

Truth

Magazine

Taking His hand, helping each other home.



TM

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THE DICKSON DISCUSSION

**“And according to Paul’s custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures”
(Acts 17:2, NASB).**



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The Mission of the Church

by Mark Mayberry

May we faithfully adhere to the pattern that Christ provided for the church, and not deviate from its divinely-assigned mission.

Reflections of Recent Events

Brothers Kyle Pope and Doug Burleson engaged in a public discussion at the Freed-Hardeman University Renaissance Center in Dickson, TN, on November 15, 2019. Hundreds of brethren attended this event, many traveling considerable distances. The event was also live-streamed by Freed-Hardeman University and also the CEI Bookstore/TruthBooks.com. A link to the audio soundtrack, along with a brief description of the points of discussion, can be found here: truthmagazine.com/summary-of-the-dickson-discussion. This face-to-face discussion followed a written exchange between these two men that was published in both *Truth Magazine* and the *Gospel Advocate* in October 2019.

Kyle Pope serves as evangelist of the Olsen Park church of Christ in Amarillo, TX, and is a member of the Truth

Publications Board of Directors. Doug Burleson labors with the Estes church of Christ in Henderson, TN. He serves as an Associate Professor in Bible at Freed-Hardeman University, where he also is the Assistant Dean of the College of Biblical Studies.

I am deeply grateful to brothers Greg Tidwell (editor of the *Gospel Advocate*), Randy and Jodie Duke (owners of the *Gospel Advocate*), David Shannon (president of Freed-Hardeman University), along with the two participants, Doug Burleson and Kyle Pope. Doug and Kyle dedicated considerable time and effort into their written exchange, and the subsequent verbal dialogue.

The spirit manifested by all who were involved in this discussion has been admirable. Indeed, I sincerely appreciate the genuine warmth and brotherly affection that has been

evident, not only in preliminary discussions, planning, and preparation but also in the actual presentation.

An open and honest discussion of differences that exist among brethren is good. Even debates can serve a beneficial purpose—revealing differences, defining positions, helping participants and interested observers to clarify their thinking, and, hopefully, come to a common understanding of God's will.

Proverbs 27:17 says, "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." Sparks can result in such circumstances, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. In our passionate commitment to truth, we must also speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:14-16). Such a spirit prevailed in these recent efforts, not only between Doug and Kyle, but also those who worked behind the scenes to make these written and oral discussions happen. A heartfelt thanks to Doug and Kyle, Randy and Jodie, along with Greg and David. I count you all as brethren and friends.

This Issue of Truth Magazine

I serve as the editor of *Truth Magazine*, which is a division of Truth Publications, Inc., a nonprofit organization that seeks to publish and provide Bible-based materials to help us all grow closer to God. I have asked Daniel King, David Dann, Ron Halbrook, and Steve Wolfgang to offer their reflections on the Dickson discussion that occurred between Doug Burleson and Kyle Pope. These men serve on the Truth Publications Board of Directors. They were present at the Dickson



Participants in the discussion (from left to right): Mark Mayberry, Greg Tidwell, Kyle Pope, Doug Burleson, and David Shannon.

discussion that was held in Dickson, TN, on November 15th.

My observations found below, serve as a more general assessment of where we are as a brotherhood of believers. From a personal standpoint, my family ties with the restoration movement go back at least four generations, if not longer. My wife, Sherelyn, and I are so blessed: The maternal and paternal branches of our family trees have been rooted in churches of Christ for generations upon generations.

This means I have family on both sides of the institutional question. I have kinfolk who have worked and worshipped with Doug. Kyle and I have family connections. My brother-in-law, Tim Matheny, shares a life-long friendship with Greg Tidwell. My uncle, John Hutcheson, Jr., and my wife's uncle, Jim Jackson, both taught at David Lipscomb University. I have close family among non-institutional brethren, and close family on the other side of the aisle.

As I reflect upon the recently completed Dickson discussion, along with the meetings that occurred earlier, my thoughts keep returning to the question, "What is our mission?" Specifically, what is the mission of the church that Christ promised to establish (Matt. 16:13-20), that Peter proclaimed on Pentecost (Acts 2), and that, according to Paul, reflects the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3:8-11)?

The Meaning of Mission

What do we mean by mission? In the context of describing the mission of the church, it signifies the duty, function, purpose, and work that God has assigned to Christians.

The Collins English Dictionary defines "mission" as "a specific task or duty assigned to a person or group of people." *The American Heritage Dictionary* says it refers to "a special assignment given to a person or group: an agent on a secret mission." Examples include "(1) a combat operation

assigned to a person or military unit; (2) an aerospace operation intended to carry out specific program objectives: a mission to Mars" (AHD).

The Importance of Having a Clear Mission

Many organizations recognize the value of having a clearly defined mission. The Peter F. Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management suggests that a great mission statement is short and sharply focused, clear and easily understood. It defines why we do what we do, and explains why the organization exists. It does not prescribe means, and is sufficiently broad, providing direction for doing the right things, addressing opportunities, corresponding to our competence, and inspiring our commitment. Ultimately, it enables us to say, "This is the work for which I wish to be remembered!"

The Home and Government

The mission of the home is defined in Ephesians 5:22-6:4, Colossians 3:18-21, along with other related passages. The mission of civil government is defined in Romans 13:1-5, 1 Peter 2:13-17, along with other related passages.

The Lord's Church

The mission of the Lord's church is set forth in the Great Commission as well as other related passages (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:6-8). Accordingly, it enjoins the threefold responsibility of evangelism, edification, and benevolence.

