

Truth

Magazine

*Taking His hand,
helping each other home.*



®

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GOD'S REMNANT

The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward. . . The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this (Isa. 37:31-32).



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If a Remnant, So What?

By Matthew Bassford

In this issue of *Truth Magazine*, Matthew Bassford has selected the theme and the writers. Though the faithful are often few, and many drift into apathy and apostasy, God has always preserved a remnant through which He accomplishes His work.

Introduction

These days, many of God's people regard the future of the Lord's church in America with great concern. Time does not appear to be on our side. It's been many years since the United States saw a generation as irreligious as the millennials. Even though the mainline denominations have suffered most from this, more conservative groups have been graying and shrinking too. We see it in our own congregations.

These demographic problems have been exacerbated by COVID. Few churches have seen their attendance increase or even hold steady. Many have experienced significant decline, and widespread congregational strife over COVID policies hasn't helped any, either.

It's easy for us to observe these trends, extrapolate them into the future, and conclude that all is lost. A friend of mine on the progressive side of the churches of Christ recently published a book with the subtitle, "Elegy for a Church on the Edge." Time to dig the grave and gather the mourners, folks. The churches of Christ are done!

Though I don't think the time has come to write that obituary just yet, the sign-out-front churches of Christ are not what they were in 1950. Especially among churches that reject human institutions, we may need to begin thinking of ourselves as a remnant. However, both historically and Biblically, a faithful remnant is not such a bad thing to be.

Predicting the Future

First, let us remember that there is only One who knows the end from the beginning, and we are not He. The educated elites in our society love to make confident predictions about what the future will hold decades from now, but if they were better educated, they would know that humanity's track record in long-term predictions is terrible. Anybody who thinks he knows what 2050 will be like is deluding himself.

In reality, religious sentiment in any nation seems to rise and fall. People of faith today wring their hands, because, in the pandemic's aftermath, fewer than half of Americans are members of any religious body. However, as best as researchers have been able to determine, only seventeen percent of Americans in 1776 were church members, a number that had been in steady decline since the Great Awakening some decades earlier.

This unpromising situation led not only to the Second Great Awakening of the early nineteenth century, but also to the Restoration itself. I doubt Thomas Jefferson would have predicted that outcome, and our future is equally unpredictable.

The End of History

Thus, we should not assume that the progressive ascendancy of our time will be permanent. We have not arrived at the end of history. Indeed, cracks already appear in the edifice.

Most recently, I have been intrigued by the rash of news stories reporting on racist behavior among high-school students. Photographs emerge of teens throwing Heil-Hitler salutes at parties or lying down in the shape of a swastika on gymnasium floors. Journalists screech, high-school administrators are appalled, and investigatory commissions are formed to root out this deplorable behavior.

I condemn racism, as does every other respectable adult. I'm on record as calling it a sin, and all of polite society joins with me in disapproval. That, of course, is the point. If you're a kid these days, and you want to torque off every authority figure in your life, what do you do? What transgressive acting-out remains?

Coming out as gay or trans won't do it. The school administration will throw you a party. Declare yourself an atheist? Nobody cares. Act like a neo-Nazi, though, and they'll push you into counseling. All your friends will think you're such a rebel!

I don't think the racist displays will stick around any more than the Satanist teens of the 1980s stayed Satanists. However, they reveal the rise of a generation that has not bought into the ideology of identity politics. I don't know what form the reaction will take, but there will be one, and a return to traditional religion is as likely a candidate as any.

Back to the Bible

Because it is reasonable to believe that religion will continue to play a significant role in American society, it's also worthwhile asking what form religious expression might take. History won't repeat itself here, but it probably will rhyme. American churches historically have thrived not by going along with the prevailing sentiments of the world, but by taking a strong Bible-based stand against those sentiments.

The history of our own brotherhood provides us with an example of this pattern. Over the latter half of the nineteenth century, a separation emerged among the churches of the Restoration Movement. Some, calling themselves the churches of Christ, rejected missionary societies, instrumental music, political involvement, and liberal theology. Others, calling themselves the Disciples of Christ, embraced all of these.

The two groups divided, and the division was not equal. According to the 1906 Census, 982,701 people identified themselves as belonging to the Disciples, but only 159,658 as belonging to the churches of Christ. A bare remnant remained true to the primitivist ideals of the Restoration. The congregations of the Disciples were large and wealthy; the churches of Christ, small and poor. It wouldn't have been hard for the trend-extrapolators of 1906 to pick a winner.

However, they would have been wrong. Over the next 100+ years, the Disciples endured another split and shared in the demographic disaster of the mainline denominations. In contrast, the churches of Christ grew and prospered, probably too much for their own good.

Consequently, from 2008 to 2018, the membership of the Disciples shrank from 679,563 to 380,248, with only 124,437 of the latter regularly attending services. By contrast, in 2019, 21st Century Christian estimated that churches of Christ had



about 1.11 million members, most of whom attended regularly, down slightly from about 1.25 million in 2008. The pattern is clear, though I expect that all these numbers will be lower post-COVID.

Is Progressivism the Answer?

Even among the churches of Christ, more conservative congregations have fared much better than more progressive ones. Noted progressive preacher Rick Atchley explained the problem in a 2013 interview in the journal *Wineskins*: “The era of the progressive Church of Christ is over,” he said. “. . . we disciplined the children of those progressive churches for a whole generation to grow past us Boomers. . . We disciplined our children to leave our movement!”

Atchley continued to say that children who have never been taught the importance of distinctive Restoration beliefs (he specifically mentions a-cappella singing, though I also would include baptism for forgiveness of sins and a complementarian view of the role of

women) have no reason to attend a Restoration church. If your parents' church is just like the Baptist church down the street, except that the Baptists have a better band, why not join the Baptists? By contrast, I do not know whether my own children will worship faithfully with God's people throughout their lives, but they certainly have been taught why they should!

There is a larger issue at work here, too. Fundamentally, the word of God is of a piece. Either it's all important, or none of it is. Moreover, there's no principled way to distinguish between important parts and not-important parts. If the word of God does not matter when it comes to form of worship and the use of the church treasury, why should it matter with the resurrection of the Christ and the divine creation of the universe? When honest people seek meaning for their lives in the pages of Scripture, they will find it for the whole of their lives.

Conclusion

Thus, we find reason for optimism about the future of the Lord's church in history, but all of this overlooks the most important reason: a God who continues to rule the affairs of men. We may glimpse His hand in today's events, but we see it for certain in the inspired record of the word. The theme section of this issue will examine a few of the triumphant remnants of Scripture, but the lesson is always the same. The prosperous and proud are humbled, but the faithful few are exalted (always, alas, to become prosperous and proud later!). Though we may become few, we may be sure that, if we are faithful, God will exalt us, too. 📖



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Who Has the Right to Marry?

By Kyle Pope

The modern world seeks to redefine the institution of marriage and those who may enter it. In this study, Kyle Pope examines the biblical evidence for who, in fact, has the right to enter the marriage bond.

Introduction

The teaching of Jesus about the permanence of marriage is one of the most radical elements of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is seen in the reaction of His disciples when Jesus first taught this doctrine. They declared after hearing it, “If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry” (Matt. 19:10, NKJV). In an age in which efforts are continually made to redefine marriage (in public policies, cultural attitudes, and in the private choices made within the human heart), it is important to remind ourselves exactly what Jesus taught.

Who Has the Right to Marry?

Only a Man and a Woman. When God created marriage, He defined it with the words, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). As God designed it, the parties involved in marriage are “a man” who is joined to “his wife.” Homosexual relations are sinful under any circumstances (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-11).

Only One Man and One Woman. In all three quotes of Genesis 2:24 found in the New Testament, the last phrase reads “and the two shall become one flesh” (Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:8; Eph. 5:31). This difference between “they” and “the two” is also found in the Septuagint, the



Greek translation of the Old Testament made before the time of Christ. While polygamy was permitted under Mosaic Law, the Law of Christ teaches that marriage to another while one is already married to his spouse is adultery (Rom. 7:2-3). That prohibits multiple wives or multiple husbands.

Only Those Who Are Free to Marry. Not all who might want to marry are free to marry. Regardless of whether culture or civil laws *allow* it, not all marriages are acceptable before God. John the Baptist was killed because he told Herod of his marriage to Herodias: “It is not lawful for you to have her” (Matt. 14:4). Who are those who are free to marry?

A Man and a Woman Who Have Never Married. Malachi 2:14-15 teaches that God acts as witness to the covenant made between a man and a woman. While marriage vows make a woman a man’s “wife by covenant” (2:14) in witnessing this contract, it is actually God who makes “them one” (2:15). Jesus taught, “what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matt. 19:6; Mark 10:9). A

man or a woman whom God has never joined to another stands free to enter into the marriage covenant.

A Man or Woman Whose Spouse Has Died. Paul wrote, “A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:39). To illustrate the Jews’ liberation from the law of Moses, Paul restates the same point in Romans 7:1-3, explaining “if her husband dies, she is free.” The marriage covenant ends upon death. A widower or widow is free to marry.

A Man or Woman Who Has Put Away a Spouse for the Cause of Fornication. The general teaching of the gospel forbids divorce. Of the four texts in the Gospels recording the teaching of Jesus on the subject, two teach: “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery” (Luke 16:18), and “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, she commits adultery” (Mark 10:11-12). So, in most cases, remarriage after divorce is defined by Jesus as a continuing practice of “adultery.” The gospel teaches that adultery prevents one from inheriting the kingdom of heaven (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

In the other two texts, Jesus inserts an exception clause that modifies the general teaching. He adds, “except for sexual immorality” (Matt. 19:9) or “for any

reason except sexual immorality” (Matt. 5:32). Careful consideration of how this clause modifies the general prohibition indicates that, when the reason one spouse divorces another is “sexual immorality,” Jesus does not define the remarriage of that spouse as “adultery.” This clause does not change how God defines remarriage on the part of the one divorced (or put away) for “sexual immorality” (or any other cause)—Jesus still defines it as “adultery.” One cannot practice adultery and go to heaven (Heb. 13:4).

Who Is Not Free to Marry?

A man to a man or woman to a woman. Since God defines the participants in marriage as a “man” and his “wife” (Gen. 2:24), and since homosexuality is sinful under any circumstance (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-11), a man has no right to marry a man, and a woman has no right to marry a woman. Marriage does not make sinful behavior right.

A man or a woman already married. David sinned by committing adultery with Bathsheba, who was the wife of another man (2 Sam. 11:1-4). According to Mosaic Law, adultery was to be punished with the death penalty (Lev. 20:10). David sinned further by concocting a plan that led to the death of Bathsheba’s husband, then marrying her (2 Sam. 11:5-27). Throughout all periods of biblical history, sexual relations with one married to another is sin, so one married to another is not free to marry someone else (cf. Gen. 20:1-10; 39:9; Hos. 2:1-7; John 8:1-11).

A man or a woman who is unscripturally divorced. Herodias, the wife of Philip, Herod’s brother, had unlawfully divorced her husband and married Herod (Matt. 14:1-3). John was executed by Herod because he courageously exposed his sin, telling him, “It is not lawful for you to have her” (Matt. 14:4). Jesus extends the definition of adultery beyond its application to only

those who are still married to someone. He teaches that one who divorces and remarries (or is divorced against his or her will and remarries) “commits adultery” (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18). The one who practices adultery will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21). This means: (1) the man or woman who has divorced a spouse for any reason other than sexual immorality is not free to marry; (2) the man or woman who was divorced against his or her will for any reason is not free to marry, and (3) the man or woman divorced from his spouse because of sexual immorality is not free to marry.

Conclusion

These teachings run counter to the practices and sentiments in our culture just as they were to the world of the first century, but they are the teachings our Lord laid down (as with all divine law) “for our good always” (Deut. 6:24). Our task is to trust in God’s wisdom and obey His commandments. Jesus said, “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels” (Luke 9:26). **T**



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I'm Ready to Take the Plunge. Now What?

By Diana Dow

Frustration with public schools is no excuse to act precipitously. Preparation is key to establishing a successful home school.

Introduction

New home-schooling parents have many questions. Frequently it goes something like this: "I've just pulled my child out of public school. Now what?" Whoa! Back up! This is like putting the cart before the horse. Imagine someone sitting in a pilot's seat just before take-off asking, "How do I fly this plane?" Or a doctor enters an operating room and just before picking up the scalpel relies upon a google search to perform the surgery. Each of these scenarios has one thing in common—the lack of preparation. Before pulling your child out of public school, do your homework. Preparation is key (Col. 3:23 Eccl. 9:10).

Prepare Yourself

Spend time learning about home schooling. What makes it different from other forms of education? Will it fit into my family's lifestyle? What is my philosophy of education? What is my teaching style? What is my child's learning style?

When I started this journey in 1991, there were few resources available. I read them all. No, I devoured them all. Every book I read opened my eyes to a new way of looking at education. Over time, I developed my personal philosophy of education; I figured out my teaching style and my child's learning style.

Today, books, articles, and videos are abundant. Getting information is not difficult. Sorting through the information and discovering the best sources is the challenge. Do your research before sitting in the pilot seat or entering the operating room. Seek advice from those who have been there.

Think through how you want your child's education to look (2 Tim. 2:15; Prov. 24:27).

