

PRAYERS & ENCOURAGEMENT

Those who are sick or need our prayers — Pat Espy, Linda Reagan, Bud Mixon, Richard Branum, Margaret Blake, Phillip Stevens, Joe Turner

Continue to remember in your prayers those who are unable to attend worship services regularly: *Billie Sue Atkins, Freda Dunn, Romona Stokes, and Marjorie Bar- ringer.*

Please pray for those who have forsaken the Lord that they may be reconciled to God.

READING THE OLD & NEW TESTAMENTS IN ONE YEAR

Monday - 2 Kings 7-8; 2 Chr 21; Matt 6

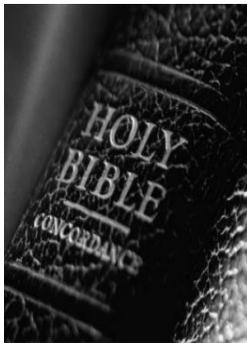
Tuesday - 2 Kgs 9-10; Psalm 49; Matt 7

Wednesday - 2 Chr 22-23; 2 Kgs 11; Ps 131; Matt 8

Thursday - 2 Chr 24; 2 Kings 12; Psalm 50; Matt 9

Friday - Joel; Matt 10

***Week #30
July 23 – July 27***



VISITORS - We would like to get to know you better, and ask that you stay a while after services. We encourage you to visit our website at <http://www.parkhillchurchofchrist.com> where you will find sermons, articles, and daily bible studies to encourage you in your daily walk with God.

QUESTIONS? *We Welcome the opportunity to study God's word with you any time.*

*All sermons are recorded on CD & DVD -
If you would like a copy, please ask one of the men.*

ELDERS

Carl Dolan.....479.414.1972 ~ Ron Roberts479.452.0347 ~ Joe Turner....479.459.6023.

DEACONS

Wayne Carson...479.648.1087 ~ Luke Dolan.....479.357.9547 ~ Joe Dugas479.629.4046 ~ David Meek.....479.459.0820

PREACHER

Bryan Loughmiller.....479.434.3939

July 22, 2018

THINK ON THESE THINGS

Welcome to the Park Hill Church of Christ

3536 GRINNELL AVENUE FORT SMITH, AR 72908 479.782.2415

It is our desire to worship God in spirit and in truth, and to glorify Him in all we do.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY MORNING
Bible Study.....9:30 am
Worship.....10:15 am

SUNDAY EVENING
Worship..... 5:00pm

WEDNESDAY EVENING
Bible Study.....7:00pm

At Peace With All Men



Romans 12:19 *"If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men."*

These are not Bible reading times for most folks anymore. But if there is one verse that seems to be jumping to the forefront these days, it's our verse today. The political arena is getting nastier and uglier every day. It has moved past policy disagreements to name calling, refusing service, and division. It's not just one political party that is guilty of this.

Both parties, equally, cannot stand the other.

It is interesting that Jesus said so little about the Roman government. His focus was upon the kingdom of God which would outlast, outshine and be victorious over powerful Rome. Yet, in our days, we can be so caught up in who said what politically, that we push the kingdom of God to the back burner.

Our verse today is not about politics. It's about relationships and getting along with others, even those who disagree with you. Earlier in this context the apostle said to "bless those who persecute you, and do not curse" (v. 14). He also said, "Never pay back evil for evil to anyone" (v. 17). Our verse is layered in among these thoughts.

Three thoughts come from our verse today:

First, If possible. Peace with some is not possible. Some would rather fight, walk away or destroy a friendship or ruin a relationship than to be a peace. Some will not shake your hand. Some will not apologize nor forgive. Some will stand in the shadows of the elder brother in the prodigal story. Instead of joining in the celebration, they will remain outside. They will be angry rather than happy. I remember a cartoon years ago. A lady was standing at the customer service counter of a store. Obviously, she was not happy with the service she had received. The customer service rep said, "What if we refund your money, give you another product for free, shoot the manager and close the store. Will that make you happy?" And, for some, the answer would be "No." The "If possible," falls into our lap. We must do all that we can to make peace. If there isn't any peace, it won't be because of us. We will have tried. We will have apologized. We will have gone the second mile. We will have extended grace.

