

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Preston Ellis

Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper

Randy Ellis Sonny Monaghan
Rodney Ellis Clay Morris

Prayers

Cory Easley Cole Meador

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Preston Ellis

Song Leader

Hayden Ellis

Lord's Supper

Randy Ellis Sonny Monaghan

Prayers

Jack Calvert Clay Morris

WEDNESDAY

Announcements

Gerald Eaton

Song Leader

Jack Calvert

Prayers

Hunter Byrd Cory Easley

Invitation

Randy Ellis

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Deacons

Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Clay Morris

Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.
Worship6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

WWW.TXKCHURCH.COM

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:35-30

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16;
1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

Think On These Things

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Issue 40

Judge with Righteous Judgment

Bryan Garlock

False Witness and Testimony

When God was ready to form a holy nation for Himself, He revealed Ten Commandments which would govern their conduct toward Him and their neighbor. The ninth commandment is "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." (Exo. 20.16) Moses explained the commandment in greater detail: "You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice...." (Exo. 23.1-2)

Since our Creator is a God of truthfulness, He adamantly abhors false testimony because it is deceitful, contrary to His nature, and sows discord among brethren (Prov. 6.19; 12.17; 14.5; 25.18). Thus, those who bear false witness have a corrupt and malicious heart (Matt. 15.19)

that must be purged of any deceit prior to being right with God.

Two or Three Witnesses

Solomon wrote, "Be not a witness against your neighbor without cause..." (Prov. 24.28). Knowing that many would bear false testimony, God in His infinite wisdom designed checks and balances to protect the innocent: "A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. If a malicious witness arises to accuse a person of wrongdoing... and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother..." (Deut. 19.15-20)

Consequently, people accused of murder (Num. 35.30), adultery (Deut.

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Willie Margaret Mobley, Bob Buls, Bonnie Allgor, Lahron McJunkins, Maxine Burnham, and Francine Davis.** Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

Linda Martin's surgery in Little Rock was successful and resulted in good news. She is recovering.

Please remember Sonny and **Cathy Monaghan** who have both been having health problems recently.

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22.22; Num. 5.13), or idolatry (Deut. 17.2-7) were not to be put to death on the testimony of one witness – only two or more witnesses would suffice. The writer of Hebrews wrote, “Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses.” (Heb. 10.28) Even for Jesus to be crucified there had to be multiple witnesses, though they bore false testimony (Matt. 26.59-66; Mark 14.56-59). However, this principle is not an Old Testament regulation only. Under the law of Christ, when a brother accuses another brother of sin and the accused brother will not repent, the accusing brother must take witnesses with him so “that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses” (Matt. 18.16). Even an elder is protected

by this principle: “Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.” (1 Tim. 5.19)

Witnesses are necessary to corroborate anything – even the resurrection of Jesus. Interestingly, the entire historical account of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection hinges on eye-witness testimony. One witness would not suffice; the Bible gives us over 500 witnesses (cf. 1 Cor. 15, etc.)! If the apostles did not witness the resurrected Jesus, they are liars, our faith is in vain and the Bible must not be recognized as history. Where there are no witnesses, then, we must not take any claims or accusations as serious. Since God does not require us to have blind faith but has provided unanswerable evidence, he does not require us to believe blind claims.

Innocent Until Proven Guilty and the Law of Love

We live in a society that thrives on false or questionable allegations – oftentimes void of evidence and/or witnesses – all to the detriment of the accused. Some people will accuse anyone to move their agenda forward – to obtain some favorable outcome, or to simply assassinate someone’s character. Since accusations themselves are not evidence, when accusations are made, love demands a variety of principles.

The accuser. While we might believe that an accuser is honest, we must hope that he is mistaken in his accusations, as love does not wish to believe evil about anyone. Rightfully so, we will give an accuser the benefit of the doubt as long as we can. To safeguard against unwarranted accusations, the accuser must present evidence that not only corroborates their story, but convinces beyond a reasonable

doubt. Above all, if one is going to accuse another, his motivation must be pure. Accordingly, it would do the accuser well to be like Joseph who – upon learning of Mary’s pregnancy – desired to put her away quietly so as not to publicly shame her because he was righteous (Matt. 1.19). When we make accusations, then, consider how we would not want others to accuse us (Matt. 7.12). Especially if the accusations are false – as in Mary’s case. Publicly shaming her prior to all the facts would have been character assassination!

The accused. Believing all things demands we must believe all things concerning both parties; not just the accuser. We must ensure that the accuser and the accused both have an impartial hearing where evidence and/or witnesses are consulted. In the meantime, we must neither think evil of nor publicly charge any evil to anyone without undeniable evidence. We must presume innocence until guilt is proven. There ought not be a cloud of assumed guilt until a legitimate case is presented; otherwise, love is not present.

What if there is only one witness and no evidence, but the person is in fact guilty? Then God will judge that person. While we want justice here on earth, there will not always be perfect justice. Thankfully, we serve a perfect Judge who will avenge and vindicate those who have suffered at the hands of evildoers. However, where there is no evidence and where there is no multitude of witnesses, there are no grounds for a guilty verdict. Additionally, while evidence may corroborate the accusation, *accusations themselves are not evidence.*

The judge. Those who hear any accusation must remember that while “Love... believes all things, hopes all things....” (1 Cor. 13.7), love also thinks no evil about another without undeniable cause. When love and purity are given first place, biases, preconceived ideas and agendas – anything that clouds our judgment – is completely removed from the picture. When love is not upheld, our likes or dislikes of an individual can skew how we view accusations, evidence, witnesses, and even common sense. We do not simply believe an accusation without doing due diligence to discover the actual truth because love will not easily accept a charge against another. What’s more, it is not enough for us to believe evidence that *seems* legitimate or plausible; the evidence must be beyond reasonable doubt. If we carefully use God’s guidelines and qualifications about accusations, we can “judge with righteous judgment.” (John 7.24, NKJV)

It is a shame that so many stir up trouble with false testimony. When one is falsely accused of wrongdoing, slanderous gossip and malicious bitterness ensues, lives are altered permanently, families are destroyed beyond repair, and careers are ruined. Consider how Joseph lost his standing in Potiphar’s house and was imprisoned because Potiphar’s wife lied about Joseph trying to lie with her (Gen. 39.1-20)! Be warned! False witnesses will not go unpunished – they will perish for the discord they sowed (Prov. 19.5, 9; 21.28). As for those who have been falsely accused, God will vindicate them. BG