

Truth

Magazine

*Taking His hand,
helping each other home.*



®

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OPEN ISSUE

While the earth remains,
seedtime and harvest, and
cold and heat, and summer
and winter, and day and
night shall not cease
(Gen. 8:22).



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David declared, "The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands." Hebrews 3:4 affirms, "For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God."

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The ruins of the Roman Colosseum are a monument to the survival of Christianity and the utter failure of a mighty world empire to destroy it. This realization give us courage to face the challenges of today.

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Keys to Spiritual Success

by Mark Mayberry

Similarities between contemporary culture and the period of the Judges serve as both a warning and an encouragement. We can fall into the same trap as did apostate Israel, or prevail over our adversaries, as did Deborah and Barak.

Introduction

The story of how God used Deborah and Barak to deliver Israel from Canaanite oppression is a highlight of the book of Judges—an otherwise dark and depraved period when “every man did what was right in his own eyes” (Judg. 17:6; 21:25). The subsequent Song of Deborah and Barak, recorded in Judges 5, contains several striking statements that capture the reason Israel enjoyed success:

That the leaders led in Israel, that the people volunteered, bless the LORD (Judg. 5:2)!

My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel, the volunteers among the people; bless the LORD (Judg. 5:9)!

At the sound of those who divide flocks among the watering places, there they shall recount the righteous deeds of the LORD, the righteous deeds for His peasantry in Israel. Then the people of the LORD went down to the gates (Judg. 5:11).

Keys to Success

God Is Exalted: “Bless the Lord”

We must recognize God’s position and power. He is exalted. He is our King and Commander. Wisdom and guidance originate with Him. As an expression of His righteous character, God bestows blessings or brings disaster based upon man’s obedience or rebellion. His might is manifested in the destruction of Israel’s enemies (Exod. 14:1-4, 13-18), in judgments against His wayward people

(Ezek. 6:1-10), and in His exaltation of the redeemed (Isa. 49:22-23). In each case, whether for good or for ill, whether in deliverance or destruction, God’s power is on display so that “Pharaoh/they/you will know that I am the LORD!”

Leaders Must Lead: “The Leaders Led”

Apart from His favor, we have no hope. With His favor, we have no fear. However, if the Lord’s people hope to achieve success, everyone must do his part:

That the leaders led in Israel, that the people volunteered, Bless the LORD (Judg. 5:2)!

My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel, the volunteers among the people; bless the LORD (Judg. 5:9)!

Those who occupy positions of authority are obligated to lead. This is true of husbands and fathers (Eph. 5:22-33; 6:4), and elders in a local church (Acts 20:28-32). It should also be the rule in the realm of politics (Prov. 28:2; Eccl. 10:16-17) and in the workplace (Col. 4:1).

Members Must Follow: “The People Volunteered”

That the leaders led in Israel, that the people volunteered, bless the LORD (Judg. 5:2)!

My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel, the volunteers among the people; bless the LORD (Judg. 5:9)!

In describing the church as a body, Paul stressed the significance of every

member. The hand and foot, the eyes and ears—each serve a vital role, individually contributing to the functioning of the whole body (1 Cor. 12:14-26; Eph. 4:11-16).

All Must Act with Confidence

Consider the courage and commitment of those tribes who heeded the call to arms (Judg. 5:12-15, 18-22).

Awake, awake, Deborah; Awake, awake, sing a song! Arise, Barak, and take away your captives, O son of Abinoam. Then survivors came down to the nobles; The people of the LORD came down to me as warriors. From Ephraim, those whose root is in Amalek came down, Following you, Benjamin, with your peoples; From Machir commanders came down, and from Zebulun those who wield the staff of office. And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; As was Issachar, so was Barak; Into the valley they rushed at his heels; among the divisions of Reuben, there were great resolves of heart (Judg. 5:12-15).

Zebulun was a people who despised their lives even to death, And Naphtali also, on the high places of the field. The kings came and fought; Then fought the kings of Canaan At Taanach near the waters of Megiddo; They took no plunder in silver. The stars fought from heaven, from their courses they fought against Sisera. The torrent of Kishon swept them away, the ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon. O my soul, march on with strength. Then the horses’ hoofs beat from the dashing, the dashing of his valiant steeds (Judg. 5:18-22).

Components of Failure

Insubordination Replaces Obedience

Turning aside to foreign gods, Israel forsook the Lord—resulting in a removal of his blessing and bounty, and a loss of His provision and protection (Judg. 5:8).

New gods were chosen; then war was in the gates. Not a shield or a spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel (Judg. 5:8).

Rationalization Replaces Resolve

In contrast with the consistent courage of Issachar, consider the divided response of Reuben (Judg. 5:15-16).

... Among the divisions of Reuben there were great **resolves** of heart. Why did you sit among the sheepfolds, to hear the piping for the flocks? Among the divisions of Reuben there were great **searchings** of heart (Judg. 5:15-16).

The Hebrew word *choq*, here translated “resolves,” signifies “something prescribed or owed, a statute” (Thomas, 2706). In contrast, the Hebrew word *cheqer*, here translated “searchings,” signifies “a searching, a thing (to be) searched out” (Thomas, 2714).

As the Pulpit Commentary says, “The Reubenites, dwelling amidst their flocks among the water-brooks, were much perplexed with doubts whether they should stay still or join their countrymen” (Spence-Jones, 45).

Lange’s Commentary offers the following observation:

Reuben, like the tribes beyond the Jordan had been called on by Barak to take part in the war against Sisera. In like manner was Sparta summoned by Athens, before Marathon. And like Sparta, Reuben considered long. Hence the derisive description of the men of Reuben as ‘investigators and scrutinizers.’ They reflect upon the necessity and feasibility of acting, till the time for it is past. Reuben sits between the folds and prefers to listen to the shepherd’s flute. . . (Lange, 101).

Consider the comments of Keil and Delitzsch:

The enumeration of the tribes who remained at a distance from the conflict commences with Reuben (vv. 15b and 16). In this tribe there did arise a lively sympathy with the national elevation. They held meetings, passed great resolutions, but it led to no practical result; and at length they preferred to remain quietly at home in their own comfortable pastoral life. . . The territory of Reuben, which was celebrated for its splendid pastures, must have abounded in brooks. The question, Why satest thou, or remainedst thou sitting between the hurdles? i.e., in the comfortable repose of a shepherd’s life, is an utterance of amazement; and the irony is very apparent in the next clause, to hear the bleating of the flocks, i.e., the piping of the shepherds, instead of the blast of the war-trumpets (231).

Note also the failure of Gilead, Dan and Asher:

Gilead remained across the Jordan; and why did Dan stay in ships? Asher sat at the seashore and remained by its landings (Judg. 5:15-17).

Cowardice Replaces Courage

“Curse Meroz,” said the angel of the LORD, “Utterly curse its inhabitants; because they did not come to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the warriors” (Judges 5:23).

The *New Bible Dictionary* offers the following discussion of Meroz:

MEROZ (Heb. mērôz), in Judges 5:23 [was] a community (doubtfully identified with Khirbet Maru , 12 k/m south of Barak’s home at Kedesh-naphtali) on which Deborah pronounces a curse for its failure to take part in the campaign against Sisera. The bitterness of the curse suggests that Meroz was under a sacred obligation to obey Barak’s summons (Bruce, 752).

Interestingly, the village of Meroz is never again mentioned in Sacred Scripture.

Conclusion

Let each member of God’s family do his part, avoiding cowardice and compromise, manifesting courage and commitment, giving all glory and honor to God!

That the leaders led in Israel, that the people volunteered, bless the LORD (Judg. 5:2)!

My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel, the volunteers among the people; bless the LORD (Judg. 5:9)!

At the sound of those who divide flocks among the watering places, there they shall recount the righteous deeds of the LORD, the righteous deeds for His peasantry in Israel. Then the people of the LORD went down to the gates (Judg. 5:11). **■**

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“Who Hindered You from Obeying the Truth?”

by Kyle Pope

Paul asked this question of the Galatians. Sadly, far too often, people allow others and circumstances to hinder them from obedience to the Lord. An awareness of this danger can help us prevent allowing this to happen to us.

Introduction

In Paul’s letter to the churches in Galatia, he asks them the question, “You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?” (Gal. 5:7, NKJV). What does it mean to *obey the truth*? The phrase is used of those who have never begun to follow Christ. Peter warned, “For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1 Pet. 4:17). Paul prophesied of God’s “taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. 1:8). These souls stand outside of Christ. They have not put faith in Jesus, turned from sin, confessed Him and been baptized into Christ. They are lost in sin. Some reading this may be like that. You know what to do; you know you have sinned, but something hinders you. The phrase can also apply to Christians who do not *continue* to obey. This is the emphasis of Galatians 5:7. They were Christians who had turned from the truth to error. I suspect there may be some reading this who are in a similar state. No one sees it. You look faithful, but your soul is in peril. Let’s think about this question in a very personal way. If you are not obedient to the truth, I urge you to ask yourself the question, “Who hindered you from obeying the truth?”

The “Who” Could Be . . .

Friends. Rehoboam asked for advice from the elders who had served his father, but also from his friends. He

chose to follow the bad advice of his friends and lost the people—and most of the kingdom—because of it (1 Kings 12). You may have been hindered from obeying the truth because you thought your friends wouldn’t like you anymore if you followed God. You were afraid they would think you were strange. What does God think about your choice?

Family. Jesus said, “a man’s enemies will be those of his own household” (Matt. 10:36). If our family hinders us from following God, that can be the case. We don’t choose our family, nor can we abandon them, but we don’t have to let them cause us to lose our soul. Job’s wife could have hindered him, but he was faithful to God despite her discouraging attitudes towards him (Job 2:9-10).

Peers. John’s gospel records the sad fact that some among the Jews actually believed in Jesus but refused to confess Him, because “they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:43). We often worry about how we look to others, sometimes even to those we don’t know. Why is it that we care so much about what people think of us, even when they don’t even know us? Why is it that we care so little about what the Savior thinks about us when He knows us better—and cares more—than anyone?

Yourself. The Wise man wrote, “He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city” (Prov. 16:32). Sadly, we are often our own worst enemy. When we fail to exercise self-control and restraint, it is not so much a question of “who” is the hindrance, but “what” we

have allowed to hinder us from obedience to the Lord. When the Ethiopian nobleman learned the truth, he didn’t allow anything to stand in his way. He asked Stephen, “What hinders me from being baptized?” (Acts 8:36b). Will you allow something in your life to hinder you from obeying the truth?

Sometimes the “What” Is . . .

Fear of Failure. In the Parable of the Talents, the man who was given one talent was afraid that his master would expect more from him than he could deliver. He allowed his fear to keep him from doing anything (Matt. 25:24-30). Certainly, all who begin to follow Christ will stumble, but we only fail if we stop fighting to get back up as quickly as we can when we realize that we have done wrong. What each of us must realize is that, if the fear of failure is what hinders us from obeying the truth—failing to obey the gospel is failure, not a way to avoid failure!

