

Truth

Magazine

Taking His hand, helping each other home.



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OPEN ISSUE

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win” (1 Cor. 9:24)



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Paul encouraged the Corinthian disciples to manifest undistracted devotion to Christ (1 Cor. 7:35). Devotion, which may be defined as "love, loyalty, or enthusiasm for a person, activity, or cause," is an essential characteristic of worship.

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Open Issue

■ FAITH AND ALS

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by Matthew Bassford

When confronted with doubt and despair, may we recall the faith of Jeremiah, the weeping prophet: “O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of distress. . .” (Jer. 16:19).

■ LEADERS ARE TEACHERS

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A top priority of outstanding leaders is developing all their people. Paul said, “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2).

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Ponder Paul’s admonition, “Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:18-19).

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Paul’s frequent use of athletic imagery reminds us of important life-lessons that can be taught through sports. Let’s consider Nick Saban’s approach toward coaching and our approach toward living.

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Saints today share much in common with first century disciples, significant differences exist. While we do not possess the miraculous gifts of revelation and confirmation, we have something better: the full and final message of salvation!

I Am the Vine

by Mark Mayberry

John's gospel records various divine declarations of Jesus: "I am the bread of life, the light of the world, the door of the sheep," etc. Let us consider the significance of His statement, "I am the vine, and you are the branches."

Introduction

In John 15, Jesus famously said,

I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full (John 15:1-11).

What lessons can we draw from this text? Jesus is not saying, as some assert, that He is the vine and various denominations are the branches. The language of the text focuses on individual responsibility. Note the personal pronouns: "I" refers to Jesus and "you" identifies the disciples. Note also the

statement, "He who abides in Me and I in him."

It is contextually inaccurate and grammatically illiterate to affirm that Jesus is speaking of separate denominations. Personal pronouns specifically replace the names of people, places or things. They are associated primarily with a particular grammatical person—first person (as *I*), second person (as *you*, either singular or plural), or third person (as *he*, *she*, *it*, or if plural, then *they*).

Jesus Is the Vine

The Messiah is the Source from which the branches bear fruit: "Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. . ." (Isa. 11:1-9). A vine gives life to the branches and provides them with access to nourishment. It gives its unique characteristics to its fruit and flowers. In order for branches to bear fruit, the vine must be healthy. The vine must have its roots planted/embedded in soil that is properly tilled, free of encumbrances, with access to water/nourishment. The vine must be cultivated, i.e., regularly pruned, and inspected for blight and insects.

Keys to Success

We Must Abide in Christ

Jesus commanded the disciples, "Abide in Me" (John 15:4-7). The Greek word *menō* means "to stay, abide, remain" (Thomas, 3306). It is used of "(1) a

person or thing [that] remains where he, she, or it is, or (2) a person or thing [that] continues in the same state" (BDAG, 630-631).

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you **abide in Me**. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who **abides in Me** and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not **abide in Me**, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you **abide in Me, and My words abide in you**, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you (John 15:4-7).

What does it mean to "abide in" someone or something? Perhaps two biblical illustrations will be helpful.

Before His ascension, the Lord instructed the disciples to remain in the city of Jerusalem until they were endowed with power from on high (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5). What would have happened if one of the apostles had become impatient, saying, "Why are we just sitting around when we could be travelling about preaching? Let's get started fulfilling the Great Commission!" What would have happened if they had disobeyed the Lord's command, and departed Jerusalem before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost?

When Paul was transported to Rome to stand trial before Caesar, the ship was caught in a violent storm, and driven before the winds for many days. As it approached the island of Malta, perilous reefs lay ahead. Some of the sailors

tried to escape the doomed vessel in the lifeboat, but Paul said, “Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved.” Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship’s boat and let it fall away. Although the ship floundered upon a reef, and was broken up by the winds and waves, all were brought to safety because the centurion believed Paul and followed his instructions (Acts 27:27-44). What would have happened if those men had ignored Paul’s inspired warning?

To abide in Christ means that we continually remain in fellowship with our Lord and Savior by submitting to His will. In admonishing the disciples to “Abide in Me,” Jesus said, “apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). True disciples continue in Christ’s word (John 8:31-32). Those who forge ahead (by pursuing their own path and proclaiming their own precepts) imperil their relationship with both the Father and the Son (2 John 8-9).

Making his defense before King Agrippa, Paul said, “I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth,” yet, in persecuting the church, Saul of Tarsus acted apart from (and in defiance of) Christ’s authority. After encountering Christ on the Damascus road, Saul revised his assessment, repented of his sins, submitted to the Lord’s will in baptism, and began promoting the faith he once sought to destroy (Acts 26:4-18).

Looking back on his former Pharisaical accomplishments, Paul acknowledged their fruitlessness and futility (Phil. 3:2-11). Apart from Jesus Christ, nothing we do endures. Apart from full submission to the will of God, our religion is worthless (Matt. 15:7-9; Col. 2:20-23). With the passing of time, the works of men crumble into dust; however, the word of God endures forever (Isa. 40:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:22-25).

All spiritual blessings reside in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:3-6), but apart from Christ, nothing we do has meaning or merit; apart from Christ, we cannot honor or glorify God (Eph. 2:4-18).

We Must Bear Fruit

Jesus said, “My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples” (John 15:8). A bountiful harvest is a frequent biblical motif, applicable to individuals and the people of God as a whole. Describing the blessings that are bestowed upon those who fear the Lord and walk in His ways, Psalm 128 says, “Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house, your children like olive plants around your table” (v. 3). Ezekiel 19:10-11 employs similar language collectively of the nation of Israel.

Despite the darkness and danger of the present hour (when Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded Judah and besieged Jerusalem), the prophet Isaiah anticipated a bountiful future: “The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward” (2 Kings 19:29-31; Isa. 37:30-32).

After the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem were deported to Babylon, Ezekiel looked beyond the present captivity and portrayed the productiveness associated with Christ’s coming (Ezek. 17:22-24).

Conclusion

Isaiah 5 pronounces divine judgment on ancient Israel, likening them to a wild grapevine that did not bear acceptable fruit. If we fail to bear fruit, it’s not the fault of the Vine. Rather, it is because we did not abide in the vine.

In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus reveals that only the good soil bears fruit with perseverance (Luke 8:25).

But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance (Luke 8:15).

Are we bearing fruit? Are we abiding in the love of God and Christ? Is this reflected in our conduct? Remember that Jesus Himself said, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (John 14:15; cf. also vv. 21-24).

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments (John 14:15).

“He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?” Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me” (John 14:21-24). **TL**

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Christians in the World

by Kyle Pope

An ancient text, known as the *Epistle to Diognetus*, describes the remarkable distinction between early Christians and the pagan world in which they lived. If an account was written in our day, could we be described the same way?

Introduction

The apostle John, in his first epistle, teaches an unusual relationship that should exist between Christians and the world. After asserting that Christ is the “propitiation” (NKJV) or “atoning sacrifice” (NIV) not only for Christians, but “for the whole world” (2:2), he moves quickly to charge believers not to “love the world or the things in the world” (2:15a, NKJV). A failure to do this, by possessing “the love of the world,” means the love of the Father is not truly within a person (2:15b). Going on to define “all that is in the world” and the various lusts that characterize it (2:16), the apostle makes the important declaration that this world “is passing away” (2:17a). This life, this age, this universe, this world was never intended to last forever—instead, it is “he who does the will of God” who “abides forever” (2:17b).

Halfway through the epistle, the apostle returns to this issue. He explains, “the world does not know us, because it did not know Him” (3:1). This is why the Christian should “not marvel” if “the world hates you” (3:13)—they hated our Master before they hated us. When we have “this world’s goods” we must open our hearts to those in need if God’s love is truly within us (3:17). “False prophets” (4:1b) and those with “the spirit of the Antichrist,” i.e., those opposed to Christ (4:3a) have gone out “into the world” (4:1c), and were “already in the world” (4:3b), making it vital for believers to “test the spirits” (4:1a). This should not discourage disciples of Christ, because “He who is in” them is “greater than he

who is in the world” (4:4). The believer should not look like the world around him. It is unbelievers who “are of the world. Therefore, they speak *as* of the world, and the world hears them” (4:5). Christ’s entrance into this world had great meaning. He was sent “into the world, that we might live through Him” (4:9). Our faith affirms that God “the Father has sent” God “the Son as Savior of the world” (4:14). That calls us to live so that “as He is, so are we in this world” (4:17).

In his closing words, the apostle returns to the incongruity of the Christian in the world. He assures the faithful that the one who is “born of God overcomes the world” (5:4a). It is our faith that is “the victory that has overcome the world” (5:4b). Despite how it may often appear, the one who “believes that Jesus is the Son of God” is “he who overcomes the world” (5:5). This incompatibility between the Christian and the world is to be expected because “the whole world lies under the wicked one” (5:19). This is what the relationship between children of God and the world should look like. How are you doing at this?

The Epistle to Diognetus

In Constantinople, in 1436, a manuscript was discovered in the shop of a fish seller as it was being used to wrap fish. It turned out to be a 13th-century manuscript containing several Greek works written by the 2nd-century Christian apologist, Justin, and an otherwise unknown apologetic text written by an author identified only as

“the disciple” (Gr. *mathētēs*) addressed to a man named Diognetus. It was first published in 1592 by Henri Estienne, the son of Robert Estienne (or Stephanus), the biblical scholar who published the edition of the Greek New Testament that came to be known as the *Textus Receptus*. Henri first classified it as an additional work by Justin, but over time scholars recognized it as the work of another unknown writer dated to the 2nd or 3rd century. Although this text is unmentioned in the writings of any known early church author, it came to be included in the collection of texts known as the *Apostolic Fathers*, comprised of the earliest Christian texts written immediately after the New Testament. It is a beautiful work written as an “apology” (i.e. an effort to persuade the reader of the wisdom of faith in Christ). It was written during a time of persecution and reflects concepts and principles taught in the New Testament and quotes Scriptures from it.


In the middle of the work, the author gives a concise description and explanation of the life of Christians and their relationship to the world. He explains:

For the Christians are distinguished from other men neither by country, nor language, nor the customs which they observe. For they neither inhabit cities of their own, nor employ a peculiar form of speech, nor lead a life which is marked out by any singularity. The course of conduct which they follow has not been devised by any speculation or deliberation of inquisitive men; nor do they, like some, proclaim themselves the advocates of any merely human doctrines. But, inhabiting Greek as well

as barbarian cities, according as the lot of each of them has determined, and following the customs of the natives in respect to clothing, food, and the rest of their ordinary conduct, they display to us their wonderful and confessedly striking method of life. They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers. They marry, as do all [others]; they beget children; but they do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men and are persecuted by all. They are unknown and condemned; they are put to death and restored to life. They are poor yet make many rich; they are in lack of all things, and yet abound in all; they are dishonored, and yet in their very dishonor are glorified. They are evil spoken of, and yet are justified; they are reviled, and bless; they are insulted, and repay the insult with honor; they do good yet are punished as evil-doers. When punished, they rejoice as if quickened into life; they are assailed by the Jews as foreigners and are persecuted by the Greeks; yet those who hate them are unable to assign any reason for their hatred. (Chapter 5: "The Manners of the Christians," modified from the translation by Roberts and Donaldson, *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*).

What about Us?

How well would this description apply to saints today? Do we serve "as citizens" of our own country though living "as sojourners"? Do we live "in the flesh" without living "after the flesh"? Do we pass our "days on earth" while recognizing that we are "citizens of heaven"? Do we obey "the prescribed laws" while surpassing "the laws" in our lives? Although "poor," do we "make many rich"? Do we repay "insult with honor"?

The Holy Spirit did not inspire these words, but they reflect the attitude of an early disciple of Christ who recognized the principles noted above. In the epistle as a whole, the author quotes from both John and Paul. We do not yet face the persecution that Christians such as this author experienced, but we live in a world that views us with contempt, bewilderment, or at the very least, misunderstanding. These words written centuries ago challenge us to see the special role we must play in our own world. Paul urged the Philippians to be "blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15). He said, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). If we penned an "apology" to persuade an unbeliever in our world to accept faith in Christ, could we describe our relationship to our world as this unknown Christian from long ago described Christians in his day? Jesus called us to be "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). May we faithfully fulfill the charge to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). May God help us to shine brightly in our world! 

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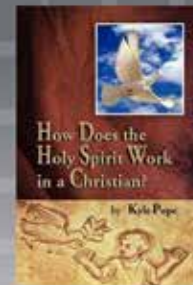
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Running the Race Unencumbered

by Lindsay Mast

Just as weights slow us down when running—increasing the stress on our joints and the demands on our circulatory system, the weight of sin and the burden of unnecessary baggage also has a debilitating effect upon our spiritual well-being.

Therefore, since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that lay before Him endured a cross and despised the shame and has sat down at the right hand of God's throne (Heb. 12:1–2, HCSB).

Every year on July 4th, 60,000 runners make their way through Atlanta for the Peachtree Road Race. Most are in patriotic-themed running attire, but every so often you may spy a different kind of runner. These individuals make their way down Peachtree Street in full military garb, complete with heavy packs, boots and flags.

They draw loud cheers from the crowd because of their military service, and also because they are running while weighted down. This is incredibly hard!

The Hebrew writer knew it! He saw good Christians tromping toward heaven, so encumbered that they were in spiritual danger. Perhaps they were not guilty of outright sinning, but he saw a better way. So how do we lay aside weights like that? It's a three-step process:

Identify the Weights

First, we must identify the weights that are ensnaring us. Sin is often easy to spot because we know the specific things we need to steer clear of in the Bible: sexual sins, hurting people, and others that are clearly spelled out in Scripture. They can often bring swift negative consequences. Yet, other spiritual weights can be harder

to spot. They probably didn't start out inherently sinful. Often, we've carried them for so long, we don't realize what would happen if we put them down.

