

Announcements

"In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5:7-8).

Jo Byrnes ✎ Betty Cannon ✎ Joyce Coones ✎ Sleatha Gore
Evelyn Griffin ✎ Essielene Henderson ✎ Ethel Jones
Faye Kilpatrick ✎ Gary Ogden ✎ Carl Rutter

Upcoming Gospel Meetings

- April 19–24 ✎ South Pine Avenue congregation, Ocala ✎ Danny Roberts, preaching ✎ 7:30 PM Mon–Fri.
- April 24–26 ✎ Northeast congregation, High Springs ✎ Ed Culp, preaching ✎ 7:30 PM Fri–Sat.
- April 26 – May 1 ✎ Palatka congregation ✎ Kevin Heaton, preaching ✎ 7:30 PM Mon–Fri.
- April 26 – May 1 ✎ Danville congregation ✎ Tommy Andrews, preaching ✎ 7:30 PM Sun–Fri.

Secret Pal meets tonight after services
at Ida Mae Watson's home.

Group 3 meets tonight after services
at Strickland Park.

This Week's Birthday and Anniversaries

Buddy & Hildreth Johnson (*today*)

Dorothy Brasiel (*Thursday*) ✎ Brian & Linda Jones (*Thursday*)

Church of Christ

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

THINGS REVEALED

"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."

— Colossians 3:1-2 —

April 19, 2009  Vol. 5, No. 5

ELDERS Tony Beach, Buddy Johnson, Devoise Lord
DEACONS Brent Brooks, H.C. Henderson, Jamey Hinds, Jerry Smith
PREACHER Jamey Hinds
www.chieflandchurchofchrist.com

Six Ways to Handle Tough Times

By John Mulligan

Without a doubt, these are stressful times. Uncertain job markets. Declining housing markets. Unstable stock market. I do not need to elaborate or exaggerate. Tough times call for people of faith to rise to the occasion of the challenge. They need to think differently and act differently. Here are six ways people of faith can survive, and thrive, during difficult times:

Minimize Contact with Faithless Voices

The news media (newspapers, television, or Internet outlets) are not voices of faith. They are driven by viewership in order to generate advertisements. Bad news — especially fear driven news — attracts viewers. An old adage in the news industry that determines the headlines is "if it bleeds, it leads." Truth

faith is rarely welcome or acknowledged in newscasts. Turn off the TV. Put down the paper. Restrict your diet of Internet news. Within days, life will become much more peaceful. Perhaps the words of Isaiah to King Hezekiah's officials, who heard the fear mongering of Rabshakeh, are most needed now — "Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard" (37:6)

Exercise Caution Around Fearful People

Sometimes the problem is not the media but the people who take in the media — family and friends. I have encountered church members far more familiar with words from the nightly newscast than with the words of Scripture. If family or friends are consumed with fear, or a "sky is falling" mentality, it is hard to not to be caught up in their frenzy. Create a loving but healthy separation between yourself and the fearful ones in your life. Remember what Paul told Timothy, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7).

Get Involved in Areas of Service

Fear contributes to cocooning. When scared, we are tempted to stay inside our homes, consume ourselves with entertainment, or become self-absorbed in other ways. Instead of withdrawing in times of trouble, we need to move outside of ourselves. Get out and visit a convalescent home. Volunteer at school. Help out at a homeless shelter. These opportunities of service will put proper perspective on our problems, and provide us with a healthy Spirit-driven distraction (Gal. 5:22). Fear will have a hard time finding room in our lives if our lives are filled with blessing others. Remember, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

See All Fears as a Door to Faith

Tough times show us how little we can control circumstances outside of our lives. The housing market, stock market, or the job market is out of the ability of one single life to influence. Our lack of control helps us see who is in control. There

is One who not only is in control, but also is the One who can change all things. Know that the Lord not only allows difficult times, He also uses them to spiritually form His chosen people. James wrote, ". . . the testing of your faith produces patience" (James 1:2).

Take Your Fears to the One Who Transcends All Fears

Our Creator wants those who trust in Him to take their fears to Him. Peter tells us "casting all your care upon Him, for he cares for you" (1 Pet. 5:7). Turning our fears over to God in prayer relieves us of the overwhelming burdens we cannot bear alone. Try praying before communicating your anxiety to loved ones. Wait and see what happens when you pray first. Wait for the peace that "passes all understanding" (Phil. 4:7).

Allow Tough Times to Refocus Your Life

When what we are comfortable with becomes threatened, another reality enters. We are soon forced to think outside our comfort zone or think beyond the little world of sameness we have created. Job loss, or even relocation, can be portals to a life beyond what we had previously imagined possible. Good times often make us content and complacent. Tough times expand us, often taking us to new and better places. Be open to the possibilities. Paul wrote, ". . . the things which have happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel" (Phil. 1:12). Should not we be able to say the same in our stressful circumstances?

How will we handle tough times? We can live by faith or fear. Fear is a dark, debilitating, and unacceptable choice. Choose faith over fear and see where the God who made the universe can take your life. Let the church of God rise to the challenge before us and be a beacon of light to a frightened country!