Thinking We Have Time. Jesus told a parable about a rich man who assumed that he had time and built bigger barns, but was not “rich toward God” when he died unexpectedly (Luke 12:16-21). The story is told of an ancient king who lit lamps all around his palace; then he sent a herald to proclaim that all criminals who would come to his palace while the lamps burned could be pardoned. When the lamps went out, it would be too late. What if we wait until the *lamps burn out* on our opportunity to experience God’s mercy? Paul talked with the Roman governor Felix about the gospel. When he

grew afraid, he told him to go away until he had a “convenient time” (Acts 24:24-25). On August 24, AD 79, a mountain in Italy known as Vesuvius erupted, spewing a cloud of gas and ash into the air, which descended on the towns of Pompei and Herculaneum. Citizens who were in the city were buried in the ash with no time to escape. Josephus tells us that Felix—who thought he would have a “convenient time” in which he could speak to Paul again, died there that day (*Antiquities* 20.7.2). Don’t let this be what hinders you.

Fear of Men. Jesus taught: “My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!” (Luke 12:4-5). I heard a news report some years ago about a woman who struggled with an intruder who attacked her in her house. Despite her fear, she fought the man and strangled him to death. The fear we may feel from men must be put into perspective. However, it is nothing compared to the absolute terror we may one day feel if we find our souls unprepared in the hands of Him who is able to cast both soul and body into hell.

Love of the World. This world offers many pleasures, but none of them will last forever. The apostle John warns us not to love these things, because all of them are “passing away” (1 John 2:15-17). How foolish and remorseful we will feel one day if we have sacrificed our souls for the few minutes of pleasure this life has to offer, only to forfeit an eternity of joy, peace, and satisfaction with our heavenly Father.

Carelessness. The church in Laodicea was rebuked because they were “neither cold nor hot,” but only “lukewarm” (Rev. 3:14-16). Ours is a world of apathy. There are few zealots. There are few genuine rebels. Many just can’t find any reason within them to even care about faith in God. Care about something often comes only after we see the consequence

of carelessness. Don’t let carelessness hinder you—too much is at stake.

Doubt. James wrote: “He who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind” (Jas. 1:6). You can’t pin down a wave: It is ever changing. It doesn’t commit itself to stay in one place but moves as soon as it has started in one direction. Some people are like that. History tells of an Anglo-Saxon king named Redwald (c. 599-624) who ruled East Anglia in the ancient British Isles. He would not commit to follow Christ fully, so in the same church building, he set up an altar to Christ and an altar to pagan gods. Don’t let doubt hinder you!

Slavery to Sin. Jesus taught, “whoever commits sin is a slave of sin” (John 8:34). Being a Christian isn’t easy. It demands that we deny self and submit to God. Perhaps what hinders you is sin. Perhaps you like to drink a little. Maybe you engage in immorality. You may want the freedom to sleep in on Sunday, use whatever kind of profanity you want, wear whatever clothing you wish, and have friends with whom you do whatever you please. That makes you *feel* free, but you are actually in the worst kind of slavery imaginable. I once met a man who “hacked paint”—a practice that involved spraying paint into a paper bag and inhaling it for the high it provided. He started doing it for the pleasure it gave. The problem was, a person who engages in such activity destroys his brain little by little as he becomes enslaved to it. That’s how sin is! Whatever sin it may be that hinders us from truly following Christ, it isn’t worth it to sell our soul to it. Don’t let yourself wait until your mind is overcome, your loved ones (in Christ) are alienated from you, and all avenues of rescue are exhausted. Be set free from sin today through obedience to the truth. **TT**



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Running the Race: Lighting the Path with Scripture

by Lindsay Mast

As Solomon said, “The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know over what they stumble (Prov. 4:18-19).”

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path (Ps. 119:105).

Over the last decade, I've had the pleasure of running more than a dozen overnight relays. (I understand this may not sound pleasurable to everyone, but some of us oddballs love it.) These weekends find me and my friends running throughout the day, but also at dusk, at 3:00 am, and at dawn—you get the picture.

Everyone on these teams comes with a fully charged headlamp for nighttime, but things happen. Twice, I've had a teammate whose headlamp died with a couple of miles left on a dark, twisting path. The run slows to a walk and they still never feel certain about where they should place their feet. It's a recipe for a twisted ankle, a fall, or even an end to their race.

Like my runner friends, we need light to be confident in our walk on this earth. Without it, we will always be unsure about our choices. Is that a tree root or a snake? Is that noise a bear? Will the next step be stable, or am I about to walk off a ledge?

Nevertheless, in our spiritual race, God provides. Enter Scripture, which is a light for our path and a lamp for our feet. It is alive; it is powerful; it is trustworthy. *It is essential.* With it, we gain clarity and vision for where our footfalls should land.

It's Alive

Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the word of God is living and active, sharp, penetrative, giving us deep insight

into thoughts and feelings. The Bible is constantly applicable to what we need to know to make the right choices *right now*. Have you ever read a familiar passage in the Bible, only to see it in a totally new way? It makes you pause and ask, “Was that always in there?!? How did I not see it before?” It is living. It is active. Likely, it is sitting near you, ready to cut through whatever challenge you are facing.

It's Powerful

2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that Scripture—all of it—is directly from God and is profitable for anything we need. It can teach, rebuke, straighten out, train, and equip us to do what's right. Have a question? It always helps to open our Bibles. Get to know our Father. Take His wisdom to heart. Learn from the examples of His people over the centuries.

It's Trustworthy

Unlike my friends' headlamps, the light of Scripture is eternally reliable. Even if my headlamp lasts the race, I'll have to charge it next week. It can get lost. Someday the battery will decay and I'll pitch it. In Mark 13:31, Jesus assures us that His words are different. They will never pass away. We can trust them implicitly. There's no other light about which I can say that.

It's Essential

Runners love to eat. It fuels and re-fuels us for our runs, and most of us know exactly how much we need to keep

going. Skipping eating is not good. We know that a run is better if it's fed with quality food rather than junk.

In Deuteronomy 8 and Matthew 4, God tells us that His word is even *more* vital than physical food. Consider how much easier it would be to feel confident in our walk and our relationship with God if we heard from Him every day! So let's determine to get into the word every day. What would happen if we committed to consuming just the good stuff, too? Because the Scripture is far more powerful than any podcast, blog post, or Instagram story about it could ever be.

Conclusion

My teammates and I use headlamps to see what's in front of us. Even so, running at night makes the experience completely different. After running one particular leg several times in the dark, I knew it consisted of a lot of granite trail and had heard that there was water nearby, but I had never really seen it. It wasn't until I ran it again in the daytime that I discovered a beautiful lake, a cabin, and lovely flowers everywhere. The light completely transformed the path. *Let's use the light of God's word to transform our spiritual path.* 🏃‍♀️



Lindsay Wolfgang Mast

Lindsay Mast has dozens of medals from marathons, half marathons and overnight relays, but is eager for the only prize that matters: heaven. She left a career as a broadcast journalist to raise and homeschool her three children. She and her husband, David, worship at the Intown congregation in Atlanta, GA. She can be reached at lbwolfgangmast@gmail.com.

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An Examination of Romans 9

by Bruce Reeves

The major thrust of this context is to defend God's sovereign choice for "whoever wills" to come and take of the "water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

We must be committed to understanding what the Scripture is teaching in its context, rather than merely proof-texting the Bible to justify our preconceived notions. Years ago, brother Elmer Moore told me, "The answer is always in the context." In our last column, we started examining Romans 9 since it is the most contested territory in the debate over Reformed Theology's assertion of Unconditional Election. We found that not only is the overall context of Scripture opposed to this teaching, but so is the text under consideration. Romans 9-11 must be understood as a cohesive argument forming the climax of Romans 1-11.

First Objection: God's Faithfulness (Rom. 9:6-13)

Paul is answering expected Jewish objections to the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17). The first question the apostle answers concerns the faithfulness of God (Rom. 9:6-13). The Lord had not failed in His promise to Israel; rather, the Jewish people misunderstood the fulfillment of His promise (Gal. 3:6-29). A clear distinction existed in God's eternal purpose between physical Israel and spiritual Israel (Rom. 9:6; cf. 2:28-29). The unbelief of the Jewish people would not alter the Lord's offer of mercy to all nations through Christ (Rom. 3:3; 9:16; 11:28). A reading of Genesis 25:23 and Malachi 1:2-3 helps Bible students to appreciate the flow of the context regarding God choosing Israel as a nation to bring the Messiah into the world for all humanity.

Second Objection: God's Righteousness (Rom. 9:14-18)

Non-believing Jews were insulted by the truth that believing Gentiles would be included in spiritual Israel, whereas they would be excluded because of their disobedience (Matt. 8:5-13). Paul writes, "What shall we say, then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!" (Rom. 9:14). It was by God's mercy that Jews and Gentiles could be saved from their sins (Rom. 9:30-33). Israel was on dangerous ground in questioning the Lord and His gospel: "For He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.' So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy" (Rom. 9:15-17). This passage is expressing God's willingness and right to extend His mercy to all those who seek Him by faith. After all, He had historically extended mercy to Israel, despite their failures (Exod. 33:4-23; Rom. 10:20-21).

Calvinists have distorted this portion of Romans 9 to deny humanity's ability to choose faith in Christ. Ironically, the major thrust of the context is to defend God's sovereign choice for "whoever wills" to come and take of the "water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). Paul writes, "So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy" (Rom. 9:16). We must keep the overall theme of Romans in mind when we interpret this chapter. The will of the Jewish people notwithstanding, the invitation of salvation to all those who

would believe fell into the realm of God's choice. The phrase, "it is not of him that wills or runs," refers to "the word of promise" in the offering of salvation to Gentile believers (Rom. 9:9, 16). Jewish disdain for the gospel's inclusion of Gentiles would never supersede God's plan to "show mercy." His choice that national Israel would bring the Messiah into the world and, thus, be a blessing to Jewish and Gentile believers alike, would not be revoked by their rejection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 11:28; Eph. 3:1-5). It is in this sense that God's Messianic promise was not based on the Jews' will, but on His choice.

Why is the hardening of Pharaoh brought into the discussion at this juncture? Paul is not taking an unrelated excursion, but he is introducing a well-known event in Israelite history which serves as a powerful illustration of the futility of resisting God's purpose to extend mercy. He writes: "For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.' Therefore, He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens" (Rom. 9:17-18).

Albert Barnes precludes any intimation that God directly forced Pharaoh to do evil:

In Exodus 9:16, "made thee stand," i.e., sustained thee . . . That is, I have kept thee from death; I have preserved thee from ruin; I have ministered strength to thee, so that thy full character has been developed. It does not mean that God had infused into his mind any positive

evil or that by any direct influence, He had excited any evil feelings, but that He had kept him in circumstances which were fitted to develop his true character (Barnes, 206).

The apostle explains that God providentially allowed Pharaoh the opportunity to do what he desired by maintaining the circumstances that would allow him to carry out his true wishes. The Lord said: “For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. But I have raised you up (or have spared you, NIV margin) for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth” (Exod. 9:15-16).

How had Pharaoh been hardened? We read that God hardened his heart, but we also read that he hardened his own heart (Exod. 9:34; 10:1). The Lord confronted Pharaoh through Moses and commanded that he let Israel go. Pharaoh responded by refusing Moses’s demands and, thus, hardened his own heart and rebelled against God and His word. The Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, in that He provided the occasion for Pharaoh to respond as he did. When God tells a man to do something that he does not desire

to do, He hardens by His truth. It has been rightly said that “the same sun that softens butter hardens clay.”