Prepare Your Child

During my preparation stage of home schooling, I asked an experienced friend for advice. The most important thing she said was, "Get your child under control." On her first day of home schooling, she sat her five-year-old down and went from being mommy to teacher. It surprised her when her son did not take too kindly to the switch. He rebelled. He did not want to sit down and learn his letters. She realized she had work to do. Obedience and respect are traits that should be taught to every child from birth. When home schooling, it quickly becomes clear whether that teaching has been sufficient.

If your child has already experienced public or private school, he will probably expect his learning at home to mimic his learning at school. Talk to him about what will be different and what will be the same. Give him time to adjust, but do not allow him to control the situation. He will need to obey and respect you as his parent *and* as his teacher (Prov. 22:6; 23:13; 29:17 Deut. 6:4-9).


Prepare Your Home

Home schooling is messy. Storage space for books, supplies and projects, as well as a study space for the student, is essential. Whether you have a separate schoolroom, gather in the living room, or congregate around the kitchen table, whatever works for your family is fine. However, the study area needs to be free from clutter, and the school supplies

need to be put away at the end of the day. Organizing the home before beginning to home school will help everything run smoothly and allow for a calm atmosphere for the entire family (Prov. 31:27-31).

Home schooling is time-consuming. Attempting to squeeze home schooling in an already busy schedule causes stress for everyone. Learning doesn't always happen within a prescribed time. If every second of every day is rigidly scheduled, there is no time for the relaxed learning that children thrive on. Clear the schedule. Make sure there is time, not only for the sit-down learning that needs to be done, but also for the creative learning, digging-deeper into a much-loved subject, and the real-life learning that will only happen if time is left open for it (Col. 4:5 Eph. 5:15-16).

Conclusion

It can be tempting to jump in and start home schooling without going through the preparation stage, but do yourself a favor: Prepare yourself, your child, and your home for this new phase of life. Spend much time in prayer—asking God for guidance, wisdom, patience, and self-control to do the best you can with the challenging task that lies before you (Luke 14:28-30). 



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An Examination of Romans 9

By Bruce Reeves

Why would anyone believe the depraved and dark view that Calvinism holds of God? Thankfully, we have a heavenly Father who loves us and desires our salvation in Christ.

Introduction

Classic Calvinists believe that “God is the first cause of evil,” “the devil is God’s devil and does what God commands him to do,” and that “the god of the Bible” has irrevocably and unconditionally predetermined the salvation of individuals, regardless of what they do. Why would anyone accept and promote such a depraved and dark view of the God of heaven?

Informed Calvinists openly admit that the most contested territory in the debate over Reformed Theology is Romans 9 (Sproul, 151). A comprehensive consideration of biblical teaching reveals that the premises and consequences of Calvinism are erroneous and unbiblical. Furthermore, it is a grave mistake to isolate Romans 9 from the rest of the epistle and its theme of unity through faith in Christ (Rom. 1:16-17; 5:6-8).

Romans 9-11 must be understood as a single cohesive argument forming the climax of Romans 1-11. After having shown that both Jews and Gentiles were guilty before God and in need of salvation through Christ, Paul anticipates and answers Jewish objections to the message of the cross (Rom. 1:16-17; 3:9, 19-20, 23; 5:1-2).

The biblical text under consideration addresses the most prominent Jewish objections to the gospel. All centered on the singular truth of God’s expression of mercy to the Gentiles and the Jews. In doing so, Paul offers an inspired response to those who would attempt to restrict God’s mercy to physical Israel (Rom. 1:16-17; 11:32).

Paul’s Sympathy for Israel (9:1-5)

The introductory statements of this section frame the rest of the discussion of God’s eternal purpose in Christ. Paul writes, “I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh” (Rom. 9:1-3). Why would he have such sorrowful grief over Israel being lost if the doctrine of unconditional election were true? Paul’s sincere desire for the redemption of all men harmonizes with God’s love for all humanity (Rom. 10:1-3; 11:15; John 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

The apostle describes his sadness over his Jewish brethren’s rejection of the Christ. The Lord’s divine purpose in the choosing of physical Israel was for the redemption of all those who would believe (Rom. 9:30-33; 10:20-21). Paul was fully aware of the blessings of the Jewish heritage: “Who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen” (Rom. 9:4-5; cf. 3:1-2). God chose Israel to bring the Messiah into the world to bless all who would seek Him by faith, but they were the very ones who rejected the promised Christ (Rom. 1:1-5).

God’s Faithfulness (9:6-13)

“If the Gospel Is True, Then God Has Been Unfaithful To Israel” (Rom. 9:6-13).

Paul answers the Jewish accusation that the gospel would result in the Lord being unfaithful to His promise to Israel by demonstrating that His word had not failed in any way:

But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but “In Isaac your seed shall be called.” That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. For this is the word of promise: “At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son” (Rom. 9:6-9).

God had not failed in His promise, but the Jews had developed a false sense of security based on their misunderstanding of the promise. Not all of those who were members of physical Israel were a part of spiritual Israel (Rom. 9:6). Paul clearly distinguishes between the “children of the flesh” and the “children of the promise.” The “children of the promise” are the true seed. Those who believe in Christ are the spiritual descendants of Abraham:

Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “All the nations will be blessed in you.” So then, those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. . . Christ redeemed us from

the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”—in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. . . and if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3:7-9, 13-14, 29).

Paul employs Hebrew parallelism and reverses oppositional phrases to emphasize his point. He uses the term “seed” in two different ways to show that the Jews had missed the application of the promise. One time Paul uses the phrase “seed of Abraham” to reference physical Israel (9:7), whereas he uses the phrase “counted for the seed” (9:8) to reference those who are spiritual Israel. Thus, He distinguishes between the “children of God,” as believers, and the “children of the flesh,” as national Israel (Rom. 4:11,12,16). His readers needed to understand that it was not physical descent, but spiritual descent, that constitutes the faithful of God (Rom. 2:28-29).

Isaac was not personally and unconditionally chosen for salvation before the foundation of the world, but he was saved from his sins by faith (Heb. 11:20) [see Note #1] Paul’s point in Romans 9:9 is not Isaac’s salvation, but God’s decision that he be a part of the lineage that brought the Messiah into the world: “For this is the word of promise, ‘At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son’” (Rom. 9:9, cf. Gen. 18:14). Again, it must be emphasized that the phrase, “*word of promise,*” identifies the

provision of the Messiah for the whole world through the Jewish people: “Sarah shall have a son.”

God’s word did not fail! Physical Israel fulfilled the purpose for which God had chosen her as a nation. The divine purpose and choice of God was to bless all nations through the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29). This choice would be accomplished through the lineage of Jacob, not Esau. Paul quotes from the Old Testament: “And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man,

works or lack of the same—but on His covenant faithfulness (Rom. 9:16; 11:28).

Those who argue that this passage refers to God’s unconditional election of individuals to salvation do so despite the context, not because of it. Paul’s statement that “the older will serve the younger” is a quotation from Genesis 25:23, which states, “The LORD said to her: ‘Two nations are in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body; one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.’”

Historically, Esau never personally served Jacob, yet the Edomites, as Esau’s descendants, did serve Israel as the descendants of Jacob (Gen. 33:4-5; 2 Sam. 8:13-14).

Scripture shows that God’s love for Jacob and hatred of Esau refers not to their personal salvation but to His blessing upon the nation of Israel. Long after the decease of both Jacob and Esau, the prophet Malachi records:

“I have loved you,” says the LORD. Yet you say, “In what way have you loved us?” “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” says the LORD. “Yet Jacob I have loved; but Esau I have hated and laid waste his mountains and his heritage for the jackals of the wilderness” (Mal. 1:2-3).

So why do we read of Isaac being chosen over Ishmael and Jacob being chosen over Esau? It was important for Israel to understand that even their place in the provision of the Messiah was by God’s sovereign choice. The ones *not* chosen (Ishmael and Esau) are *not* thereby condemned to hell; rather, they are simply excluded from having a part in God’s redemptive plan. The Lord has the sovereign right to choose how He will



even by our father Isaac (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), it was said to her, ‘The older shall serve the younger.’ As it is written, ‘Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated’” (Rom. 9:10-13).

The unbelief of Israel would not alter God’s offer of mercy to all nations through Christ. Paul wrote, “For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? (Rom. 3:3). The Lord’s choice to use ethnic Israel to fulfill His purpose was not dependent upon her goodness or evil,

work out His redemptive purposes and through whom He does so.

If the election of Romans 9:11 is that of personal salvation, then there are grave consequences regarding God's nature, because the choosing of this verse was not based on any good or evil that Jacob or Esau did. The logical conclusion for proponents of Calvinism is that, ultimately, those who are condemned to hell are not condemned because of their "evil," but because God did not have any redemptive love for them.

Stephen Garrett, a Calvinistic Baptist, in expressing his view of Romans 9, said, "Brother, when you talk about God loving somebody and God hating somebody, are you not talking about eternal salvation? He hated Esau before He was born, and he says it was not based on any evil that he did" (*Reeves-Garrett Debate*, Garrett's Third Negative, 2010).

Gene Cook, Jr., a well-known defender of Reformed Theology, when asked about infants and the Calvinistic interpretation of this context said:

"Non-elect infants who die in their infancy will spend eternity in hell"—I would answer true to that question, you have to be elect in order to be saved. If this question is false, then we should perform abortion, because abortion is the greatest evangelistic act that has ever taken place since the time that Jesus walked the face of the earth, because every one of those children are going straight to heaven according to Mr. Brown's theology (Cook, 150).

When that quote was played during our debate in 2005, Gene Cook replied:

So, when he (Bruce Reeves) stands over here, and says, "His (Gene Cook, Jr.) God is a monster, his God is not fair, his God sends little babies to hell. . . there is nothing they can do about it," he (Bruce Reeves) is really arguing against the God of the Bible. . ." (Cook, 174).

You just got up and heard Mr. Reeves make the argument that my version of God is a God who puts one baby on the saved list and another baby not on the saved list and I'm going to show you

from Romans chapter nine that that's what the Scripture says (Cook, 172).

Here it becomes painfully obvious that Calvinistic theology must ignore both the immediate and remote context of Scripture to uphold its position. Those who are willing to abuse this chapter to teach unconditional election take unwarranted liberties with the Bible for one reason and one reason alone: *to affirm their theology*. The fundamental problem is that the Calvinist does not come to Romans 9 in an unbiased fashion because of his view of God's sovereignty, unconditional election, and humanity's total inability to choose faith. In many ways, they put all their eggs in the basket of Romans 9. It is my conviction that this very text may be the key to removing the underpinnings of Calvinism, which is a false view of God's sovereignty and saving election!

The application of Romans 9 to unconditional election violates the very point that Paul was trying to make to the Jews: that God intended Israel to be the conduit for the provision of salvation for all who would believe. Those who say that "God provided salvation for all men," but foreordained from eternity that they would not (and could not) respond, are guilty of illogical double-talk to avoid the necessary conclusion of their teaching [see note #2]. Interestingly, Paul is rebuking the Jewish desire for unconditional, nationalistic election, and some have adopted the general tone of their argument. Thank God we have a heavenly Father who loves us and desires our salvation in Christ. Let us praise God for His glorious grace! 🙏

Notes

Note #1: In Ephesians 1:1-13 the apostle Paul argues that God, before the foundation of the world, chose that all those who would exercise faith in His Son would be His "chosen" or "elect" people. Unbelievers are never described as being God's elect in Scripture, because such individuals are not yet in Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-

13). God's people are "elect" because of their union with His "chosen" Son (Isa. 42:1-2). We choose whether we are "in Him" through obedience to the gospel (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; 2 Thess. 2:13). The Lord determined the category of persons, the relationship and sphere, and even the conditions of salvation. Yet, He did not predetermine the specific individuals who would be saved but offered the gospel to all (Mark 16:15-16; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Pet. 3:9).

Note #2: Stephen Garrett has written on his blog, BaptistGadfly, "I am confirmed in my 'five point' Calvinism, although I have come to see how God has a general love for all men and has provided salvation for every man."

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TUE.	I Believe Jesus Died for My Sins	SHANE CARRINGTON
THUR.	I Believe Jesus Rose from the Dead	DANIEL H. KING, SR.
TUE.	I Believe Jesus Was Born of a Virgin	TYLER SAMS
WED.	I Believe Jesus Performed Miracles	PHIL STUCKEY
THUR.	I Believe Jesus Cast out Demons	SPENCER BLACKWELDER
TUE.	I Believe Jesus Was the Son of Man	JOHN HUMPHRIES
WED.	I Believe Jesus is the Christ	MIKE WILLIS
THUR.	I Believe that Jesus Is the Son of God	SHAWN CHANCELLOR
TUE.	I Believe that Jesus is the Savior of the World	NATHAN WARD
WED.	I Believe the Church Demonstrates the Glory of Jesus	BARRY BRITNELL
THUR.	I Believe Jesus Is with Believers Always	KEVIN MAXEY
TUE.	MEN'S TRACK How do I help the skeptic come to faith?	RICK BILLINGSLEY
TUE.	WOMEN'S TRACK How do I help the skeptic come to faith?	REBEKAH DUTTON
WED.	MEN'S TRACK Answering the problem of suffering	BRUCE REEVES
WED.	WOMEN'S TRACK Answering the problem of suffering	KATE MITCHELL
THUR.	MEN'S TRACK Overcoming my own doubts	KEVIN HARRINGTON
THUR.	WOMEN'S TRACK Overcoming my own doubts	RACHEL REEVES

Your Body Is a Temple of the Holy Spirit

By Shane Carrington

As ancient Israel's temple represented the holiness and glory of God, our lives should reflect God's holiness (1 Pet. 1:14-16) and point to His glory (Matt. 5:13-16) as we submit to the written word inspired by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:3-5).

