

# Northside Church of Christ

“God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”  
John 4:24



## Let's Not Be Casual About Cruelty

By Mike Riley

We see it on the freeways (road-rage), on the playgrounds (degrading those who are different than we are), in homes (spousal abuse), workplaces (using cruel terminology), and in incidents that populate the evening news. The idea of “Man’s inhumanity to man” is so thoroughly ingrained in our society, that we almost don’t think about it anymore.

In Psalm 71:4, the Psalmist wrote:

“Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.”

Any kind of cruelty is indeed wicked and ungodly. It is contrary to righteousness and the spirit of Christ. It is also easy, taking little effort at all to do or say something that is heartless and insensitive — and we’ve all been guilty of cruelty at one time or another.

The singer Asaph observed in Psalm 74:20:

“the dark places of the earth are full of the haunts of cruelty.”

It’s sad but indeed true that cruelty represents the darkness within each of us — that part of ourselves that has turned away from the light of God. The more we turn toward darkness, the more cruelty we are capable of doing.

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### SUNDAY MORNING

Triple E  
Edify, Exhort,  
Evangelize  
4 Square  
8:30 AM

### SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Hebrews  
9:30 AM

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship Service  
10:30 AM

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Singing Night  
7:00 PM



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“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15

Northside Church of Christ  
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Place Stamp Here

## Despised Blessings

By Mike Riley

It may sound strange but one can receive a blessing and at the same time despise it. Beyond question, this is exactly what happened to ancient Israel as they wandered in the wilderness before entering the land of Canaan. The blessings God had given them were manifold. They needed leadership; God provided it (Exodus 14-16). They were hungry; God fed them (Exodus 16:11-21).

God, who made man, knew the kind of food man's body needed and He knew the importance of daily provisions. Therefore He sent manna to sustain His people's need. It was bread from heaven sent six days a week (Exodus 16:26). It's substance was "a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground." (Exodus 16:14 - ESV) . Manna was "like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey" (Exodus 16:31). In the book of Numbers, the text tells that manna could be ground in mills, boiled in pots, and made into cakes, "and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil" (Numbers 11:8).

So how was this blessing from God received? The people complained, "But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at" (Numbers 11:6 - ESV).

Are we any different today than the people of ancient Israel? We have the Lord and salvation (Tit. 2:11); the Bible and a knowledge of things that even angels desired to know (1 Peter 1:12); the privilege of assembling with the household of faith for worship (Hebrews 10:25); the avenue of prayer through Christ (Matthew 7:7-8; Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9-13; John 14:13-14; John 15:7,16; John 16:23-24; James 1:5; 1 John 3:22; 1 John 5:14-15). The list could go on and on to include all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3). So what do we do? We neglect the study of the Scriptures; forsake the assembly; fail to pray; and thus live beneath our privileges.

The question we need to ponder is: Do we thank God for His rich blessings (John 3:37; Colossians 3:15; 1 Timothy 4:3-4; James 1:17), or do we despise what He has given each one of us (Romans 1:21)? May we reflect on this article and humbly thank God for all the blessings he continually bestows upon us as His children (Matthew 5:44-45; Acts 14:17; Acts 17:24-25,28; Ephesians 1:3).

For a moment, let's think of an extreme example — Judas the turncoat apostle. We wonder how Judas could casually betray Jesus to His enemies, knowing that they would brutally torture Christ and execute Him. Luke provides us with this inspired answer:

"Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot" (Luke 22:3).

When Judas opened the door of his heart to the lord of darkness (Satan), there was no longer anything he was incapable of doing, no matter how ruthless. Brethren, the same can happen to any one of us.

Solomon wrote in Proverbs 12:10:

"The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."

The cruel person can find a way to do harm even while appearing to do good. The Scriptures tell us that "foolish talking" and "coarse jesting" are "not fitting" (Ephesians 5:4). Humor that comes at the expense of another is not really humorous at all.

If we think about it as we ought, it shouldn't surprise us that God's word says:

"The merciful man does good for his own soul, but he who is cruel troubles his own flesh" (Proverbs 11:17).

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word "Chamets" — translated "cruel" — literally means "leavened with sourness." Because of a desperate attempt to assuage his own pain by causing pain to others, a person who is bitter (or sour) within, many times lashes out with hateful words and cruel acts. If allowed to fester, any "root of bitterness" can completely separate us from God (Hebrews 12:15; cf. Acts 8:23).

Brethren and friends, let's not be casual about cruelty. Instead, let's see it for what it is — evil — and resist the impulse to engage in it — even when cruel deeds or words are directed at us.

Let's remember the example of our Lord (1 Peter 2:21-23) and consider these poetic lines:

"Curse or cry or call it unfair,

But be thankful to the grave

That you were the one who received the hurt,

And not the one who gave."

## Announcements

- Fellowship meal, November 6th following morning worship
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## Prayer Requests This Week

- Pray for all those with ongoing health ailments
- Gary Beavers - leg amputation (Potts family)
- Regan Cameron - leukemia (Thrash family)
- Walter King - on hospice (Callens family)
- Sandra Callens - viral infection

## Communion Preparation

- September - Thrash
- October - Carlberg
- November - Callens
- December - Rowell

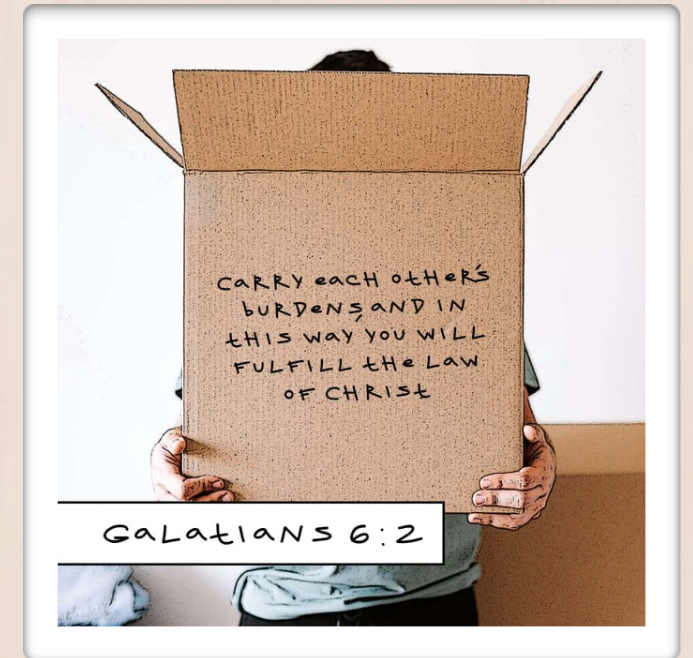
## September Birthdays & Anniversary's

- Camden Cooper - 1st
- Dwight Callens - 9th
- Bostyn Rowell - 10th
- Aubri Cooper - 15th

## Every Sunday Morning

@ 8:00 AM

on WTOK-TV



## Sermon Notes

## Men to Serve

Announcements/Opening Prayer - Larry Montgomery  
 Scripture Reading - Acts 4:31 - 37  
 Lead Singing - Chuck Rowell  
 Head of Lord's Table - Don Potts  
 Assist on Lord's Table - Mark Potts  
 Scripture Reading - Matthew 27:50 - 54  
 Closing Prayer - Rick Carlberg

<b>Comcast Cable</b>	<b>6</b>
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<b>Comcast Cable</b>	<b>1011</b>
<b>DirecTV</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>DirecTV</b>	<b>396</b>
<b>Dish Network</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Over-the-air</b>	<b>11.3</b>