

Try These Excuses

Selected

The following list of excuses is presented for your use the next time you miss work and need a good reason. These are some of the excuses that brethren have used thousands of times in the past. Obviously, if the Lord will accept them, they should satisfy your boss...

- I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, but some friends came by unexpectedly.
- I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, but we went to visit family and didn't make it back in time.
- I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, but I was with you in spirit.
- I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, but I decided to make my traveling plans during the time I was supposed to be at work and just could not make it.

WARNING: THESE EXCUSES HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED FINAL APPROVAL FROM THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY! Hebrews 10:24-25 • Matthew 25:31-33 • John 5:28-29 • 2 Corinthians 5:10

NAVARRE NEWS AND NOTES: Please remember in your prayers: **Jim Wetzstein, Debbie King-smill, Carrie Hare, Sister Gerry** in Asbury Place, Gulf Breeze, **Kenny Cauley** will be having back surgery. Cindy Perry's sister and Felis Larson's daughter - **Mary Garrett** Continue to remember **Houston Perry** as he serves in military duty in Iraq.

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 10

JUNE 18, 2006

Thought To Ponder

Every Christian occupies some kind of pulpit and preaches some kind of sermon every day.

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:14-16)

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Jim Bell
Evangelist & Editor

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP



"Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world." These are the familiar words we sing as we teach our children how important they are to our Lord. Jesus does love children, as was seen in His own earthly ministry. "Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.'" (Mark 10:13-14)

Children need to be present for the worship. As parents, we should emphasize to our children what a privilege it is to be a part of the worship of God. By bringing them to worship, we are teaching them to "seek first the kingdom of God" and "to love God" with all their hearts. Yes, children are often distracted and must sometimes be disciplined during the services, but do not let this discourage you as a parent from bringing your children to worship. They must learn how to properly worship and show reverence, and they can only do this with patience, time, and training.

Children need to learn the importance of their efforts in worship. At our worship services, we should never be embarrassed by the efforts of our youth and encourage them to participate to the best of their ability. It is always a joy to see children who enjoy being a part of the worship of God. Children can learn to sing the "old songs" with an open song book; bow their heads for prayer; and even take notes from the sermon. Let's praise them for this.

Children set an example to others in worship. When we see children participating in worship, it reminds us of Jesus' words, *"unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."* (Matt. 18:3) When we see our children worshipping, we are reminded that we too must be humble, thankful, and happy in the worship of God. This is the attitude of heart that Jesus loves!

Check us out on the internet: www.navarrechurchofchrist.net



Can We See The Bible Alike?

by Bob Buchanon

The Bible is the only book in all the world that can tell us for certain what to do to be saved. One might read all of the books of history, science and poetry ever written, and find not one word on what to do to be saved.

Does the Bible tell us plainly enough what to do, so that any ordinary man can understand it? Did God want us to understand His message? Can we all see the Bible alike?

Why is it that some people read and study the Bible for a lifetime and still know very little about it? The explanation is simple. They read the same passages over hundreds of times and get the same wrong or inadequate picture each time. Unless we can break out of our misunderstandings and get into the original meaning of these key words and concepts, we may never understand the Bible. God has given us a book full of rich meanings. I believe He expects every serious child of His to try to get the true picture of what He has revealed.

We need to remember that for a thousand years of church history the Bible was not allowed to speak. Men read the Scriptures in search of proof texts to support the authoritative teachings of the Catholic Church. They resorted to methods of interpretation that would make the Bible say what fitted their theological, social, and political systems. Their minds were closed to the plain meaning of the Bible, and its words of truth were not allowed to judge and reform a corrupt church and social order. The very key to Bible interpretation was lost.

While the Protestant Reformation led to a rediscovery of the Word of God, a tragic and familiar pattern soon developed among the non-Catholics which was just as bad as what the Catholics were doing. Hundreds of competing denominations and sects read the same Bible and agreed that it was the one sure rule of faith and order. But each of them claimed to be the true expression of the faith revealed in the Scriptures and condemned other as heretics. As one theologian sadly commented: "The Bible is the book in which everyone seeks and promptly finds his own dogmas."

Look at the confusion, strife, and division in the religious world today. We disagree, come to different conclusions and think we are both right. The problem is with man, not God. God has given us a book that we can understand. The Bible was written for this purpose (Ephesians 3:2-4), and we are commanded to understand it (Ephesians 5:17).

If we are able to understand the Bible at all, we will understand it alike. There will not be the 350 or more denominations with the varied teachings. If we do not understand alike, we misunderstand. One of us, or both of us, will have to admit error. We cannot have different answers and both be right. Disagreement is evidence of misunderstanding. When we understand we are alike. When we misunderstand we are different. When we misunderstand, we disagree. When we understand, we agree. To say we cannot understand alike is to charge God of being the author of confusion. The Bible says, "God is not the author of confusion" (1 Corinthians 14:33).

"I have more understanding than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation." Psalms 119:99



Before Men - - Before God

by Bill Hall

"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven" (**Matthew 6:1**).

True righteousness is primarily "God-conscious" rather than "man-conscious." God is pleased as we sing His praises, or teach His truth, or lead in prayer, or help the needy, or give to support His work, if our purpose is to gain His approval and bring glory to His name. But woe to that person who sings for the purpose of displaying his beautiful voice. Woe to that person who seeks the praise of men as he leads in prayer. Woe to that preacher who "tickles the ears" of his listeners. Woe to that person who gives to be seen of men. When he gains their praises, he "has his reward in full"; none awaits him from the Father in heaven.

In keeping with this teaching, the Bible reveals God's judgment of two different couples, one enjoying God's approval, the other suffering His disapproval.

God disapproved of Ananias and Sapphira (**Acts 5:1-11**). His disapproval was not because of the amount of their offering. They had brought a very liberal offering. They had even sold a possession in order to give, and while we do not know what portion they brought, they obviously brought what they thought would be sufficient to impress the apostles. But herein lies the key to their real problem: They were more conscious of **men's** reaction to their benevolence than they were of **God's**. Had they been conscious of God in what they did, and had they been seeking His approval, they would not have lied. But they did their

righteousness "**before men, to be seen by them,**" and in their concern for impressing

men, they lied concerning the amount which they brought.

In contrast to Ananias and Sapphira, there were Zacharias and Elizabeth of whom it was said, "**And they were both righteous before God**" (**Luke 1:6**). While many no doubt observed their righteousness, and as a result glorified the Father in heaven (**Matthew 5:16**), Zacharias and Elizabeth obviously were not as concerned for man's approval as they were for God's approval. It was God's approval that they sought; it was His approval that they gained.

God blessed Zacharias and Elizabeth, choosing them to be the parents of John, the forerunner of Christ. He punished Ananias and Sapphira with immediate death, and, in keeping with Jesus' statement of **Matthew 6:1**, they "have no reward from your Father who is in heaven."

Hypocrisy is loathsome to the Lord. For a person to appear outwardly religious and sincere, while inwardly he only desires the praise and approval of men is to be guilty of gross hypocrisy. Let us seek always to do our righteousness before God to be seen of Him. The glorious and eternal "reward, of the Father" cannot be compared with the fickle and fleeting praise of men.

"Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth..." Joshua 24:14

