

Vancleave Church of Christ Weekly Newsletter

Dedicated to spiritual encouragement and local Christian ministry

January 16, 2022

Scripture Reading: Luke 12:16-21


The Way to True Riches

John, while imprisoned on an island called Patmos, wrote a letter from the risen and reigning Savior to the church of Christ meeting together at Smyrna. At the time of the writing, Smyrna was a small but industrious city located in Asia Minor just north of Ephesus whose local culture was filled with the patronage of the ruling worldly powers as well as idol worship (*for further information see Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, et al. available at <https://biblehub.com/revelation/2-8.htm>*). Worldliness brought much gain at Smyrna, but the church was not willing to compromise the Christian faith in exchange for material gain. Financial poverty characterized the church, and soon afterward external pressures arose creating even more difficulties for the brethren. We might refer to this church in context of the Revelation as "Suffering Smyrna" due to the following statement about them from John's pen:

"These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: 'I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life'" (**Revelation 2:8b-10**, NKJV).

When staring down possible end of life terms as a result of poverty or persecution, it may be tempting to negotiate peace with the rulers of this world – with those who can offer material sustenance and protection against the fear of physical death. But such a "deal" with the Devil would mean a forfeiture of the soul and the loss of something Jesus declared earlier is more valuable than anything in the whole world (viz. **Mark 8:36, 37**). Christians are to be "rich toward God" and to store up "treasures in heaven" where the soul is truly at home with God (**Luke 12:21ff; Matthew 6:19-21**). The world - its necessary merchandise and services – are on a limited timetable and are of no value with regard to eternal life. According to John in another letter, the world is "passing away" (**1 John 2:17**). Instead, God's people are to be "rich in good works" with the means that are available to them in accordance with God's will (**1 Timothy 6:17-19**). Faithfulness to the Lord is the way to true riches: the "crown of life" eternal is given by the One who died and came back to life forever!

Seeking first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness...

<u>Services:</u>	<u>Local Works of Faith:</u>	<u>Foreign Missions:</u>	<u>Subscribe to these on YouTube:</u>
Sunday 9:00 AM Bible Class 10:00 AM Worship 6:00 PM Worship	Sunnybrook Children's Home Gulf Coast Bible Camp Local Food Pantry Annual Youth Events Back-Pack Buddies The Gospel of Christ TV (Fox 25) (Every Sunday at 6:30 AM)	Guyana India Guam Local Wi-Fi Network Access: SSID: 2Wire029 Key: 3995723302	<i>Vancleave Church of Christ Digital Ministries</i> <i>The Mississippi Gospel Minute</i>
Wednesday: 6:00 PM Prayer & Bible Study		E-mail: vcocministry@vancleavechurch.org Web Site: https://www.vancleavechurch.org	

The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. ~ Psalms 34:15

Recent Prayer Requests:

→ COVID-19 has recently gripped several of our loved ones. These include:

Grant Lovato, Scarlett Buck, Susanne Samples, Max Gruich, Ryann Robinson family, Roman Holmes Family, among others, please remember these in prayer.

→ **George Allen Hudson** is to have bariatric surgery to help alleviate multiple health issues.

→ **Traci Gruich and Lexi Bisset** are awaiting results from Covid test.

→ **Christy Brown:** Being with child, she has been having some complications. Prayers needed.

→ **Lisa Wages:** Experiencing problems from previous hernia. She is to see doctor on Monday.

→ **Cindy Stevens** is to have an MRI Wednesday. This will help determine possible surgery.

→ **Others:** _____

Please Continue to Remember These in Prayer

David Hines	Harvey Goldensup	Maxine Robinson	Tonya Organ
Joe Dorris Box	Amy Stevens	Mary Culbreth	Jack Hayes
Roy Corbin	Mary McDaniel	Mark Damron	Mike Kenney
Paul Langham	Mary Alice Kenney	Dino Vechio	

Have requests or other announcements? Send email to vcocministry@vancleavemchurch.org

Announcements: Rising Cases of Covid-19 / Omicron variant has prompted the implementation of limited social distancing measures in our public assembly. This is to continue until further notice. For those who wish to do so, face masks are encouraged and will be provided for those who may need one.

WEEKLY WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT: Many things in the life can be cancelled, but nothing in the world can stop us from the love of God!

“...we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” (Romans 8:37, NKJV)

Daily Bible Reading Plan for 2021, Week 52

MONDAY 2 Peter 1-3, Jude

Godliness and worldliness is contrasted in these writings. How might our lives reflect godliness?

TUESDAY 1 John 1-5

What might be some practical ways to avoid spiritual darkness and, instead, walk in the light?

WEDNESDAY 2 John, 3 John

What “gifts” has the Lord given you that cause others to see Christ’s life when they look at yours?

THURSDAY Revelation 1-5

Which of the seven letters to the churches aligns with your life in Christ? Is this a tough question?

FRIDAY Revelation 6-11

This passage seems to bother many Christians today. Why might this be the case?

SATURDAY Revelation 12-16

Filled with much violence and fearful imagery, what do you suppose is John’s message in this passage?

SUNDAY Revelation 17-22

Babylon’s fall foreshadowed the fall of sin and evil. What might the imagery of Ch.’s 21 and 22 preview?

“...they received the word with all readiness of mind...” (Acts 17:11)