Some of us have lugged around anger, bitterness, and anxiety for decades. Greed or feelings of worthlessness drives others to spend far too much time working. Emotional weights like these are so heavy, but they're like an ugly family heirloom: we don't know why we're keeping it, but it would feel so weird not to have it!

Perhaps the weight of our physical possessions is too much to bear anymore. We went into debt to get the car or add on to the house, and now it's crushing us. Accumulated clutter heightens our depressive tendencies. It could be that we have so much stuff that simply caring for it sucks up our time.

Ensnaring weights may even take the form of people. Relationships that draw us away from God need to be assessed honestly for their effect. Friendships that started as a conversion mission may need to be kindly ended if the person isn't receptive (Luke 9:5).

So, how do we determine if a weight is ensnaring us? The litmus test is this question: Is this helping me get to heaven? A prayerful look can provide the answer.

Envision Something Better

Second, we should envision something better. Now we must act. Once we realize we need to resign the bitterness, or sell the car, or forego the relationship, the work starts. Yet, it can be so much easier

if we consider what things will look like on the other side.

What would it feel like to be at peace with our past and to have the emotional openness to let God use us more? What would life look like without crushing debt payments and having more cash in hand? What would it look like to have the time and mental space to pursue new relationships? Do you feel freer already?

Put It Down

Put it down (maybe repeatedly). That vision, coupled with our trust in the Lord to care for us and show us the way (1 Pet. 5:7; John 14:6), can give us the strength to put down any weight and run a very different race. It may be necessary for us to *repeatedly* put something down. It can be scary suddenly to run fast. We may be tempted to pick up the old thing again because we haven't experienced something different, better, in a while. In such circumstances, keep going back to the vision—and try again to run the race as God commands. Hebrews 12:2 says that we are to fix our eyes on Jesus. When we envision a lighter load and realize we are running straight toward our savior, we will want to be as fast and free as possible. **T**



Lindsay Wolfgang Mast

Lindsay Mast has dozens of medals from marathons, half marathons and overnight relays, but is anxious for the only prize that matters, heaven. She left a career as a broadcast journalist to homeschool her three children, and now also does online marketing for small businesses. She and her husband, David, worship at the Intown congregation in Atlanta, GA. She can be reached at lbwolgangmast@gmail.com.

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Progressivism and the Bible

by Kyle Pope

In contrast with the confusing and contradictory views espoused by those branding themselves as “progressive,” the Bible offers a clear and consistent path that our Creator has revealed to guide us through this life and into eternity.

Introduction

Defining “progressivism” is a little like “nailing Jello to the wall”: its meaning varies depending upon the time, the subject, the field, the discipline, and the people to whom it is applied. In the Progressive Party of 1912, “progressives” called for disclosure of campaign contributions, publication of congressional committee meetings, the right of women to vote, workers’ compensation for workplace injuries, and the right to remove political leaders from office (Peters and Wooley). Additionally, the Progressive movements of the period known to history as the “Progressive Era” (1890-1920s) manifested themselves in causes as diverse as the Temperance Movement (that sought to prohibit the sale and production of alcohol) (Hanson) to the Eugenics Movement (that sought to “improve human heredity by the social control of human breeding”) (Thomas).

In our day, this ambiguity has improved very little. Political “progressives” claim to stand *against corruption, oppression, and discrimination, and for democracy, transparency, accountability, freedom of the press, and non-violence* (Kayes). Yet, the same political “progressives” quickly silence free speech through “cancel culture” (WSJ Editorial Board) and embrace lethal violence within the womb (Weigel). The religious “progressive” is no more consistent. In 2012, an organization known as the Center for Progressive Christianity published a statement known as “The 8 Points of Progressive Christianity.”

In its first point it affirmed a belief in following “the teachings of Jesus,” but in its next two points it claimed “the teachings of Jesus provide but one of many ways to experience the Sacredness and Oneness of life” claiming to be “inclusive of ALL people. . . including all sexual orientations and gender identities” (ProgressiveChristianity.org).

A Better Way

Manmade philosophies and values inevitably lead to confusion and contradiction because they all come from the human mind that is frail, limited, and subject to bias, passion, and ignorance. Our Creator has set forth a better, more consistent, and clear path through the revelation of His word in the pages of the Bible. It teaches us:

About Human Life

Human beings were created by an omnipotent Creator, not formed by an accident of chance (Gen. 2:7; Isa. 44:24; 45:12). Our Creator knows us through and through and instructs us in what is best for us in this life and beyond (Ps. 139:1-4; Matt. 10:30-31; Deut. 10:12-13). Human beings have material bodies that are perishable and a spirit (created in God’s image) that is eternal (Gen. 1:27-27; Eccl. 12:7; 2 Cor. 4:16-18). God creates this eternal spirit within the womb (Ps. 139:13; Zech. 12:1).

About the Material World

The material world is a resource over which man has been given stewardship

(Gen. 1:28; Ps. 8:6-8; 2 Cor. 9:10-11; 1 Pet. 4:10). We should be good stewards, using its resources responsibly for God’s glory (Prov. 3:9; Matt. 25:14-30; Col. 3:23; 1 Pet. 4:10). The material world is temporary—our ultimate goal lies beyond this life (Matt. 6:31-33; 24:35; Col. 3:2; 1 John 2:17). Growing in knowledge and understanding of the material world enhances our appreciation for the intelligent Creator responsible for its existence (Ps. 19:1-3; 111:1-2; Rom. 1:20). While some materialistic scientific theories conflict with the Bible, the sound interpretation of Scripture is not in conflict with the facts of science (Ps. 14:1; 53:1; 1 Cor. 1:20-25; 1 Tim. 6:20-21).

About Gender and Sexuality

God created human beings with biological gender that is not subject to individual choice (Gen. 1:27; 2:18-20; 2:21-23; 5:2; Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6). All genders are of value, but our Creator has equipped and assigned different roles and functions to different genders (Gen. 3:16; Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:18; 1 Cor. 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:11-14; Titus 2:5). Human gender is inextricably connected with human sexuality and homosexual relations are always sinful (Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:27-27; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:8-11). God created sexuality as a beautiful part of the relationship that He intends to find expression within marriage (Gen. 2:24-25; Lev. 18:8; Prov. 5:15-19; 1 Cor. 7:3-5; Heb. 13:4).



About Marriage and the Home

Our Creator established and defined the covenant of marriage (Gen. 2:24; Mal. 2:14-16; Matt. 19:6). While human beings can choose whether or not to marry, they cannot choose how to define marriage (Matt. 14:4; 19:10-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-40). Marriage is a lifelong covenant (Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:39). Fornication is the sole grounds for divorce (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). All sexual relations outside of marriage are contrary to the will of our Creator (Gen. 34:7; Deut. 22:22; 22:23-29). God designed the home to be a place of love and spiritual and emotional shelter (Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 31:10-31; 1 Cor. 13:4-7; Col. 3:21; 1 Tim. 5:4, 8, 16; Heb. 12:5). He established order within the home with husbands as the head, wives as keepers of the house, and children in obedience to their parents (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 6:16; Eph. 5:22-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; 1 Tim. 5:14; Titus 2:5). This order serves our

needs and is maintained through love and the parental exercise of measured corporal punishment for the training and discipline of children (Prov. 13:24; 23:13-14; 29:15; Heb. 12:4-11). Parents hold the primary responsibility for material, emotional, and spiritual training of children (Gen. 18:19; Deut. 4:9; 6:6-9; 11:18-21; Eph. 6:4).

About Civil Government

Civil government functions under the authority of God to protect and serve the good of mankind (Rom. 13:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:13-15). Humans should not kill other humans, whether in or out of the womb (Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17; Matt. 19:18; Rom. 13:9). Civil government is granted the right to exercise capital punishment for protection and the punishment of wrongdoing (Gen. 9:6; Rom. 13:4). Followers of Christ must submit to civil authority unless doing so

requires the violation of God's law (Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-6; 1 Pet. 2:14-15). It is the responsibility of the family and the individual to provide for one's livelihood (Prov. 21:25; 2 Thess. 3:10-14; 1 Tim. 5:4, 8, 16).

About Proper Behavior toward Others

Human beings should treat one another with kindness, respect, and as we would want to be treated (Matt. 7:12; Gal. 6:1; Eph. 4:32; Phil. 2:4; 1 Pet. 3:11). Disciples of Christ should not lie, but live lives characterized by honesty (Exod. 20:16; Deut. 5:20; Prov. 14:5; Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:9). Disciples of Christ should not steal but respect the property of others (Exod. 20:15; Lev. 19:11; Deut. 5:19; Matt. 19:18; Rom. 13:9). Disciples of Christ should not curse and use foul language (Prov. 12:18; Eph. 4:29; Jas. 3:5-10).

About God's Will for Us

Man does not possess the instinctual ability to direct his own ways (Jer. 10:23). Following God's law leads to blessings in life and beyond (Pss. 1:1-6; 19:7-11). God's law for human beings is revealed within the Bible: with the teachings of the New Testament as the binding standard in this age and the Old Testament for our learning (John 12:47-48; Rom. 15:4; 1 Tim. 1:8-11; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). The violation of God's law (i.e., divinely revealed instruction), either by commission or omission, constitutes a sin against God (John 14:23-24; 1 John 3:4; Jas. 4:17).

About Our Relationship with God

Sin committed by accountable souls severs our relationship with God (Isa. 59:1-2; Eph. 2:1-3). Only the shed blood of Christ can restore that relationship (Acts 4:10-12; Rom. 5:8-11; Col. 1:19-22). One comes into contact with the blood of Christ through faith, confession, repentance, and baptism into Christ (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:28; 22:16; Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-11; Gal. 3:26-27). Once forgiven of sin, the faithful disciple of Christ continues in obedience to the teaching of the New Testament in life and worship of God (John 8:31; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 15:1-2; Phil. 4:9; Rev. 2:10). Faithful disciples of Christ identify with sound local congregations of Christians for worship and service to Christ (Acts 11:26; Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-30; Eph. 4:11-16). Local churches assemble regularly for worship and encouragement (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Heb. 10:25). Worship under Christ involves prayer, singing, study, and the observance of the Lord's Supper and contribution for the saints on Sunday (Acts 12:12; Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18-19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2). Members of local churches function under the headship of Christ in submission to scripturally qualified appointed elders and deacons (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:16-18; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 3:8-13). While all genders have equal value before God, the Creator has reserved roles of leadership and public

teaching for male disciples (1 Cor. 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:11-14). Female disciples may teach other women, children, and join in discussions with men in contexts outside the worship assembly (Acts 18:26; Titus 2:3).

About Life after Death and Judgment

Upon death, one's spiritual destiny is sealed with all souls going to Hades to await final judgment (Luke 16:19-31; Rev. 20:12-13). When Jesus returns, this universe will be destroyed and all souls will be judged by Jesus Christ (Matt. 25:31-32; 2 Pet. 3:10-12). At the final judgment, those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ will attain an eternal home with God free of pain, decay, and death (Matt. 25:33-40, 46; Rom. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; 1:17-19; Rev. 21:3-4). Those in sin will remain eternally separated from God under punishment (John 8:21; Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thess. 1:5-11; Rev. 20:15).

Conclusion

The Creator's plan for life on earth and His provision for eternity is a consistent and clear path for us to follow. It demonstrates the unchanging wisdom of God. In a world of continual "regression" to the lowest forms of chaos and selfish imagination, it represents what is actually the most "progressive" and beneficial platform ever known. Wise souls will yield to its guidance in every step and choice in life. ■

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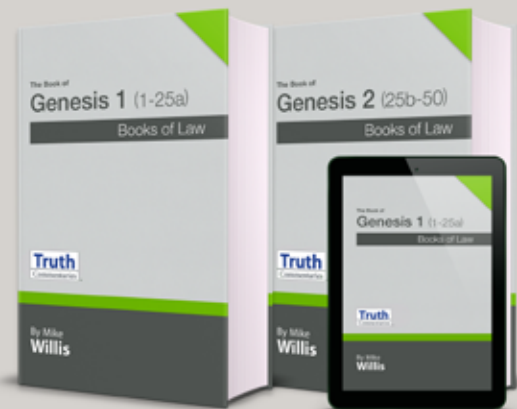
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The Need for Devotion

by Matthew Bassford

Paul encouraged the Corinthian disciples to manifest undistracted devotion to Christ (1 Cor. 7:35). Devotion, which may be defined as “love, loyalty, or enthusiasm for a person, activity, or cause,” is an essential characteristic of worship.

Introduction

All of us know what it's like to “go through the motions” in worship. We're singing a familiar hymn on Sunday morning, but our mind wanders to the exciting football game we watched yesterday. We spend more time during the Lord's Supper reflecting on the nasty taste of those single-serve Styrofoam pellets than we do on the death of Jesus. Our stomach growls during the closing prayer, and we are transported in spirit to Cracker Barrel.

Anyone watching us at these times would conclude that we had adequately checked our act-of-worship boxes, but in truth, checking the boxes was all we did. Herein lies a great spiritual danger! Many of us learned from our youth to despise the Pharisees of Jesus' day, and shudder in pious horror at His depiction of their hypocrisy in Matthew 6:1-6.

However, if we pay close attention to what the mirror of the word is showing us in that context, we may not like what we see. The Pharisees worshiped in order to impress others, but if we aren't worshipping out of devotion to God, whom are we seeking to impress? Isn't it our brothers and sisters, the ones who will give us the side-eye if we don't sing, if we don't partake, if we trot off to Cracker Barrel five minutes early? If our “worship” is about them, we need to listen to what the Lord says about our reward.

The key to receiving that reward in eternity rather than now is our devotion to God. He never is indifferent to us, even when we are indifferent to Him, but the

day will come when most will long for His indifference! Conversely, when we pour out our hearts before Him, we awaken His compassion. Devotion in worship is not a luxury that we award God when we feel like it. It is vital.