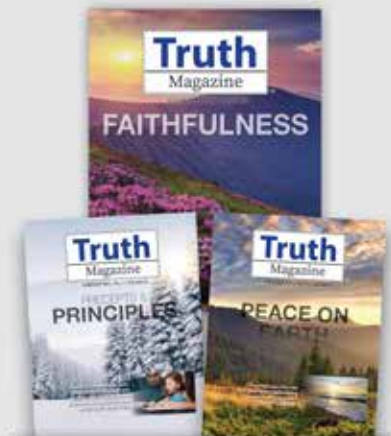
Evangelism

In the first century, the church effectively fulfilled its mission and mandate. Christ commanded the disciples, "Go and preach," and they promptly obeyed (Mark 16:15-16, 20).

In both an individual and collective sense, disciples of Christ must be evangelistic (Acts 8:4; 20:25-27; Eph. 4:11-13).

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Preserving the Conscience of the Young

by Kyle Pope

A tender conscience is a vital tool in helping us faithfully serve the Lord. Parents must act wisely to help safeguard this precious asset in the hearts of our children.

The nightly news is filled with tragic stories of young men and women who commit horrible acts of brutality and cruelty while still at an early age in life. On a recent broadcast, one expert observed that increasingly, even after being convicted and sentenced for serious crimes, many of today's young people demonstrate no remorse or sense of shame when they are called to account for their actions. This is much as it was in Jeremiah's day. Concerning the wicked of Judah, the Lord asked, "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed, nor did they know how to blush" (Jer. 8:12, NKJV).

Sadly, this tendency is not limited to the hardened criminals of our society, but even among young people within the church throughout the brotherhood. We see lies told casually, immorality embraced, delight taken in intoxication, laws broken, authorities mocked, and rebellion admired. While it is true that the young of all periods of history have struggled with such things, I'm afraid that some things young people are forced to face in this age are much more threatening to their eternal welfare than the issues that rebellious youth of previous generations could ever imagine. Lifelong addictions can begin in childhood. Disrespect for the very things that can help them the most can become imbedded within young hearts. Failure to restrain attitudes and actions of the flesh can make it so difficult to turn back to spiritual values that many never do.

Jesus aptly warned, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18:6).

Undoubtedly, many factors account for this—some that are within and some that are outside of our control. However, it seems to me that there are a few things we can do while our children are young to help preserve a tender conscience within them.

Nurture Within Them an Understanding of Their Accountability to God.

Behaving a certain way because a child's parents demand it has its limitations. As soon as a child realizes that mom and dad can't always know what he does in secret, all of the instruction in the world can go out the window. The human soul must realize that God watches over our actions at all times. Such knowledge helps us to govern our behavior properly. The Hebrew writer warned, "There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Heb. 4:13).

Don't Treat Rebellion Lightly.

Sometimes a little child will look his parents in the face and defiantly tell them, "No!" If parents allow a child to deliberately disobey their clear instructions, they are planting

the embryonic seeds of rebellion that one day may produce the spirit that looks in the face of God and rejects His counsel. Certainly, there will be times when children rebel. I'm not saying we should treat every incident of rebellion the same way or with the same severity, regardless of age, comprehension, or intent. However, we must not make it seem as if some rebellion is acceptable. We must let children know that it is a serious matter to reject the authority that God has placed over us, whether it be parents, teachers, elders, civil authorities, or Scripture itself. Paul taught, "There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves" (Rom. 13:1-2). If parents ignore rebellion, we indirectly tell our children that sometimes it is acceptable to disobey "the ordinance of God." It is not!

Don't Let the World Dictate What You Will Tolerate from Your Children.

I'm not sure why it is, but over the last few decades, there has been a dramatic change in societal expectations of the type behavior of which children are capable. The world tells us, "You just can't expect a little child to behave"—so children are not expected to obey and behave themselves. The result is that when parents don't expect a certain behavior,

that behavior doesn't happen. Yes, all of us have seen cases of parents communicating to their children that they "aren't good enough," no matter what they do. This can be just as destructive, and I am certainly not advocating that kind of cruel mistreatment of children. Nevertheless, we must look to Scripture to determine for ourselves the type of behavior that God expects of His children, and then

exercise loving yet forceful influence to help produce that behavior in our children. The Psalmist declares rightly, "The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple" (Ps. 119:130). The world will not follow the standard of Scripture, but we must do so. Thus, we give our children a stable example and guiding influence that will provide them with the strength to stand against the tide. **T**



Kyle Pope

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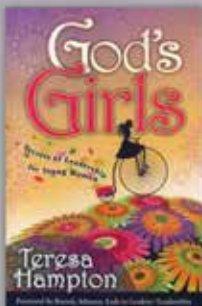
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The Principle of the Teaching Process (Part II)

by Aleta Samford

The teaching process is reflected in everything we do, and every law we implement, which are designed to help our children exercise their senses.

How different are the results when this great law of teaching is properly followed! The stimulated self-activities operate in the correct manner, into a busy laboratory. The pupils become thinkers and discoverers. They master great truths and apply them to the great questions of life. They invade new fields of knowledge. The teacher merely leads the march. Their reconnaissance becomes a conquest. Skill and power grow with exercise. Through this, the students find out what their minds are for and become students for life (Gregory, 102-103).

