

From the Preacher's Pen... Are you helping or hurting the church, the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Are you a real soul winner for Jesus or just an old sorehead? Do you truly stand with your...

Battle Buddies

A fellow preacher recently sent me an article to read. Now there are two important things you should know about this article. First, it was from a very denominational source and, as a rule, I don't feel there is much value in the thoughts and writings of false teachers. Second, this article actually made some good points that deserve our attention.

The article was discussing the lack of real friendships and "brotherhood" among church members and, to an even greater extent, among church leadership. The fact is, we as Christians are often guilty of "shooting our wounded!"

The most demanding job in this world is that of actively living a Christ-like life! Having said that, we often imagine that what that means is living a totally self-righteous life. While Jesus lived a sinless life, he did NOT live it without friendships, encouragement, love and support of others!

John is described as the disciple that Jesus loved (John 13:23; 20:2; 21:7, 20). While Jesus was close to all His disciples, there were some that especially provided even closer friendship and fellowship. Martha, Mary and Lazarus are also singled out as those that Jesus loved (John 11:5). Certainly, many of Jesus' discussions with Peter show an especially close bond of encouragement.

If Jesus drew strength and reinforcement from that bond of friendship then we undoubtedly need the same thing, too. Solomon, another "wise man," reminded us that *there is a friend that is closer than a brother* (Proverbs 18:24).

To return to the thoughts of that article mentioned above, burnout is highest among those that work the hardest! Teachers, elders, preachers, deacons and all who faithfully serve the Lord are both worthy of honor and in danger of that dreaded disease.

Think of Paul's admonition, *The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching* (1 Timothy 5:17). We usually focus on the "double honor" as being paid for their work, but part of the honor is also the appreciation and caring for that's so richly deserved, even here on earth, for those that faithfully serve.

Over the years many of our finest elders, preachers, teachers and Christian servants of the Lord have burned out and even lost their faith. So, what can we do about it?

As we've already noted, Jesus had close, loving friends that were an encouragement to Him. Solomon, David and many others of God's people depended on those friends that were closer than earthly family.

Let's back up a moment and consider the problem from another angle. Suicide (both literally and professionally) is extremely high among soldiers with the most combat experience. And very similar things happen among the most proficient police officers, firefighters and emergency medical professionals. The challenge of constantly having someone's life (soul) in your hands and so often seeing it all go badly wrong too often is a huge burden to bear.

It seems like some of that pressure is evident in the apostle Paul's writings. Too many battles fought with too little support from your own side is an awful burden to bear. You can hear it rather loudly in 2 Timothy 4.

The US Army began a program several years back known as the "battle buddy." The idea is that a battle buddy assists his or her partner both in and out of combat. They are not just for company but intentionally for the reduction of suicide. Each battle buddy watches his partner's actions and is expected to save their fellow soldier's life by noticing negative thoughts and feelings and intervening to provide help.

It is a real challenge to have the self-confidence to stay strong without that "buddy" support. Nowadays the "battle buddy" concept is not only for support in combat but for the ongoing support for living life outside of combat. The lesson readily applies to Christians that are sincerely fighting the good fight of faith.

Go back to 2 Timothy 4 and note verses 9-11: *Make every effort to come to me soon; for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.* Do you hear the loss of too many? Do you see the importance of those close friends, those "battle buddies" that remain faithful?

You will recall that Jesus ALWAYS sent his disciples to work in (at least) pairs. Paul routinely travelled and worked with one or more fellow workers.

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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

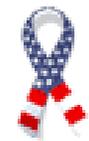
Welcome to our visitors today! We hope & pray you'll be blessed by your time with us & will join us again soon!

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; JunAyoks Casianoespinoza (Philippines).

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; Michael Lighthouse: 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; 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; LaVerne Jackson's mother; Sandra Watson, Sue Shepperd & Elzie Shirley: Lynn's family with illnesses; Ed Baum; Ray Stephenson; Delbert White's

Granddaughter Jessica; Tom Hoover: (John's brother); Jerry Odom; Barbara Harrison.

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

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

Kirrin Kerby: (Jean Grubbs grandson).