Worshipping in Spirit

Even before the church was established, Jesus highlighted the importance of devoted worship, sometimes when we would not expect Him to do so. The most notable of these unexpected discussions appears in John 4:19-24 during His conversation with the woman at the well.

She has figured out that He is a prophet, and she wants Him to settle a religious dispute. Where should people worship God, at the Jerusalem temple like the Jews, or on Mt. Gerizim like the Samaritans? Is it “A” or “B”?

Jesus tells her, though, that “C” is the answer. In the hour that now has arrived, the attitude of worshipers will be far more important than their physical location. Worshipping in the temple or on the mountain doesn't matter; worshipping in spirit and in truth matters greatly.

Worshipping in truth isn't terribly hard to figure out, but worshipping in spirit is much more of a puzzle. Perhaps the best way to think about it is in terms of spiritual location. Jesus observes that God is spirit, so those who worship Him must worship in spirit.

The image of Artemis that fell from heaven was located in Ephesus, so those who wanted to worship that image had

to worship in the temple in Ephesus. By contrast, the God who fills all things is everywhere and nowhere, i.e., His presence is not restricted to a specific physical location (1 Kings 8:27; Ps. 139:7-16; Acts 17:24-28). Anybody anywhere can draw near to Him, but they must draw near by seeking Him inwardly, according to His nature. Autopilot worship, even if offered in the auditorium of a building that says “church of Christ” on the sign out front, doesn't qualify.

Lifting Up the Soul

We see a very different kind of worship in Psalm 25:1. There, the NASB95 reads, “To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul.” This statement appears three times in Psalms, each time in a context of trouble and distress (Pss. 25:1; 86:4; 143:8). Surrounded by enemies that were too great for him to overcome, David lifts up his soul to God. This expression is rich in meaning. It shows that the psalmist has thrown himself entirely on God's mercy. His whole being is involved in his appeal because he has no other hope. There is nothing left in his mind but his need and his Redeemer.

Sometimes, we find it very easy to lift up our souls to God. Generally, this happens when we (or our loved ones) face great and obvious peril. However, is less fervent worship than this ever appropriate? Is there ever a time in our lives when we are not in great danger from which only God can deliver us? Is there ever an occasion of worship when it's appropriate to divert part of our attention away from Him? If we don't lift

up our souls to the Lord, completely and regularly, something isn't right.

Making Melody in the Heart

Also, we must consider the instrument upon which we are to play in worship. The familiar text of Ephesians 5:19 tells us that we must sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord. I've seen T-shirts that say the voice is the only instrument authorized by God. Actually, the heart is.

Here, too, we encounter a deep scriptural concept. The Biblical heart is not the heart of Disney movies, i.e., the seat of the emotions. Instead, we ought to think of it as the mind-and-heart, the place where intellect and emotion intersect. Thus, the heart is both enlightened by the knowledge of Christ in Ephesians 1:18 and broken by the weeping of friends in Acts 21:13. We struggle with this idea because the Western worldview falsely supposes that intellect and emotion can be separated, but their joint functioning is central to the Biblical ideal of devoted worship.

A rote recital of "Trust and Obey" does not play upon the heart. Neither does a repetitive, low-content praise song that leaves half the congregation weeping and wanting to raise their hands to Jesus. God wants all of us in worship, and part of us, even the emotional part, never can be enough.

When our whole heart is involved in our worship, it creates the most memorable worship experiences of our lives. I still remember the first time I sang "And Can It Be?" It was during a college devotional in Houston when I was going to law school. I'm not a crier, but I wept as I sang.

However, what moved me to tears was not mere emotionalism. Rather, it was my mind-and-heart response to the second verse: "You left Your Father's throne above, So free and infinite Your grace, Emptied Yourself of all but love, And bled for Adam's helpless race."

Surely the last two lines are the greatest summary of Philippians 2 in our

hymn repertoire. Christ emptied Himself, and He bled for us. What a magnificently moving thought! It leaves me helpless before His divine love. I have no trouble lifting up my soul when stirred by sentiments such as that!

Conclusion

As all of this should make clear, the responsibility for devoted worship is shared. It falls first on worship leaders, whether they are leading the congregation in singing, prayers, presiding at the Lord's table, or proclaiming the word of God. Throughout the Old Testament, we see that the spirituality of God's people generally reflects the spirituality of their leaders. Much the same thing holds true for our worship leaders today. Their preparedness, commitment, and zeal have a powerful influence over the hearts of the congregation, both for good and ill. Those who lead will do well to remember the weight of this solemn responsibility.

However, all of us also must remember the burden that lies on our own shoulders. It doesn't matter if the man up front isn't taking his role seriously. We still must take our worship seriously. It doesn't matter if the hearts of those around us already are savoring the biscuits at Cracker Barrel. During periods of worship, we must be fully and completely committed to the delights of glorifying God. **T**



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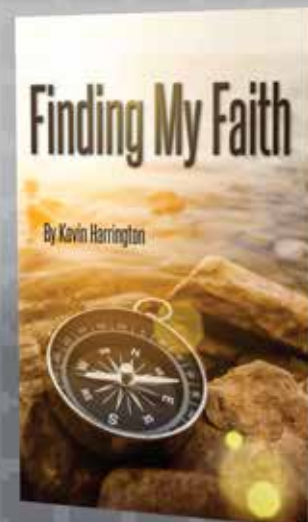
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by Bobby L. Graham



QUESTION.

A reader asks, "Does 2 Samuel 7:14 refer to Jesus Christ or Solomon?"

ANSWER.

Question:

Does 2 Samuel 7:14 refer to Jesus Christ or Solomon? This passage has to be referring to Solomon because Christ committed no sin. I have heard quotations that seem to say this is referring to Christ.

Answer:

To set forth the total quotation from God through Nathan the prophet, consider 2 Samuel 7:12-16, which says:

When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the

sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.

In reading the surrounding context, one observes that God was promising to build a house for David (v. 11). This would not be the house which David wished to build for the Lord, which was later constructed by Solomon. This would be a different kind of house, identified in the quoted passage with the word "seed," meaning his offspring, or household coming from his descendants. Jehovah then changed His focus to the house which David's son would later build. Again, in verse 16, the Lord turned back to the house which He had in mind for David's offspring: "Your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." This prophecy ultimately is fulfilled in the church of Jesus Christ.

Notice that verse 16 associates the terms "your house," "your kingdom," and "your throne" with each other, making them parallel. In verse 18, David uses "house" to mean his ruling family/house/household, later showing its permanence in rule beyond the time of David's life. The sweet psalmist's last words are recorded in chapter 23, thought by some to be a song. The words of 23:5 clarify that David's own immediate family did not measure up to the divine standard God had established due to their various sins (which are recorded in chapters 11-18). As a result, God was not then causing it to grow/increase according to His promise. He would fulfill it later.

Having discussed the identity of the house of David mentioned in 7:12-16, now we can move to identify the one about whom our questioner asked in verse 14: "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men."

This is how I reconciled the matter: The fourteenth verse proves that David's seed, in this context, includes his closer offspring (committed iniquity and then chastened), but also includes the Messiah (who did no sin and never chastened). Similar Old Testament prophecies and their New Testament fulfillments (Heb. 1:5) leave me with no doubt that the statement about committing iniquity has to refer to David's physical offspring, i.e., Solomon and his other descendants. On the other hand, I have no doubt that the statement about setting up the kingdom forever has reference to Christ, the only ultimate fulfillment. We have a case of a prophecy being fulfilled at different times or on different levels. Of course, this

means that Solomon was the beginning of its fulfillment, with Christ being the complete/ultimate realization of this prophecy. There are some other Old Testament prophecies of the same sort—that is, fulfilled on different levels.



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Inscription of Biblical Name Unearthed in Israel

by Luke Chandler

Recalling past heroes of faith, Hebrews 11:32 says, “Time will fail me if I tell of Gideon. . .” A newly discovered pottery fragment containing Gideon’s nickname, “Jerubbaal,” carries a reminder for Christians today.

In the summer of 2019, near the end of an excavation season in which several Christians participated, including myself, word spread of a discovery just down the slope from our work area. Pottery fragments inscribed with ancient letters had just been unearthed in a 3,000-year-old trash pit. The senior archaeologists packed the inscription away and sent it to a Jerusalem lab for analysis, leaving the rest of the team to imagine what the message might say.

In July 2021, after two years of research and discussion, the archaeologists publicly revealed the inscription. It spells the name “Jerubbaal,” a biblical name associated with Gideon. It is written in Proto-Canaanite (or Early Alphabetic) script, a precursor to the Hebrew alphabet, and dates to around 1150 BC, the approximate time of the latter Judges and Samuel. The discovery was made at a site called Khirbet er-Ra’i (Arabic for “Ruins of the Shepherd”), an ancient town along the border of tribal Judah and the Philistines. This is the first time that the name Jerubbaal has been attested outside of the Bible.

How did Gideon receive the name Jerubbaal? His first task from God was to destroy his father’s high place to Baal and Asherah, and to use the materials in constructing an altar for burnt offerings to the Lord.

Take your father’s bull, and the second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it and build an altar to the LORD your God on the top of the stronghold here, with stones laid in due order. Then take

the second bull and offer it as a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah that you shall cut down (Judg. 6:25-26, ESV).

Gideon was fearful, so he did the work at night under cover of darkness. When people saw the results the next morning, they soon realized Gideon was the culprit. They demanded he be executed for sacrilege but his father Joash replied, “If [Baal] is a god, let him contend for himself” (v. 31) From that time, people referred to Gideon as Jerubbaal, which translates, “Let Baal contend with him.”

Gideon went on to fabulous success in God’s name, but the nickname was used for him up through the time of Samuel and David (1 Sam 12:11; 2 Sam 11:21). Interestingly, the reference in 2 Samuel 11 replaces “-Baal” with the word “-Boshet” (shame), possibly as a euphemism to avoid using the idol’s name.

Does this “Jerubbaal” inscription refer to Gideon? While possible, we cannot be certain. The inscription was found at a site in southern Canaan, far from the Jezreel Valley, where Gideon lived and operated. There is no scriptural record to link Gideon with the region of Judah. At most, we can say it “might” refer to Gideon. It is possible they used the name with some other person or context.

What can we take from this discovery? For one, this is a fresh example of how the Bible preserves historically accurate details. Until now, the name Jerubbaal has only been found in Scripture, and only during the time of the Judges and earliest kings. This discovery confirms the name was in use during that period.

While some critics insist much of the Bible should not be considered historical, we now have another example demonstrating otherwise. It is reasonable to put faith in the Bible’s historicity.

The Jerubbaal inscription also carries a reminder for us. Many people once trusted in Baal, but Gideon’s life revealed the futility of false gods. In a similar way, the idols of money, materialism, race-based philosophies, political figures, pornography, and more surround us. Reliance on any of these in contradiction to God will be revealed as failure, distracting or misleading a person from Truth.

May we renew our trust in the incorruptible, all-powerful God, looking to the day when false hopes have faded and our faith becomes sight. 📖

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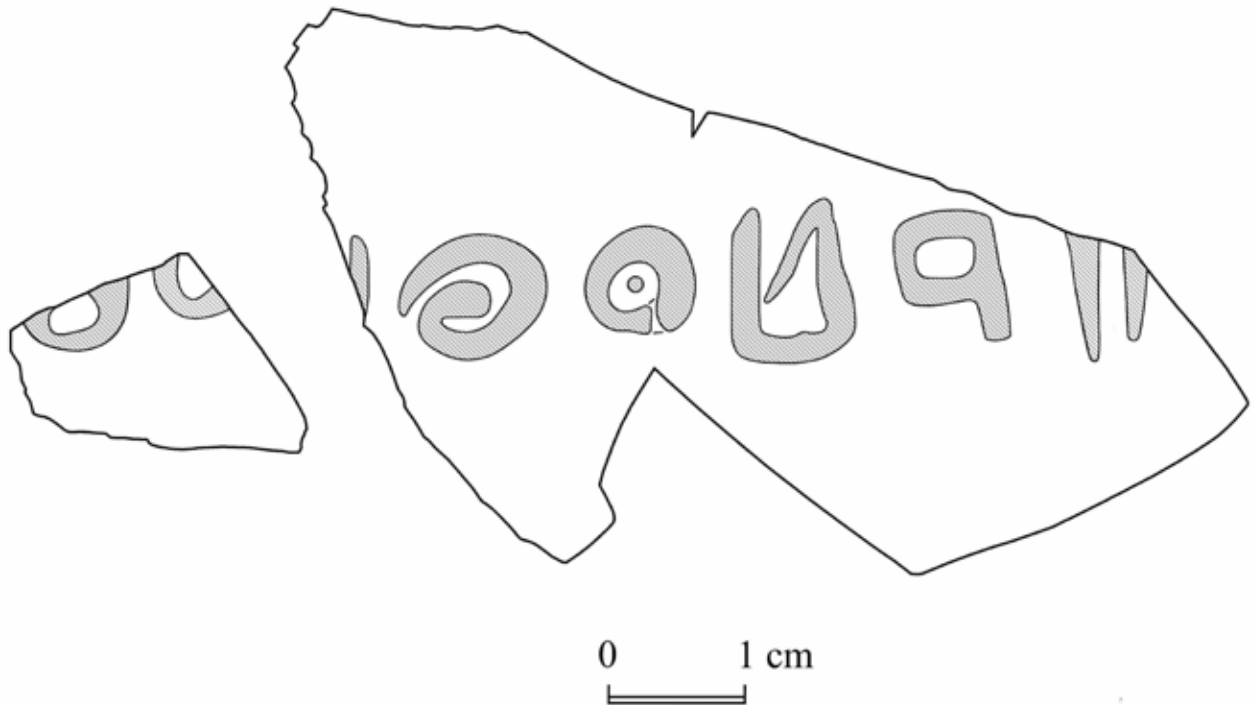


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Caption 1: Jerubbaal inscription—Photo by Dafna Gazit. Israel Antiquities Authority



Caption 2: Drawing of the sherd including the letters yod (broken at top) resh bet ayin lamed. Drawing by Olga Dubovsky.

