

# Winn's Creek Baptist Church NEWS

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January 2015

## The Pastor's Corner

### The Difference between Descriptive and Prescriptive Scripture Passages

This past week, I ran into a friend of mine who happens to be a Jehovah's Witness. Every time I see him, he "tests" me. He wants to give me something to think about. This particular day, he asked me if I was celebrating Christmas.

I said, "Certainly," while smiling, knowing what was going to come next!

He responded, "You know, the only two birthdays celebrated in the Bible led to trouble".

I said, "Well, John the Baptist seemed pretty excited about the coming of Christ...he even jumped when he was still in his mother's womb." And we left it at that.

Now the two passages about birthdays that my friend was referring to come from Genesis chapter 40 and Matthew chapter 14.

The Genesis passage goes like this,

***20 Pharaoh's birthday came three days later, and he prepared a banquet for all his officials and staff. He summoned his chief cup-bearer and chief baker to join the other officials.<sup>21</sup> He then restored the chief cup-bearer to his former position, so he could again hand Pharaoh his cup.<sup>22</sup> But Pharaoh impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had predicted when he interpreted his dream. Gen 40:20-22 (NLT)***

Here Pharaoh was celebrating his birthday...and just as Joseph had said, the chief baker of the palace was impaled.

The second passage is from the Gospel of Matthew; it goes like this,

***6 But at a birthday party for Herod, Herodias's daughter performed a dance that greatly pleased him,<sup>7</sup> so he promised with a vow to give her anything she wanted.<sup>8</sup> At her mother's urging, the girl said, "I want the***

*head of John the Baptist on a tray!"<sup>9</sup> Then the king regretted what he had said; but because of the vow he*

*had made in front of his guests, he issued the necessary orders.<sup>10</sup> So John was beheaded in the prison,<sup>11</sup> and his head was brought on a tray and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. Matt 14:6-11 (NLT)*

In this passage, Herod ends up beheading John the Baptist because of a promise that he made to Herodias. My friend's point was that one can simply read these two passages and see that celebrating birthdays leads to trouble.

However, if you read both of these scriptures carefully, neither one of them says that we should not celebrate birthdays (or Christmas, by implication). They just describe what happened on these particular birthdays. In fact, in the Genesis passage, it's true that the baker was impaled...but it's also true that the cupbearer was brought out of prison, vindicated and restored on the same day.

This being the case, we have to be careful when reading scripture. Sometimes we are told information that is part of the story, but we draw too much from it. We make scripture say things that were never intended.

Now the truth is, beyond just the Jehovah's Witnesses, there are many other people that decide they don't want to have a Christmas tree, or they don't want to have an Advent wreath...because of the pagan superstitions that were originally associated with these ideas.

So what are we to do? How do we handle these situations? Is it right to celebrate Christmas and birthdays, or not?

Thankfully, scripture does give us the answer...because in the book of Romans, Paul tells us not to argue about whether we celebrate different holidays. He tells us,

***5 In the same way, some think one day is more holy than another day, while others think every day is alike. You should each be fully convinced that whichever day you choose is acceptable. Romans 14:5 (NLT)***

(Continued on next page)

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**(The Pastor's Corner continued)**

If you read the prior verses of Romans 14 to get the context, you can clearly see that Paul is telling believers how to handle differences. Whether it be what food

people eat, or what days people celebrate, these things are secondary issues, and people are free to choose for themselves what days are special.

You see, the Romans passage is a PRESCRIPTIVE passage. Paul is telling the church "HOW" to handle different situations. The Genesis and Matthew passages were DESCRIPTIVE passages; they were simply telling "WHAT" happened on a given day. When we're reading our Bibles, we need to be attentive to this difference.

Pastor Jim

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## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

(To add a name, please see Joani Layman.)

- 4<sup>th</sup> Mike & Pat Spencer - A
- 7<sup>th</sup> Garnett Hall - B
- James Clayton - B
- 9<sup>th</sup> Adam Layman - B
- 10<sup>th</sup> Zachary Epps - B
- Alice Clayton - B
- 13<sup>th</sup> Robert Conard - B
- 15<sup>th</sup> Tyler Hudson - B
- 24<sup>th</sup> Kitty Holt - B
- 25<sup>th</sup> Joani Layman - B
- Donna Turner - B
- 26<sup>th</sup> Cindy Cole - B
- 27<sup>th</sup> Kasey Martin - B
- Joshua Martin - B
- 29<sup>th</sup> Harmony West
- 30<sup>th</sup> Shirley Epps - B
- 31<sup>st</sup> Danny Owen - B

**COME TO THE COFFEE HOUSE!**

**Saturday, January 3**

**5:30 p.m. - Soup & Sandwiches**

*(no cost - just come and enjoy!)*

**6:30 p.m. - Coffee House Talent**

Come and bring a friend or two. For more information, contact Tammy Hall.

