

The Messenger

COLDWATER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dec. 11, 2011



A Word from the Preacher

by Clifton Angel

“Anywhere is home, as long as my Lord is there”--we sang these words in chapel on the second day of my visit to the Philippine Theological College. It brought comfort to my mind as I sat in fellowship with those of like precious faith thousands of miles away from home, in a land where I had never traveled. I truly enjoyed my time with the Filipino brethren. I can empathize with the words of the apostle Paul when he said to the brethren at Philippi, *For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ* (Phil. 1:8), and as he said to the Romans, *I long to see you* (Rom. 1:11). As it was true of Paul, it is true of all of us: we cannot be in more than one place at one time, and so we cannot always be in the physical presence of one another. I am thankful to my elders and brethren at Coldwater, and those that have financially and spiritually supported me, so that I was able to make this trip to the Philippines. I hope that all will be supportive of my making trips such as this in the future, if the Lord is willing.

As we meet more brothers and sisters in Christ around the world, and as we endeavor to teach more souls about Christ, so that they will obey and the Lord will add them to His kingdom, our desire to be in Heaven should increase more and more. One of the greatest beauties of Heaven is the reunion therein. The reunion of those who have died in the Lord. The reunion of those who are in lands far away. The reunion of our souls to the Father in Heaven. “How beautiful Heaven must be”.

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you... (1 John 1:5).

VISITORS, WELCOME!

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Class

10:30 a.m. WORSHIP

5:00 p.m. WORSHIP

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Class

We have Bible classes for all ages & Pew Packers on 1st & 3rd Sundays at 4:15 p.m.

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ELDERS

Billy Bland

W. Timothy Wilkes, Sr.

Jim Jackson

DEACONS

Jason Bayless Jared Brown

Jerry Davis Jeffrey Ferrell

Ron Johnson Andy Ratliff

PREACHER

Clifton Angel

Keeping Jesus in the Manger

Steven Rogers

It is that time of year again! Lights and other decorations of red and green adorn our houses and public buildings. Malls and shopping centers are filled to capacity with eager shoppers in search of the perfect gifts for their friends and loved ones. December 25th is recognized by many as “the most wonderful time of the year” because of the giving and receiving of gifts and the drawing together of family. However, to many the significance of this holiday is the celebration and recognition of the Savior’s birth. Though it is wonderful when one chooses to reflect upon the life of our Lord here on earth, for many this is the only time of year where such a reflection is made. It also seems as though more attention is given to the “Nativity Scene” than to the proceeding life of Christ. Their focus tends to be on the infant rather than who He was to become. By the actions and priorities of the majority of society, it seems as though they would like to keep the Lord in the manger.

The account of Christ’s birth is fundamental to the Gospel. When Matthew began recording the beginning events of the Gospel, he wrote “now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise” (Matt 1:18). It was precisely on that wise that the Lord’s incarnation as man was foretold by the prophets of old, thus “now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet” (Matt 1:22). The writer then quotes the words of the prophet in Isaiah 7:14 which gave details to the event. In addition to the fulfillment of prophecy, this account is significant because of the humble nature of His birth. However, too many focus on this portion of His life as if there were no more to it. They would rather see baby Jesus than see the man who cleared the temple of the moneychangers or who later brought the price of sin to man’s attention. After all, man would owe no gratitude--no personal responsibility to an infant in a manger.

What if there were no more to the life of Christ than His miraculous birth and humble beginning? While these things are indeed important and beautiful, they are but a small part of the vast mosaic which is the account of our Savior’s life. When the angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream, he was told to name the child Jesus, “for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt 1:21). After leaving the manger, “the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him” (Luke 2:40). He began His ministry at the age of thirty, teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, confirming the message by healing (Matt 4:23; 9:35; cf Mark 16:20). Throughout His life He remained sinless, a quality which enabled Him to carry out His mission to be our sin offering (2 Co 5:21). This sacrifice was realized when He selflessly gave Himself to die on the cruel cross of calvary. If the child had never left the manger, there would be no hope of salvation for us. When one limits his view of Christ to the precious little babe in Bethlehem, he doesn’t see who the child became and all that He did for mankind.

Perhaps while leaving the Lord in the manger, many also choose to leave the seeking up to the shepherds and magi. It is essential to one's salvation that he seek the Lord. On one occasion our Lord said "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). The Hebrews writer stated that "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of **them that diligently seek Him**" (Heb 11:6 emp. added). Therefore in order to be reconciled and rewarded one must seek the Son! This can be done in the obedience of His Word. This is clearly seen in James' assessment that "of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). Every December 25th multitudes of people celebrate the miraculous birth of Jesus, never to seek the Savior He became, but instead to seek worldly pleasure and revelry only five days later.

