

From the Minister's Desk



Wesley R. Brown

The Difficulties of Life are Like Thorns and Thistles

So many people wonder why there are so many problems, and difficulties in this world. What is wrong that makes people hate each other, and try to destroy one another. Is God responsible for all of this adversity, and hardship which plagues mankind, and his world? Some say, "Yes." While others have come to the conclusion that there is no God. For they cannot imagine a good God allowing the pain, and suffering that they see, and that they might have experienced. The answer to this dilemma is right there in the Bible, but certain men have ignored it for whatever reason.

As the word teaches, "God has made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions, or schemes." (Ecc. 7:29) Also, He has made ample provisions for man's life, and existence. "As Paul said, "Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:17) David said, "He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the service of man, That he may bring forth food from the earth, (Psa. 104:14) Thus, God did not total abandon man, but has allowed him to discover that God is good.

The thorns, and thistles came about because man left God to pursue a career of self-determination, self-sufficient, self-assertion, and self-glorification. He was told that he could be just like God, but in the wrong way. Man ate the forbidden fruit, and forsook the God who made him, and created a beautiful world for him. Thus thorns, and thistles invaded his world, and caused him much pain, and suffering. Listen to the Creator, "Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return." (Gen. 3:18,19)

Thorns, and thistles are symbolical of his employment, his enjoyment, and his business being a burden, and a toil for him. All of his education, exploration, his investments, research, and his civilization would last only for a short period of time. "For the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil." (Gen. 3:22) To know good, and evil is to experience health, and sickness; joy, and sorrow; ups, and downs; good times, and bad times; prosperous times, and times of poverty. In other words man needed to discover his helplessness, and weakness without God. Ships sink, airplanes crash, light bulbs burnout, cars break down, our houses need repairing from time to time, there would be good weather, and bad weather, and even our blood supply would become contaminated. God is not being hard on man, man is being hard on himself by ignoring or pretending that he can survive without God. His doubt will be his downfall! If men continue to turn away from God, and His will for their lives; the thorns, and thistles will turn into fire, and brimstone. The choice is his. Listen to Joshua, the servant of God. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (Jos. 24:15)

COMBINED ZONE MEETING

For All West Enders – This Saturday 12 - 2 p.m.



There will be a combined Zone Meeting at West End this Saturday, February 18 from noon to 2 p.m. Come to meet and greet the many new faces at West End and learn about the events that the Zone Committee has planned for this year.

Ladies' Bible Class

Next Sunday @ 4:30

Marriage Enrichment Cruise to Bermuda – Make plans today to sail away Sunday, October 15, 2006 through Friday, October 20, 2006. Enjoy five nights of exciting fun, relaxation, and rejuvenation in exotic Bermuda. For more details, pick up the flyers in the foyer or see Stella Wilson or Yonita Rowell.

The **Membership to Discipleship** group meets each Tuesday evening at 7 p.m. in the brick annex. See J.P. Collier, I. David Logan, or Dorothy Reed for more information.

Bulletin Announcements – If you want an announcement in the Sunday bulletin, your information must be e-mailed by noon on Monday to announcements@thewest-ender.com. E-mailing is the preferred method. Written or telephoned announcements should be directed to Tawania Thigpen (678-363-6100), Cynthia Mitchell (770-322-1072) or David Bishop (770-306-7462). Please plan in advance so your information won't be left out.

Hush Little Baby - Visitors and members with infants and young children are asked to immediately take those ones that are talkative, crying, or otherwise irritated to the Nursery located outside the auditorium. What may sound okay to you may be disturbing another's ability to worship properly. You may take them out at any time - even during times of congregational prayer if necessary. Thanks in advance for cooperating.

■ YOUTH AND SINGLES ■

February Star Students/Rising Stars are Meekhi Harris, Todd Small, Kurtis East, Nakeem Middleton, Tyria Horton, Dezsjon Harrold, Parys Middleton, Preycious Harris, Jordan Williams, and Madeline Livingston. These students will be recognized at the February 26 Family/Youth Devotional. Turn in all qualifying report cards and progress reports to David Bishop no later than Sunday, February 19.

