

# The Danger of Everything Going Well

"Men are undoubtedly more in danger from prosperity than from adversity. For when matters go smoothly, they flatter themselves and are intoxicated by their success." - A Commentary on Isaiah

by Todd Mangum

If there was ever a group of people in history that needed to heed this point it is Americans today: American Christians especially.

It is a point that God warned His people about early on. It is as if God knows that people will turn to Him when they are under duress. It is "when your cities are great and splendid," "your houses are full of all good things," when the "cisterns are hewn" and fresh water abounds, when "the vineyards and olive trees" are plump with their produce, "and you shall eat and be satisfied" – that is when "you must beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (**Deut. 6:10-12; cf. Deut 8:11-14**).

Isaiah the prophet drives home this very point in the 8th century B.C., warning the people (my paraphrase) "You are forgetting! Your prosperity is making you foolish!" This prophecy is what prompts the commentator's observation in the 16th century (more than 2,000 years later). And 500 years after that, here we are, forgetful and stupid once again.

Jesus states plainly, "You cannot serve both God and materialism" (**Mt. 6:24**). It really does seem like many American Christians believe that if you work it right, you can. How forgetful, how foolish we are.

What would God say about a country so prosperous, about a people so arrogant and proud, so comfortable and complacent? What would Isaiah say? What would Moses say? What would Jesus say? (I'm guessing the message would be similar and would be along the lines of: "Beware! You are forgetting, and your prosperity is making yourselves foolish!")



<b>Rachel Bobo</b> <b>Julie Britnell</b> <b>Ethan Chandler</b>	<b>Graduates</b> <b>Logan Chappell</b> <b>Katie Gentry</b> <b>Connell Hodges</b>	<b>Adam Holliday</b> <b>Erin Turner</b> <b>Jessica Yates</b>
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Lisa Carter (Daniel's mother)	Jesse and Martha Godwin (Troy's parents)	Nell Holcomb (Ben's grandmother, Joannetta's aunt)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Emery Anne Vest (Patsy's grandniece)	Mary Edwards (Sandra Chason's mom)	Kimzey Simpson	Ruth Addison (gmom of April and Julie)
Tory Colvin (sister of Case O'Dell)	Maria Williams	Barbara Chandler	Robert Collins (child of Walker's co-worker)
Betty Bradford	Amy Call (Seth Humphrey's cousin's wife)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	Abbie Harrison
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Arabelle Rich (Joannetta's aunt)	Matt Bishop (friend of Long's)	Doug Bailey (Keith's brother)
Landon Grace (Seth Humphrey's nephew)	William and Toni Herd	Taina Acuff (Anna's aunt)	Jesse Russell (Ron's brother)

### December Birthdays

- 2-Katelyn Sullivanne
- 3-Christopher Willingham
- 4-Hector Chavez
- 4- Austin Hutto
- 4-Alex Hutto
- 5-Rusty Weldon
- 5-Charlie Johnson
- 5-Allie Hosey
- 8-Macy Johnson
- 9-Anna Acuff
- 9-Kayla Reid
- 9-Anna Cagle
- 11-Lily Rogers
- 13-Dave Hosey
- 13-Will Bruce Harris
- 17-Joseph Miller
- 19-Chase Sanders
- 20-Meredith Reid
- 21-Holly Johnson
- 21-Manna Jones
- 22-William Herd
- 24-Jessica Yates
- 25-Jake Hagewood
- 27-Stan Tolliver
- 28-Turner Stephens
- 28-Gabby Borden
- 28-Jesse Gibson
- 30-Douglas Bethea
- 31-Justin Hinson