It is also worthwhile to note the similarities between Pharaoh and Israel. God kept Pharaoh in circumstances that permitted him to express his character. Likewise, He had shown mercy to Israel to bring the Messiah into the world (Gal. 4:4). Just as Pharaoh had rejected God’s word to his demise, likewise, Israel was rejecting God’s word to their condemnation (Rom. 9:27-29). The Lord’s mercy and deliverance for His faithful people hardened those who remained in unbelief. This is a point that must not be missed: God’s purpose was not thwarted by their rebellion. If anyone remembered the end of Pharaoh, it should have been the Jews. Yet, Israel was following in Pharaoh’s anti-God path by their attempt to interfere with the Lord’s expression of mercy to those who would serve Him.

Third Objection: God’s Fairness (Rom. 9:19-33)

The Jewish defiance against the gospel’s inclusion of Gentile believers, as well as its rejection of Jewish unbelievers, escalates to a charge against God Himself: “You will say

to me then, ‘Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?’” (Rom. 9:19). The Jewish conception was that, since God established Israel as His people through Abraham and the Law, it would be unjust for Him to reject circumcised Jews who refused to believe in Jesus Christ (Rom. 2:17-24; 9:14). Essentially, they were blaming God for their unbelief, as if they had caught Him in the “horns of a dilemma.” Their reasoning seems distorted, but it is similar to the discussion earlier in Romans: “But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous is He? (I am speaking in human terms). May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world. . . their condemnation is just” (Rom. 3:5-6, 8).

How could God use the Jewish people to provide the Messiah and yet reject them because of their unbelief? According to Paul, the Jewish accusation against the gospel actually slandered the Lord Himself. To argue that the Lord’s use of unbelievers to accomplish His purposes would render Him responsible for their wickedness is blasphemous (Hab.1-3). The Calvinistic interpretation of this text grants the Jewish argument that Paul denies! It is only by *divorcing* verses 10-24 from the surrounding context that this passage has been interpreted primarily in terms of unconditional individual election.

Paul rebukes the perverse rebelliousness of the unbelieving Jews:

But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to Him who formed it, “Why have you made me like this?” Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? (Rom. 9:20-21).

Unbelievers had no right to demand that God be answerable to them. YHWH sets the criteria for salvation, not man (Rom. 10:1-3). The Jews were attempting to obligate God to fulfill their false concept of His purpose, which



was contrary to the very Old Testament Scriptures that they claimed to believe. The potter-clay metaphor has been sorely abused by Calvinistic expositors. Yet, by reading the Old Testament passages from which the apostle Paul is quoting, we can receive a clearer understanding of his line of argumentation (Isa. 29:13-16).

Isaiah's use of the potter-clay metaphor does not fit with the Calvinistic viewpoint. Notice that Isaiah says, "... they have removed their hearts far from me." One is made to wonder how this harmonizes with the doctrines of "Unconditional Election," "Irresistible Grace," or the "Perseverance of the Saints" within Reformed Theology. We observe the meaning of the potter-clay metaphor when Isaiah warns the people: "Surely you have things turned around! Shall the potter be esteemed as the clay; for shall the thing made say of Him who made it, 'He did not make me'? Or shall the thing formed say of Him who formed it, 'He has no understanding'?"

This is precisely why Paul uses this metaphor. The Jews had everything "turned around" by attempting to dictate to God, who should be invited into the kingdom and what conditions they must meet in order to be saved. Jeremiah similarly used the metaphor to rebuke the stubborn impenitence of Israel (Jer. 18:1-12).

It is interesting to take note of the many aspects of Calvinism that the context of Jeremiah contradicts. For instance, consider the clay that was marred in the hand of the potter. Was it the clay's fault or the potter's fault? Has God eternally decreed unbelievers to be condemned? It is also noteworthy that He is addressing the nation of Israel, e.g., the phrase "O house of Israel." The potter-clay metaphor references God's right to require that His people meet certain conditions. Israel was refusing to do so by rejecting Christ. By using the potter-clay metaphor, Paul is telling the Jews that God calls all men to repentance. The image is that of the vessel of dishonor blaming its position on the potter, rather than humbly submitting to God. The

potter determines the standard or criteria of acceptance, i.e., a vessel of honor or vessel of dishonor.


Paul then exonerates God's treatment of unfaithful ethnic Israel. His patience with them was not to be interpreted as either acceptance or indifference toward their sin (Rom. 9:22-24). However, His longsuffering and grace were expressions of God's love and mercy and an indication that the greater glory redounds to God by the salvation of the faithful and judgment on the unrighteous. The nature of the categories or classes, i.e., "vessels of His mercy" and "vessels of His wrath," is unchanging, but the inclusion of an individual in either category or class is based on that person's response to the offer of grace (Rom. 10:1-3; 11:22).

The Calvinist cannot successfully harmonize his view of unconditional, individualistic election with Paul's presentation of conditional election in Romans 11:16-33. Both his explanation regarding the "natural branches," i.e., unbelieving Jews, being cut off, and His warning to "wild branches," i.e., Gentile believers, about the possibility of their apostasy demand a conditional view of election.

Of course, the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself. Paul identified those who chose unbelief as being their own worst enemy: "But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. 2:5).

The apostle masterfully supports his argument with Scripture. Israel's salvation was dependent on faith in Christ (Rom. 10:1-3). Hosea prophesied that Gentiles were to be a part of His people (Rom. 9:25-26). Additionally, the fact that a remnant of Israel would be saved had been prophesied by Isaiah (Rom. 9:27-29). All of Israel who would be saved, would be saved in the same manner as the Gentiles, and that is through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 11:26).

Conclusion

Paul's illustrations irrefutably demonstrate that Jewish objections to the gospel were without merit and an expression of disrespect toward God Himself. He speaks of the Lord choosing Jacob over Esau to show that Israel was not chosen as a nation for salvation, but as a nation to provide the Savior. Paul presents Pharaoh to show that God, not Israel, sets the terms of mercy. Finally, he used the Old Testament potter-clay metaphor to show humanity's need and ability to repent and God's sovereign right to demand that they do so. May we all submit to the great God of heaven and come to appreciate His faithful love as expressed in His Son Jesus Christ. Not only does Romans 9 deny unconditional election—it exposes and reproves those who attempt to embrace this false doctrine! Thank God for His loyal and steadfast love (John 3:16; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 2:2)! 

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MON.	I Believe Jesus Really Lived	BUDDY PAYNE
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

Sanctified by the Spirit (1 Cor. 6:9-20)

by Shane Carrington

The Holy Spirit cleanses us of our sins and sets us apart unto God's service through the life-giving word that He revealed.

Introduction

Last month's column was entitled: "Your Body Is a Temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). "Body" in this passage references the life lived, not the outer shell divorced from a godly manner of life. Rather than using the physical body as a tool of sexual immorality (1 Cor. 6:13), it should be used to serve the Lord by glorifying "God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:19). The Holy Spirit indwells us in the sense that we are carrying out His purposes as we submit to His teaching (1 Cor. 2:11-16). The Corinthian disciples struggled with this! So do many today.

Paul described their sad, sordid past:

...neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you. . . (1 Cor. 6:9-11a).

He also depicted their redemption in Jesus:

...but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:11).

While they had a long way to go, through Jesus and the Spirit, the Father gave them a new start. Specific sins may vary, but such a list delineates man's need for forgiveness and reconciliation.

Compartmentalization?

By compartmentalization, we mean distinguishing our relationship with God from our manner of living. Paul addressed

this grievous error in 1 Corinthians 6. Ancient Corinth's libertine attitude toward sexuality was well-known and had apparently influenced these recent converts. They struggled because of their licentious upbringing (read 1 Cor. 5-6). A member was fornicating with "his father's wife" (1 Cor. 5:1). Their struggles in this area showed that the fruits of repentance had not reached maturity (1 Cor. 6:15-20).

What hindered them? They were influenced by Plato's dualism, whose home of Athens was only sixty-five miles from Corinth. While Plato died four hundred years before Paul wrote, his philosophy continued to have many adherents. According to the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*:

In dualism, "mind" is contrasted with "body". . . Plato believed that the true substances are not physical bodies. . . but the eternal forms of which bodies are imperfect copies.

The Scripture shows that they thought physical actions were less important than spiritual understanding. While this preceded full-blown Gnosticism, it sounds like a precursor to it.

Compartmentalizing physical actions from spiritual principles continues to be a problem today. Rather than repenting, some rationalize their actions, saying, "I know I did wrong, but God knows my heart." God makes no such distinction! The "works of the flesh" prevent people from reaching heaven (Gal. 5:19-21). The Lord expects us to have "faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6).

Calvinists struggle with a similar mentality. "My body sins," they claim,

"but my spirit does not. God only sees the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed to me, covering my sinfulness." This could not be further from the truth. Rather than God merely ignoring sin, ". . . the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). How? Jesus offered Himself as the perfect propitiation (i.e., sin offering) that is sufficient to remove sin (1 John 2:2)! For disciples His blood is applied again "If we confess our sins. . ." (1 John 1:9a). Like Peter told Simon, "repent of this wickedness. . . and pray the Lord. . ." (Acts 8:22). Rather than a mere cover-up, when we ask in prayer, "He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9b).

Divorcing our relationship with God from the rest of our lives is grossly inconsistent with Scripture. *God wants our all.*

The Holy Spirit and Sanctification

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:23).

How? God calls us (1 Thess. 5:24) through the Holy Spirit-inspired word (1 Thess. 5:19-22)! As Paul also wrote:

...when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe (1 Thess. 2:13).



... God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 2:13-14).

The Holy Spirit sanctifies us through His word-gospel-calling (cf. Rom. 10:17). Paul taught this everywhere.

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).

What does glorifying “God in your body” look like? It results in a sanctified manner of life!

Glorifying God in Your Body—Sanctified by the Holy Spirit

While “the body is not for sexual immorality. . .” (1 Cor. 6:13a), the question remains, “How do we overcome sin?”

Remember who you are and Whom you serve. “Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body” (1 Cor. 6:13b). This perspective gives us wisdom and strength to battle temptation and sin successfully. “And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself just as He is pure” (1 John 3:3).

Focus on God’s purpose for our lives. “. . . your bodies are members of Christ” (1 Cor. 6:15a). Because we are connected to Him, we do not have to wonder about our purpose. The Lord revealed His will in the pages of His word. By laboring in His work, we have fellowship with Him in His purposes (1 Cor. 6:17).

Allow the Holy Spirit to convict and strengthen you. “. . . your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. . . you are not your own. . . therefore glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:19-20). He indwells our bodies (that is, our lives) as we recognize His ownership over us and respond to the command to “glorify God in your body.” He does this through the word (1 Cor. 2:10-13; cf. John 16:7-15 and Eph. 6:17 with Heb. 4:11-13; etc.)!

Listen to the Spirit’s word to be sanctified. In other words, devote time to reading, studying, meditating, and participating in the word by avoiding sin (1 Cor. 6:9-11) and obeying Him (1 Cor. 6:19-20). That is a sanctified life, as Paul further explained:

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man, but the God

who gives His Holy Spirit to you (1 Thess. 4:3-8).

