

Truth

Magazine

*Taking His hand,
helping each other home.*



®

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OPEN ISSUE

*“This is the day which the
LORD has made; Let us
rejoice and be glad in it”*

(Ps. 118:24).



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One characteristic of outstanding leaders is that they can see the potential in someone when others do not.

YOU ARE NOT YOUR ISSUES!

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A web search on “I’ve got issues” yields 194,000 results—including books, movies, blogs, etc. While all struggle with “issues,” i.e., personal characteristics, or traits, that are causing some kind of problem, we must not be dominated or defined by them.

SIN THAT EASILY ENTANGLES US

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Satan has employed the same playbook since the beginning—tempting man through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Let us, therefore, not be ignorant of his devices.

REBRANDING THE CHURCH

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As Jesus said, we must let our lights shine, so that God will be glorified (Matt. 5:16). Yet, principle and precept matter more than perception and popularity.

WHEN WERE THE NT BOOKS RECOGNIZED AS AUTHORITATIVE?

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Webster defines “spurious” as “outwardly similar or corresponding to something without having its genuine qualities.” Ron discussed the differences between true or canonical books and false or non-canonical books.

THE POWER OF EXAMPLE

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Godly examples effectively illustrate divine commandments. Paul said, “Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us” (Phil. 3:17).

Truth—Objective or Subjective?

by Mark Mayberry

Christians are facing a renewed and intensified threat from the “woke” culture that seeks to impose its subjective definition of morality upon us all. Let us not compromise or remain silent, but resist and remain true to God’s word.

Introduction

Jesus affirmed that God’s word is truth (John 17:13-21).

But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me (John 17:13-21).

What *is* the nature of truth? Is it objective or subjective? Webster defines “objective” as “of, relating to, or being an object, phenomenon, or condition in the realm of sensible experience independent of individual thought and perceptible by all observers: **having reality independent of the mind.**” In contrast, “subjective” is “characteristic of or belonging to **reality as perceived** rather than as independent of mind.”

Many Believe that Truth Is Subjective

Isaiah exposed the folly of those who call good evil and evil good:

Woe to those who drag iniquity with the cords of falsehood, and sin as if with cart ropes; who say, “Let Him make speed, let Him hasten His work, that we may see it; and let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come to pass, that we may know it!” Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! (Isa. 5:18-20).

The Lord will cast down and consume those who justify the wicked and condemn the righteous (Prov. 17:15; Amos 5:6-7).

He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD (Prov. 17:15).

Seek the LORD that you may live, or He will break forth like a fire, O house of Joseph, and it will consume with none to quench it for Bethel, for those who turn justice into wormwood and cast righteousness down to the earth (Amos 5:6-7).

Scripture Affirms that Truth Is Objective

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6). This was acknowledged, however grudgingly, by Jesus’s enemies (Matt. 22:15-22). The

singularity of the gospel is reflected in its unifying principles (Eph. 4:1-6).

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all (Eph. 4:1-6).

The Secular View of Gender

As a means of illustration and application, let us consider an article entitled, “The Ouroboros Moment,” by Abigail Mering, which appeared in the *American Mind*, a publication of the Claremont Institute. The ouroboros is an ancient symbol depicting a serpent eating its own tail. It entered Western tradition via ancient Egyptian iconography and the Greek magical tradition, Gnosticism and alchemy. The Greek word *ouroboros* is a compound of *oura* (tail) and *boros* (eating).

Abigail Mering, the article’s author, who is a student at Thomas Aquinas College, argues “Today’s official version of ‘progress’ is eating its own tail.” She’s right. Every erroneous and evil system of thought contains the seeds of its own destruction. This is also true of the ludicrously misnamed “Progressive Movement,” which is not progressive at all, but entirely regressive, i.e., rooted in the failed philosophies of the past.

Illustrating the inconsistencies of wokeness, Ms. Mering says:

Jill over there with the Adam's apple and the testosterone is not only trying to live by her (his) own subjective reality but is now trying to point a government gun at the rest of us and tell us to live by her subjective reality. Which would mean she doesn't want her reality to be subjective anymore. If you took away that government gun, Jill would just be a guy who called himself Jill, and we'd all be okay with that so long as he doesn't try and go near our daughters in public restrooms. Jill's reality would be intact, or as intact as an insane reality can be, and my reality would not be infringed upon. I could call Jill he/him if I'd like, because that's what I perceive Jill to be, and he shouldn't be affected by that because he lives in his own reality anyway.

But that's not enough, and that's the problem many people have with the trans movement. It's not a matter of "live and let live" anymore, but of forcibly altering our human identity into something else, something we're supposed to trust the fanatics to forge and impose. Their lack of logic is more and more apparent as the movement grows. Gender is a scale, and male and female are the extremes, but there's no such thing as gender-specificities. So there's no outward way to distinguish male and female, but they do exist as the ends of the spectrum. Yet drag queens, generally men dressed as women, put on all of the stereotypical external feminine marks and mannerisms in order to signify that they are indeed imitating famous (biologically) female singers or film stars. They pull out the heels and false eyelashes and sequins to signify that they are trying to imitate femininity, because these things are engrained in all our minds as being more womanly. And then the movement expects us to give toy trucks to our baby girls because "how dare you say trucks are boy toys?" There are no rules other than to break the rules of human nature, and to kneel before whatever artifice is "next."

The Scriptural View of Gender

In contrast with such madness, the biblical message is clear and consistent. God created humankind as biologically distinct, man/male and woman/female:

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."
... So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh (Gen. 2:18-24).

The Hebrew word *ish* refers to a "man" (Thomas, 376). When occurring by itself, it always identifies one who is a biological male, and is never used of a biological female. In contrast, the word *ishshah*, translated "woman" and "wife" in vv. 23-24, refers to a "woman, wife, or female" (Thomas, 802). While it may identify women of different ages, occupations, marital status, and morality, it always refers to one who is a biological female, and is never used of a biological male.

Moreover, God reserved sexuality for the marital bond—which involves a loving and lifelong relationship between a biological man and woman (Gen. 2:23-24). Jesus Christ reaffirmed this essential truth (Matt. 19:3-6).

Outside the commitment/covenant of marriage, sexual expression is degrading and sinful (Prov. 5:15-23; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11). Furthermore, God intends men and women to be distinct in apparel and behavior (Deut. 22:5). As Paul begins his extensive discussion of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 11-14), his instruction concerning the covering in chapter 11 is rooted in the inherent differences between males and females. This is seen in the respective roles of men and women in the home and the church (Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Tim. 2:9-15).

Conclusion

May we respect the role that divine revelation plays in our quest for spiritual understanding. Psalm 119 says, "Consider how I love Your precepts; revive me, O LORD, according to Your lovingkindness. The sum of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting" (vv. 159-160). The inspired apostle said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH'" (Rom. 1:16-17).

The gospel is an external, objective standard that is received by revelation. As I grow, "the faith" becomes "my faith." In other words, as we render submission to the gospel, each believer internalizes the principles and precepts of the gospel, so that God's pattern guides our individual choices. Our subjective morality is based upon an objective standard. **T**

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Seeing God within Me

by Kyle Pope

While the pagan concept that a “god-force” exists within each of us is false, Christians should recognize how our behavior can shape the concepts that others have of God from what they see within us.

Introduction

In 1983, actress Shirley MacLaine authored a book entitled *Out on a Limb* (New York: Bantam Books, 1983). Four years later, on January 18 and 19 of 1987, the book was adapted to a two-part, five-hour television mini-series of the same title which was broadcast on ABC. The book and mini-series portrayed MacLaine’s personal spiritual journey to accept a mix of Eastern religious beliefs and extraterrestrial mysticism that came to be known as the “New Age Movement.” At a pivotal moment in the mini-series, MacLaine (playing herself) sits on a beach with one of her spiritual advisors (played by actor John Heard) who urges her to recognize that all things are a part of God—a core belief of Hinduism. The two eventually stand, with arms outspread, shouting to the sea, “I am God!” “I am God!”

While I absolutely reject New Age concepts such as this, that argue that all souls have a “God-Force” within them that must simply be unleashed, as the title of this article suggests, I would like to explore the biblical sense in which each of us should realize the importance of allowing others to see God within us.

The God of the Bible

Ultimately, all sound concepts about God must be drawn from the Bible. “It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jer. 10:23b, NKJV). So, it cannot be that we simply tap into an inner “God-Force.” Yes, the God of the Bible is said to “fill heaven and earth” (Jer. 23:24), but

that is not because He *is* all things (the doctrine known as *pantheism*). Instead, it is because He sees and sustains all things: “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good” (Prov. 15:3). The God of the Bible is *transcendent*; that is, “existing apart from, and not subject to, the limitations of the material universe” (*New Oxford American Dictionary*). What may be known of God is available to us, because “the LORD revealed Himself” (1 Sam. 3:21) to the inspired writers of Scripture. Thus, the Bible has “given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him” (2 Pet. 1:3). Through it we may “be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:17). This doesn’t mean we know every conceivable thing about God. He tells us, “My thoughts are not your thoughts,” because “as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa. 55:8-9). God has given us all we need, but we must learn to be content in the recognition that—“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever” (Deut. 29:29).

“Some Do Not Have the Knowledge of God”

While the Bible is the true source of what may be known about God, as Paul acknowledged, “some do not have the knowledge of God” (1 Cor. 15:34). So, how will they ever “come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4; 2

Tim. 3:7)? Many hymnals include the beautiful song written by Annie Johnson Flint, entitled “The World’s Bible.” Its second stanza reads:

We are the only Bible the careless world will read; We are the sinner’s gospel; We are the scoffer’s creed; We are the Lord’s last message, given in deed and word; What if the type is crooked? What if the print is blurred?

What Flint writes about the Bible may apply equally to God Himself. God does not personally *reveal Himself* today, as He did to inspired writers in the past. For some, before they ever even look to the pages of Scripture, the concepts they form about God will be drawn from what they see in the lives of Christians. Consider how this can happen.

Children. A child learns about God from what he is taught by parents, grandparents, and teachers. Simple truths, such as “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 16) or “God is faithful” (1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:18) will be etched into children’s hearts and minds by what they see in us about love and faithfulness.