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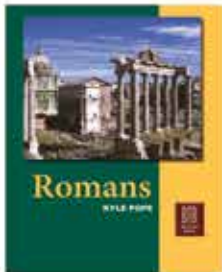
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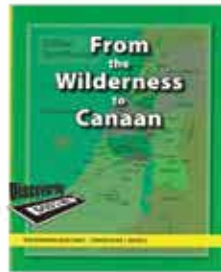
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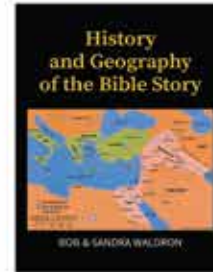
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Faith and ALS

By Matthew Bassford

When confronted with doubt and despair, may we recall the faith of Jeremiah, the weeping prophet: “O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of distress. . .” (Jer. 16:19).

Introduction

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, is a degenerative motor-neuron disease. As the disease progresses, motor neurons throughout the body die, causing the victim to lose control of his limbs, the muscles involved in speech and swallowing, and finally the diaphragm, leading to suffocation and death. Most people with ALS die within five years of their diagnosis.

ALS is also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease, named after the baseball great. Gehrig’s decline, from world-class athlete to death, took about three years. Even today, there is no FDA-approved treatment that can cure the disease or even slow its progression by more than a few months.

In July 2021, I was diagnosed with ALS.

Coming to Terms

In some ways, this was not a shock. Ninety percent of ALS cases are what is called sporadic ALS, in which the disease arises for whatever reason in someone who has no family history of it. I’m in the other 10 percent. I have a family history of ALS; both my mother and her brother, my uncle, died from the disease. Because of the way that ALS is inherited, I’ve known for years that I had a 50-50 chance of developing it myself.

The timing, however, was shocking. My mother was over seventy when she passed. My uncle was in his sixties. I, in contrast, am forty-two. Worse yet, I have

an eleven-year-old daughter and a nine-year-old son.

Consequently, I invested a lot of mental effort in trying to explain away my symptoms. The stiffness and weakness in my legs was nothing more than the result of middle age. I was falling because I wasn’t paying attention to where I was walking. Probably my new bifocals had something to do with it, too. The weakness in my right hand was carpal-tunnel syndrome. I was wearing my watch too loosely, or too tightly, or something. Any explanation, no matter how contrived, was preferable to the obvious and unthinkable.

However, as I made my way through a series of tests that eliminated the other possibilities (no Lyme disease, no manganese poisoning, no vitamin B6 deficiency, etc.), I had to start thinking about the unthinkable. During the day, I comforted myself with alternative explanations (“Parkinson’s! I have young-onset Parkinson’s!”), but I think my subconscious knew the truth, and it ruled my nights.

Depression

Every night, I began waking up at about 2:30 in the morning, filled with panic and terror. It took me hours to calm down enough to go back to sleep, and sleep deprivation quickly took its toll on my mental state during the day. I felt good for an hour or two after working out, but I spent the rest of my waking hours in an increasingly dark haze of misery.

The tipping point for me came one Monday after an existentially awful morning of work at the church building. As I prepared to make the left turn out of the Jackson Heights parking lot, I thought, “If I pulled out right in front of that dump truck in the left lane, I could kill myself.” After a moment’s thought, I revised my plan. A dump truck in the right lane would be better because then the impact would occur on the driver’s-side door, which would be more likely to be fatal.

When I realized what I was thinking, it shook me to my core. I don’t hold to the Catholic doctrine that all suicides automatically go to hell, but I still didn’t want to kill myself! I had dealt with other depressive episodes in the past on my own, but clearly I needed help with this one.

My wife and I spent the next day in the ER of the Vanderbilt Medical Center, in search of a consultation with both a neurologist (who seemed to be unavailable in middle Tennessee) and a psychiatrist. The latter prescribed a couple of antidepressants that had a powerful and immediate effect on me. I began sleeping through the night again, and with the added rest, I quickly recovered my mental footing during the day as well.

Where Is God?

As a result, even though anxious uncertainty about my condition has turned to grim certainty, I feel much better now. I’ve also found that knowing the truth, no matter how bad the news

might be, is better than not knowing and fearing the worst. My earthly future is bleak. I have no reason to expect that the inexorable march of ALS through my body will spare me any more than it spared my mother, an extraordinary woman of God though she was.

At this story, a skeptic might sneer. Where is God in all this? I've been a Bible-believing, churchgoing Christian all my adult life. I seek to love and serve others. Also, I have done my best to take care of my body; I don't drink, smoke, or use drugs. I watch my weight and exercise daily.

In short, I have done all the things that are supposed to lead to divine favor and long earthly life. Yet, what has befallen me seems like a karmic judgment appropriate for the foulest reprobate. Who sinned, I or my parents, that I should be thus afflicted? In the absence of sin, doesn't this look much more like the world of the atheist, in which the righteous and the wicked alike are subject to the whims of chance, than it does like the world of the believer, which is ruled by a merciful and omnipotent God? So, I ask again: Where is God in all of this?

God in His People

First, God is present (and powerfully so) in His people. The Facebook post in which I shared my struggle with mental illness generated the most likes and shares I have ever seen from an unpaid post on Facebook. My announcement of my diagnosis was a close second.

We Christians are a communal lot, perhaps not as much as we should be by biblical standards, but certainly much more so than nearly anyone else in our splintered, solipsistic society. The unbeliever can go through life with

hardly anyone caring much about them, but those who are devoted to the Lord will find that their fellow believers are also devoted to them.

No one will ever confuse me with Jeff Bezos when it comes to material wealth, but I have lived a life rich with love and Christian family. I would not trade my riches for his. Never has the value of this love been more obvious. I have received thousands of expressions of love and concern, from the members of my congregation, from old friends in other places, and from brethren on whom I've never laid eyes.



God in Providence and Prayer

Similarly, thousands of disciples are praying for me. They range from some of the most prominent preachers in the brotherhood and the elders of many congregations to humble saints who would not so much as make a comment in Bible class but live lives of selfless service. Because of all those who are approaching the throne on my behalf, I feel that I have maximized the potential

of prayer. Whatever it can accomplish in my case, it assuredly is accomplishing!

I believe that this already has been evident in the quality of medical care I have received. I've seen many doctors, nurses, and therapists. Uniformly, they have proven to be a tremendous blessing. Indeed, given the fact of my ALS, all of my various appointments have gone as well as they could, especially in the swift diagnosis of my disease. That has enabled me to begin treatment much earlier than normal, which may well pay dividends by giving me extra months of function. I am deeply thankful for this, and I hope that the prayers of others will continue!

Likewise, my reaction to the antidepressants I've been taking has been extraordinary. I've known many people who have received marginal or no benefit from such medications. I've never even heard of anyone experiencing as dramatic a change for the better as have I. Serendipitous brain chemistry? Maybe. An answer to prayer? Certainly!

I don't know how providence and prayer will shape the rest of my life, but I am confident that it will do so powerfully. For instance, as any Christian in my position would be, I am concerned about the fate of my children. How will they fare without me to guide them? Nonetheless, I am comforted by the conviction that God will not allow their souls to be lost because of my illness. Maybe some new medical therapy allows me to live much longer than I otherwise would. That, too, would be a mighty sign of God's mercy.

God in His Word

I also see God in the Bible's rich theology of suffering. Modern Americans

who prefer to believe that we can solve every difficulty through ingenuity and hard work often ignore this scriptural teaching. We hold in our hands the power to make ourselves happy. Of course, this Pollyanna worldview falls apart when it encounters (as it invariably does) problems that are beyond our power to solve.

The Bible falls into neither this error nor into the error of promising that the lives of the faithful will be prosperous and painless. Indeed, much of the Old Testament wisdom literature, particularly the books of Job, Psalms, and Ecclesiastes, is preoccupied with the problem of righteous suffering. Arguably, this preoccupation is even more pronounced in the New Testament. Jesus Himself was righteous, even sinless, yet He suffered to the point of death. All of His apostles, as different as they were in other ways, were united in their suffering for His sake.

In fact, early Christians would have scoffed at the notion that their faith should protect them from earthly harm. They knew full well that they were promised every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, not every earthly one. Their faith might well expose them to suffering that they otherwise could have avoided.

God in Serving Him

The benefit of Christianity does not lie in protection from suffering. It lies in the uniqueness of suffering as a Christian. Although God does not promise protection from every evil, He guarantees us strength and grace to endure it. When we suffer as Christians, our suffering is meaningful. To paraphrase Jesus in John 9:3, it was neither I nor my parents who sinned, but that God's works might be displayed in me—if I so choose.

For us, every trial is a choice, and the greater the trial, the greater the choice. I can crumple under the weight of hardship, or I can seek the Lord and glorify Him. Indeed, I believe God allows the faithful to suffer severely in order to make the latter choice possible. My

diagnosis already has taught me things I would have learned in no other way, and when I share those things with others, I help them and honor Him.

I intend to do so for as long as I am able. Frontotemporal dementia, which was associated with my mother's ALS, may show up to wreck me also. More people with ALS lose their ability to speak as the disease progresses, so my days in the pulpit are numbered.

However, modern assistive technology, which is pretty amazing these days, will allow me to "type" by tracking my eye movements even after I lose control of every other muscle. If my life and my mind remain with me, I will be able to serve and edify others. If I lose either, I hope that others will regard it as my final triumph and a final admission of defeat by Satan.

God in His Promises

Naturally, this is not the only hope I cherish. Death and the devil can destroy my earthly body, as they will destroy everyone's earthly body, until their work is halted by the Lord's return. However, they cannot destroy my soul unless I let them. If I curse God and die, I will die indeed. If I remain faithful to Him, He will remain faithful to me and perform what He has promised. 3000 years from now, neither I nor anyone else who stayed true to Christ will have cause to regret that decision.

Nor is my hope convenient or unfounded. It rests on the resurrection of Jesus Christ, in whose likeness I too will rise. If Christ is not risen, I'm in a world of hurt, but it also is true that if Christ is not risen, no good explanation exists for the bizarre events surrounding the origin of Christianity. Even a skeptical reading of the first-century accounts yields sufficient proof for the resurrection, and I am comforted daily by this thought.

Additionally, if Christ is risen, He also is Lord and Savior. When I must give an account of the deeds done in the body, He will speak on my behalf. I need not

justify myself because He will justify me. So often, I talk with Christians who worry about whether they have been "good enough" to inherit eternal life. I know that I'm not good enough, but I also know that Christ is.

Conclusion

Where is God in all this? God is everywhere in it. He is in the thousands of brothers and sisters who love me. He is in the powerful answers to their prayers. The truth about existence in this fallen world is preserved for me in His gospel of suffering and love. He assures me that even the greatest trials will allow me to live a meaningful life that glorifies Him. Finally, my hope of eternal life rests entirely in God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. I have every reason to rely on His word. Where is God in all this? In disaster, He is all that makes life worth living. ■



Matthew Bassford

Matt has worked with the Jackson Heights congregation in Columbia, TN, for almost four years. He and his wife, Lauren, have two children. His website is hisexcellentword.blogspot.com. He can be reached at mandlbassford@gmail.com.

Are We Filled with the Spirit?

By Howard Whittlesey

Ponder Paul's admonition, "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:18-19).

Introduction

God's inspiration of the apostle Paul was wondrous indeed. A diligent study of his writings will lead one to appreciate his organization as he shared God's wisdom. Among the plethora of examples, none provides more proof than Paul's instruction to the Ephesian congregation in chapter 5 of his epistle thereto. Here, it's as simple as "one, two, three."

In verse 18, Paul instructs the entire congregation as to the alternative to being drunk with wine. He said, "but be filled with the Spirit." "But" introduces the alternative. This takes the next three verses to gather all of its content. Each verse supplies an actualization of being filled with the Spirit.

One

Verse 19 says, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." You've heard untold numbers of Christians say, "Oh, I don't sing; I can't carry a tune in a bucket." Right? Supposedly, this serves to excuse one from actualizing the instruction. What do you find in this verse that even hints at such an excuse, *or* dismissal from the responsibility? That child of God sounds sort of like the one-talent man, does he not? Might the Lord's reaction to the non-singer be at all similar to that of the one-talent man?

The point of the instruction is to "sing with the spirit and with the understanding also" (1 Cor. 14:15). The thrust of each Christian's participation is to instruct,

inform, and partake in such a way as to bring about an inseparable collective bond of the congregation. Each member does everything they do *together—unto unity*. It's not up to the accomplished musicians only. Everyone does what it takes to attain unto a oneness that is decisively evident. Each member is indescribably encouraged and empowered. The preacher is thereby motivated to do his work effectively. It defies human comprehension, and, best of all, it glorifies God.

Two

Verse 20 says, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul began 1 Corinthians 14:15 by saying, "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also." So now, we understand just what to pray for—"all things." Someone says, "You mean—ALL things—like good *and* bad—small, medium, and large?" You name it—you betcha! Whatever confronts us—or eludes us—any time, any day, is orchestrated (or allowed) by the love of God. Does the potter do only things that are convenient to his clay? Does he not cut, peal, break, even destroy and start all over again? The music composer does similarly until he has a finished product which he feels is fit for presentation. Thus, as one prays, he can acknowledge that all the events of a day are in place to make him fit for the eternal kingdom with the Master Potter. Even trials like those that beset Job bring blessings for those who persevere in faith. Is that not thankworthy by every last one of us who is loved beyond measure?

