

# 2008 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

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June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008

## **EVEN WHILE ENEMIES**

*By Joe Fitch*

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. *"For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."* (**Rom.5:8**).

Love is easy if it is convenient -if it is to your benefit - if love brings delight. But what about when none of those things are present? Remember this hard admonition: *"...love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you,"* (**Mt.5:44**). Well, that is exactly how God loves! -and why he expects us to thus love is explained in the very next verse: *"that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."* Jesus died for us even when "we were still sinners" - even while we were "enemies." What love that the Father sends his son to save "sinners" and "enemies! -even ones who killed him! Yet it is true! Furthermore, God did not thus love in the first century only. Jesus did not quit loving when he ascended to heaven. Even now, God loves sinners -even his enemies.

Men come before God - scared. They have glimpsed the gates of hell, heard the screams of the damned, and felt the despair of the banished. Fear of judgment and

punishment compels them. They dread "the terror of the Lord." (**2 Cor.5:11**) Repentance is sparked by seeing what eternity holds for the lost. Not all repent - and not all who repent do so out of fear. Others view the cross and see a dying savior sacrificed -because of their sin -because God's love is too great to abandon them to hell. Such love compels men. Not all, but many repent and turn to God responding to his manifest love. They do not "despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering" but are living proof that "the goodness of God leads to repentance:." (**Rom.2:4**).

Already a Christian? Already knelt at the foot of Jesus' cross? Well, God is not finished loving yet! He loves Christians! Jesus' sacrifice continues for Christians! - and His love reaches and forgives even Christians who are stumbling -weak - ignorant - character flawed. God still loves them in spite of their flaws! They are his sons! They are committed to do right; they often fail. On occasion, they fall on their face, and rise weeping - shamed by their sin. God still loves them -still forgives His struggling and faltering sons.

*"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."*(**1 Jno 1:7**). The Christian's rule of life is to "walk in the light." He is committed. He disavowed his old rule of life - to "walk in darkness" - a lifestyle which accepts and permits sin. For those "in the light," fellowship with Jesus is a reality - even though they fail to measure up. Otherwise they do not need the "blood of Jesus Christ" to "cleanse ... from all sin." Christians both have sinned and they do sin (**1 Jno 1:8, 10**). Is theirs a lost cause? No! "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (**1:10**). Those struggling, faltering Christians do not give up on God; God surely does not give up on them! He is faithful! His love is boundless! "...the

*mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him" (Psa 103:17)*. His forgiveness is sure! -and abundant! A throng gathers at God's throne in robes washed white in the blood of the lamb - not washed once or twice, but many times!

When you forget that God still loves you - that Jesus' sacrifice still cleanses you -that Jesus still intercedes for you in heaven, then despair will inevitably overwhelm. Complacency settles in, and eventually worship becomes an empty ritual. However, you never lose God nor your fervor nor all his benefits until you forget his love -which makes us love him, thank him, and serve him.

God loved us when we were unlovable -still loves us while we are unlovable. However, he does expect us to become lovable -good people -people of character resembling our savior. Consider some Christians -not just babes but old soldiers who are selfish, grumpy, ill tempered, mean spirited, sharp tongued, malicious, or hard hearted. It is hard to love them! Right? Yet God still does! We should! Yet, something is wrong; they have not allowed God to change them - make them into His image. God's love is no excuse for meanness.

God loves good men in a special measure. "for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God" (**Jno 16:27**). Christians, likewise, love good people more than mean people (yes, there are some mean-spirited people on some "church rolls!" We treasure each brother for the worth of his soul. However, with good people, we also appreciate them, enjoy them, and delight in them -as does God. God loved us! He still loves us! What good news that is for each of us! And let us love one another just as God freely loves us.

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**SERVICES TODAY AT 5:00 PM**

# When We Miss on Wednesday Nights

It is common to look at the attendance figures of most congregations and find the Wednesday night attendance figures to be greatly below those for the service on Sunday morning. Sometimes the total attending on Wednesday is less than one-half the Sunday morning figure.

We recognize that everyone who is absent on Wednesday evening is not necessarily "forsaking the assembling," as per **Heb 10:25**. There can certainly be extenuating circumstances for absents oneself from that service. IT IS designed by the eldership not only for enlightenment by the quality classes that are offered, but also for encouragement to continue in living faithfully in obedience to Christ; AND ALSO being an encouragement to those who need such a stimulus from others! But please be aware that those who are deliberately forsaking the Wednesday evening Bible services are sounding forth a message to God and other members. Let us look at some of the things we proclaim when we choose to forsake midweek Bible study.

