

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE WEEK OF SUNDAY DECEMBER 15, 2024	
Announcements	Ron Brown

SUNDAY DOOR GREETERS	
North Side	David/ Roxanna Hitchcock
South Side	Bobby/ Marlene Rothfus

SUNDAY DOOR MONITOR	
Gary Robinson	Ricky Davis

MORNING WORSHIP	
Adult Bible Class Prayer	Adam Swallows
Song Leader	Joel Knight
First Prayer	Bobby Rothfus
Sermon	John Chowning
Lord's Table	Todd Webb
Closing Prayer	Allen Cantrell

Evening Worship	
Song Leader	Jay Whitson
First Prayer	Jondan Rothfus
Sermon	John Chowning
Lord's Table	Bobby Rothfus
Closing Prayer	Gary Loftis

Wednesday December 18, 2024	
Song Leader	Bobby Rothfus
Scripture Reading	Gary Robinson
Devotional Talk	Gary Loftis
Closing Prayer	Levi Swallows

Wednesday Door Monitor	
Jere Whitson	

Jere Whitson is responsible for worship assignments.
If you are going to be absent or need to request changes, please contact him.
Gospel Broadcast Supported
Preaching the Gospel, Sunday 7:30 A.M. – Ch. 11

Important News:

2024 Theme

Here Am I, Send Me

Isaiah 6:8

*“Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying,
Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?
Then said I, Here am I; send me,”*

Are we as enthusiastically prepared and ready to serve the Lord like Isaiah was when asked?

How can I be more involved in helping to encourage others and self to serve the Lord?

THIS WEEK’S TEXTS

AM class– 2 Timothy 3:11-17

AM sermon– 1 Timothy 5:17-21

PM sermon– Mark 16:9-20

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SUNDAY	WEDNESDAY
Bible Study9:00 AM	Bible Study.....7:00 P.M.
Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M.	
Evening Worship.....6:00 P.M.	

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Volume XLV Thur. December 19, 2024 Number 50

“SHADES OF MEDIOCRITY” (Part One)

Gary W. Summers

But all my words come back to me
In shades of mediocrity.
Like emptiness in harmony,
I need someone to comfort me.

These words were written by Paul Simon as part of the song, “Homeward Bound,” a Top Five hit from 1966. The phrase, *shades of mediocrity*, would be a poet’s nightmare when he struggles to select just the right words with the appropriate shade of meaning to convey his message. Anyone who thinks writing poetry is easy should try to match Simon and Garfunkel on their early songs. An artist, whether with words or paint, desires that the final version of his efforts be of the highest quality. To be mediocre is but

to fail.

Tom Wacaster, for a manuscript titled, “He only Is My Rock” (not to be confused with Simon and Garfunkel’s, “I Am a Rock”) quoted from an unknown source a marvelous passage describing King David (*Build Your Hope on Things Eternal* 208-209). Among other promises that David might have made to God is this one: “I will not...meander in the maze of mediocrity.” The unknown author must have based that phrase on some observation made about David, but we do not know what specifically that was. But it certainly seems true. David would never have wandered around in the maze of mediocrity.

What does it mean to be *mediocre*? According to *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, the word *mediocre* means: “Neither good nor bad; average, ordinary, commonplace.” It comes from the Latin word, *mediocris*, which means “halfway up the mountain,” in a middle state.

It is interesting to think of various Bible personalities and situations in relationship to this word. How many of those listed in Hebrews 11 that are heroes of the faith would one term as *mediocre* in their character or in their service? Would a mediocre Abraham have left Ur of the Chaldees? Would an *average* Moses have endured all the hostility he faced from God’s own people? Would a *commonplace* Rahab have saved herself and her family from death?

God’s commandments do not leave any room for mediocrity. There is no command to: “Remember the Sabbath day an average amount of times during the year.” God did not tell the Israelites: “Honor your father and mother when it’s convenient.” He never said: “You shall not steal—very often.” How does an *average* person keep these commandments? Actually, Israel did keep, “You shall make no graven images” in a mediocre fashion—by making them. Consider how someone ought to keep Deuteronomy 10:12-13: “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?”

Can anyone envision an Israelite saying, “I’m going to lend mediocre support to this commandment”? How can these words be approached on a half-hearted basis? The same could be said of the greatest commandment God gave, according to Jesus. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind...” (Luke 10:27).

Does obeying this commandment sound as though it might be performed in a mediocre manner?

The following example was given by a prophet to King Ahab, who had let the cruel and arrogant King Ben-Hadad of Syria live. The prophet described the scenario in which a soldier was to guard a prisoner. However, while the guard was busy here and there, the prisoner escaped. What should be done? Ahab agreed that he should be put to death. Then he found out the application concerned himself. But he was correct. The guard was guilty of mediocrity, and death was the punishment for it.

What a wonderful congregation the Ephesians had! Jesus praised them for many of their good aspects. They tested men who claimed to be apostles and found them to be liars. They did not tolerate those who were evil. They had patiently labored for Jesus’ sake and in His name. They had not grown weary in doing so (Rev. 2:2-3). With all of these praiseworthy characteristics, they were mediocre in one way: they had lost their first love and needed to repent (Rev. 2:4).

Being a mediocre Christian is not an option. Later, to the church at Laodicea, Jesus informed them that they were lukewarm and that He wanted to vomit them out of His mouth (Rev. 3:16). Lukewarm is a mediocre temperature. Probably, we have too many members in the Lord’s church who are lukewarm today.

How else can it be accurately described when “Christians” do not care what occurs in worship? Hand clapping? “Well, I don’t particularly like it, but I won’t say anything about it.” Instrumental music? Same response. False doctrine? “Well, all of us probably believe something false.” Is it any wonder that churches of Christ are becoming liberal and acting like denominations? Mediocrity is killing us.

IMPORTANT NEWS

-We rejoice with our India brethren, CH Lazarus reported 2 baptisms this past week to a husband and wife in the village of Tattivaru.

-Ron Gilbert reported for the Africa brethren in the month of November , they have had 663 baptisms. 621 restorations, and 13 new congregations started.

-The elders have decided to relocate the library at the building and they are needing one to two volunteers to oversee this relocation. If this is something you are interested in , please see one of the elders.

ILLNESSES

Carrie Jones, mother of Roxanna Hitchcock, had surgery Monday for her cancer diagnosis and will begin treatments soon. The surgery went well.

Brenda Allen, is at Vanderbilt Hospital at this time, not doing well. She is now under palliative care.

Ora Lee Whitaker, is in CRMC at this time.

PANTRY ITEM:

Spam

EXTENDED ILLNESS

Bonnie Stockton, Jerry Vincent, Gary Wyatt, Carol Meadows, Junior and Lou Bryant, Ora Lee Whitaker, Sue Ing, Mike and Lucy Mitchell, and Bill and Betty Barnes.

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