

(cont. from page 1)

In his excellent little volume, [Story of the Christian Church](#), J. L. Hurlbut lists some of the effects that this period of history had upon the church.

**Church attendance exploded:** Hurlbut writes: Everybody sought membership in the church, and nearly everybody was received. Both good and bad, sincere seekers after God and hypocritical seekers after gain, rushed into the communion.” Conditions are not totally unlike this, especially in some places, even today. In some areas it is “popular” to be a member of a church; it is even financially advantageous. In many cases, it has become a cultural norm with very little correlation between what is professed and the reality of life. In recent years, much emphasis has been given to booming attendance drives in competition with denominational groups, with little stress on straight-forward, soul-shaking Bible teaching. Have we become so enamored with quantity that we are but little concerned with quality? We must remember that it is possible to be “strong in the land, but not for truth” (Jer. 9:3).

**Church services became more elaborate, but less spiritual:** Hurlbut observes, “The services of worship increased in splendor, but were less spiritual and hearty than those of former times.”

How true of today! This is the era of huge “plants,” plush trappings, and stained glass. In many cases, an extravagant theater-like “experience” seems to be the preference of the day. Image and appearance in the community has become more important than our image with Jehovah. And those monstrous mortgages to which we have anchored ourselves have in some cases been an effective deterrent to powerful pulpit preaching. Some of our preaching is so indistinct and “spit-and-polish” oriented, that one can transfer from denominationalism into our fellowship and never be aware of the change! Numerous brethren who once shouted “Amen” to solid gospel preaching, when meeting in those little white-framed buildings, now blush in dismay when denominational names are mentioned or sin is vigorously exposed. What has happened?

**Corrupted by power:** Finally, Hurlbut notes: “As a result of the church sitting in power, we do not see Christianity transforming the world to its own ideal, but the world dominating the church.”

When there is no sharp line of distinction between the lives of professing Christians and the world, the influence of the church is greatly curtailed. When members of the church can dance, practice social drinking, smoke, dress indecently, and neglect any phase of the Lord’s work that suits their notion, with little being said and practically nothing being done about it, is it any wonder that the church does not grow as it did nineteen centuries ago?

Yes, there are some vital lessons to be learned from history. We ought to look back to where we’ve been, and then ahead to where we seem to be going, and then ask ourselves, “Are we aiming in the right direction?”

Christian Courier

### This and That.....

—Don’t be an echo: Remember that although it’s always an exact imitation, it never contributes anything new.

—If you have old eye glasses, either prescription or reading glasses, please think about donating them to the people of India. Mike and Gary will take them when they travel there in February 2015.

—Reminder, Bethany Allison is requesting support for her missionary trip to Tanzania in 2015. There are envelopes on the table for your convenience.

—People who are all wrapped up in themselves are usually overdressed.

—There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board for communion prep for 2015. Please consider helping.

—Kendall asks that we all get “a jump on our pantry needs early for its all year-round use.” Please bring canned meat or soup for this month. 19 food baskets were delivered this past holiday with great appreciation from the recipients.

—Let us all remember the box tops that are being collected for Midwestern Children’s Home in Ohio. They are greatly needed for various supplies in the home.

# WEST SIDE WINDOW

Volume 21, Issue 2

January 11, 2015

## Some Lessons from Church History

By Wayne Jackson

The church of Christ was born in troublesome times. The bold and uncompromising preaching that was characteristic of those early disciples soon plunged them into grievous persecutions.

Peter and John were imprisoned and whipped (Acts 4, 5). Shortly thereafter Stephen became the first martyr (Acts 7:60). Apparently his death triggered the “great persecution” (Acts 8:1), which subsequently came upon the church.

For the following two and one half centuries, the church of God was literally bathed in blood. Thousands of saints were tortured and murdered in the most inhumane way.

Though the atrocities of this period were dreadful indeed, the persecutions were not without secondary benefits to the cause of the Savior.

First of all, the hardships tempered those who were truly converted to Jesus. Secondly, it “weeded out” much of the hypocritical element which plagued the church. And thirdly, it prevented insincere people from identifying with the people of God. As one historian has put it,

“One effect of the trials through which the Christians of that period passed was a purified church. The persecutions kept away all who were not sincere in their profession.”

In spite of the tribulations, the church grew with marvelous rapidity. Scholars estimate that there were possibly some sixty million Christians by the end of the second century A.D.

In the early fourth century, however, the Roman ruler Constantine came to the imperial throne. He was friendly toward the Christians, and in 313 A.D. he issued his famous “Edict of Toleration,” which at once put an end to the persecution of those who professed to follow Christ.

Admittedly, this produced some very good effects as far as society in general was concerned. Crucifixion as a method of capital punishment was abolished, slavery began to fade, and the murder of unwanted infants was repressed.

If we consider the cessation of persecution a blessing, it is only fair to point out that this newly found popularity which Christianity enjoyed had its disadvantages as well. In view of the popularity of the “Christian religion” in the western world of our own time, we might be able to learn some valuable lessons from history.