Re-read that profoundly important statement which highlights the role of the Spirit-revealed word in our sanctification.

Conclusion

God has provided tools to help us overcome sin—and be more like the Lord Jesus. Through His grace, God has provided, not just cleansing from our past sins, but also a path for continuing sanctification and transformation. The Holy Spirit revealed the correction, commands, and commendation we need (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Delve into His word, allowing the inspired message to direct your steps, and you will grow to be more like Jesus (Eph. 4:11-16). **📖**

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By Bobby L. Graham



QUESTION.

When Should Withdrawal Occur?

ANSWER.

Question

How can we know when to withdraw from the disorderly? My concern is not over the church's withdrawing, but over the timing.

Answer

Some very clear principles are available in the New Testament to guide us regarding the practice of local-church discipline. Perhaps a brief look at some will prove helpful in answering this question.

A local church maintains discipline (scriptural and spiritual direction) through its teaching and the leadership of its overseers. All discipline, whether in the family or in the congregation, is preventive or corrective (sometimes punitive, though retaining its corrective intent [Heb. 12:5-11]). From this passage, we learn the following principles:

The purpose of preventive discipline is to help people avoid sin or evil in

their lives, because of the enormous destruction which it brings (Gal. 6:7-8).

Biblical principles relating to discipline apply, not only to our physical families but also to the family of God.

Its purpose is first to prevent sin, and then to correct it in the lives of disciples.

While discipline is not pleasant, it is necessary for the desired aim to be realized.

The presence of such discipline is proof that the one in charge (God in His family, parents in their family, and overseers in the local church) lovingly wants to help those being disciplined.

The success of such efforts depends upon the subjection of those involved to their superiors.

This discipline is a kind of training for higher and greater spiritual service.

It should be easily understood that preventive discipline, when faithfully applied through regular and consistent teaching, often makes corrective or punitive discipline unnecessary. When it has to occur, our querist wants to know the "when" or the timing of such action.

It is commendable that people have such concerns. While recognizing that such action needs to take place, they wonder if it is possible to be too hasty in taking such action.

The following points, gleaned from the Scriptures, should help us in arriving at some conclusion concerning this matter:

While God sometimes administered His disciplinary action quickly (Nadab and Abihu, Ananias and Sapphira), more often He delayed His action in favor of teaching and changing attitudes (Book of Hosea, God's consistent dealing with His OT people over many decades).

In the corrupt congregation in Thyatira, Christ gave Jezebel time to repent of her fornication, though she did not take advantage of the opportunity (Rev. 3:21).

The inspired apostles and the Lord Jesus gave various congregations (Corinth, Ephesus, etc.) time to repent before "cracking the whip" by removing their candlestick or otherwise dealing with their sins.

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God's longsuffering waited in the days of Noah when dealing with the sins of the entire world (1 Pet. 3:21).

The second coming of Jesus Christ has not already occurred because the Lord does not wish any to perish, but "delays" (from a human perspective) so that all can repent (2 Pet. 3:9, 15).

Do these principles tell us precisely when to exercise church discipline, to withdraw from those walking disorderly? No, but they help us proceed cautiously, in the interest of souls. They also should instruct us not to delay too long, lest we be thought to lend approval to their sinful lives. Without knowing the details of a situation, it is nearly impossible to be more exact as to timing; but those knowledgeable about specific situations

are better equipped to make such decisions.

In those instances where New Testament instruction directed to congregations or individuals to take such action, it becomes clear that the conduct of those who were subject to divine discipline was settled in favor of sin. Disciples had become spiritually imperiled by sinful actions, and sinful attitudes had developed from the sinful practice (Matt. 18:15-17; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1-9; 2 Thes. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 1:20; Titus 3:9-11). Further delay would only encourage sin and its spread to others. Overseers (elders) of congregations and souls must use the wisdom inherent in their spiritual qualifications and maturity to make such decisions. People willing to

do further study or to show repentance or spiritual progress probably should not be objects of immediate withdrawal, but those settled into their sinful attitudes and conduct must be shocked with the awareness that their lives are not acceptable to God or to His people. **T**



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The Promises of God

by Barry Britnell

Traveling to Israel during the month of March can be a valuable reminder of the power of the promises of God.

I am often asked, “Why do you travel to Israel so much? Is there anything else to learn?” Undoubtedly, those questions come from someone who has never been there. The most striking thing to me, as I travel across that beautiful country, is how little I know. When I am there, an hour does not pass in which I do not learn something valuable.

Back in March, I led my latest tour group over there. This was the earliest in the year that I have taken a group. Mostly, I enjoy traveling to the mid-east during in the summer months. Yes, it is warmer than other parts of the year. Yet, with the ample amounts of daylight and the fact that there is no chance of rain, it makes that time of year very desirable for traveling. With that said, the opportunity to lead a group in March was something that I could not turn down. We were not disappointed. We experienced many unusual events, including seeing falling snow while we were visiting the Mount of Olives!

By traveling this time of year, I was reminded of something involving the promises of God. In Deuteronomy 11, God speaks to the people (through Moses). He tells them that God will bless the land to which they are about to enter via “the early rains and late/latter rains.”

It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil. He will

give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied (Deut. 11:13-15).

This promise of God, made about 3,500 years ago, remains still true today. The early rains start in October. From October through March (when the latter rains fall), the land of Israel gets almost continual rain. Between the latter rains (in March) and the early rains (in October), the land receives no rainfall.

By traveling to Israel in the summer, I visit many places that have not received rain in at least three months. Therefore, most of the grass and shrubbery have turned brown. However, by traveling in March (at the end of the rainy season), I was able to see the land in full, lush color.

At the Old Testament city of Beit-shan, the tel of the ancient city is usually brown, which only enhances the heat

which beats down on to the first-century Decapolis city of Scythopolis. However, after the rains of March, the mound is a beautiful green, which encourages travelers to hike to the top for an unforgettable view.

While traveling across the Sea of Galilee, the awe-inspiring edifice of Mount Arbel towers over the western side of the lake. During July, this rocky crag is the home to small burrowing animals which seek relief from the never-ending sunlight. However, in March, the grass-covered hillsides beckon many animals to feed on what it offers.

Walking through in the valley of Elah, where David fought Goliath, the sounds of crackling underbrush heard in July is replaced by the lush, deep-green agriculture which will be soon ready for harvest.



The Vally of Elah



Beit-shan

Experiencing these locations at an earlier time of year reminded me of the wonderful promise that God made to the children of Israel centuries ago. This promise to care for the land through the early and latter rains still holds true today.

The Bible is full of promises. In the beginning, God created man, and they were in complete fellowship with each other. However, man soon sinned, and that relationship was tarnished. The rest of the Bible details God's plan to reestablish that relationship with man. This plan involves dozens of divine promises.

In Genesis 6, God promised to bring a flood upon the earth. That promise came true.

In Genesis 9, God promised to never destroy the earth by water again. That promise came true.

In Genesis 12, God promised to bless all the families of the earth through the seed of Abraham. That promise came true.

In Jeremiah 25, God promised that the people would be carried into captivity because of their sin. That promise came true.

In Jeremiah 30, God promised that some survivors would return to the land. That promise came true.

In Matthew 1, God promised Joseph that Mary would bear a Son who would save His people from their sins. That promise came true.

In Matthew 9, Jesus promised that He would be delivered into the hands of men, killed, and He would rise on the third day. That promise came true.

2 Peter 3:8-9 reminds us that God is not slack concerning the promises that He makes. History confirms what Peter is saying.

It does not matter if the promise involves the punishment of the Israelites because of wickedness, the role of Jesus in the salvation of man, or of the rain that falls on the land. God's promises always come true. Walking around the land of Israel during March is a vivid reminder of this unchanging reality. **T**



Mount Arbel



Barry Britnell

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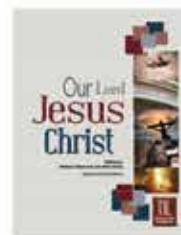
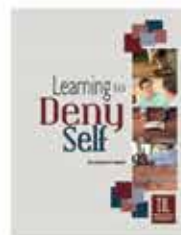
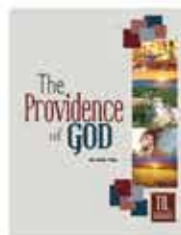
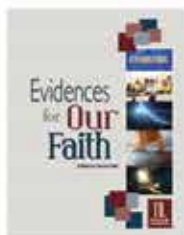
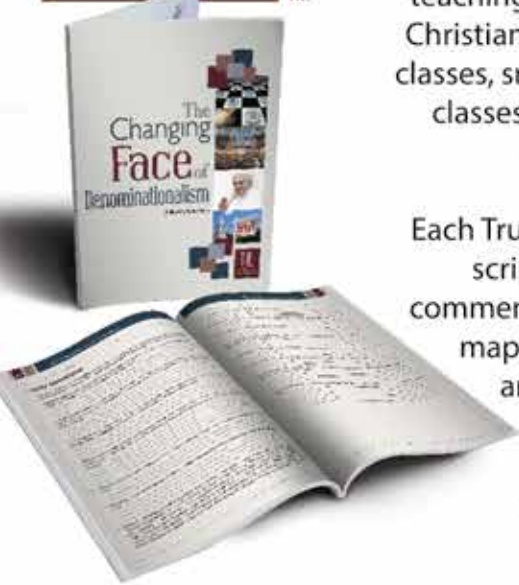


Truth in Life Workbooks

The Truth in Life series of workbooks from Truth Publications is a topical series of Bible studies designed to guide Bible students through book, chapter, verse teaching on topics of interest to every Christian. Church classes, home school classes, small group studies, high school classes and alike will enjoy the rich material in this series.

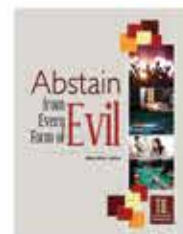
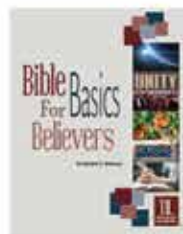
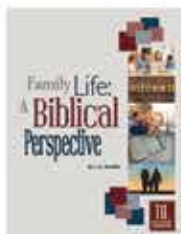
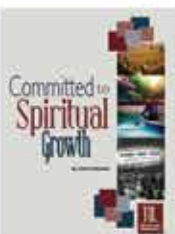


Each Truth in Life book includes many scriptural references, reliable commentary, pictures, charts, graphs, maps, end of lesson questions, and more. With the wide range of topics, there is a book that every class can enjoy.



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The New World Translation: Scripture as Private Interpretation

by Ron Halbrook

The New World Translation of the Bible by the Jehovah's Witnesses is a perversion rather than a translation of the Bible. One of its main agendas is eliminating the deity of Christ from the Scriptures.

Introduction

The Jehovah's Witnesses cult has their own Bible. The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. published their own interpretations as Scripture entitled *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (published in parts between 1950-60; and in whole with revisions in 1961; 1970 rev.; 1984 rev.; 2013 rev.).

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1:20-21).

The words of Scripture originated in the Holy Spirit, not in the will, reason, or interpretation of the human writers. Bible translators must give a true and accurate representation of the biblical manuscripts without substituting their own theories or theologies for the text. Honest analysis shows that the *New World Translation* is Scripture as private interpretation.