Our Spouse. Whether a husband and wife both come from backgrounds of faith, one is new to faith, or one has no faith, few relationships have more impact on our spiritual welfare than the relationship we share with our spouse. While we should strive to be “heirs together of the grace of life” (1 Pet. 3:7) or, if one does “not obey the word,” the other “may be won by the conduct” of the spouse (1 Pet. 3:1). What my spouse sees in me can shape concepts about God and a willingness to be faithful to Him.

Neighbors and Co-Workers. People are always watching us. They know we are Christians and they see just how true we are to our faith. God's nature doesn't change when we are hypocrites, dishonest, or unkind. Yet, all too often, what others see in us shapes what they think about God. This is surely why an elder is to be a man who has "a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (1 Tim. 3:7). Wives are to obey their husbands, "that the word of God may not be blasphemed" (Titus 2:5). When people speak against God's word, they are speaking against Him. Believers are commanded to "walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time" (Col. 4:5).

Unbelievers. When Paul instructed the Corinthians about the proper use of spiritual gifts, he emphasized the need to guard their actions because of what it could communicate to the "uninformed or unbelievers." Improper action could lead them to think Christians are *out of their minds*. Proper action could lead them to recognize that "God is truly among you" (1 Cor. 14:23-25). Like children, our behavior can shape what others think about God.

Fellow Christians. Concerning the impact that sin and falsehood can have on other believers, Paul warned, "a little leaven leavens the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9). Again, one person's wrongdoing doesn't change who God is. Yet, sadly, as our brothers and sisters look at us, they often either grow in their love for God and confidence in His word, or begin asking themselves, "What's the point in serving God?" "Why should I stay faithful?" What they see of God living (or not living) in us can influence their own concepts of accountability to Him.

"God's Fellow Workers"

In Shirley MacLaine's mini-series, she first showed a resistance to saying, "I

am God," feeling it would be arrogant or delusional to express such presumptuous words. Her hesitation was fitting. It is arrogant and delusional to imagine that we are God. Although we are His offspring (Acts 17:28-29) and bear His image (Gen. 1:26-27) we are *not* God! What was said of the Egyptians is true of each of us, we "are men, and not God" (Isa. 31:3).

Is it then equally arrogant and delusional to imagine that what others see in us can shape their own concepts about God? Well, perhaps if we allowed it to stop there. When Paul and Barnabas were in Lystra, when the residents imagined that they were gods, they at once declared, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them" (Acts 14:15). They used that as an opportunity to explain to the people the truth about the true and "living God." I am not suggesting that we encourage others to base their concepts of God on us. Instead, I am challenging us to recognize that our actions can help move people closer to the knowledge of the God revealed in Scripture, or further away from ever even considering Him.

Conclusion

The Bible teaches that as we obey Him, we participate in His work. Paul told the Corinthians, "We are God's fellow workers" (1 Cor. 3:9). Christians are "fellow workers for the kingdom of God" (Col. 4:11). As Christians, while we have no innate "God-Force" within us, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are said to dwell within us (John 14:23; Rom. 8:9). We are led by His Spirit as we set our minds on the "things of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:5)—the things revealed in Scripture. His word "effectively works" in those who believe (1 Thess. 2:13). We strive to be "imitators of God" (Eph. 5:1), recognizing

that His power works within us in ways beyond our understanding unto His glory (Eph. 3:20-21). We are "workers together with Him" (2 Cor. 6:1). This leaves no place for arrogance or delusion. In doing His will, we realize, "it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). Like Paul, our attitude must be, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20a). In this spirit, may each of us work diligently to allow the world to see a sound picture of God within our hearts and lives. ■



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Running the Race with Obedience

by Lindsay Mast

Our willingness to submit to the guidance of a coach (or in the spiritual realm—to our God) is a mark of maturity and will lead to greater accomplishment.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey. . .

For the first twenty years of my life, I don't think a week passed when I didn't sing this hymn with my home congregation. At some points, I'm sure it felt stale, but the words are now ingrained in my mind for all time. The further along I've traveled in my Christian race, the more I appreciate them.

In order to succeed in distance running, there comes a point where you realize you need to trust those who know things that you don't—those who have experienced things you haven't. When they talk, you need to listen and act.

Of course, with earthly running, those authorities are the experienced runners and coaches who have gone further, faster, or who have learned more about the sport than you have. In our Christian race, this simple hymn expresses the same fundamental truth. We need to trust the authority: God, and how He has instructed us through Scripture. We need to obey Him—no matter what.

Funny, it's easier to obey when we trust Him. However, we can't obey only when our feelings of trust are strong. When we doubt, when we question, when we wonder if another way might be better, the plain truth is we still need to obey.

When a running coach devises a training plan for a runner, it will include weeks of workouts along with periods of rest. There may be some room for deviation, but if it's raining for a week,



and you don't do the workouts, you won't get the same results. If rest periods are called for, but you ignore it and add in your own workout, you'll wind up exhausted, or worse, *injured*.

A young runner might be tempted to go hard for every workout, not understanding that varying pace leads to long-term success. A cross-country athlete might get upset at a coach whose vision they don't share, and then refuse to work to the best of their ability—only to find that, of course, they then aren't making progress.

Trust and obedience can so often seem counterintuitive to self-seeking, inward-focused and vision-lacking humans. It's hard to accept coaching. It's hard to accept that someone else knows more than you and possesses wise advice you need to receive in order to reach your goal. It's hard to trust that someone who isn't in your exact situation has the answers you need when you don't know what to do.

Jesus tells us that His yoke is easy, his burden light, and in it is rest (Matt. 11:29-30). This, too, seems counterintuitive

when we are steeped in the messages of the world. Yet, those who have trusted God and showed it through obedience will tell you that they've experienced that lightness. In running, we will never know how good a coach is if we don't do what they tell us to do. Likewise, we cannot truly experience how good our God is if we never do what He tells us to do. We rob Him of the opportunity to prove His love when we refuse to obey Him.

If you met an Olympian, you'd likely listen to his advice about how to become a great runner. You would inherently trust him because he has met the goal you want to meet. When we read the words of Jesus, we often have trouble believing He really meant what He said, even though He is *the* authority—the only authority—on living a sinless life. Living that life took tremendous trust. We need to believe Him. Trust Him. Obey Him.

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whoever has been born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world: our faith (1 John 5:3-4). **TL**



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 lbwolfofgangmast@gmail.com.

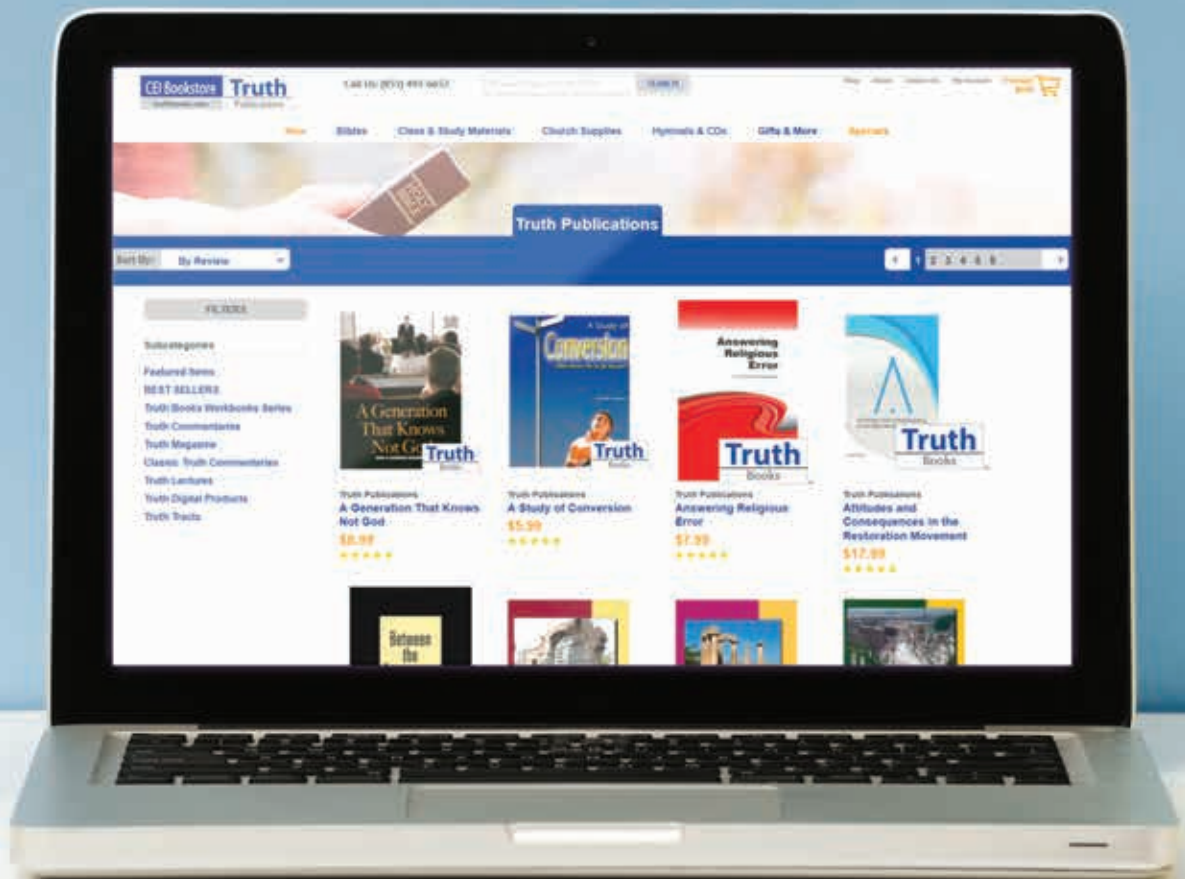
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Preaching as an Elderly Man

by John Humphries

Advancing age brings a unique set of challenges. The writer of Ecclesiastes describes this process poetically (12:1–8); brother Humphries addresses it practically and personally.

Introduction

The golden years (or sunset years) can be a very challenging time in an elderly preacher's life. With most, their bodies have been weakened by age, so that they no longer have the energy to move about as quickly as when they were younger. With some, their mind remains clear and they are free of the dementia that afflicts so many in their later years. Such elderly men can still teach Bible classes and preach God's word. Some can still write timely articles and even books. They have years of experience and solid maturity in the Scriptures that they can still share. Some are fortunate enough to work with congregations along with a younger man and be a real blessing to the church. Elderly preachers, who also serve as elders, may effectively labor with their respective congregations for many years.