### News and Notes

- ☒ - We welcome our new member Kathleen Parker!
- ☒ - Please remember Chandler Sullivan's dad, Stan Holland, as he had a recent heart attack and stents placed successfully.
- ☒ - Please pray for Nathan Diehl and his family in the loss of his dad, Denny, on Friday.
- ☒ - Ron Russell's brother, Jesse, remains in hospice care in Montgomery.
- ☒ - Pray for our expectant mothers: Cheryl Carthel, Kristen Diehl, Megan Hester and Rachel Simpson.
- ☒ - Keith Bailey's brother, Doug, is currently in the Shelby Co. Hospital, about to move to Brookwood and a possible surgery.
- ☒ - All audio is immediately posted to [www.auchurch.com](http://www.auchurch.com)

# The Auburn Beacon



## What Will Your Children Remember?

By Lowell Blasingame



**Thoughts to Ponder**  
 The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him: 2 What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows? (**Proverbs 31:1-2**)

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**(334) 734-2133**

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**  
**Sunday**  
 Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
 Worship .....10:20 AM  
 Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM  
**Wednesday**  
 Bible Classes.....7:00 PM  
**E-Mail:**  
[larryrouse@aubeacon.com](mailto:larryrouse@aubeacon.com)

**Larry Rouse**  
**Evangelist and Editor**

The Psalmist said that a man's children are "a heritage of the Lord," (**Psa. 127:4**). Most admit that there is something badly wrong with parents who do not love and value their children as such.

Parental love motivates us to be concerned about our children's welfare and seek what is best for them. We try to train them to eat properly so they will develop strong healthy bodies. We warn and advise against dangers of which they are not aware. We make decisions for them until we think they are mature enough to make their own.

Unfortunately, parents often fail their children in the most important area of all in life - the need for seeking first the kingdom of God (**Mt. 6:33**). I once visited with a father and tried to impress upon him this need. His response to me was that when he was a child his mother made him get up on Sun-

In fact, very rarely did parents who spasmodically attended and took no part in the work of the congregation have children to become active members when they became adults. They exhibited the same undependable traits that their parents did.

days and go to the little church in the community where they lived and he made up his mind then that when he became a man of his own, that he wouldn't go until he wanted to go. This man later in life came to recognize that need and obeyed the gospel but his son, who was in his formative years when I talked with his father and needed a father's example, didn't get such then and today is not a Christian. Fathers are admonished to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition

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of the Lord," (**Eph. 6:4**). Timothy's unfeigned faith is attributed to the example of a godly mother and grandmother (**2 Tim. 1:5**). On the other hand, of Ahaziah it is said, "For his mother was his counselor to do wickedly" (**2 Chron. 22:3**).

Jeremiah made an observation about his generation that its sin was written with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond upon the table of their heart and horns of their altars, "Whilst their children remember their altars and their grooves by the green trees upon the high hills," (**Jer. 17:1-2**). Judah's example was imprinting the future of their children - it was being decided by what they remembered from the example of their forefathers.

Statistics recently released from a study made reveal the tremendous impact of parental example in the lives of their children. It was learned that children growing up in homes whose parents actively participated in the work of the local congregation had a tendency to be more active in the work of the congregation when they became adults than those whose parents manifest little or no interest in the work of the church. In fact, very rarely did parents who spasmodically attended and took no part in the work of the congregation have children to become active members when they became adults. They exhibited the same undependable traits that their parents did.

I can conceive of nothing more heart rending than for one seeing his child condemned in the day of judgment and know that he had influenced his child in the wrong way. Jeremiah said that Judah's children would remember her altars and

groves. His point was that their idolatry would influence their children to serve idols and incur the wrath of Jehovah and that they were partially responsible for it by their examples.

What will your children remember? Will it be that you never obeyed the gospel, or that you turned back and ceased to serve the Lord, or that you constantly complained and found fault with your brethren in the Lord? Will they remember that you could sit on a backless bleacher for a two to three hour ballgame or in a boat fishing, but that an hour on a bench in the church building had your back killing you? Will they remember that you skipped services when kinfolks came, or for a golf tournament, or for the opening day of deer season? Will they remember that you bought the best with which to golf, hunt or fish, that the price of gasoline, motels and food never kept you from Mountain View, Pigeon Forge or the beach, but you never could drive fifty or a hundred miles to worship with brethren and encourage them in a gospel meeting? Will they remember that you were always early for the movie, first at the picnic and in the stands before the first pitch of the ball game, but that you never seemed to be able to get to worship services before the singing had started?