1] ***One may be saying that he does not need spiritual food.*** The Bible contains the necessary ingredients for one's spiritual growth. As in **I Peter 2:2**, "*as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.*" Every Wednesday night, some of these spiritual delicacies are set forth for those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Those who choose to absent themselves and remain at home during this spiritual feast act as though they do not need this nutrition for their souls. At the present, these individuals may not be aware of it, but they are dying spiritually. One who doesn't eat in the

physical realm will soon cease to be. This is also true in the realm of things spiritual.

- 2] ***Those who forsake (abandon, leave in the lurch) the Wednesday night services may be saying with loud clarity that there are some things more important than gathering with God's people for study and meditation upon God's Word.*** OFTEN, these "more important" things are the television programs, the newspaper, housework, and the garden. (Most recognize there are some involvements, responsibilities, obligations, or priorities that necessarily must be attended to.) Dear friends, a continuation in such a course will cause many people, even your brothers and sisters in Christ, habitual absenteeism from edification sessions for the people of God, to wonder about your commitment and allegiance to the group, or even to Christ. ***"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."*** (**Col. 3:1-2**)
- 3] ***Those who remain at home on Wednesday nights are also stating that Bible study is boring and dull.*** It is amazing that one could call something that's more precious than gold (**Psalms 19:10**) to be "dull and boring." It is beyond comprehension that the Book containing God's mind (**I Cor 2:9-13**) could be thought of as dry and uninteresting. It is astounding that the man which will direct us to the heavenly abode with the Almighty and his Son (**Mt. 7:21**) can be said to be stale and humdrum. Yet, that may be exactly what those who forsake Wednesday's spiritual feeding sessions are saying, "*in essence*".
- 4] ***Those who don't attend Wednesday nights are saying with certainty either that they don't believe they're disobeying God or the elder's efforts, or that it's not important;*** or

that Heb 10:25 is not binding as a command that one not forsake the assemblies of the saints. Those who willfully do not attend the mid-week service obviously do not believe that God wants them to attend the study period or they could, supposedly, think this passage does not apply to them. Could they be mistaken? ***"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."*** (Rev. 22:14)

We urge all those who frequently miss any gatherings of the congregation to consider carefully the influence you may be having on "others" or "weaker ones" ~ because the Lord urges us to not be detrimental in our actions that would cause others to sin! Make sure you try to attend in order to receive the spiritual food which is offered. There is nothing more important than the proper and continuing growth patterns of God's precious children.. Upon attending regularly, you will find that it is both refreshing and enjoyable. And, you will be obeying the Savior and the overseers of your souls in the process. See you on Wednesday night?!!

---via Victor M. Eskew

## **THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS**

Jason & Marie & Cayna Anderson  
 Edith Ayers  
 Frank & Tina Ayers  
 Jack & Dorothy Bailey  
 Margie Buchanan  
 Ed Brouillette  
 Bill Cain  
 Karen Daly  
*Robert Erickson*  
*Min Fox*  
 Helen Gray  
 Chris Heffelfinger  
 Margaret Holcomb  
 Chuck House  
 Donna Lee & Amber  
 Jean McCarty  
 Martha McCurdy  
 Kiley Pace  
 R.B. & June Rankin  
 Wendell & Irma Rapier  
 Berniece Raven & Sharon Collamore  
 Rosie Reagan  
 LaurieAnn Reagan  
 Eli & the Roadman family  
 Caleb & Jacob Robertson  
 Taylor Romine  
 Carol and Ray Rude  
 Bill & Rena Schultz  
 Troy Shadman  
 The Brad Shuck Family  
 Ola Thornburg  
 Nancy Valine  
 Shirley Watkins  
 Clair & Ellie Williams  
 Kathy Wilson (Folsom)  
 Gordon Wilson

### **TRAVELING IN THEIR WORK**

Karen Daly  
 Aaron Robertson  
 Gordon Wilson

### **IN THE MILITARY**

Jason Anderson  
 David Lovett  
 Aaron Robertson  
 Trent Walsh

**What will you do this next week**  
**(in addition to praying)**  
**for these loved ones who ail?**

## ***Speaker at the Fair Oaks congregation***

### **Bob West**

(from Carter Av church in San Jose)

**PREACHING TODAY**

**at 3:00 PM**

**ADDRESS:**

**Womens Thursday Club Building**  
**10625 Fair Oaks Blvd.**

**not far from corner of**  
**Sunrise & Fair Oaks Blvd**