Introduction

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body (1 Cor. 6:19-20, NASB).

That the Holy Spirit indwells the believer cannot be disputed. Many passages affirm this truth (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19-20; Gal. 4:6-7; Eph. 3:14-19; 5:18-20; Rom. 8:9-11, 14-17; etc.). What such Scriptures mean—and how the Spirit's indwelling is accomplished—has long been the subject of vigorous discussion.

A casual reading of this text sounds to some like the Holy Spirit mystically indwells the physical bodies of Christians: “your body is a temple,” and “the Holy Spirit who is in you.” Is the Holy Spirit's literal, mystical indwelling in the human body being taught in these statements, or are they figurative expressions conveying something else? If there are no figures of speech in this passage, a literal indwelling gains traction, but if figurative expressions are present, these sayings mean something else.

The Meaning of Temple

Israel possessed a literal, physical temple (and the tabernacle which preceded it). Under the Mosaic system, it was described as “the house of the Lord” (Exod. 23:19; 34:26; Deut. 26:13; Josh. 6:24; 1 Sam. 1:7; 1 Kings 5:3-5; 6:1; 7:12; 8:1-64; etc.). As such, it served several important purposes. It was the place. . .

- from which God made His word known (Exod. 33:7-11).
- to which ancient Israel must go to offer sacrifice (Exod. 20:24).
- that represented God's presence, holiness, and glory (Exod. 40:34-38; 2 Chron. 5:1-14; Lev. 10).

Consequently, the tabernacle/temple was the central feature in ancient Israel. While the temple was “the house of the Lord,” it was not where God actually lived:

However, the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands; as the prophet says: “Heaven is My throne, And earth is the footstool of My feet; What kind of house will you build for Me?” says the Lord, “Or what place is there for My repose?” (Acts 7:48-49; quoted from Isa. 66:1-2).

The temple was the intersection between God and Israel, where God connected with them. However, the Creator's glory and presence are not confined to His creation—Yahweh cannot be bottled up in a physical structure made by hands (Acts 7:48; Ps. 139). The temple was a representative dwelling, but God's throne is in heaven (Matt. 5:34-35; 6:9; 23:22; etc.).

The temple represented God's presence, holiness, glory, and will, but He did not literally indwell it as a house (Acts 7:48-49 and Isa. 66:1-2, see above). Therefore, when the Holy Spirit says, “your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 6:19), the inspired apostle is not affirming that the Holy Spirit literally lives in the fleshly bodies of Christians. Rather, he is teaching that the life we live is to be used for God's purposes, not sinful activity. The context makes this clear.



- Paul contrasts the “unrighteous,” who live sinfully, with the righteous (“washed. . . sanctified. . . justified”) who do not (1 Cor. 6:9-11). One’s manner of living, not a mystical indwelling, is the emphasis.
- “Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord. . .” (1 Cor. 6:13). One’s manner of living, not a mystical indwelling, is the emphasis.
- “. . . your bodies are members of Christ. . . Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?” (1 Cor. 6:15). One’s manner of living, not a mystical indwelling, is the emphasis.
- “. . . the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her. . . For He says, ‘The two shall become one flesh.’ But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him” (1 Cor. 6:16). One’s manner of living, not a mystical indwelling, is the emphasis.
- “Flee immorality. . . sin that a man commits. . . the immoral man sins against his own body” (1 Cor. 6:18). One’s manner of living, not a mystical indwelling, is the emphasis.
- Lastly, because “your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. . . you are not your own. . . therefore glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:19). Manner of living, not mystical indwelling, is the emphasis.

As faithful expositor, Elmer Moore, used to say, “The Holy Spirit indwells your life.” God wills that we use our bodies in a manner consistent with His revealed word. He wants us to live our embodied lives to His honor and glory, and the Holy Spirit revealed the manner and motivations for that life! That’s what Paul is teaching.

Weary of Figures of Speech?

The Bible’s basic message is simple enough for the masses to understand, yet deep enough for scholars to spend a lifetime studying its nuances. Most of us prefer straightforward bullet-pointed teaching, but the Bible contains different kinds of literature with truth expressed in a variety of ways. When Jesus said of King Herod, “Go and tell that fox. . .” (Luke 12:32), He did not mean Herod

had pointed ears and a bushy tail. Figures of speech populate every page of the Bible! Parables were Jesus’s predominant method of teaching. To literalize, mock, or minimize figures of speech is to use biblical language unbiblically. How can you discuss the fathomless glory of the infinite God without using approximations (figures)? To study the Bible well requires learning how to use figures of speech.

What figure of speech is God using when He says, “Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit”? Metonymy! It is hard to spell, but here’s what it means:

- The substitution of the name of an attribute or adjunct for that of the thing meant, for example, “suit” for “business executive” (Oxford Dictionary).
- “the change of one noun for a related noun” (Bullinger’s *Figures of Speech*, 538-539; cf. Dungan’s *Heremenuitics*, 70ff)—For example, “the Spirit by measure” (John 3:34) actually refers to the gifts the Spirit bestows, not the person of the Spirit.
- “. . . a figure of speech (substitution) involving cause and effect” (*Grasping God’s Word*, 385). To illustrate, “They have Moses and the prophets. . .” (Luke 16:29), mentions the writers (causes) for their writings (effects). Moses and the Prophets had been long dead, but their writings remained!

In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, the Holy Spirit (the “cause”) is mentioned while godly living (the “effect”) is actually under discussion: “therefore glorify God in your body”! How does the Holy Spirit lead us to use our bodies (lives) in ways consistent with God’s holiness? He does so by instructing us through the word that He revealed!


For to us, God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. . . the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received. . . the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words (1 Cor. 2:10-13).

Consider the comments of Joseph Henry Thayer, who said concerning language that is descriptive of one person being “in” another:

[It is used] . . . of a person to whom another is wholly joined and to whose power and influence he is subject, so that the former may be likened to the place in which the latter lives and moves. . . of intimate relationship with God or with Christ. . . the idea of power and blessing resulting from that union (Thayer, 210).

Relationship and influence, not geographical location, is the point (cf. John 4:24; 17:20-23).

Conclusion

The Holy Spirit indwells us! Yet, this occurs neither mystically nor directly. He affects our embodied lives as we listen to, absorb, and follow His teaching revealed in Scripture. How does this impact personal holiness? “The Sanctification of the Spirit” will be next month’s article! Keep reading, studying, and following Sacred Scripture, for that is how the Holy Spirit speaks to us and indwells us (cf. Eph. 5:18-19 with Col. 3:16). *Let Him change you from the inside out!* 

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By Bobby L. Graham



QUESTION.

Will We Know Each Other in Heaven?

ANSWER.

Question

What does the Bible say about knowing each other in heaven?

Answer

This question is one that people interested in heaven have long discussed. I believe the Bible teaches personal recognition in heaven, based on some very convincing principles of divine truth. According to 1 John 3:2, we will be like the Lord, seeing Him even as He is. We shall know Him, and therefore, be knowable.

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is (1 John 3:2, NASB).

Though incomplete in our knowledge of the afterlife (“it has not yet been revealed what we shall be”), John affirmed

our confidence in being like the Lord when He is revealed at the resurrection of all and the return of Jesus. When the resurrection occurs, our bodies (whether dead or alive) will be changed (1 Cor. 15:50-54). It follows, therefore, that the same spiritual state will remain in the judgment and the heavenly state.

David’s statement concerning being with his son who had died: “But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me” (cf. 2 Sam. 12:23), also implies that personal recognition shall exist. This meaningful and confidence-instilling affirmation becomes meaningless without the understanding that we shall know each other in heaven.

The Lord’s description of the kingdom—both in its temporal phase and its heavenly phase—in Matthew 8:11ff, further implies personal recognition in heaven. That the eternal phase of the kingdom is here included can be easily seen by contrasting the state of the “sons of the kingdom” who are cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and

gnashing of teeth, which is a picture of the final punishment of the wicked (v. 12), with the blessedness enjoyed in the kingdom with saints like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were not part of the kingdom of Christ when they walked the earth. It is the extension of this enjoyment to the eternal kingdom, which is necessarily implied in this passage.

That individuals retain their identity and power to recognize others, as well as their consciousness and mental powers, is seen again in the rich man depicted by the Lord in Luke 16:24. He obviously recognized Abraham when he called him by name.


When Lazarus had died, his sister, Martha, expressed her hope of being with (i.e., seeing and knowing) him in the resurrection. Jesus told her that she could see Lazarus immediately, because He (Jesus) is the resurrection and the life (John 11:21ff). Herein lies the real and profound hope of knowing each other in the future world.

Likewise, Jesus's teaching about the resurrection in Matthew 22:32 involves the survival of individual personality. Along with individual personality also comes personal identity and personal recognition. Long after their deaths, God continued to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not just of the beings who used to be Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This provides a very strong basis for believing that we shall know each other in heaven.



The chief objection raised to what I have here taught is based on emotion, not on a discussion of the passages cited or the argumentation used. Some have objected: "If we reach heaven only to discover that our loved ones are not present, we could experience no happiness or joy, knowing that they are lost. Therefore, there must be no personal recognition in heaven." Will such considerations mar the perfect happiness of the eternal city? I try hard to understand why eternal happiness depends on who is present or absent, but I do not comprehend it. *We ought to recognize that we do not love those relatives any more than God does.* Appreciating God's eternal plan will help us be content in letting Him work out the details of that plan. It might also prove helpful to ask, "If there is no personal recognition in heaven and if no one

will recognize anybody, how could we experience any joy or bliss in the presence of non-entities and non-personalities?" The thought of joy in our present state depends entirely on present experiences, as must its anticipation in the next world, if the assurances of the Bible are to be accepted. The truth is that we should not limit our concept of heavenly joy based on present experiences. After all, we still enjoy life even when we now know that loved ones are living their lives apart from God. Heaven is a place without sorrow or sighing. God will take care of this matter in heaven, when our joys shall exceed all that we have known (or anticipated) while still in this world (Rev. 21:4).

There is marvelous comfort in the assurance of the Scriptures along this line. Why do you think God gave us such assurance, if not to instill comfort for the soul? Even Paul's statement in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 should comfort us. They necessarily incorporate the idea of personal recognition in (1) the reunion that is here affirmed, (2) the joy that will occur at such a time, and (3) the comfort that is made possible. Truly, let us both find comfort and lend comfort in these words. 



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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 bobby@truth@spectrum.net.

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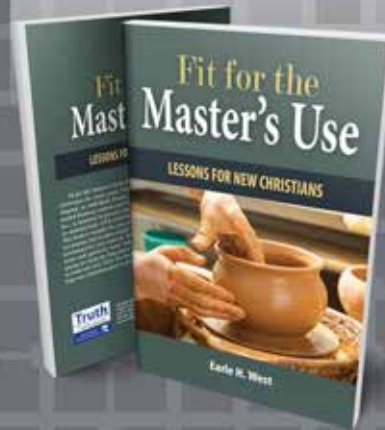
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Can Archaeology Reveal “Invisible” Peoples from the Bible?

By Luke Chandler

New discoveries at a distant desert mine in southern Israel may answer questions involving David’s kingdom and even how the Hebrews first settled Canaan.

One controversy with archaeology and the Bible involves the early monarchies of Israel and Judah. The Bible describes active, powerful leaders such as David and Solomon, but archaeology finds little physical evidence of their kingdoms. This gap leads some to doubt their historical existence.

Likewise, the Hebrews’ entry into Canaan brings an archaeological puzzle. The Bible puts Israel’s entrance into Canaan around 1400 BC, but new farming villages, reflecting a new population, don’t appear until one and a half centuries later. This contrast leads some to distrust the Bible’s historicity.

An archaeologist named Erez Ben-Yosef may help untangle these controversies. He has been excavating ancient copper mines at Timna, a remote desert site far south of the Dead Sea. Copper was once in high demand as a key ingredient in bronze, a strategic metal for ancient peoples. Ben-Yosef has demonstrated the Timna copper mines were most active during the tenth and ninth centuries BC, the time of David, Solomon, and other early Hebrew kings.

Why does dating mine operations to the early kings matter? High demand for bronze would come from powerful nations for production of weapons and tools, and for use in monumental architecture. Skeptics have dismissed the existence of the early kingdoms, insisting societies of the tenth and ninth centuries were still tribal, yet Timna’s massive level of copper production suggests otherwise.

Recent information from the Timna mines now reveals a different picture

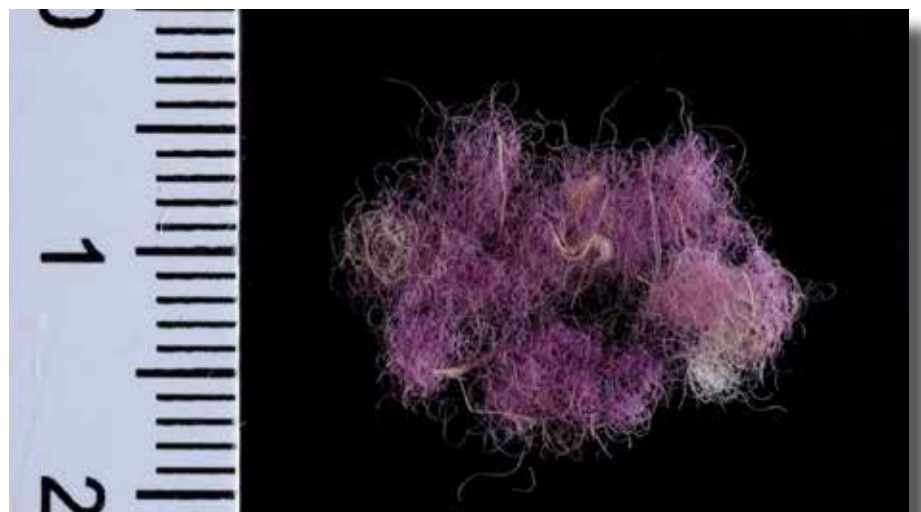
of tenth—ninth century Canaan than many have believed. Rather than a tribal backwater, the area was commercially active with organized societies, even if not strongly urbanized.

