

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. *These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others*” (Matthew 23:23, ESV. Emphasis added).

“For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings” (Hosea 6:6).

## Announcements

The Safford church will be hosting a **Bible Bowl** on January 12, 2013 at the church facilities.

Mickey and Jamie Harrison’s new contact details are:  
101 Poquito Dr.  
Rockport, TX 78382  
ph. 504-355-9214  
sportpilot51@yahoo.com

Back issues are posted at  
<http://saffordchurchofchrist.org>



### **Prayer List:**

**Healing:** *Christie, Mike Cavasos, Sandy Cavasos, Ben Atchley, Faye Atchley, Nicolas Self, Annie Self, Douglas Gardner, Brandon (Gerry Clark's grandson), Inez's son Lee, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.*

# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

**30 December 2012**

### **Sermon Topics:**

**AM: The Old Has Gone! The New Has Come!**

2 Corinthians 5:16-6:2

**PM: The Faithful City Has Become a Harlot!**

Isaiah 1:21-31

Evangelist

*Ken Knowlton: 428-5974*

Elders

*Ben Atchley: 428-2246*

*Greg Briggs: 428-8756*

*John Cunningham: 428-0895*

Services

|                             |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Sunday Bible Class          | 10:00 A.M. |
| Sunday Morning Worship      | 11:00 A.M. |
| Sunday Evening Worship      | 6:30 P.M.  |
| Wednesday Evening Class     | 6:30 P.M.  |
| Thursday Ladies Bible Class | 10:00 A.M. |

## We All Need the Church

Although forgiveness is a very individual and private matter between you and God, recovery is something that requires community. God gave us His Church because He knows our weaknesses. He knows Satan well and knows we cannot stand against him without His Spirit and His people. If you have ever made choices you regret, if you know what Godly sorrow feels like, you know what I mean. You don't have to be reminded of the high price of sin or the

reality of mindless cruelty and stifling and suffocating evil. When you see the world as things really are, when you have seen the deceit of sin and experienced the hell of hopelessness, it changes how you view the Church. That is why I don't just want the Church, I need the Church. I long for community.

I am thankful for my brothers and sisters in Christ because it is through them that I have a community that loves me and forgives me and cares for me and offers safe harbor in the storm.

Do not be lulled into believing your life is without meaning or that light can shine in the darkness without being noticed. Your decision to stand in the gap, to be a watchman on the wall, will bring opposition. Stand together, pursue holiness and know you are a Child of the King. We are in this together and you are needed.

You are loved.

From the 728B Facebook page: 2012 11 23.

**And I sought for anyone among them who would repair the wall and stand in the breach before me on behalf of the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one. Therefore I have poured out my indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath; I have returned their conduct upon their heads, says the Lord God (Ezekiel 22:30-31. NRSV).**

## **Right Is Only Half the Story!**

On Isaiah 1

One comedian has a routine in which he pictures two Christians meeting for the first time. They question each

other, gradually discovering that they are both Conservative, Fundamental, Seventh-Day, Separated, Predestinarian Baptists, Great Lakes district. Then the final question is asked. Organized 1912, or reconstituted 1934? When one answers 1912, the other pushes him off a cliff, shouting, "Die heretic!"

We might resent the routine a little. But it is funny. And it points up a flaw in some of our thinking about faith. A flaw Isaiah saw some 700 years before the birth of Christ.

In verses 10-17 the prophet described a religious people whose ritual seems to be according to the Law. These folks had religion down pat, and were absolutely "right." They went up to the temple for the required festivals. They offered the right sacrifices. They made long prayers. But God called all these things meaningless.

He went on through Isaiah to tell these religiously right people to "stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow" (vv. 16-17). The point, of course, is that what demonstrates a real and vital faith is not that we are "right," but that our relationship with God has produced righteousness.

I suppose it's good to be concerned about being right. But being right is, at best, only half the issue. What God cares about most is, are we righteous?\*

Lawrence O. Richards. *Devotional Commentary*.

Victor: Colorado Springs, CO. 2002. 410-411.

\* I take some issue with the author's seeming to minimize the importance of being right. He is correct that too much focus on rightness can interfere with attention to righteousness. -Neil Short