Three

Paul gives us another instruction in verse 21: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Brother Charlie Blue asks, "For what do I need to submit to any of the members?" Good question! Answer: Charlie, are you self-sufficient? Can you do everything that needs to be done with (and for) the congregation? Can you do it whenever, wherever, and for whomever it is needed? Charlie says, "Well, of course not." Such is true of every member, including you and me. The congregation is a team. The team members play different roles ("positions") based on their expertise and talents—"every man according to his several ability" (Matt. 25:15). The MVP has every team member to thank for all that made it possible to receive his award and recognition. (Let's not forget to acknowledge our "Coach"—our Lord.) So, Charlie Blue, here's the story. You submit to the one from whom you need help, information, or service. Then Sam Hill submits to you for the same reason. Thus, the congregation can amass finished products that complete jobs, missions, and tasks, all of which reflect divine light and love right back to God who gave it.

Let's observe one last element of this momentous teaching of the great apostle. Have you noticed the "ing" endings in each of our verses (19-21)? The "ing" makes the verb progressive, which means that we must keep on doing what we're doing. Remember the potter? He kept on doing and re-doing unto a precision that was impeccable. Whoa! When does the church member ever hear *that* word


regarding the interaction with other members in the above admonitions? This writer would ask, “Why not?” Should we not do all that we do with the spirit and with the understanding? Would increased spirituality and understanding not upgrade the frequency and/or quality of our efforts? Do you remember what church it was that was told, “Thou hast left thy first love”? It was Ephesus. In Revelation 2:5, Jesus, through the pen of John, demanded of the Ephesians, “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works” Their first love likely incorporated diligence, graciousness, joy, and—yes, even pleasure.

Conclusion

So, God’s inspiration and Paul’s writings are still wondrous and demand diligence and steadfastness unto eternity.

Is your singing, praying, and your submitting progressive and continuous? By the way, if you have to carry your “tune in a bucket,” carry it with love and thanksgiving, with or without a lid. What would be wrong with the quality of your efforts becoming increasingly impeccable? How would you rate God’s provision for your needs? Before you answer that question, check out 1 Corinthians 4:7.


Remember your “first works” right after your wedding? Were they not rather refreshing, joyous, and qualitative? If your singing, praying, and submitting are impeccable, continue repeat—“ing.” If one or all need improvement, keep work—“ing.”

This writer’s cub scout pack—way back in childhood—chanted this saying: “Good, better, best—Never let it rest—until your good is better and your better is best.” Brethren, do thou likewise. 



Howard Whittlesey

Howard is a retired High School Choir Director of 39 years. The last thirty-two of those were at North Miami H.S. in Denver, IN. He and his wife, Colleen, have four children. He can be reached at howcolwhit@aol.com.




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A Special Messenger Sent by God

By Shane Carrington

Saints today share much in common with first century disciples, significant differences exist. While we do not possess the miraculous gifts of revelation and confirmation, we have something better: the full and final message of salvation!

Introduction

God has called and sent many messengers through the ages: angels, prophets in both testaments, the apostles (defined as “ones sent”), and Jesus.

Of John the baptizer, the Lord said, “Behold, I am sending My messenger, and he will clear a way before Me” (Mal. 3:1a; cf. Matt. 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27). He was God’s special messenger preparing the way for the coming of Jesus!

Concerning Paul, Jesus said, “He is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles” (Acts 9:15). Regardless of the specific focus of their labors, this general statement applies to all apostles. Jesus chose the original apostles: “These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them. . .” (Matt. 10:1-5). Subsequently, He chose Matthias as Judas’s replacement: “And they prayed and said, ‘You, Lord. . . show which one of these two You have chosen to occupy this ministry and apostleship’” (Acts 1:24-26). Then He chose Paul: “. . . last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles. . .” (1 Cor. 15:8-9).

Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and

Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him. These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them. . . (Matt. 10:1-5).

And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles (Acts 1:24-26).

. . . and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God (1 Cor. 15:8-9).

That is elite company. These special messengers sent by God—angels, prophets, apostles, Jesus—were foundational in God’s work of redemption. As the church, we “are fellow citizens with the saints, and are

of God’s household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone” (Eph. 2:19-20). Their work undergirds our faith and hope. Paul spoke of “the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to mankind” which “has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit” (Eph. 3:4-5). They “wrote” so that “when you read you can understand. . .” (Eph. 3:3-4). It is in this special sense that the apostles are referred to as “ambassadors of Christ” (2 Cor. 5:20).

To men such as these, Jesus promised inspiration. “When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth.. (John 16:13; Acts 1:5-8). This equipped them to speak and write God’s word completely and accurately.



Inspiration also equipped them when they were put on trial:

But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given you in that hour. For it is not you who are speaking, but it is the Spirit of your Father who is speaking in you (Matt. 10:19-20).

Those were special times where God equipped select men with special powers for special purposes. However, what about someone today who exclaims, “God directly called and sent me as His special messenger!”? While God providentially blesses all disciples with abilities and responsibilities, not any of us are His special messengers, like the apostles or prophets, for not any of us are inspired or miraculously led by the Holy Spirit. Note differences between apostles and prophets—and believers today:

The Apostles and Prophets

God commissioned a few of them for a limited time. There were few apostles in the sense of the original twelve, plus Matthias, plus Paul. This special call was for only a few men. God only gave “some” to be apostles and prophets (Eph. 4:11-12), but all disciples are to be soul-winners (Matt. 28:18-20).

God granted special powers for a limited period, lasting until the inspired word was completely made known (1 Cor. 13:5-13). Apostles and prophets ceased toward the end of the first century. No one today possesses such powers.

God directly addressed them through the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts; etc.). He speaks to us through the written word (see Eph. 3:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 4:6; Heb. 10:15-17; Rev. 2 & 3).

God empowered them to teach and preach without studying (Matt. 10:19-20, etc.). Disciples today must study the first century writings of the apostles and prophets to know what to say and how to say it: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

As H. B. Charles, Jr. said, “A passion to preach without a burden to study is a desire to perform.”

Disciples Today

All disciples are commissioned to preach Jesus, win souls (Acts 8:4), and edify their brethren (Eph. 4:15-16). The writings of the apostles and prophets equip us unto this work. For us to assume a similar commission implies a failure by the apostles and prophets to fulfill God’s purpose through them (Matt. 19:28; John 20:23; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Arrogant pride concludes, “God knew no one could do this like me.” Misguided priorities like this must give way to a spirit of humility (Phil. 1:15-18).

Everyone desires being a difference-maker. Although the one-talent man fell short, it was not because he lacked ability. Lacking the skill to manage two or five talents made him no less important. What was his problem? He didn’t use the ability he possessed (Matt. 25:14-30). Whatever our abilities, may we employ them as good stewards in God’s kingdom—and grow in using those talents. Whatever responsibilities God invests in us (being a parent, preacher, personal worker, etc.), let us be faithful to God who blesses us with such opportunities. Get busy. Stay busy. Let’s make what difference we can, whether we are publicly known or act privately (Acts 20:20).

Everyone likes feeling important, being special—a difference-maker! However, Jesus defines true importance as child-like humility (Matt. 18:1-4), even if that means providing “just a cup of cold water” (Matt. 10:42). 📖



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Shane has worked with the Southside church of Christ in Sulphur Springs, TX, for twenty-three years. He and his wife, Kelly, have two daughters. The church website is churchofchristss.com. He can be reached at bshanec@mac.com.

Will Jesus Really Come Again? Debate on the AD 70 Doctrine

Bruce Reeves

Holger Neubauer

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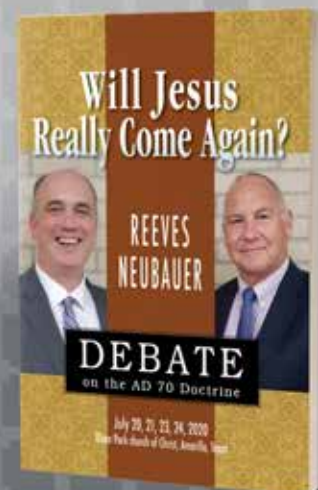
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Leaders Are Teachers

By Keith Hamilton

A top priority of outstanding leaders is developing all their people. The apostle Paul said, “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2).

Introduction

At one point, our company considered contracting with a consulting group to develop and deliver a class about “Coaching.” Our corporate leaders asked me to sit in and evaluate the pilot class with some of our employees. During the class, the teacher asked, “When does a coach engage in coaching?” After listening to the responses from some students, the teacher turned to me and asked the same question. I said, “All the time.” I explained, “Anytime a coach is in the presence of those with whom he works, he is coaching/teaching. At practice, during the game, on the bus to the game, in one-on-one situations. A good coach is always coaching and teaching.”

I have been fortunate to spend time with, talk to, and observe successful leaders. One thing stood out about each of them: first and foremost, they were teachers (i.e., coaches). It did not matter what organization: sports, military, business, etc. I heard the same thing repeatedly from each of them. The characteristics possessed by a successful leader can be transferred to any organization and any situation.

In recent years, people are rediscovering that the Bible is a great source for learning about “Leadership.” This is especially true regarding the characteristic of the leader as a teacher (i.e., coach).

Jesus Is the Greatest Teacher

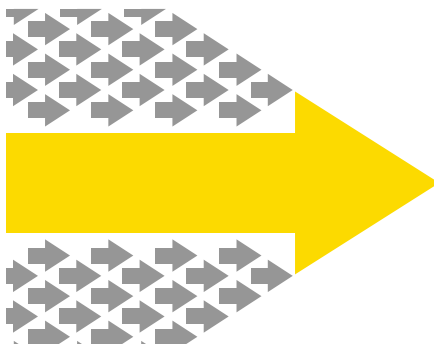
Our Lord is the greatest Leader and Teacher. When one examines the life of Christ, He was always teaching, even at the age of twelve, in His discussion with the religious leaders in the temple (Luke 2:46-47). His work at teaching others was tireless. Yes, Jesus delivered lessons to large groups of folks—from the mountain where He delivered the beatitudes (Matt. 5-7), to the occasion when He spoke from a boat to the multitude who were assembled on the shore (Matt. 13:2ff). Although the “Rabbi” of Nazareth was constantly pursued by large crowds, He also taught small groups, including His closest disciples. He took the time to teach individuals. He met at night with Nicodemus, a revered and aged member of the Sanhedrin (John 3:1 ff). Seated beside a well in Samaria, He taught a solitary woman from a nearby city (John 4:7 ff). Regardless of the time, place, or size of His audience, Jesus taught. The characteristic of being a “Christian leader” has been pressed upon all disciples, especially regarding the issue

of teaching (coaching) others. In giving the Great Commission, Jesus charged the disciples to “go and teach” (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). We must also follow our Lord’s example and be teachers. Each of us should lead others to Him.

Great Leaders Teach Everyone

A top priority of outstanding leaders is developing all their people. Great leaders know how to build and develop teams. In doing so, they know that a strong team does not happen if a teacher/coach only focuses on developing a few of their “pets.” Once I sat down and discussed coaching philosophy with Raymond Berry, a former NFL great and the first head coach to take the New England Patriots to a Super Bowl. In our discussion, I said the greatest example of leadership was when Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. He later responded by saying, “As a player and coach, I have learned there are two kinds of coaches. There are coaches who look at their players and say, ‘What can you do for me?’ Then there are coaches who look at their players and say, ‘What can I do for you?’ I have always tried to be the coach who asked what I could do for each of the players on our team.” Coach Berry understood that a successful leader or coach develops everyone he works with.

Although Jesus sometimes would take a couple of His disciples aside, He taught them all. The Lord wanted each of His disciples to be their best, and He provided them all with the information they needed to achieve that end. The Comforter would guide them all so that



they would receive “all truth” (John 14:26; 16:13). Elders who lead the local flock are doing a great work when they ensure every member is receiving the spiritual nutrition that is necessary for them to grow and develop (Acts 20:28).

Great Organizations Are Teaching Organizations

The church that Jesus built (Matt. 16:18) was later described by the apostle Paul as “the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). The “manifold wisdom of God” is made known unto the world through the church (Eph. 3:10). Its work centers on (1) teaching the lost so that they might be saved, and (2) teaching the saved so that they might be edified/built up (Eph. 4:11-12). Therefore, the church is a learning and teaching organization. This is where leadership within a local congregation is key. What are the elders and preacher(s) doing to develop a love for learning and teaching within the heart of each member of the congregation?

I am impressed with the system for developing leaders used at West Point Military Academy. In their second year, each sophomore cadet has assigned to them a freshman. They are responsible for training that individual. Having each cadet learn some subject and then be responsible for teaching this material to an underclassman is how West Point develops leaders. Cadets first learn how to teach/lead one person before they are given additional leadership responsibilities.

I have often thought, “What if a local congregation could do the same with the members?” Instead of the preacher, elders, or Bible class teachers doing all the instructing, everyone grew so that (in some capacity) they could teach others. Imagine how tremendous it would be if the elders could call upon many within the congregation to take new converts under their wings and guide them through a study of the Bible. Would that not be an excellent way for the church to develop its future leaders?

Obviously, the first-century church was a dynamic teaching organization. When disciples were scattered by persecution, they “went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4). This realization may require a changing of our mindset. Should not elders understand they are leaders of leaders? Should not preachers and teachers see their role as that of teachers of teachers (2 Tim. 2:2)? What if we could get everyone involved and onboard with leading others to Christ by engaging them in the learning and teaching process?

Leaders Welcome Change

One characteristic of outstanding leaders is that they are always curious. They are always learning. They want to know more. They are always growing and, therefore, changing. Please note that this is not “change” in the sense of drifting from the divine pattern, but change in the sense of achieving greater maturity and making more consistent application of truth to our lives.

