

From the Preacher's Pen... Have you ever been in love? Do you remember what it is like to be in love? One of the greatest difficulties for us as human beings is remembering to really keep our love alive and not grow tired of someone.

A simple illustration: The first time you held your newborn child, remember that feeling of love, that care and concern, that desire to protect and care for them? Now, fast forward six months. Check out the sleep-deprived parent of that same child with a cold and cutting their first tooth. The frustration at a given moment may well seem to overshadow the love you once felt.

The fact is, like the Apostle Paul said so well in 1 Corinthians 13, we must constantly remember what real love is and how it acts. So, let's take a moment to reflect on God's lesson about our love for Him:

Loving the Lord

Let's begin with Romans 8:28 where Paul said, *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.* Two things we must keep in mind here: First, God's "good" is promised for those that love Him. Second, God defines loving Him as how we live in obedience to Him.

Without obedience we don't really love Him and we cannot expect His blessings. You can easily check that fact with John's words of 1 John 5:2, *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.*

This has ALWAYS been God's definition of really loving Him! Deuteronomy 6:5 states the basic standard: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*

From that passage forward God corrects numerous misunderstandings. Deuteronomy 11:1 emphasizes keeping all of His requirements, statutes, ordinances, commandments. As Jesus reminded Satan (Matthew 4:4), *every word of God is important!*

In Deuteronomy 11:13 and 22 God reminds us that all our blessings are contingent on faithful love and service, our obedience to Him.

Deuteronomy 13:3 is one of the many times God underscores the reminder that false teachers are NOT to be followed. In fact, they are a test that God uses to find out if we really love Him!

To simplify all this, Deuteronomy 30:16 tells us that loving God to the point of total obedience is the absolute basis of all blessings and life. That's actually the same concept as Paul stated in Romans 8:28.

The songs of God's people carry the same lessons: *O love the Lord, all you His godly ones! The Lord preserves the faithful and fully recompenses the proud doer.* (Psalm 31:23) *Hate evil, you who love the Lord, who preserves the souls of His godly ones; He delivers them from the hand of the wicked* (Psalm 97:10).

Just in case you've forgotten, Jesus also echoed that same great standard of loving God in Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30 and Luke 10:27. Real love is for God is the all-consuming passion of faithful service to our Lord.

Leave it to the Holy Spirit through Paul to state the boldly obvious negative: *If anyone does not love the Lord, he is to be accursed. The Lord has come! The Lord comes!* (1 Corinthians 16:22) Consider for a moment the force of what Paul says there. Even as he pronounces a curse on those that do not love the Lord, he offers a double blessing that the Lord has already come and that He is coming again (the Aramaic term Paul uses translates to both meanings).

So, how's your love? Are there difficult times? Certainly! Are there events that make you question your love? Things that make you question His love? We all face these challenges and it is worth remembering that Jesus did, too! But keeping the faith, truly loving the Lord our God and Savior means that we *must* also remember the whole story!

Yes, a parent of a six-month child with a cold that's cutting teeth will certainly struggle. But we remind them, we remind ourselves of what love really means. And we keep on loving and caring for that child. We treasure the precious moments as they grow, even when they are a challenge to us. Why? Because that is love, real love!

Do you love the Lord? Are you aware of all He puts up with in our lives? And yet He goes on loving us, encouraging us, blessing us, patiently waiting for us to show our love for Him.

Do you love the Lord?

— Lester P. Bagley

Opportunities to worship, study & serve:

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY 10 AM

WORSHIP 11 AM

EVENING WORSHIP 6 PM

WEDNESDAY 7 PM

THURSDAY LADIES' BIBLE CLASS 10 AM

Congregational Potluck 3rd Sunday
each month after morning worship
(except June, July & August)

Welcome to all!
We are glad you are here!

Enter to Worship...
Leave to Serve



Welcome to our visitors today! We hope & pray you'll be blessed by your time with us & will join us again soon!

Our Prayer List: Keep the following in prayer this week as you "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17): Matthew Odom, Heather Ries, Hunter Shirley, Ruth West, Everett Martin, Anna Mae Hardin, the Najera family, Bill Hall, Reta Wallace, Jim Holder, Kristi Martin, Wally Myers, Cindy Turpin, Millie Cunningham and...