Mechanism for Private Interpretation

The New World Bible Translation Committee was unqualified and incompetent for the task of translating the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek languages. The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society refuses to reveal the translators' names. Five names of the seven-man committee were revealed by Raymond V. Franz, who was a member of the Governing Body of the Jehovah's

Witnesses (1971-80), after he was expelled: Nathan H. Knorr (Chairman and primary translator), Frederick W. Franz, George D. Gangos, Karl Klein, and A.D. Schroeder. William Cetnar, who worked at the Society's international headquarters in 1950 when the project began, identified one more contributor after he left the organization: Milton G. Henschel.

None of these men had the training or qualifications to translate the Bible. The most "qualified" was Fred Franz, who finished only two years of college work, including minimal exposure to Greek classes and who was self-taught in some Hebrew. Franz explained that he was guided by invisible communications from "angels of different ranks who control Witnesses" (testimony in 1954 trial in Scotland; E.C. Gruss, *Apostles of Denial*: 32). He performed most of the work, including the revisions through 1984. Paul warned of such men who pervert the truth while claiming angelic guidance (Gal. 1:6-9). The Society's highest leaders hide these facts from their followers.

Private Interpretations Deny the Deity of Christ

Jehovah's Witnesses deny the deity of Jesus Christ, and their *New World Translation* eliminates this great truth from the Bible as much as possible. According to them, all standard Bible translations are corrupted on the deity of Jesus Christ and other pet topics essential to their unique religion.

The Jehovah's Witnesses cult claims that God created first an archangel through whom all other angels and the universe would be created. That angel is Michael, a name "applied to God's Son before he left heaven to become Jesus Christ and also after his return" (*Aid to Bible Understanding*, 1971, p. 1152). This theology forces them to dilute every passage affirming the divinity of Jesus Christ.

The Deity of Jesus Christ in John

John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." *The New World Translation* notoriously renders it, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." This is an effort to reduce Jesus Christ to a created being with certain God-like characteristics.

This perversion is based on the premise that "*theos*" (the Greek word for God) is *arthrous* or is preceded by the definite article, "o," for "the" in the clause "the Word was with God," but "*theos*" is *anarthrous*, or is not preceded by the definite article, "o," for "the" in the clause "the Word was God." This does not indicate that God in the second clause is a lesser or created being. The absence of the definite article here stresses "the quality or character" of deity or Godhood rather than personal identity (see Dana & Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, pp. 149-150).

The personal identity of God as the Father is indicated in the first clause by the presence of the definite article. The personal identity of Jesus is noted by “the Word” and His divine nature is emphasized by “God”: “the Word was God.” The person called the Word is full deity or divinity in nature.

The word *theos* for God appears in John 1:6, 12, and 13, without the definite article in the Greek text. The *New World Translation* reverses its phoney rule imposed on verse 1 to produce “a god” and translates all these other verses properly as “God.” Why “a god” only in verse 1? Their cultic theology demands it.

The New World Translation dodges the deity of Jesus Christ in John 8:58 by substituting the private interpretation, “Before Abraham came into existence, I have been,” for the actual text, “Before Abraham was, I am.” This faulty translation is an attempt to avoid the obvious claim of Jesus to be the Great “I AM” of Exodus 3:14, i.e., deity. The Jews knew that was precisely His point and immediately picked up stones to execute Him for blasphemy (John 8:59; cf. 10:30-39). The mere claim to be older than Abraham would have elicited only laughter and ridicule, but the claim to be “I AM” elicited the charge of blasphemy.

The Deity of Jesus Christ in Colossians

Paul proclaims the deity of Jesus Christ in Colossians 1:15 by describing Him as “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” First, the incarnate Christ is the visible image of the invisible God, a clear affirmation of His deity. Second, He holds the status of the firstborn in or over the universe, but what does firstborn mean?

The family culture of Old Testament times included the right of primogeniture, i.e., a preeminent or dominant status granted to the male child born first in each family, which carried the prerogatives of leadership and inheritance. This right could be transferred as happened when Jacob

(later named Israel) obtained the birthright, which originally belonged to Esau, who was born first. God told Moses to command the Pharaoh of Egypt to release the Jews from slavery because He ordained them for a preeminent role: “Israel is my son, even my firstborn” (Exod. 4:22). In this case, the dominant role was held by the child born second.

In a similar use of the term firstborn, God promised that His chosen king would be preeminent above all others in Psalm 89:27, which says, “I will make Him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.” This refers to the role or position of dominance, not to the first male born into a family or even to the first man to rule as a king.

Colossians 1:16-18 shows why the role and position of Christ is that of the firstborn. He created all things, He existed before all things, He sustains all things, and He is the head of the church—“that in all things He might have the preeminence.”

The Jehovah’s Witnesses pervert Colossians 1:15 in a way which creates grammatical chaos in the context. Jesus is here called, in *The New World Translation*, “the firstborn of all creation,” a harmless translation. Their theology forces them to interpret this to mean He was the first thing God created, which gives them grammatical problems in verses 16-17 which refer four times to Him creating and sustaining “all things.” If He is a created being, and He created all things, then He created himself.

To escape this contradiction, it is necessary to insert “other” four times to make the text read: “all other things.” Until the revision of 2013, “other” was inserted in brackets. There is no Greek word for “other” in verses 16-17, nor does anything in the context justify inserting it, with or without brackets. Even when these brackets are inserted in their translation, Jehovah’s Witnesses commonly dropped them when they quoted these verses in their other publications. Now all pretense of using brackets is gone.

The private interpretation, “other,” is added to the text in violation of the direct command of God repeated several times not to add anything to His Word (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18). This sin is avoided by recognizing that “firstborn” does not mean “created first” but refers to the preeminence of Jesus Christ over all creation by His divine nature, “the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15).

The Deity of Jesus Christ in Hebrews

Hebrews 1:8-9 quotes Psalm 45:6-7 and applies it to Jesus. Verse 8 affirms, “But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” Dozens of translations translate the verse the same way with only minor variations.

To avoid this affirmation that Jesus is God, *The New World Translation* gives the nonsensical rendering, “But about the Son, He says: ‘God is your throne for ever and ever, and the scepter of your Kingdom is the scepter of righteousness.’” In truth, the Bible teaches that God rules from His throne, but not that God is someone else’s throne!

Psalm 45:6 was written regarding David’s position as “the vicegerent of Israel’s God,” as Daniel H. King notes in his commentary. He further explains the Hebrew writer’s use of the quotation:

Here the writer makes these words an appropriate vehicle for conveying a special truth about the Messianic King and His nature as deity. Judges and rulers in the Old Testament were sometimes called *elohim*, “gods” (cf. Exod. 21:6; 22:8; Ps. 73; John 10:34-36), but nothing so exalted is ever given to a human person, except on occasion in prophetic speech, as in this case, related to the Messiah (cf. also Isa. 9:6). He has an eternal throne, as only God himself can have, a righteous scepter, and a universal kingdom. If taken to

Continued on page 32

Let Us Praise Our Creator!

by Craig Thomas

David declared, “The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.” Hebrews 3:4 affirms, “For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.”

Introduction

Psalms 104 praises the LORD for the great power which He demonstrated in creation and the flood. We live in a world that dismisses the Creator. If one believes in divine creation, he is considered an ignorant rube, an “unscientific” ignoramus.

I have been blessed in my life with a good education, and was able to obtain advanced degrees from some of our country’s most prestigious universities. I was blessed to study science at the feet of teachers of exceptional intellect and knowledge. To their credit, I must admit that none of my former professors ever mentioned creation, nor did they dogmatically teach Darwinian evolution, materialism, naturalism, etc. Such things were never on the “front burner.” To their credit, they focused on real science and brought neither materialistic, naturalistic, nor atheistic philosophies into the picture.

However, in the popular scientific world, such is not the case. One cannot watch a “science-based” program on television, like A&E, PBS, Science Channel, National Geographic Channel, etc. without being bombarded by the materialistic, naturalistic, atheistic, evolutionary viewpoint. Anyone who dares challenge this viewpoint is immediately considered a hopeless dimwit on par with those believing in a flat earth or the Loch Ness monster. These self-appointed arbiters of truth claim that they possess the scientific “high ground,” point their fingers at creationists, and make the charge that we

are “unscientific.” However, in reality, *they* are unscientific!

Allow me to explain briefly. Their camp subscribes to the “Big Bang” theory. They believe space-time-matter popped into existence from nothing some 13.77 billion years ago. This scenario is in direct and total violation of science’s most fundamental law: *The Law of Cause and Effect*. This law affirms that every material effect (in this case, the physical universe) must have an adequate antecedent or simultaneous cause. This law has been investigated for millennia, dating back at least to the writings of Aristotle and Plato (350-360 BC). Every student of logic knows that this law is the ultimate canon of all the sciences. Without the Principle of Causality, proven by millennia of empirical data, all the sciences would crumble to dust.

Creationists respect this fundamental law. The Bible articulated this principle long ago when the writer of Hebrews stated, “Every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God” (Heb. 3:4). The Universe is the grand Effect and God is the grand Cause, for “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). The evolutionist’s denial of this great principle leaves them with the unscientific dilemma of trying to explain how our inestimably complex and immense universe could come into existence without a cause. Robert Jastrow, founder and former director of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies at NASA, an evolutionist, wrote:

The Universe, and everything that has happened in it since the beginning of time, are a grand effect without a known cause. An effect without a known cause? That is not the world of science; it is a world of witchcraft, of wild events and the whims of demons, a medieval world that science has tried to banish. As scientists, what are we to make of this picture? I do not know (Jastrow, 21).

Scientifically speaking, according to the well-accepted *principle of causality*, there had to be a cause for the universe. Yet evolutionists are forced to admit a great effect without an antecedent great cause. Who’s being “unscientific”?

Other tenets of evolution are also in conflict with the empirical evidence of scientific inquiry. About two centuries ago, brilliant scientists, including Louis Pasteur, proved that abiogenesis is false. Abiogenesis was the theory that non-living matter gave rise to living matter. For example, that flies could spontaneously generate from rotting meat. Without abiogenesis, there is no starting point for the theory of evolution. Empirical evidence unequivocally proves abiogenesis is false; yet evolutionists are forced to believe that at some point in the distant past, lifeless chemicals, through random, unintelligent physical processes, made the unimaginable leap to form living creatures. To believe Darwinian evolution, evolutionists must subscribe to a theory invalidated and debunked by empirical science. Who’s being “unscientific”?

Sir Fredrick Hoyle, a famed and well-respected English astronomer and evolutionist, estimated:

The likelihood of the formation of life from inanimate matter is 1 to a number with 40,000 noughts after it (1040,000). . . It is big enough to bury Darwin and the whole theory of evolution. There was no primeval soup, neither on this planet nor any other, and if the beginnings of life were not random, they must therefore have been the product of purposeful intelligence (Hoyle, 148).

Hoyle also compared the probability of the spontaneous generation of life to the probability of 1050 blind people each simultaneously solving Rubik's cube. He then said, "The notion that not only biopolymers but the operating program of a living cell could be arrived at by chance in a primordial organic soup here on earth is evidently nonsense of a high order." The late Dr. Carl Sagan (host of the original PBS television series *Cosmos*) put the odds of the spontaneous generation of life even higher at 1 in 102,000,000,000. That's preposterous! Who's being "unscientific"?