So, learning is not a “goal” or an “outcome,” but rather a process or a journey. For leaders, life is a journey. They invite others to join them and learn with them. In much the same way, our Lord joined Himself with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and “expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27). As we learn and grow, we change. The spiritually mature Christian is one who changes over time as he grows in his knowledge. He also grows (i.e., changes or matures) in his ability to lead others. Therefore, let us be about the business of leading others to Christ—learning, growing, changing, leading others by teaching. ■



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“The Process” and the Christian’s Journey

By Dennis Abernathy

Paul’s frequent use of athletic imagery reminds us of important life-lessons that can be taught through sports. Let’s consider Nick Saban’s approach toward coaching and our approach toward living.

Introduction

Coach Nick Saban is all about what he calls, “The Process.” With seven National Championships (including six at Alabama), Saban has solidified his coaching acumen. For one whose name is synonymous with winning, Saban doesn’t place all the emphasis upon winning. Instead, he tells his assistant coaches and players to focus on “The Process.” He says, “Don’t think about winning the SEC Championship. Don’t think about the national championship. Think about what you need to do in this drill, on this play, in this moment. That’s the process; Let us think about what we can do today, the task at hand.” That is a great perspective! When you consider that in the winner-takes-all fields like sports, results are all that matter: You either win or you lose; there are no moral victories or consolation prizes; if you don’t win, you don’t coach, at least for long! So, what spiritual lessons can we draw from Saban’s example?

A good working definition of “process” is, “The sequence of interdependent and linked procedures which at every stage uses resources until the goal or end result is reached.” That also defines the life of a successful Christian. We must put into practice the resources God has provided for us until we reach our heavenly home.

Life is a time of preparation, a methodical journey, a marathon race! While players and coaches are concerned about being successful at the game of football, we need to be concerned about being successful at the game of life! While

commitment to “The Process” has made Alabama a great football team, Christians must manifest similar commitment to God. This steady march actually is a “daily grind.” We must appreciate the journey—with its trials and tribulations, and its successes and failures—if we hope to reach our heavenly goal.

Consider several relevant quotes from coach Saban: “The belief that the willingness to prepare on a methodical, daily basis is the key to success.” “Many focus on the result, and not the consistent preparation that is necessary to achieve the result, and thus are doomed to disappointment.” Undoubtedly, there are many who want to go to heaven, but they don’t want to make the preparation necessary to get there. Their eyes are not on the goal; they do not walk by faith, but rather by sight (cf. 2 Cor. 5:7). From start to finish, the Christian life is a journey of faith (Rom. 1:16-17). This journey is a process that enables us to grow as we press toward our goal. Along the way, faithful Christians undergo personal and spiritual development. That is where preparation comes in! It does little good to dream of heaven, but not take the steps necessary to achieve that goal. Consider some important lessons:

Life Is Inherently Complex

Like sports, life is inherently complex. Many variables affect our lives, and some are not within our control. In the game of football, there are too many plays, statistics, and countermoves for a player to remember them all. To control them all to perfection would be sheer madness.

It is impossible to read and execute every play to perfection over an entire game. Therefore, excellence is a matter of steps, i.e., excelling at the first thing, then the second, and then the next. “The Process” is about staying in the present, and laying siege to the obstacle in front of you. It’s about not getting distracted by all the clutter that will come your way.

Isn’t that a good description of the Christian life? We will never do everything perfectly, nor control everything that goes on around us. Yet, we can live our lives step by step, doing what is right, and seeking to control the present moment, always striving for perfection. This could be defined as a “well-orchestrated life.” If we focus on all the clutter going on around us in the world, which we cannot control, we lose our focus and risk failure. Jesus said, “Don’t worry about tomorrow, tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matt. 6:34). Therefore, stay focused!

It’s the Little Things that Count

Even while winning a game, often by a big margin, coach Saban can still be seen scowling on the sidelines. If you didn’t know better, you’d think he was coaching the losing team. Why is he upset? As he told ESPN, “I know I get criticized for that. Everybody says, ‘He just won by thirty-one! What’s he complaining about?’ However, it goes back to the inner scoreboard versus the outer scoreboard. Which one is more important? If you’re going to accomplish your goals, it’s always the inner scoreboard.”

It's the little things that get him fuming. Maybe someone didn't execute the assigned play, or someone was in the wrong position, or the team didn't give enough effort. You'd think that such errors would be forgiven if the team wins, but not for coach Saban. His question to his players is always, "How good do you want to be?"

How good of a Christian do you want to be? As Booker T. Washington said, "Success in life is founded upon attention to the small things rather than the large things." Vincent Van Gogh reportedly said, "Great things are done by a series of small things brought together." That is true in sports, as individuals, and as a team. It is also true with the Christian and the church. Small things always snowball into big things. That is why Saban always strives to make sure his players do the little things right. Focus on the fundamentals, if you please!

The inspired apostle Paul said, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9; 1 Cor. 5:6). In other words, a small amount of false doctrine will corrupt the whole of Christianity. What coach Saban is saying is, "When you are winning by a big margin, what outwardly might appear to be unimportant (the little things) has major consequences." Yes, the outer scoreboard is what most people notice and praise, but it is the inner scoreboard that really reflects what we've done right!

It is great to have goals! Yet, in order to reach those goals, we must focus on the specific steps necessary to achieve them, which includes a lot of little things, otherwise we will never get there! We must run by the rules to win the race.

Adversity Is Your Friend

Nick Saban frequently quotes the first line of the book *The Road Less Traveled* by M. Scott Peck: "Life is difficult!" We know this is true, and not only in sports. Every person faces adversity along the



Statue of Coach Nick Saban located just outside the University of Alabama football stadium in Tuscaloosa.

journey of life. While having to overcome adversity isn't all that pleasant. As coach Saban says, "Achievements in the face of adversity are what make achievements even more worthwhile."

In 1 Corinthians 9:24, Paul uses an athletic illustration. As successful athletes master their desires and make great sacrifices for the sake of winning, so also must the Christian. Athletics were popular in the first-century Greco-Roman world. They held regular competitions. Spectators and fans were enthusiastic. Champion athletes toured cities and towns, receiving accolades. Monuments were erected in their honor. Victors' names became familiar in every household. In antiquity, young men sought athletic glory, just as many now dream of playing college and professional football, or some other sport. Purpose, discipline, and determination must characterize a successful and great

athlete. There is no easy way to success; it is always the product of toil and work. Nothing of consequence is ever achieved without discipline. Championship football players do not become such without sweat!

The Christian's life is beset with difficulties. Jesus said, "Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matt. 7:14). In His discussion of the parable of the closed door, Jesus said, "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able" (Luke 13:24). The Greek term for "strive" is the source of the English words "agonize" and "anguish." The road Christians travel is filled with adversity, difficulties, struggles, and even persecutions. Obviously, much effort is required to enter heaven.

Therefore, the need for mental toughness and discipline is paramount. As we run the race of life, we must block out all the clutter of the world and focus on the work at hand. Such is not always an appealing and comfortable decision. Life is made up of choices and decisions. I will quote coach Saban again from a speech where he remarked, "Most people have something every day that they don't want to do, but they know they should, so they do it (or the opposite). Likewise, most people have something every day that they know they should not do, and they choose not to (or the opposite). It's these daily choices that are influenced by our discipline and mental toughness, in terms of having the strength to make the right ones."

Alabama football players who are not willing to set their eyes on the goal and do whatever is necessary to do their job in order to achieve that goal rarely hang around for very long. The same is true for the Christian. Are you willing to give your all to the Lord (Matt. 6:33; Rom. 12:1-2; Col. 3:1-2)? We have a goal. Let us work to achieve it.

Keep Moving Forward and Trust the Process.

In sports, the process gives players something they need to do. This involves paying attention to details, being in the right place at the right time, playing your position, etc. It keeps players from becoming complacent. It is geared to long-term thinking. Football is about the individual player, but it is also a team sport. Both must adhere to the process. As Bill Belichick (Saban's former mentor) said, "Do your job!" In football, it is always about putting forth the effort, fixing things that hinder, and moving forward. The same is true for the Christian as we journey toward heaven.

The apostle Paul said, "One thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead. I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14). A Christian views growth as a lifelong process, so he has a long-haul attitude and mindset, and never has the attitude that says, "I've arrived." Instead, he keeps moving ahead! In moving ahead, he trusts in God's process-obeying His commands—fixing and correcting the things that need to be fixed—exercising the discipline necessary, as he presses on toward maturity and the end of the race.

Paul had been converted some twenty years before he wrote these lines to the Philippians, and yet he did not say that he had arrived. He continued to "press on." Although he had been at it for some twenty-five years, the aged apostle didn't view himself as having attained the goal. So he pressed on, as a runner stretches toward the finish line!

Paul said he was "forgetting those things that are behind." Again, the picture is of a runner who does not make the mistake of looking over his shoulder—his eyes are fixed on the finish line! The past must not control us. In football, if you lose a game, you move on. Alabama won three national championships, and in all three seasons they lost a game—but they

moved ahead! They didn't look back and dwell on the loss!

Think of a car's rear-view mirror. You don't drive by looking in the mirror. You drive by looking ahead out of the windshield. While it is helpful to take occasional glances in your mirror and use the information to decide how to drive safely in the present and the future, if you spend too much time looking in your mirror, you'll probably crash because you're not paying attention to the present. Just so, all of those national championships in the past do not earn any in the present and in the future unless they continue to move on. Paul wrote, "Let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart" (Gal. 6:9). Get the point?

Conclusion

I think it is interesting that Nick Saban's success as a head coach really comes down to a life philosophy. When most people think of "The Process," as it relates to coach Nick Saban, they picture him on the practice field, voice raised, coaching hard, with an intensity in his eyes. When you actually think about what "The Process" is, you find it goes well beyond football. It's actually a philosophy rooted in sound psychological advice. Regardless of our profession or situation, this approach can be life-changing if adhered to properly. ■

Sources

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Dennis Abernathy

Dennis has preached for the White Oak church of Christ in White Oak, TX, for thirty-three years. He and his wife, Kay, have three daughters and six grandchildren. He can be reached at dennis.abernathy845@gmail.com.

ALASKA

ANCHORAGE

Rose St. church of Christ

3124 Rose St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: David Webb (907) 350-8358

ALABAMA

BIRMINGHAM

Pine Ln. church of Christ

3955 Pine Ln. Bessemer, AL
(N. side of Exit #6 at 1459)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:15 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: David Deason (205) 425-2352

Vestavia Hills church of Christ

2325 Old Columbiana Rd. (near I-65 & Hwy. 31)
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelists: Doy Moyer & Zack Lee
(205) 822-0018 or 822-0082

FLORENCE

College View church of Christ

851 N. Pine St. (Next to University Campus)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:15 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Kenny Moore (256) 766-0403

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West Mobile church of Christ

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Worship: 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(251) 342-4144 or 342-2041
Evangelist: Ken Sils (365) 307-8048

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(formerly Southeast)
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Wed. Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.
Contacts: Kirk Moore (334) 546-3788

Eastbrook church of Christ

650 Coliseum Blvd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6 p.m.
Contacts: Brian Moore (334) 279-1077
Charles Martin: (334) 283-2983

PARRISH

McArthur Heights church of Christ

5082 Hwy. 269
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6:30 p.m.
(205) 686-5978 or 686-5620

SCOTTSBORO

Eastside church of Christ

John T. Reid Pkwy. | (Hwy. 72, 2 mi. E. of Hwy. 35)
Sun. Worship: 9 a.m. | Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship:
10:30 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: Summer 7 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: Winter 6 p.m.
Evangelist: Aaron Andrews
(256) 574-1603 or 575-2664

ARKANSAS

CONWAY

Eastside church of Christ

1540 E. Oak St. 72302
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
conwaychurchofchrist.org

Hwy 65 church of Christ

271 Hwy 65N
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Bruce Reeves
Bldg: (501) 336-0052

Prince St. church of Christ

2655 Prince St., 72034
Sun. Worship: 9 a.m. | Bible class 9:50 a.m. | Worship & Lord's
Supper: 10:40 a.m.
Wed. Bible Class 7 p.m.
(501) 450-8640

FORT SMITH

South 46th St. church of Christ

2323 South 46th St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: John Hagenbuch
Bldg: (479) 782-0588 | churchofchristfortsmith.com

HARRISON

Capps Rd. church of Christ

407 Bella Vista Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:15 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Norman E. Sewell
cappsroad.org
870-741-9104 or 870-741-5151

JONESBORO

StoneRidge church of Christ

514 Airport Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Dick Blackford (rib612@aol.com) (870) 933-9134

LITTLE ROCK

Church of Christ

7115 West 65th St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Don McClain, Res. (501) 847-6677
Study (501) 586-1062

MARVELL

Marvell church of Christ

Hwy 49 | Marvell, AR 72366
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6 p.m.
(870) 714-1452 or (870) 338-1833

PINE BLUFF

Hwy 79 S church of Christ

4341 S Camden Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Clarence W. Sell (870) 879-2097

POCAHONTAS

Westside church of Christ

3644 Hwy 90 West | P.O. Box 43
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:45 a.m.
Afternoon 1 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6:30 p.m.

