

NORTON MANOR

Attend Church Regularly

...and read your Bible daily



WEEKLY SERMONETTE

By Pastor Terry Laughlin, CrossRoads Church, Norton

Be Holy: We have just entered into the year 2008. God clearly gives instructions to His children about what they are to focus on this coming year. The Holy Spirit inspired the apostle Peter to write to God's elect — those who are chosen by God through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:1-2). The goal God has set before Christians is high, yet attainable. "... Prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given when Jesus is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.' " (1 Peter 1:13-15)

The writer of the Book of Hebrews, while warning against falling away from the faith, rebuked his readers for still being spiritual infants. Many Christians continually need someone to remind them of the elementary truths of God's Word. Messages on forgiveness and salvation are most certainly Biblical, however they alone won't mature a believer in Christ. Christians must find teaching that will take them from milk on up to the meat of God's Word. Solid food is for those who want to mature and diligently train themselves to distinguish what is truly worthwhile spiritually from what is only a lethargic form of godliness.

The purpose of the church is not to make

people feel good about themselves but to give God's children an opportunity to become increasingly holy. In our day of social Christianity, the newest fads and latest programs have produced carnal Christians. If the apostle Paul were alive, his letters to many churches today

would mirror his epistle rebuking the first century worldly Corinthian church.

"Holy," "saint," "sanctification" — all three of these words have been translated from one Greek word that is difficult to translate into English. Its gist, however, is easy to grasp — it

means to be separated, set apart or different from. Morally, it means to be striving heartily after God's purity and righteousness instead of seeking after the ways of the world and the things in it. A Christian who is set apart for the Lord lives his life in a way that pleases God. He uses his talents and the things that God has given him to glorify Jesus Christ, not himself or the church he attends.

People are often guilty of perceiving "church" to be just another club in town competing for numbers or a building where lots of programs are held. Rather, they should come to know that "church" is people who have received Christ into their hearts and who are being changed into His image through the illumination of the Holy Spirit and the written Word of God. Jesus is the Head, the church is His Body.

The Bible instructs Christians to always conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel (Php. 1:27). Paul wrote, "Count yourself dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Sin is not to be your master." (Rom. 6:11,14)

As a Christian, you are purchased by the very blood of Christ and your New Year Resolution for 2008 is a mandate from God, "Be holy." The Bible teaches that if you love the Lord, then you will obey His commands (1 John 5:3). And you have God's promise, He will faithfully empower you to live out what He calls you to — an abundant life of holiness.



Are You Ready

Midnight...New Year's Eve. The clock counts down; this is the moment you've been waiting for. Confetti flies! Laughter resounds! Resolutions have been made, this year will be different. Are you ready?

Life is unpredictable and reality may attempt to weaken your resolve. This year can be different with God's help. You can keep those resolutions with the strength that God provides, long after New Year's Day has come and gone. Without His help you are helpless as a baby, yet when you trust in God, you are promised that "...the old has gone, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17)!

Spend time with God this year at your house of worship; let that be your first and most important resolution. Walk with God and you will always be ready!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Luke 2:21-40	Hebrews 1:1-14	Colossians 1:1-23	Colossians 1:24-2:5	Colossians 2:6-23	Colossians 9:1-17	Psalms 2

Scriptures Selected by The American Bible Society
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By DORIS MIZELL

Clara Shewey went to her son Jimmie's on Dec. 24 and her son Gerald was there from Daytonport, Iowa, and also her son George.

Others there that afternoon were Jimmie's girl and her husband and two little ones; Shawn and his girl friend and Rosie Lentz from Almena. Some went home to go to work and Jimmie fixed the complete dinner for nine at noon and three for supper. The next day Clara went to Karen Anderson's, Prairie View, where all of Karen's children were home. On Dec. 27 she went to Rosie's for dinner where there were 16 present. She returned home that evening.

Mildred Schwab spent most of Monday and Tuesday with the Wayne McCallisters at Norton. Mike McCallister from Hays was home. Rob and Dodie and Matthew McCallister, Holcomb, came Monday. The men needed to get home to work on Wednesday so all left in a hurry. Christmas afternoon when they reported what might be a blizzard was coming in. We all had a good Christmas dinner at Wayne and Norma's. Lots of good food and visiting. Mike brought Grandma Schwab back home on his way back to Hays.

Robert and Dawn Pauley, James and Lena Skrdlants' daughter and son-in-law, came Christmas Day and cooked the dinner for the four of them. They had a phone call from their daughter Julia and grandson from Liberal.

Alma Schulze spent Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with Mr. and Mrs. Dale Schulze and family. Additional guests were Tim Adrian and son Gary from Colby.