Despite these insurmountable odds, evolutionists desperately cling to their theory. Why? It certainly cannot be because science is on their side, for their theory requires a false and debunked theory, abiogenesis, to be true. Abiogenesis is contrary to the empirical evidence cherished by all true scientists, as it has been repeatedly proven invalid. Rather than recognize the "eternal power and deity" of our Creator (Rom. 1:20), the naturalist/materialist is left with only the power (?) of unintelligent matter and time. Regarding spontaneous generation producing life from non-life, Dr. George Wald, a Nobel Laureate, said, "given enough time it will almost certainly happen. . . Time is in fact the hero of the plot. . . Given so much time, the 'impossible' becomes possible, the possible probable, and the probable virtually certain. One has only to wait; time itself performs the miracles." And creationists are those charged with telling "just so" stories?! When one considers the

overwhelming evidence God provides in His creation, is it any wonder Paul said, "they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20)?

Conclusion

There you have it from the minds and tongues of leading evolutionists. They persist in believing the theory, although scientific evidence disproves its plausibility. Who's being "unscientific"? As we contemplate the LORD as our grand Creator, let us join in psalm—and praise Him!

I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. May my meditation be sweet to Him; I will be glad in the LORD. May sinners be consumed from the earth, and the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul! Praise the LORD! **T**

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Craig V. Thomas

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Two Monuments and Their Significance

by Dick Blackford

The ruins of the Roman Colosseum are a monument to the survival of Christianity and the utter failure of a mighty world empire to destroy it. This realization give us courage to face the challenges of today.

Introduction

One definition of a monument is, “a building, structure, or site that is of historical importance or interest” (Google Dictionary).

There are two monuments that are very close in distance (333 yards) of each other in the city of Rome. Standing in a particular place, you can see both in the same view. One is the Arch of Titus. The other is the Roman Colosseum..

The Arch of Titus

The Arch of Titus is a monument to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish State. The relief depicts the triumphal procession of Titus (and his father, Vespasian), honored for his destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. On the south relief, the spoils of war are displayed as part of the procession: trumpets, the table of showbread, and the menorah. In the time of Constantine, some interpreted the table as actually representing the Ark of the Covenant. The Arch of Titus was commissioned by Emperor Domitian in AD 81 and was completed in AD 85. It is the oldest and only Triumphal arch in Rome still standing today. While it celebrates the temple’s destruction, it also celebrates the “deity” of Titus. However, Titus died in AD 81 at the age of forty-one and hasn’t been heard from since.

The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple was a fulfillment of a prophecy given by Jesus (Matt. 24:1,2; Luke 21:20-24). He also gave His disciples signs to look for to know when it was best for

them to escape and the things for which they should pray (Matt. 24:15-22).

History records the destruction of the biblical Jewish nation. Josephus records the “Last Stand” of a Jewish Revolt that occurred when Jews took refuge on Masada, a mountain fortress that had been erected by Herod the Great in case he ever needed a place of refuge. Because of strategy, it took the Romans until AD 73-74 to capture the mountain. Josephus says that 967 Jews who were living there committed mass suicide to prevent being enslaved by the Romans. While that story has been in dispute, it has not been successfully refuted.

The nation called Israel today should *not* be confused with the biblical nation of Israel. It does not bear the identifying

characteristics. It has no king, no throne, no temple, no priesthood (because of loss of genealogical records), no animal sacrifices, etc.

God kept His word and gave biblical Israel all the land that He had promised them (Josh. 1:4-6; 21:43-45). However, their retention of the land was conditioned on them remaining faithful to God; otherwise, He would remove them from the land (Josh. 23:15-16). They did not remain faithful, even rejecting the Son of God when He came in fulfillment of all those prophecies, and Jesus prophesied their destruction. The nation called Israel of today is not connected with anything the Bible says, but primarily by the will of the United States—minus the earmarks that would



The Arch of Titus

identify it with the Israel of the Bible. The Titus Arch stands as a monument to the destruction of biblical Israel and fulfilled prophecy.

Individually, God never stopped loving them, and He wants them to be saved—thus the Day of Pentecost in which many Jews became Christians (Acts 2; Rom. 1:16). While the nation of Israel was destroyed, God never forgot them *individually*.

From a personal viewpoint I am glad national Israel today is a democracy that allows us to visit freely and is preserving biblical sites that permit us to do research and study, which might not be the case if they were in the hands of those who are hostile to the New Testament.

The Roman Colosseum

There were both local and empire-wide persecutions of Christians. The Roman Colosseum is the place where many Christians died grisly deaths, being ripped apart by savage animals. Others were killed at great disadvantage by having to fight the gladiators. About 400,000 people died there and at least 3,000 were Christians. This was one of the most popular forms of entertainment

in the Roman world. According to the *National Geographic*, it was probably begun about AD 73-75 and was almost completed in 79 when Vespasian died. Titus, Vespasian's older son, dedicated it in AD 89 with 100 days of games—in which 5,000 men and animals were said to have been slaughtered on one day.

The Mighty Roman Empire that seemed impregnable, that allowed such horrid, bloody entertainment, *ceased to exist over sixteen centuries ago*. The Roman Colosseum, where thousands gathered for such a low and ruthless form of entertainment, is now in ruins. By the twentieth century, nearly two-thirds of the original building had been destroyed. Who could ever have imagined that Christianity would become the official religion of the Roman Empire by AD 323? Did God mock the mighty empire that murdered so many of His followers? *Believers should view the ruins of the Roman Colosseum as a monument to the survival of Christianity and the utter failure of the most powerful empire to stamp it out! Let that sink in!*

The survival of Christ's church and His teachings were also a fulfillment of prophecy. The gates of hell could not prevail against it! (Matt. 16:18). Not even

the death of Jesus would keep the church from being established on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2)! Many would see the kingdom come in their lifetime (Mark 9:1). It would stand forever! Daniel 2:44-45 declares, "And in the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever." It is an "everlasting kingdom" (Dan. 7:27)."The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and *He shall reign forever and ever.*"

Get this! Both the *destruction* of a nation that *rejected* the son of God and the *survival* of His eternal kingdom established by Christ that "*cannot be shaken*" (Heb. 12:27), were prophesied in the Scriptures. We see both of these in the Arch of Titus and the Roman Colosseum. I wonder if the Lord has allowed them to survive for a reason? As a reminder about that kingdom that could never be destroyed and would last forever while the Roman Empire had its downfall sixteen centuries ago.

Conclusion

Jesus said, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). When the Samaritans "believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. How did they know to do that? They were taught what the *King* said is necessary to enter the kingdom!

I hope you have an honest heart and will respond as these disciples did and become a citizen of the eternal kingdom.

T



Dick Blackford

Dick has worked with the StoneRidge church of Christ in Jonesboro, AR, for fourteen years. He and his wife, Kathy, have three children (one deceased). The church website is stoneridgechurchofchrist.com. He can be reached at rlb612@aol.com.



The Roman Colosseum

The Limit

by Howard Whittlesey

Satan is an implacable foe: a roaring lion, a devouring dragon, a relentless enemy. Yet, God has provided us with the power to resist his intimidating threats and his whispered enticements.

Introduction

Public enemy #1 in all the world is Satan. No one on earth seeks to reach and/or exceed limits quite like him. He will therefore be the central figure in hell. In that doleful place, he will not be any less miserable than any soul of man. There will be nowhere to go, no one to whom to turn for rest, solace, consolation, or comfort.

The most terrible tragedy for lost mankind will be the realization that his choice was to listen to Satan, to follow his allurements to the limit from which there is no return. As the rich man was aware of his torment, having reported it to Abraham, all other occupants of hell will have similar stories and suffer exactly the same consequence of reaching or exceeding the limit.

Bear in mind that the limit is not something that is ever sought by a man of God. The true man of God finds obedience a far greater preference than anything that the world can offer or propose. James uses the word “enticed” (Jas. 1:14), which he poses as the point from which all men fail to see and understand the limit. Therefore, he reaches or exceeds the limit, and his reception of the enticement leads him to the conception of his lust. God gave man the choice of how, when, and where they should stop before reaching the limit.

Man’s defense is exactly that of our Savior: “It is written.” This is all he needs to reveal Him whose word is the standard for every thought, word, or deed. John defines very simply the ploy of Satan:

“the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16). This is Satan’s realm of free rein. Man cannot blame God for his having made a reprehensible choice. God is the infinitely perfect mark at which man can look for guidance unto the right and best choice. Understand that choice is one of the empowerments that comes from being made in God’s image. Satan knows this right well.

What are some guidelines that make perfect sense if and when one decides to limit himself to that which God prescribes?

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

Other passages that urge the same undefeatable relationship are Psalm 22:23; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; Romans 15:6; and 1 Corinthians 6:20. Unto glorifying God, no limit is prescribed. God will never deny the prayer of one who asks, “Let your will be done, and let your glory be accomplished.”

Have you ever contemplated God’s design unto the fulfillment of “life’s purpose”? Notice the importance of:

Faithfully serving the Lord (Josh. 24:15)

Seeking God’s kingdom (Matt. 6:33)

Doing the Father’s will (John 4:34)

Finishing the divine task (John 17:4)

Completing the course joyfully (Acts 20:24)

Unto the fulfilling of life’s purpose, using God’s standard, there is no limit.

James said, “Resist the devil” (Jas. 4:7). It may even be advisable to “ignore” the devil. There’s no limit to either of those. The devil will need some of your time in order to entice and lead you to lust and to sin. Thus, the obvious defense is to give him—*none*—of your time. Be advised: Satan needs so little of your time, for he only plants the seed.

Conclusion

As one reads through the whole Bible, he will be inundated with the realization of how much limitation is tacitly in place for man. If he abides by these limitations, he reveals his effectiveness in the use of fear in his relationship to God. Ponder, if you will: “Enoch walked with God” (Gen. 5:21-24). Does it sound like he had any difficulty with limitation? Does it not rather sound like he dwelt in the unlimited arena of the above passages for glorifying God and fulfilling life’s purpose? How many examples do we need in order to see the path being accessible to, and usable by, *all* men? What if the proverbial historian were to write the last three words of Genesis 5:24 about someone in the 21st century? Why not you? **TL**



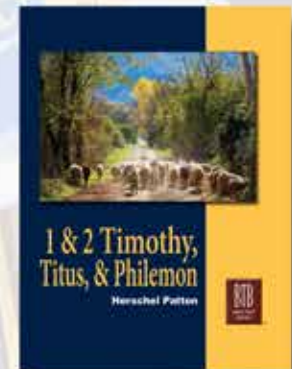
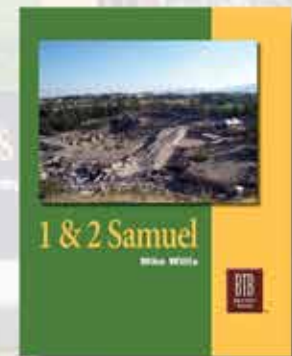
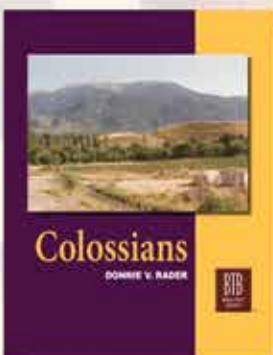
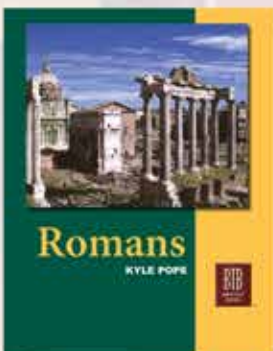
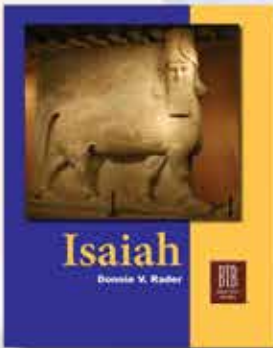
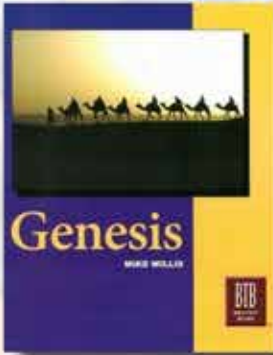
Howard Whittlesey

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

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Bobby Adams (1928-2022):

“God Is the Strength of My Heart”

by Ron Halbrook

The Lord shepherded the life of Bobby Adams, and she found Him to be the strength of her heart for ninety-three years. She was a godly wife to two husbands and taught God’s word for over seventy years.

