

"I am He who testifies about myself..." - John 8:18

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."
- John 15:5

Serving Today

*Please let Garrett know if you are unable to serve

Greeters: Chris and Tammy Smith
(Next Week: Garrett and Lindsey)

Announcements and Opening Prayer:
Randy Jackson

Song Leader: Brandon Jackson

Lead Communion: Ed Leibner

Assist: Brice Thompson

Gary Carter

Allen Hedge

Scripture Reading: Garrett Jackson

Speaker: Aaron Baker

Closing Prayer: Mike Thompson

(Sunday pm: Tony Carter)

Serving Wednesday

Announcements & Prayer: Randy Jackson

Song Leader: Brandon Jackson

Devotional: Richard Carroz

Happy Anniversary
in December to...


Evan and Christina Romo - 30th

For updates or additions to the announcements or prayer list, contact Cindy Baker ---

Last Week's Attendance

Sunday AM: 60

Sunday PM: 35

Giving: \$2324

Wednesday: 39

Our Meeting Times

SUNDAY

Bible Study - 9:00am

Morning Worship - 10:00am

Afternoon Worship - 1:00pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study 7:00-8:00pm

Happy Birthday
in December to...

Penny Leibner - 1st

Cindi Thompson - 4th

Richard Carroz - 5th

Sandie Owens - 12th

Jaye Cunningham - 18th

Christina Romo - 27th

Welcome TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

@ FORISTELL

Loving the Lord with all our strength... (Mark 12:30)



Foristell Church of Christ

761 Highway T, Foristell, MO 63348

Minister: Aaron Baker

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(636) 673-1155

minister@foristellchurchofchrist.com

Forgiveness before Repentance?

That's right, forgiveness before repentance --- At least that's what the marquee said in front of a church building I passed on West Meyers Road in Wentzville the other day (12/2/13). If you are like me, I had to do a double take, just to make sure I read it right.

In the text listed, Luke 23:34 reads, "Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." At first glance, the text may seem to indicate that Jesus was praying for forgiveness to come when no indication of repentance was mentioned in that text. But, as any good God-fearing student of the Bible must do, we must do two things: 1) See if this interpretation of forgiveness before repentance is supported elsewhere in the Bible and 2) Understand the context of why this was said by Jesus.

Interpretation supported? We must ask if the idea of forgiveness before repentance is a valid conclusion. Unfortunately, this is not a conclusion supported by Scripture. Here's why:

First, repentance is something that comes before forgiveness, **not** the other way around. Consider these verses:

Acts 5:31 "Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give **repentance** to Israel and **forgiveness** of sins."

Acts 8:22 "Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be **forgiven** you."

Luke 24:47 "...and that **repentance** and **remission** (forgiveness) of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

All these verses indicate that repentance is something that comes before forgiveness. Would God have forgiven Israel if they had not repented (Acts 5)? Would God have forgiven Simon of his greed if he had not repented and then prayed (Acts 8)? Was Jesus mistaken when he said that His disciples needed to preach to all

...continued on inside page...

God is calling you, but not on your cell phone.
Be sure to silence your phone during worship!

nations about repentance and remission of sins (which means forgiveness in that passage)? Of course not! The Bible teaches that forgiveness is something that is received after repentance is sought, not before.

Context: Available vs Accessed. So if repentance comes before forgiveness, how do we reconcile Jesus' statement on the cross? He does say, "Father forgive them." The answer is that Jesus is praying for God to make forgiveness available to those who crucified him on the cross. God did make forgiveness available to these people. In fact, this is the same crowd to whom Peter preaches in Acts chapter 2 and he shows them their sin of killing Jesus, that they "...have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death..." and "...whom you crucified..." (vs 23, 28).

Peter's words so resonated with the people who had killed Jesus, that they realized they were guilty of this sin (37). So guilty in fact, that they said, "...what shall we do?" Now if the people had forgiveness before repentance then why did he not say something like, "Don't worry about it, you have already been forgiven"? Instead, Peter told them to "...repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission (forgiveness) of sins..."

Those people who wanted forgiveness had to do something to access that forgiveness which Jesus prayed would be available. First, they had to repent. Without that first step, there would have been no access to the forgiveness of sins. Second, they had to be baptized. Without that second step, there would have been no access to the forgiveness of sins.

Did these people understand what they had to do to receive forgiveness of sins? You bet! In fact, 3,000 of them were baptized (which implies that the repentance step had been completed and is evidenced by their being "cut to the heart"), praised God, and were saved (41, 46, 47).

Jesus prayed for forgiveness to be available, but in order to access it, one must repent and be baptized. Forgiveness comes after repentance in the Bible, not before.

- Aaron Baker

"Be devoted to prayer..." (Romans 12:12)

- * Continue to keep **Kay Shepard** in your prayers for her health. She is feeling some better, but still needs our prayers. Cards can be send to her at:
- * **Janet Colgett** (Sherra's step-mom) had to go back to the hospital in Memphis because her platelet count dropped and they want to moniter her there. Janet and Jimmy can still receive cards at
- * Please keep **Harold Fitzjerrell** in your prayers. He was admitted to the hospital early last week for dehydration and confusion, but is back home now. However, he is not doing well.
- * Our thanks to God that Willadean's brother, **Carl Wright**, was released from the hospital on Wednesday and is doing much better. The bleeding was able to be stopped and he is feeling much better.
- * **Kim Vogelsang** learned this week that she has a disc in her neck that is pushing on her spinal cord and this is what is causing the numbness in her limbs. Pray for her doctors as they seek to help her with this problem and her other health problems that she faces daily. Cards can be sent to Kim at:

On Our Daily Prayer List:

- *Tracy Ehlmann (health),
- *Kay Shepard (health),
- *Harold Fitzjerrell (Alzheimers),
- *Carl Wright (Willadean's brother... health),
- *Kim Vogelsang (health),
- *Caleb Sams (cancer),
- *Sandie Owens (personal problems),
- *Israel Fox...(military),
- *Sue Schmitz....(Marysville, cancer),
- *Marsha Clark...(Sherra's college suitemate, cancer),
- *Virginia Johnson...(lung cancer),

"And the heavens will praise
Your wonders, O Lord; Your
faithfulness also in the
assembly of the saints."
- Psalm 89:5

20's and 30's -
Don't forget your Acts 2
Bible study questions! They
are available on the church's
website or see Aaron.



Take Note!

- * MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST is every Friday at 6:30am at Bob Evan's in Wentzville.
- * Monday Night WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY is here at the building from 7-8pm.
- * We will work on VISUALS FOR VANUATU TODAY! If you can stay to help, that would be great! Aaron will deliver the Visual Aid Books to the village where he will be teaching when he travels to Vanuatu in January.
- * The 20's and 30's DEVO AND GET-TOGETHER will be at Aaron and Cindy's house this coming Friday, December 13th at 7:00pm. Bring finger foods and drinks & your Bible.
- * Non-perishable food donations for the Warrenton and Wright City school kids can be put on the back table in the fellowship room. Marilyn will collect them at the end of the month.
- * Ladies, the SIGN-UP SHEETS FOR LADIES DAY are on the back bulletin board. There is plenty to do so let's all work together to make our 1st Ladies Day our best Ladies Day! See Kim Johnson if you have questions.