In connecting this law of teaching to the incident with my daughter as a baby in the situation with the house plant (that I described in the May 2017 issue of *Truth Magazine*), I would ask, How did my actions in that situation help Katie “invade new fields of knowledge?” My goal was that she learns to fear and obey me when I gave her instructions, so I set out to “lead the march” from a simple command to a problem. When I spanked Katie’s plump little leg, it shook up her world, causing her to become a “thinker and discoverer.”

To be clear—regarding the fear I desired from Katie—I am not talking about terror, the kind of fear that does not motivate. I’m describing reverence—the fear of a dutiful child towards a good Father, a fear of opposing Him, and dishonoring Him. It’s a fear that says, “I have something important at stake here, and I don’t want to lose it!” It’s a fear that exercises the senses and results in the discernment of both good and evil.

If I had roughly handled Katie, or yelled “Stop it!”, I would have placed confusion and terror in her heart, and I would not have been acting in a way worthy of her respect. I would not have been a good parent. Speaking with the firm, yet loving, expectation that she heed my instructions created in her a fear that resembled honor, respect, and obedience, even after I had to inflict the incentive of pain.

Whether you’re a parent at home or a teacher in the classroom, have confidence that consistently firm and loving expectations will do two things: (1) it will build your children’s love and trust in you, making you worthy of their respect, and (2) it will cause them to look for

ways to meet those expectations with discernment in dealing with further information. This is how the Lord builds our fear and trust in Him, motivating us to love and obedience. “Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who delights greatly in His commandments” (Ps. 112:1).

If we want our children to be stirred by the word of God, we must study it with fervor and prepare to help them think and solve problems. “It’s the unskilled teacher who prefers to hear his own voice in endless talk rather than watch and direct the course of the thoughts of his pupils” (Gregory, 87). This teacher wonders why the children don’t listen or why they don’t remember anything.

“The true teacher stirs the ground and sows the seed” (Gregory, 90). This teacher is not tempted to blame the children for poor listening. This teacher helps her students practice thinking from the ground up because she knows this will help them grow in their love of learning, making it their own.

In a class situation, we can stir the ground and plant seeds by starting with a problem, such as a hypothetical situation, or with the question of “Who said it?” Seeds begin to germinate as, naturally, the motivation arises to find the solution or make a change. Expecting our students to learn to problem-solve is preparing them to face the problems and temptations of life.

The teaching process is found in everything we do, in every law we implement, to exercise the senses. May we diligently prepare, believe good listening can and will occur, speak their language, and speak at their level of knowledge. Such focused efforts will lead to the mastery of further knowledge. In May, we will look at learning as the student’s responsibility. **11**



Aleta Samford

Aleta is the wife of Gene Samford who preaches for the church that meets in Kemp, TX. She has taught Bible classes for forty-four years and, to help other women join the ranks, presents a series of lessons based on God’s word, *The Seven Laws of Teaching*, and her own experiences. She may be reached at aletas10@sbcglobal.net.

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Faithless Idolaters and the Faithfulness of God

by David Flatt

In this article, we consider how both Gentiles and Jews had turned to idolatry and how God was still able to be faithful to His covenant (Rom. 1:18-3:31).

In his introduction, Paul affirms that the righteousness of God has been revealed through Jesus the Messiah. Hope is the result: everyone can (potentially) be saved. Yet, as wonderful as the hope of humanity's salvation is, there was a time when salvation was unclear.

Paul will describe how both the Gentiles and Jews had become faithless idolaters. Humanity is full of decay and headed towards death. What will God do to rescue mankind from eternal destruction? Before this question can be answered, Paul must show why the human family is unfit and unable to solve the problems that they have created.

The Idolatry of the Pagans (Rom. 1:18-32)

In a word, idolatry is the reason humanity is unable and unfit to solve its problems. Since God created Adam and Eve, we have been left to decide who we will worship: the Creator or ourselves. Paul argues that the Gentiles had chosen to worship themselves instead of the Creator.

Civilization could continue in its current condition; however, God has had enough. While He will offer a path to salvation, God will not allow evil to go unchecked in His creation. He has passed judgment against a world filled with idolatry. He will be impartial in dispensing justice: if they have chosen idolatry, both Gentile and Jew will be destroyed.

Paul first describes the idolatry of the Gentiles. The Gentiles possessed an awareness of their Creator. No one who passes through the natural world does so without (on some level) knowing he has a Creator. Instead of allowing knowledge of the Creator to shape their hearts and minds, the Gentiles attempted to suppress this truth and remove Him from their culture. Twisted thinking and darkened hearts produced idolatry among the Gentiles.

We would be wise to learn the lesson of how we use our minds. We live in a society that values pluralism: "Everyone is right, and no one is wrong. All beliefs are of equal value." Yet, this text proves there are right and wrong ways of thinking. How we use our mind matters. If we remove the Creator from our lives, families, and society, God will permit us to do so. Three times in this chapter, Paul writes the words, "God gave them up" (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).

What does a society look like where the truth of the Creator is methodically suppressed? What evidence demonstrates that a populace is godless and thus deserving of death? The chief evidence Paul cites is homosexuality. Why?

In the Garden of Eden, God made man. When no suitable helper could be found, God created a woman. Adam and Eve were opposite complements for one another. Regarding their origins, Genesis reads,

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he

created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen. 1:27-28, ESV).

Adam and Eve were given two objectives in life: (1) reproduce, and (2) subdue the creation. Together, they were to assist in bringing order to the earthly realm. From the beginning of human civilization, God ordered the natural world in such a fashion that *opposites* can bring harmony in ways that two *like* things cannot. By reproducing through the bond of marriage and subduing creation, these two opposites would bring glory to the Creator.