The Timna mines required thousands of people to sustain their production of copper, even with the region’s intense heat, less than one inch of annual rainfall, and no arable land. Food and water for all workers, guards, and support staff had to be brought in from afar. The hundreds of pack animals needed for this also consumed huge amounts of water and fodder. Workers also needed imported materials for mining and smelting, such as charcoal, clay, flux, ground stones, and large quantities of tools. Traces of a security network for the

supply chain, such as manned forts and observation posts, have also been found. These complex and expensive logistical operations over long distances reflect a strong society able to command and control a wide area.

The Timna excavations also discovered evidence of an elite upper class that oversaw operations. Luxury products found at Timna include dyed fabrics (with the costly royal purple), premium cuts of meat, dried fish from the Mediterranean Sea (185 miles distant!), along with figs, pomegranates, and olives. These items point to a developed commercial society existing in the middle of a harsh desert.

Who was running these massive copper mines, with a splendid supply



Caption: A fabric dyed with the costly Royal Purple. This and other luxury goods reveal a sophisticated commercial network and supply chain operating in this remote desert region of Timna. Credit: Dafna Gazit—Israel Antiquities Authority.



Caption: “A view of Tinma. Ancient copper mines in this desert region may help to resolve some perceived conflicts between the Bible and archaeological finds.” Credit: By Eliran T—Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0 File: Timna Valley Panoramic.jpg—Wikimedia Commons

chain, in the time of David and Solomon? Ben-Yosef attributes the mine operation to Edom, which is remarkable since the Edomites were nomadic in the tenth and ninth centuries. They were not living in cities or erecting large stone buildings. They lived in tents, yet successfully managed a highly complex mine operation and supply/commerce chain.

Archaeologists do not consider nomads capable of functioning on a high societal or political level. Developed societies are normally linked with physical structures. Ben-Yosef now describes this presumption as “architectural bias.” Timna shows nomads could exist and compete on the level of an urbanized society. The Edomites of the tenth century BC managed complex economic connections and demonstrated controlling power over a large region.

This new understanding of Edom gives us a fresh perspective on David’s kingdom, and even Israel’s first generations in Canaan. Nomads tend to be archaeologically invisible and easy to miss—or at least misunderstood. Did the kingdom of David need many physical structures to be powerful, organized, and control its space? Did the Hebrews immediately build houses when they settled in Canaan or did they continue as nomads for a time, transitioning to settled farming generations later? Can an “architectural bias” lead archaeologists astray?

Timna makes us rethink how to define an organized society. It also reminds us that, when we perceive a conflict between the Bible and archaeology, the error is often in us; we wrongly interpret one or the other—or even both. We find wisdom through care and humility with Scripture, and also with its archeology. **TL**



Bedouin Tent



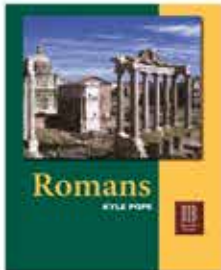
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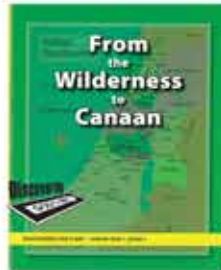
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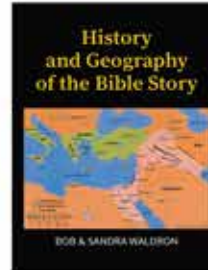
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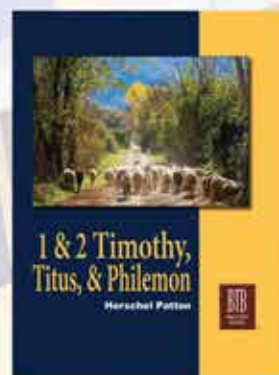
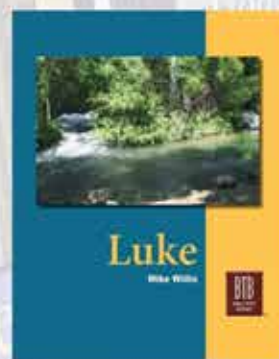
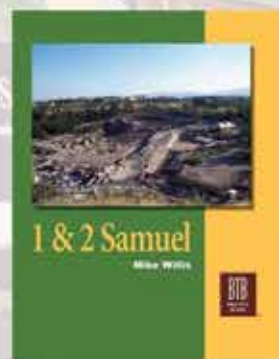
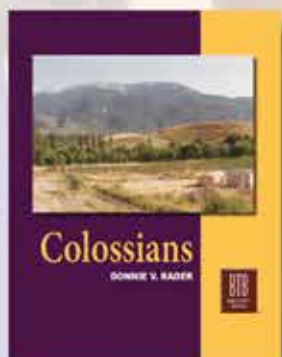
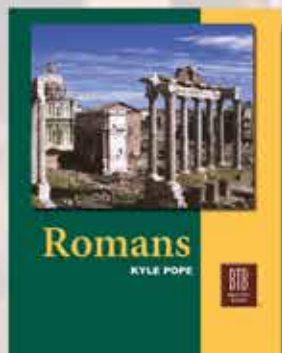
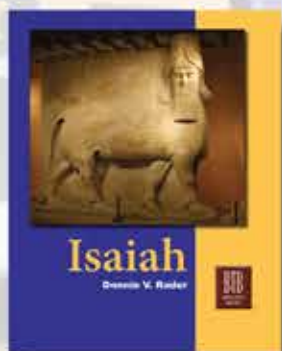
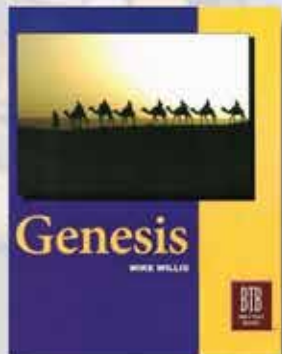


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The First Remnant

By Max Dawson

In contrast with their cowardly companions, Joshua and Caleb stood alone, trusting in God and believing His promises. God's anger burned against faithless Israel, but He blessed these two, saying, "they have followed the LORD fully" (Num. 32:10-12).

Introduction

By definition, a remnant is that which is left or remains. It is typically set in contrast to a larger piece of the same material or substance. At the fabric store, my wife buys a remnant, a piece of cloth that remains when the main portion is gone.

Never was the concept of a remnant more clearly seen than in the case of Joshua and Caleb. They found themselves in the minority when Israel was afflicted with unbelief at Kadesh-Barnea. While most of Israel was gone, Joshua and Caleb remained faithful to God.

As Israel neared the land of Canaan, twelve spies were sent into the promised land. Numbers 13:1-33 recounts the forty days' journey that the spies made into the land, as well as their return, when they offered two reports about the land. The majority report can be summarized in one sentence: "We are not able to take the land." The minority report stood in stark contrast as Caleb said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."

Caleb and Joshua found themselves in the minority, not only among the spies, but also in contrast to the whole nation of Israel. Numbers 14:1 indicates that all the congregation wept that night because of the report of the ten spies. No amount of persuading by Joshua, Caleb, Moses, or Aaron would turn the people from their rebellion (Num.

14:1-10). The congregation of Israel went so far as to want to kill God's leaders.

Joshua and Caleb can be identified as "the first remnant." They, along with a few others, did not rebel against the Lord.

There are two kinds of leaders in this story: (1) There are those who believe that, with God's help, they could be successful in doing His will and realizing His promises. (2) Then, there are those who, motivated by fear rather than faith, believed they would fail.

What should godly leaders do when they find themselves in the minority? If you are a leader among God's people today, it may happen to you, just like it did to so many faithful leaders chronicled in the Bible story. Think of Moses, David, Jeremiah, Jesus, and Paul.

Here are four things to do when you are in the minority, part of that remnant that is faithful to God.

Be Sure You Are Right.

Don't assume that you are standing for truth just because others may oppose you. Caleb and Joshua were indeed right. God had told them that the land of Canaan would be theirs (Num. 14:8). Abraham Lincoln said, "Be sure you are right, and then go ahead." Good advice.

Keep the Big Picture in Mind.

God had promised that land to Abraham's descendants more than 400 years earlier (Gen. 12:7). All that happened in the Bible story up to Joshua and Caleb's time was looking forward to that great moment when—with the help of God—they would take the Promised Land. God's plan was still alive and well, even though the Israelites rebelled. God's plan might be delayed for forty years, but it would not be stopped.

Sometimes things will not go in the way (or in the time) you think they should, and you may be right in your thinking. However, don't give up! God's work must continue, and it is not all about you or me and the things that we think should happen. We do what we can with the time and opportunities afforded to each of us, but we don't give up.

See Situations in the Light of God.

Maybe this is part of keeping the big picture in mind, but it is more than that. It is about faith.



Joshua and Caleb believed God would make good on His promise. The ten spies who gave the faithless report did not once mention God. Their report was all about how “we are not able.” They were thinking of their own strength. They said of the people of Canaan, “They are stronger than we” (Num. 13:31).

Joshua and Caleb said, “We are well able” (Num. 13:30). When they said that, they were not thinking about their own strength, but of God and His power. In Numbers 13:8-9, they spoke words of faith when they said, “He will bring us into this land” and “The Lord is with us. Do not fear them.”

Have we forgotten that it is the all-powerful God whom we serve? Indeed, we might find ourselves in the minority when we have faith and others do not. It is precisely in such times when we must remind others of God’s power. We are people of faith. We look at every situation in the light of God and His ability.

Maintain an Obedient Spirit of Optimism.

Look at the spirit of Caleb in Numbers 14:24. God was going to bring him into the land and his descendants would inherit it. Why? God said “. . .because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully. . .” Caleb was obedient to God while others were not. Caleb maintained an optimistic can-do spirit while others faltered. The word “spirit” in this text has to do with Caleb’s attitude or disposition. He had a positive outlook, a view of God and His promises that believed in the success of what God called him to do!

We can be like Caleb. Even though we are in a minority, we can still maintain an optimistic spirit. We can be obedient to God and follow Him fully, even when others do not. It has a lot to do with our disposition!

Those other spies—along with their generation—were not allowed to inherit the land of Canaan. God turned them back not only to wander in the

wilderness but also to die in it. Listen to Numbers 14:29: “The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above.”

What about Joshua and Caleb? See the next verse: “Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in” (Num. 14:30). None of that generation would be allowed to inherit the land. . . except for Caleb and Joshua! Indeed, they did inherit the land. The book of Joshua chronicles their conquest of Canaan.

Conclusion

One more thing to note. In Joshua 14:6-15, some forty-five years have passed since that incident at Kadesh-barnea. Caleb is now eighty-five years old. Moses had sworn that the land Caleb had walked on when he spied out Canaan would be his. Joshua honored what Moses promised and gave Hebron to Caleb. However, the Anakim were in that land, but Caleb was ready to take them on! He said, “I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in.” Caleb, the aged giant-killer! Caleb was now doing what God wanted him to do all along—take the land!

We can draw an important lesson from Caleb’s life. Doing right eventually vindicates the righteous. At the spying incident, Caleb both spoke and did what was right. He was hated for it, but his continued loyalty, obedience, and trust in God eventually vindicated him. The same can be true of us, even if we are numbered in the minority. **TM**



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The Rescued Remnant

By Matt Harber

In Isaiah, the word “remnant” highlights both God’s faithful rescue of His people and God’s decisive defeat of His opponents.

Introduction: A Humiliated Remnant in Need of Rescue

Sennacherib’s invasion and humiliation of Judah in 701 BC is one of the best-attested events in the Old Testament. Three scriptural accounts (2 Kings 18-20; Isa. 36-37; 2 Chron. 32), plus numerous Assyrian records, and an impressive archaeological destruction layer all highlight the momentous importance of this crisis within Israel/Judah’s history. This article focuses on Isaiah’s invasion account, specifically how the word “remnant” in the Assyrian invasion story (Isa. 36-37) draws upon “remnant” language found throughout this prophetic book to highlight *both* God’s faithful rescue of His people *and* God’s decisive defeat of His opponents.

“Remnant” Language in Isaiah

“Remnant” is a prophetic term for God’s covenantal preservation of His people through judgment. The most essential (and most surprising) feature of Isaiah’s “remnant” language is its *ambivalence*: the meaning of “remnant” can be positive or negative (or both). God’s remnant can be the object either of His judgment or His salvation (or both).

