

# It All Begins At Home!

Trying times are ahead for us as we enter the 21st century. Already there are apparent weaknesses surfacing in our society. Our brethren are facing a most difficult task of standing for the truth, not falling prey to false doctrine, and following exactly God's Word. Authority to oppose false teaching can be found nowhere else but in God's Word.

Today's society embraces sin by giving it more "politically correct" names, i.e. adultery - an affair; homosexuality - gay; drunkenness -- social drinking, etc. The young men and women of today will be the future of man kind and have been given the task of rejecting error, and only by the teaching of sound doctrine and morals from God's inspired word can this be accomplished.

It is time for Christian parents to recognize the severity of failing to teach our children at home, and failing to learn our lesson as God's children.

— by Rocky Rose

## Navarre News and Notes

**Remember Those On Our Sick List:** Jim Wetzstein, Francis Mansfield, Starr Wilkins, Carrie Hare, Sister Gerry Wiemert.

**Remember in your prayers:** Houston Perry now in the states and hopes to be home for a visit soon.

We meet on James M Harvell Rd next to the public library in Navarre. Call us for directions and more information (850) 939-8109



Navarre church of Christ  
8490 James M Harvell Rd  
Navarre, FL 32566

Place  
Stamp  
Here

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday

Bible Class for all ages.....9:00 AM  
Morning Worship Service.....10:00 AM  
Evening Worship Service ..... 6:00 PM

Wednesday  
Bible Class for all ages.....7:00 PM

**VISITORS ARE  
WELCOME!**

**If you know of someone who would like to receive this publication, please let us know.**

**For a free Bible correspondence course by mail, call us.**

# Navarre Messenger



*"Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Matthew 11:1*

Volume 2 Issue 23

December 24, 2006

## Thought To Ponder

**Real love is helping someone who can never return the favor.**



**Matthew 6:1-4  
Matthew 19:21  
Matthew 14:21  
Proverbs 19:17**

## Inside This Issue:

**Page 2 - "Church Growth: Attitudes"**  
**Page 3 - "Does Pain Mean That God Does Not Love Us?"**

Jim Bell  
Evangelist & Editor

## CAREFUL TO ANSWER

When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were called before the king and faced charges of refusing to worship the golden image he had erected, Nebuchadnezzar asked, "Who is that god that shall deliver you out of my hands?" Things looked pretty dark.

But they replied, "We have no need to answer thee in this matter" (AS). The King James version reads, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter" (**Dan. 3:15-16**). The thought seems to be, we will not choose our words carefully — concerned lest we offend; we will not try to "talk our way out of" this situation. And they added, "Our God is able to deliver us" (if it suits His purposes to do so) "but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Several years back a preacher said John (the Immerser) "lost his head" because he "lost his head" — he was not tactful in his criticism of Herod. John had said, of Herod's marriage to his brother Philip's wife, "It is not lawful for thee to have her" (**Matt. 14:3-5**).

John was not "careful to answer," someone might say. Well, he certainly was not trying to "butter up" the king. On the other hand, John and the captive Jews of Daniel 3, were very careful to maintain their faith in God and to court His approval. John lost his head, and the three Hebrews were thrown into the fiery furnace, but each gained more than he lost. We "have no need" for any man's approval as we have need for God's approval.

Jesus said, "Fear 'not those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell" (**Matt. 10:28**).

We are not advocating crudeness! Daniel's brethren were respectful to the king; and love for souls will forbid our becoming a bully with the truth. Shouting, stomping pronouncements of Damnation are often signs of weakness, while genuine strength is accompanied by humility. But genuine strength speaks truthfully, directly and clearly, regardless of temporal consequences — and because of inevitable eternal consequences.

— Robert Turner

**Check us out on the internet: [www.navarrechurchofchrist.net](http://www.navarrechurchofchrist.net)**

## “CHURCH GROWTH: From Decline To Growth” Attitudes That Help and Hurt

Members of the church must learn to respond maturely to perceived wrongs and disagreements (Matthew 5:21-26). When church members respond emotionally to disagreements about teaching or perceived personal wrongs or congregational actions and leave without proper dialogue with those they feel to be in error, the whole church is injured and demoralized. In many cases, those who encourage others to join with them to strengthen their case against whatever source of dissatisfaction they have had. These adverse reactions to disagreements often create tension among members as “sides” are taken and hostility is displayed behind the scenes toward others, rather than fair and constructive discussion of whatever issues and problems may exist. Visitors and weak members run for their lives when they see this kind of rancor in a church. Therefore it is imperative that all members seek reconciliation with their brethren rather than seek to undermine their influence through talking to others. Each member must cultivate his own personal faith in God and commitment to His work (2 Peter 3:18).

