

that reward. If we choose to hold our peace and fail to warn men about the sin of homosexuality, we may enjoy the praise of men for a short season. However, when we stand before God, having failed Him by refusing to strive against sin (Heb. 12:4), we will lose our eternal reward reserved for those who are willing in these evil days to rejoice because we suffered for committing a "hate crime!"

—Charles Pogue
Rogers, AR



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Men's Meeting—Sunday noon

Let us pray for...

Rick & Sheila Beauchamp—his job hunt, mother, her ears
Waynette Davis, Karla Dobbs, Sharon Harp—health problems
Darrell Broking family—their job hunts
Lavonne McClish—macular degeneration treatments
Janice Parks—her health and family burdens
Rick Heimberger, Darrell Conley—health problems

Records you helped make...

Bible Class	9
Sunday AM Worship	9
Sunday PM Worship	9
Wednesday PM Bible Class/Worship	11
Contribution	\$360.00
Contribution average (2009)	\$326.29

Sermon broadcasts...

Both sermons each Sunday are broadcast via Internet, available at our Website, www.northpointcoc.com. The Sunday morning sermon begins at approximately 10:47 a.m., and Sunday afternoon at approximately 1:15 p.m.

Bible class teacher for September
Chairman of Men's Meetings (July–September)
Preacher, *The Lighthouse* editor

Jerry Smith
Rick Beauchamp
Dub McClish

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Sunday
Bible Class 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 1:00 PM

Wednesday
B.C./Worship 7:00 PM



The Northpoint Lighthouse

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PRAYING AND WORKING

An important Biblical principle is captured in the time-worn exhortation, *Pray as if it all depends upon God, but work as if it all depends upon you*. Some Scriptural illustrations come to mind:

- When Jacob obtained Esau's birthright by deception, Esau resolved to kill him. Jacob fled, eventually fathering a large family and accumulating great wealth during his years away from home. When he decided to return, he feared his brother's wrath and prayed for protection from it: "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him..." (Gen. 32:11). However, after his prayer he took the precaution of sending servants ahead with a large gift of flocks and herds to assuage any vengeance Esau might seek (vv. 13–23). Note that Jacob did not pray and then do nothing about that for which he prayed. Did Jacob's action in this regard indicate some lack of faith in God?
- When the Jews who had returned from Babylonian captivity began rebuilding the walls of devastated Jerusalem, they met with great opposition. First Sanballat and Tobiah mocked these efforts, but when this did not slow their progress, they conspired with others to oppose by force the rebuilding work. Nehemiah, a man of great faith, had a two-fold defense strategy as they continued to build: "But we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them" (Neh. 4:9). Note that they did not pray and then ignore the danger their adversaries posed. Rather, they asked God's help and then set about to defend themselves as if they had not prayed. Did their efforts demonstrate a lack of faith on their part?
- Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Mat. 6:11). One is exceptionally dense if he believes that his prayer for God to supply his food implies that he should do nothing to produce it. Paul was not contradicting the Lord when he wrote, "If any will not work, neither let him eat" (2 The. 3:10b). Does one who prays for his daily food exhibit a lack of faith when he works to produce it?

In none of the above cases did one's human effort, after he had prayed, constitute a lack of faith whatsoever, nor does it in other practical cases related to our modern circumstances.

I have met a few brethren through the years who were convinced that if they prayed for God to protect them from harm, they would demonstrate distrust of

Him if they purchased insurance of any kind. One may as well argue that to pray as a tornado approaches and refuse to run for shelter is to distrust God. It is not so in either case. Purchasing insurance merely indicates the wise use of the mind God has given us to protect health, property, life, and liability. Those who refuse on “religious” grounds to make what provisions they can for the inevitable vicissitudes of life exhibit great folly rather than great faith, not to mention a misunderstanding of prayer, providence, and faith. When disaster strikes, they become a burden on family, brethren, and friends that should have been borne by an insurer (I neither sell insurance nor have any relatives who do, by the way).