What evidence demonstrates that the natural world is broken, out of order, and disjointed? The Creator's image-bearers, i.e., men and women, have turned to homosexuality. Homosexuality is proof of perverted minds and darkened hearts. Without dispute, such behavior reveals idolatry within the human family. Therefore, creation is desperately in need of God's righteousness.

As the Gentiles rejected the truth of God and began to live distorted lives, their society decayed morally and ethically. Evil was promoted, and good was condemned. As idolaters digressed, their minds and hearts ceased to be affected by pain and

guilt. They lost all sense of shame, remorse, and regret. Knowing of God's judgment, they did not care about incurring His wrath. Paul concludes the chapter by stating, "Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them" (Rom. 1:32).

The Idolatry of the Jews (Rom. 2:1-3:20)

Any Jew reading Romans 1 would have said, "Amen!" Among the Hebrews, none disputed that the Gentiles were idolaters fit for destruction. The nation of Israel took great pride in the fact that God had chosen their forefather, Abraham, through whom to bring redemption. God had made His covenant with their family. So far as they were concerned, they could do no wrong. They thought they were better than the Gentiles.

Of course, this was false. In Romans 2, Paul warns the Jews about the self-righteous (and self-condemnatory) judgment that they passed against the Gentiles. Like the Gentiles, the Jews were guilty of idolatry: "Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things" (Rom. 2:1). God's righteousness/justice being revealed meant Israel would stand equally condemned with the Gentiles. God is impartial in dispensing justice.

Also, Israel thought they could do no wrong because God gave them the law. (Note that when Paul refers to "the law," he nearly always is referring to the Law of Moses.) In their twisted thinking, they thought themselves superior to the rest of the world because they possessed the law. To prove that they were equally guilty of idolatry, Paul cites the law and how Israel had broken the Mosaic code.



Israel's history was filled with repeated examples of their failure: (1) While God was giving the law to Moses, the people made an idol under the guidance of Aaron. (2) During the period of the Judges, Israel repeatedly turned to idolatry. (3) Solomon married Gentile wives and incorporated idolatrous practices in Israel. (4) Jeroboam instituted idol worship at Dan and Bethel. They worshiped idols in the groves and high places. Generation after generation, Israel failed to follow the law. When the Gentile world looked at Israel, they laughed at Israel's claims of superiority. To the Gentile nations, Israel was no different than themselves.

At the summation of this passage, Paul quotes the prophet's critique of Israel: they caused the name of God to be blasphemed among the Gentiles (Rom. 2:24). This was no small shortcoming. It was the result of prolonged idolatry and immorality, arising from twisted minds and darkened hearts.

To prophets like Isaiah and Ezekiel, this meant Israel needed to be punished and reconstituted as a nation. In this section of Romans, Paul is explaining how Israel had been unfaithful to God and the covenant.

He writes like one of the prophets, and like the prophets, he offers a hopeful solution (Rom. 3:21-26).

Lastly, Paul makes a point about the name "Jew." By itself, bearing the name "Jew" did not make one part of the covenant family. Even John the Baptizer affirmed this claim was invalid: "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Luke 3:8).

The human heart is of the highest value to God. If we, by the Spirit, have God's law written on our hearts, then we will have praise of God. Here the apostle is writing in Greek but is thinking in Hebrew. The expression, "having praise of God," is a play on the word "Jew." The term "Jew" is derived from the Hebrew word "Judah," which means "celebrate" or "praise." Having God's praise or approval does not merely come by wearing a name, but by possessing a certain kind of heart.

Coming to chapter 3, Paul acknowledges the advantage of the Jews. They were God's chosen people. God gave them the law. The Law of Moses offered Israel the advantage of sharing a relationship with the Creator. However, what was God's purpose in giving Israel the law? Was it merely a point of national pride? No. God gave Israel His oracles so they might become the light of the world. Sadly, Israel failed miserably in this sacred trust. Instead of being a light to the world, they floundered in the darkness of idolatry.

Israel's guilt was undeniable, and their behavior inexcusable. Their mouths must be stopped, along with their arrogant spirit and self-righteous superiority. Despite being God's people, having the law, and being

circumcised, they were no better than the pagan, godless Gentile world.

Paul rarely ever cites a passage from the Old Testament as a mere “proof text.” He usually has broader contexts and themes in mind, which are summarized in a specific citation. Most of the passages Paul cites in this text come from Psalms 5, 140, 10, and 36, and also from Isaiah 59. These passages not only describe Israel’s sins but conclude with God’s declaration that He will rescue the world. God will keep His covenant in spite of Israel’s unfaithfulness. This is the point Paul is building (Rom. 3:21). Paul’s style of writing reflects that of the prophets.

Finally, no one could appeal to the law, or rely upon the works of the law, as a means for justification. For one to be justified according to the law, he would have had to keep the law perfectly. This did not happen with Israel. If an Israelite appealed to the works of the law for justification, his conduct demonstrated that he had broken the law.

Appealing to the law for justification would be like someone pleading his innocence to a police officer who caught him breaking the law. James made a similar point: “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (Jas. 2:10). If someone breaks one law but keeps the others, he stands condemned as a lawbreaker. Accordingly, Israel could not claim innocence or superiority.

God’s Faithfulness Is Proven through Jesus, the Messiah.