Our Missionaries: Jack Farber and Aaron Knotts and families; Cesario Espinosa, Jr. (Philippines); the Jorge Mora family (NM Christian Children's Home)

Previously Announced Family & Friends: Robin & Marc Estabrook (Julie Evan's sister & nephew), David Reffner (Flora Doster's grandson with MS), Art Stoneking & wife (friends of Carl Catozzi, cancer), Jeremiah Haller (Flora Doster's grandson), Annette (Cindy Turpin's sister), Cole Myers (grandson of friend of Myers), Sheila Simpson, Lillian Wilhite (relative of Lynn Shirley), Teresa Acosta, Rosemary Glasier (Crystal Mora-Landroth's mother), John Hoover's relatives with personal difficulties, Shelly Cooper (friend of Carl Catozzi), Lucas Espinoza (Brian Campbell's friend), Kaesha Raffterfer (Gene Pinkston's cousin, cancer), Chuck Keels (friend of Grubbs with cancer), Terri Fillipski (cancer, Julie Evans' cousin).

Special Requests: WBS & WEI Bible study students; Kevin & Nancy Chambers & World Christian Broadcasting; Judy Hagner, son Preston, daughter Angela & son James. Brandi Schroeder (Flora Doster's granddaughter with MS); Dallas Purcella's mother; Paulina's father (Arnold); Julie's father; Laurel's father.



OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL: Nate Panka (Cleo Wise's grandson); Javier Najera; Fernando Najera, Frank Torres (Javier's brother & cousin); Eric Shirley; Trevor Farrow (Allen's son); Scott Hoover (John's son); Ariel Gomez; Ismael Lopez; Robinson Goldman (Cindy Turpin's son-in-law); Nathan Bagley.

New: Jason: Carl Catozzi's son in need of prayers; Michael Lightheart: son-in-law of Flora Doster, health problems; Jim Hartdegen: friend of David Davis following a stroke; Sean & Vickie: Carl Catozzi's friends with struggles in their lives; Terri Hoover: John's daughter-in-law with serious health issues; Monica Lopez: Jorge Mora's aunt with breast cancer; Jacob Shirley: struggles; John Mark: in Afghanistan in danger for his faith; Jimmy Davis: friend of Mike Evans with melanoma; Adele Fink: recovering from colon cancer; George Ponter: Brian Campbell's cousin with multiple struggles; Anna Price: via Kimberlee Myers; Chuck Hedrick family: with multiple health problems; Kathy Gonzalez: grandmother of Heavyn & Tatum with cancer; LaVerne Jackson's mother; Sandra Watson, Sue Shepperd & Elzie Shirley: Lynn's family with illnesses; Ray Stephenson; Delbert White's Granddaughter Jessica; Tom Hoover: (John's brother); Jerry Odom; Barbara Harrison.

Steve McDonald: Jean Grubbs granddaughter's husband, tests. 2

Donald Helton: on dialysis until he has a kidney transplant.

Kirrin Kerby: (Jean Grubbs grandson).

Bob Harrod: cancer

Carolyn Fisher: multiple health issues (via Cleo Wise).

Dena Lara: complications of Valley Fever.

Ken Price: friend of the Halls with kidney disease.

Rick Richarson: Cheryl Campbell's brother with heart problems.

Don McCaully & his son: friends of Carl Catozzi.

Ayanna Rodriguez: friend of Sarah Evans with brain cancer.

Ruben Torres family: Javier Najera's cousin's family recovering from auto accident. Evelyn is now out of hospital & in rehab.

Jeannie Lewis' brother-in-law: recovering from lung transplant surgery.

Phyllis Hall's sister: fell and broke some bones.

Lonnie Akins: brain cancer.

Malakye Didelotte: continues to have kidney problems and tests.

Kandy Cunningham: Mickey Didelotte's mother having tests.

Doyle Wise: Flora's brother & Cleo's brother-in-law; bone cancer.

Charlie Stephenson: having tests for his headaches.

Terry Lara: friend of Davis family with pancreatic cancer.

