;  
Bill Schultz, 771-0263; Brad Shuck, 530-677-9474

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## **OPINIONS IN BIBLE CLASSES**

*by Rick Liggin*

Are our Bible classes supposed to be times for open discussion where anyone and everyone may state his own "opinion" on what some Bible text or verse of Scripture means? Asked a little differently: are Bible class teachers simply discussion facilitators or are they supposed to actually teach the class something?

Obviously, teachers are supposed to teach! They are "to give instruction"-since that is what a "teacher" does. And though that may involve engaging his students in some kind of discussion, in the end the teacher is supposed to be leading his class in a definite direction so that real learning takes place. Anyone can stand at the head of a classroom and ask his students for comments – but a teacher must do more than that. He must teach! He must instruct! He must make sure that real learning – learning that is true to the Word – takes place in the minds and hearts of his students.

But not only must he teach; he must do so with authority. Paul told Timothy: "*These things command and teach*" in 1 Timothy 4:11. And he told Titus, "*These things speak exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you*" in Titus 2:15. A faithful Bible teacher does not hand down his own "opinion" of what the Bible says--an "opinion" that others may take or leave, accept or reject. He teaches the Word of God, which is an authoritative message that must be accepted and obeyed.

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that some of us have gotten the wrong idea about our Bible class periods. Some of us seem to think that Bible class is a time for us to all get together and share our "opinions" with one another about some Bible topic or Bible text. But folks, that's not Bible study! It might be one thing if we were sharing with one another the fruit of our own diligent, honest and careful private Bible study. In fact, if that were the case, I'm sure that some real and significant Bible learning would take place in such a class period. But that most often is not the case!

More often than not, these "opinions" we express are not based on any real, personal Bible study; in fact, they're often not even based on having previously read the text before coming to class. More often than not, they are the result of whatever might pop into our heads as we read the text for the first time while already in class. I'll be honest and tell you that, as a Bible class teacher who works hard at preparing to teach Bible classes, I find that insulting. How dare we come into a class and challenge a qualified teacher's conclusions by expressing our "opinions" if we haven't even taken the time to read the text before coming to class! We're not saying that error should not be corrected. If a Bible class teacher teaches something wrong, he should be challenged and corrected, yet kindly. But how can we do that if we have not studied the text before coming to class?

Bible class is not about sharing "opinions" (**especially unstudied opinions**) with one another. It's about helping one another learn correctly what God's Word says, so that we can use it to change our lives. And it is the teacher's place to do that – and to do it with authority, so that all feel the need to do what God says. Vision for the future demands that we make our Bible classes periods of real learning, and that requires teachers who are prepared to teach and students who come to class prepared to learn. ###

## The Second Time Around

by Dee Bowman  
Southside Church of Christ  
Pasadena, Texas

Ah, the joy of something new! There's nothing quite like it. Some new product that works better. Some new way to get there faster. Some new fidelity to make it sound better. Some new wrench that works smoother. Some new machine that's stronger. Some new story that tickles your fancy. Some new drug that makes your health problems easier to bear. There's just something special about new stuff.

One of the best of all new things is new beginnings, the sheer joy of just being able to just start over. I used to work math problems until I just got totally frustrated. In desperation, I'd wad the paper up, throw it at (notice, I said at) the trash can, and just start over again. A clean sheet of paper is a beautiful thing. It's just great to be able to start over. You'll usually do it better the second time around.

Forgiveness makes possible the most beautiful of all new beginnings. Forgiveness means a new start, a new page, a new chapter to write. Forgiveness means that what was there before—sin with all its guilt—is no longer present, that sin—that which once blighted your character and distorted your view of things—is no longer present. It's gone. It's been sent away. Never to return. It's like having a new sheet of paper.

When a person—one with faith and a penitent heart—is baptized into Christ (**1 Cor. 12:13**), he becomes a new creature, a new creation. His old person is taken away and he is made new (**Rom. 6:3-7**). Paul talks about our becoming "new creatures in Christ." Hear him. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"* (**2 Cor. 5:17**). In other words, when a man obeys the gospel of Christ, he becomes something entirely new, a new creation, one forgiven and clean, one totally devoid of his old sins. They've all been washed away. It's as if they never existed. What a joy to know

that when God forgives, He forgets. It's the best of all new things, the first and most important of all new beginnings, forgiveness is. But a new beginning is just that—a new beginning. Now you have to get on with this new life. There is learning to be done, corrections that need to be made in all your courses of life, new focuses to be engaged, new horizons to view, new determinations to be made, a new hope to embrace. *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”* We have to press on toward the mark, abound in the work of the Lord, make our calling and election sure, work out our own salvation (**Phil 3:12-14**; **2 Pet. 1:10**; **Phil 2:12**). The new beginning is just the start of all we now have to do.

