

## Weekly Bible Reading – Week 14

Sunday = Acts 23.11 – 24.21

Monday = Acts 24.22 – 26.11

Tuesday = Acts 26.12 – 27.38

Wednesday = Acts 28.1 – Romans 1.15

Thursday = Romans 1.16 – 2.29

Friday = Romans 3.1 – 4.12

Saturday = Romans 4.13 – 6.14

First of all, we would like to extend a warm welcome to our visitors. Especially, we'd like to welcome among Jeff, Sara, Angela, and Michael Himmel who have come to be with us this week.

Today's Activities. Today we will be meeting at our regular times (9:30, 10:20, and 5:00).

However, this afternoon, following our Sunday morning worship, everyone is invited to a potluck dinner at The Hinds. We'll begin as soon as we can.

Throughout the week we'll be meeting at 7:30PM.

We intend to record the lessons and they will be available in one of three formats — CD, MP3, and cassette tape. There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer.

### THOSE REQUESTING PRAYERS

Bryan Bailey Sr.'s father, Elwood Gaskins ✦ Jo Byrnes ✦ Joyce Coones ✦ Sleatha Gore ✦ Faye Kilpatrick ✦ Sally Smith ✦ Gary Ogden

### BIRTHDAYS

Today—Bubba Bailey and Helen Usher ✦ Monday—Sally Smith ✦ Thursday—Bonnie Lord

Chiefland Church of Christ

Meeting at 211 NE 2nd Street in beautiful Chiefland, Florida  
Post Office Box 2539, Chiefland FL 32644 • (352) 493-1242

# Things Above

“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.”

— Colossians 3:1-2 —

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## God Causes Growth

By Jamey Hinds

*“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase” (1Co 3.5-7).*

We put too much emphasis on man's role in salvation. We are the ones who are in need of salvation, how then can we play a bigger role than the One who is saving us? The point from God's word is simple enough — God is Savior and His grace reveals His will to mankind. And when the implanted word is sown in good and honest hearts, there is a harvest.

“The seed is the word of God. ... But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with an honest and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience” (Lk

8.11,15). “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls” (Jas 1.21).

We receive that which God alone gives. He gives the seed and we receive it (Mk 4.16). How we receive it, of course, will help determine how — at judgment — we will be received. Jesus said, “Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him” (Lk 8.18).

“So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (Rom 10.17 ASV). “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Heb 11.6).

“Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name” (Jn 20.30-31 ASV).

“O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jer 10.23). “But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God” (1Co 2.9-10).

Yes, we have choices to make in regard to our own salvation. We can choose to obey or disobey. And this choice is not necessarily *once* made *always* made — we continue to face difficulties in life that challenge the choice to follow God. This is why it is of highest importance that we read the word of God to protect and encourage growth of our faith in Him.

Even the devil realizes the power of the word of God — “Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved” (Lk 8.12; *also see* Mk 4.15; Mt 13.19).

We must do our part while at the same time not inflating our part as somehow being equal to or greater God’s part in our salvation. “Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue; whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. Yea, and for this very cause *adding on your part all diligence*, in your faith supply virtue ... For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble: for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2Pe 1.2-11 ASV).

If we would acknowledge God’s grace in our salvation — making less of our obedience and more of His grace — then we would live graciously. “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” (2Co 9.15).

Don’t *underestimate* God’s grace — without Him we would still be helpless and remain in our sins (Rom 5.6). If we will busy ourselves with planting and watering, He will give the increase because God *alone* gives the increase.