Bob Harrod: recently diagnosed with cancer

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

Dena Lara: Myers' niece with complications of Valley Fever.

Rene Turner family: at her passing.

Daniel & Rebecca Untersee's father, Scott: surgery May 15.

Larry West: is home but not expected to live much longer.

Katheryn Haddad and family: at the passing of her brother-in-law in Michigan last Tuesday.

Owen Doster: heart surgery May 18

Delbert White: surgery May 17.

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

Congratulations to four of our young ladies at their graduations this month:

Heavyn Acuña

Velma Jackson

Vernell Jackson

& Kimberlee Myers (Masters)

**Vacation Bible School
Coming June 18-21
More info soon!**

Upcoming Events...

Men's Business Meeting: **TONIGHT** after evening worship.

Potluck: May 20 — Group #1 [Tanya Haney's group] set-up, serve & clean-up — This will be our final potluck until October

Monthly Singing: May 27 at 2:30 in Eloy

2 5th Wednesday Prayer & Song Meeting: May 30.

John tells us, *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* (1 John 1:9). But it remains for James to demonstrate the practice as he says, *Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.* (James 5:16)

It seems like God is trying to tell us something there! The way to survive the trials is with the working together, the praying for one another. Only together can we accomplish much!

Look at four additional scriptures that address this issue: *A friend loves at all times, & a brother is born for adversity* (Proverbs 17:17). *Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor* (Romans 12:10). *With all humility & gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love* (Ephesians 4:2). *Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you* (Ephesians 4:32).

There are souls to save here. And the only way we can save the souls of fellow saints is to stand strong and firm with them in the Lord. Only together can we accomplish much!

— Lester P. Bagley



**Please remember to be
QUIET
for our Pew Packers between
Bible Study & Worship!**

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

.....
Doing good to all people...
(Galatians 6:10)

*Thus far in May, our clothing room workers
have clothed over 68 people!
Next open to the public: October 8*

Church TV Program Reminder
In Search of the Lord's Way
Cox Cable channel 13 @ 7:30 am
Dish channel 239 @ 4 am
DirecTV channel 307 @ 4 am
www.searchtv.org
Getting to Know Your Bible
DirecTV channel 377 weeknights @ 7:30 pm

Last Week: 12+ Pew-Packers



Be "in the picture" every week!

✓ Checkup ✓
How are we doing?

Attendance Last Week:
Sunday Morning Bible Class = 76
Sunday Morning Worship = 102
Sunday Evening Worship = 58
Wednesday Evening = 45

Giving
2018 Weekly Budget = \$3,015.00
Contribution Last Week = 2,947.29

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

Postage

TO:

Privileged to Serve

Sunday Morning May 13

Adult Bible Class: • *Acts of the Apostles* Lester Bagley
Announcements: Mike Evans
Song Leader:..... Curt Odom
Prayer:.....Allen Farrow
Serve Communion:....Brian Campbell, John Hoover, Bill Hall, Frank Campbell, George Mora
Sermon: • *Mark: The Urgent Gospel*..... Lester Bagley
Closing Prayer: Tom Haney

Count Contribution: Curt Odom & Max Compton

Sunday Evening May 13

Song Leader:..... Curt Odom
Prayer:..... Ron Cook
Sermon: • *Evangelists = All Christians* Lester Bagley
Serve Communion:.....Bill Hall
Closing Prayer: Mike Evans

Wednesday Evening May 16

Song Leader:..... George Mora
Prayer:.....TBA
Devo:..... Jim Holder
Closing Prayer:David Davis

Anniversaries



May 14: *Brett & Jessica Myers*
May 15: *Owen & Flora Doster*
May 28: *George & Nancy Young*
May 30: *Jerry & Billie Odom*
June 7: *Jorge & Chantelle Mora*
July 3: *Michael & Clara Hill*

Birthdays



May 9: *Roy Holland*
May 11: *Owen Doster - Pete Wise*
May 14: *Katheryn Haddad*
May 15: *Leanne Hill*
May 17: *Paulina Stutenroth*
May 19: *Mickey Didelotte*
May 20: *Jenny Reid*
May 21: *Angela Harrison*