Paul puts this new beginning into the proper focus when he says, *“For our citizenship (‘citizenship’ NKJV) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

*Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.”* (**Phil 3:20-4:1**). We're in a probationary period, and we still have lots to think about, lots to do, before we get where we're going.

And so, it behooves each of us to make our new beginning all that it was intended to be. Let's be workers for the Lord. It's the only life that makes any sense. And it's the only way the new beginning can have any real worth in our lives.

As one fellow I know quite well once said, “If you miss heaven, you've just missed all there is.” Copyright (C) 2002-2005 Southside Church of Christ  
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***“Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you.” --- Deut 16:17***

## THE SICK AMONG US

Edith Ayers  
Frank Ayers  
Tina Ayers  
Carly Cain (Placerville)  
Helen Gray  
Margaret Holcomb  
Chuck House  
Catherine Kay (Escalon)  
Tony Moyer  
Jean McCarty  
Jeffry Pennant  
Kaye Pennant  
Irma Rapier  
LaurieAnn Reagan  
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Taylor Romine  
Oliver Sasse (Brush Prarie)  
Rena Schultz  
Geneva Shelton  
Ken Sterling  
Ola Thornburg  
Nancy Valine  
Bill Westphal  
Ellie Williams  
Gordon & Glenda Wilson  
Maxine Wilson

## TRAVELING IN THEIR WORK

Rick Rittenhouse  
Gordon Wilson

## IN THE MILITARY

Michael Mendez  
Steve Ries  
Aaron Robertson  
Trent Walsh

**Which family of this congregation are you praying for this week? Have you told them yet? Please do so today.**

**ALSO, please pray for the eldership, that their work may be effectual and productive.**

# **"BUILDING ON THE ROCK OR ON THE SAND?"**

Matt 7:24-29; Luke 6:47-49

## **INTRODUCTION:**

A. FUNDAMENTAL STEPS IN CHOOSING A PLACE TO BUILD IN CALIFORNIA NECESSITATE A CAREFUL CHOOSING OF A PLAN, AND A CONSIDERATION OF THE SOILS OF THE PLOT INVOLVED!

1. A first major step in erecting a building is to do a soil check to see if the ground will support the weight.
2. Jesus concludes His Sermon on the Mount with a spiritual soil sample.

B. If we build that life on Jesus and His teachings it will stand the test of time and eternity and the end result will be heaven.

1. If we build on anything else, it will not stand and the end result will be hell.
2. We consider these two builders in this lesson in order to better see where we stand with the Lord.

## **I. WE NEED A FOUNDATION THAT MUST BE CAREFULLY CHOSEN**

A. An old Southern spiritual has the words: "I'm working on a building."

1. That's what people in God's family are doing! FIRST, we're working on building up that Kingdom of Jesus Christ
2. We're all building: a life, a character, a personality, and a spiritual relationship.

B. The foundation must be on a substratum of Faith. Isa 28:16; 1 Pet 2:6

C. JESUS is far more than just an ethical teacher. HE stands before us AS GOD.

1. There's NO SAFETY, or SALVATION or HOPE without obedience.
2. ? The persons among us who don't accept Jesus' teachings, DO NOT ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST.

## **II. SO, WE DO HAVE A HOUSE TO BUILD, DON'T WE?**

A. We've all noticed the similarity between the houses in a subdivision.

1. The two builders in Matt 7 put up houses SIMILAR IN APPEARANCE!

B. Building on the sand is also much easier. Remember this: an EASIER way of building may be faster, but IT WON'T BE SECURE!

1. Luke says the acceptable worker " laid the foundation on a rock" (6:48).
- 2 Digging down to rock and into rock is hard work.

## **III. THERE ARE ALSO TESTINGS THAT MUST BE FACED AND WON!**

A. THERE ARE TESTS THROUGHOUT EVERY LIFE.

B. FINALLY, THE TEST OF DEATH.

C. AND THEN, THE TEST OF JUDGMENT.

## **IV. WE CONCLUDE WITH THE THOUGHT THAT EACH OF US IS HEADING TOWARD A DESTINY THAT MUST BE RECEIVED**

A. The CHARACTER that has been BUILT ON FAITH AND OBEDIENCE, which has stood the tests of time, will live forever with God in heaven.

B. The character built on human lies or excuses WILL HAVE "A GREAT FALL."

## **CONCLUSION:**

A. FRIEND, on what foundation are you building?

B. It's all determined by what you do with Jesus – the foundation; and what Jesus is able to PRODUCE THROUGH YOU – the fruit.