“Remnant” language in Isaiah derives from four Hebrew roots:

- [רתִּי] [y-t-r] (1:8-9; 4:3; 7:22; 30:17)
- [יִלֶּפֶן] [p-l-f] (4:2; 10:20; 15:9; 37:31-32; 45:20)
- [דָּרַשׁ] [š-r-d] (1:9)
- [רָאשׁ] [š-’-r] (4:3; 7:3; 10:19-22; 11:11, 16; 14:22; 16:14; 17:3, 6; 21:17; 24:6, 12; 28:5; 37:31; 49:21)

Four “remnant” passages in Isaiah feature a combination of two or more of these roots (1:8-9; 4:2-3; 10:19-22; 37:31-32). The last of these, 37:31-32, is the focus of our study:

And the surviving [š-’-r] remnant [p-l-f] of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant [š-’-r], and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors [p-l-f]. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. (ESV, here and throughout)

The prophet Isaiah sends King Hezekiah these words in reply to his prayer for deliverance from Assyria (37:21-35). Isaiah’s oracle is followed by Jerusalem’s miraculous angelic deliverance. The question before us is *how* the term “remnant” (vv. 31-32) connects to God’s rescue (vv. 36-37).

The answer is not as obvious as it might appear, *i.e.*, that “remnant” refers simply to the small Jerusalemite contingent whom God spares from the invasion. Surprisingly, the “remnant” in this context is *both* the delivered Judeans (v. 31) *and* the defeated Assyrians (v. 32). In other words, “remnant” refers both to God’s people and to God’s enemies! This double meaning can be demonstrated both by the immediate context (vv. 33-35) and by previous “remnant” language in chapters 7-12. Let us consider each of these lines of evidence.

First, we may use 10:19-22 as a convenient entry point into the Syro-Ephraimite War narrative (ch. 7-12). Like Isaiah 37:31-32, this is a passage full of “remnant” language:

The remnant [š-’-r] of the trees of his forest will be so few that a child can write them down. In that day the remnant [š-’-r] of Israel and the survivors [p-l-t] of the house of Jacob will no more lean on him who struck them, but will lean on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant [š-’-r] will return, the remnant [š-’-r] of Jacob, to the mighty God. For though your people Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant [š-’-r] of them will return.

Isaiah is warning King Ahaz (to no avail) against allying himself with Assyria to solve his besetting military troubles with Aram and (northern) Israel. Assyria may seem like a powerful ally, but its strength is illusory and its downfall is decreed. A treaty with Assyria is a cure worse than the disease! In this passage, “remnant” refers *negatively* to (a) the pitiful remains of Assyrian glory following God’s judgment (10:19), and (b) the pitiful tally of Israel’s returnees from exile (10:22).

Sandwiched between these negative uses, however, are three *positive* uses of the word “remnant” emphasizing God’s rescue of a faithful “Israel/Jacob” (10:20-21). The phrase that opens 10:21, “a remnant [š-’-r] shall return,” is an allusion to the name of Isaiah’s son, Shear-jashub [šē’ār-yāšû[b]], mentioned previously in 7:3. The boy’s name signifies to Ahaz a *negative* message: though Rezin of Aram and Pekah of Israel appear to be a formidable alliance, they are but “smoldering stumps” (7:4) who will soon be “shattered” (7:8). In other words, only a *remnant* of the enemy will “return” [yāšû[b]] home from its assault on Judah.



We see then that the phrase “[only] a remnant shall return” can signify either a positive or a negative outcome, depending on the context.

Next, returning to chapter 37, we see a parallel between the “remnant” of the doomed Syro-Ephraimite assault on Jerusalem (ca. 734 BC), and the “remnant” of the doomed Assyrian siege of Jerusalem (701 BC) in the final verses of Isaiah’s oracle (vv. 33-34):

Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. By the way that he came, [by the same he shall return] [*yāšû[b]*], and he shall not come into this city, declares the LORD.

This prophetic word is fulfilled in Isaiah 37:37, following the angel’s massacre: “Then Sennacherib, king of Assyria, departed and *returned* home and lived at Nineveh.” The “returning remnant” in 37:32-37, like the one in 7:3-9, is thus not Judah returning home from foreign dominance, but rather Judah’s enemy returning home in defeat. However—and this is the key point—the disgraced Assyrian “remnant” of 37:32 is juxtaposed with the saved Judean

“remnant” in 37:31 *just so that* Judah and Hezekiah will humbly acknowledge that *they too* can be objects of God’s judgment, if they do not stand “firm in faith” (7:9), resisting the false security of convenient alliances (2 Kings 16:7-18; Isa. 30:1-17; 36:6-10). Whereas Ahaz utterly fails in this kind of faithfulness, his son Hezekiah partially (but not totally) succeeds (38:2; cf. 30:1-5; 39:1-8).

The last clue we should understand concerning “remnant” in Isaiah 37:31-32, in a double sense, is the declaration, “The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this,” which occurs only in Isaiah 37:32b (and its parallel in 2 Kings 19:31) and 9:7b. This distinctive phrase creates a link between the crises faced by Ahaz and Hezekiah, reminding us, along with other biblical father-son parallels, that “history doesn’t repeat itself, but it often rhymes.” Isaiah charges Hezekiah to heed the prophetic message that Ahaz resisted, *viz.*, that Judah is a remnant subject to *both* God’s mercy *and* God’s punishment. The mention of the LORD’s “zeal” reminds us that God can act fiercely both *for* and *against* His people, *i.e.*, *for* their peace (Isa. 26:11-12) and *against* their apostasy (Exod. 20:5; 34:14).

For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant and out of Mount Zion survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this (Isa. 37:32)

For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant, and out of Mount Zion survivors. The zeal of the LORD will perform this (2 Kings 19:31).

Conclusion: A Rescued Remnant in Need of Humility

Present-day American Christians, like Ahaz and Hezekiah, are susceptible to the allure of convenient alliances that promise short-term security but betray a deficient faith in the zealous God who saves us. In particular, the pseudo-religious bluster of recent electoral cycles and the polarizing algorithms of social media have led astray many of the Lord’s people, tempting us to exchange our integrity and witness for the illusory hope of cultural and political dominance. May God “make a remnant” of those who would oppose Him thus! “In returning and rest, you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength” (Isa. 30:15). It is *God* whose zeal creates and rescues His faithful remnant, then and now. To the extent that we, His church, rightly claim to be grafted into the faithful remnant of Israel through the work of Jesus, we share with Israel all that being the “remnant” entails: *both* God’s deliverance *and* God’s chastening, *both* His kindness *and* His severity. May we not become proud, but rather humble ourselves with awe! **TL**



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The Faithful Remnant

By Shawn Jefferies

During the time of the Babylonian captivity, Daniel and his friends show unrelenting faithfulness to God as His faithful remnant. Drawing courage from their example, let us maintain our distinctiveness in an equally alien culture.

Introduction

By highlighting critical moments in the life of Daniel, the book of Daniel covers the entire seventy-year period of Babylonian exile for the Jews. Daniel's story is strikingly like Joseph's in that he also was a teenage slave in a foreign country who eventually rose to a position of political power.

Daniel is most known for being miraculously delivered by God from the lions (Dan. 6:16-24). Like Noah building the ark and Jonah spending three days in the belly of the fish, this is one of those biblical stories that children are introduced to early. As young children begin learning about God, Daniel's deliverance provides parents with wonderful avenues. They are given an avenue to teach about God's power, protection, faith, and the virtue of habitual prayer (Dan. 6:10; Heb. 11:33). Many forget that Daniel was not a teenager or a young adult when he was thrown into the lion's den, but was an aged man—perhaps around ninety years old!

When the book of Daniel opens, Daniel is likely a teenager. God uses King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian empire to remove the Israelites from their land and punish them for worshipping idols. The finest and brightest Hebrew youths were taken during the first wave of captives in 605 BC (Dan. 1:3-4). Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were among the prisoners (Dan. 1:6-7). After being educated for three years in the culture of the Babylonians, they were made advisors to the king (Dan. 1:5).

This would be a challenging time for young Daniel. He would be required to change his diet and name, learn a new language, and even take on a new religion. How would he cope under these conditions? What godly qualities did he possess in the days of his youth that helped him develop into the seasoned man of faith who would later be delivered from a den of lions?

Resolve

Even though he was a mere youth, Daniel did not shy away from expressing his commitment to God. He refused to defile himself with the king's appointed food. While many of his peers may have been willing to compromise their faith, Daniel resolved to obey God's dietary laws. Even though he was hundreds of miles from home, and separated from his parents, "Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or the wine which he drank" (Dan. 1:8). He put his faith in God and proposed to the school leader that he and his friends be allowed to eat vegetables and drink water for ten days. If they didn't look healthier than the others, they would eat from the king's menu. God blessed this plan! After the days were complete, Daniel and his friends looked healthier and were allowed to continue their diet (Dan. 1:11-16). God also gave them wisdom and the ability to interpret visions and dreams (Dan. 1:17). These blessings moved them ahead of their class and right to the king's service (Dan. 1:18-20). This same resolve is also seen when Daniel's friends are pressured to worship

an idol, and decades later, when it became a violation of Babylonian law for Daniel to petition God (Dan. 3:1-18; 6:10).

In our current culture, where Christians are constantly being pressured to compromise godly principles, there is an enormous need for them to have the resolve of Daniel. There is a need for disciples to resolve to live righteously, even though culture detests Christianity and views a life of faith as silly and outdated. There is a need for God's children never to compromise what scripture promotes about morality and exercise wisdom when voicing their commitment to it. There is a need for young people to be determined to live for the Lord, even when their parents aren't near to monitor their behavior.

Courage

Imagine being separated from your family and sentenced to live out the rest of your life among people whose culture, language, and religious practices differed from anything you had ever known.

While many of the Hebrew captives caved to the pressures of their new environment, Daniel and his friends did not. Even when threatened with death, they boldly resisted defiling themselves and bowing to idols (Dan. 1:8; 3:12). The courage displayed by Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah is particularly inspiring. Faced with a literal fiery trial, they boldly told King Nebuchadnezzar, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O King. But even if He does not, let it be

known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up” (Dan. 3:17-18). Nebuchadnezzar may have never experienced people having the courage to resist anything he demanded.

As the storm continues to intensify in our current culture against people who stand for godly living, courage from God’s people is needed more than ever before. It takes courage to speak out against the sins plaguing our society and live in a godly manner that exposes the wickedness (Matt. 5:13-15; Eph. 5:11). The fearful are useless to the Lord, but the courageous can be used to influence a sinful society to begin seeking and acknowledging the righteousness of God (Dan. 3:28; Matt. 5:16).

Trust

Daniel’s resolve and courage were rooted in a deep trust in God. He trusted that God’s dietary requirements were best for him and that God would bless his efforts to be committed to those requirements (Dan. 1:12-13). This same kind of trust was also present in Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (Dan. 3:17).

Followers of God continue to have their trust tested by Satan. Will we trust that God knows what is best for our lives? Will we continue trusting in God’s standard for morality? Will we continue trusting that God is on the throne and that He rules in the kingdom of men? Will we continue trusting that a heavenly reward awaits them even while experiencing great trials?

As with Eve, Satan knows that if he can persuade God’s children to waver in their trust, he can gain victory over them (Gen. 3:1-6). The Lord’s people must adhere to the wisdom penned by Solomon. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight” (Prov. 3:5-6).

Humility

God rewarded the faithfulness of His servants in Babylon. Daniel was blessed with great wisdom and the ability to interpret dreams and was exalted to a high position in the empire (Dan. 1:17-21). Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were also blessed to be officials and were miraculously delivered from the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:30). In each case, God’s people gave Him the glory (Dan. 2:28; 3:17; 6:22).

Humility has always been a virtue blessed by God (Luke 18:14). Whatever kingdom work is performed, souls are converted, or position is gained, God’s people must always give Him the glory. We must acknowledge that He is responsible for every good gift we receive.

Conclusion

While Judah was being punished for having hearts far from God, it is encouraging to read about those who served God faithfully. Jews like Daniel began and ended their time in Babylon with a determination to bring God glory.

May God’s current faithful remnant bring Him the same glory! **IT**



Shawn Jefferies

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A Remnant Shall Return by Bob and Sandra Waldron

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The Remnant Restored

By Bruce Reeves

Encouraging brethren to be part of the restored remnant, Bruce refutes some full-preterist and premillennial notions of Zechariah, and emphasizes the value of post-exilic work by the prophets.

Introduction

God's faithful remnant is seen in every turn of biblical history. The divine assurances given to His children reveal the preserving power and tender mercy of His steadfast love. The apostle Paul rightly observed that the Lord's people are "afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor. 4:8-9). In the fiery trials of tribulation, we are refined for God's glory, renewed by His strength, and become "more than conquerors through Him that has loved us" (Rom. 8:37; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 1 Pet. 1:6-9). It is amazing to consider the Lord's providential faithfulness in His promises to Abraham, Israel's deliverance from Egypt in the Exodus, and the proclamation of redemption by the prophets (Acts 3:21-26). Our Father has graciously called us out of a wicked world into the fellowship of His family (Rom. 1:4-5; 9:4-5; 11:11-18; Eph. 3:14-15; 1 John 5:19).

Old Testament history has two primary watershed events: the Exodus from Egypt and the Exile in Babylon. After the Exile, God brings a remnant of His people back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and experience a true revival of faith. This post-exilic period was filled with paradoxes. It was a time of powerful victories and crushing defeats, of noble leaders and polluted priests, of corruption and cleansing, and of decline and renewal. During this unique period of biblical history, we find powerful keys that can help us be God's devoted

followers and walk by faith in a chaotic world.