Making Adjustments

There may come a time, however, when a man's mind and body are just not up to the effort required to present a lesson. His voice may not hold out or his mind may not be clear enough to teach or preach. When this becomes evident, mature brethren must handle the matter with patience, gentleness, and wisdom by bringing in others who can teach and preach. It is also hoped that the elderly preacher himself will have the wisdom and humility to realize that he needs to remain seated and allow others to "take the plow" and carry on.

It is difficult to accept that, after sixty or more years of labor, one's preaching

and teaching days are over. Some sink into melancholy and depression, dwelling upon the perception that they have been "put on the shelf" by the brethren. This feeling is intensified if one is never called upon to teach a class, preach a lesson here or there, or write an article, etc. Wise and discerning brethren will understand this and use an elderly preacher *to the extent that his limited abilities and strength will allow*. Aged men often have something to share spiritually. Brethren should use them as much as possible. Sadly, some elderly preachers who could contribute are not being called upon. Wonderful knowledge, mature wisdom, and many years of experience are not being utilized. Of course, good judgment must be employed, and every circumstance taken into consideration by wise and caring brethren. Yet, sometimes this is not done.

Continuing to Contribute

Some men only want to retire and visit with family, friends, or travel here and there. *That is their decision, of course*. This writer (hopefully along with others) would encourage such men to set aside some of their time to take a turn at teaching classes or preaching a lesson. Write an article now and then for the bulletin or some paper. Please don't quit completely. As long as your mind is clear, share your accumulated knowledge and years of experience with the brethren. It will be a blessing to them and will also honor our Lord.

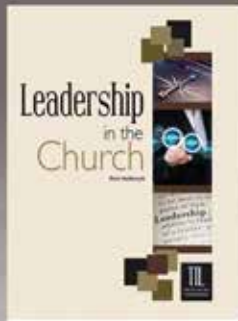
Dealing with Loss

This writer, along with other elderly preachers in similar situations, lost a

beloved wife of over half a century. This is certainly a difficult time in the life of an elderly preacher. The one with whom their children were brought into the world and raised into adulthood is missing. The dear companion, with whom the good times and the bad were shared, and painfully endured, is gone. Through thick and thin, she was a blessed help meet as various challenges faced the family. When she is gone, loneliness, emptiness, and sorrow that cannot be adequately expressed often accompany the daily recollections of the heart. The only thing that makes her passing bearable is the knowledge that she is in a better place. Even after years have gone by, tears still fall at times.

Finding Someone New

Some who have lost their mates remarry. This can be a restorative experience for the elderly man of God. Often, the remarriage is with a sister in Christ that has lost her husband through death. Two spiritually mature Christians can make this a beautiful union that will benefit and bless both parties. Yet, they need to proceed carefully and wisely before entering marriage late in life. There are important issues to be considered both prayerfully and carefully. Where will they live? What will they do with houses and properties? Will there be sufficient financial resources to sustain the marriage? Will the children and grandchildren accept this change and properly adjust to the new family situation? Much wisdom and patience may be required. Wills may also need revision,



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and prenuptial agreements may need to be prepared. Are there “living wills” that each party understands and accepts?

Also, there must be the realization that people at this age have lived as they have for many years. Elderly individuals can be “set in their ways” and not like change. They have habits, likes and dislikes, liberal or conservative views, travel or no travel opinions, certain foods at mealtime, late or early risers, early or late nights, and a host of other traits, habits, and characteristics that may pose potential problems. What about pets, and visits with (or from) children and grandchildren? What about babysitting the great grandchildren? Obviously, there will always be some areas where mature, thoughtful people will have different feelings and preferences. Usually, these can be worked out, or at least brought to a mutual understanding and agreement, and thus will not prevent the marriage from being a blessed success. Both parties must exercise wisdom and (with candor and honesty) talk it over carefully, *before the marriage*, in order to prevent

painful disagreements, hurt feelings, and misunderstandings later on. Flexibility and patience with each other are vital!

Different Working Relationships

An elderly preacher and his wife may be on social security at this stage in their lives. If both agree and are able, this can lead to the decision to seek a small congregation that cannot fully support a preacher with family to work with them. The elderly preacher and his wife would not require a large salary to meet their financial needs and thus can work with the small church. This idea is not for everyone, but it is a potential solution for a small congregation and an elderly evangelist and his wife, *if all are interested, willing, and able*.

Relocating Near Family

Since aged individuals conclude that they only have a few years left before departing this life, they may wish to be near some of their children or

grandchildren so that their family can offer help. This can be a wise decision. It may hinge upon what must be done if one or both are to be placed in a special facility that is adequate to care for them. These are always hard decisions for a loving family. While some may be cared for at home, there are medical circumstances where this is not possible and the elderly need specialized care. This writer's wife had amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) which eventually became far too complicated to be handled at home. She returned home from the facility under Hospice Care and passed on the very next day. All elderly preachers and their wives need to give this some serious thought and planning with their children (Pss. 39:4; 90:12).

Relating Past Trials

Elderly preachers can be a wonderful source of information concerning past issues that have affected churches across the nation. They can share their experiences with younger brethren who are interested in hearing what they have

to say. Older preachers can discuss what brethren did back then that was unwise, or just plain wrong, in dealing with various issues. These are mistakes that God's people should avoid in dealing with a divisive issue that may come along. On the other hand, the elderly preacher can recall what the brethren did that was right and helpful in dealing with troublesome issues that arise. They can make some helpful observations regarding what should have been done. If handled properly, this can greatly benefit younger brethren. *Please note, however, that bitterness, jealousy, and resentment are never helpful! Such discussions must not become a gripe session!*

There are important lessons to learn from the history of past major divisions among God's people. These older preachers who lived and preached through those divisive times can have valuable observations concerning them. Some of them can relate their personal (and sometimes painful) experiences and what they learned from such. Churches and families experienced division, brethren who had been friends for many years were alienated, while some became bitter enemies, etc. Faithful men who stood for the truth were quarantined. Some were fired. Indeed, God's people have faced turbulent times in the past. Elderly preachers, looking back, may have some wise counsel for younger preachers to remember when preventive, timely preaching is needful. This writer has heard elderly preachers sound warnings in gospel meetings regarding signs of spiritual weakness here and there that they are observing. Sometimes, the warnings given went unheeded and a little later, the church (where the writer heard the warning from the elderly preacher) had a division.

Reassigning Resources

Over the years, elderly preachers often build sizable libraries. Some keep their books until they pass away. Some wish to either sell their libraries or donate books to younger preachers or a school. Others invite younger preachers to pick

out books they would like to have and use. This writer chose this method of disposing of *his* library. The only request was that those who took the books (some of which were very expensive sets) would eventually donate them to a younger preacher when they became elderly preachers! Of course, many now utilize digital libraries instead of having an extensive collection of printed materials lining bookshelves. Their electronic library resides on their computer or phone, and the internet is their research domain.

Remaining Active

Should an elderly preacher find himself in a situation where he is not teaching or preaching, he should still keep his mind active. It is not healthy for the mind to be idle and unengaged. If one does not have opportunities to teach or preach, then find something to challenge the brain. Perhaps he might study another language, lead a small group Bible study, start a journal, or write about his past preaching and life experiences. I highly recommend that seniors keep their minds active and not become sedentary. Sitting around watching TV, or doing nothing that mentally stimulates the mind, may encourage dementia—or even Alzheimer's disease.


If possible, elderly preachers and other seniors should take a walk every day and also be careful about their weight. Since our body is the "temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 6:19), we should take care of ourselves physically, and try to remain as healthy as possible.

An elderly preacher (if able and interested) probably would be a skilled teacher for a class that trains the men of the congregation to make announcements, head the Lord's table, lead prayer, or make a talk, etc. The elderly preacher can draw from his many years of preaching experience to make the class not only interesting but very profitable. Even if he did not do the active leading and teaching of the class, he could

still sit in and be an excellent source of information to supplement the lessons.

Some churches that have a good number of their elderly members confined at home or in nursing facilities would do well to engage or employ an elderly preacher who is no longer "in the pulpit" on a weekly basis. He could visit these permanent shut-ins, making their days at home or in the nursing facilities more pleasant with his timely visits. Of course, such a commitment should not be considered a substitute for other members fulfilling their responsibility to visit sick or indigent brethren (Matt. 25:36).

Conclusion

As an elderly preacher moves nearer and nearer to the sunset, he should have the same sentiment as the aged apostle Paul: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:6-8). May this be the sentiment of us all. 



John Humphries

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Examples of Truth

by Matthew Bassford

Popular praise songs are often of the “Seven-Eleven” variety, i.e., containing only seven words that are sung eleven times! Brethren, we can do better. The pattern one observes in Psalms points the way.

Introduction

For years, brethren have been concerned with the scripturality of hymns. Obviously, this is an important consideration; none of us wants to be singing false doctrine in worship! However, over time, “It’s scriptural” has become shorthand for “It doesn’t teach false doctrine,” and “It doesn’t teach false doctrine,” has become a sufficient justification for singing a song.

Sadly, too often, this mindset has led to the song worship of the church being less than it ought to be. The most vacuous hymns usually don’t contain false teaching because they don’t contain anything that would teach anyone over the age of three. This may be “scriptural”, but it does not adequately instruct the faithful, nor does it glorify God as He deserves. When our singing expresses our love for Him over and over and over again, but does not proclaim the wonderful works of the Lord, who is that singing really about?

It’s time for churches and their leadership (God surely will hold elders to account for what is sung as well as what is preached!) to invest some thought in what a truth-focused, God-focused worship repertoire looks like. In this inquiry, the Bible gives us considerable guidance, though not in a place we usually look. If we desire to know how God wants to be worshiped, we ought to consider the Psalms.

Rich Content

One of the most striking characteristics of the Psalms is their rich,

complex content. This is a far cry from the denominational praise songs of our day that have filtered into the worship of the Lord’s church, too. Lyrical repetition frequently characterizes praise songs. This allows for musical repetition, too, which makes them easier to sing, but such ease comes at the expense of content. It’s hard to convey a complex thought in a repeated eight-word sentence!

When asked about this problem, praise-song advocates commonly will reply, “The Psalms were repetitive!” In this, they refer to the great responsorial psalm, Psalm 136. Indeed, Psalm 136 is repetitive in a way that no other psalm is. Every other line says something like “His faithful love endures forever.”

