

Weekly Bible Reading: Week 23

- ◆ SUNDAY — 1 John 5:1 – 3 John 14
- ◆ MONDAY — Jude 1 – Revelation 1:20
- ◆ TUESDAY — Revelation 2:1 – 3:22
- ◆ WEDNESDAY — Revelation 4:1 – 5:14
- ◆ THURSDAY — Revelation 6:1 – 8:13
- ◆ FRIDAY — Revelation 9:1 – 11:10
- ◆ SATURDAY — Revelation 11:11 – 13:18

With a new year having begun, we should consider how blessed we truly are by the Lord. There are things we should all want to improve upon individually and congregationally. And it should be everyone's intention to do those *necessary*, and maybe even *challenging* things to fulfill God's will, giving Him glory and honor here in Chiefland and in Eternity.

We should **no longer be children** . . . but, speaking the truth in love, **may grow up** in all things into Him who is the head—**Christ**—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together **by what every joint supplies**, according to the effective working by which **every part does its share, causes growth** of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

—[*Ephesians 4:14–16*]—

Chiefland Church of Christ

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THINGS ABOVE

“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth”

—[Colossians 3:1-2]—

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Preaching the Word

By Jamey Hinds

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim 4:2-4).

There are themes in the word of God that are easier to present for the preacher and for the audience. For example, the theme of God's goodness is one that preachers take pleasure in presenting and that audiences also enjoy. But the Bible does not only tell us about God's goodness — and preachers who only preach one side of God are not presenting the “whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). “Behold therefore the goodness and se-

verity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off” (Rom 11:22).

Speak, Exhort, Rebuke

When Paul wrote Titus, one of the things he encouraged him in was in his preaching of the gospel — “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee” (Ti 2:15). Unpleasant as it is to an audience, rebuke is also challenging to the one who preaches. But for us to grow in Christ there will be times that we must hear those things that we may not want to hear. And we should take heed how and what we hear (cf. Lk 8:18; Mk 4:24).

“It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools” (Ecc 7:5). In another place we read, “Open rebuke is better than secret love” (Prov 27:5).

“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, ‘My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth” (Heb 12:5–6).

There is a greater benefit for our soul’s eternal salvation in the balance of exhortation and rebuke. To go to the extreme of exhortation only or to the extreme of only rebuke is to harm the divine balance.

The balanced diet of exhortation *and* rebuke is what we should seek to please God and save men, saving ourselves.



Resolutions and the Lord’s Supper

By Jamey Hinds

This time of year we make well-intentioned intentions. The problem, of course, is self-control and many of us tend not to exercise it as well as we should. Whether we are referring to food intake and physical exercise, or maybe more seriously, things concerning our character.

This *annual* self-examination is important (and much better if we do more than merely *intend* well). But even more effective and life-changing would be a *weekly* time of self-examination when we commune with our brothers and sisters and the Lord Himself.

“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. **But let a man examine himself,** and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. **For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.** But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world” (1 Cor. 11:27–32).

The Lord’s Supper is the perfect time for us to examine ourselves in the shadow of the cross and to resolve to improve who we are in the service of our Lord.