Remembering you will be a major factor in imprinting the lives of your children and grandchildren, is this what you want?

"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid" (**1 Tim. 5:24-25**).



## Clapping to Songs

By Paul K. Williams

I have noticed some articles in opposition to the practice of applauding speakers in church, articles to which I say a hearty "Amen." Preaching is not entertainment to be measured by an applause meter.

In South Africa our problem is slightly different; it is that the denominations love to clap in rhythm to the songs. Naturally, denominational practices influence brethren; so we must frequently teach that, just as instrumental music in worship is unauthorized, so also is the "music" of clapping.

I attended a wedding at which a young denominational preacher made a speech. When he stood up he began a song. As he paraded up and down the aisle he first got everyone (except Christians, I am happy to say) clapping, then he got them on their feet stomping. When he began to speak he had the audience so "hot" that they roared "Amen" to anything he shouted.

Just here is a major objection to clapping to the rhythm of songs: It is a method of manipulating the mood of the audience. Frequently the clapping becomes faster and more vigorous as the song progresses, bringing the audience to an emotional "high." This emotional feeling is thought to be spirituality, so the higher and more often the high can be repeated, the greater the spirituality of the people and the more they are convinced that they are being moved by the Holy Spirit. Yet what they experience is an artificially produced emotional feeling, a feeling which can be duplicated by dancing to rock and roll music. It has nothing to do with spirituality.

The Christian does experience spiritual emotions, deep emotions. Sorrow for one's sins, grief over the fall of a brother, rejoicing with the angels of heaven over the return of the prodigal, the deep glow of security in the love of brethren, the inexpressible joy when contemplating God's love for us, the sweet longing for heaven - these are real and precious experiences for every Christian. But they are not artificially induced; they come from real faith and an understanding of the word of God. They do not depend upon exciting circumstances such as clapping or upon mood-inducing actions such as dimmed lights, hand holding and closed eyes.

But today I understand that he was producing an artificial excitement. Now that I understand the word of God better, I have an abiding excitement, an enthusiasm which I will never lose because it comes from God's word

Several years ago I baptized a devout boy about 14 years old. He became very precious to Helen and me, so when about six months later he became enamored of the preaching of a Pentecostal preacher I was greatly concerned. I attended the tent services to see what was attracting him and was appalled to hear so much error preached in so little space of time! Yet the audience loved it because their mood was influenced by the guitar and organ music, clapping, shouting, and other such things. With difficulty I pried my friend away from that

kind of emotionalism. Many months later he told me: "Brother Williams, after I was baptized I thought I had lost something. The excitement had gone out of my religion and I thought I had lost my spirituality. That is what the Pentecostal preacher supplied. But today I understand that he was producing an artificial excitement. Now that I understand the word of God better, I have an abiding excitement, an enthusiasm which I will never lose because it comes from God's word." He had learned to tell the difference between manipulated emotions and the emotions which come from faith.

Therefore clapping in rhythm to songs is sinful for two reasons: (1) It is as unauthorized as is instrumental music in worship. Clapping is not singing, and singing is all that the New Testament tells us to do (**Col. 3:16**; **Eph. 5:19**). Clapping produces a sound just like the guitar or organ or drum does, but that sound is not singing. (2) It produces artificial excitement which takes the worshipers away from the simplicity of the gospel and the true emotions produced by the gospel. When we rely on anything except the gospel to attract, or convert, or edify people we are sinning against God. The gospel is the power of God to salvation (**Rom. 1:16**), and it is that which will make us grow (**1 Pet. 2:2**). If the preaching and practice of that gospel will not attract, convert or hold a person, then other means will not work. Other means will only attract a person to a spurious religion, not to Christ. They will produce a counterfeit spirituality which will prove disastrous in the day of judgment.

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