



First Christian Church

Lovington, New Mexico

July
Volume 52
Number 7

In the heart of the community, with the community at heart.

Month-At-A-Glance

- 1-4 North American Christian Convention
- 2 No Summer Backyard Fellowship
- 6 Mike's First Sunday
- 9 Fellowship - 6:30pm
- 13 Board Meeting
- 16 Fellowship - 6:30pm
- 23 Fellowship - 6:30pm
- 30 Last Fellowship of Summer—6:30pm

July



We will not be meeting this month. Our next meeting will be Saturday, August 2nd.

LADIES COMMITTEE:

- Pat Capps
- Jamie Cunningham & Rickey Tabor

COMMUNION:

- Jamie Cunningham
- Gail Samberson

Summer Backyard

Fellowships

We've gotten off to a great start in the month of June with our fellowships on Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm. Each host chooses a theme and we bring foods to go with it. Remember to bring large portions and chairs.

The schedule for July is:

July 2 - none scheduled

July 9 - Mexican food at the church, hosted Jamie

July 16 - Football food at 1521 Camino Del Arco, Hobbs
Mary Donaldson & the Guthrie family are hosting

July 23 - Faquitas at 610 W. Avenue C. The Lewellens and Raburns are hosting.

July 30 - Still need a host for this evening

Our Vision

"To be in the Heart of the Community, with the Community at Heart!"

Our Mission

To LOVE:

- Lead Others to Christ,
- Obey God and His Word,
- Volunteer Our Abilities,
- Exalt God's Presence

Casas Por Christo

We have an opportunity to be part of a missions trip to Juarez, Mexico to build a house for a family, July 27 - August 1st. The cost per person is \$420. Susie Bogan, Tray Ballard, Micah Shorter and possibly Martha Willyard are planning to be part of this ministry this year.

Susie will be cooking and being mom. The others will be building a house and/or anything else needed.

If anyone else would like to go, please let Susie know and

details.

If you aren't interested in going but would like to take part, you can do that a couple of ways. You can promise to pray daily for those going and/or helping financially. Each person going has to raise their own money. Donations would be appreciated so anyone who wants to go can.



Don't Take a Vacation from Church



MIKE'S MUSINGS

Recently, I had a three-day discussion with a pastor friend, regarding the person and character (or lack thereof) of a man from Kerioth. You might know him as Judas Iscariot. Judas was one of the twelve closest followers of Christ. In fact, Jesus and the others had put Judas in charge of the money for the ministerial work. Obviously, the eleven trusted him at least a little.

Knowing what we know about Judas and of the betrayal of Christ, led to my friend and I sharing our opinions on the character of Judas. My friend maintained Judas had no choice but to do what he did. In other words, Judas was *created* to object to the jar of perfume at the house in Bethany, receive 30 pieces of silver, and eventually kiss Jesus in the garden – leading to the arrest and crucifixion. Each of those incidents leads my friend to believe Judas was never a “true follower” of Christ. If he had been, Judas would have never done what he did.

The disagreement between the pastor and I hinges on “Was Judas created for betrayal? Did the man from Kerioth have a choice in the matter? Was Judas simply a great actor that “played the part” for the three years of Jesus’ public ministry?”

First of all, if Judas was an actor, he was a great actor. Why would anyone allow a person they don’t trust to handle their money? I would argue, “They wouldn’t.” And based upon the trust the others had in Judas ie. Judas fulfilling his apostolic role of sharing the Gospel (cf. Lk. 9), it seems Scripture is clear that Judas was a true follower at that point in life.

Second, just as I tell my kids time and time again, “Life is about choices. Choose wisely.” We’re told temptations/trials/challenges will come. When they do, our decision leads to life (peace) or death (turmoil). Judas chose disobedience and betrayal and for that reason experienced turmoil, eventually taking his own life.

Lastly, the idea of Judas being *created* for betrayal just makes me squirm. Genesis 1:26 tells us that all mankind (I guess “all” would include Judas, Hitler, Stalin etc.) is created in the image of God. In other words, God created with perfection. Mankind screwed it up based upon choices! Most scholarship today believes Judas was motivated by thinking Jesus would overthrow the Romans. If that’s the case, Judas hadn’t been created for the purpose of betraying Jesus. He was a true follower but chose to betray Jesus for selfish reasons.

I’m reminded of several other betrayals Scripture records. For the sake of space, let’s just talk about one. Do you remember after the arrest of Jesus? Jesus is led to the high priests. Peter is standing in the courtyard warming himself. We’re told Peter denies knowing Jesus – not once, but three times. Wouldn’t we have to put those denials in the betrayal category?

The fact of the matter is we all betray Jesus. The only difference between Judas and Peter was one failed to receive grace and restoration, while the other was restored and went on to lead the early Church. Betrayal is a choice. Receiving grace is a choice. John reminds us we all sin but grace is possible (I Jn 1:8-9). Have you chosen to experience God’s grace today? I pray you have.

Mike