

# Vancleave Church of Christ

## Prayer Requests and Announcements

March 12, 2023

**Sermon Title:** The Way of Christ

**Scripture:** Acts 9:1, 2

**Don Boone:** Don passed away recently. We wish to express our deepest sympathy to his family.

**Elisa Hesselrode:** She is scheduled to have a biopsy soon. Please be praying for her.

**Lanette Girod's cousin's grandson, David** has returned home and is recovering well.

***Ongoing Prayers (Please see earlier Prayer Requests for details) Please be sure to update at:***

***vcocministry@vancleavemchurch.org***

Lisa Jenkins	Tara Forte	Linda Kenney	Elsie Ashcraft
David Robinson	Mike Inabinette	Ingelise Myrick	Naomi Waitrous
Rick Bedwell	Murray Davidson	Susan Flurry	Frank Sentelle
Maxine Robinson	Pete Hankins	Frieda Wilson	Darlene Hannah
Paul Myrick	Ashley McGriff	Darrell McCormick	Charlotte Rashun
Zenie George	Gerardo Ranario	Dot Catchot	Sue Whatley
Andi Barrett	Virginia Dickerson	Sandra Roberson	Gary Mitchell
Mike Kenney	David Bosarge	Heath Smith	Jesse & Sharon Owens
Suzette Saucier	Theresa Blackmon		

### **A Word of Encouragement for the Week Ahead**

We may lose many things in this world...but we need never lose our love for God!

"I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Romans 8:38, 39)

**While we have no up-to-date/current announcements this week, here is one that was surely noteworthy during the lives of the earliest disciples:**

"But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"

(Luke 24:1-5, ESV)

*The following article is the second of three articles I've included in our Prayer Requests and Announcements sheet (See 3/5/2023 for first of three). The entire article, "3 Things We Can Learn From Atheists," was written by Eric Lyons, M.Min. and originally appeared in the monthly journal, Reason and Revelation, dated June 2021, published by Apologetics Press™ (<https://apologeticspress.org>). There will be one more in this series. ~ DP*

## **2—Atheists Correctly Call Out the Hypocrisy of Pretend Christianity, But They Illogically Conclude That Pretend Christianity Justifies a Rejection of the Real Thing**

One atheist was reported to have said a few years ago: "We hear an awful lot from conservatives in the Bible Belt and on the TV about how we all should be living. Certainly a culture that teaches the conservative religious values of the Christian right must have clean living written all over it. And lots of ripe fruit from their morally superior lives abounding. It doesn't. Far from it. People that talk the loudest may be the ones walking the slowest. Joining its history of Biblically correct bigotry and discrimination, it is an area with the highest divorce, murder, STD/HIV/AIDS, teen pregnancy," etc.<sup>5</sup> The fact is, many people who call themselves Christians do not walk in the light of the Lord, but sadly stroll in the devil's darkness.

Consider one example. In 2014, 86% of Alabamians claimed to be Christians.<sup>6</sup> In Montgomery, the state's capital city of about 200,000 people,<sup>7</sup> the proverbial phrase "you'll find a church on every corner" rightly portrays this city of over 250 churches.<sup>8</sup> Sadly, in 2015, this "Christian city" was statistically crowned "the most sexually diseased city in the nation."<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, atheists should call out such blatant hypocrisy on the part of many "Christians." In fact, they are doing what Christian parents, preachers, and Bible teachers **should be** doing continually—warning those who claim to be Christians not to live in sin, including any kind of sexual sin.<sup>10</sup> No doubt, hypocrisy runs wild in "Christian America" today<sup>11</sup> in part because (a) so many churches seem more interested in social gatherings and entertainment than preaching on sin and salvation,<sup>12</sup> and (b) most churches appear too politically correct to address specific sinful situations in their midst, which only exacerbates the problems in churches across the country (cf. 1 Corinthians 5:1-13).

Still, for all the disheartening hypocrisy among the religious today, just as a counterfeit \$100 bill does not prove that genuine \$100 bills do not exist, counterfeit Christianity is not a logical reason to reject authentic Christianity. Neither Cain's unacceptable religious sacrifice nor his murder of Abel made true worship and service to God illogical. What's more, neither Judas's thievery nor his betrayal of Jesus made the religion of Jesus invalid. God condemns hypocrisy (Matthew 5:20), but He gives everyone sufficient evidence to know the Truth and obey it (John 8:32)—to follow the evidence where it leads and to become real, genuine Christians, like Peter and Paul, Philip and Phoebe, and Aquila and Priscilla.

### **NOTES**

<sup>5</sup> James Veverka as quoted in B.A. Robinson (2000), "U.S. Divorce Rates for Various Faith Groups, Age Groups, & Geographic Areas," [http://www.religioustolerance.org/chr\\_dira.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/chr_dira.htm).

<sup>6</sup> Kay Campbell (2015), "How Alabama's 'Religious Landscape' Has Changed since 2007," [https://www.al.com/living/2015/05/us\\_religious\\_landscape.html](https://www.al.com/living/2015/05/us_religious_landscape.html).

<sup>7</sup> "Montgomery, AL Population" (2021), World Population Review, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/montgomery-al-population>.

<sup>8</sup> According to [www.churchfinder.com/churches/al/montgomery](http://www.churchfinder.com/churches/al/montgomery).

<sup>9</sup> Kym Klass (2015), "Montgomery Rated Most Sexually Diseased City in Nation," July 27, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2015/07/27/montgomery-rated-sexually-diseased-city-nation/30722091/>.

<sup>10</sup> Consider the many warnings that Paul made to various first-century churches about sin, including repeated admonitions about refraining from all manner of sexual immorality: Romans 1:24-32; 1 Corinthians 5:1-7:9; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:1-14; Colossians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8.

<sup>11</sup> The leading cause surely being the breakdown of the home, even among so many who claim to be Christians.

<sup>12</sup> This is not a criticism of Christian fellowship and social gatherings, which are extremely important to the life of the Church. However, the preaching of the saving-from-sin Gospel of Christ (in all its power—Romans 1:16) must not take a back seat to anything in the life of God's people.