If the Gentiles and Jews were faithless idolaters, what could God do to keep His covenant? If the very people through whom He planned to rescue the world had rejected Him, how could He use them to save the world? It would appear that humanity is without hope.

Having described an abysmal situation, Paul changes the tone of his letter with two words: “But, now.” When everything appeared hopeless, God sent the Messiah. The Messiah would be the lone, faithful Israelite through whom God would prove His faithfulness to the covenant He made with Abraham. Our heavenly Father would rescue the world through His Son. Jesus Christ is the Light of the world. As the incarnate Word, He delivers the oracles of God.

More broadly, Paul begins to explain how God could justify humanity through faith in Jesus. Using language descriptive of tabernacle/temple service, he says, “God put forward as a propitiation by his blood...” (Rom. 3:25). Some translations render this phrase as, “God put forth Jesus as the place of mercy.” In other words, Paul draws on sacrificial language to explain how God rescued humanity from slavery.

The “mercy seat” was the lid of the ark of the covenant—the space between the two seraphim situated on either end. God would meet the High Priest at the mercy seat for grace and forgiveness. Paul is describing how God used the blood of Jesus as the new seat of mercy, where believers can receive grace and forgiveness. Today, when we think of these qualities, we do not think of the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant. Instead, we associate grace and forgiveness with the cross of the Messiah.

Conclusion


What was the source of Israel’s boasting or confidence? Was it the law? Was it works performed according to the law? No. The Law of Moses was insufficient to justify anyone. Moreover, Israel had been unfaithful to the law.

Today, how can we be confident we are part of God’s covenant family? The only source of confidence, available to Israel or anyone else, is found in a new law: the law of faith. The only way we can become part of God’s covenant

family is through faith in what God did through Jesus, the Messiah.

Here is a critical implication of this new law of faith: both Jews and Gentiles could become part of God’s covenant family. As the Jewish Shema (the primary confession of faith for Israel) clearly stated, “The Lord is one Lord” (Deut. 6:4). Although this declaration was direct and straightforward, Israel failed to realize its implication: God also created the Gentiles. Paul interjects the theme of monotheism. This declaration remains true today, along with its associated implication. Let us understand what the One Creator God did through His Son, the Messiah. “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:6). There is one God over all humanity: Jew and Gentile, alike.

Finally, Paul and Jesus were both criticized for allegedly arguing that the law was worthless. Our Lord answered this criticism in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus said He did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill the law (Matt. 5:17-19). This is how Paul often explained the law. Did faith void the law? No. The law was and is fulfilled by the act of faith in what God did through Jesus.

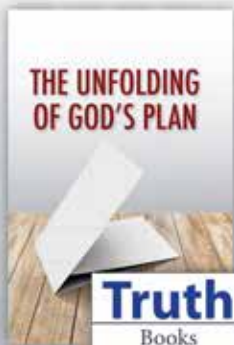
The law was fulfilled in a fashion no one had ever imagined. The law was fulfilled through faith. Paul frequently explained that the law was like a teacher, leading the Jews to the Messiah (Gal. 3:19-29). He will expand this theme in the next chapter by introducing Abraham the father of Israel. 



David Flatt

David and his family began laboring with the Fry Road church of Christ in Houston, TX in 2019. The church website is fryroad.org. He can be reached at dflatt85@yahoo.com.

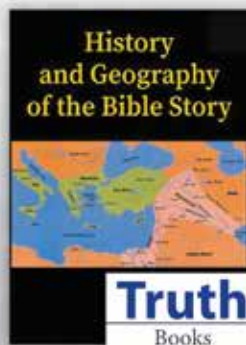
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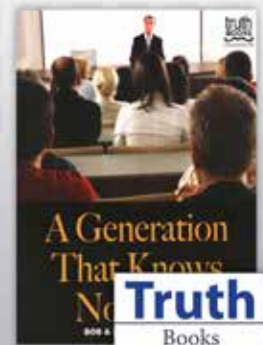
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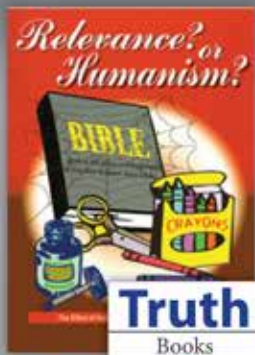
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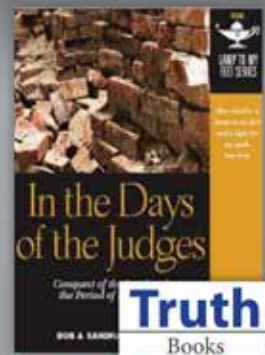
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The Establishment of the Church

by Bruce Reeves

If one is saved at all, he is a member of Christ's church; if he is a faithful member of the church, he is saved.

The religious world reflects division, chaos, and confusion (1 Cor. 1:10; 14:33). Today, we observe thousands of denominations teaching different doctrines on critical spiritual questions, yet they are all claiming to follow the one faith. Is this really what Christ wanted? Jesus desires that His people be united on the basis of truth as a proclamation of His grace (John 17:20-21; 2 John 9-11).

Sadly, some members of local churches of Christ have a denominational view of the Lord's church, but they think their denomination is the best one. As a result of a diminished view of the authority of the Scriptures, they also have a low view of the church. Yet, the Bible presents a high view of both the Scriptures and the Lord's church! Let us consider Christ's conversation with Peter in Matthew 16:13-19.

What Did Jesus Establish?

Our conceptual understanding of the church is critical to our appreciation for it as the fulfillment of God's "eternal purpose" (Eph. 3:10-11). The church is composed of the redeemed people of God who have been called out of the world by the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-14).

