TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Bryant Perkins
#797 Lord, We Come Before Thee Now

Welcome by: Bobby Rader/Opening Prayer by: Robert Ward

1 Praise Medley
#432 How Shall the Young Secure Their Hearts?
Scripture Reading by: Rock Cary
How Deep the Father's Love
Communion Devotional by: Daniel Balch
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#113 His Grace Reaches Me
#869 We're Marching to Zion
Sermon: "A Murderer's Prayer"
Psalms 51

#501 Though Your Sins Be as Scarlet
#705 A Common Love
Closing Prayer by: Gus Tristan

We will not have
Evening Service tonight

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Oct. 23, 2022

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

You Can Go Home Again

Our sermon this morning will be from **Psalm 51,** David's great confession of sin and plea for forgiveness after God's man, Nathan, confronted him regarding his actions toward Bathsheba. It's a powerful reminder of both the flaws that still exist even in the most exemplary of saints, and the grace and mercy of God that he continues to abundantly give us. Thinking about that reminded me of another, near-contemporary example of the same phenomenon. I have told this story in a Sunday evening sermon years ago and even printed it on these pages some time past. But I know at times people miss things here and there, and we likely have some visitors in our audience who will read this on today of all days. So it seemed good to me to share it again on this occasion.

Clyde Thompson was raised in a Christian home. His father was a Bible salesman and itinerant preacher. But Clyde never had much use for church. When he was old enough to stay home alone, he began refusing to attend services. Most Sundays, while his family was worshipping, Clyde was out hunting. One Sunday evening, he was doing just that with a couple of friends, two brothers, ages 18 and 13. Clyde was only 17. They borrowed the pistol and shotgun of the brothers' father without his knowledge and set out. As it happened, they ran into a couple of men who had had trouble with the older brother and their father. Some words were exchanged. The argument escalated to a fight. When the two men tried to use a powder horn and tree limb as weapons, Clyde pulled the pistol and shot them dead.

Clyde was sentenced to death in the electric chair in 1931. At only 19 years old, he was the youngest person ever to be placed on death row in Huntsville at the time. He had never obeyed the gospel. But he overheard Bro. P.D. Wilmeth preaching on a radio in the prison. Clyde listened and sent for him to come and baptize him. He did, there in the Walls Unit at Huntsville, only 6 days before he was to be executed.

In the meantime, the trial of his other adult accomplice took place. That young man came from money and was able to hire a good lawyer. He received a 5 year suspended sentence. The governor could not see justice in sending one man to die when two others were equally guilty. So Clyde's sentence was commuted mere hours before his execution—not to 5 years, but to life in prison.

They sent him to Retrieve Farm near Angleton on the Gulf Coast, a place so miserable the inmates referred to it as "Burnin' Hell." They worked prisoners as much as 8 weeks straight without a day off. There was no time even to wash their socks. They would just come in from working the land, collapse exhausted into bed, filthy, to do it over again. Clyde lost what little faith he had. How could both God and a place like that exist? His father came to visit him, and Clyde gave him back the Bible he had given him on death row. He told him he didn't believe it anymore and wouldn't try to live it. Oh, how that must have hurt him! The whole ordeal probably put him in an early grave—he died in 1938, only 53 years old.

During this dark period, Clyde became a desperate man. His fellow inmates tagged him as the "Meanest Man in Texas." He attempted to escape on 4 separate occasions, but was always plotting and planning it. He felt determined either to get away or be killed. He had 2 knife fights with fellow inmates and killed the men. For those

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Louise Cottle has shingles.

Bubba Pearson is recovering from a procedure on Friday.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Tina Garcia, Oscar Cantu, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ka'Leisha Jones, Linda Frank, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Susan McCain, Gary Nielsen, Howard Duhon, Bubba Pearson

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meeting Monday, Oct. 24th at 5:30 p.m..

We will have a meal on Wednesday, Oct 26th at 5:30 p.m. in the family life center.

Homecoming is today, Sunday, Oct. 23rd. We will have a catered meal and will need to provide drinks and desserts.

Primetimers will be meeting at Tiger Harry's at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 25th. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

Fall Festival

Fall Festival, Saturday, Oct. 29th from 4-6 p.m. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board in the foyer. See Lauren Tristan for more information.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

is the weekly bulletin of the Liberty Church of Christ 3201 North Main, Liberty Texas 77575
Office Phone Number (936) 336-2213; Fax (936) 334-8280;
Minister's (Bryant Perkins) Cell Phone Number (903)407-5737
Website: libertycofc.org Facebook page: Liberty Church of Christ

crimes, he was sentenced to another life sentence in each case. The officials realized he was not afraid to die, so they transferred him to a unit they called "Little Alcatraz" at Eastham Farm. There, he plotted with several inmates to seize the arsenal and hand out weapons, planning to kill anyone in the way of their escape. They seized two guards, used them as human shields, and made their way to the armory. But it was an ambush. Clyde was shot through the shoulder. The other three men who went up with him were killed.

At that point, the prison system gave up on Clyde. There was an old abandoned morgue behind death row, a concrete building. They put a steel door on it and they placed Clyde there in solitary confinement. There was no light except what came in through the barred hole in the door for 5 hours a day. There was no water. There was no toilet. They didn't give him utensils, afraid he would sharpen even a spoon. They gave him no clothes except shorts, afraid he would hang himself. Clyde walked end to end in it to the point he wore holes in the concrete floor where he made the turn and his bare feet became hard as rocks.

After a few months, he asked the guards if they would bring him a Bible. He knew they wouldn't let him have anything else to read, but he had to have something to keep from going mad. He was angry with God. So he set out to prove it was full of contradictions. With nothing else to do, he studied diligently

And it was then that Clyde Thompson came to himself. He began to realize the Bible was true and he was false. He repented in tears, on his knees day and night for months. He read the Scriptures and prayed, asking if God really could forgive someone like him, and if he would take him and use him for his honor glory. And the Lord—merciful, gracious, loving Father that he is—did just that. When they took him out to bathe and shave him once a week, they started letting him pass out literature. Soon, he had three men wanting to obey the gospel. He wrote to a preacher in Dallas to come down and baptize them, and he did, in an old deep bathtub on the corridor of death row, where Clyde had once awaited execution.

In 1946, a young woman named Julia sent him a Christmas card after hearing his story from her minister—he had encouraged members of the church to send Clyde cards, and she was the only one who responded. A correspondence began, and they met for the first time a year later. Clyde proposed marriage and she accepted. From then on, she campaigned on his behalf. Finally, on November 1, 1955, after more than 28 years in prison, Clyde Thompson—once the "Meanest Man in Texas"—was released on a conditional pardon. He and Julia married 5 days later.

The Thompsons traveled for awhile after their marriage, seeking to serve Christ wherever they were called. He was in local church work at times, as well as Superintendent of a Navajo Children's Home in New Mexico. They adopted a Navajo infant girl there. Finally, in 1970, he returned to Huntsville, where he established his Prisoner's Aid Center. He taught and baptized more than 1,500 prisoners between then and 1977. Then he moved to Lubbock, where he worked with the Sunset Church of Christ as Prison Minister and converted another 400 souls, before being called home to be with his Lord on July 3, 1979.

Today is our annual Homecoming. If you are reading this, it may be that you are a former member here who has fallen away, and it has been a long time since you attended. Thomas Wolfe famously wrote, "you can't go home again." But he was wrong when it comes to our Heavenly Father. No matter if it has been weeks or months or years since you left—no matter what you have done—he is waiting to welcome you back home. Like David—like Clyde Thompson—his grace and mercy is readily available to you, too. All you need to do is turn to him.

Bryant Perkins