However, this repetition is nothing like the repetition of the praise band. If every one of those repeated lines is removed from Psalm 136, we are left with a twenty-six-line narrative psalm (by comparison, the standard three-verse single-page hymn has twenty-four lines). It praises God in detail for creating the cosmos, rescuing the people from Egypt, giving them the promised land, and continuing to care for every living thing. To describe the psalm as content-rich hardly does it justice!

To this narrative, the refrain (probably sung by a congregation of Israelites in response to a cantor singing the rest) adds another level of content. It emphasizes that everything He has done, from making the stars to killing Sihon and Og, reveals His faithful love for His people. Indeed, this is nothing less than the central concept of the Old Testament.

By all means, let us use repetition in our assemblies today—but only when the repetition creates content as powerful as Psalm 136!

Divine Focus

Similarly, the Psalms are focused on God. This does not surprise anyone. However, the *way* in which they are focused on Him is as noteworthy as the focus itself.

One might argue that any hymn is by definition God-focused. Yet, too many of the songs that we sing together are God-focused in the way that an infatuated teenager is crush-focused. They talk about Him a lot, but they reveal a shallow awareness of who He is and what He has done.

It is not so in the Psalms, which paint a portrait of God that is subtle and profound. Psalm 148 exalts Him as the Creator and King of the natural world. Psalm 82 reveals His dominion over a spiritual realm we can see only dimly. Psalm 105 describes His faithfulness to the patriarchs and the awesome power He displayed in rescuing Israel from Egyptian servitude. Psalm 78 relates Israel’s unfaithfulness in the wilderness and during the time of the judges, contrasting it with His faithfulness and mercy.

Psalm 94 calls upon God to judge the kings who oppressed the poor with unjust laws. Psalm 89 contrasts the covenant He made with David with the downfall of the Davidic dynasty. Psalm 79 pleads for His mercy after the destruction of the temple, and Psalm 137 begs Him to requite the

cruelties of captivity. Psalm 126 rejoices in the return of captives from bondage.

In short, the Psalms tell the entire story of God's relationship with His people, dwelling particularly on the way all those interactions reveal His nature and character. All of us have heard whole sermons with less meat than any historical psalm, which was part of the repertoire that God's children sang.

Genuine Relationship

Finally, the Psalms teach us what a genuine relationship with God looks like. All of us who have been Christians for longer than two weeks know that our walk with God is not an unending mountaintop experience. We experience sorrow and tragedy. Some whom we love betray us. We struggle with illness. We suffer, and we cry out to God from the midst of our suffering.

However, the reality of our spiritual experience too often is not reflected in the songs we sing. Our current repertoire is relentlessly upbeat, even in the way it handles the Psalms. Either it cherry-picks the most positive psalms, or it plucks positive verses from psalms that aren't. Take, for instance, "As the Deer." The first two lines of the hymn come from Psalm 42:1, but where the hymn is warm and comforting, the psalm is an expression of loneliness and sorrow.

There's nothing wrong with rejoicing before the Lord, of course, but if rejoicing is all we ever sing about, our worship neither meets us where we are nor prepares us for the reality of life under the sun.


The Psalms are much more honest in worship than we are, sometimes shockingly so. Would we feel comfortable with a hymn that accused God of abandoning us even though we were faithful to Him? Psalm 44 does. How about one that cried out to Him from the depths of depression and despair? Psalm 88 does. How about one that chronicled our struggles with faith when He appeared indifferent to our prayers? Psalm 77 does.

Similar examples abound. Indeed, there may be more psalms about the darkest times of human existence than about its brightest moments. Confronting such things makes many Americans, even many American Christians, uneasy. After all, isn't worship the time when we are supposed to "lay aside the thoughts and the cares of the world"?

The Psalms imply that it isn't. Rather, we are supposed to come before the Lord with our whole lives and our entire selves, even the ugliest parts. Worshiping in spirit and truth doesn't have to do only with the truth about the word. It has to do also with the truth about ourselves.

Conclusion

If the Psalms are the measuring stick for truth in worship, many churches will have to put in a lot of work to measure up. The right repertoire can help here. Though I may be biased (having helped edit the hymnal), I believe that *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*, along with its associated slide program, contains hundreds of worthy hymns and a gratifyingly low number of stinkers.

However, the true work must be done within our hearts. We must reject the trendy and musically appealing in favor of the timeless and profound. Only when we embrace this goal will the song worship of God's people do justice to God's truth. 



Matthew Bassford

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By Bobby L. Graham



QUESTION.

A reader asks how the message echoing from pulpits has changed over the years.

ANSWER.

Question

What differences do you notice between the preaching that is heard today and the preaching in your earlier life?

Answer

Having been born in 1946 and having been reared outside Florence, Alabama, I enjoyed access to some able preachers in my growing-up years. Men like Franklin T. Puckett, Roy E. Cogdill, Robert Welch, H. A. Dickson, Earl West, Guy N. Woods, John D. Cox, James P. Miller, Granville Tyler, Lindsay Allen, Curtis Flatt, and Barney Keith were often preaching near us, sometimes in regular work and sometimes in gospel meetings. I mention these only because many still know their names as representing biblical teaching. I knew all of them and heard all of them. Solid teaching was also generally heard

in rural congregations where we visited for meetings over a three-county area. A few of these able men did later follow the institutional line, when problems arose over the work of the local church in the late 1950s and 1960s. Yet, even their teaching was mostly sound and Bible-based. It was from their teaching that I learned and grew toward spiritual maturity. I actually obeyed the Gospel and then began presenting some short lessons while our family still worshipped with the old Poplar Street congregation in Florence (now Wood Avenue); division later came over the work of the church.

The teaching of those years often stressed biblical fundamentals: the inspiration of the Scriptures, the authority of Jesus Christ, the Bible as our only authority, the two covenants (old vs. new), the necessity of being in the church, the Lord's church (New Testament church, church of Christ) as the sole church in God's plan, water baptism being essential for salvation, denominationalism as sinful, the need to restore the church to its original pattern, the possibility of

our being New Testament Christians, conversion to Christ, God's plan for worship in the local church, the sinfulness of instrumental music in worship, the spiritual nature of the church and its work, the departure from truth when the local church's operation is institutionalized, the heavenly hope of the redeemed, and the fearful punishment of the wicked. I might add that God's grace was often mentioned in connection with His plan of salvation and the Christian's hope, contrary to the claims of a few that we never heard about grace.

How long has it been since you heard lessons of this kind? Preachers, how long has it been since you preached such lessons? Elders, when have you asked a preacher to include such teaching in his sermons? Which of these topics would you find difficult to explain to someone? Yes, it is wise to balance our preaching, but omitting such "heavy" issues as these has led to ignorance of the church that Jesus built. It even becomes questionable when such imbalance causes local churches to lose their sense of belonging



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 (12:4) Marriage and the Home

to Christ and our sense of being New Testament Christians. Such teaching as this definitely gave the understanding that Christians and the church of the Lord are different from men's churches.

I understand that many issues have arisen in more recent times that trouble and agitate, all of which deserve some place in our menu of teaching. I also understand that subjects like grace, mercy, love, peace, longsuffering, and personal evangelism need inclusion. However, my experience with the profound teaching of my past, especially when combined with the Lord's instructions to preachers in the Letters to Preachers (1, 2 Timothy, and Titus), leads me to conclude that a good part of what I hear in gospel meetings in recent years falls short of the high level of edification on which I was trained.

It may well be the case that some congregations have chosen the wrong men as elders. It also may be true that some churches have the wrong preacher. Evangelists need to quit viewing

themselves as professionals trying to hold on to their positions and "shell down the corn." Elders and churches need to quit treating them as such. Elders need to quit trying to please people and remain popular when they should be pleasing God! They should know what churches need and see that they receive it.

Perhaps another word about balance is needed. To stress such topics as I am recommending, to the exclusion of other needed matters, is just as unwise and unbalanced as the other extreme. All sin must be exposed. All virtues must be commended. All encouragement must be given. Nothing needed should be avoided. May preachers so fill themselves with the Scriptures that all of it eventually comes out in their teaching. 📖



Bobby L. Graham

Bobby actively participates in fill-in preaching, Belize trips, teaching an hour each day at Athens Bible School, and in gospel meeting work. He and his wife, Karen, have three children. He can be reached at bobbylgraham@pclnet.net.

Caesarea Maritima

by Trent and Rebekah Dutton

Caesarea Maritima is a prominent site of New Testament interest and holds exquisite examples of first-century Roman architecture.

As the pandemic wanes in prominence and travelers are returning abroad, and as the original intent of our article series was to hit the high points of Israel, we have to stop somewhere. That somewhere is Caesarea by the Sea, or Caesarea Maritima, as you may see it named.

Caesarea is a cornerstone of New Testament events. Try reading through the book of Acts and not travel to Caesarea. Philip travels there after baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch, Cornelius is there, Herod Agrippa I was struck down in the city, Paul lands there at the end of his second and third journeys, and he was sent there again after being arrested. It was there that Paul testified before Festus and Herod Agrippa II.

From the historical and archaeological perspective, this site is a treasure trove, particularly for the first centuries of both B.C. and A.D. This is due to Caesarea being a harbor. If you are familiar with the coastline of Israel, there is one item not common: natural harbors. The straight-line currents moving past the shores of Israel create a coastline of beautiful beaches and few inlets. In early antiquity, there were still port cities that developed and thrived over time, but they had no real harbors. Instead, ships, depending on their size and configuration, would often “dock” offshore and ferry cargo ashore in smaller boats, or run the ship aground in a controlled manner. Port cities such as Tyre and Acre (Acco) were the exception in the region, where the coastline provided a slight harbor.

Port cities on the Mediterranean were centers of interest and power in the eyes of regional ruling nations. Why? Any port city was a trading point. Via taxation and regulating the flow of goods, nations could enrich themselves by controlling these ports. Many ports in on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean served this purpose. Alexandria, Ashkelon, Joppa, Caesarea, Tyre, and Sidon. Each of these cities, and Tyre in particular, also served as gateways to the east, not just into the Levant, but into Persia and beyond.

Caesarea was built near a deserted Ptolemaic (Ancient Greek State) trade station known as Straton’s Tower. Its history begins with Rome and King Herod—being built as a military

stronghold and significant harbor for the Roman-controlled kingdom of Judah. Caesarea was important for trade, but it also served as a show of power. In typical Roman and King Herod fashion, Caesarea was built on a large and impressive scale. Using the most advanced methods of the time and with imported materials, he had had breakwaters constructed of material that hardened into concrete under the water. Another advanced Roman feature was aqueducts. Multiple aqueducts served the city, with some having their source as far away as the southern slopes of Mount Carmel.