The universal church includes the whole company of the saved who are in a relationship with Christ. The church is not *part* of the saved; the church *is* the saved (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9). This term is not used biblically to refer to humanly

devised boards, councils, synods, etc., but rather to the saved.

The church does not save me, nor does she administer grace. Christ is my Savior, Redeemer, and Lord (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Eph. 5:23). The Lord adds us to the church as a result of our having been saved: "So then, those who had received His word were baptized . . . and the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:41, 47).

As the Lord saves, He adds, and as He adds, He saves. Therefore, if one is saved at all, he is a member of Christ's church, and if he is a member of the church, he is saved. One cannot be saved outside of the church of Christ, nor can he be lost if he remains a faithful member of the body of Christ (Eph. 1:3, 22-23; 4:4; 5:23; Col. 1:17-18; Heb. 12:22-23). The universal church is made up of individual believers, not local churches (1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27). The notion that local churches tied together constitutes the universal church is an unbiblical concept.

In the New Testament, local churches were autonomous and self-governing groups of Christians overseen by shepherds (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-11). Local congregations are composed of individual members who agree to join together in fellowship (Acts 9:26), worship in a common assembly (1 Cor. 11:18), work out of a common treasury (1 Cor. 16:1-3) and submit to a common oversight (Acts 14:23; 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2-3).

The local church is all-sufficient to fulfill the work God has given His people (Eph. 4:11-16). This truth, however, does not deny individual responsibilities that we all have as disciples but emphasizes the wisdom of God in ordaining the organization and work of the local church (Matt. 18:15-17).

It is distressing to see the low estimation some have of the local church, as well as their dismissive spirit toward the New Testament pattern for the work of local congregations. It is disconcerting when brethren have clarity regarding sound hermeneutical principles on such issues as salvation, instrumental music, marriage, divorce, and remarriage, but then abandon such principles when attempting to defend the social gospel at work in local churches of Christ. Church-sponsored and funded parachurch organizations¹ among our brethren, although seemingly well-intended, manifest an underlying, but real dissatisfaction with the local church as God designed it. We must define the church the way Christ did.

The Foundation of the Church

When asked, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter unequivocally confessed the deity of Christ, saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God"

¹ The term *parachurch*, as used in this article, refers to the practice of local churches funding faith-based organizations to do the spiritual work, which has been assigned to local churches.

(Matt. 16:13-16). Jesus emphatically affirms the church's true foundation: "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church . . ." (Matt. 16:17-18).

The notion that this "rock" refers to Peter is untenable. The "rock" of which Jesus speaks is the truth that Peter confessed concerning the deity of Christ. The apostle Paul explicitly taught that Christ is the foundation of His church: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11). Even when speaking of the "foundation of the apostles and prophets," Paul communicates this same truth by metonymy: "Jesus Christ . . . being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together grows into a holy temple in the Lord . . ." (Eph. 2:20-21).

The Certainty of the Church

The certainty of the church is discerned in Christ's statement, "I will build my church . . ." (Matt. 16:18). Despite the unbelief of the Jewish leadership, the oppression of Roman rule, and the shortcomings of His disciples—Jesus declares the certainty of the establishment of His church. The church is the manifestation of God's wisdom, sovereignty, and power and far from a mere contingency plan (Eph. 3:10-11). There is no uncertainty in the words of Jesus. What a blessing it is to know that God is faithful to His promises!

The prophets foretold of the timeframe of the coming of the Messianic kingdom (Isa. 2: 2-3; Dan. 2:44-45). John the Baptist and Jesus both affirmed the imminence of its arrival to those alive during their ministries (Matt. 3:1-2; 12:28; Mark 9:1). Christ instructed His apostles to remain in Jerusalem for the power of

the Holy Spirit, which would be poured out on Pentecost (Luke 24:46-48; John 14-16; Acts 2:1-4). On the day of Pentecost, Peter proclaimed that Christ was reigning over His kingdom on the throne of God (Acts 2:29-36; cf. Dan. 7:13-14). Interestingly, after Pentecost, we read of believers being "translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son" (Col. 1:13) and of our reception of an immovable kingdom (Heb. 12:28). The certainty of Jesus's statement, "I will build my church," is indisputable.

The Intimacy of the Church

The Lord also emphasizes the intimacy of the relationship that He would sustain with His church when He said, "I will build *my* church" (Matt. 16:18). Nowhere is this truth seen more clearly than in Paul's treatment of Christ and His church through the analogy of the marriage relationship. The apostle vividly describes the sacrificial headship of Christ over the church (Eph. 5:23-25), the sanctifying purpose of the Savior for His bride (Eph. 5:26-27) and the selfless devotion of Christ for His people (Eph. 5:28-32). The Lord's provision and protection for His church demonstrate His love for His people.


How anyone could fail to see the great value of the church in light of the truth that Jesus Christ "purchased the church with His own blood" is unimaginable (Acts 20:28). The church is presented as "*the body of Christ*" and Jesus as her spiritual head (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; Col. 1:18). When Saul was persecuting the church (Acts 8:1), Jesus asked him, "Saul, why do you persecute Me?" (Acts 9:4). When enemies of the Lord persecute God's people, they are sticking their finger in God's eye (Zech. 2:8; Matt. 18:6).