The exiles who returned home from Babylon in 538 BC began plans for rebuilding the temple, but adverse economic and political conditions delayed the project. Haggai and Zechariah passionately pleaded with the people to continue and complete the building. Let us focus our attention on the book of Zechariah as we consider *The Remnant Restored*.

"In that Day"

The phrase "in that day" is a critical expression throughout the book of Zechariah. Both premillennialists and full preterists frequently misinterpret the meaning of the phrase. In so doing, they miss the major theme of the prophetic message. It is not speaking of the future second coming of Christ, nor the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Rather, the heart of the message entails the importance of the rebuilding of the temple in preparation for the first coming of Christ. The phrase refers to Jesus's birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension, and reign as King, as well as the life and persecution of the early church. It is critical that we recognize that the context is referring to *spiritual* Jerusalem, not *physical* Jerusalem (Luke 21:20-21; John 18:36; Gal. 4:26; 6:16; Heb. 12:22). Since Christians partake in spiritual Israel, we find great encouragement in the writings of the prophets as they point toward Christ and His people. We must not forget that Zechariah is a highly Messianic book!

Spiritual Restoration of the Remnant

The book of Zechariah dates itself in three passages. The first two fall in the "second year of Darius" (Zech. 1:1; 1:7) and the third in the "fourth year of king Darius" (Zech. 7:1). This reference is to the fourth Persian king, Darius Hystaspes, who reigned from 522 to 486 BC. It was during his reign that Jews who had returned from Babylonian exile were allowed to resume the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 4:24). Zechariah's pivotal post-exilic message and work offers exhortation, warning, and promise. He warns Israel of God's wrath, but then invites them to return to His fellowship (Zech. 1:2-3). The God whom we serve offers spiritual restoration: "I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it. . . My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem" (Zech. 1:16-17). All those who would surrender to the Messianic Servant, described as the "Branch," would worship God in unity (Zech. 3:8, 10; 8:22-23; 14:16-17). The "Branch" would serve as both King and Priest for all those who obey Him (Zech. 6:13; Heb. 5:8-9).

Spiritual Jerusalem refers to God's faithful remnant. Zechariah declares the presence and mercy of the Lord toward His people: "Many nations will join themselves to the Lord in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you" (Zech. 2:11; cf. 3:9-10; 9:16). God is not speaking

of literal land or a fleshly kingdom. He is describing those He has cleansed: “I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day” (Zech. 3:10). He goes on to proclaim the time when Christ’s light will shine in the world (Zech. 14:7; cf. John 8:12) and offer “living waters” of salvation (Zech. 14:8; cf. Matt. 8:11; John 4:10, 14; 7:37-38). Through Jesus Christ, we enjoy true restoration and salvation (Matt. 11:28-30; Acts 3:18-22; Gal. 6:1-2). Truly, what a blessing it is to live as God’s new creation and faithful remnant today (Rom. 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Pet. 2:9)!

Spiritual Protection

No matter what tragic persecution may come upon the Lord’s remnant, they will be safe and secure in spiritual Jerusalem. Although we may suffer physically, the Lord will be with us. Zechariah assures us of God’s presence: “For I,” declares the Lord, “will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst” (Zech. 2:5). The Lord’s work is performed by His power, not human wisdom: As the angel said to Zechariah, “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts” (Zech. 4:6; cf. Rom. 11:5).

Zechariah points us toward the salvation of the coming Messiah: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zech. 9:9). Matthew directly applies this prophetic statement to Jesus’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem at the beginning of the final week before His death (Matt. 21:1-10). This depiction of spiritual Jerusalem occurred long before the second coming or even the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. We know this because Zechariah’s prophecy includes references prior to either event:

- The purchase amount of Judas’s betrayal of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12-13; cf. Matt. 27:9-10)

- The betrayal of Christ (Zech. 13:7a; Mark 14:27)
- The death of Christ (Zech. 12:10-14; cf. John 19:37)
- The exaltation of Jesus as Lord (Zech. 11:9; cf. Matt. 28:18; Acts 2:36)

These facts show that the phrase, “in that day,” refers to a period of time, not a literal twenty-four-hour day. This time period references the incarnation, death, and reign of Christ, as well as the persecution of the early church.

Jerusalem is described as a “cup that causes reeling” and “a heavy stone” to the surrounding peoples who attempt to harm her (Zech. 14:2-3). The Lord promised “to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem” (Zech. 12:9). God’s people are admonished to live in Jerusalem where there will be no curse, but only security (Zech. 14:11). Such language clearly speaks of spiritual Jerusalem. If we can understand the difference between leaving a city and staying in a city, then we can understand that Zechariah is expressing the Lord’s protection of His spiritual city and people in times of persecution, not AD 70 or a millennial kingdom at the end of time.

Zechariah 14:2-3 is not describing a physical battle, but the spiritual conflict that the remnant will experience. Using warfare language, he says, “For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as when He fights on a day of battle.” Such militant language is a common metaphor for our spiritual conflict (2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:10-17). While there will be casualties of war, as some fall away in times of suffering (1 John 2:19; Rev. 2:10), yet those who surrender to Jesus as King and Redeemer will be safe and secure. Brethren, let us dwell securely in spiritual Jerusalem!

Spiritual Identity

Some seem deeply bothered by the idea of few rather than many being saved. Yet, Jesus taught that few would take the narrow path that leads to eternal life while many would take the broad way that leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13-14). The entire narrative of Scripture reveals that, although God lovingly invites all, the majority will not hear or heed heaven’s call. Rather, it is only (and always) a remnant that chooses to walk in obedience to His will. It is easy to be fashioned like the surrounding sinful world, rather than pursuing the sanctification of the Lord (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1).

Even while in captivity, some Jews became so acclimated to their surroundings that they had fallen into complacent indifference and were failing to see that it was time to return home and build for the Lord. Zechariah cries out, “Ho, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon” (Zech. 2:7). Have we become too comfortable in Babylon? Are we being “conformed to the world” rather than being “transformed by the renewing of our minds” (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 1:13-16)? Are we being shaped by the perverse values of social media, corrupt cultural norms, and the permissiveness of a decadent society? Are we conforming to the expectations of the surrounding world in the way that we dress, speak, and behave? Have we become resistant and hostile to returning to the Lord’s work and sacrificing to build for His cause? Do we need to be restored? Let us seek our faithful Shepherd, compassionate Priest, and sovereign King (Zech. 6:13; 13:7)! Let us enjoy the tremendous blessings of walking with our God as His restored remnant! 🙏



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The Chosen Remnant

By Mark Roberts

God has a faithful group that He uses. . . and we can be part of it. However, being in that remnant isn't always easy! Courage and commitment are required.

Introduction

Somehow the idea of a “remnant” almost feels second rate. “We only have a few remnants left,” might mean the store is out of its best goods. Yet, for Paul, it was an exciting idea that played across the stage of all Scripture: the faithful few through whom God continues to work. For Paul, it wasn't about being “leftovers,” but being at the center of God's plans. That is why we want to understand the remnant in Romans 11. Paul says “there is a remnant, chosen by grace” (v. 5), *and we want to be part of that remnant.*

Romans 11 is a climactic moment in Paul's writing to the church in Rome. This is a church experiencing division and strife along racial lines. Paul deals with much of this by reminding Jews and Gentiles that they are so alike. For example, they are all sinners (chs. 1-3), and all are saved by grace (ch. 4), and all have become new in Christ through baptism (ch. 6). Even so, Paul knows there are simmering and smoldering attitudes in Rome. A Jewish Christian might consider Gentiles as almost second-class Christians, thinking “Gentiles read *our* Bible and follow *our* Messiah—who is a Jew!” Gentile brothers might respond in resentment by saying, “You Jews didn't pursue God by faith. He has rejected you and replaced you with us!” Paul answers this problem by saying that God is certainly not done with all Jews. After all, Paul says, I am a Jew (11:1)! Moreover, the inspired apostle argues, God will never be done with *true* Jews. There was a remnant, a small group faithful to God, even during

Elijah's time (vv. 2-4). Those 7,000 stand for all time to remind us that God *always* has a faithful group with whom He works to accomplish His purpose (v. 5). There are three implications for our Roman brethren, and for us, from these truths.

The Existence of the Remnant Is a Testimony to God's Amazing Grace.

Why didn't true belief simply vanish during the time of Elijah when God's prophets were killed and His altars demolished? Because God sustained the faithful. In His grace and mercy, He protected them. For example, God miraculously fed Elijah at the brook Kidron by means of ravens (1 Kings 17:6). What happened with the others? We aren't told, but God assures Elijah he is not alone! God had made incredible promises to Abraham, and those promises would not be exterminated. The key is for us to realize that neither Elijah nor the 7,000 deserved that. They could have been swept away in the furious storm of sin and idolatry that Ahab and Jezebel unleashed. Faithfulness doesn't mean that God owes us anything. Nevertheless, by His grace, He maintains His commitment to Himself and His promises, and He chose to do that through a small group of faithful Israelites that He preserved.

This is an excellent place for American Christians to stop congratulating themselves on the size of our buildings, the effectiveness of our YouTube videos and live streaming, and be reminded: we are here by God's grace.

The freedoms we enjoy in this country have empowered us to build strong and thriving congregations. Yet it is clear that the forces of darkness would gladly sweep us away. Why hasn't that happened yet? With so many arrayed against God's people—the media, the courts, the legislature, and more—how are we still here? We are but a remnant. Yet, we are here, Paul reminds us, because of God's *amazing grace.*

The Remnant Is There for Any (And All) Who Choose to Be a Part of It.

Perhaps few places in Scripture give us a glimpse of the joining of human will and divine sovereignty like Romans 11. Yes, God had determined that faith would not be obliterated from the earth. Who would carry the light of His knowledge forward? Who would be in the group that God used to keep the promises to Abraham alive? The answer is simple: those who chose not to bow the knee to Baal. To be sure, God does not need faithful people to accomplish His will. He can (and has) used unbelievers. Yet, God's preference is to work with those who want to work with Him! That does not mean such folks aren't sinners and don't need grace. Of course not. The 7,000 Paul references in Romans 11 were still sinners needing forgiveness. However, they were the kind of people who wanted to be on God's side. They wanted to do right. God blesses that, and God uses that. They were true Israelites. They had a heart for God. *God chose them, and they chose God.*



From a societal standpoint, life became complicated and difficult for Jews (such as Paul) who believed in Christ and obeyed the gospel. They had chosen Jesus of Nazareth. That meant persecution and attacks—from their own countrymen! It was hard for the 7,000 to refuse Baal, and it was hard for those New Testament Christians in Rome to be faithful. In acknowledging this truth—that our choice to serve God can bring hardship—we are brought to a third truth about being in God’s remnant. . .

Being in the Remnant Isn’t Easy, Which Means We Need Our Brethren.

The Jewish religion had long known special status under Roman law. They may have loathed the Jews, but the Romans knew not to trifle with their religious rites. There was no idol to Caesar in their temple, and their synagogues were exempt from laws about secret societies. Jews were allowed to send the temple tax to Jerusalem each year, instead of Rome. Judaism was a legal religion.

Christianity was not. For a while, it operated under the umbrella of Judaism, but the Jews who rejected Jesus worked hard to separate themselves from Christianity (Acts 18:2). By the time Paul writes Romans, Jewish disciples are having to make hard decisions about who they are for what they stand. Maybe that’s why Paul is so concerned about the church at Rome. He knows those Jewish Christians *need their Gentile brothers!* Thus, he calls them to be faithful to Christ, to be part of the remnant, but he also calls them to unity and care for one another. Instead of disdaining one another, Jew and Gentile needed to help each other—something Paul develops at much greater length in Romans 14-15.

Somehow all of this feels like *deja vu!* Many laws and special privileges have protected Christianity in the United States of America. Yet, we see those evaporating. More and more Christians will have to decide if they want to be citizens of the Kingdom or citizens of America. To refuse to bow the knee will be costly. There will be persecution and ostracism. Of course, it will be worth it as God works through the faithful, the true Israelites, to accomplish His everlasting purposes. Yet, that doesn’t mean it will

be easy, *and we will need our brethren to sustain and help and comfort each other.* When you are the majority, you fit into society with no troubles. When you are but a remnant, you need all the help and support you can get because you will be persecuted!

Conclusion

God has a plan. In His grace, His plan always includes those who want to be part of His work and who set themselves up against the majority of society because they believe in Him and His Word. What about you and me today? Are we ready to be part of God’s faithful remnant? Are we thankful for His grace, and are we ready to refuse to bow the knee? Then let us pull ranks tight with our brothers and sisters as we continue to be lights in this ever-darkening world for Jesus Christ! **||**



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The Remnant Today

By Mike Willis

The age old battle between God and Satan continues. So long as our adversary is effective in leading brethren to apostasy, there will always be a call for God's remnant to show their faithfulness to His word.

Introduction

For they are not all Israel, who are of Israel (Rom. 9:6).

The Hebrew word *shearit*, translated "remnant," basically means "that which is left over, *remainder*" (HALOT, 1380) [see Note #1]. It can refer to what is left over from a tree or timber (Isa. 44:17), of the remainder of unnamed princes of the king of Babylon (Jer. 39:3), or of any other thing left over. The word is used 266 times in the OT; it is Isaiah's favorite word to express the idea of the remnant. When used of a remnant of a people, it refers to those who survive a great catastrophe. Lester V. Meyer explains the concept, saying,

... the catastrophe purges the community of its impurities, and remnant is called to exemplary life as the people of Yahweh (Ezra. 9:13-14; Isa. 1:25-26; 4:2-4; 10:20). Thus, the appointment and rescue of the remnant, making possible the continuation of the life of the community, may be viewed as themselves constituting the saving activity of Yahweh (AYBD, 5:670).