Introduction

Sister Bobby Adams, wife of brother Connie W. Adams, was born on May 15th, 1928, in Hopewell, KY and went to be with her Lord on January 30, 2022. Among her many accomplishments serving her Lord, she taught children and women His word for over seventy years. It was a privilege for me to offer the following remarks on February 2 at her funeral.

How fitting that sister Bobby Adams passed from the land of the dying to the land of the living on the Lord’s Day—the day of her Lord’s victory over death, as recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—the day on which her Lord’s church began, as recorded in Acts 2—the day appointed to worship her Lord until His return, as recorded in Acts 20:7!

The Lord Is My Shepherd

The faith expressed by David in Psalm 23 was exemplified by Bobby and will sustain us in the days to come.

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all

the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

With the Lord as our Shepherd, we have nothing to fear, not even the valley of the shadow of death. God is a great King, and David was his vassal who depended on Him to defeat his enemies. When the Lord is our host at the victory feast, He welcomes us as guests to celebrate the victory. He wins for us over all the enemies of truth and right. His goodness and mercy sustain us in all of life’s trials. He welcomes and protects us in His holy house for ever. Bobby found this safety and security in her Lord, and so can we.

Bobby’s life exemplifies David’s intense, devoted love for the Lord as expressed in Psalm 27:4, “One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His temple.”

God Is the Strength of My Heart

David’s prayer in Psalm 73:24-26 was Bobby’s prayer, and is also our prayer: “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.”

God was the strength of Bobby’s heart from the days of her youth to the last moment of her earthly life. Based on

her faith in Christ at the age of eleven, she was baptized for the remission of her sins like the sinners in Acts 2:38. Her character grew strong as she passed through the challenges of life from picking cotton as a girl to thirty-five happy years of marriage to Tom Hughes as they raised their children and she helped him succeed in business working behind the scenes. Some years after Tom’s death, she shared thirty-six years of marriage with Connie, working hand-in-hand to serve Christ, and assist her husband in spreading the gospel around this country and around the world. They labored together in over 400 gospel meetings here in the U.S. with her often reading the Bible to him as they drove thousands of miles. She also taught ladies’ classes in the majority of those meetings.

I Believed, and Therefore Have I Spoken

God was the strength of her heart in forging her strong convictions in upholding the truth of God’s word as expressed by both David and Paul, “We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe and therefore speak” (Ps. 116:10; 2 Cor. 4:13).

Bobby believed that, when John 3:16 says God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for the sins of all men, that was the only possible means to save her and all men. Therefore, she spoke this truth to all who would listen.

She believed that there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, as taught in

Ephesians 4:4-6, and therefore, she taught this truth to others without shame.

She fully believed the message of salvation as spoken by Jesus in Mark 16:15-16 and did her best to convince all men to believe in Christ and submit to Him in water baptism.

Bobby believed that Jesus fulfilled His promise to build His church in Matthew 16:18, and that He built it in Acts 2. She embraced the pattern given in Scripture for the New Testament church regarding its name, doctrine, work, worship, and organization. She believed it and spoke it.

She believed Jesus when He affirmed that marriage is for one man and one woman in a lifetime commitment, the only exception being that if one party committed fornication, the innocent party could divorce the fornicator and marry a new mate. That is what Jesus taught in Matthew 19:3-9. She lived this truth as a faithful wife and taught it to countless others.

She believed Romans 12:1-2 which affirms that we should present our bodies as a living sacrifice to the service of God and not be conformed to this sinful world by drinking alcohol, using profane speech, gambling, dancing, watching movies that glorify immoral conduct, or wearing immodest clothing. She exemplified this truth and spoke it without hesitation or apology.

Bobby believed in the teaching of Hebrews 10:25 that Christians should not be willfully absent from the assemblies of the saints. God was the strength of her heart so that she attended when we all wondered how she managed it as she shuffled her feet a few inches at a time from the car to her seat in the assembly, with Connie holding her arm as she made this trek countless times.

Bobby believed Jesus's description of the Final Judgment Day in Matthew 25:31-46, when the saved will be



welcomed into heaven and the lost will be banished to hell. She believed and tried to convince all men to believe it and to prepare for that day.

The world at large thinks that people who believe, live, and teach as Bobby did are dried up prunes—grumbling grizzly bears. Some people thought of brother Roy E. Cogdill that way because he was a staunch defender of the faith who refuted the false doctrines of men who wanted to liberalize the church of Christ. He held a meeting where I preached in Nashville, TN, in August 1973, and visited in our home when our son Jonathan was a year and a half old. I did not know brother Cogdill could play the ventriloquist, but he convinced Jonathan there was a dog under brother Cogdill's big chair and Jonathan ran around and around the chair looking for that dog. It was obvious brother Cogdill's heart was as big as the chair when he picked Jonathan up and held him, hugged him, and laughed with him. Like brother Cogdill, sister Bobby had a tender heart and a healthy sense of humor. I used to ask her playfully, "Will you please make Connie behave himself?" She would answer with a dry smile and a twinkle in her eye, "Yes, I can, and I will."

Last, God was the strength of Bobby's heart in her spirit of love, compassion, and hospitality. She loved to take food to the sick and infirm and to entertain guests in her house. Donna and I were the beneficiaries of her gracious hospitality. Numerous times, Donna and I visited brethren in hospitals and nursing homes where we would be told, "Connie and Bobby were just here." I always wondered how they managed to stay a step ahead of us all the time when we were twenty years younger than them. Bobby spent untold hours teaching new converts in her home, such as Briana White, a young lady who is blind and was converted by Danny Dennison, a blind brother. Briana has continued to grow in Christ on the solid foundation of teaching patiently and lovingly given by Bobby.

Bobby wants us to know that the Lord who has been her Shepherd wants to be our Shepherd, too. If you need to obey the gospel or be restored to the Lord, a loving Shepherd is ready to help you, and so are we. Let Him guide you with His counsel and afterward receive you to glory, just as He has done for Bobby. **TL**

Notes

You can see Bobby's obituary at this link: <https://www.subfuneralhome.com/obituary/bobby-adams>

Brother Connie Adams can be reached at conniewadams@twc.com or P.O. Box 91346, Louisville, KY 40291. He and I are sharing the pulpit at the Hebron Lane church of Christ, where he still preaches with clarity and vigor.



Ron Halbrook

Ron has preached for the Hebron Lane church of Christ in Shepherdsville, KY for twenty-four years. He and his wife, Donna, have three children. The church website is hebronlanechurchofchrist.com. He can be reached at halbrook@twc.com.

Does Human Law Override God's Law?

by Dennis Abernathy

Although civil authorities and human courts may legalize sin and outlaw righteousness, such travesties do not overturn divine precepts that will judge us on the final day.

Many people will equate conduct that is declared legal by civil authority with having God's approval. Evidently, they believe human law overrides God's law; that man is in a better position to determine right and wrong than is Almighty God; that a mere stroke of the pen can turn that which is sinful and wrong into that which is right! Regardless, God will not have fellowship with wickedness (1 John 1:5-6), and neither should we (Eph. 5:11). Will God approve of laws that legalize and advocate a sinful way of life? No, He will not!

Think about churches and religions that make religious laws that condone sinful conduct. Civil governments, and more and more religious bodies, have compromised and capitulated in matters of morality, but God has not! Governments can declare legal, and churches can approve religiously, the sale, and drinking of alcohol, gambling, adultery, cohabitation, recreational use of drugs, homosexual marriage, transgenderism, abortion on demand, etc., but that does not give such sinful conduct God's approval.

We are living in perilous times, where Bible truths are declared hateful and unloving, and sinful conduct is declared good and loving. Long ago, the prophet Isaiah said: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter" (Isa. 5:20).



Ours is becoming a topsy-turvy world:

We have come to dwell in Topsy-Turvydom!

Where vice is virtue—virtue, vice,

Where nice is nasty—nasty, nice,

Where white is black and black is white,

Where right is wrong and wrong is right!

Psalms 94:20 says: "Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frames mischief by a law (decree)?" Think about these things. **11**



Dennis Abernathy

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



Ron Halbrook

Ron has preached for the Hebron Lane church of Christ in Shepherdsville, KY for twenty-four years. He and his wife, Donna, have three children. The church website is hebronlanechurchofchrist.com. He can be reached at halbrook@twc.com.

Continued from page 23

their logical extreme, no one of these three realities is ultimately available to any save God himself. So, the deity of the Son is pronounced by this passage. That is beyond any successful refutation (King, 70).

There are many other problems with the *New World Translation*, but this is sufficient to expose the cultic nature of the Jehovah's Witnesses who promote private interpretation as Scripture. This is especially true in their determination to eliminate the deity of Jesus Christ from the Bible. **11**

Sources

Dana, H.E., and Julius Mantey. *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*. Toronto, CA: The MacMillan Co., 1955.

King, Sr., Daniel H. *Truth Commentaries: The Book of Hebrews*, edited by Mike Willis. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation, 2008.

Bobby K. Thompson

July 25, 1925—January 23, 2022

A memorial service was held on February 3, 2022 @ 11:30 a.m. in honor of Bobby K. Thompson at the Brown & Sons Chapel in Bradenton, Florida.

Robert Kendall Thompson (known as Bobby K. Thompson), passed away at age ninety-six on Sunday, January 23, 2022, at his home in Palmetto, Manatee County, Florida. A dear father and friend, his kindness, humor, and generosity will be greatly missed. Bobby can now say, along with the apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7-8, "I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."

Bobby was born in Henry County, TN, on July 25, 1925, the youngest of four children, to the late Edmond Lewis and Carrie Kendall Thompson. Raised in Paris, TN, he played the clarinet in the marching band, worked at his older brother's grocery store, and graduated from Grove High School in 1943. Upon his death, Bobby still owned a part of his family's farm in that community.

Answering his country's call to service during World War II, Bobby enlisted and served in the U.S. Navy from July 24, 1943, to February 19, 1946, and was deployed from Southern California to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and the Philippines.

