

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church of God Big Sandy

ChurchofGodBigSandy.com

Dec. 23, 2023 • 1:00 p.m. • Sunset 5:19

Bible studies

Interactive study—1:00 p.m. Dave Havir
Presentation study—2:00 Dave Havir
(Also transmitted live)

Order of service—3:00 p.m.

Song leader Wynn Skelton
Pianist Dixon Cartwright
Scripture reading Isaiah 42:1–9
Sermon Daniel Hammons

Quick takes

1. Wednesday-night Bible study—Dec. 27 at 7:00.
2. Save the date—The East Texas Barn Dance and Chili Supper is scheduled in Gladewater on Dec. 30 at 6:00 p.m.
3. Edifying the Body—This week's article is "Economy: Six Charts the Media Don't Want You to See" by Craig Bannister.
4. Among Friends—This week's article is "2 Corinthians 11:20—Part 4" by Dave Havir.
5. Eye on the World—219 headlines and six articles

Prayer updates

Lisa Smith reports that **Gary Wilson** is scheduled to return this weekend from Metairie, La. (where he was receiving extended hyperbaric therapy).

In last week's bulletin, we mentioned that **Timberly Dunnam** was dealing with significant pain due to the kidney stone. She reports that she is doing better. She said: "The kidney pain is mostly gone."

On Tuesday, **Clay Forrestier** gave the following report about **Gavin** (his 10-year-old son). He wrote: "We don't have a date yet for surgery. Probably January, as soon as all three surgeons (who will be part of the operation) can coordinate their schedules. He will have two surgeons for the tumor and one surgeon for the facial nerves. This operation is typically two or three hours. They will be making an incision near the belly button to remove fat and graft it into the crevice left behind from the tumor removal. Barring complications, we should expect one night in the hospital and five days of recovery before removing the drain tube. We should also expect the probability of some lower facial weakness/paralysis for nine to 12 weeks. We greatly appreciate the prayers."

On Thursday, **Angela Dunnam** reported: "I'm having another flare-up in all my joints that is very painful. The pain is also in the lymph-node-removal area. I have a fever and chills. This seems to happen once a month or so. I'm trying to get my immune system built back up. It is taking a while."

In the Dec. 2 bulletin, we mentioned that **Ruth Roe** is recovering from her surgery on her left knee at Legend Oaks nursing home in Gladewater. She reports that her leg is improving slowly and that she will be there until she can take steps (which she said might take four more weeks).

On Sunday, **Joyce Coleman** returned from Iowa (where she was visiting her mother, **Donna Pfrimmer**). She reported: "I will go back in a couple of weeks. Mom has bouts of bad coughing from the phlegm. They said it's related with congestive heart failure. Her confusion is getting much worse. I am expecting she may not know me when I get back up there. Thank you for your prayers."

New prayer requests

On Tuesday, **Shirley West** fell at home and had bruises on her face, knees and arms. She went to Longview Regional Hospital and was admitted to make sure there wasn't a blood clot in her lung. On Wednesday, she made the decision for a pacemaker to be inserted, and the procedure was done on Thursday. (In the past, she had been resistant to that idea, but she agreed to the pacemaker this time when she understood that it would be inserted without the doctor making any surgical cuts.) She was scheduled to go home on Friday.

Following is a text that **Dave Havar** received on Monday from his older sister (**Norma**) concerning her daughter (his niece, **Melissa**), who is 46 years old. Norma wrote: "So this year my daughter had a hysterectomy; open-heart surgery to replace a valve that has put her on warfarin for the rest of her life; her toes are fusing together from her rheumatoid arthritis; last week all her tests confirmed lupus; an MRI showed markers for Alzheimer's or Parkinson's; and, today, we find out she has breast cancer. This is my baby and I don't know how to help her. Thanks for listening."

David Briggs of Tulsa, Okla., died on Dec. 11. Please pray for the family.

Martha Clement of Tulsa, Okla., died on Dec. 19. Please remember her husband, **Harold**, and the rest of the family in your prayers.

Larry Foster of Longview died on Dec. 21. Please pray for the family.

Synopsis of board meeting on Dec. 17

- Board members reviewed the 2023 church budget, made adjustments for the 2024 church budget and approved the 2024 budget.
- Reg Killingley mentioned that the board should discuss the congregation's overall approach to renting out the building and finalize an updated price list.
- Since the details of the pastor's report can be finalized on Dec. 31, Dave Havir will distribute that information to board members at the end of December.