While the primary jetties of the Caesarea harbor did not remain above



Caesarea was served by multiple aqueducts



Theatre at Caesarea, reconstructed and occasionally configured for modern events, as shown here

sea level past antiquity, this port in its time provided a location for Herod to build a Roman city with palaces and baths as well as a theatre, amphitheater, agora, hippodrome, and temples. Later, Roman governors would also use the city as a base of operations, and it became a Roman colony under Vespasian. One of the most well-known governors of Caesarea was Pontius Pilate. A famous inscription known as the Pilate Stone was discovered at Caesarea Maritima—part

of which reads, “Pontus Pilate,” “prefect of Judea.”

When visiting this site, like the others in this series, there is much to see and process in the context of the biblical narrative. This site is one of great value for events in the New Testament and the first centuries. Maybe most prominent for us, is that it was the location where God’s plan of salvation was first delivered to all via the message to Cornelius. **T**



Trent & Rebekah Dutton

Trent and Rebekah Dutton both hold Master’s degrees in Biblical Archaeology from Wheaton College, in the Chicago, IL, area. They have participated in four full excavation seasons with The Leon Levy Expedition to Ashkelon, two seasons at Tel Shimron in the Jezreel Valley, and one season at Tel Burna in the Shephelah. They are members of the Eastside church of Christ in Athens, AL. They can be reached at trentdutton@gmail.com.

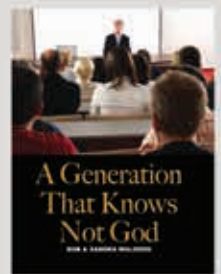
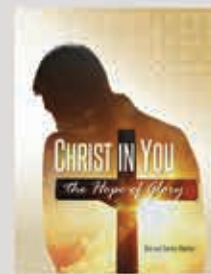


The hippodrome at Caesarea, site of horse and chariot races



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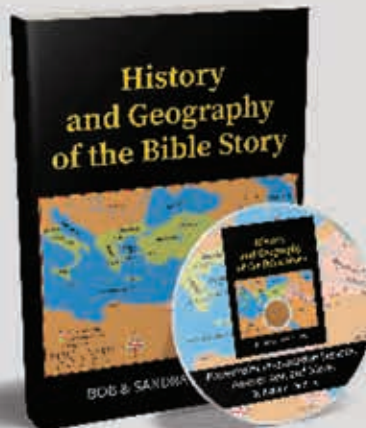
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Taking His hand, helping each other home.

Leaders Trust Others

by Keith Hamilton

One characteristic of outstanding leaders is that they can see the potential in someone when others do not.

Introduction

Visualize for a moment an imaginary meeting. The disciples, now apostles of the Lord, are sitting in a room and having a discussion. Peter has just returned from the house of Cornelius and reported the successful conversion of a group of Gentiles. The topic focuses on the need to identify someone who could lead the work of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. As the apostles are reflecting in silence, one of them cheerfully speaks up. He says, “I know the perfect person for this work.” The other apostles look at him curiously, anticipating his suggestion. He says, “The ideal candidate for this work would be Saul of Tarsus!” We can only imagine the gasps of horror, chuckles, or even the critical, “Have you lost your mind?” Given the circumstances that existed, this reaction would have been expected. However, we know “the rest of the story.” The Lord declared that Saul of Tarsus was a “chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15). Knowing the reputation of Saul, the reaction imagined above would have been expected. The response by Ananias shows he was not too keen on the idea: “Lord, I have heard by many of this man, and how much evil he hath done to thy saints in Jerusalem” (Acts 9:13, 21). This reminds us of an essential truth: “the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7, NKJV) One remarkable thing I have observed in successful leaders is a unique ability they have to look past a person’s personality and reputation when working with them.

Distinguishing Between Performance and Personality

We live in a very fickle time where people are judged based upon the perception that others have of them. The problem is that what folks “like” about a person’s character today may change tomorrow. Society is often governed by “rock stars” who are popular at that moment, not because of their ability to perform but because of their personality. We cannot allow this worldly mindset to affect the way a local congregation chooses leaders. Selecting elders, deacons, and preachers should be done in a grave and mature manner. Unfortunately, in some places, it appears that adolescents are in charge and leadership selection looks more like voting for the high school homecoming queen and king.

One thing that is true of effective leaders is that they can see the potential in someone when others do not. They will also trust in someone when others will not. When General Eisenhower needed a hard driving leader who could rescue the American troops at the Battle of the Bulge, there was no doubt in his mind who to tap: General George Patton. General Patton’s personality was arrogant and caustic. He said and did things that got him in serious trouble. Many did not like him and believed he should have been removed. Yet, General Eisenhower knew there was one, and only one, individual who had the performance ability that was presently needed.

Some folks never learn the lesson that you can work with and work for

people you may not like. Yet, even a casual study of the Scriptures reveals God chose people to perform some tasks that men would not have chosen. Which of us would have chosen the men that Jesus did to be apostles? God looked past personality and reputation to call upon people with the ability to perform the work to which He called them. The prophet Amos also comes to mind. He was a “country boy” from Tekoa who made a living herding goats and picking sycamore fruit (Amos 7:14). Yet, God called him from obscurity and sent him to Jerusalem to preach repentance to the sinful and affluent “city folks.” Although he lacked a sophisticated education and possessed a rough personality, Amos fulfilled God’s call to preach (Amos 7:15). At one point, Amos referred to the worldly wives of the wicked leaders as the “kine of Bashan” (Amos 4:1), which is equivalent to calling them a bunch of “fat cows.” Folks, that’s rough! Yet, this uneducated and “uncouth” man whom God called from obscurity stepped outside that which was familiar to serve in a role beyond his prior experience. It was not the messenger that was important, but the message. Let us not forget that this has always been the case. May we see people for their potential and ability, looking past their personality and present accomplishments. Let us not make judgments about others based on a superficial consideration of their reputation (i.e., what others say about them). Leaders must focus on developing everyone they work with and not just those that they “like.” This brings us then to an important point regarding the ability of great leaders.

Learning to Meet Each Person Where They Are

I used to make this statement to members of management when I provided training or coaching. I meant that they needed to get to know each person with whom they worked and what their specific needs were. There is no “cookie cutter” approach to leadership. Some people need encouragement and direction, while others just need support. When I used to coach at a high school, I learned that there were some players who would not respond without me “getting on to them.” Yet, others, if I looked cross at them, would tune up and cry. As a coach, I had to learn how to adjust my leadership style for each person with whom I interacted.

I love what Head Baseball Coach Tim Corbin of Vanderbilt does at the beginning of practice with his team. As the players form a circle to stretch and warm up, Coach Corbin gets in the middle of the circle and goes back and forth from player to player, talking to each of them. Coach Corbin learns each of his players and knows what they specifically need for development. It would be wise for elders to learn about the members of the congregation they serve (lead) to know what each person needs for development. How else can they truly “feed” the flock? This obviously cannot happen if the elders do not even know who some of the members are.

The apostle Paul applied this principle of knowing where people are in order to serve them when he wrote to the church at Corinth: “I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people, but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are not able; for you are still carnal. . .” (1 Cor. 3:1-3). Leaders learn to adjust to each person. Some require a “hands on” approach. There is another important point that leaders need to learn with people.

Knowing When to Get Out of the Way

Believe it or not, this is probably the hardest thing for many leaders to learn. Sometimes the best thing you can do for some people is get out of their way. This requires a high level of trust by a leader. Some folks have the mistaken impression that a leader must know everything and be involved in every decision. However, a skilled leader knows how to develop the people they work with so that they can function without them. This principle applies in every sphere: home, work, community, and even in the local church.

A great leader wants the people they work with to become self-directed so that when they see an opportunity to function within their authorized sphere, they do not have to ask for permission. They do what needs to be done. A church needs to be filled with energetic disciples who, when they have an opportunity to serve, just do it. They don’t have to be exhorted to take advantage of the opportunity. They also have the trust of the leaders of the local congregation to know that they will function in a scriptural manner. This will happen only when spiritual leaders create an environment of trust. Jesus saw the potential of Paul (Saul of Tarsus) and then “trusted” him with the gospel (1 Thess. 2:4). Let us also learn to see the potential in others and then trust them to render faithful service. **T**



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Sin That Easily Entangles Us

by Brenden D. Ashby

Satan has employed the same playbook since the beginning—tempting man through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Let us, therefore, not be ignorant of his devices.

Introduction

After extolling the great examples of faith, the Hebrew writer says this, “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1, NASB). Sin has a way of getting us all tangled up. Satan has a habit of taking us further than we ever wanted to go. We need to look no further than the beginning chapters of Genesis to see how quickly sin entangles people.

The First Sin

We begin in Genesis 3:1-7 with the fall of Adam and Eve. Man and woman had everything they could want or need in the garden. However, we read in Genesis 3:1, “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.” He said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” Satan slightly adjusts what God said to Eve. I believe Satan recognized Eve knew better, so he asked her a leading question that would allow him to sow seeds of doubt in her mind.

In the following verses, we see Eve answers correctly (vv. 2-3). This tree in the middle of the garden is the only one from which they are not to eat. Satan seizes on this, “You surely will not die!” he responds, “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (vv. 4-5). Satan

cast his doubt, and now that doubt has been sown in Eve’s mind, she questions God’s command (Gen. 3:2-3). So, when she was near the tree of good and evil, she saw that the tree “was good for food, and it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise.” Blinded by desire, Eve felt justified in disobeying God: “She took from the tree and ate; she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate” (v. 6).

Satan neglected to tell her the consequences of this action. Quickly, man and woman go from living in peace with God to fear and shame before God (Gen. 3:10), pride in self (Gen. 3:12), and they are cast out from the presence of God (Gen. 3:22-24). We should all pause after reading this account and ask ourselves, do we accept the guilt and shame of our sin, or do we pridefully and evasively cast blame?

