

Visit Your House of Worship

WEEKLY SERMONETTE

"Living at Your Best" by Rev. Lew Van Der Wege

The New Year holds great promise for our lives, our churches, our country and our world. Through Jesus the Christ the power of God's Love is ever present and working in our lives. It is only empowered by Christ's Love that we can live at our best. Following are some steps for acting out the Love of God in our lives that make sense to me. I pray that you will consider them and use them in the year ahead. Let us live at our best in 2004.

Don't let circumstances get you down. At the beginning of each day, determine that you are not going to get "under the circumstances." They can flatten you. If you can't change negative situations, don't let them change you. "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

Evict resentment from your life. Resentment can take over your mind and heart, affect your nervous system, and cripple your ability to live at your best. "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." Philippians 4:8

Remember you are a child of God. Affirm this fact several times a day: "I am a child of God. Today I will act like God's child, talk like God's child, live like God's child, give like God's child."

Accomplish something positive each day. Decide that before the day ends you will accomplish at least one thing that is positive. Let it be centered in Christian Love and let it be for someone else, not for your own profit or as a favor you expect to have returned.

Bring your best to each day. Start each day with this prayer in your heart: "Today I give my best. Dear God, give me this day what you know I will need. "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your

spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable and perfect." Romans 12:1-2

Keep a prayer list. Develop a prayer list and keep it up to date. Confess sins; get rid of grudges, surrender jealousy, ask God to help you in every possible way. Thank God for the forgiveness you have received and the power that is yours. Then, pray for those you love, those with whom you work, those you don't like, and those who have asked to be remembered.

Be a true friend. Speak to your co-workers, expressing love, concern and appreciation. Avoid gossip about others. This drains your energies. Use your energy to do the very best you can on your job. "To watch over mouth and tongue is to keep out of trouble." Proverbs 21:23

Surprise someone with friendliness. Contact someone within your family circle or perhaps a friend . . . by letter, phone, email or visit. Speak to someone you may not know. Express genuine care. "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven" Matthew 5:16

Study your areas of weakness. Don't focus on your weaknesses all the time. Be aware of them, work on strengthening them, but do not let them become an obsession in your thinking. "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9

You can do it with God's help. Begin now to believe that you can live at your best the kind of life God wills for you. Pray, act, talk, work and know that God cares about you and what you do with your life. God has given the power to overcome, to live the abundant life that Christ reveals. "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power." Ephesians 6:10.

Adapted from a leaflet written by Sam H. Coker for Discipleship Resources.



Casting a Broken Spirit

Many of us have had the misfortune to suffer a broken bone or to sympathize with someone who has. The worst part is the pain of the broken bone. Then there is the discomfort and confinement of the solid cast, allowing no mobility of the area, no leeway for the bone to bend. Yet, this must be so that the bone heals straight and strong to support the body again.

Similarly, God heals a broken spirit. In Jeremiah 23:9, we read, "My heart is broken within me, all my bones shake." For a spirit to heal, we must stay close to God, not bending to the familiarity of "quick fixes." This may seem uncomfortable during times of temptation, yet as the bone heals, so does the spirit, in due time. Nehemiah 8:10 proclaims "....the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Is your spirit weak? Visit the Great Physician at your church or synagogue this week. He will strengthen you.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Luke 3:1-22	Luke 4:31-44	Luke 5:1-16	Luke 5:17-39	Luke 6:1-16	Luke 7:18-35	Luke 8:19-39

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PINOCHLE

By JAKE DURHAM

It was a starlit night as the moon was in the last quarter, in fact you had to look twice just to see its outline, an obvious reason to expect another action-packed night of high-level Pinochle. It was just four days till Christmas and as would be expected, everyone was being extra nice. The Grand Mothers had made cookies and hand-made Christmas cards to help make it a festive occasion. It was also just a week plus until the Mighty Wildcats would show the world just how powerful they really were, as they would take on the always dominate and nationally ranked, Big Ten power, the Ohio Buckeyes. The biggest thing in football for Kansans since the Jayhawks made it to the Orange Bowl under Pepper Rogers, eons ago. There was no shortage of activity but before you knew it the clock on the on the wall was straight up seven and as the bell rang, an even forty scrambled to their seats.

Being as this was the last tournament of the year 03, there were those who for sentimental reasons wanted to capture the championship. However, it was going to take more than sentiment as was obvious as the first round came to a close when the team of Ron and Sondra Kester took the high round honors and the initial lead. Stan Billips and Vern Coddington, often referred to as the Graham County Wonders, captured the honors on round two but the lead fell to the team of Larry Smith and Stan Miller. Coddington and Billips made it back-to-back honors on three and also took the lead. The bell rang to signal the break after round four and as the scores sheets were turned in and being recorded, most everyone took time to assess the situation. The team of Dave Sheley and Jack Mechsner had taken fourth round honors but the lead was still under the control of Billips and Coddington, who were the only team with a one-hundred point average after four rounds. Dee and Thelma Bushnell were in second place. The teams of Darren McMullen and Angie Griffin were tied for third and fourth with the team of Dennis McMullen and Duane McEwen, and the teams of Arnold and Dorothy Zillinger were in a tie for fifth with Dave Sheley and Jack Mechsner.