Where these are lacking, there will be little enthusiasm for evangelism. However, where faith is sincere and our relationship to God and one another is encouraging, there will be an excitement in our language around non-Christians. Invitations to enjoy the blessings of God will be abundant and universally given; and outsiders with be curious as to what excites us about the congregation.

Church members must be eager to form new relationships for the purpose of evangelism (Matthew 22:39). The church’s growth comes from the contacts developed by the membership and the ongoing work they do in inviting their associates to hear the gospel and in the follow-up teaching that is done.

When church members become content with their present relationships, church growth shuts down because there is no stream of contacts to teach.

It is imperative that all members keep a healthy commitment to the Scripture as the anchoring point for their beliefs and to make their appeal to them for the proper understanding of God’s will and how to apply it (Col. 3:17). However, members, like leaders, must have the ability to see how the church can address the needs of their changing culture without compromising the principles upon which the church is built. The church must continue to evaluate the quality of its actions and look for the most effective ways to reach the lost and edify the church.

Finally, members must listen respectfully and carefully to their leaders and work cooperatively with them (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). In our time, it is fashionable to stress individualism rather than respect for the studied judgment of those with far more experience in the Lord’s word and work. This can cause congregational heartache and discord. However, when members develop a teachable attitude and a team spirit, all congregational needs and goals can be accomplished with unity and good will; and the salvation of many souls will be the result.

— Johnny Felker

---

**“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him..”  
(Colossians 3:17)**

---



## DOES PAIN MEAN THAT GOD DOES NOT LOVE US?

Suffering and pain are a part of life. We know it because we have all felt it to one degree or another -- emotionally and physically. The temptation, when we do have pain, is to think that God does not really care. If God cared, wouldn't He end the suffering for us and make us feel more comfortable in life?

One of the worst thoughts that anyone can have is to think, "God does not love me." And the proof, we may think, is that we have pain. Still, we need to understand there is solid proof of the fact that God does love us beyond all measure. And this proof is found in Jesus Christ. Let's recall what the apostle wrote to the Romans: *"He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will he not also with Him freely give us all things?"* (Romans 8:32). Then Paul asked, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"* (v. 35). The obvious answer is "nothing" (vv. 36-38).

While some may question the love of God when they are in pain, we need to remember that the love of God was ultimately demonstrated by sending Jesus to the cross for our sins. In doing so, God Himself entered into suffering and shared it with us. Thus, through an act of suffering on our behalf, God demonstrated that His love is beyond question (Romans 5:6-8). What this means to us is that there is nothing that can happen to us that will tell us that God does not love us. If we are beaten, scorned, mocked, or reviled and persecuted in any way, these things cannot tell us that God does not love us. Likewise, if we are victimized by crime, or injured through an accident, or fall seriously ill, these cannot demonstrate that God does not care. The love and care of God is demonstrated in the cross, and nothing can take that away. Nothing.

So why is there pain and suffering? Ultimately the answer goes back to the problem of sin. When Adam and Eve sinned, there were consequences that went into effect that will continually plague the earth and its inhabitants. The presence of suffering should not make us want to depart from God; it should cause us to draw closer, for in suffering we are witnessing the effects of living in a sin-filled world. Why would we want to revert to that?

Of course, this does not mean that every instance of pain in your life is due to your personal sin. It just means that we live in a fallen world that bears the ugly marks of sin. And suffering is a part of that.

In instituting death for sin, God actually created a way in which to bring us back to Him. It is through the death of Jesus that we can be forgiven of our sins. This is the love of God; yet, without death, this sacrifice could not have been made. So physical death became a way of blessing us through Jesus.

We also need to keep in mind that this world is not the end of all things. God will bless us spiritually here; but what we receive here is only a payment of what is to come in Heaven (1 Peter 1:3-4). And this is all the more reason to give our lives to Him who has shown us the greatest love of all.

So the next time we are in pain, let's think of how God loved us through the pain and agony of the cross. In doing so, we can take advantage of learning the patience and maturity that can come from our pain.

— T. Doy Moyer  
~ *Gospel Power*, Anderson, Alabama

