



# THE INFORMER

Church of Christ ~ New Albany, Mississippi

[www.nacoc.us](http://www.nacoc.us)

April 21, 2020

## When Paul Was Quarantined: The Beauty of Christ's Church

By: David Sproule



Paul spent two years quarantined. Can you imagine? Paul spent two years quarantined as a Roman prisoner. Can you imagine that? That's a bit different than being quarantined in the comfort of your own home for a few weeks. Well, what did the apostle Paul do with himself for two years? Scripture tells us what he spent much of his time doing: *"he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God"* (Acts 28:23). Paul focused on the church. He even wrote a letter to his Christian friends in Ephesus extolling and glorifying the beauty of Christ's church.

While in quarantine, Paul focused on the abundant blessings possessed by those in Christ's church. Paul wanted his friends to be reminded that *"God...has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"* (Eph. 1:3). He went on in this chapter to enumerate and emphasize a number of these blessings provided only to those in Christ's church. *"He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...He made us accepted in the Beloved...In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins...In Him also we have obtained an inheritance...in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise"* (Eph. 1:4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14). Although isolated, there are numerous spiritual blessings available only to those in the Lord's church, which is the reason the first chapter ends by describing the church as *"the fullness of Him who fills all in all"* (Eph. 1:23). Do you focus on these exclusive blessings?

While in quarantine, Paul focused on the incredible unity enjoyed by those in Christ's church. The church is made up of people who were all, at one time, *"dead in trespasses and sins"* (Eph. 2:1), but had been *"saved"* by the *"grace"* of God (Eph. 2:4-9).

The church is made up of people who were not only estranged from Christ (Eph 2:12), but were also estranged from each other and needed to be *"brought near by the blood of Christ"* (Eph. 2:13) and reconciled *"to God in one body through the cross"* (Eph. Eph. 2:16). Once in the church, these peoples from such varied backgrounds and even sharp enmity, all now *"have access by one Spirit to the Father,"* all are *"fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,"* and all are *"built together for a dwelling place of God"* (Eph. 2:18-22). Although isolated, there should still exist a genuine unity and cross-shaped bond that ties us together no matter what. Do you focus on the unity of God's people? Acts 2:41-47 41 *"So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. 42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; 45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."*

Although Paul was separated from his dear friends in the church, he counted his blessings to be a part of God's family. In the rest of the letter, he focused on the amazing transformation experienced by those in Christ's church. What a glorious blessing to a part of the beautiful church of Christ. Let's not take it for granted! Let us glorify Him in it (Eph. 3:21).

## He's not Heavy, He's my Brother

The story is told of two brothers around three years apart. The older one was a popular 15-year-old and had an abundance of friends. His younger brother, 12 at the time, was less popular and a little awkward around people. The younger of the two boys had developed slower than most boys his age due to a medical issue. The doctors who had been treating the boy were not sure what was going on, but the young boy would have sporadic seizures. The older brother loved his younger brother and included him in everything he could.



One day the older brother was going on a hike with some of his friends and as was his habit, the older brother invited his younger brother to go. Even though his friends tried to talk him out of taking his younger brother he did not give in and the younger brother went. The hike was going well, and they hiked all day. On the way back, the older brother began noticing his younger brother's breathing get heavier and he was falling behind. His friends yelled back, "keep up, come on." The Older brother signaled to his friends to keep going and assured them that they would catch up. The younger brother's breathing progressively became more labored and now he could barely walk. The boys sat down to take a break and as the younger brother sat down he began to have a seizure.

The older brother became extremely worried and helped control his younger brother, after the seizure stopped the younger brother was not responsive. The older brother picked up his younger brother and began running down the mountain knowing he had to get him help and fast. As he caught up to the other boys they noticed that something was wrong, they could see the younger brother lying limp in the older brother's arms who now had tears streaming down his face. The other boys asked to help, to maybe take turns carrying the younger brother, the older brother just kept running. As the older brother passed them he yelled back, "he is not heavy, he is my brother!"