TEXARKANA

Church of Christ

2301 Franklin Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:15 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Bryan Garlock

WALDRON

Westside church of Christ

1232 State Hwy 248
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Evangelist: James Strickland (strick93124@gmail.com) (479)
299-4763

ARIZONA

GLENDALE

Church of Christ

6801 N. 60th Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:40 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Chance Ruffino

TUCSON

Church of Christ

145 N. Country Club Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Hugh Delong
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Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(562) 866-5615
roseavenue.org

FOLSOM

Church of Christ

900 E. Natomas St. | P.O. Box 492
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. | Bible
Study: 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: David Posey
(530) 676-9514 or (916) 608-4866 | folsomchurch.com

LONG BEACH

Church of Christ

3433 Studebaker Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:50 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
JP Flores (562) 420-2363
Mark Reeves (562) 377-1674
JustChristians.org

OCEANSIDE-VISTA

Church of Christ

2020 Sunset Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(760) 940-8003

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FORT COLLINS

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126 West Harvard St. | Suite 6
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Richie Thetford
poudrevalleychurchofchrist.org

MONTROSE

San Juan church of Christ

1414 Hawk Parkway, Unit C
Sun. Worship: 11 a.m. | Bible Study: 2 p.m. & 1:30 p.m.
(970) 249-8116
sanjuanchurchofchrist.org

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Lighthouse church of Christ

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Sun. Worship: 9:30 a.m. | Bible Class: 10:45 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(302) 644-7379

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South Walton church of Christ

64 Casting Lake Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(850) 622-3817 | southwaltonchurchofchrist.com

FORT LAUDERDALE

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Pompano Plaza Shopping Center
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Wed. 7:30 p.m.
(954) 822-1974 | northsideflauderdale.com

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Church of Christ

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Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m.
(407) 349-9998

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Key Largo church of Christ

100695 N. Overseas Hwy.
33037 m. 100.7 on US 1
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Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: William LeDent (305) 451-1194

MARY ESTHER

Church of Christ

6 Ln. Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Joey Rankin (850) 244-9222

MIAMI

Church of Christ

Eglise du Christ de Miami
8343 NE 3rd Court
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Junot Joseph (305) 244-8295

Flagler Grove church of Christ

(Nearest to Airport), 500 N.W. 53rd Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: John Butterick (305) 634-5924

Church of Christ

12780 Quail Roost Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Clark Pace
(305) 233-9590 or (954) 430-1437

OCALA

Anthony church of Christ

9778 N.E. Jacksonville Rd. | Anthony, FL 32617
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Greg Cruz (352) 629-5505
anthonycrof.com

ChurchDirectory

ORLANDO

Azalea Park church of Christ

6800 Lake Underhill Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(407) 277-7931

Church of Christ at S. Bumby

3940 S. Bumby Ave.
Sun. Worship: 9 a.m. | Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship w/
communion 10:55 a.m. (No Evening Service)
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Ken Chapman & Greg Kline
Office: (407) 851-8031

Pine Hills church of Christ

890 Hastings St.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Sun. Worship: 11 a.m.
Sun. Evening Worship: 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(407) 293-2851 or (407) 290-8650

PALMETTO

Palmetto church of Christ

1575 14th Ave. W.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
palmettochurchofchrist.com
(941) 722-1307

PANAMA CITY BEACH

Beach church of Christ

8910 Front Beach Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(850) 234-2521

SEFFNER

Church of Christ

621 E. Wheeler Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:50 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Bobby Witherington (813) 684-1297
seffnercoc.org

GEORGIA

CENTERVILLE

Centerville church of Christ

250 Collins Ave. (Near Robins AFB)
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: J. Wiley Adams (478) 922-1158

COLUMBUS

River City church of Christ

3900 River Rd. | Columbus GA 31904
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelists Jeff McCrary & Bo Couchman
(205) 451-9028 | rivercitychurchofchrist.com
backtothebible@rivercitychurchofchrist.com

CONYERS

Rockdale church of Christ

East Metro Atlanta, 705 Smyrna Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Building (770) 929-3973

PINE MTN. VALLEY

Church of Christ

Route 116 (near Galloway Gardens)
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Tommy W. Thomas
(706) 628-5117 or 628-5229 | pmvchurch.com

SAVANNAH

Coastal church of Christ

Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
(912) 344-1687 | coastalchurchofchrist@outlook.com

VALDOSTA

Church Of Christ

4313 North Valdosta Rd.
(Located 1 mile E. of Exit 22 off I-75)
Sun. Worship: 9 a.m. | Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Communion
11 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(229) 244-8630 | northvaldostacoc.com

IDAHO

BLACKFOOT

Church of Christ

370 N. Shilling | P.O. Box 158-83221
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(208) 785-6168 or 681-1552

IOWA

DES MOINES

Church of Christ

1310 N.E. 54th Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:40 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m. | (515) 262-6799

GRINNELL

Church of Christ

1402 Third Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(641) 521-6485 & (641) 236-3883 | grinnellcoc.com

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO

Church of Christ

1514 West 74th St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: James E. Scott
Bldg. (773) 224-9279 & (708) 339-6126

DOWNERS GROVE

Church of Christ

1236 63rd St.
(Dir: 1.5 miles E of I355)
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:55 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(630) 968-0760 | dgccoc.org

GLEN ELLYN

Glen Ellyn church of Christ

796 Prairie Ave.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Sun. Evening 5 p.m.
Evangelist: Keith E. Brown
(630) 858-2290 & (630) 377-3990

MATTOON

Southside church of Christ

1100 S. 17th St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(217) 234-3702

SOUTH HOLLAND

Southeast church of Christ

16224 S Vincennes Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 4 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Donald Hawkins (708) 339-1008
southeastchurchofchrist.com

INDIANA

CLARKSVILLE

Clarksville church of Christ

407 W. Lewis & Clark Parkway, 47129
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Brian Anderson (812) 944-2305
or (812) 948-9917
clarksvillechurchofchrist.org

GREENWOOD

Greenwood church of Christ

371 W. Main St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelists: Neil Tremblett
(317) 888-8288
Churchofchristgreenwood.org

HOBART

Church of Christ

300 N. Liberty St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Jerry Cleek (219) 942-2663

INDIANAPOLIS

Castleton church of Christ

7701 East 86th St., 46256
Sun. Worship: 11 a.m. | Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m. | 11:15 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(317) 710-1204

JAMESTOWN

Church of Christ

Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:25 a.m. & 4 p.m. |
Wednesday 7 p.m.
Evangelist: David McPherson
(765) 676-6404 or (270) 994-4397 | jamestowncoc.com

OOLITIC

Church of Christ

400 Lafayette Ave. | P.O. Box 34

Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. 7 p.m.
(812) 279-4332

PEKIN

Church of Christ

(First St. & Karnes Ct.)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Jeremy Goen
(812) 967-3437 or 967-3520 | pekinchurchofchrist.com

PLAINFIELD

Church of Christ West

2028 Stafford Rd. | Ste. C. (Marsh Shopping Cntr.)
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:50 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Johnnie Edwards
(317) 964-9404 or (317) 839-1769
Churchofchristwest.org

SAINT LEON

Church of Christ

7140 Hyland Rd. | Guildford, IN 47022
174 exit 164 1 mile south on SR 1
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
812-637-1252 or 513-367-7871

SALEM

Westside church of Christ

2000 West State Rd. 56
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(812) 883-2033, westsidechurchofchrist.net

TRAFALGAR

Spearsville Rd. church of Christ

6244 S. 500 W (1.2 mi. S. of Hwy. 135)
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Charles Wright
(317) 878-5969 or (317) 300-8790 | trafalgarchurch.com

KANSAS

TOPEKA

17th St. church of Christ

5600 SW 17th St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:15 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(785) 235-8687 or 273-7977
17thstreetchurchofchrist.org

KENTUCKY

AUSTIN

Peter's Creek church of Christ

856 Thomason Park Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
(270) 579-8074 & (270) 646-0498 | peterscreekcoc.com

BEAVER DAM

Church of Christ

1235 Williams St.
Sun. Worship: 10 a.m. | Bible Study: After Worship & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Jerid Gunter
(270) 274-4451

BENTON

Fairdealing church of Christ

8081 US Hwy 68-East
Sun. Bible Study: 9:00 a.m. | Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6 p.m.
Churchofchristatairdealing.com | (270) 227-3262
(Dir: Conveniently located near Kenlake State Resort Park on
the western shore of the lake.)

BRANDENBURG

Brandenburg church of Christ

612 Broadway
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Charles J. White (270) 422-3878

CAMPBELLSVILLE

Sunny Hill Dr. church of Christ

a.m. Worship: 9:30 a.m. | a.m. Bible Study: 10:30 a.m.
a.m. Worship: 11:30 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Steve Lee (stevelee4510@windstream.net)
(270) 789-1651 | sunnyhillcoc.com

CANEYVILLE

Caneyville church of Christ

103 N. Main St. | P.O. Box 233
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Jarrod Jacobs (270) 589-4167 or
(270) 274-3065

DANVILLE

Church of Christ

385 E. Lexington Ave.
Sun. Worship: 10 a.m. | Bible Study: 11:15 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: B.J. Sipe (859) 236-4204

FRANKLIN

31-W North church of Christ

1733 Bowling Green Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Steve Monts (270) 776-9393 | 31wchurchofchrist.com

HODGENVILLE

Hodgenville church of Christ
613 S Lincoln Blvd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Don Brady (dbrady1295@aol.com) (270) 358-6053

LEITCHFIELD

Mill St. church of Christ
733 Mill St., Hwy 62 E.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:55 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Michael Hardin
(270) 259-4968 or (270) 300-3239
millstreetchurchofchrist.org

LOUISVILLE

Valley Station church of Christ
1803 Dixie Garden Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Dudley Ross Spears (502) 937-2822

LOUISIANA

GONZALES

Southside church of Christ
405 Orice Roth Rd. | 70737 (Baton Rouge area)
Sun. Bible Class 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: R.J. Evans (rjevans@eatel.net) (225) 622-4587

MANY

Lakeside church of Christ
12095 Texas Hwy. (Hwy. 6 W.)
12 miles west of Many
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(318) 256-9396

STONEWALL

N. DeSoto church of Christ
2071 Hwy 171 (South of Shreveport)
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(318) 925-2733

MARYLAND

SEVERN

Southwest church of Christ
805 Meadow Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Brandon Trout
(410) 969-1420 or (410) 551-6549 | swcofchrist.com

MAINE

PORTLAND

Church of Christ 856 Brighton Ave.
Leave Maine Turnpike at Exit 48
(Breakwater School)
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. w/ second service immediately following a.m. worship.
Mid-week Bible Study: Please call for times & places
(207) 839-3075 or 839-8409

MICHIGAN

CEDAR SPRINGS

W. Michigan church of Christ
Sr. Citizen Center, 44 Park St.
(Grand Rapids Area)
Sun. Worship: 11 a.m. | Bible Study: 12:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Joseph Gladwell (616) 975-2778
westmichcof10@yahoo.com

MINNESOTA

DULUTH

Church of Christ
4401 Glenwood St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m.
Sun. Bible Study: 5:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Taylor Ladd (218) 728-3233

ST. CHARLES

Church of Christ
939 Whitewater Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Sun. Bible Study: 2:15 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m. | call for location
FREE Bible correspondence studies
Evangelist: Robert Lehnertz (507) 534-2905

MISSISSIPPI

BOONEVILLE

Oakleigh Dr. church of Christ
101 Oakleigh Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Bldg: (662) 728-1942

CLINTON

McRaven Rd. church of Christ
301 McRaven Rd. (I20, exit 36)
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Leonard White
(601) 925-9757 or 924-2645

MERIDIAN

Grandview church of Christ
2820 Grandview Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6:30 p.m.
Ron Cooper (roncooper@bellsouth.net) (601) 934-3675
or Ricky Ethridge (rickymarsha@bellsouth.net) (601) 737-5778

7th St. church of Christ

2914 7th St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m.

SOUTHAVEN

Church of Christ
2110 E State Line Rd. (Exit I-55) (Memphis area)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: James A. Brown
Building (662) 342-1132

MISSOURI

BLUE SPRINGS

Southside church of Christ
4000 SW Christiansen
Sun. Worship: 9 a.m. | Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Brett Hogland (816) 228-9262

BRANSON

Eagle Rock Rd. church of Christ
432 Eagle Rock Rd.
Sun. Worship: 9:30 a.m. | Bible Study: 10:30 a.m.
Sun. Evening Worship: 2 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6 p.m.
Evangelist: Philip North (primrosenor@suddenlink.net) (417) 239-1036
eaglerockroadchurchofchrist.org

CAPE GIRARDEAU

Cape County church of Christ
2912 Bloomfield Rd
Sun. Bible Study: 9:15 a.m. | Worship 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Seth McDonald & Jerry Lee Westbrook
(573) 837-1001 | capecountycoc.com
capecountycoc@gmail.com

DONIPHAN

Southside church of Christ
Hwy. 142 E ½ mile (P.O. Box 220)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(573) 996-3251 or 996-3513

FAIR GROVE

Church of Christ
217 N. Orchard Blvd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. & 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Walter Myers (417) 830-8972 or
(417) 736-2663

KENNETT

Church of Christ
703 Harrison St.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(573) 888-6778 or (870) 650-1648
Evangelist: Nolan Glover
westsidechurchofchrist.us

LILBOURN

Church of Christ
211 Benton St.
Sun. Worship: 9 a.m. | Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Ben Lawrence (501) 470-5390

RAYTOWN

Sterling Ave. church of Christ
5825 Sterling Ave. (Near the Sports Complex)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Justin Bess (816) 356-3096 or (270) 320-6157
sterlingavechurchofchrist.org

ST. JAMES

Church of Christ
685 Sidney St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:15 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Lynn Huggins (573) 265-8628

ST. JOSEPH

County Line church of Christ
2727 County Line Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:50 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(816) 279-4737 | countylinechurchofchrist.com

NEBRASKA

BEATRICE

Church of Christ at 7th & Bell
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.
233-4102 or 228-3827 | churchofchrist7bell.com

NEVADA

RENO

Central church of Christ
2450 Wrondel Way, Suite A
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(775) 786-2888

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte church of Christ
5327 S. Tryon St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Sun. Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(704) 525-5655
charlottechurchofchrist.org

OHIO

BEAVERCREEK

Knollwood church of Christ
1031 Welford Dr.
Bible Study: 10:00 am, Worship: 11:00 am & 3:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: Bible Study: Adults: 1:00 p.m. All ages: 7:00 p.m.
Evangelist: Heath Rogers
(937) 426-1422
knollwoodchurch.org

CINCINNATI

Blue Ash church of Christ
4667 Cooper Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Russell Dunaway, Jr.
(513) 891-3174 | blueashchurchofchrist.com

