**SERVICE SCHEDULE for April 7, 2024**

**Announcements for the Week Cliff Davis**

**Morning Service Evening Service**

**Prayer**- Cliff Davis **Prayer-** Cliff Davis

**Song Leader**- Eli Hickey **Song Leader**- Andy Fuller

**-- Comments** – Andy Fuller **Comments** – Russ Sollars

**-- Assisting** – Phillip Dorn **Communion** – Ben Wofford

**-- Assisting** – Russ Sollars

**-- Assisting** – Darryl Griffing

**-- Assisting** – Gary Scott

**-- Scripture** – Dean Shacklock **Scripture** – Micah Phillips **Closing Prayer-** Dan Woodward **Closing Prayer**- Phillip Dorn

**Wednesday Night – April 10, 2024**

**First Prayer–** John MacQuilliam

**Song Leader** – Andy Fuller

**Invitation –** Ben Wofford

**Closing Prayer –** Roger German

**April 21 Evening Service –**Russ Sollars

**Upcoming Assignments**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **April** | **Communion** | **Cleaning** |
| **7** | Griffing | Please Be Considerate |
| **14** | Land | Clean the area around your seat |

**Memory Verse – Psalm 119:33**

**Teach me, oh Lord, Lord, the way of your statutes, and I shalle keep it to the end.**

**Good Thoughts:**

**Gratitude comes in a spectrum of colors, but Ingratitude is always black. ― Ankala V Subbarao**

**We should be more concerned with the Rock of Ages, instead of the age of rocks.**

**Reputation is what people think about you. Character is what people know you are**

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***Schedule of Services***

**Sunday: 9 a.m., 10 a.m. & 5 p.m. Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.**

**This bulletin is published weekly. Edited by Bill McIlvain.**

**Send any articles for the bulletin to Office@covingtonchurchofchrist.com**

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**Elders: Jason LaChappelle, Bill McIlvain**

**Deacons: Cliff Davis, Darryl Griffing, Buck Phillips**

**April 7, 2024**

***More Exploits of Elijah & Elisha***

1. Who was healed of leprosy when he followed Elisha’s instructions?

2. Who appeared with Jesus and Elijah on the Mount fo Transfiguration?

3. What birds fed Elijah in the wilderness?

4. What river did Elijah part by striking it with his mantle?

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***Paper Bait, Paper Mouse***

**By Bob West**

You have probably heard the story of the fellow who was out of cheese, so he baited the mouse trap with a picture of a piece of cheese. The next morning the trap was sprung, having captured a picture of a mouse!

This reminds me of the efforts made by religious teachers (including some of my brethren), who try to attract souls to Christ without the real gospel. Instead, they substitute recreation, entertainment, and other social events in the hope of drawing large numbers who can then be "trapped" into becoming Christians. At least two things are wrong with this practice. 

***Paper Bait, Paper Mouse***

**Continued**

First of all, reaching the lost is not some kind of trapping expedition where the quarry is the unsuspecting sinner, who must be "baited" or "suckered" into accepting the Gospel.. While it is true that Jesus wants His disciples to be "fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19), most of the fishing done in that area had to do with nets, not fancy and deceptive baits. Jesus said, "Go and preach." He did not authorize us to sneak up on or entrap sinners.

In the second place, the real, unadulterated gospel is the only means God has given us to attract sinners. It alone is the ***"power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16).*** The knowledge of God is, according to our Master, sufficient to draw sinners to Christ (John 6:44-45). The use of some phony, worldly "bait" will, like the story above, result in snaring phony, worldly converts. We still reap what we sow. Sowing carnality is not likely to bring forth spirituality.

If we are diligent in forthrightly proclaiming the gospel to the lost, those with good and honest hearts will receive the word with gladness and be saved. Those who reject it cannot be saved by worldly means. This is God's original, simple, and effective plan for reaching. Who are we to suggest that we can improve upon the Divine plan by using the world's methods? We need to be satisfied with God's provisions which are more than adequate to accomplish His purposes.

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***Storm Damage***

**By Jim Jonas**

High winds recently blew through leaving behind a big mess and some obvious spiritual analogies.

First, many of the trees blown down had rotten cores. Before the storm they appeared healthy and strong, but the hollow cores could not withstand the howling wind. Isn’t this true of some people? They give an outward appearance of faith and spirituality, but when a crisis comes they collapse under the pressure. The Christian must be strengthened in the inner man (Ephesians 3:16) in order to withstand the storms of life.

Secondly, some trees were simply blown over because their root systems were shallow. The tree may have been otherwise healthy, but it was not firmly anchored in the ground. Jesus said there would be people like this (Matthew 13:5-6, 20-21). Their interest in God would last only as long as their lives were stable and secure.

Thirdly, the destructive winds seemed arbitrary and selective. A large tree was left standing in my yard, but one just like it a few feet away in the neighbor’s yard was uprooted. Similarly, the trials of life can affect men arbitrarily. Surviving victims of tragic accidents often wrestle with the guilt of having lived when friends or loved ones have died. But there’s often no rationale for such occurrences. We must be thankful for the opportunities we have been given and be good stewards of the lives we have been given.

Fourth, such storms are God’s way of naturally pruning dead wood. Many yards were littered with limbs that were dead which needed to come down and make room for the new growth. The trials of our lives can have the same effect. We can acquire bad habits or attitudes which we find hard to dismiss, but the rough storms which we periodically endure can prune our character and help us focus upon what is truly important.

Finally, much costly damage was done indirectly by the storm as falling trees and limbs snapped power lines, smashed roofs and crumpled cars. This, too, occurs when faith fails under stress. If a man loses his faith, his entire family suffers. If a child goes astray, the parents are devastated. A congregation’s morale suffers with every backslider’s return to the world.

The storms will come. May we stand firm with deep roots, faithful cores, and strong limbs.

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**Answers from page 1**

1. Naaman the Syrian [2 Kings 5:1-14]

2. Moses [Luke 9:26-36]

3. Ravens [1 Kings 17:2-7]

4. The Jordan [2 Kings 2:8]

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