As Christians we have a responsibility to bear one another's burdens. When we are struggling we need to be able to go to our church family for help. We also need to be able to help those who are struggling. Paul tells the churches in Galatia, "*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*" (Galatians 6:2). When a brother or sister is struggling we need to be willing to pick them up and carry them, helping them along the way.

~Travis Robertson ~ via Bulletin Digest

## God Will Have the Last Word

A sales manager and two of his sales reps are walking to lunch one day when they come across an antique oil lamp. They rub it and a Genie appears, saying, "I'll give each of you just one wish." One rep is quick to speak up first. He says, "I want to be in the Bahamas, driving a speedboat, without a care in the world." Poof! He's gone. The next rep speaks up. "I want to be fishing in a stream in the Colorado Rockies." Poof! He's gone. The genie turns to the sales manager and says, "Your turn." The manager says, "I want those two back in the office after lunch." It makes a difference who has the last word, doesn't it?

The question is: who, or what, will have the last word in your life today? Will your choices today be driven by ambition, revenge, or mere whim? Or will the Word of God have the final say? Paul said, "*Let the word of Christ dwell richly within you, with all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs...*" (Colossians 3:16). Do you know what he is saying? He is saying; *Let God's Word guide your life today, and every day.* It makes a difference who has the last word. "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ....*" (2 Corin. 5:10). ~ Clark Tatum

## BIBLE CHALLENGE

The first letter of each answer forms the name of one of the great Jewish feasts.

1. That which we are to do without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
2. The man God knew would command his household after him (Genesis 18:19)
3. A bird God notices as it falls to the ground (Matthew 10:29)
4. A church mentioned in Revelation (Revelation 3:1)
5. The number of times Christ offered up Himself for sin (Hebrews 7:27)
6. That which Jesus calls Himself in John 15:1; "the true \_\_\_\_\_"
7. A man who kissed his brother who had wronged him (Genesis 33:4)
8. The last book in the New Testament.



1. \_\_\_
2. \_\_\_
3. \_\_\_
4. \_\_\_
5. \_\_\_
6. \_\_\_
7. \_\_\_
8. \_\_\_

# For daily devotional & updates call NEWSLINE @ 534-0016

## PRAYER LIST



**Ron Griggs** father of *Madison Griggs* is now at home recovery from surgery. He remains in a lot of pain and is confined to bed for a least another week.

**Sue Stroud** is at home recovering from a mini stroke. **Eleta Grimmett** is improving.

**Billie Joe Garner** is suffering from another UTI.


**Charles Ulmer**, relative of the *Young family* is having serious health problems at this time.


**Ronnie Miller**, father of *Amanda Coggin* is in the Tupelo Hospital having to have blood. He will be having tests this week to determine his problem.

**Nicki Weaver** is dealing with health problems and will be going to Jackson this week for tests.

**Patty Worley**, cousin of *Kathy Clayton* is very sick at this time and in need of prayers.

### Sympathy:

 We extend our sympathy to *Martha Beasley Gentry* and family in the passing of **Gordon Gentry** who passed away Friday, April 17. Graveside services were held Mon. at Stark-Gentry Cemetery near Blue Springs, MS. He was the brother-in-law of *Ronald Beasley*.

 We express our sympathy to *Dixie White* and family in the death of her sister, **Mildred Shackelford** of Ripley, who passed away April 19th. Graveside services were held Mon. April 20th, at the Chapman Church of Christ Cemetery.

### Continue to Remember:

Michelle Bell, Molly Clayton, Jerry Coats, Shane Crotts, Arelus Dye, Mable Erwin, Prebble Foster, Phillip Haynes, Janie Huggins, Bill Lyon, Connie Montgomery, Elizabeth Phagen, Jerry Robbins, Shannon Sciara, Levi Smith, Sue Stroud, Josie Tidwell, Angela Victory, Donnie Wilson

### Shut-Ins:

Bill & Helen DePriest, Linda Griggs, Billy Joe Garner, Nancy Petrowski, J.D. Stroud

### Nursing Home/Assisted Living:

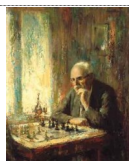
Joe Downs, Jerry & Lucille Gibson, Price Senter