The Invincibility of the Church

Jesus said, "Upon this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hades *shall not prevail against it*"

(Matt. 16:18). This statement was not a denial that enemies of truth would oppose His redemptive work, but it was a promise that death would not prevent the victory of the church. Death would neither stop Christ from building the church nor spell defeat for those who comprise it. Christ manifested His power over death (Rom. 6:9; Heb. 2:14-15). His resurrection demonstrates His intercessory life (Isa. 28:16-18; Acts 2:25-28; Rev. 1:17-18). In Jesus Christ, death and hades have no power over us (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

Entrance into the Church

The Lord promises Peter apostolic authority in the preaching of the gospel and the entry of sinners into the church (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; 23:13; Luke 11:52). The kingdom is something to be entered, and Peter would show people how they could enter by proclaiming the gospel (Acts 2, 10). When Jesus promised Peter and the apostles, "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven," He was not writing them a blank check to do and say whatever they desired. The form of the verbs, "bind" and "loose," can correctly be translated, "*Whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.*" Peter was only to teach heaven's will (Matt. 6:10). Thank God for the apostolic message of the gospel (Heb. 2:3-4), and the establishment of the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:20-21). 



Bruce Reeves

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Q.

by Bobby L. Graham

A.



Bobby L. Graham

Bobby actively participates in fill-in preaching, Belize trips, teaching an hour each day at Athens Bible School,

and in gospel meeting work. He and his wife, Karen, have three children. He can be reached at bobbylgraham@pclnet.

QUESTION.

Why did Jael give Sisera milk instead of water in Judges 4:19?

ANSWER.

The prophetess, Deborah, had been chosen by God to serve as Israel's fourth judge (more a military leader than an arbiter of cases). Oppression at this time was coming from the Canaanites, led by Sisera the captain of their army. Barak led the army of Deborah. At the beginning of the battle, Barak's men confused/routed the army of Canaan. The army of Sisera fell by the sword that day. Sisera, however, fled on foot from the fighting to the tent of Jael because of the amicable relations between Jabin, a Canaanite king, and Heber, the husband of Jael.

Jael accorded Sisera comforts associated with hospitality, not the usual treatment reserved for an enemy. She covered him with a blanket/rug. When he requested water, she gave him milk, which most likely was agitated milk because of the meaning

of the word, something like buttermilk or cream. Without refrigeration, it must have been anything but cold.

The Song of Deborah, recorded in Judges 5, gives other helpful information on this matter. "He asked for water, and she gave him milk; in a magnificent bowl, she brought him curds" (Judg. 5:25). The text refers to thick, curdled milk. Older versions described the bowl as being "lordly."

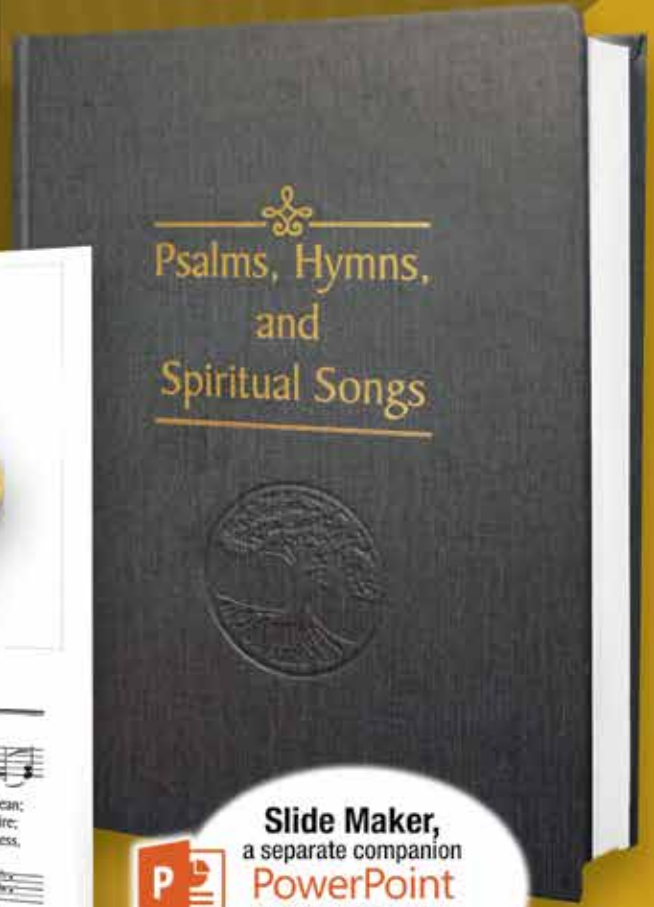
Why did she do this? According to one source, "When Sisera came to Jael's tent, she opened a skin bottle of milk. Fresh milk shaken in such a skin would be curdled by the bacteria left on the inner surface, and would then be served as sour milk (Judg. 4:19; 5:25) or *hema*, which is not 'butter.' Called *leben* in Arabic, it is still served to guests by Bedouins (cf. Gen. 18:8)" (TWOT, 285).

Notice that Jael gave Sisera more than he requested, and she served it to him in grand style. Why? She was most likely trying to make him feel special and secure, because of the treatment she planned to give him later when killing him. She hammered a tent peg into his temple and drove it into the ground on which he lay. Little could Sisera have suspected Jael of her murderous intent after she provided for him in such a magnificent manner. Her act was notable in overcoming the Canaanite enemies, as evidenced in Deborah's Song already mentioned (Judg. 5:24-27). **1**

Sources

Yamauchi, Edwin. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Edited by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke. Chicago: Moody Press, 1999.