Serving the Lord as a gospel preacher for almost seventy-five years, Bobby began preaching for churches of Christ in Henry County, TN, in 1947. During this time, he also attended Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, TN. Bobby graduated from Bethel College in

McKenzie, TN, in 1952 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education.

While Bobby was preaching for The Plaza church of Christ in Charlotte, NC, during the years 1953-58, he held a summer gospel meeting in his hometown of Paris, TN. There he met and soon married his beloved companion, Vera Mae Winkler (Benson), a widow with two children, on December 19, 1955. While in Charlotte, their daughter, Karen Anne, was born.

Bobby went on to preach for the newly-built North Miami Avenue church of Christ in Miami, FL (1957-1978), the Pruett and Lobit church of Christ in Baytown, TX (1978-1992), and the Manatee County church of Christ in Bradenton, FL (from 1992 until a few months before his death).

During these years, Bobby conducted gospel meetings from coast to coast and has written and published weekly bulletins and several lesson books and sermon outlines that remain in circulation today. This work was enhanced by a professional printing press which he had obtained and learned to use, moving it with him to each city and church-building. He found opportunities to make friends with local preachers and print shops and never ceased to send orders of his class materials and children's class songbooks all over the country. Later in life, Bobby worked diligently to learn to use a computer for his bulletin and sermon materials. He was always available to mentor other preachers and encourage young people, never missing an opportunity to conduct a Vacation Bible School, "singing" with the church kids. Many today cannot hear "Booster,

Booster" or "Please Don't Smoke" without thinking of him.

Bobby rarely "took a vacation." During many of his travels preaching the gospel, he would take his family and show them the beauties of this country and indulge his love of American history with stops at "historical monuments," battlefields and museums. Neither did Bobby know the meaning of the word "relax." He stayed busy at home through the years, painting houses, fixing lawnmowers, gardening, and selling specialty advertising, to name a few. He enjoyed reading Western novels, playing games, and loved watching his sports teams. Bobby was loved and respected for his stand for the truth, but outside the pulpit, he always brought laughter.

In 2020, Bobby was predeceased by his wife, Vera Mae Thompson, who had worked alongside him for sixty-five years as he preached for churches or traveled to gospel meetings. Their unwavering stand for God's word and the lives they lived endeared them to so many.

As well as his parents, he was also predeceased by his three older siblings, Edward Thompson, Mary Sue Thompson Looney and Virginia Thompson Rickelton, and his stepson, David Sherrill Benson.

Bobby is survived by daughter, Karen Thompson Dargan (Steve), step-daughter, Linda Benson Wade (Lynn), four step-grandchildren, David A Benson, Darin Benson, Amy Wade Hollis, and Jeremy Wade, eleven great-grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren.

Following the funeral service, a brief gravesite and military service was held at the Sarasota National Cemetery, 9810 State Road 72, Sarasota, FL 34241. 🇺🇸

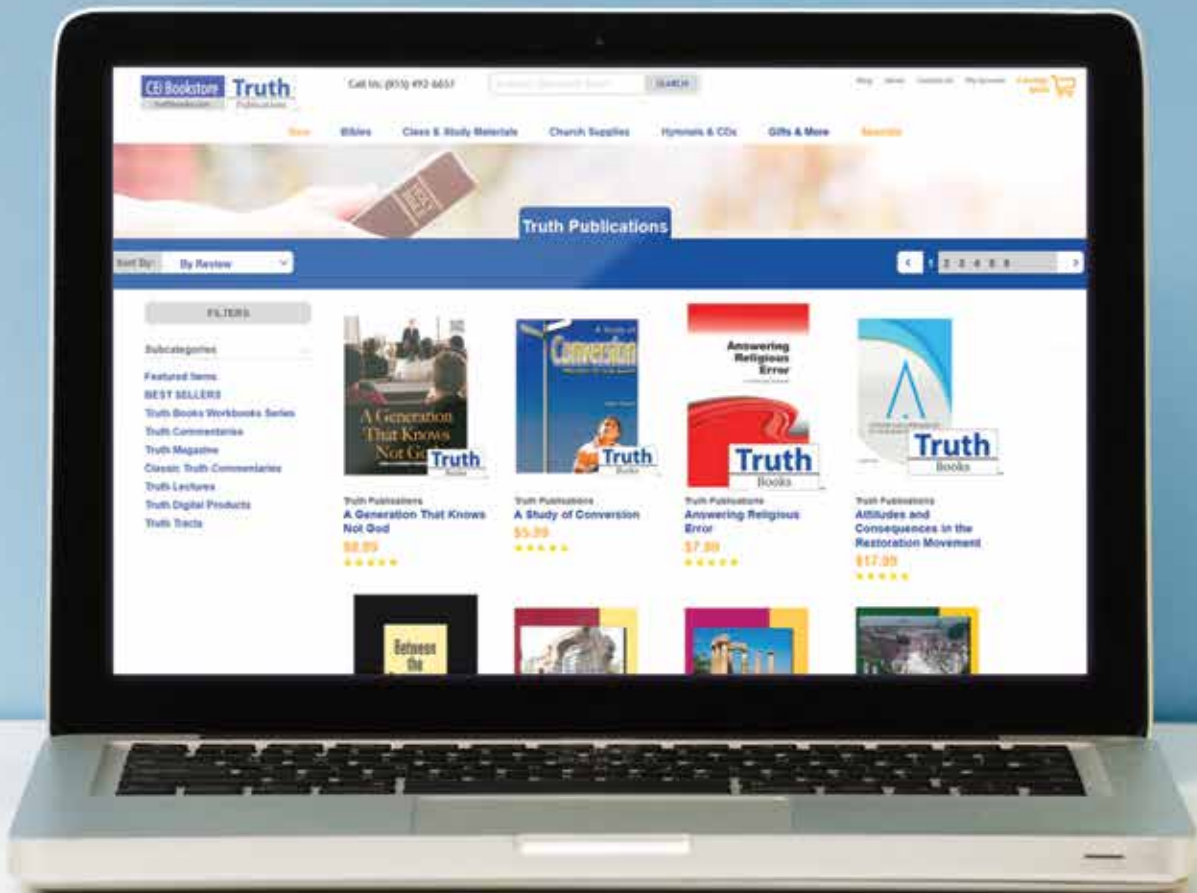
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Evangelist: John Gibson | jonesroad-church.org

Market Street Church of Christ

514 W Market St, Athens, AL 35611
Sun. Bible Class 9:45 am | Sunday Worship 10:30 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: David A. Cox | 256-232-1525 | marketstreet-church.com

Mt Zion Church of Christ

24190 Wooley Springs Rd, Athens, AL 35613
Sun. Worship 9:30 am & 5:15 pm | Wed. Bible Class 7:00 pm
Evangelists: Bob Watson & Matt Taylor | mtzionchurchofchrist.org

BIRMINGHAM

Vestavia Hills Church of Christ

2325 Old Columbiana Rd. (near I-65 & Hwy. 31)
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelists: Zack Lee | 205-822-0018

Elkmont

Sandlin Rd Church of Christ

19965 Sandlin Rd. Elkmont, AL 35620
Sun. Bible Class 10:00 am | Worship: 11:00 pm & 5:00 pm (Worship & Study) | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Lance R. Taylor | 256-777-0990 | sandlinroadhchurch.com

FLORENCE

College View Church of Christ

851 N. Pine St. (Located next to University campus)
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:15 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Kenny Mooror | 256-766-0403

GARDENDALE

Gardendale Church of Christ

601 Pineywood Road, Gardendale, AL, 35071 (Located 10 miles N of Birmingham)
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship: 10:25 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study: 7:00 pm
Evangelists: Andrew Smith & Jason Shackelford | 205-631-2131 | gardendalechurchofchrist.com

MOBILE

West Mobile Church of Christ

129 Hillcrest Rd, Mobile, AL 36608
Sun. Worship 9-9:30 am | Bible Study 9:30-10:30 am | Worship 10:30-11:30 am | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Ken Sils | 765-307-8048 | 251-342-4144 or 342-2041 | westmobilechurch.com

ARKANSAS

CONWAY

Hwy 65 Church of Christ

271 Highway 65 N, Conway, AR 72032
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Bruce Reeves | Bldg: 501-336-0052 | hwy65churchofchrist.org

Prince St. Church of Christ

2655 Prince St., Conway, AR 72034
Sun. Worship 9:00 pm | Bible class 9:50 am | Worship & Lord's Supper: 10:40 am | Wed. Bible Class 7:00 pm
501-450-8640

FORT SMITH

South 46th St. Church of Christ

2323 South 46th St.
Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:30 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: John Hagenbuch | Bldg: 479-782-0588 | churchofchristfortsmith.com

HARRISON

Capps Rd. Church of Christ

407 Bella Vista Dr.
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:15 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Norman E. Sewell | 870-741-9104 or 870-741-5151 | cappsroad.org

JONESBORO

StoneRidge Church of Christ

514 Airport Rd.
Sun. Bible Study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Dick Blackford | 870-933-9134

PINE BLUFF

Hwy 79 S Church of Christ

4341 S Camden Rd.
Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:45 am & 5:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Clarence W. Sell | 870-879-2097

ARIZONA

TUCSON

Church of Christ

145 N. Country Club Rd.
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: Brenden Ashby | 520-326-3634 | churchofchristtucson.org

CALIFORNIA

BELLFLOWER

Rose Ave. Church of Christ

17903 Ibbetson Ave.
Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:50 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
562-866-5615 | roseavenue.org

LONG BEACH

Church of Christ

3433 Studebaker Rd.
Sun. Bible Study 9:50 am | Worship 10:45 am & 5:30 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
JP Flores | 562-420-2363 or Mark Reeves | 562-377-1674 | justchristians.org

SAN DIMAS

San Dimas Church of Christ

449 W. Allen Ave., Suite 120, San Dimas, CA 91773
Sun. Bible study 10:00 am | Worship 11:00 pm & 4:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:30 pm
909-788-9978 | sandimaschurchofchrist.com

COLORADO

FORT COLLINS

Poudre Valley Church of Christ

126 West Harvard St. | Suite 6
Sun. Bible Study 9:30 am | Worship 10:30 am
Evangelist: Richie Thetford | pourevalleychurchofchrist.org

MONTROSE

San Juan Church of Christ

1414 Hawk Parkway, Unit C
Sun. Worship 11:00 pm | Bible Study 2 pm & 1:30 pm
970-249-8116 | sanjuanchurchofchrist.org

FLORIDA

DESTIN

South Walton Church of Christ

64 Casting Lake Rd.
Sun. Bible Study 9:00 am | Worship 10:00 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
850-622-3817 | southwaltonchurchofchrist.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 | dgccoc.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 | swcfcchrist.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 | lincolncc.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 | northsidecofc.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

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

MCALESTER

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

ChurchDirectory

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 | mooresvillepikecoc.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 | ednachurchof-christ.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, Houston, TX 77084

Sun. Bible Study 9:45 am | Worship 10:30 am & 6:00 pm | Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm
Evangelist: David Flatt | fryroad.org | church@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 | leonval-
leychurch.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 | montpelierchurchof-
christ.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 | westsidechurchof-
christwv.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. Wor-
ship 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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