The First Murder

Unfortunately, we’re not done yet. Quickly, the biblical text moves from the world’s first sin to the first murder. We read in Genesis 4:1-15 of Cain murdering his brother Abel. The brothers come to offer a sacrifice to God, and we are told that Abel’s offering was acceptable, and Cain’s was not. Cain took issue with this. Harboring resentment toward his brother, he “became very angry and his countenance fell” (4:5). We would do well to remember at this point that such an attitude is sinful and, when left unchecked, sets us on a terrible downward path (cf. Matt. 5:21-24).

In response to Cain’s anger, God offered a warning. “The Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it’” (4:6-7). God warns Cain here that he better put this attitude in check lest it lead to further sin. Yet, Cain does not listen; instead, he plotted and planned. Leading Abel out into the field where no one could hear or see what was happening, Cain committed the first murder. “It came about when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him” (v. 8).

Like his parents, Cain wasn’t prepared for the consequences of his actions. God curses Cain because he shed innocent blood (Gen. 4:11). As a result, the ground would no longer yield its strength for him (4:12). In response, Cain selfishly cried out, “My punishment is too great to bear!” (4:13). The divine curse was not all the consequences of his sin. We read further that Cain “went out from the presence of the Lord” (4:16). Again, note how quickly sin can entangle a person. Here we might pause again and reflect: Did Cain learn anything from his parents’ sin? Have we learned anything from our previous sins? Part of not giving “the devil an opportunity” (Eph. 4:27) is learning from our past mistakes so we won’t commit them again.

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Pervasive Wickedness

In chapter five, we read of the descendants of Adam through the line of Seth (the child who replaced Abel). Starting in chapter six, we find that the sons of God (righteous men) married the daughters of men (unrighteous women). Generations of families lacking spiritual discernment resulted in a world where “the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5). God mourned over humanity’s fallen state (6:6). The consequences of this wickedness were unlike anything God had done before. God would “blot out man whom I have created from the face of the earth. . . for I am sorry that I have made them” (6:7).

Yet, not all is lost, and the world is not completely dark. Amid this wickedness, we find a man named Noah and his family, who were not like the people of

that day and they found favor with God (Gen. 6:8). Because God found Noah and his family to be faithful, He spared them from the judgment of the flood.

It is incredible to see how quickly things spiraled out of control for humanity. We go from disobeying God’s command in the garden to the corruption of all mankind in six brief chapters. In each case we observed, sin quickly made a mess of things—taking individuals further than they probably thought possible, bringing consequences that they never anticipated or conceived.

Hope from the Beginning

After the flood, we find out that Noah had his faults and sins (just like any human). We also see man in an act of arrogance and pride, try to build something to rival God. Just as things seem to be getting dark again in the narrative of Genesis, we are introduced

to Abram (later renamed Abraham) in Genesis 12:1. Moreover, we see God has a plan to remedy the sin problem that plagues humanity. We read in Genesis 12:3, “And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” This promise God gave to Abram would ultimately be fulfilled through Christ (Gal. 3:16, 26-29). Through Jesus, God rendered powerless sin and death and provided the hope of eternity with Him. **BT**



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When Were the NT Books Recognized as Authoritative?

by Ron Halbrook

Webster defines “spurious” as “outwardly similar or corresponding to something without having its genuine qualities.” Ron discussed the differences between true or canonical books and false or non-canonical books.

Introduction

By the end of the first century, all the twenty-seven books we now have in the New Testament had been written. God’s revelation was given first in the men and then in their writings (2 Thess. 2:15). Just as there were spurious books, there were spurious apostles (2 Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 2:4). God gave the true apostles the credentials to prove that they were true apostles, and He gave the inspired writings the necessary credentials, distinguishing them from everything false. Just as spurious apostles unwittingly expose themselves as false, so do spurious writings (Deut. 18:21-22; 13:1-5; Gal. 1:6-9; 1 Tim. 4:1-3).

The spurious books contain doctrines which contradict the books readily acknowledged as inspired, and often contain bizarre and ridiculous accounts which fall far beneath the dignity of true Scripture. All anyone has to do is to read some of these writings to recognize such differences immediately. For instance, one of these ancient books has the child Jesus turning children into donkeys so he can find them when playing hide-and-seek. In contrast, the true books are in perfect harmony in their teaching and contain no ridiculous myths, a definite mark of inspiration.



Authoritative When Written

The New Testament books were written by men who knew they were inspired. It is not the case that the aura of inspiration was conferred on these books several centuries later. In 2 Peter 3:1-2 and 15-16, the apostle Peter puts the writings of the New Testament apostles on a par with Old Testament Scripture.

This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard

to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.

Notice in verse 2, “us the apostles,” which includes Peter himself. Peter recognized that he wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit just as Old Testament prophets before him (2 Pet. 1:20-21). What Peter wrote thus had immediate authority as true Scripture. His writings did not wait 200 years to have authority conferred on them by the

vote of some council. Those councils merely acknowledged what had been known to be true from the very time the authors penned their letters.

In verses 15-16, Peter also recognized that Paul wrote by inspiration (“the wisdom given unto him”) and that what the apostles taught harmonized (“even as . . . Paul . . . hath written unto you”). “All his (i.e., Paul’s) epistles” were accounted as a part of “the other Scriptures.” Thus, the writings of Paul were already recognized as authoritative in the first century!

Complete Authoritative Revelation Promised

God planned to provide the perfect and complete revelation of His will in the first century through the agency of His chosen apostles and prophets. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13:9-10, “For we

know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” Divine revelation was partial and progressive until its completion. The “in-part” revelation soon became the “perfect” or complete revelation. Efforts are made to extend the power of divine revelation through new apostles and prophets by claiming that this passage points to the second coming of Christ as the end of the age of revelation. The passage does not contrast the partial coming of Christ and then the perfect coming of Christ. The process of divine revelation is under discussion, not the process of Christ’s return.

The partial revelation made through inspired knowledge and prophecy would end when it was completed, which occurred by the end of the first century. We have “that which is perfect” in the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, just as God promised.

The Process of Distinguishing True and False Scripture

Some people claim that the process of Christians listing true or canonical books, and false or non-canonical books after the first century, proves that there was no certainty about what books were authoritative. To the contrary, that process proves that the early Christians were determined to protect the completed revelation from the encroachments of subsequent fake revelations. They diligently observed the final divine warning recorded in Scripture:

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book (Rev. 22:18-19).

Does the appearance of the *Book of Mormon* or other modern publications claiming to be Scripture shake our faith

in the perfection and all-sufficiency of God’s word? No. No more than the appearance of such bogus writings in the early centuries. Suppose we were to publish a list of the twenty-seven books in an article today and to list such writings, as the *Book of Mormon*, as bogus. Does that mean the twenty-seven books of the New Testament were not recognized as authoritative among God’s people *before* such an article or list appeared? No, and neither did earlier lists prove any such thing. Such lists are simply testimony to the ongoing battle between God and Satan as Satan tries to destroy the authority and credibility of God’s word.

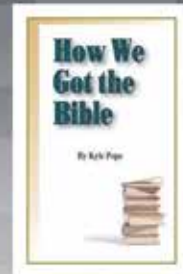
Just as there have always been false as well as true apostles, there have always been false as well as true books of Scripture. God commands us to distinguish the true from the false (1 Thess. 5:23; 1 John 4:1-6). Faithful followers of God have always been able to recognize that distinction. Just as the true apostles were recognized in the first century, as distinguished from the specious, even so true Scripture was recognized in the first century, as distinguished from the spurious. We can make the same distinction today.

If some man adds to or subtracts from the books of true Scripture, that in no way weakens the integrity of true Scripture (Rev. 22:18-19). It simply proves that men can be deceived because they do not have a genuine love of truth (2 Thess. 2:9-12). God can be found and the truth of His word can be recognized wherever good and honest hearts seek Him (Matt. 7:7-11; 13:18-23; John 7:17; Acts 17:27; Rom. 1:20; 2 Pet. 3:3-5). **II**



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You Are Not Your Issues!

by Nathan L Morrison

A web search on “I’ve got issues” yields 194,000 results—including books, movies, blogs, etc. While all struggle with “issues,” i.e., personal characteristics, or traits, that are causing some kind of problem, we must not be dominated or defined by them.

Introduction

Many times in life, we get defined by our “issues:” I am an asthmatic. I am a diabetic. You can say, I am. . . *insert any issue or condition you may be facing.* Sometimes our *identities* get lost in the description of our *issues*. While such information may be important to doctors and care providers, we must not let it be what defines us. You are *not* your issues! You are more than that. You are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27). He loved you so much that He sent His Son to die for your sins, and give you hope of sharing eternity with Him (John 1:29; 3:16; 14:1-6)!

Mark 5:25-34 and Luke 8:43-48 offer an account of an unnamed woman who, for all time, is associated with her “issue.” Nevertheless, she finds compassion, healing, and a new identity in Jesus Christ. Many people today need the healing found only in Jesus, the Great Physician!

The Woman with an Issue of Blood for Twelve Years

In Luke 8:40-42, Jairus, an official of the synagogue, implored Jesus to come and heal his dying twelve-year-old daughter. Along the way, an interruption happened that didn’t seem to bother Jesus (Luke 8:43-48; Mark 5:25-34)! The gospels of Mark and Luke both detail the interruption that took Jesus’s attention. An unnamed woman, who had suffered from a blood hemorrhage for twelve years [who had spent her livelihood on physicians (Luke 8:43-44 and Mark 5:25-

29, cf. ESV & NKJV), but none of their treatments worked, and she only grew worse], touched the border of Jesus’s garment and was immediately healed! Some things of note in this account:

She is unnamed—and known for all time by her “issue.” If she followed the Law of Moses, then her life over the previous twelve years would have been spent in isolation and included lots of water because she would have been counted as “Unclean!”

Leviticus 15:19-24 has the laws governing a woman’s normal cycle, where she would be unclean for seven days and made clean the eighth day. Leviticus 15:25-33 clarifies that a woman with a discharge of blood outside the normal cycle is subject to all the rules of normality, but also would be considered unclean until it was resolved. Anyone who touched her, involuntarily or voluntarily, needed to wash and would be unclean until evening. Anything on which she sat or slept was counted as unclean, so also anyone who touched those objects. Leviticus 15:31 says, “Thus you shall keep the sons of Israel separated from their uncleanness, so that they will not die in their uncleanness by their defiling My tabernacle that is among them” (NASB).