CLEVELAND

Lorain Ave. church of Christ
13501 Lorain Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.
(330) 723-0111 or (330) 590-0227 or (216) 322-9392 |
lorainave-churchofchrist.com

COLUMBUS

Laurel Canyon church of Christ
409 McNaughton Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(614) 868-1375, lccoc.net

DAYTON

West Carrollton church of Christ
28 W. Main St., 45449
Sun. Worship: 9 a.m. | Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:25 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelists: Michael Grushon (937) 866-5162 or Alan Beck (937) 469-3111
wc-coc.org

FRANKLIN

Franklin church of Christ
6417 Franklin-Lebanon Rd. 45005
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m.
Tues. 6:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Josh Lee (937) 789-8055 or (937) 746-1249
franklin-church.org

FREMONT

Church of Christ
3361 W. State St., 1 mi. W. of Fremont
on U.S. Rt. 20
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(419) 849-3340 or (419) 849-2980 | fremontchurchofchrist.com

HAMILTON

Westview church of Christ
1040 Azel Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:45 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Eugene Ford (513) 856-9288

HILLIARD

Church of Christ
4840 Cemetery Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(614) 876-4089

MANSFIELD

Southside church of Christ
687 Mansfield-Lucas Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 4:30 p.m.
James Bond: (419) 564-3878
Mr. Kim Walton: (419) 651-3488
Church: (419) 522-8982
https://northsidecofc.us/

NEW LEBANON

New Lebanon church of Christ

1973 W Main St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m., & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Bruce Hastings (937) 687-7150 or (937) 478-0367

MARIETTA-RENO

Marietta-Reno church of Christ

80 Sandhill Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Daniel Ruegg: (740) 222-9160 or
Steve Foutty: (740) 473-9028

NORTHWOOD

Frey Rd. church of Christ

4110 Frey Rd. (Toledo Area)
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Donald Jarabek
(419) 893-3566 & (567) 694-5062

UHRICHSVILLE

Church of Christ

638 Parrish St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. |
Mid-week 6:30 p.m.

OKLAHOMA

MCALESTER

North A St. church of Christ

2120 No. A St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Rob Lungstrum, Cell: (918) 931-1362
Office: (918) 423-3445

OKLAHOMA CITY

Seminole Pointe church of Christ

16300 N. May Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: John M. Duvall (405) 340-3189
or (405) 513-6691, seminolepointe.church

OREGON

SWEET HOME

Church of Christ

3702 E. Long St., Sweet Home, OR
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Bldg: (541) 367-1599

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA

Church of Christ

7222 Germantown Ave. | 19119
Sun. Bible Study: 10:15 a.m. | Worship: 11:15 a.m.
Tues. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: James H. Baker, Jr. (215) 248-2026
mtairychurchofchrist.org

SOUTH CAROLINA

COLUMBIA

Lower Richland church of Christ

3000 Trotter Rd. (Hopkins, SC)
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(803) 730-0452 | lowerrichlandchurch.org

SUMTER

Woodland church of Christ

3370 Broad St. Extension
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: A.A. Granke, Jr. (803) 499-6023

WEST COLUMBIA

Airport church of Christ

4013 Edmund Hwy. (Hwy. 302)
OUR WEB SITE DISPLAYS OUR
CURRENT ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE.
Evangelist: Terry W. Benton
(803) 834-6978 | airport-church-of-christ.com

TENNESSEE

COLUMBIA

Mooresville Pike church of Christ

417 Mooresville Pike
(.8 mi. N. of Hwy. 50/Jas. Campbell)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(931) 388-5828 or (931) 381-7898 | mooresvillepikecoc.com

COSBY

Cosby church of Christ

4894 Hooper Hwy. | 37722
(15 mi. E. of Gattinburg on Hwy. 321)
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6:00 p.m.
Evangelist: Olie Williamson (423) 487-5540 or (423) 748-0844

JACKSON

Sunset View church of Christ

3618 Hwy 70 East
(Exit 87 off I-40, 7mi. @ Spring Creek)
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Steve Wilkerson (731) 967-0590 or 968-9851

JOHNSON CITY

Brookmead church of Christ

2428 Lakeview Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Kevin Kay (423) 282-6251 or 426-1836

JONESBOROUGH

11-E church of Christ

240 Headtown Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10:30 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 5 p.m. |
Evangelist: David Wheeler
(423) 557-9119 or (423) 948-6464 | christianadmonisher.
jigsy.com

KINGSTON SPRINGS

Kingston Springs church of Christ

350 North Main St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Steve Walker
ksccoc.com

MT. PLEASANT

Locust St. church of Christ

108 Locust St. | Mt. Pleasant, TN 38474
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Daniel H. King, Sr.
(931) 379-3704 or (931) 964-3924 | lscoc.com

KINGSPORT

Kingsport church of Christ

4938 Fort Henry Dr. | P.O. Box 554
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.
Evangelist: Tom Kinzel, Bldg.# (423) 239-3979
or (423) 579-2002 | kptcoc.org

MARYVILLE

Smokey Mt. church of Christ

2206 Montvale Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Harold Labor (865) 977-4230 or Lon Spurgeon (865) 388-8749
| smokymountainchurchofchrist.com

MEMPHIS

Rocky Pt. Rd. church of Christ

516 E. Rocky Point Rd. | Cordova
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
rockypointchurch@gmail.com
rockypointchurch.org

MURFREESBORO

Cason Ln. church of Christ

1110 Cason Lane
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Bldg: (615) 896-0090
casonlanechurch.org

Northfield Blvd. church of Christ

2091 Pitts Ln. at Northfield Blvd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: David Bunting (615) 893-1200

NASHVILLE

Hillview church of Christ

7471 Charlotte Pike
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(615) 952-5458 or (615) 356-7318
Evangelist: Lee Wildman

Perry Heights church of Christ

423 Donelson Pike
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:55 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Johnny Felker
(615) 883-3118 | perryheights.faithweb.com

SHELBYVILLE

El Bethel church of Christ

1801 Hwy. 41-A North
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:50 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Donnie V. Rader (dvrader@live.com)
(931) 607-9099 | elbethelchurchofchrist.com

Shelbyville Mills church of Christ

1222 W. Jackson St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Jeff Curtis (djc Curtis1963@hotmail.com) (931)
607-9118

TEXAS

ALLEN

West Allen church of Christ

1414 W. Exchange Blvd. (2 miles west of Hwy. 75)
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:50 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Jerry King (214) 504-0443
Building (972) 727-5355

ALVARADO

I-35 church of Christ

E. Service Rd. off I-35, N. of Alvarado
Sun. Bible Study: 10:00 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.
(817) 295-7277 or 790-7253

ALVIN

Adoue St. church of Christ

605 E. Adoue St
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Mark Mayberry (mark@ascoc.org)
(346) 216-1707 | ascoc.org
contact@ascoc.org

AUSTIN

Schultz Ln. church of Christ

Faber Rd. & Schultz Ln., Pflugerville, TX 78660
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 2 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.

BAYTOWN

Church of Christ at Pruett & Lobit

701 North Pruett St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:40 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Bldg (281) 422-5926 or Weldon (713) 818-1321

BEAUMONT

Dowlen Rd. church of Christ

3060 Dowlen Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelists: Max Dawson
(409) 866-1996

CONROE

Woodland Hills church of Christ

410 Woodland Hills Dr. | 77303
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(936) 756-9322 | conroechurch.com

CORPUS CHRISTI

Hwy. 9 church of Christ

Sun. Worship: 10 a.m. | Bible Study: 11 a.m. | Worship: 12 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Call for location: Keith Kalies (361) 776-2304
or Patrick Frazier (361) 235-1990

DICKINSON

Church of Christ

2919 FM 517 Rd. E.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:50 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. & 7 p.m.
(281) 534-4870

DALLAS

Methodist St. church of Christ

211 Methodist St. | Red Oak TX, 75154
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: D. LeRoy Klice
(972) 576-3119 or (972) 363-7672 | methodiststreetchurchofchrist.com

DUNCANVILLE

Whispering Hills church of Christ

2126 S. Main (South Dallas)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(214) 874-5701 | whchurchofchrist.net
info@whchurchofchrist.net

EDNA

Church of Christ

301 Robison St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
(361) 782-5506 or (361) 782-2844

EL PASO

Eastridge church of Christ

3277 Pendleton Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(915) 855-1524

FORT WORTH

West Side church of Christ

6110 White Settlement Rd. 76114
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(817) 738-7269

GRANBURY

Church of Christ

4313 Old Granbury Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(817) 913-4209 or (817) 279-3351

HOUSTON

Fry Rd. church of Christ

2510 Fry Rd. (77084)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:20 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
fryroad.org

Spring Woods church of Christ

9955 Neuens Rd. at Witte Rd.
Sun. Worship: 9 a.m. | Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(713) 419-1750 | springwoodschurchofchrist.com

IRVING

Westside church of Christ

2320 Imperial Dr. (closest to DFW Airport)
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:50 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Mark Roberts
(972) 986-9131 | justchristians.com

LANCASTER

Pleasant Run church of Christ

831 W. Pleasant Run Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:20 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(972) 227-1708 or 227-2598

LUBBOCK

Indiana Ave. church of Christ

6111 Indiana Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(806) 795-3377 | lubbockchurch.com

LUFKIN

Timberland Dr. church of Christ

912 S. Timberland Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 9:50 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelists: Harold Hancock & Reagan McClenny
(936) 634-7110 or 632-7070

MANSFIELD

Northside church of Christ

1820 Mansfield-Webb Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:20 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 5:30 p.m.
northsideofcus
Evangelist: Tom Roberts (817) 466-3160

NACOGDOCHES

Stallings Dr. church of Christ

3831 N.E. Stallings Dr.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:20 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelists: Randy Harshbarger & Jay Taylor

PLANO

Spring Creek church of Christ

2100 W. Spring Creek Pkwy. (North Dallas Suburb)
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(972) 517-5582, planochurch.org

SAN ANTONIO

Grissom Rd. church of Christ

5470 Lost Ln. at Grissom Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78238-2700
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: Ladies Class: 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: Bible Class: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Terry Starling
grissomroadcoc.org

Pecan Valley church of Christ

268 Utopia Ave. (Dir: I-37 S.E. Exit Pecan Valley)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Clyde W. Carter (210) 337-6143

SHERMAN

Westwood Village church of Christ

314 N. Tolbert
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Ronald Stringer

TEMPLE

Leon Valley church of Christ

4404 Twin City Blvd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Jason Garcia (yourfriendjgar@gmail.com)
biblemoments.org

WACO

Sun Valley church of Christ

340 E Warren St. (in Hewitt, a suburb of Waco)
Sun. Bible Class 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Marc Smith
(254) 292-2482 or 652-7698

THE WOODLANDS

Woodlands church of Christ

1500 Wellman Rd. | P.O. Box 7664 (77380)
Sun. Bible Class 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:20 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(281) 367-2099
woodlandschurchofchrist.org

VIRGINIA

CHESAPEAKE

Tidewater church of Christ

217 Taxus St.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Steve Schlosser (757) 436-6900

CHESTER

Chester church of Christ

12100 Winfree St., (Central to Richmond, Hopewell, Petersburg, & Colonial Heights)
Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Ed Barnes
Building (804) 385-2725 or (804) 271-0877
chesterchurchofchrist.org

RICHMOND

Courthouse church of Christ

(Dir: Metro Area; Courthouse Rd. at Double Creek Ct. 2.2 miles S of Rt. 288)
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Nathan L. Morrison
(804) 790-1629 | courthousechurchofchrist.com

Forest Hill church of Christ

1208 W. 41st St.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.
Evangelist: Jack Bise, Jr. (804) 233-5959

RIDGEWAY

Church of Christ

2970 Old Leaksville Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(276) 956-6049 | churchofchristatridgeway.com

ROANOKE

\$Blue Ridge church of Christ
929 Indiana Ave. N.E. (5 min. from Roanoke Convention Center)
1st Lesson 9:15 a.m. | Bible Study: 10 a.m.
Sun. Worship: 11 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(540) 344-2755

VIRGINIA BEACH

Southside church of Christ

5652 Haden Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Robert Mallard (757) 464-4574

WASHINGTON

BELLINGHAM

Mt. Baker church of Christ

1860 Mt. Baker Hwy.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Joe Price
(360) 752-2692 or (360) 380-2960 | bibleanswer.com/mtbaker

SEQUIM

Sequim church of Christ

American Legion Hall
7 W. Prairie St. at Sequim Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: night Bible study 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Jerry MacDonald
(360) 808-1021 | churchofchristinsequim.com
biblepage@att.net

TACOMA

Manitou Park church of Christ

(meets at Gray Middle School)
6229 S Tyler St.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(253) 242-3098 | tacomachurch.com
tacomachurch@gmail.com

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON

Oakwood Rd. church of Christ

873 Oakwood Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:50 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(304) 342-5637 | orcoc.org
oakwoodrdcoc@suddenlinkmail.com

CLARKSBURG

Westside church of Christ

Davison Run Rd.
Sun. Worship: 9:30 a.m.
(304) 622-5433
westsidechurchofchristwv.net

FAIRMONT

Eastside church of Christ

1929 Morgantown Ave.
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(304) 363-8696 or (304) 844-2437

GLADESVILLE

Gladesville church of Christ

2906 Gladesville Rd. | Independence, WV 26374
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 10:45 a.m. & 7 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.
(304) 864-3078

MOUNDSVILLE

Moundsville church of Christ

210 Cedar St.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. | Mid-week 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Tony Huntsman (304) 845-4940

PARKERSBURG

Marrtown church of Christ

825 Marrtown Rd.
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.
(304) 422-7458 or 893-5227

WYOMING

RANCHESTER

Ranchester church of Christ

Hwy. 14 West, Ranch Mart Mall
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 6:30 p.m.
Contact: Bob Reich (307) 655-2563

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