### NEXT BLOODMOBILE

**Saturday, January 10, 2015**

**10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

**Special Doings...January is Donor Appreciation Month!**

*Come join us as we begin our 12<sup>th</sup> year of blood drive ministry in the community. If you can donate food, door prizes, put up posters, or work at the blood drive, please contact Joani Layman.*

### OFFERING ENVELOPES

New offering envelopes are now available. Please pick up a new box of offering envelopes and begin using these in January 2015. **There is a signup sheet with the boxes of envelopes on the front pew in the church**--please list your name and the number on your new box of envelopes, to help the church with record keeping. Thanks!

### **NEW MEMBER:**

*We were delighted to welcome Ra'Shawn Jones as a new member on Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. Ra'Shawn and his brother Jakob are the sons of Raven Epps, and David & Michelle Epps' grandsons.*

# Winn's Creek Baptist Church NEWS

**YOUR ATTENDANCE IS NEEDED**

**AT WINN'S CREEK CHURCH**

**The Lord's Supper**

Sunday, January 4 - 11 a.m.

**Quarterly Business Meeting**

Sunday, January 25 - 6:00 p.m.

## **FOCUS ON --SUNDAY SCHOOL**

If you're not already a part of Sunday School, we hope you'll come give it a try in 2015. This is a valuable time of learning and growing in our faith, regardless whether we're new Christians" or made the decision to follow Christ many years earlier in our lives.



Every Sunday morning from 9:45-10 a.m. there is an Opening Assembly in the sanctuary. We begin with a hymn and prayer, followed by scripture and a brief "thought for the day." Then everyone goes to his or her classroom. Some people choose to skip this assembly, and that's fine too.

Our current Sunday School classes, teachers, and locations are:

- **Ages 0-2 years** – First classroom past church office – Teachers: Trudy Epps & Debra Stewart
- **Ages 3-5 years** – Third classroom past church office – Teachers: Cecelia Owen & Pat Spencer
- **Grades 1-3** – Upstairs – Teachers: Kathy Ambrose & Lisa Davis
- **Grades 4-5** – Upstairs – Teachers: Julie Kopco & Tammy Hall
- **Grades 6-12** - Upstairs – Teachers: Billie Jean Baylous, Danny Owen, & Ricky Loftis
- **Adult Class** – Fellowship Hall – Teachers: James Stewart and Larry Layman.
- **Adult Ladies Class** – First classroom in the hallway to Fellowship Hall – Teachers: Anne Jones, Thelma Brown, Mary Elizabeth Magnotto, & Betty Burton.



The Adult Choir will resume their regular practice schedule on Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

Visitors are always welcome at choir practice sessions. We will be going over familiar anthems and gospel songs, with occasional new music.

On Sunday nights beginning February 1<sup>st</sup> we will practice a new Easter cantata, "**Finished.**" Written by Marty Parks, this is a 25-minute, six-song cantata, described online this way:  
*"There's a line that's been drawn through the ages,  
On that line stands an old rugged cross;  
On that cross a battle is raging  
For the gain of man's soul or his loss.'  
Soon the battle will be over—the Victor crowned—the conflict complete.  
Now the battle cry reaches to us from the ages...FINISHED!!"*

If you love to sing, we invite you to come visit our choir. No tryouts are necessary—you don't even have to read music—just be willing to make a joyful noise as we praise our Lord in song!

# Winn's Creek Baptist Church NEWS



## Needed: Volunteers for Children's Message.

The folks who have been presenting the children's message would be glad to have others share in this ministry. If you would like to provide the Children's message

one Sunday, please see Cecelia Owen. The church has plenty of materials available to use for some fresh ideas.

Assistance is available if needed, no qualifications necessary other than a willing heart dedicated to the Lord. You never know what God will do through you until you give Him the opportunity. No age limit – you're never too young or too old for God to take your willingness and use it for His glory!



## JANUARY 2015 CHURCH CALENDAR

### Sundays (unless otherwise announced)

9:45 a.m. Sunday School  
 11:00 a.m. Worship  
 6:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study  
 7:00 p.m. Adult Choir

### Wednesdays (unless otherwise announced)

7:00 p.m. Ray Vander Laan DVD/Bible Study (for men & women)  
 8:00 p.m. Adult Choir

### Thursdays

7:30 p.m. Praise Team practice (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays)

Sat., Jan. 3	5:30 p.m.	Soup & Sandwich Supper
	6:30 p.m.	Coffee House Entertainment
Sun., Jan. 4	11:00 a.m.	Worship / The Lord's Supper
Mon., Jan. 5	7:00 p.m.	Deacons & Wives meet
Thurs., Jan. 8	7:30 p.m.	Praise Team practice
Sat., Jan. 10	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	BLOODMOBILE
Thurs., Jan. 22	7:30 p.m.	Praise Team practice
Sun., Jan. 25	6:00 p.m.	Quarterly Business Meeting