Paul used the concept of the "remnant" (*hupoleimma*: "a relatively small surviving group, *remnant*," BDAG, 1038) to describe those Jews who chose to believe in and obey the Lord Jesus; they are the "remnant" of Israel (Rom. 9-11) [see Note #2]. John describes the faithful saints in a less than faithful church at Thyatira who are the "rest" (Greek: *loipos*) or those who are "left" (Rev. 2:24); the "dead" church at Sardis had a few faithful to God (Rev. 3:4), although remnant language is not used to describe

them. Those who are able to survive the onslaughts of the Great Dragon are called a "remnant" (Rev. 11:13; 12:17, from *loipos*, "those who were left" [BDAG, 602], translated "remnant" in KJV and "rest" in NKJV).

The Present

My assignment in this series of articles is to look at how the idea of remnant applies to the church today. That apostasy can occur within a church includes the idea of a remnant because these apostasies frequently divide Christians, with one group departing from the truth and the other group clinging to the word of Christ [see Note #3]. Paul's closing words to the elders at Ephesus illustrate this:

Therefore, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, *to draw away the disciples after themselves*. Therefore, watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears (Acts 20:28-31).

To the young preacher, Timothy, Paul warned,

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having

their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth (1 Tim. 4:1-3).

Peter wrote, "But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. *And many will follow their destructive ways*, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed" (2 Pet. 2:1-2). Using the example of the angels who sinned and were cast to hell, coupled with the ancient world in the days of Noah, and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, Peter encouraged Christians that, just as God saved Noah and Lot, "the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment" (2 Pet. 2:9; cf. Jude).

The Past

The history of Christians in America who were determined to leave sectarian denominationalism in order go back to the Bible, being content to be Christians in the "one body" (Eph. 4:4), the church of God [see Note #4], illustrates the effect that doctrinal apostasy has on congregations. Though differences between the groups may appear small to outside observers in the beginning, historically those who moved away from Bible authority eventually embraced liberal attitudes toward the Bible (denying inspiration, rejecting the concept of

the oneness of the church [which they deemed too exclusive], and embracing many of the cultural causes of the age [such as immodest dress, abortion, and homosexuality]). Historians estimate that 80-85% of all churches usually follow the apostate group. In that respect, the 15-20% who are left can truly be called a “remnant.” Frequently, they lost their church buildings and were compelled by conscience to move into rented facilities and start all over again.

Their history usually follows a pattern like this: (a) Zealous, committed Christians who made great sacrifices to worship and work together in accordance with divine revelation; (b) Years of struggling to grow a congregation from a handful of people meeting in economically stressed neighborhoods; (c) Finally, they grow large enough to build a building in a respectable neighborhood [see Note #5]; (d) A period of spiritual and numerical prosperity follows with the saints rejoicing in what Christ has done to bless their congregation; (e) This generation of saints begins to die off and the second generation moves into leadership positions, without recognizing what it took for the prior generation to succeed [see Note #6]; (f) The next generation becomes dissatisfied with the biblical way of doing things and becomes attracted to the “successful” leaders in contemporary denominations, aping them in their own local congregation. Within a few years, the difference in direction reaches critical mass, and the cycle repeats itself anew. The cycle in our churches resembles the cycle during the period of the judges, repeating itself in successive generations of mankind:

When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel. Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baals; and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down

to them; and they provoked the Lord to anger (Judg. 2:10-12).

Conclusion

Because of the cyclical nature of history, there will always need to be a remnant—disciples of the Lord Jesus who are committed to following the revealed word of God, not being attracted to the latest and greatest bauble used by Satan to lure Christians away from God. Moses described the temptations that Israel experienced during the wilderness wanderings as a time when God led His people “to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not” (Deut. 8:2). I suspect similar events happen to every generation of mankind. Therefore, let us heed the lessons of history. ■

Notes

Note #1: For a brief look at the different Hebrew words for expressing the idea of “remnant,” see G. F. Hasel, “Remnant,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible, Supplementary Volume*, 735-736.

Note #2: Paul quotes from Isaiah 10:22; 1:9; and 1 Kings 19:18 (see Rom. 9:27, 29; 11:4).

Note #3: Sometimes the apostasy is so complete that the entire congregation follows its leaders into disobedience.

Note #4: The term “church of God” is not intended to refer to the modern “Church of God” denomination, but rather to the church in the New Testament sense of all of those being saved in Christ (i.e., the universal church [Acts 2:47]), meeting together in local churches (congregations), and without any denominational machinery tying them together.

Note #5: Unfortunately, sometimes a remnant is unsuccessful in establishing a faithful congregation, because committed saints move away or

die, and those who are left are not sufficiently committed to enable the local group to continue.

Note #6: Some of these second-generation leaders may even criticize their forebears, who endured the conflict in the local churches to salvage a remnant. They frequently do not understand the issues that caused the separation and are unwilling to allow preaching that reinforces commitment to Bible authority to prevent the cycle of apostasy from repeating itself.

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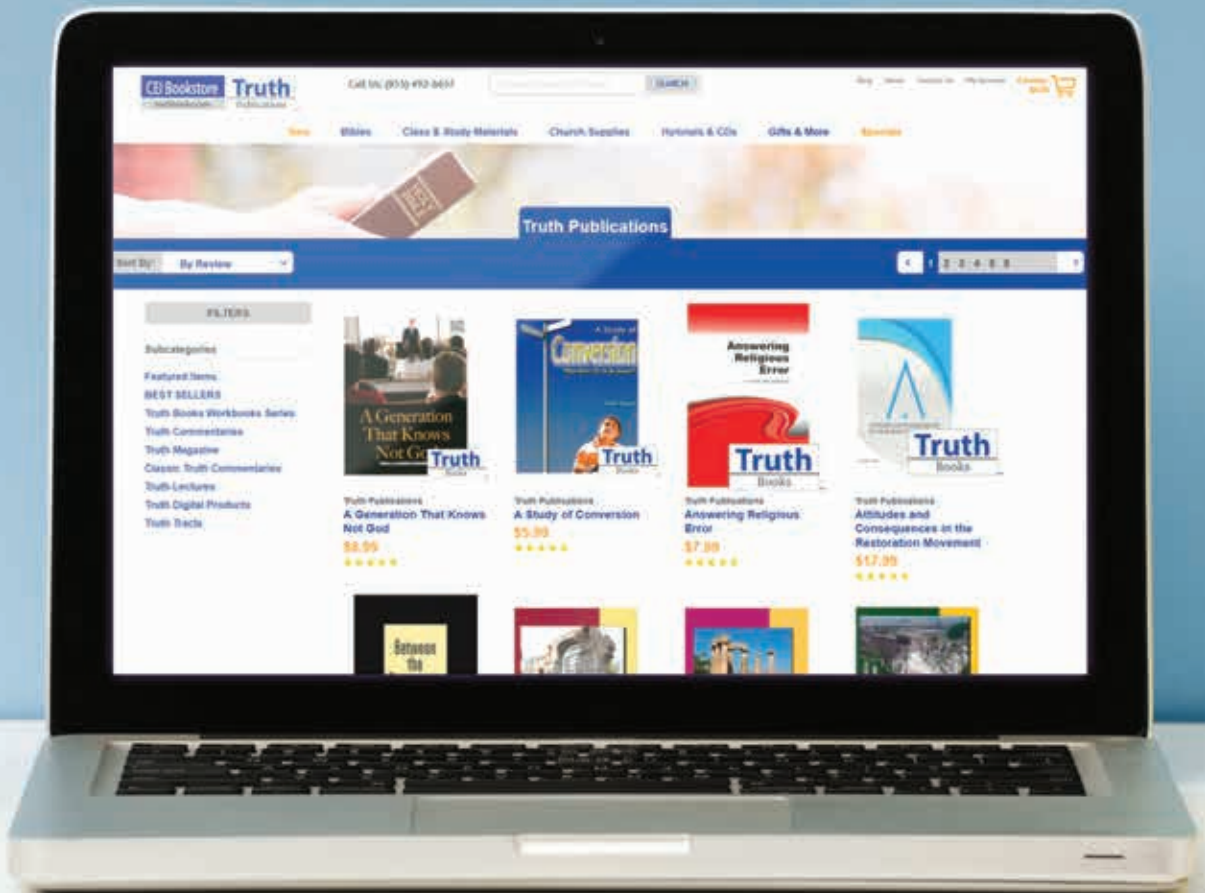
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 0052 | hwy65churchofchrist.org

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

GENEVA

Church of Christ

Ave. C & 2nd St.
 Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:45
 am | 407-349-9998

MARY ESTHER

Church of Christ

6 Ln. Dr.
 Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
 Evangelist: Joey Rankin 850-244-9222

ORLANDO

Church of Christ at S. Bumby

3940 S. Bumby Ave.
 Sun. Communion: 9:30 am | Bible Study
 10:00 am | Praise & Preaching: 10:55 am
 (No pm Service) | Wed 7:00 pm
 Evangelist: Ken Chapman
 Office: 407-851-8031 | bumby.org | Note:
 Please call for current worship and Bible
 study times.

PANAMA CITY BEACH

Beach Church of Christ

8910 Front Beach Rd.
 Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship
 11:00 pm & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
 7:00 pm
 850-234-2521

SEFFNER

Church of Christ

621 E. Wheeler Rd.
 Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship
 10:50 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
 7:30 pm
 Evangelist: Bobby Witherington | 813-
 684-1297 | seffnercoc.org

GEORGIA

PINE MTN. VALLEY

Church of Christ

Route 116 (near Callaway Gardens)
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship
11:00 pm & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:30 pm
Evangelist: Tommy W. Thomas | 706-628-
5117 or 628-5229 | pmvchurch.com

IDAHO

BLACKFOOT

Church of Christ

370 N. Shilling | P.O. Box 158-83221
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship
11:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
208-785-6168 or 681-1552

IOWA

DES MOINES

Church of Christ

1310 N.E. 54th Ave.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:40
am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
515-262-6799

ILLINOIS

DOWNERS GROVE

Church of Christ

1236 63rd St. (Dir: 1.5 miles E of I355)
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 9:55
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
Evangelist: Steve Wolfgang | 630-968-
0760 | dgcoc.org

GLEN ELLYN

Glen Ellyn Church of Christ

796 Prairie Ave.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Sun. Worship
10:30 am & 5:00 pm
Evangelist: Keith E. Brown | 630-858-
2290 & 630-377-3990

MATTOON

Southside Church of Christ

1100 S. 17th St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
217-234-3702

SOUTH HOLLAND

Southeast Church of Christ

16224 S Vincennes Ave.
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00
am & 4 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Donald Hawkins | 708-339-
1008 | southeastchurchofchrist.com

WASHINGTON

Tazewell County Church of Christ

Meeting @ Sleep Inn Suites and Motel |
1101 North Cummings Lane, Washington,
IL 61571
Sun. Worship: 11:30 am | Bible Study:
12:30 pm | Wed. Bible Study 6:30 pm @
home of Tim Sundlie, call for address
Evangelist: Tim Sundlie | 608-796-9028
| sunbeads1@gmail.com | tazewellcococ.
org

INDIANA

CLARKSVILLE

Clarksville Church of Christ

407 W. Lewis & Clark Parkway, 47129
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
Evangelist: Brian Anderson | 812-944-
2305 or 812-948-9917 | clarksvillechur-
chofchrist.org

JAMESTOWN

Church of Christ

Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:25
am & 4 pm | Wed. 7:00 pm
765-676-6404 | jamestowncoc.com

NOBLESVILLE

Stony Creek Church of Christ

15530 Herriman Blvd, 46060
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship
11:00 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: John Smith | preacher-
john54@att.net | 317-501-8035 or
317-501-0249 or 317-701-1204

OOLITIC

Church of Christ

400 Lafayette Ave. | P.O. Box 34
Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:30
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. 7:00 pm
812-279-4332

PEKIN

Church of Christ

(First St. & Karnes Ct.)
Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:30
am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Jeremy Goen | 812-967-3437
or 967-3520 | pekinchurchofchrist.com

KANSAS

TOPEKA

17th Street Church of Christ

5600 SW 17th St, Topeka, KS 66604
Sun. Bible Study 9:15 am | Sun. Worship
10:30 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
785-235-8687 or 785-273-7977 |
17thstreetchurchofchrist.org

KENTUCKY

BEAVER DAM

Church of Christ

1235 Williams St.
Sun. Worship 10:00 am | Bible Study After
am Worship & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
Evangelist: Jerid Gunter | 270-274-4451

BENTON

Fairdealing Church of Christ

8081 US Hwy 68-East, Benton, KY 42025
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00
am | Wed. Bible Study 6:00 pm
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
Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:30
am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 6:30 pm
Evangelist: Charles J. White | 270-422-
3878

CAMPBELLSVILLE

Sunny Hill Dr. Church of Christ

107 Sunny Hill Dr.
Worship 9:30 am & 11:30 am | Bible
Study 10:30 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00
pm
Evangelist: Steve Lee | 270-789-1651 |
sunnyhillcoc.com

CANEYVILLE

Caneyville Church of Christ

103 N. Main St. | P.O. Box 233
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship
10:45 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
Evangelist: Jarrod Jacobs | 270-589-4167
or 270-274-3065

