

destroyed. The kingdom may seem hampered and blocked by much opposition and ungodliness, but God's eventual victory is certain and sure.

There is no call here for panic measures to separate good from evil, for there is no easy and practical way of drawing a line between them. The Church must wait. Jesus may have deliberately taken a different approach from some Jewish groups of his time. Groups such as Pharisees and Essenes were keen to form pure religious community, where all the members would be godly and righteous, and where contact with outsiders might be rather limited. Jesus was more open. He was in no hurry to put a firm and permanent boundary around his own group of followers. God knows who is serving his cause, and in due time he will judge truly and rightly.

In the meantime, Christians are called to be 'salt of the earth'\* (Matthew 5:13), influencing its life, attracting others to Christ, and playing our part in the energetic and certain growth of the gospel.

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\* called to be 'salt of the earth': This statement isn't entirely correct. We are not told to "be" salt of the earth but rather, we are told *we are* salt of the earth and we should take care to maintain our saltiness (Matthew 5:13). We are never told to "go be salt" or "go be light." Rather, we are told that, wherever we are, we are salt and light. Don't be shy about it. -NS

## News:

The Miami Church of Christ is hosting a **Ladies Day Brunch** on May 18 at 735 W. Sullivan Street in Miami. The theme is "A Woman of Service."

Registration begins at 8:00 A.M. and brunch is 9:00 A.M. to noon. For further questions contact Sister Jo Anna McDaniel at 602-348-9672. Please continue to pray for Tatyana's daughter Olga who is undergoing treatments for cancer.

## Prayer List:

**Healing:** Jerry Robinson's daughter Christie, Jerry Robinson's mother Norma. Mike Cavazos, Sandy Cavazos, Ben Atchley, Faye Atchley, Nicolas and Annie Self, Douglas and Jonda Gardner, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.  
**Travels:** John and Sharron Cunningham, Tatyana Knowlton. **Sympathy:** Sharron Cunningham and family.

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# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

12 May 2013

## Sermon Topics

A.M.: A Tribute to Our Mothers

Proverbs 31:10-31

P.M.: TBA

Isaiah 25-66

Pulpit 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.

## Have You Forgotten Us?

Miles Custis, Bible Study Magazine, March/April 2013  
on Psalm 44

Psalm 44 is a corporate (group) lament psalm that would have likely been recited after a military defeat. As the community struggles to cope with a defeat in battle, the psalmist reminds God of the deeds that He performed for their ancestors (44:1-3). How would these accounts have influenced the people's trust in God? How would they influence your trust in God? What past events your own life remind you of God's goodness during times of struggle?

The psalmist asserts that the community has trusted God (44:4-8). Despite this, it seems that God has rejected them (44:9-16). Why would the psalmist attribute their defeat to God rejecting them? Have you ever felt like God has abandoned you? How can the psalmist's strong language, directed toward God, encourage you during trials?

The psalmist repeats his assertion that the people have not forgotten God (44:17-22). Despite their faithfulness, they were suffering (44:19, 22). Why do you think the psalmist emphasizes the people's "boast" in God (44:8) and their suffering "for [His] sake (44:22)? When you feel abandoned by God, do you honestly express that to him?

At the conclusion of the psalm, the psalmist calls for God to wake up and help His people (44:23-26). His language is surprisingly blunt. Have you ever addressed God in this way? How does a reminder of God's past deeds shed insight on these cries for help (44:1-3)? What great act of God reminds you of His love and faithfulness?

For other corporate lament psalms, read Psalms 12, 74, 80 and 90. How do these psalms appeal to God? How can these psalms encourage you to honestly express your feelings to God?

## Self-serving Wisdom versus Wise Justice

We are studying the book of Kings (1 & 2 Kings) on Wednesday nights. As one of the teachers, I find there are some topics that just don't lend themselves to class discussions or any group-study format. One reason for the above observation is that classes become frustrated, impatient or "mind-numbed" if too many good points are made from a section of Scripture. To try to understand this point, try to imagine teaching an expository class on the Book of Proverbs! I can still make a related point here and there in a bulletin article, right? Ah-um.

When I am preparing the presentation of a class, I find myself throwing out bucket-loads of very good and challenging points simply because there is a limit that an average class can take. One conclusion to this confession is that, if a Christian depends only on Bible classes and Sermons at church to learn about the Bible and God's will for him, he's not going to come very close to what can be gained by personally studying the Scriptures on his own time.

One of my study partners (Iain Provan. *1 & 2 Kings*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995.) observed that Solomon had two different kinds of wisdom. One is innate (like a talent) and one is a gift God gave to him because Solomon asked for it. "... Solomon has recognized and God is confirming that the "wisdom" of [1 Kings] chapter 2 was of a highly unenlightened, self-serving sort, which must now be replaced with a higher sort, in order that the king may rule justly and wisely over his subjects (3:9,

11). An important theme of the Old Testament is brought to mind by such a reading: it is the fear of the LORD that is truly the beginning of wisdom (Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 15:33)." -NS

Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you (1 Kings 3:12, ESV).

## I Will Give You a Wise and Discerning Heart

Iain W. Provan

The emphasis of the line, and indeed of the whole section 3:4-15, is that this wisdom comes as a supernatural gift from God. It is not innate (as it is implicitly in 2:1-4); it is not acquired by patient hard work, utilizing careful observation and self-discipline (as it is explicitly in much of Proverbs and in 1 Kings 4:29-34). This is wisdom from above, not below.

It is of some interest to note the similarity in theme between 3:11-13 and both Matthew 6:25-34 and Luke 12:13-21, the first of which explicitly mentions Solomon as an archetypal figure of riches and honor. The essential element of these New Testament passages is that people ought to seek God and the kingdom of God first of all, rather than the things of this world. If they do, Matthew 6:25-34 tells us, then these other things will follow. In the same way, Solomon's seeking of God's kingdom rather than self-aggrandizement will bring in its train material blessings.

Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn (Matthew 13:30, ESV).

## Putting Evil in its Place

John Proctor

Following the parable of the sower, which showed a very mixed response to Jesus' kingdom preaching, this parable of the wheat and tares has offered a broader understanding of the complex mystery of good and evil. There is an 'enemy' whose malicious work is spread wide in the world. But evil has a limited span of life: in God's good time it will be finally and fully