Peace is not possible if we must surrender our faith. That is the thought from 1 Corinthians 7, where believers were married to non-believers. The non-believers had enough. They were walking out of the marriage. It wasn't communication problems. There wasn't someone else. It was about faith. The only thing that would make them stay was for the believers to stop believing. That cannot happen. In such cases, let them go. We should not have to compromise our convictions nor sell out on what we believe just to get along with others. I will not go half way with someone when it involves sin. "I'll come to church with you on Sunday morning, if you will party with me on Sunday night." And, that partying involves doing things that are wrong. The answer is NO. This is not possible.

Second, so far as it depends on you. This sounds like peace is possible, but someone is dragging their feet. There could be reconciliation. There could be forgiveness. There could be a mutual understanding and agreement. But, it won't happen unless we do our part. This means getting over hurts. This is part of forgiveness. We must let things go. Don't keep replaying the problem, the pain and what it did for you. Don't keep talking about it over and over. Peace may be possible, if you allow it. The hardest part of this is our feelings. We want justice. We want to at least hurt the one who hurt us, just a little. He should suffer some for what he did. He should have to pay for what he did. All of this sounds reasonable, logical but not very Biblical. As far as it depends upon you. Don't be the one that keeps drama going in the family. Don't be the one that causes others to leave the congregation for another one. Don't be the one that fills the room with tension. Be the encourager. Be the forgiver. Be the one who is first to extend the hand of forgiveness and love. Don't be the last one. Don't be dragging your feet. Don't be the one that everyone has to come and convince you to do what you ought to do. As far as it depends upon you, means you'll be big enough to swallow your pride. It means that you have suffered but you won't hold that against a person anymore. It means that you could demand justice, but you won't. Be the hero here. Be the one who walks in the shadow of Jesus. Hold your tongue. Stop trash talking. Don't stoop to the level of others. Don't bully back. When pushed, this is when our character or lack of character shows. Getting even, hurting others, seems to be the playbook in American politics today, but it's not the steps of God's people.

Third, be at peace with all men. In the beatitudes we find, "Blessed are the peace makers." Folks enjoy peace. We want peace. But the Lord called blessed those who make peace. They

make peace first, with God. We must stop fighting God and being the enemy of Him. But from that, we must be at peace with all men, if possible. The "all men," extends these words beyond our family and the church. It's all people. That's really pushing the limits for some. Toxic work environment really tests these words. Gossipy co-workers who will stab you in the back and take credit for what you have done, and blame others for what they did wrong, make these words nearly impossible. However, as far as it depends upon you, means you will not be the source of problems. Many people have terrible relationship skills. This spills over into terrible martial skills and terrible parenting skills. Walk though a Walmart on a Saturday morning and listen to the tired parents screaming at their kids. Stand in line on black Friday and notice how mean people can become over stuff. It's just stuff.

Getting along, working together, sharing ideas, realizing that my opinion and my way is not the only way, caring for others, these are fundamental relationship skills. When people lack these qualities, it will strain whatever roles they are in. Add selfishness, self centeredness and jealousy and you have all it takes for most reality TV shows. Have you ever wondered why people enjoy watching people cry, scream and get angry with one another. Why do people enjoy watching dysfunction? Could it be that this is part of their world as well?

The opposite of peace is war. War is not nice, whether it's between nations, political parties, brethren, or in the home. We don't sleep well when war fills the air. It consumes our conversations and it puts us on edge. But peace is such a wonderful thought. It brings the image of sitting on my back porch with my wife and just listening to the birds and staring into the woods behind us. Words like calm, restful, delightful, enjoyable, nice, surround the concept of peace. Rest in peace, or R.I.P, is something that once was found on many tombstones. For some, in death may be the only place they found peace and if they didn't know the Lord, they didn't have peace then.

It seems that some people are not comfortable with peace. They like to stir the pot. They like to be the agitator. In a Bible class, they like to bring up the controversial. They like being the devil's advocate. My feelings are, the devil has enough on his side. I'd rather be the Lord's advocate. Why upset others? Why be a trouble maker? Why take away peace? Some just don't seem to get it. It'd be good just to lock some people in a room together and tell them they can't come out until they get along. For some, they would never come out.

Be at peace. Be at peace with all men. As far as it depends upon you, be at peace. If possible, be at peace. This is something that we not only strive for, but must work at. It's easy to irritate others and push their buttons. It takes a lot of character to be a peace with folks.

Roger Shouse, Jump Starts Daily #2130