Mary Keith's family gathered together Dec. 23 to celebrate Christ's birthday at the Norton Manor. Those attending were Mr. and Mrs. Tom Murphy of Wilson; Mr. and Mrs. Shane Murphy and girls of Sioux Fall, S.D.; Mr. and Mrs. Ed Keith of Almena; Mr. and Mrs. Royce Bruce of Win-

dom; Mr. and Mrs. Bill Greving, Mr. and Mrs. Colby Greving, Prairie View; Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Navarus and boys, North Platte, Neb.; Mr. and Mrs. Todd Slavik and Torea, Long Island.

Bozie and Deloros Bozarth spent from Sunday, Dec. 23 to Christmas afternoon in Plainville at the home of their daughter Denise and Dave Whisman. Visitors on Dec. 24 in the morning were their granddaughter, Mandi Dobson and children, Cael and Marlie of Plainville. On Christmas Eve, Miki Waggoner, the Bozarth's granddaughter and Shawn Smith and children, Madison Waggoner and Gaige Smith, hosted a dinner at Miki's home in Plainville. Others present were grandson Mark and wife Danniele Waggoner, Plainville; grandson, Matt and wife Julie and daughter Kyllor of Salina; and son Curtis and Marla and children Hayli and Eli of Norton.

Mary Schoen entertained Mary Keith and Mr. and Mrs. Lee Preston to Christmas Eve soup supper.

Christmas Day, Mary Keith joined the Bill Greving family for a feast and gift exchange.

The Saturday after Christmas Alma Schulze and Donna Thomas went to Americus, and spent the night with Mr. and Mrs. Mike Houston. All of Donna's children and families were there. It was very enjoyable. They came back Sunday.

Doris Mizell hosted the family get-together and gift exchange on Christmas Day at the Manor. Those attending were Mr. and Mrs. Dennis McCallister, Clayton; Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Foster, Jared and Peggy, Jennings; Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Mizell, Wamego; Jordan Mizell, Manhattan; Lester Mizell, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Mizell, Stephen, David and Jacob, Karlynn Kent and Brian Volgamore, Norton.

Marie Engelhardt's visitor Sunday afternoon was Mildred Engelhardt.

I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Have a story idea? Call 877-3361 and let us know ... we'd love to hear about it!

CrossRoads

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

The Christmas celebrations are over. Now comes that time of the year when many people make New Year's resolutions. With fixed determination they try to achieve what they have announced at some party. However, they seldom keep those New Year's resolutions. Why not?

There are three powerful enemies that often work together to keep us from fulfilling those resolutions: 1.) The flesh, or better yet, the sinful nature. Paul specifically describes its power, "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out." We inherited this sinful nature from Adam and Eve and it controls all unbelievers; 2.) The world, or this world's system, has a lot to draw us away from what is good and right—that is to worship God with all our lives; 3.) The devil. He is real. He was cast out of heaven for pride and rebellion, and he led other angelic beings to rebel with him. Peter warns us, "Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5: 8).

With these three adversaries constantly opposing us, it is easy to understand how most people fail to achieve or accomplish their resolutions and fulfill commitments.

Jesus warns us that apart from Him we can do nothing good. Instead, people do what is right in their own eyes bringing grief, disappointment and destruction into their own lives and the lives of their families.

The apostle Paul wrote about struggling with sin and how to overcome it. Sin is overcome only by being born-again, allowing God's Holy Spirit to live in us and surrendering to Him (Rom. 8: 9). Paul described it best when he wrote, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). These words are true for every man, woman and child. A person must have Christ living in them before they can begin to live a righteous life.

The Bible teaches that Jesus is able to sympathize with your weaknesses. He has been tempted in every way, just as you are, yet He was without sin. Jesus is able to help you overcome sin and set you free from the bondage of sin. Jesus said, "Everyone who sins is a slave to sin." However, He also said, "If the Son sets you free, you are free indeed" (John 8:34,36). Jesus is not only able to save you from hell but save you from your sins in this life as well. When you repent and confess your sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive you of your sins and purify you from all unrighteousness.

Jesus also taught that only a few will enter the narrow gate and walk the narrow road that leads to eternal life. (Matt. 7:14) Those who have chosen the narrow gate and walk on the narrow road are those who have accepted Jesus as personal Savior and Lord. They find themselves becoming more and more like Christ and living victoriously over the sin that desires to destroy them and their relationship with the Lord.

The only New Year's resolution that can withstand the flesh, the world and the devil, is to resolve to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Will you be one of the few and receive Him? He is waiting to set you free!

CrossRoads Church, 313 W. Lincoln, Norton, KS (785) Phone 877-2416
www.standatthecrossroads.com - e-mail crossroads@uratel.net