

From the Preacher's Pen... I guess we've all noticed that there are some games we like to play and others that really don't interest us. One of those games that many play and enjoy is the "game" of perverting God's word.

Recently in a conversation I was told that God will save even those that are disobedient to His will, so we have nothing to worry about. I quickly checked my Bible to see if God had perhaps changed His will. But, no, 2 Thessalonians 1:8 (and a host of other similar scriptures!) was still there. When Jesus comes again He will come taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So how is it that people can twist and pervert God's word like that? Let's consider the subject of...

Playing Legal Games with God

Back in 2012 an 81-year-old woman with a sore jaw died just weeks after a hospital in Detroit mistakenly performed brain surgery on her. A jury awarded her family \$20 million. But appeals courts and the state Supreme Court reversed the decision claiming that it was simple medical malpractice and not negligence. Yet the hospital had admitted that the surgery was an error of negligence!

What was shocking to nearly everyone involved in this case is that, in an amazing display of legal gamesmanship, the courts reversed the actual evidence and facts. What the judges did allowed a crime to be committed and the criminals to be declared innocent with no hope of any future justice in the case.

As appalling as this case is, it has become relatively common place in the American legal system. Right and wrong are no longer decided by facts and laws but by who can play the best game.

Again, as appalling as all this is in the world, it is also a favorite game for people to play with God, His word, and His laws. For, you see, in spite of all the nonsense we attempt to use to cover the facts, God has clearly defined right and wrong and people have felt free to play legal games!

Solomon faced the problem in his day and declared, *He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord* (Proverbs 17:15).

Many years later this same legal game was being played in Isaiah's time and caused God to comment: *Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight!* (Isaiah 5:20-21)

Do we disobey God, commit some sin then either declare that it's okay, or imagine that God has to forgive us so we are free to do wrong? Even under the Old Law God recognized and forbade His people from playing legal games. The word He often used for this sin of playing legal games with sin is *presumptuousness*.

Many translations use this same English word but some translate it as premeditated, contempt, arrogance, willful or flagrant. Do you see God's word pictures of His view of our legal games?

Consider some specific examples: *The man who acts presumptuously by not listening to the priest who stands there to serve the Lord your God, nor to the judge, that man shall die; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel. Then all the people will hear and be afraid, and will not act presumptuously again.* (Deuteronomy 17:12-13) Paul would echo this command to Timothy in dealing with elders (or any other Christian by implication) who sin like this (read 1 Timothy 5:19-20).

The term false teachers (or prophets) is used for those teaching or advocating playing legal games with God, and they deserve the same treatment by those faithful to God: *But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die* (Deuteronomy 18:20). Again the New Testament echoes this lesson (cf. 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Peter 3:14-18; 1 John 4:1-6, etc.)

David, even as he wrote of his praise to God, would also remember to ask, *Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not rule over me; then I will be blameless, and I shall be acquitted of great transgression* (Psalm 19:13).

We as Christians face a world that loves to play legal games, even with God's own words and commands. You will be told that God doesn't care how you worship and serve Him. You will be told that all you have to do to be saved is pray a "sinners prayer" that's never found in

continued on page 3

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): Nora McNeil, Matthew Odom, Heather Ries, Hunter Shirley, Rene Turner, 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.

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 & Mirlene Smith (relatives 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; Paul Sipes & April Belovedstone (Sue Wolfe's son & daughter); Robert Strickland (Cleo Wise's grand-nephew); Ismael Lopez; Robinson Goldman (Cindy Turpin's son-in-law); Destanie Aragon; Nathan Bagley.

New: Jason: son of Carl Catozzi in need of prayers; Dr. Yanni: friend of John Hoover with cancer; Michael Lightheart: son-in-law of Flora Doster, health problems; Jimmy Handtegen: friend of David Davis following a stroke; Derwin Jackson & family: with his job; Sean & Vickie: Carl Catozzi's friends with struggles in their lives; Terri Hoover: John's daughter-in-law with serious health issues; Monica Lopez: George Mora's aunt with breast cancer; Jacob Shirley: struggles; Rhett Booher: Gary & Toni Pierce's grandson: Traumatic Brain Injury while in the Army; Ray Stephenson family: youngest son's cancer has spread; 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; Amy Vestal: lupus and intestinal problems; Anna Price: via Kimberlee Myers; Chuck Hedrick family: with multiple health problems; Kathy Gonzalez: grandmother of Heavyn & Tatum with cancer.

