

# Neighborly News

*Brought to you by your friends at the Mt. Hebron Church of Christ.*

## Helps in Handling Bereavement

Since the pale of death pierces every mortal, it is necessary for all of us to learn how to handle bereavement. I have watched with great admiration and respect the courage that has borne many a saint through hours of sorrow. Here is some of the practical advice I have seen others use in dealing with grief:

### Express your emotions.

Since Jesus wept, it should not be considered a Christian virtue to be unmoved by the loss of a loved one. There is a difference between suppressing one's emotion and losing one's self-control. The Bible does not say, "Sorrow not," but it says, "sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

**Seek the aid of your friends.** The very presence of friends is an encouragement. When Paul neared Rome, the brethren came to meet him and he "thanked God, and took courage" (Acts 28:15).

**Compel yourself to be with people.** Your inclination may be to retreat into the refuge of privacy, but there is a greater need than one realizes

to associate with others. David did (2 Samuel 12:19-23). Express your feelings in words. Talking about it will help you to accept it. If this is done at the outset of bereavement, one will sooner be able to stabilize his life.

**Avail yourself of spiritual resources.** Even though you may not have realized the importance of the Scriptures and their comfort, now this can help in building your faith. The power of prayer and the peace of God are very precious possessions. **Don't brood over what might have been.** Both Mary and Martha said, "If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:21, 32).

**Actively pursue worthwhile tasks.** Once the initial shock has been dealt with, get busy at other things. Resolve like Paul to reach "forth unto the things which are before" (Philippians 3:13).

**Make careful, thoughtful decisions.** Many an individual jumps hastily into deciding the

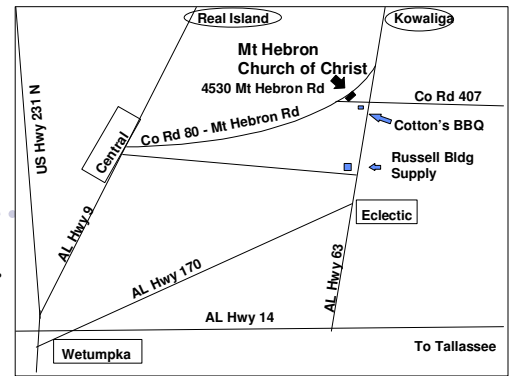


full scope of the future rather than waiting until he has regained a proper perspective of life. Don't get in a hurry. Make prayerful decisions.

**Increase your trust in God.** Those who have come through their sorrows with a deeper faith can verify that God, who rules over all, truly does make all things work together for good (Romans 8:28).

After the crisis of grief, you can serve more fully and sympathize more completely with men of like passions. With Paul, you, too, can thank God for the comfort received in knowing that it has now given you the ability to comfort others who are in any trouble.

- Hardeman Nichols



### Mt. Hebron Church of Christ

P.O. Box 240159  
4530 Mt. Hebron Rd.  
Eclectic, Ala. 36024

Come and visit us

Sunday

Bible Classes 10:00 AM

Worship Services

11:00 AM & 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 PM

### JUST FOR LAUGHS

"Why did you buy such an expensive coat?" her husband demanded.

"Well," confessed the wife, "I guess the devil just tempted me."

"Then why didn't you say, 'Get behind me, Satan?'"

"I did—but he looked over my shoulder and said, 'Fits real nice in the back, too.'"



"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ,"- Philippians 1:9-10

## IF — It's a big word

Consider these verses:

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what we will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).

What if we don't?

"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). What if we don't?

"Ye are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).

What if we don't?

"If you continue in my word, then ye are my disciples" (John 8:31). What if we don't?

Someone once said, "If 'ifs' and 'buts'

were cans of nuts, we'd all have a Merry Christmas." Indeed "if" is a big word!

A few questions:

- What if God took away the Bible tomorrow because we would not read it today?
- What if God forgave us as we forgave others?
- What if God gave us ten times the amount of money we give to him on Sunday?
- What if we never saw a flower bloom because we grumbled when God sent the rain?

- What if God treated us the way we treat our mates?
- What if Jesus were going to preach at church Sunday night?
- What if every church member evangelized just like you?
- What if God took away the blessings for which we had not given thanks?
- What if you knew today would be your last?
- What if you knew that Jesus were coming in the next five minutes?

What if...?

## A look in the mirror

Our society is addicted to "reality." I guess it started a good while back with crime shows like *Cops* and *Real TV*. Then, we made the switch to relationship shows like *The Bachelor(ette)*. It seems that nothing is too sacred or outlandish for people to turn into a reality show. There is even one now that consists of two families swapping mothers/wives for two weeks (if this isn't evidence that our nation's family values are out of whack, I don't know what is).

The lure of these shows is the fascination we have

with seeing "real" people in "real" situations... seeing who they REALLY

are! Yeah right! With cameras in their face and the world watching, how real do you think these people are being? Reality or not, the key word is "show." Do we ever put on a show for others? What is the truth about who you are? What if everyone you know was able to look in your mirror and see exactly what you see... who you really are (James 1:23-25)?

How would your



friends react? Would your Christian friends be shocked at the person you are in secret? Would your non-Christian friends be shocked to find that you are a Christian at all? Are you the kind of person who "observes himself, (in the mirror), goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was?" (1:24).

Most importantly, what do you see when you look in the mirror of truth? Perhaps you yourself are fooled into

seeing something that's not true (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). This is especially dangerous when it relates to eternal salvation. The devil says, "Everyone's ok," and "God doesn't mean what he says." But God will keep His promises, including, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

The REAL you peeks out when no one is looking (Mama always said). And the REAL you is determined by your actions... not by your intentions. Make your reality pleasing to God by obeying His will.

- Darrell Powell