

Please welcome...

Preaching for us once again is **Ron Robinson**. Be sure to welcome him and thank him for his help!

**Philippians 3:13**

*"...forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead..."*

Our new preacher, Mike McKnight and his wife Morgie, along with their three boys, Noah, Daniel and "new arrival", Joseph Samuel are here today! Mike's mom, Lee, will also be with them. Welcome them and give them all a hug! Mike will start teaching the Wednesday evening class this next Wednesday; the subject: "Book of Genesis". Mike's first Sunday to preach will be next Sunday, April 5.

**March Birthdays**

30 Barrett Hoffman

**April Birthdays**

- 1 Daniel McKnight    11 Dolly Cashion    23 Shannon Hudson
- 3 Amanda Hoffman    16 Alana Hudson    26 Stori Rose Hoffman
- 6 Susan Hudson        17 Belva Meanor

**April Anniversaries**

19 Bill & Kena Brown

**Regular Meeting Times**

- Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
- Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
- Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

**Preacher:**  
Mike McKnight

**Church of Christ**

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# Indio Informer

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## "What's Important?"

### A Congregation is More than a Group of Friends

By Richard Mansel

We commonly believe that if the members of a congregation get along really well, they are unified and constitute a strong spiritual family. However, this is not necessarily true.

Men who congregate at a cafe every morning for coffee are close friends, but that does not mean they are a spiritual family. Likewise, a group of people who gather on Sundays and Wednesdays can be close friends, love each other's company, and not necessarily be a close spiritual family. It requires more than simply good cheer, hugs, and laughs.

A spiritual family is one that exists in Christ (Galatians 3:27; Acts 22:16; Acts 2:38). Its primary goal is to bring glory to Christ (Ephesians 3:20-21), which includes evangelism, worship, fellowship, and a host of spiritual blessings. We labor diligently in the fields of the Lord in His name (Colossians 3:17). We work with His power to accomplish the goals set forth in Scripture (Ephesians 1:19). God *"put all things under [Christ's] feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all"* (Ephesians 1:22-23).

If we are not seeking to fulfill these majestic goals, we are a group of friends but not necessarily a functional, spiritual family. The Lord's church exists to do the Lord's work, not simply to be a social club. The task before us is too immense to ignore.

God brings spiritual families together (Acts 2:47). We can create a group around a common interest, but it may not be Christ's interest. Friendships are wonderful, but if they exist within a spiritual family they are far better. When we are united in the job of bringing souls to the Lord, we are developing the strongest bonds possible.

A group of friends knows the boundaries that exist within the group. They know the areas in which the individual members differ, and they suppress them for the sake of the group. As a result, their common interests fuel their group. Surely we can see how this differs from biblical unity. Paul wrote: “*Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*” (Ephesians 4:3). Unity in the Spirit means that we are united in the Lord and in God’s holy and divine Word.

We speak the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11), whether we find them palatable or not (2 Timothy 4:2). We have no right to suppress that which we do not like just so the group can be harmonious. That goes beyond our rights as children of God (1 Corinthians 4:6).

Christians submit to God and then they find spiritual unity. Just like an orchestra, we remain focused on the conductor and playing the piece that he has written. When we do, we create beautiful music.

Biblical unity is more than companionship; it is collectively moving toward the goal of heaven (2 Thessalonians 2:13-17). That will bring joyful hearts by itself. When we are rich in His grace and mercy, we will find the spiritual unity we all crave. Let us seek it out every day!

### **One Thousand Marbles** (From Houseto.com)

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday morning. I love the quiet solitude of being first to rise, the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. The first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable. Recently, I shuffled toward the kitchen with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday turned into one of those lessons that life hands you ever so often.

I turned on my radio to listen to a Saturday morning talk show. I heard an older sounding chap with a golden voice talking about 'a thousand marbles' to someone named 'Tom.' I was intrigued and sat down to listen. 'Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work 60-70 hours a week to make ends meet.

Too bad you missed your daughter's recital.' He continued, 'Let me tell you something, Tom, that has helped me keep a good perspective on my own priorities.'

That's when he began to explain his theory of a 'thousand marbles.' 'You see,' he said, 'I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about 75 years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about 75 years.' 'I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3,900 which is the number of Saturdays the average person has in their entire lifetime. Stick with me Tom, I'm getting to the important part. It took me until I was 55 to think this through in detail, and by then, I had already used over 2,800 Saturdays. I figured that if I lived to be 75, I had about a thousand Saturdays left to enjoy.'

'So I went out and bought 1,000 marbles and put them in a large, clear plastic container here in my workshop next to the radio. Every Saturday since, I take one marble out and throw it away. By watching my marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time on earth run out to help get your priorities straight.'

'One last thing before I sign-off and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the last marble out of the container. I figure if I make it until next Saturday then God has blessed me with a little extra time to be with my loved ones. It was nice to talk to you Tom, I hope you spend more time with your loved ones. Have a good morning!'

You could have heard a pin drop when he finished. I had planned to do some work that morning, then go to the gym. Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife with a kiss. 'C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast.'

'What brought this on?' she asked with a smile. I said, 'It has just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out?' I said, 'I need to buy some marbles.'

**“... redeeming the time ...”**  
Ephesians 5:16