DANVILLE

Church of Christ

385 E. Lexington Ave.
Sun. Worship 10:00 am | Bible Study
11:15 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
Evangelist: B.J. Sipe | 859-236-4204

FLORENCE

Northern Kentucky Church of Christ

18 Scott Drive, Florence, KY 41042
Sun. Worship 9:30 am & 5:30 pm | Sun.
Bible Study 10:30 am | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
859-371-2095 | nkcofc.com

FRANKLIN

31-W North Church of Christ

1733 Bowling Green Rd.
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Steve Monts | 270-776-9393 |
31wchurchofchrist.com

LEITCHFIELD

Mill St. Church of Christ

733 Mill St. Hwy 62 E.
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship
10:55 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
Evangelist: Dan McMahan | 270-971-
1492 | millstreetchurchofchrist.org

LOUISVILLE

Valley Station Church of Christ

1803 Dixie Garden Dr.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Michael Hardin | michaelhar-
din1123@att.net | 502-937 2822

SHEPHERDSVILLE

Hebron Lane Church of Christ

3221 East Hebron Lane
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00
am & 5 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
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 am | Worship 10:30
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
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 10:00 am | Worship
11:00 pm & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
318-256-9396

MAINE

PORTLAND

Church of Christ

856 Brighton Ave. (Breakwater School) | Leave Maine Turnpike at Exit 48
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm w/ second service immediately following am worship | Mid-week Bible Study (please call for times & places)
207-839-3075 or 839-8409

MICHIGAN

KENTWOOD

W. Michigan Church of Christ

3084 Creek Drive SE, #1-C, Kentwood, MI 49512 | P.O. Box 8446, Kentwood, Mich. 49508 (Grand Rapids area)
Sun. Worship 11:00 am | Sun. Bible Study 12:30 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Joseph Gladwell | cedar-springs98@gmail.com

ROSCOMMON

N. Michigan Church of Christ

414 South Main Street
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 am | Wed. Bible Study 6:00 pm
Evangelist: Ryan Thomas | 810-837-1302 or 989-389-3226 | northernmichigan-churchofchrist.com

MISSISSIPPI

CLINTON

McRaven Rd. Church of Christ

301 McRaven Rd. (I20, exit 36)
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Leonard White | 601-925-9757 or 924-2645

MERIDIAN

7th St. Church of Christ

2914 7th St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00 am

Grandview Church of Christ

2820 Grandview Ave.
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Sun. Worship 11:00 pm | Wed. 6:30 pm
Ron Cooper: 601-934-3675 | roncooper@bellsouth.net
Ricky Ethridge: 601-737-5778 | rickymarsha@bellsouth.net

SOUTH HAVEN

Church of Christ

2110 E State Line Rd. (Exit I-55) (Memphis area)
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: James A. Brown | Bldg: 662-342-1132

MARYLAND

SEVERN

Southwest Church of Christ

805 Meadow Rd, Severn, MD 21144
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Sun. Worship 11:00 pm & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
Evangelist: Brandon Trout | 410-969-1420 or 410-551-6549 | swcofchrist.com

MISSOURI

BLODGETT

Blodgett Church of Christ

422 N Linton St., Blodgett, MO 63824
Sun. Worship 10:00 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Russell Rice | 573-475-0417

BLUE SPRINGS

Southside Church of Christ

4000 SW Christiansen
Sun. Worship 9:00 pm | Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Brett Hogland | 816-228-9262

BRANSON

Eagle Rock Rd. Church of Christ

432 Eagle Rock Rd.
Sun. Worship 9:30 am | Bible Study 10:30 am | Sun. Evening Worship 2 pm | Wed. Bible Study 6:00 pm
Evangelist: Philip North | 417-239-1036 | primrosenor@suddenink.net | eaglerock-roadchurchofchrist.org

CAPE GIRARDEAU

Cape County Church of Christ

2912 Bloomfield Rd
Sun. Bible Study 9:15 am | Worship 10:00 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
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 9:00 am & 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Walter Myers | 417-830-8972 or 417-736-2663

KENNETT

Church of Christ

703 Harrison St.
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
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 am | Worship 10:15 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Lynn Huggins | 573-265-8628

SAINT JOSEPH

County Line Church of Christ

2727 County Line Rd.
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 9:50 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
816-279-4737 | countylinechurchofchrist.com

NEBRASKA

BEATRICE

Church of Christ at 7th & Bell

Bell St & S 7th St. Beatrice, NE 68310
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00 am & 6:30 pm
402-233-4102 or 402-228-3827 | churchofchrist7bell.org

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte Church of Christ

5327 S. Tryon Street
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Sun. Worship 10:30 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
704-525-5655 | charlottechurchofchrist.org

LINCOLN

Lincoln Church of Christ

3781 East Highway 27, Iron Station, NC 28080
Sun. Bible Study: 10:00 am | Sun. Worship 11:00 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Stan Adams | 704-748-9777 (Bldg) & 704-748-3747 (Jerry) | lincolnnc-church@gmail.com | lincolnccoc.com

OHIO

BEAVERCREEK

Knollwood Church of Christ

1031 Welford Dr, Beavercreek, OH 45434 (located a few miles E of Dayton)
Sun. Short Worship: 9:30 am | Bible Study 10:05 am | Sun. Worship 11:00 am | Wed. Bible Study Adults: 1:00 pm & All ages: 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Heath Rogers | 937-426-1422 | knollwoodchurch.org

DAYTON

West Carrollton Church of Christ

28 W. Main St., 45449
Sun. Worship 9:00 pm | Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:25 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
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 10:00 am | Worship 10:45 am | Tues. Bible Study 6:30 pm
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 10:00 am | Worship 10:45 am | Wed. Bible Study 4:30 pm
James Bond: 419-564-3878 | Mr. Kim Walton: 419-651-3488 | Bldg: 419-522-8982 | northsidecoc.us

NEW LEBANON

New Lebanon Church of Christ

1973 W Main St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30 am, & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
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 am | Worship 10:30 am & 6:30 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Mark Childers | 304-615-1091 | 740-374-9827 | mariettarenochurchofchrist.org

ChurchDirectory

NORTHWOOD

Frey Rd. Church of Christ

4110 Frey Rd. (Toledo Area)
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship
11:00 pm & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
Evangelist: Donald Jarabek | 419-893-
3566 & 567-694-5062

OKLAHOMA

MCALISTER

North A St. Church of Christ

2120 No. A St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:45
am & 5:30 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Rob Lungstrum | 918-931-
1362 or 918-423-3445

OREGON

SWEET HOME

Church of Christ

3702 E. Long St.
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship
11:00 pm & 7:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:30 pm
Bldg: 541-367-1599

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA

Mt. Airy Church of Christ

7222 Germantown Ave, Philadelphia, PA
19119
Sun. Bible Study 10:15 am | Sun. Worship:
11:15 am | Tues. Bible Study: 7:00 pm
Evangelist: James H. Baker, Jr. | 215-248-
2026 | mtairychurchofchrist.org

SOUTH CAROLINA

SUMTER

Woodland Church of Christ

3370 Broad St. Extension
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
am & 5:30 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
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 am | Worship 10:30
am & 3:30 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
931-388-5828 or 931-381-7898 | moores-
villepikecoc.com

COSBY

Cosby Church of Christ

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

KINGSTON SPRINGS

Kingston Springs Church of Christ

350 North Main St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00
am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Steve Walker | kscoc.com

MOUNT PLEASANT

Locust St. Church of Christ

108 Locust St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
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 9:00 am | Worship 10:00
am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Bldg: 615-896-0090 | casonlanechurch.
org

Northfield Blvd. Church of Christ

2091 Pitts Ln, Murfreesboro, TN 37130
(located at the corner of Northfield Blvd
and Pitts Lane)
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Sun. Worship
10:30 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
Evangelist: David Bunting | 615-893-1200
| GodsRedeemed.org

NASHVILLE

Hillview Church of Christ

7471 Charlotte Pike
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00
am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Lee Wildman | 615-952-5458
or 615-356-7318

Perry Heights Church of Christ

423 Donelson Pike
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 9:55
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Johnny Felker | 615-883-3118
| perryheights.faithweb.com

TEXAS

ALLEN

Twin Creeks Church of Christ

1414 W. Exchange Pkwy
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00
am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Jerry King 214-504-0443 or
972-727-5355 | twincreekscoc.com

ALVARADO

I-35 Church of Christ

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

ALVIN

Adoue St. Church of Christ

605 E. Adoue St., Alvin, TX 77511
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
Evangelist: Mark Mayberry | mark@ascoc.
org | ascoc.org

BAYTOWN

Church of Christ at Pruett & Lobit

701 North Pruett St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:40
am & 6:30 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Bldg: 281-422-5926 | Weldon: 713-818-
1321 | biblework.com

BEAUMONT

Dowlen Rd. Church of Christ

3060 Dowlen Rd.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Max Dawson | 409-866-1996 |
dowlenroad.com

DICKINSON

Dickinson Church of Christ

2919 Main St/FM 517 E., Dickinson, TX
77539
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Sunday
Worship 11:00 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible
Study 7:00 pm
713-298-6673

EDNA

Church of Christ

301 Robison St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
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 am | Worship 10:30
am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
915-855-1524

GALVESTON (BACLIFF)

Bacliff Church of Christ

4303 18th St, Bacliff, TX 77518
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Sun. Worship
10:00 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
Evangelist: Richard Lay | bacliffchurchof-
christ.org

FORT WORTH

West Side Church of Christ

6110 White Settlement Rd. 76114
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
817-738-7269

GRANBURY

Old Granbury Rd Church of Christ
4313 Old Granbury Rd, Granbury, TX
76049
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Sun. Worship 10:30
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Chip Foster | 817-913-4209 or
817-279-3351 | oldgranburyrdchurch.org

HOUSTON

Fry Rd. Church of Christ

2510 Fry Rd. (77084)
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:20
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
Evangelist: Mark White | fryroad.org

IRVING

Westside Church of Christ

2320 Imperial Dr. (Located close to DFW
Airport)
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 9:50
am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
Evangelist: Mark Roberts | 972-986-9131
| justchristians.com

LUBBOCK

Indiana Avenue Church of Christ

6111 Indiana Ave, Lubbock, TX 79413
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Sun. Worship
9:00 am & 11:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study
7:00 pm
806-795-3377 | lubbockchurch.com

MANSFIELD

Northside Church of Christ

1820 Mansfield Webb Rd, Mansfield, TX 76063

Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Sun. Worship: 10:20 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 5:30 pm.

Evangelist: Tom Roberts | 817-996-3926 | northsidecofc.us

NACOGDOCHES

Shawnee Church of Christ

612 S Shawnee St, Nacogdoches, TX 75961

Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:30 am & 6:00 | Wed. Bible Study 6:00 pm

Minister: Van Dennis | 936-615-2950

Stallings Dr. Church of Christ

3831 N.E. Stallings Dr.

Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:20 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

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 am | Worship 10:30 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

Evangelist: Jesse Garcia | 210-660 0409 | pecanvalleychurchofchrist.org

SHERMAN

Westwood Village Church of Christ

314 N. Tolbert

Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

Evangelist: Ronald Stringer

TEMPLE

Leon Valley Church of Christ

4404 Twin City Blvd.

Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm

Evangelist: Jason Garcia (yourfriend-jgar@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 am | Worship 10:15 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

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 am | Worship 10:30 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

Evangelist: Marc Smith | 254-292-2482 or 652-7698

VERMONT

MONTPELIER

Montpelier Church of Christ

Meeting in the Capital City Grange Hall, 6612 Route 12 Berlin, VT 05602

Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10 am | Tues. Evening in Homes

Evangelist: Open | montpelierchurchofchrist.com | P.O. Box 70, Williamstown, VT 05679 | For questions or directions: Wade Holt 802-485-4311

VIRGINIA

CHESAPEAKE

Tidewater Church of Christ

217 Taxus St.

Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

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 am | Worship 10:30 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

Evangelist: Nathan L. Morrison | 804-778-4717 | courthousechurchofchrist.com

Forest Hill Church of Christ

1208 W. 41st St.

Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

Evangelist: Jack Bise, Jr. | 804-233-5959

RIDGEWAY

Church of Christ

2970 Old Leaksville Rd.

Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm & 5:30 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

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 am | Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm

Evangelist: Brent Paschall | 540-344-2755 | blueridgecoc.org

VIRGINIA BEACH

Southside Church of Christ

5652 Haden Rd.

Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm

Robert Mallard | 757-464-4574

WASHINGTON

BELLINGHAM

Mt. Baker Church of Christ

1860 Mt. Baker Hwy.

Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

Evangelist: Joe Price | 360-752-2692 or 360-920-6965 | 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 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm (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 am

304-622-5433 | westsidechurchofchristwv.net

FAIRMONT

Eastside Church of Christ

1929 Morgantown Ave.

Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 10:45 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

304-363-8696 or 304-844-2437

MOUNDSVILLE

Moundsville Church of Christ

210 Cedar Ave, Moundsville, WV 26041

Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Sun. Worship 10:30 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

Evangelist: Tony Huntsman | 304-845-4940 | cedarsower.com

CANADA

CALGARY, AB

Northside Church of Christ

803 20A Ave NE, Calgary AB T2E 1S1

Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Sun. Worship 11:00 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm

Evangelist: Eric Castillo | +1-403-619-1249 | churchofchristcalgary.com

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