This unfortunate woman experienced a long-term illness; she had seen many doctors, suffered much at their hands, and spent all her money (Mark 5:26). She not only “could not be healed by anyone,” but also had grown worse. Because of the crowd, she should have been shouting, “Unclean! Unclean!” because anyone she

touched, or who touched her, would need to go bathe and be unclean themselves until evening. Anyone she touched, or touched her, would have been annoyed at the massive inconvenience, since they would have had to stop what they were doing to go wash and isolate themselves as unclean until the evening! Imagine the jostling (Mark 5:31; Luke 8:45) required to reach Jesus because she had heard of Him and thought to herself, “If I just touch His garments, I will get well” (Mark 5:28).

What *faith!* She was aware of Jesus and His power, recognized her need for Him in her life, and knew that she needed to contact Jesus. Nothing would keep her from Him!

She came to Jesus seeking to just touch Him and be healed. She snuck up behind Him and stooped down to just touch the fringe of His cloak (Luke 8:44)! The *New English Translation Bible* (NET) says, “edge” while the *New King James Version* (NKJV) says, “border.”

Numbers 15:37-41 says that all the male (“sons of Israel”) Jews had to wear tassels on each corner of their garments, and each tassel had to have a thread or cord of blue to signify their obedience to God’s Law and to be holy. Many Jewish communities still observe this practice. Over the years, other colors were added to signify an individual’s authority and status within their community, such as royalty, nobility, rabbi, teacher or healer. Here, this woman most likely touched the tassel on the edge, or border, of Jesus’s robe.

When she touched Jesus, He didn't become unclean but made *her* clean! Jesus has the healing ability to take what is unclean and make it clean!

We also have a need to “touch Jesus”: We have an illness of sin (Rom. 3:10, 23). Sin will bring about death—we are dying without Christ (Rom. 6:23). Peter said now through Jesus Christ let no one be called “unholy or unclean!” but that “in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him” (Acts 10:28, 34-35). Don't let your issues or any other thing impede you reaching Jesus, the Great Physician!

Beyond the Issues

Luke and Mark both introduce the woman by her issue of bleeding for twelve years (Luke 8:43; Mark 5:25-26). Despite her great faith and other positive traits, this woman was defined almost entirely by her “issue,” by her problem, by her pain. The same thing can happen to you and me! When your “issues,” problems, and pain threaten to overwhelm you and try to define you, don't allow them to! Go to God in prayer and give it to the Master Healer (1 Pet. 5:6-7)! By grabbing the edge of Jesus's robe (perhaps His tassel), she was grabbing hold of the symbol of Jesus's authority and commitment to God, including the promises of His word! This is a beautiful picture of prayer: When you are in danger of being swallowed up or defined by your issues, go to God in prayer (Phil. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:6-7). Through faith in Jesus, grab hold of the promises of God and don't let go!

Know Your Value

Another lesson: This woman knew her value in God's eyes! She refused to be stopped from her objective, i.e., contacting/touching Jesus (Mark 5:28)! In both accounts, this woman was not the Lord's primary focus—He was on the way to heal Jairus' twelve-year-old daughter who was dying. Both women in this story faced tragic circumstances: One was twelve years old and dying! The other had been suffering for twelve years in

lonely isolation! Doctors had failed. Both ladies needed Jesus. From a first century societal standpoint, Jairus was a respected synagogue official, but the unclean woman would have been considered “riffraff”

The unclean woman made her way through the crowd and touched Jesus! Although it interrupted the procession on the way to an important man's house, Jesus took the time to point her out. He said, “Who is the one who touched Me? For I was aware. . .” God's salvation and healing are only for those who desire Him—she sought Him! *As God knows who is testing Him and who is sincere, He knows those who desire Him. Jesus knew who touched Him. He asked for her benefit.* She had to overcome her own fears and the intimidation she might face from the crowd. In response, she came “trembling” and fell down before Jesus and confessed the “whole truth!” (Luke 8:45-47; Mark 5:30-33)

If we humble ourselves to God, He will exalt us (1 Pet. 5:6-7). Her diligent efforts to “touch Jesus” allowed her to receive God's blessing and be called, “Daughter” (Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48). Lifting her beyond her “issue” and declaring in the presence of all her inherent worth, Jesus said, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction” (Mark 5:34). Our loving Lord transformed this woman's identity! No longer “Unclean,” no longer “not enough,” no longer excluded from society, no longer defined by an “issue”—she was a daughter of the King!

The world will try to make you feel small, worthless, and not worth God's time because of your “issues.” Jesus wants you! He says to come unto Him for rest (Matt. 11:28-30). When we come out of the world, God promises, “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” says the Lord Almighty (2 Cor. 6:18). You matter and are of value to Jesus. He died for you to be lifted up from your “issues” and for you to be called a “Son” or “Daughter” of the King!

Conclusion

When you feel your “issues” (whatever they are) defining you and feel that all anyone sees are your problems and pain, remember: You are *not* your issues! *You are a child of the King!* When you obey the gospel, you are adopted into the family of God, not because of how special you are or because God needed you, but simply because God wants you—issues and all (Rom. 8:14-17). Like this unnamed daughter of the King: don't stop! Don't give up! Reach out and touch Jesus today and you will receive His blessings, salvation, and healing for your soul! He is the Great Physician (Matt. 9:12). Seek to “touch,” i.e., contact Jesus” and thus be healed from sin. Accept His invitation (Through obedience to the gospel). Confess Him as Lord (Live your lives in submission to Him). *Only* Jesus could save the woman and *Only* Jesus can save you (Acts 4:10-12)! Don't fall for the false “cures” of the world, but obey the gospel in baptism for the forgiveness of your sins and go to God in prayer to find victory over the issues of life! **🙏**

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Nathan Morrison

Nathan has labored with the Courthouse church of Christ in Richmond, VA, since 2017. He and his wife, Becky, have two children. The church website is courthousechurchofchrist.com. He can be reached at nmorrison1939@gmail.com.

Rebranding the Church

by Heath Rogers

As Jesus said, we must let our lights shine, so that God will be glorified (Matt. 5:16). Yet, principle and precept matter more than perception and popularity.

Rebranding is a marketing strategy in which a new name, term, symbol, design, or concept is created for an established company or product with the intention of making it more attractive to customers. This often involves radical changes to a brand's logo, name, image, and/or advertising themes.

As with many other worldly practices, rebranding has crept into religion. Church rebranding is a real thing. In his online article, *Warning: 3 Things You Need to Know Before a Church Rebrand*, Mark MacDonald writes, "It's all the rage. And it's a great trend. In fact, if you haven't branded or rebranded your church in the last five years, you should budget for it in the next year. Why? Because an effective rebrand will help you: evangelize better (it'll reconnect you to your community), increase membership (your members will improve word-of-mouth promotion), strengthen participation (members will have more ownership of ministries)."

Churches rebrand to make themselves relevant to the surrounding community. It is often done in the name of "evangelism." However, effective rebranding involves more than designing a new logo or creating a gimmicky new name for a church. Successful rebranding requires a church to change what it offers to the community to accommodate the demands of the marketplace. In another online article entitled *Ten Steps to Rebrand Your Church*, step two reads:

Have staff and elders complete 200 community-wide door-to-door surveys



which ask the following three questions: (1) "Do you attend a church more than two times a month?" (If yes, tell them thank you and move on. DO NOT FINISH SURVEY). (2) "If you were to consider going to a church, what kinds of things would they have to offer to get you to attend and come back a second time?" (3) "On any given week, what things do you and your family members participate in?" (Do not hand them anything at this point. Or invite them to church. Nothing. Trust me on this. Just say "thank you" and be on your way.)

Church rebranding is not about trying to be the Lord's church doing the Lord's work in the Lord's way. It is about offering the community the church they want for the sake of numbers. Those who are promoting this innovation have already acknowledged its failure. According to MacDonald, a church needs to rebrand itself every five years. Why? The whims of the community change. If a church is community oriented, it will have to change to meet the demands of the community. However, if a church is Christ-oriented, it will never have to rebrand itself.

We are all concerned about saving lost souls and increasing the membership of

the local church. However, the Lord's model for church growth involves every member letting their light shine (Matt. 5:16) and sharing their faith with others (Acts 8:4; 19:10).

Let's leave the rebranding to the denominations. They are doomed to failure, anyway. Instead, let's be content to be the Lord's church doing the Lord's work the Lord's way. **T**

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Heath Rogers

Heath has been preaching for the Knollwood church of Christ in Beavercreek, OH, since 2011. He and his wife, Christy, have two grown children. The church website is knollwoodchurch.org. He can be reached at heathrogers71@yahoo.com.



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The Power of Example

by Mike Cooner

Godly examples effectively illustrate divine commandments. Paul said, “Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us” (Phil. 3:17).

Examples are some of the most powerful tools we have to influence others, either for good or evil. Jesus, when teaching others, did not just command His disciples to obey Him, but He also lived a life full of unselfish examples to teach us how we should live. When Jesus honored the poor widow for her example of sacrificial giving, it was after He had first left the glory and riches of heaven to walk on the earth without even as much as a place to lay His head (Luke 21:1-4; Matt. 8:20). When Jesus taught his disciples about serving one another, He did so by washing their feet (John 13:1-17). When Jesus taught about love and obedience, He showed His own love and obedience toward His Father (John 14:15, 21; Matt. 26:39; Heb. 5:8-9).

Paul also had a lot to say about examples. He reminded a young Timothy: “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim. 4:12). Paul reminded the Corinthians that those who fell in the wilderness and were destroyed were their examples that they should not follow in their rebellion and sin. “But with most of them, God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. . . Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come” (1 Cor. 10:5-11). While the Bible is filled with many examples that have the power for good in our lives if we follow them, there

are also examples that have the power for evil if we follow them.

The apostle Paul reminds the Corinthians, “Do not be deceived: ‘evil company corrupts good habits’” (1 Cor. 15:33). The writer of Hebrews warns of consequences if we follow the evil examples of others, “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience” (Heb. 4:11). The Proverb writer says, “Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on” (Prov. 4:14-15).

What about you and me? Are we using the power of our example for good or evil?

