

## WHAT IS YOUR EXCUSE Continued from page 1

### Worldliness

*“The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused”* (Luke 14:18). Is anything more precious in this world than to feast upon God’s word and fellowship our brethren? *“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby”* (1 Pet.2:2). Yet too many of us are tied to a “piece of ground”. That “ground” may be washed away in a flood tonight, burned up in a tragic fire, or become a tax-burden we are forced to relinquish.

It exemplifies **an attitude** of worldliness that pervades our society. We often have our values mixed up. What is truly spiritual and eternal in this world takes backseat to the physical and transitory. A hunting lease, a house, a boat, a motorcycle, etc. can become the primary impetus of our longing, rather than God’s word. God’s word will stand long after these things are burned up – for eternity (cf. 2 Pet.3:10-12).

### Priorities?

*“And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused”* (Luke 14:19).

I have often wondered why this man did not have the oxen tested BEFORE he bought them. Does anyone buy a car sight unseen, untried? And why did he choose to not attend a supper he have been invited to in advance? (Verse 17)?

It is all a matter of priorities. If we have determined to meet with our brethren to study God’s word, we will be there as if at any **important appointment**. It is interesting to note the excuses brethren make for not coming to Bible study. It is always “too cold, too hot, or too wet”. This seems to be the same folks who huddle under a blanket during inclement weather to root for their favorite football team. My favorite is “it’s too early”. These are the same brethren who get up at the crack of dawn to be first in line at the department store sale or to go fishing. Brethren, where will be our mistaken priorities be on the Day of Judgment?

### Lack of Love

*“And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come”* (Luke 14:20).

The master of the house had gone to great lengths to prepare this supper. Then he finds out that this man tried to make his recent marriage an excuse not to attend. Likewise, our Father has provided us with His word, sealed with the blood of the Son, for us to feed upon and we neglect the opportunity to do so! Where is **our love**? *“If a man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple”* (Luke 14:26).

Where is our love of God, our Creator? Where is our love of Jesus Christ, our Savior? Where is our love of the church of Christ? Where is our love of the Truth? *“O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day”* (Psa.119:97).

I hope to see you in Bible study!

Roelf Ruffner  
Cheyenne, WY



**BELVEDERE BEACON**  
*“Ye are the light of the world”* (Matthew 5:14)  
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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES  
SUNDAY:      WEDNESDAY:  
Bible Classes for all ages      10:00 am.      Bible Classes for all ages      7:00 pm.  
Morning Worship      11:00 am.  
Evening Worship      6:00 pm.  
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## WHAT IS YOUR EXCUSE?

I believe that the Bible is just another book **if** I do not apply it to myself in the here and now. The Holy Spirit authored this book so I might be “complete” (ASV, 2 Tim.3:17). It is a “living and active” document (ASV, Heb.4:12). In our distracting, ungodly world it is easy for me to be derailed from what is truly important about me – **a soul** made in the image of God. What I need is to read, study and apply God’s word to that soul; to mold it further to His image. A soul I will not be ashamed of when the Lord returns (cf. 2 Tim.2:15).

These truths should be self-evident to every child of God. Yet why is there such a **chronic lag** in attendance for Bible study on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings? In most congregations of the Lord’s church in the United States attendance for these two times set aside for public study of God’s word is usually at least fifty percent lower than it is at Sunday morning worship. Are you part of that group?

In the Parable of the Great Supper (Luke 14:15-24) Jesus likens the kingdom of God to a feast prepared for a great lord for those whom he has chosen. Yet when summoned, each invitee gives an excuse for not attending. In frustration, the lord bids his servants invite others to the feast who were not initially invited and to close it to those who had made the excuses.

This parable was directly applied to the Jewish nation who, for the most part, rejected the Christ’s invitation, **the gospel**, and the great spiritual feast and fellowship of His kingdom, the church, Jesus would open up the feast to those **of all nations** (cf. Gen.22:18; Matt.28:18-20). But I am often intrigued by the three excuses that we made and how they could apply to attendance at Bible study. The parallel is amazing.

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The following appeared in the November 18, 2009 edition of *North Augusta Today* in the “Church Calendar” section:

Support TNC Land Offering and Adopt-A-Block by purchasing a smoked turkey or boston butt. Order forms are available at guest services and the church office. Return forms and money by Sunday. Orders can be picked up at the North Augusta High School auditorium from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. November 25.

