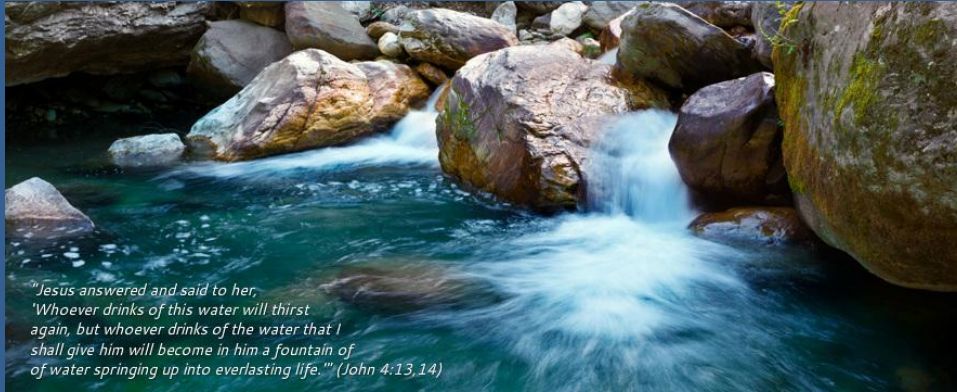




CENTRAL SHELBY CHURCH OF CHRIST

working and worshipping together to serve the Lord



*"Jesus answered and said to her,
'Whoever drinks of this water will thirst
again, but whoever drinks of the water that I
shall give him will become in him a fountain of
of water springing up into everlasting life.'" (John 4:13, 14)*

ARE WE WASHING OUR HANDS?

We suppose that the most famous (or infamous) hand-washer in history was Pilate, who sought to absolve himself of responsibility in the crucifixion of Jesus by washing his hands in a basin of water. *"I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it,"* he said to the Jewish tumult (Matthew 27:24). The washing of one's hands was symbolic of moral and spiritual cleanness, but no basin of water was going to wash Pilate's responsibility away (Psalm 26:6).

We wonder if it might be that many of us today are seeking to "wash our hands" of the responsibility we have toward our fellow man, specifically in teaching him the gospel. Beloved, if this is true of us, let us resolve now to repent of our inactivity.

It can be so easy to convince ourselves that we've absolved ourselves of the responsibility. We have families to care for. We have to make a living. We should have some 'down time,' too. There is no doubting these, but too often we allow our busy-ness in these keep us from seeing the wretched state and (consequently) needs of our sin-sick neighbors and acquaintances. Are THEIR needs not important?

The truth is that we can care for our jobs, our families, and other aspects of our lives and still find the time to focus our attention on a world that has *"no hope"* and is *"without Christ"* (Ephesians 2:12).

You say, "I don't have the time." If that is true, then you are too busy. (No, we are not trying to be callous and unsympathetic to your plight; but you are simply too busy.) *"Redeem the time,"* the Scripture says, and what better use could be made of our bought-back time than spending it in the pursuit of soul-saving? (Ephesians 5:16)

But for most of us, the statement, "I don't have the time," is not a correct assessment of the situation. We may genuinely think that it is, but it is not. No, beloved -- we are making excuses in an attempt to clear ourselves of the responsibility of soul-winning. We are spending too much time on house upkeep, land care, recreation, television-watching, and the like, all the while taking

our minds off what is truly important. We are trying to “wash our hands” of the matter, but will this ‘wash’ with the Lord?

If needed, will you pledge now to do better?

What a wonderful thing it would be if we could truthfully say, *“I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare... the whole counsel of God to others”* (Acts 20:7).

--Mike Noble