The answer will be found in who we choose to follow. “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life’” (John 8:12). **TL**

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Mike Cooner

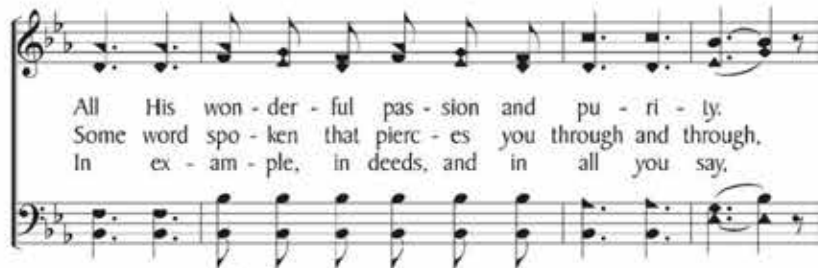
Mike is a member of the Trenton Church of Christ in Trenton, FL, and is currently involved in sharing the gospel in two local prisons. He can be reached at cooner.mike@yahoo.com.



Let the Beauty of Jesus Be Seen • 619



1. Let the beau - ty of Je - sus be seen in me,
 2. When some - bod - y has been so un - kind to you,
 3. From the dawn of the morn - ing to close of day,



All His won - der - ful pas - sion and pu - ri - ty,
 Some word spo - ken that pier - ces you through and through,
 In ex - am - ple, in deeds, and in all you say,



May His Spir - it di - vine All my be - ing re - fine;
 Think how He was be - guiled, Spat up - on and re - viled;
 Lay your gifts at His feet; Ev - er strive to keep sweet;



Let the beau - ty of Je - sus be seen in me.
 Let the beau - ty of Je - sus be seen in you.
 Let the beau - ty of Je - sus be seen in you.

Hymn: 11.11.6.6.11. • Albert W. T. Orsborn (c. 1916), st. 2-3 George L. Johnson (1934)
 Tune: BRIDLINGTON • Tom M. Jones (1927), arr. Cleavant Derricks
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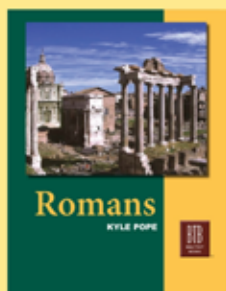
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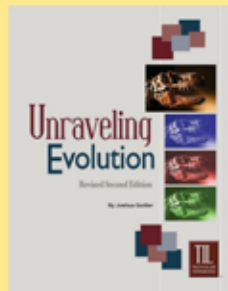
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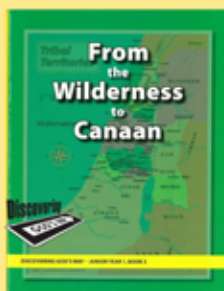
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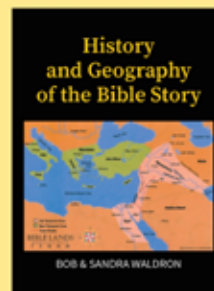
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Evangelist: Lance R. Taylor (256) 777-0990 | sandlinroadhchurch.com

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Evangelist: Ken Sils (765) 307-8048 | (251) 342-4144 or 342-2041

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271 Hwy 65N
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Evangelist: Bruce Reeves | Bldg: (501) 336-0052

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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

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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

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Evangelist: Dick Blackford | (870) 933-9134

PINE BLUFF

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Evangelist: Clarence W. Sell | (870) 879-2097

ARIZONA

TUCSON

Church of Christ

145 N. Country Club Rd.
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JP Flores | (562) 420-2363 or Mark Reeves | (562) 377-1674 | justchristians.org

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10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.

Evangelist: Richie Thetford | poudrevalleychurchofchrist.org

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(970) 249-8116 | sanjuanchurchofchrist.org

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(850) 622-3817 | southwaltonchurchofchrist.com | Location change coming in 2022: 497 Church St Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

GENEVA

Church of Christ

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Church of Christ

6 Ln. Dr.
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Evangelist: Joey Rankin (850) 244-9222

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Church of Christ at S. Bumby

3940 S. Bumby Ave.
Sun. Communion: 9:30 a.m. | Bible Study 10 a.m. | Praise & Preaching: 10:55 a.m. (No p.m. Service) | Wed 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Ken Chapman
Office: (407) 851-8031 | bumby.org | Note: Call for current worship and Bible study times.

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(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

PINE MTN. VALLEY

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Route 116 (near Callaway Gardens)
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Evangelist: Tommy W. Thomas | (706) 628-5117 or 628-5229 | pmvchurch.com

IDAHO

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Evangelist: Steve Wolfgang | (630) 968-0760 | dgcoc.org

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ChurchDirectory

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OOLITIC

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Evangelist: Jeremy Goen | (812) 967-3437 or 967-3520 | pekinchurchofchrist.com

KENTUCKY

BEAVER DAM

Church of Christ

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Evangelist: Jerid Gunter | (270) 274-4451

BENTON

Fairdealing Church of Christ

8081 US Hwy 68-East, Benton, KY 42025
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 a.m. | Worship 10:00 a.m. | Wed. Bible Study 6 p.m.
270. 354-9451 | fairdealingmarc@gmail.com | churchofchristatfairdealing.com | Conveniently located near Kenlake State Resort Park on the western shore of Kentucky Lake.

BRANDENBURG

Brandenburg Church of Christ

612 Broadway
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Evangelist: Charles J. White | (270) 422-3878

CAMPBELLSVILLE

Sunny Hill Dr. Church of Christ

107 Sunny Hill Dr.
Worship 9:30 a.m. & 11:30 a.m. | Bible Study 10:30 a.m. | Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Steve Lee | (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

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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

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: Dan McMahan | (270) 971-1492 | 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 7:00 p.m.
Evangelist: Michael Hardin | michaelhardin1123@att.net | (502) 937 2822

Shepherdsville

Hebron Lane Church of Christ

3221 East Hebron Lane
Sun. Bible Study 9 a.m. | Worship 10 a.m. | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Ron Halbrook & Connie W. Adams | (502) 957-5115 or (502) 955-1748 | hebronlanechurchofchrist.com

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

MAINE

PORTLAND

Church of Christ

856 Brighton Ave. (Breakwater School) | Leave Maine Turnpike at Exit 48
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 | cedarsprings98@gmail.com

Roscommon

*N. Michigan Church of Christ***

414 South Main Street
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 a.m. | Worship 11:00 a.m. | Wed. Bible Study 6:00 p.m.
Evangelist: Ryan Thomas | (810) 837-1302 or (989) 389-3226 | northernmichiganchurchofchrist.com

MISSISSIPPI

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

7th St. Church of Christ

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

Grandview Church of Christ

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

SOUTH HAVEN

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 | (417) 239-1036 | primrosenor@suddenink.net | 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@gmail.com | capecountycoc.com

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.
Evangelist: Nolan Glover | (573) 888-6778 or (870) 650-1648 | westsidechurchofchrist.us

SAINT 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

SAINT 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 | churchofchrist-7bell.com

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte Church of Christ
5327 S. Tryon Street
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.
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 a.m. | Sun. Worship 11:00 am & 3:00 p.m. | Wed. Bible Study Adults: 1:00 p.m. & All ages: 7:00 p.m.
Evangelist: Heath Rogers | (937) 426-1422 | knollwoodchurch.org

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) 469-3311 | 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. Bible Study 6:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Josh Lee | (937) 789-8055 or (937) 746-1249 | franklin-church.org

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 or Mr. Kim Walton: (419) 651-3488 | Bldg: (419) 522-8982 | 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. Reno, OH 45773
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. | Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. | Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Mark Childers | (304) 615-1091 | (740) 374-9827 | mariettareno-churchofchrist.org

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

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 | (918) 931-1362 or (918) 423-3445

OREGON

SWEET HOME

Church of Christ
3702 E. Long St.
Sun. Bible Study 10 a.m. | Worship 11 a.m. & 7 p.m. | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 p.m.
Bldg: (541) 367-1599

SOUTH CAROLINA

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)
Note: See our web site for 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 | (Located .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 | (Located 15 mi. E. of Gatlinburg on Hwy. 321)
Sun. Bible Study 10a.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

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 | kscoc.com

MOUNT PLEASANT

Locust St. Church of Christ
108 Locust St.
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

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

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.
Evangelist: Lee Wildman | (615) 952-5458 or (615) 356-7318

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

ChurchDirectory

TEXAS

ALLEN

Twin Creeks Church of Christ

1414 W. Exchange Pkwy
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 a.m. | Worship 10 a.m. & 5:00 p.m. | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m.
Evangelist: Jerry King (214) 504-0443 & (972) 727-5355 | twincreeksoc.com

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 | (346) 216-1707 | ascoc.org

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 | biblework.com

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.
Evangelist: Max Dawson | (409) 866-1996 | dowlenroad.com

EDNA

Church of Christ

301 Robison St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. | Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m. | Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.
Evangelist: Phillip Stuckey | (361) 782-5506 or (361) 782-2844 | ednachurchofchrist.org

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

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.
Evangelist: Mark White | fryroad.org

IRVING

Westside Church of Christ

2320 Imperial Dr. (Located close 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

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

SAN ANTONIO

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: Jesse Garcia | (210) 660 0409 | pecanvalleychurchofchrist.org

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) or (leonvalleychurch@gmail.com) | (254) 939-0682 | leonvalleychurch.org

TEXARKANA

Franklin Dr. Church of Christ

2301 Franklin Dr.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. | Worship 10:15 a.m. | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 p.m.
Evangelist: Bryan Garlock
(870) 772-0746 | txkchurch.com

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

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: Steven Matthews | (757) 436-6900 | tidewaterchurchofchrist.com

RICHMOND

Courthouse Church of Christ

8330 Doublecreek Court, Chesterfield, VA 23832 (Located in teh 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) 778-4717 | 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 | churchofchristatridge-way.com

ROANOKE

Blue Ridge Church of Christ

929 Indiana Ave. N.E. (5 min. from Roanoke Convention Center)
Sun. 1st Lesson 9:15 a.m. | Bible Study 10 a.m. | Worship 11 a.m. | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 p.m.
Evangelist: Brent Paschall | (540) 344-2755 | blueridgecoc.org

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

TACOMA

Manitou Park Church of Christ

Meeting at Gray Middle School, 6229 S. Tyler St., Tacoma, WA 98409
Note: Please see webpage for updated meeting location and times.
Sun. Bible Study 10 a.m. | Worship 11 a.m. | Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m. (Online)
(253) 242-3098 | tacomachurch@gmail.com | tacomachurch.com

WEST VIRGINIA

CLARKSBURG

Westside Church of Christ

7 Old Davisson Run Rd
Sun. Worship 9:30 a.m.
(304) 622-5433 | westsidechurchofchrist-wv.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

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