The next baptism service will be Nov. 29. A baptism class will be Sunday at 10 a.m. in the choir room of North Augusta High School. If interested in being Dunk’d, sign up for the class at guest services.

TrueNorth is a church group that was established in North Augusta back in March of 2004 when some folk left First Baptist Church. Although they are affiliated with some Baptist organizations they are not, strictly speaking, Baptists. Indeed, they are more closely linked with what are known as “Community Churches.” They are affiliated with the Willow Creek which is the “granddaddy” of the Community church movement.

From the information in the “Church Calendar” we note two particular things mentioned. First there is what they refer to as “TNC Land Offering and Adopt-A-Block” They are seeking community support in fund-raising for what appears to be a building program and also for one of the works in which they are engaged. Where does their authority come from to seek funds for these projects from non-members, heaven or men? Scripture authorizes only the free will offering of members (I Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:7). Second, we note what is said regarding baptism. Note their terminology: “If interested in being Dunk’d, sign up for the class” The very use of the word “Dunk’d” shows their disdain for the holy commandment. Where does their authority to have a “baptism service” or to simply to have one “sign up for a class.” come from, heaven or men? The scriptures don’t speak of “baptism services” but rather when one responds in obedience to the gospel, they are baptized as soon as possible (Acts 8:35-39; Acts 16:30-34).

On their website, they answer the question, “What does the name TrueNorth mean?”:

As you hold a compass in your hand, it points to magnetic north. If you follow magnetic north you may think you are walking north, but you're not. Scientifically, there is a term known as "True North." It is approximately 7 degrees west of what we think is north. In Proverbs 14:12 it says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me." Therefore, Jesus is our "True North."

True North is a reference point to find direction when you are lost on land and at sea. TrueNorth Church will be a reference point for all those who have lost direction and hope in this world. Many people find themselves looking at others to help them make wise choices in their marriages, families, and lives. Our mission is to point people to our "TrueNorth," Jesus Christ, so that all may find the purpose and potential that God has for their marriages, families, and lives.

From what we have noted, above, it is clear, that their “compass” has a problem, it is not pointing “truenorth” to the Scriptures but to the authority of men. Remember what Jesus said: “*But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*” (Matthew 15:9). Truenorth, like any other denomination that follows man-made doctrine for which there is no Biblical authority exist **without** the authority of God and their “compass” is not true! Their “way” is of man (Proverbs 14:12) and a “broad way” that leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13-15) and **not** the way of Christ (John 14:6).

*Ken Chumbley*

**NEWS AND NOTES**

Keep in your prayers the following: Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett, Lavonne McClish, Linda Chumbley, Maomi Aaron’s sister, Leann Rogers, who is having health problems, Myrtle Grimsley, and Lanny Niver together with his daughter and son, and Tim Smith.

Continue to keep Myrtle Grimsley in your prayers as she continues to recuperate at her daughter’s.

Lanny Niver was able to be out tonight. He responded to the invitation asking for prayer that he might be strengthened in his faith through his health difficulties.

Kristoffer Grundy was baptized into Christ Sunday night. He is a friend of Dawn Mason. We welcome him as a new brother in Christ.

The Wilsons were not out Wednesday evening as they had gone to west Georgia for Thanksgiving. Kathy Treadway had also left for North Carolina for Thanksgiving

***IS BIBLE CLASS IMPORTANT?***

Does attending Bible class regularly really make any difference in the quality of one’s life? With all the pressures that our children and young people face today, can regular attendance at Bible class really help to fortify them against evil?

Consider this: In a 5-year period, Jude Fossett in Brooklyn sentenced 2,400 juvenile young people to the reformatory. His investigations showed that not one of them as a member of a Bible class anywhere!

Or consider this: In a 2-year period, Lee Baxton presided over 2,400 juvenile court cases. He had a standing offer to pay court costs for any person convicted of a criminal offense if that young person had been regular in attendance to a Bible class during that year. He never had to pay anyone’s fine.

Attending Bible class not for a cure-all, but young people who are regularly found there are seldom found in court. A proven fact! Our young people need all the help we can give them. Plan to be at Bible class this Sunday. You have a example to set!

*Bobby Dockery  
Deceased*