Ordering Sermon Recordings - New Procedure

To order sermon tapes or CDs, please fill out the available prepay envelopes along with your payment and drop it in the secure drop box located on the display rack across from the Nursery. The envelopes are available next to the drop box. Please make sure to include your telephone number so you can be contacted once your order is completed. If a phone number is not available, please include your complete mailing address where the order can be mailed. Turnaround time is approximately one week. The previously used binders are now replaced by the use of the ordering envelopes. Thanks for your cooperation. Direct any questions to Anthony Nixon or Alfanette Garvin, co-chairs of the Audio/Video Committee.

REGULAR SUNDAY SERMONS
Cassettes - \$3 / Audio CDs - \$4

Is your new year's resolution to manage your money better?
Are you set up to live comfortably after you retire?

Classes are now underway for West Ends 2006 Stewardship and Finance Education Program. This program has multiple classes designed to give you the tools you need to better manage your finances in the new year and beyond. Classes are held at West End on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon and will continue approximately until April. Topics to be covered include:

- Finance
- Credit and Debt Management
- Savings, Retirement and Investment
- Budgeting
- Homeownership
- Making Major Purchases

The classes will teach Christian principles for managing money and special stewardship classes will teach why it is every Christian's responsibility to do so. If you are ready to get your money under control, get out of debt, or simply create the best financial plan for your future these classes are for you. Please sign up at the table in the foyer or see Avery Pitts (404-328-9090) or Mike Wells (404-277-3430) for further details.

Upcoming Canvassing Events

SPONSORED BY THE EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

Mar 8

10a.m. - NOON

Monthly Neighborhood Canvassing

AREAS: West End neighborhoods, MARTA stations

Apr 8

10 a.m. - NOON

Special Canvassing Initiative

To share the gospel with those attending a highly promoted conference centered on women and the church

AREAS: Downtown Atlanta, MARTA stations and surrounding areas

Apr 22

8 a.m. - NOON

3rd Annual Congregational Canvassing

To promote West End's spring gospel meeting

AREAS: West End neighborhoods and surrounding areas, MARTA stations

Be Commissioned To Go!



West End Centennial Anniversary DVD/Video Now Available!

The DVD and VHS that is available for purchase for \$10 is the must-see souvenir historical documentary that was shown on the last day of the 100 year anniversary celebration. Among other special features, it includes comments from several West Enders, as well as the Fox 5 Good Day Atlanta interview with Moses and Joyce Hall. One particular highlight is vintage footage from West End's groundbreaking ceremony in 1993 featuring comments from now deceased elders Anderson Davis and Robert Freeman. See Mike Wells (404-277-3430), Clark Brown (770-222-9550), or Helen Baker (404-349-5698) to place your order.

Placed Membership

12-18-05

Aaron Braziel

133 Trinity Ave., SW, Apt. 2504

Atlanta, Ga. 30303

404-614-6252

Military Addresses

SPC Anthony B. Grogan

4th PLT 233rd Trans

Camp ARIFJAN, Kuwait

APO, AE 09366

email: shawtylo@yahoo.com

SICK & SHUT-IN

To be included in this listing contact Gayron Johnson at the church office.

Willie Mae Morrow - 3060 Continental Colony Pkwy., Apt. 502, Atl., GA 30330. 404-344-9990
Esther Brown - 2610 MLK Dr., SW, Apt. 502, Atl. GA 30311. 404-696-3941. Elizabeth Perkins -
1392 Maywood Rd., NW, # 31, Atl. GA 30331. 404-691-0268. Alicia Green is recovering from
recent surgery. 2426 Corner Shoals Dr., Decatur, GA 30034. 404-212-7889. Debra Harding -
2599 Chesterbrooke Dr., Lithia Springs, GA 30122. 770-577-0044. Annie McArthur - 751
Fairburn Rd., SW #2212, Atl., GA, 30331. 404-699-2939. Ollie Burton - 2426 Corner Shoals Rd.,
Decatur, GA 30034. 404-212-7889. Continued prayers for Daneka Vickers, daughter of Mack and
Sandra Freeman. Annie Glaze c/o Wesley Woods Nursing Home, 1825 Clifton Rd., Apt. #517,
Atl., GA 30329. 404-486-1191. Anreneka Johnson - 2025 Highpoint Trail, Atl., GA 30331. 404-
344-1010.