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### SERVICES

Sunday Bible Study —  
9:30 am  
Worship — 10:30 am &  
6:00 pm  
Wed. Bible Study —  
7:00 pm

### MINISTER

Michael Gors

### ELDERS

Michael Gors  
Gary Reynolds  
Larry Reynolds  
Todd Stults

### DEACONS

Don Allison— Fellowship  
Kendall Clark- Benevo-  
lence  
Jim Clark-Visitation  
Lowell Huffman-Media  
Volker Jaromin— Com-  
munication and Ad-  
vertising

### MISSION WORKS

Russia & India  
Mark Reynolds

Memphis School of  
Preaching  
Armand Wine  
Ronnie Gootam

Southeast Institute of  
Biblical Studies  
Preaching  
Caleb Taylor

New Hampshire  
Laconia Church of  
Christ  
Shane Belanger

# WORSHIP FOR January 11, 2015

## MORNING WORSHIP

Announcements: Larry Reynolds  
Song Leader: Gary Reynolds  
1st Prayer: Rex Harper  
Scripture: Steve Gors  
*Acts 17:16-21*

Sermon: Mike Gors  
*“Being Christian in a World of  
Idolatry”*

Closing Prayer: Joe Reed  
Sound Room: Jerry Hoyt

## COMMUNION SERVERS

West Side— Outside: Carl Gilstrap  
                  Inside: Todd Stults  
East Side— Inside: Jonah Stults  
                  Outside: Jimmy Clark

## EVENING WORSHIP

Song Leader: Gary Reynolds  
Prayer: Jimmy Clark  
Scripture Reading: Rex Harper  
*Psalms 47:1-9*

Sermon: Mike Gors  
*“Why Should God’s People Sing?”*  
Communion Table: Bill Winemiller  
Closing Prayer: Todd Stults  
Sound Room: Jerry Hoyt

### GROUP 1 DUTIES, JAN 11 & 14

Group 1 is responsible for all activities in the month of January. Chad & Jennifer Bobo are this group’s leaders.  
Kista & Elayna--Communion Prep

## Remember in Prayer

**Beth Rumfeld**, Broken pelvis. In-law to Richard Messer.  
**Bob Allison**, Finished chemo treatments and is doing well. Father of Don Allison.  
**Brett Rutherford**, Missionary. Lesions on brain.  
**Doug & Sally Anderson**  
**Evelyn Mertz**, Surgery this past Wednesday. No cancer detected but a treatment plan will be instigated. Sister of Dorothy.  
**Herb & Betty Smith**, This week, Herb is faring well. Betty has been under the weather.  
**Howard Goodman**, Recuperating at home  
**Jim Witty**, Spirits have improved.  
**Jerry Anderson**, Uncle of Doug Anderson. Heart blockage  
**Judy Schuck**, Radiation treatment for cancer. Charlene’s cousin  
**Kennedy Zade**, MRI scheduled. Dorothy’s granddaughter.  
**Kristi Tesmer**, Shirley Durnal’s daughter. Struggling after cancer surgery.  
**Lanier Bailey**, Elder at Towne Acres. Open heart surgery. Now residing at Parker Health Care in Parker City.  
**Linda Bigler**, Brain cancer.  
**Les & Sara Bonham**, Brother and sister-in-law to Pat Kidd. He has Alzheimer's Disease and she has cancer.  
**Margaret Huffman**, Pneumonia. Resting at home.  
**Mark Reynolds, Mindy, Abby & Corrine**, Safely arrived in India. They will be there until Jan. 17th  
**Pat Lee**, Flu  
**Rosemary Summers**. Stroke. Appreciates cards.  
**Rodney Lawson**, Lung Cancer. Now residing at Signature Health Care, formerly Muncie Health Care on North Walnut Street. Cousin of Kathy Harper.  
**Sandy Crawford**, Cancer and shingles. Wife of close friend to Kendall Clark  
**Sandy Phillips**, Progressing after cancer Surgery  
**Shawna Schock**  
**Teresa Allison**, Doing well. Hoping to go back to work this week.

## Remember our Shut-ins with Cards, Visits and Prayer:

Bill Gaw—Westminster Village  
Evelyn Vannatter—Elmcroft  
Forrest Hurst—Elmcroft  
Lana Blanchard—Albany Health Care  
Vada Zeek—Willow Bend

## Midweek Bible Study January 14th

**Devotions:** Mike Gors  
**Song Leader:** Adam Gors  
**Prayer:** Sean Bobo

## Week Attendance for the of Jan. 4, 2015

Sun. Bible Study 73  
Sun. Worship am 95  
Sun. Worship pm 66

## Happy Birthday

Debby P—Jan 11  
Rick—Jan 11  
Keesha C.—Jan 11  
Charlene—Jan 14  
Andy Daunhauer—Jan. 16  
Pat Lee—Jan. 30  
Jack Qualkenbush—Jan 31

## Sincerest Sympathy and heartfelt prayers from all of us at West Side to the families of:

-**Ed Canon**, Cousin of Kathy Murphy. Mr. Cannon passed away on Wednesday, New Year’s Eve.  
-**John Clark Family**, death of daughters, Annie and Carolyn Clark in a car accident. These students attended Cowan School with Skylar and Taylor.  
-**Leonard Turner** who passed away. Leonard attended West Side at one time and is the uncle of Don Allison.

## Today on January 11th

*Good Samaritans to meet after morning worship.  
Ladies Singing at 2:30p. All ladies welcome to lead.*

## Looking Ahead

Jan. 13, Men’s fellowship breakfast at IHOP 8:00a  
Jan. 13, Women’s fellowship breakfast, IHOP at 10:00a  
Jan. 17, Bible Bowl, 7:00 p  
Jan. 18, Boy’s Song Leading at 3:00p  
Jan 18, Girl’s Song Leading at 4:30p  
Jan. 22, College & High School Devotions at Towne Acres, 7p  
Jan. 29, Ladies Deep Bible Study, 7p