The crucial fifth and sixth rounds were coming up and some bold moves now could make some major impacts. The pushers were determined to go the farthest bid possible to either take control or make their opponents pay the price. It was risk-taking but in some cases necessary to get back in the hunt. The team of June Jolly and Margaret Magers took fifth round honors but Billips and Coddington were riding high and maintained the lead for the third round in a row. The team of Ed and Kathleen Berlier took the honors on round six and a look at the board showed things were tightening up. Coddington and Billips were still

in the lead but changes perhaps were in the making. A catch-up break was declared after round seven so everyone could get an even start on the eighth and final round. The team of Eleanor Jensen and Barbara McKie cashed in the seventh round honors and also captured the lead. The team of Billips and Coddington were one point down in second place and were one point ahead of Sheley and Mechsner. McMullen and Shick were in fourth place and rounding out the top five was the team of McMullen and McEwen. With two points separating the top three teams and twenty points separating the top five, it seemed like a five team race, but actually it was more like a ten team race and could be even more. One thing was sure, the final round would be the determining factor.

The bell rang for the eighth and final round and a more serious atmosphere prevailed. Every bid was now carefully determined. A high round could make a major effect in more than a few hands. There were the usual moans and groans as each hand was played out and as the scores were turned in, it seemed as though the lead changed as each one was posted. It wasn't until the final score was recorded that the outcome was determined. The Team of Merle Taylor and Weldon Brooks had captured eighth round honors but the team of Eleanor Jensen and Barbara McKie had prevailed and walked away with the championship and the Ladies Coalition began a victory celebration. The winners were humble in their victory however and in good sportsmanship fashion vowed to return to defend their newly won title.

Top ten teams in order were: 1. Eleanor Jensen and Barbara McKie; 2. Dave Sheley and Jack Mechsner; 3. Darren McMullen and Angie Schick; 4. Arnold and Dorothy Zillinger; 5. Dennis McMullen and Duane McEwen; 6. Eldon Billips and Vern Coddington; 7. John Hildebrand and Coy Christy; 8. Larry Smith and Stan Miller; 9. Brett and Doug Gallentine; 10. Merle Taylor and Weldon Brooks. Winning score by Jensen and McKie was 745 points for an average of 93.2 points per round. Highest single round score was 134 points by Dave Sheley and Jack Mechsner.

Other teams not previously mentioned were: Bill Glenne-meier and Eldon Vincent; Bill and Nitz Vontz; Norm Walter and Mary Jane Wahlmeier; Cyrene Kester and Loree Province; Todd and Doyle Brooks; Dee and Thelma Bushnell; Roger Wahlmeier and Jake Durham

It had been a fun filled evening. The sounds of Elvis' Blue Christmas could be heard in the background as holiday wishes were expressed as each team bid their farewells. A quick glance at the calendar showed the third Sunday in January would be the 18th, so come early and sign in. Games start at seven.

Even Santa still makes a stop at Rita's home and even knows who all is at this place. Rita Bieber's granddaughter, Linnea Archer Fague and children, Casey and Christina of Rochester, Minn., drove to visit their grandmother at Calvert New Year's Eve and also to be here when her mother, sister and family were to arrive on New Year's Day.

On New Year's Day Rita Bieber drove to Hays Airport to meet her daughter Marcia Archer of Ladera Ranch, Calif., and Marcia's daughter Erin Boele, Jacob and Taylor who had spent a few days visiting her parents at Ladera Ranch. Erin and her family live in Reno, Nev., where she is residents' director at the university. Her husband Pete Boele is the sports writer and also head of the sports department of the Reno News.

The four-year-old boys, Casey and Jacob, had lots of fun playing in the snow. Even two-year-old Christina joined them in making snow angels.

Linnea and her family returned home on Tuesday to resume her teaching job after the holidays. Rita took Marcia, Erin and her family back to Hays January 6 to meet their flight to return home. They all went to visit their uncle Don Moody at Whispering Pines while they were here.

ALMENA NEWS

By ESTHER MARBLE

Mabel Malcolm celebrated her 90th birthday on Jan. 11 and her three sons and families, Bill and Carol Malcolm, Hutchinson; Jim and Shirley Malcolm, Colby; Norman and Amy Malcolm, Cimarron, came for the weekend. Afternoon guests were Margaret McElroy, Topeka; Sylvia Whitney, Norton; Joyce Trumbo, Carrie Malcolm and Don and Linda Malcolm, Almena; Wesley and Ed Whitney, Norton; Eddie, Steven and Stewart Whitney, Almena.

Esther Marble received a call Friday afternoon from her sister, Edna Nelson, Columbus, Neb., to tell her our niece, Janet Nelson, of Colorado had died. Janet was the youngest child of our sister, Leona and husband Ralph Nelson, who are deceased.

Margaret McElroy of Topeka came Friday to visit her mother, Carrie Malcolm, and spent a couple of days with her.

Guests of Rita Bieber at Calvert over the Christmas holidays were John Bieber and Chris of Wichita, Jennifer Bieber of Manhattan, Barbara, Ed and Meghan Wassinger of Ness City, Suzann Wassinger and Lance Pfeifer of Hays. All attended Christmas Eve Mass together then Christmas Day was fun with all the festivities.