

Prayer List

Cyndie, Nichole & Lauren
Sheila
Ophelia
Josh
Daniel
Olene

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

www.pinolechurchofchrist.com

Vol. 12, No. 33 - May 29, 2011

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

"Stand in the Ways and See" (Jeremiah 6:16)

By Michael D. Rankins

"Thus says the LORD: 'Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls.' But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'" - Jeremiah 6:16

This simple verse provides all kinds of insight into how we might learn to be pleasing to God. Consider:

"Stand in the ways and see." If you want to learn anything, you have to go where the information is - to "stand in the way" where that knowledge travels. If you were interested, for example, in improving your math skills, signing up for an English class at the junior college would not be the best means of going about it. English class is not the place to stand if you want to learn about math. You have to enroll in a math class, because that's where math knowledge is being distributed.

This Week's Question:

Who was killed after his hair was caught in on oak's branches?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Zechariah - 2 Chronicles 24:21

Published by the church of Christ which meets at 755 Pinole Valley Road, Pinole, CA 94564, Phone (510) 724-1994, (Mailing address: church of Christ, P.O. Box 453, Pinole, CA 94564)

Once in the right place, you have to "see," to open your eyes to the instruction. Most of us learn very little by osmosis - that is, by simply absorbing knowledge into our brains out of the thin air around us. If you wanted to learn more about math, just being in a math class would avail you little unless you opened the textbook, studied the lessons, and did the homework exercises contained therein. That's how you learn.

"Ask for the old paths." Learning is almost always facilitated by getting instruction from someone who has been studying the subject longer than you have. You might be able to teach yourself mathematics, but you'd gain knowledge much more quickly by studying with a knowledgeable math teacher, or perhaps even another student who had already taken the class and would be willing to tutor you. And fortunately for you, mathematicians have been kicking numbers around for thousands of years, so everything you want to know about math is already out there in "the old paths" of math instruction - you just need to ask someone to show you where to look.

"Where the good way is." Here's where matters get complicated. If you want to learn math, even enrolling in a math class, studying diligently, and making use of the available instruction isn't enough. The problem is, there are excellent math teachers and poor math teachers. If you get tutored by someone who knows as little about math as you do - or even worse, "knows" a great deal that is incorrect - you could find yourself no better off than you started, or worse, hopelessly confused.

You need to seek out a good math teacher, someone who really knows his or her stuff, who understands the subject material backward and forward, and will teach you "the good way" as it pertains to mathematics.

"And walk in it." Your long-term success in your math studies depends upon your putting into action what you learn. I took two years of algebra and a year of geometry in high school, and another semester of algebra in college. Can I work an algebra or geometry problem today? No - a math textbook reads like hieroglyphics to me today, because I haven't used any higher math in a quarter-century or longer. I didn't "walk in it," so the learning all those years ago did me no practical good at all.

The Spiritual Application

What is true of mathematics, as we've been discussing the subject here, is even more true of spiritual truth. If we want to know more about God, we have to "stand in the way" where the knowledge of God and His will exists, and "see" what is there to be discovered. We can't make it up as we go along; rather, we must "ask for the old paths" and be instructed in what God revealed long ago in His word (2 Timothy 3:16-17). We must make certain we are taught in "the good way," and the only way to do that is by comparing what we are taught with the scriptures (Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:1). As we learn from God's written word, we must implement the wisdom we learn, and "walk in it" (Luke 11:28; James 1:22). When we apply ourselves to this plan, we will truly find rest for our souls. From Expository Files 12.2; February 2005