Some religious groups teach their people that if they pray for God to heal a family member who has some life-threatening disease, they then cannot allow any sort of medical treatment. In their view, to do so would be to question the power of God. Obviously, such folk have not considered the possibility that the very means God would providentially use to fulfill their heart’s desire would be employment of the great medical advances of our time. Such treatment is no more a demonstration of distrust in God than is the earning of one’s daily food after praying that God will supply it.

Related to the foregoing paragraph, some feel uncomfortable with the idea of making plans in anticipation of the possible loss of a loved whose recovery has been the subject of their prayers. Does making decisions based on the possibility he or she might not live long make their prayers hypocritical? When we have prayed for our family’s good health, whether we expect many or few days of life for our loved ones, it is no demonstration of doubt to anticipate and plan for the future with one’s best wisdom (including insurance [as noted above], funeral arrangements, circumstances that will exist without them, etc.). Surely, God expects us to use the minds he has given us in these matters, as in all others.

The Bible teaches us to unceasingly, believingly, and fervently pray for our gracious and loving God to grant our pleas (1 The. 5:17; Jam. 1:6; 5:17). When and as we pray, we exhibit no lack of faith when and as we act in ways that relate to our prayers.

—Dub McClish
Denton, TX



REJOICING TO SUFFER FOR A “HATE CRIME”

Recently, in view of the last presidential election, a brother was heard criticizing himself for expressing his own concerns about the direction in which the nation is headed. Given the agenda of the president, and the efforts of the liberal congress, his self criticism seems very unnecessary.

It is a wacky world indeed in which violent crimes against some persons are regarded as “hate crimes,” but not when the same violence is committed against others; say one of one’s own race. However, the present discussion on the matter of hate crimes is something every Christian should be concerned about, and should be prepared for the possibility of suffering for committing one of these “crimes of hate.”

Just a few weeks ago, president Obama met with a number of leaders of the homosexual movement in the White House. He pledged to them that by the time he leaves office he will have fulfilled an agenda that keeps campaign promises made to that group of sinners. Part of that agenda is to have homosexuals awarded minority status, so that not only any violent crime committed against them will fall under hate crimes legislation, but even to speak publicly against the sin of homosexuality will be a violation of the law.

We must be perfectly clear first of all that Christians are not to commit violence against any person, but rather to do good unto all men (Gal. 6:10). We are even to do good to our enemies (Mat. 5:44; Luke 6:35). Yet, we are to speak as the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11), and obey God when there is a conflict between God’s commands and man’s laws (Acts 5:29).

Doing good includes warning those who are in sin to repent and leave it (Col. 1:28; Acts 3:19; Acts 17:30). It could not be more clear throughout all the Bible that homosexuality is sin (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26,27; 1 Cor. 6:9). Some have correctly pointed out that Jesus taught against the sin of homosexuality when He said: *“Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?”* (Mat. 19:4–5). Given these Bible truths, it is incumbent upon the children of God to preach and teach against the sin of homosexuality.

Jesus also said, *“Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake”* (Mat. 5:11). The apostles were ordered not to speak in the name of Christ, but they obeyed God and did. When they were persecuted by men for it, they left the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ (Acts 5:41). Paul spoke truly when he wrote to Timothy that all who will live godly in Christ will suffer the persecution of men (2 Tim. 3:12).

Unless things change, it is not only possible, it is likely that the liberal administration and congress will pass laws making it a crime for a gospel preacher to stand in a pulpit of the Lord’s church and preach against the very heinous sin that brought destruction against Sodom and Gomorrah! If that happens, not only will our nation’s constitution, guaranteeing both freedom of speech and religion, be trodden under foot once again, but more importantly, every child of God will have to make a decision. He or she will have to decide whether or not to suffer reproach—even do jail time—at the hands of men or obey God and continue to speak out against not only this, but against all other sins of man.

If this situation should arise, what will you do? There are far too many of us who have the tendency to rationalize away our God-given responsibility. Some may say they can do no good if they are in jail, therefore they will keep quiet. Others may claim they have spoken much against this sin already and it has done no good, therefore, why should they suffer at the hands of wicked men for it?

Moses chose to suffer with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin (Heb. 11:25). He did so because he was looking for a better country. Had he chosen to be called “the son of Pharaoh’s daughter” he would have lost