

**WELCOME VISITORS** We're happy to have you visiting with us today and hope that you will come again. Please fill out a visitor's card and pass it to the right so that we'll have a record of your attendance.

**PURE RELIGION: GOD'S VIEW**

*"Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."* (James 1:27) NASB updated... When we look back to the beginnings of the church in the first century we often reflect on the purity of doctrine and Christian living that was present. Although we are 20 centuries removed from this beginning we should never forget that God's will for His church and God's word for mankind has not changed. He still desires that we practice pure religion in our daily lives.

As far as religious activities are concerned, there are a lot of good things to be involved in and to be about doing. According to this teaching from James, a very practical book of the Bible; pure religion involves two important activities. The first is given in the positive... *"Visit orphans and widows in their distress."* Although in our American culture today we may not know many orphans...there are a good number of widows in our congregation. Many of these are unable to make it to services because of deteriorating health and desperately desire fellowship and blessing of human touch.

To *"visit"* literally means, "to go to see." What does the phrase *"in their distress"* mean? In the original language that this letter was written in, it means in their trials and afflictions. There are many different distresses that widows face. Sometimes it may involve a financial distress. Other times it may be due to health concerns or loneliness. All through the Bible we can see God's concern for those in need, those who lack support, and those who society often ignores. It is our duty as Christians to take note of who the orphans and widows of the congregation are and to try to go and visit them.

In every congregation, the elders and minister should be doing regular visits with those in need. However, this charge given by the Holy Spirit through James is given to all Christians! Decide today as a brother or sister in Christ to reach out and practice pure religion. Now let's consider a second aspect of pure and undefiled religion.

*"Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."* (James 1:27) NASB updated... Let's take a closer look at keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.

It is important to first note that the keeping of oneself unspotted is our responsibility! The wording here means to "watch over" or to "guard." This requires diligence and sober alertness. God is always with us, but pure religion involves daily purposefulness in the life of a Christian. Satan's influence in our lives is a daily assault. The forces of our culture also come at us daily and never let up. It is no wonder that the Holy Spirit is urging us be so vigilant and active! (continued)

To keep oneself unspotted is to remain "spotless." The idea here is that even though we live in the world, we don't allow its ideals and ways to rub off on us or leave its mark on our lives. It is a choice that we must make and a conviction to remain holy before the Lord. The word "world" used here refers not to the physical creation itself, but to the ways of the world as lived out by those in it. Obviously, for the time being, we must live on this earth. However, we can choose not be of the world as the scriptures encourage and teach.

This is pure in God's sight because it is God who called us out of the world and into Christ's marvelous light! He has challenged all His followers to be holy and pure as He is. He has given us the Living Word and the presence of His Holy Spirit to help us in this life. He has surrounded us with other like-minded believers to help us remain strong and get encouragement. He has promised us that if we remain faithful to him all the days of this short life, that He will reward us with the blessing of eternal life. Practice pure religion. Be aware of the needs of orphans and widows and make sure to visit them in their time of distress. Stay pure in the holiness of God.

-Nathan Wolfe

**AREA WIDE THANKSGIVING SERVICE** On Sunday, November 20, the Flanders Road Church of Christ will be hosting the annual Thanksgiving service at 5:30 pm. Please note the earlier start time.

\*\*\*There will be no evening services here as we will be meeting at Flanders Road Church of Christ.



**WIDOWS LUNCHEON** Come and enjoy a holiday luncheon at noon on Monday, December 5 in the life center. Debbie Jeffers is coordinating the luncheon. Sponsors, please remember to call your widows

**BREAKFAST WITH SANTA** Breakfast with Santa will be Saturday, December 10 at 10am. This will be potluck style again so please bring a breakfast dish to share. Any questions see Ben or Haley.

**FOUNTAIN SQUARE DINNER** will be held Monday, December 12. Sign-up sheets for food help are on the foyer board. Food needs to be at the church building by 4:30 or at Fountain Square kitchen by 5:00. Our schedule will be doors open at 4:30, devotional at 5:15, dinner at 5:30, and singing at 6:00. We will also need help serving, singing, and cleanup. This is a great way to be out in our community and help those less fortunate than us and give our children an opportunity to serve with us. See Wanda Peace, Bev Zilka, or Judy Stroud with questions.

**IN APPRECIATION** I would like to thank all of you for the prayers and cards I received during Dean's sickness and passing away. Please keep me in your prayers and I'll remember one day at a time. With all my love, Elaine Street

- John Huntzinger—at Lane Park

**PLEASE PRAY FOR** Charles Hyndman Sr., Anna Copass, Ruth Watson, Tony Ramos, Kay Hammond, Alma Schultz, Mary Henry, Norma Gonzalez, Carmen Wright, Mike Borysiak, Robert Dickey, Larry Hollstein, Jasper Lucas, Bertha Wells, Jim & Neva Hall, Terry Howell, Alton Tripp, and Jack Reynolds.

**DIRECTORYPICTURES** New pictures or updated pictures for the directory will be taken between class and worship and also after morning services today, Nov. 20.

**NEW ADDRESS** Daniel and Nicole Corwin now live at 4603 282<sup>nd</sup> St., Toledo, OH, 43611.

**READING** November 20, Acts 21-22; Nov. 21, Acts 23-25; Nov. 22, Acts 26-28; Nov. 23, Romans 1-3; Nov. 24, Rom. 4-7; Nov. 25, Rom. 8-10; Nov. 26, Rom. 11-14.

RECORDS NOV. 13, 2016			
9:00	96	BUS	1
10:00	263		
6:00	88		
Wed.	62		
Contribution		\$3,765.00	
Missions			
Total		\$3,765.00	
Weekly Budget		\$5,717.06	

SCHEDULE OF SERVICE	
Sun.	9:00 am Bible Study
	10:00 am Worship
	6:00 pm Worship
Wed.	7:00 pm Bible Study
Thurs.	11:30 am Bible Study