"2 Corinthians 11:20—Part 4"

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Dec. 23, 2023.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with a five-part series about 2 Corinthians 11:20. Since the apostle Paul mentioned five negative characteristics practiced by religious leaders and disciples, each study will discuss one of the ideas that he mentioned.

Followers were more wrong

It is interesting to read the context leading up to 2 Corinthians 11:20.

■ 2 Corinthians 11:13-15—The discussion is about false apostles who are described as deceitful workers.

■ 2 Corinthians 11:20-21—But, while Paul is describing the wrong behavior of the fake apostles, he was directly discussing the wrong behavior of the followers.

■ Shame on false religious teachers for promoting themselves and their erroneous ideas.

■ But shame on followers for accepting the wrong behavior of the alleged religious leaders.

Allowing people to exalt themselves over you

Notice the fourth of the five characteristics mentioned in 2 Corinthians 11:20.

2 Corinthians 11:20 (New King James)—“For you put up with it . . . if one exalts himself [over you].”

2 Corinthians 11:20 (The Amplified New Testament)—“For you endure it . . . if a

man is arrogant and puts on airs.”

Exalting versus serving

The rest of this article will be about four concepts that show the contrast between exalting over people versus serving people.

Instead of following people who exalt themselves over people, we should be encouraging people to be humble servants.

Do not follow leaders who exalt themselves

Notice a few verses about people who focused upon exalting themselves.

■ Acts 8:18-19—Simon wanted power and prestige (instead of the opportunity to serve), so he offered money to buy the power.

■ Acts 8:20-23—Peter sized up Simon's problem and corrected him.

■ 3 John 9—Diotrephes desired the pre-eminence over people, and did not receive servants like John.

■ 3 John 10—John said that he was willing to point out the wrong deeds of Diotrephes—speaking malicious words against servants, not receiving the brethren and putting many out of the church.

I repeat—do not follow leaders who exalt themselves.

Do not exalt yourself over people

Notice a few verses about warning people to avoid exalting themselves over people.

■ Matthew 20:25—The Son of God re-

minded that rulers tend to lord it over the people and tend to exercise authority over them.

■ Matthew 20:26-28—The Son of God said that His disciples should act in such a manner—but rather become servants like the Son of God.

■ Matthew 23:12—The Son of God said that he who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Now, notice the verses leading up to that statement.

■ Matthew 23:4-11—Notice some bad characteristics to avoid—giving heavy burdens upon people, seeking the spotlight, seeking the best privileges among the people and seeking the fancy titles.

■ Matthew 23:12—The greatest will be the servant.

■ Luke 14:11—The Son of God said that he who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Now, notice the verses leading up to that statement.

■ Luke 14:7-10—When you go to a wedding feast, sit at the lesser seats and allow the hosts to invite you to the best seats.

■ Luke 18:14—The Son of God said that he who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Now, notice the verses leading up to that statement.

■ Luke 18:9-13—The Son of God contrasted a self-righteous Pharisee and a humble tax collector.

I repeat—do not exalt yourself.

Understand the danger of pride

Let's notice three examples from the Old Testament about the danger of pride and the

danger of arrogance.

■ 1 Samuel 15:17—Samuel asked Saul: “When you were little in your own eyes, were you not head of the tribes of Israel?”

■ Isaiah 10:12-15—The Lord announced that He would punish the arrogance of the King of Assyria, because that nation took excessive delight in capturing the northern Kingdom of Israel.

■ Isaiah 14:12-14—The Lord criticized Lucifer for wanting to ascend into heaven and to exalt his throne above the stars of God.

Teaching people to be humble servants

■ Philippians 2:1-4—Paul described about esteeming other people better than themselves.

■ Philippians 2:5-11—The Son of God was the perfect example of humility.

■ Philippians 2:19-24—Timothy set a good example of being a humble servant.

■ 1 Thessalonians 2:6—Paul did not seek glory from men.

■ 1 Thessalonians 2:7—Paul sought to be gentle like a nursing mother cherishing her children.

■ 1 Thessalonians 2:8—Paul did not only impart the gospel, but he sought to give his life for the people.

■ 1 Peter 5:2-3—As servants, we should strive to fulfill three goals—serve willingly (instead of by compulsion); serve eagerly (instead of for money); and set an example (instead of being an overlord).

■ 1 Peter 5:4—Peter wrote: “When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”

Thoughts for the week

“You put up with it if one brings you into bondage.”—*The Apostle Paul*

“You put up with it . . . if one devours you.”—*The Apostle Paul*

“You put up with it . . . if one takes from you [historically understood to include money and property].”—*The Apostle Paul*

“You put up with it . . . if one exalts himself [over you].”—*The Apostle Paul*