### Military List:

Derek Bradley, Tevin Bradley, Luke Goff, Chase Seals

## I've Learned...

The best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY



April 25. .... Billie Joe Garner  
April 29. .... Lana Todd  
May 02. .... Madison West

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

April 28. .... Larry & Linda Ashmore



## BIBLE CLASS / VIDEOS & ZOOM

Several opportunities are now available for our youth to engage in Bible class by way of videos and Zoom. *Shaler* has a Wed. night Bible class on Zoom for the teenage class and is working on a video for our pre-teen classes. *Amy Jennings* will have a Zoom class on Wednesdays at 3:00pm for the cradle roll through kindergarten class. If you have any questions about these opportunities please let *Shaler* or *Amy* know. We hope all our youth (as well as other youth who would like to participate) will take part.

## CHURCH NEWS

- Communion supplies are available if you did not come by and pick yours up last week. Please contact *Greg Clayton* at 662-252-9762, and he will see that you get some. Also, your contribution can be mailed to our post office box 148.
- Remember that our services are being live streamed Sun. morning at 10:30. You can go to our website @ [nacoc.us](http://nacoc.us) to watch live. On Wed. night we will be posting a video devo by *Shaler* no later than 6:00 PM.
- Please continue to check on each other via texts, calls, face book etc.



Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Phil. 2:4 ESV

Visit our website @ <http://www.nacoc.us>

Email: [nacoc15s@gmail.com](mailto:nacoc15s@gmail.com)

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Volume 16

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday School.....9:30  
 Morning Worship.....10:30  
 Evening Worship.....6:00  
 Wednesday Bible Study....6:30

## MINISTER

Shaler Grigsby....Youth/ Assoc.  
 .....256-263-9137  
 Office ..... 534-4649

## ELDERS

Greg Clayton.....252-9762  
 Tim Dye.....316-2527  
 Richard Jennings .....316-1305  
 Troy Robertson .....316-3163  
 Phil Young.....316-2059

## DEACONS

Kurt Clayton.....316-6420  
 Roger Clayton ..... 538-8195  
 Shane Crotts.....266-0195  
 Jason Jennings..... 801-3260  
 Mark Jennings.....316-1606  
 Randy Wall ..... 316-9255

## TO SERVE

Scripture.....  
 A.M. Prayer.....  
 Closing.....  
 P.M. Prayer.....  
 Closing.....  
 Wed.....  
 Wed.....  
 Lock.....  
 Usher .....  
 Security .....

## OUR RECORD

Sunday School.....  
 Sunday A.M.....  
 Sunday P.M.....  
 Wednesday.....  
 Contribution.....  
 Budget.....\$4,095.92

## PANTRY ITEMS



THE INFORMER (USPS 581-500)  
 Church of Christ  
 511 Hwy. 15 South, P.O. Box 148  
 New Albany, Mississippi 38652  
 (662)534-4649

Periodical  
 Postage Paid  
 New Albany, MS

POSTMASTER: Send address changes  
 (Form 3579) to: The Informer, P.O. Box  
 148, New Albany, MS 38652

## Cleaning Out the Barn

Mark McCrary

Growing up, this was the job I hated the most (and, hated is not too strong a word). Three times a week I had to clean out the feed room in the barn. That includes everything you think would be included. It was a stinky, unpleasant job. I did it because it was my chore to do. I did it because dad made me.

Fast forward 30 years. Saturday afternoon I was feeding the cows for Pop. I finished his instructions and was about to leave the feed room when I noticed how dirty the floor was. I looked over and saw the shovel to the side and decided to clean the floor for him. I did the same thing that I'd done 30 years ago. It was just as unpleasant. But this time I did it not because I had to, but because I love him.

Obedience to God is kind of like that. Early on in our spiritual life, we obey because we have to; we do what we're told. Somewhere along the way, though — if you're really growing — we start obeying because we love him. Tasks that seemed to be so difficult at one point become much more bearable. That's why — long term — love is a far better motivator in Christian service than fear or obligation.

*“If you love me, you will keep My commandments”* (John 14:15)