

August 22, 2021

Refreshing Christians

by Ken Weliever

Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus.

Do you know who they are? In what book of the Bible are they mentioned? Old or New Testament? You won't find them in Hebrews 11—The Spiritual "Hall of Fame."

More than likely they are reserved for the answer to a Bible Trivia game. They are filed under Miscellaneous. Unidentified. Or unknown.

Give up?

They were three members of the Corinthian church that Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 16:15-19. So who were they? And what did they do? Well, Paul knew and so did the Corinthian church.

"I urge you, brethren — you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints — that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with us."

I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied. For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men.

These three men, unheard of, unheralded and unknown, find their place in sacred scripture, not because of some great deed. World shaking exploit. Or miraculous work. These men are honored because of their devotion. Their ministry. Their encouragement.

Paul pays them a great compliment. He calls them "refreshing Christians." To refresh means to provide rest. To renew strength. To rejuvenate. How? We don't exactly know. It is believed that Paul wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus during his third missionary journey. So these three men came to Ephesus and supplied something for Paul that was lacking. Something he needed. Something that lifted and encouraged him.

Today we need more folks like Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus. Willing to work. Ready to labor. Equipped for ministry. Not waiting for some great or grandiose task, but humbly seeking to serve in whatever way they can. We need more refreshing Christians!

When spiritual labor tires both body and soul, we need refreshing Christians. When trials come and disappointments discourage us, we need refreshing Christians. When people quit, loyalty lags, and the spirit of melancholy pervades, refreshing Christians are needed to lift the spirit. Soothe the soul. Renew hope.

When problems pervade the church or trouble invades the home, refreshing Christians are needed. When sickness strikes or death intrudes, refreshing Christians are a welcome respite from sorrow. In a darkened world filled with immorality, ungodliness, and corruption, the sight of a devoted, serving, encouraging Christian is indeed

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

Mark your calendar! Our next gospel meeting will be September 12-15 with Mike Walls.

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

refreshing! Invigorating! Rejuvenating!

You can be a refreshing Christian!

Oh, not by waiting for some grand opportunity that makes a big splash, but by daily doing what needs to be done. By the little things. Simple things. Common things. Jesus commended those that would give a “cup of water” in his name (Mk. 9:41). Just like an ice-cold glass of water on a hot and sweltering day can provide refreshment to a parched throat, so can your refreshing deeds of ministry.

How can you be a refreshing Christian? Be ready to offer a kind word. Write a note of encouragement. Or a phone call of concern. It may be a meal. A timely visit. Or a warm embrace. In our day it could be a short text or facebook message. A poem shared. A book given. A pat on the back. A wink or a nod of recognition.

Your good example, faithfulness under temptation, or calmness under trial may serve as an encouragement to another person. Your strength, courage, and fortitude may be refreshing and inspiring, as they face similar circumstances. Or it could be your enthusiasm and excitement when others are discouraged, that lifts the fog of depression.

While they didn't make Hebrews 11, these three unheard-of men made a difference in their church family in Corinth. And in Paul's ministry. They were refreshing Christians.

What about you?

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Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is at home and undergoing physical therapy.

Jerry Richardson is still undergoing cancer treatments.

Nancy Richardson is doing better but still dealing with breathing problems.

Karen Hallmark has improved but is still struggling with her health and her eyes, as well as asthma.

Dinah Williams continues to be homebound due to mobility issues. She had a small fire at her house and is staying at the Comfort Inn while repairs are being made.

Bobbie Gibbons is in the hospital with Covid.

Dorothy Steadman is hoping to be back home soon.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

Evangelist

Darrell Trammel
512-756-4493 Office
Darrell@
oakswestchurchofChrist.com

Elders

George Gresham
Jim Johnson
Darrell Trammel

Contact Us

Address:
P.O. Box 675
Burnet, TX 78611

Call:
(512) 756-4493

E-Mail:
oakswestchurch@gmail.com

Website:
oakswestchurchofchrist.com