When one leaves the Lord in the manger and leaves the seeking to the shepherds, it only follows that he would leave the offering up to the magi. Christmas pageants and carols throughout the country recount how the wise men made their journey to Jesus, guided by a star, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Many acknowledge and accept this account without so much as asking themselves "what do I have in offering to the Lord?" Man is expected to render his reverent service to the Lord. Paul wrote in his epistle to the Romans, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom 12:1). In addition to offering one's self by living for Him, one must continually give an offering of praise and worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). It was a command when the Holy Spirit through the hand of Paul proclaimed "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col 3:16). Because the righteous seek the home prepared for them, they must "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name" (Heb 13:15).

It is precious when you choose to meditate on the birth of his Lord and Savior no matter what day of the year it happens to be. In fact, Christ's entire life should be the focus of your daily meditation for as long as the breath is within you. When the Savior stated "this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me," it was a practice to be done on the first day of every week (1 Co 11:25; cf 1 Co 16:2; Acts 2:42; 20:7). Let us focus on His whole life often, always remembering His sacrifice and what it means for mankind.

Steven Rogers is a dear friend to Clifton, and he preaches at the Dahlonga Church of Christ in Dahlonga, GA.

NEWS & NOTES

Please Pray

Wiley & Betty Tuggle.
Far East Missions
Open Door Ministry, Tim II, and family.
Fishers of Men

Congratulations to Sean & Hannah O'Brien in the healthy birth of their son and daughter, Murphy and Shannah.

Family & Friends

Bobby Keel, husband of Becky, co-worker of Angie; Bobby has cancer and is on his death bed.
Kyle Ellis, co-worker of Andy; his wife and daughter have been in medical facilities at the same time because of serious medical problems.
Mark Wood, friend of Clifton; he is recovering from a major auto. accident.
Wes, brother of Deb Peeler, has cancer.
Harvey Tuggle, brother of Wiley.
Charlie McAllister, co-worker to Caleb Baker, has 2 brain tumors, was scheduled for surgery Nov. 22, and then 4 months recovery best case scenario.
Renee Wright, daughter of Wiley, recovering from 2nd degree burns.
Luke Finchman, in loss of grandmother and other trials.
Renee Loya, (cousin of Elizabeth Baker), has MS.
Norman & Brenda Mahan, tragic motorcycle accident.
Virginia Mayfield -- friend of Bren, has leukemia.
Ray Maples -- undergoing chemo-therapy for leukemia.
Janie Brister -- has multiple health problems.
Cathy Thompson -- has lupus.
Carl Hounshell; Peyton Harville; Linda Lentz; Josh & Maggie Farrow; Charles Easley; Jeff Nichols; James Angel; Steve Angel; Gloria Angel; Bob Spurlin; David Bragg; Kelly Ann Cooper; Carla Carlson.

December Birthdays

Jimmy Yarbro -- 12/05
Kaiden Ferrell -- 12/17
Jeremy Moore -- 12/23
Reese Kinney -- 12/27
Renee Davis -- 12/30

December Anniversaries

Beau & Maira Davis -- 12/10
Jerry & Renee Davis -- 12/13

Get Involved!

Providence Place Devo -- Today -- 2PM
Ornament Exchange -- Dec. 16 -- 6:30PM
Coldwater Youth Lock-in -- Dec. 16

Christmas Party at the Staten's
December 17 -- 6PM - 9PM -- All are invited

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:1, 2).

Privileged to Serve

Sunday, November 20

Morning

Prayer Before Class	Wiley Tuggle
Announcements	Billy Bland
Song Leader	Caleb Baker
Lord's Supper:	
Preside	Jerry Davis
	Johnny Bayless
Assist	Jared Brown
	Payton Jackson
Opening Prayer	Timothy Wilkes, Sr.
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Closing Prayer	Ron Johnson

Evening

Song Leader	Caleb Baker
Opening Prayer	Andy Ratliff
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Lord's Supper	Jared Brown
	Payton Jackson
Closing Prayer	Jeffrey Ferrell

Wednesday, November 23

Song Leader	Caleb Baker
Prayer	Jim Jackson
Invitation	Clifton Angel
Prayer	Jason Bayless