Ken Ramsey: father-in-law to John Hoover's son had bypass surgery.

Carl Catozzi family: his premature, new-born great-grandson.

Amy Vestal: in treatment and rehab. She sends her thanks to everyone for the prayers!

Also Our New Christians, those travelling and especially those with spiritual struggles.

Help Update Our Prayer List!

If you have someone listed in our *Previously Announced Family & Friends* prayer list & would like them to REMAIN on the list, please fill out one of the *Prayer Request* cards in the foyer & give it to Lester.

A BIG thank you to those that have given updates! It really helps keep us all up-to-date.

Upcoming Events...

Men's Business Meeting: December 9 after evening worship.

Potluck: December 16 — Group #1 [Tanya Haney's group] set-up, serve & clean-up

Monthly Singing: December 30 at 2:30 here.

5th Wednesday Prayer & Song Meeting: January 30.

Men's Leading & Serving Class

Begins TODAY at 5 pm...

Men (young & older!) training class for leading prayers, doing talks & devotionals, & song-leading.

Monday with the Master

Ages 10 through college meet tomorrow at 6 pm for dinner & Bible study in the Fellowship Hall.

See Lou Bagley THIS MORNING if you don't already know what to bring!

Congregational Projects

Project 1: *Cottage fund for George & Chantelle @ NM Christian Children's Home. PRAY, plan to be involved!*

Project 2: *Collecting t-shirts to make into diapers and pillowcases for dresses. To help, patterns are on the table in the foyer along with brochures about Healing Hands. Beside the foyer table are two plastic bins for donations of tee shirts and pillowcases.*

Urgent Prayer Need

Our brothers and sisters face persecution and death for becoming Christians in their Muslim-governed country. Do not let them go through this alone. They are asking for your prayers.

A map with pictures is on the large red bulletin board near the foyer, first names and countries. **PLEASE take a prayer list with their names on it and pray for them at least once a day.**

Even pictures of the bulletin board sent over the internet could further endanger their lives. Keep praying.

Last Week: 7+ Pew-Packers



Be "in the picture" every week!

✓ Checkup ✓ How are we doing?

Attendance Last Week:

Sunday Morning Bible Class = 79
Sunday Morning Worship = 128
Sunday Evening Worship = 69
Wednesday Evening = 42

Giving

2018 Weekly Budget = \$3,015.00
Contribution Last Week = \$2,464.00

Church of Christ
805 East Racine Place
Casa Grande, AZ 85122

Postage

TO:

Privileged to Serve

Sunday Morning December 2

Adult Bible Class: • *Acts of the Apostles* Lester Bagley
Announcements: Jerry Odom
Song Leader:..... Tom Haney
Prayer:..... Chuck Hedrick
Serve Communion:....Riley Harrison, Bill Hall, Derwin Jackson, John Hoover, Gary Pierce
Sermon: • *Ephesians 1:7-14*..... Lester Bagley
Closing Prayer: Frank Campbell

Count Contribution: Curt Odom & Max Compton

Sunday Evening December 2

Song Leader:..... Albert Bailey
Prayer:..... Jim Holder
Sermon: • *Parables of Jesus - 24* Lester Bagley
Serve Communion:..... Derwin Jackson
Closing Prayer: Jerry Odom

Wednesday Evening December 5

Song Leader:..... Albert Bailey
Prayer:..... John Hoover
Devo:..... Lester Bagley
Closing Prayer: Frank Campbell

Anniversaries



December 2: *Mike & Julie Evans*
January 1: *Lester & Lou Bagley*
January 15: *Dave & Joan Davis*
January 17: *L.Z. & Lynn Shirley*
January 23: *Gary & Toni Pierce*
January 25: *Allen & Brenda Farrow*
January 29: *Frank & Cheryl Campbell*
January 31: *Mickey & Sharon DeWitt*

Birthdays



December 2: *Velma Jackson - Kim Myers*
December 7: *Lily Reid*
December 22: *Sharon DeWitt*
December 27: *Julie Evans*
December 27: *Michael Hill*
December 27: *Carolyn Rouse*
December 28: *Tatum Acuna*
December 29: *Nancy Young*