Sue Wolfe; LaVerne Jackson's mother; Celeste Wallace: health

problems; Sandra Watson, Sue Shepperd & Elzie Shirley: Lynn's family with illnesses; Ed Baum; Chuck Hedrick; Ray Stephenson; Gene Pinkston: back problems; Delbert White's Granddaughter Jessica; Tom Hoover: (John's brother)

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

Larry West: complications of diabetes.

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

Kirrin Kerby: (Jean Grubbs grandson).

Shannon White & Talon Bored: friends of the Martin family in need of prayers.

Everett Martin: several doctor visits & tests

Carlos Sterling: as he travels to California for his father's funeral.

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

2018 Directory Update

Be sure to pick up your updates on the table in the foyer!

There is a packet from a few weeks ago of several additions.

There are NEW single sheet additions and updated BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY pages.

If you need a complete directory with or without a binder, please see Lester.

Upcoming Events...

Monthly Singing: TODAY at 2:30 in Eloy

Men's Business Meeting: March 11 after evening worship.

Potluck: March 18 — Group #3 [Cheryl Campbell's group] set-up, serve & clean-up

5th Wednesday Prayer & Song Meeting: May 30.

the Bible. You will be told that God has nothing against homosexual behavior or that sex outside of marriage is okay.

You will be told a million things by those playing legal games with God. And they will all still be lies that will cost you your soul if you believe them for God still says that the soul that sins will die (cf. Ezekiel 18:20).

So how about it? Are you smart enough NOT to play legal games with God? Are you smart enough to actually obey what God says? It is a choice we need to make right now!

— Lester P. Bagley



Men's Training Class, 5 pm today...
for leading prayers, doing talks & devotionals, & song-leading.

Ben Mereness of EEM will be updating us on the work in class this morning & preaching at morning worship.

Champions for Change!

For NM Christian Children's Home

It's that time again! Several have already exchanged full cans for empty ones & more empties are available on the table in the foyer.

Please return them by April 25th.

Liquid Dishwasher Detergent is also needed!

Pickup for everything will be April 28

Monday with the Master

Ages 10 through college meet the first Monday of the month for dinner & Bible study.

NEXT MEETING IS ONE WEEK FROM TOMORROW - 6 pm in the fellowship hall

Parents & College Age please see Lou Bagley THIS MORNING to plan our meal!

Last Week: 9+ Pew-Packers



Be "in the picture" every week!

✓ Checkup ✓ How are we doing?

Attendance Last Week:

Sunday Morning Bible Class = 67

Sunday Morning Worship = 131

Sunday Evening Worship = 51

Wednesday Evening = 66

Giving

2018 Weekly Budget = \$3,015.00

Contribution Last Week = \$2,902.93

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

Postage

TO:

Privileged to Serve

Sunday Morning February 25

Adult Bible Class: • *Acts of the Apostles* Lester Bagley
Announcements: Allen Farrow
Song Leader: Curt Odom
Prayer: Kim Myers
Serve Communion: George Mora, Allen Farrow, Tom Haney, Mike Evans, Max Compton
Sermon: • Ben Mereness
Closing Prayer: Jim Holder

Count Contribution: Tom Haney & John Hoover

Sunday Evening February 25

Song Leader: Curt Odom
Prayer: Delbert White
Sermon: • *Feelings* Lester Bagley
Serve Communion: Tom Haney
Closing Prayer: Ron Cook

Wednesday Evening February 28

Song Leader: George Mora
Prayer: David Davis
Devo: Lester Bagley
Closing Prayer: Curt Odom

Anniversaries



March 1: *Chris & Mickey Didelotte*
March 5: *Everrett & Jeanne Martin*
March 6: *Derwin & LaVerne Jackson*
March 17: *Brian & Catrina Campbell*
March 28: *Thomas & Adele Fink*
April 5: *Archie & Karen Peterson*

Birthdays



February 25: *Jim Holder*
February 25: *Louise Terpstra*
February 27: *Matthew Odom*
February 28: *Kristi Ann Martin*
March 3: *Toni Pierce*
March 6: *Allison Chavez – Amy Vestal*
March 7: *Stephanie Davis – Luke Hill*
March 7: *Vernell Jackson – Morgan Parry*