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The Stations of the Cross

by Barry Britnell

When you take a closer look at the Via Dolorosa’s Stations of the Cross, you soon realize that they are not all scripturally accurate.

In today’s world, we are presented with so much “factual” information. Such information is often presented as a confirmed truth and should not be disputed. This is especially true when you travel to Israel. Different religious organizations will attempt to tell you that specific locations are actual locations with only sketchy information to confirm such a claim.

Such is the case with the Via Dolorosa (i.e., the “Way of Sorrows”) that wanders through the Old City of Jerusalem and is supposed to mark the exact path that Jesus took between the location where Pilate gave his sentence to the site of the crucifixion. A few months ago, I wrote an article for *Truth Magazine* in which we discussed the current path of the Via Dolorosa. In summary, I believe that the current route of the Via Dolorosa is probably not correct, and I encourage you to go back and read it.

In this article, I would like to take a closer look at the Via Dolorosa’s “Stations of the Cross.” These fourteen

stations are supposed to represent fourteen different events that occurred as Jesus was making his way to Golgotha. However, as you will see, there are significant differences in what is presented to people when they visit Jerusalem and what is revealed to all of us in Scripture. Let’s take a closer look at these stations and discuss what they mean and what can be confirmed by Scripture.

Station #1—Jesus is sentenced to death by Pontius Pilate.

This event is recorded in all four Gospels (Matt. 24:26; Mark 15:15; Luke 23:24-25; John 19:16).

Station #2—Jesus takes up His cross. This event, where Jesus is forced to carry a portion of His cross part of the way to Golgotha, is recorded in John 19:17.

Station #3—Jesus falls for the first time. Having been scourged and beaten, it is logical to assume that Jesus struggled in making His way to Golgotha. However, it

is never mentioned in Scripture that He fell to the ground.

Station #4—Jesus’s mother, Mary, watches her Son pass. As we know from John 19:25, Mary was, at least temporarily, at the cross of Jesus. However, the Bible does not record any encounter that Jesus had with her along the route to Golgotha.

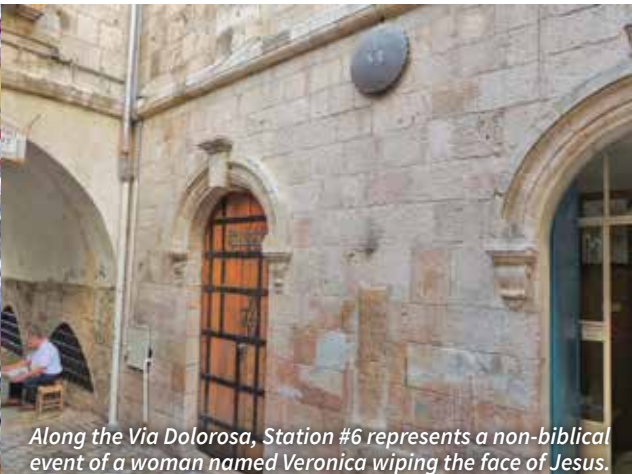
Station #5—Simon of Cyrene is forced to carry the cross. As Jesus walked to Golgotha, a man was pulled out of the crowd and forced to carry the cross on behalf of Jesus. This event is recorded for us in three of the Gospels (Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26).

Station #6—Veronica uses her veil to wipe the face of Jesus. It is believed that Jesus’s face was impressed on this cloth, which is currently housed in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. However, this event is never mentioned in Scripture.

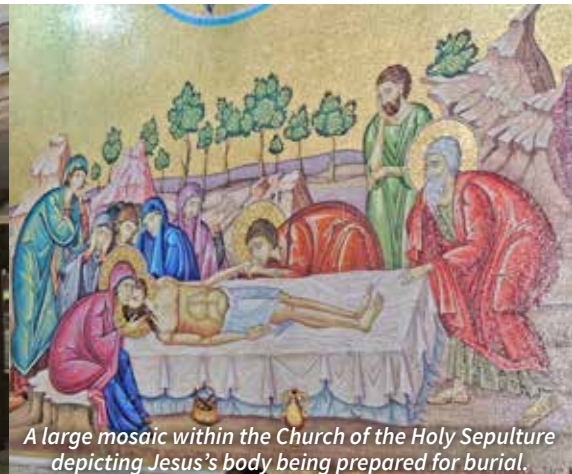
Station #7—Jesus falls for a second time. Again, this event is not mentioned in Scripture.



The “Stone of Anointing,” the traditional location of where Jesus’s body was prepared for burial.



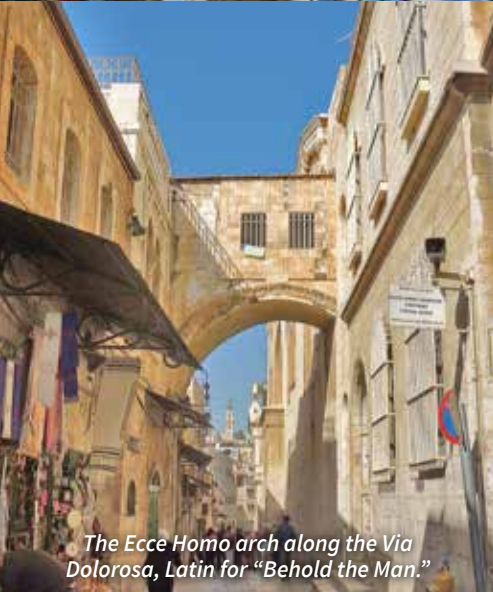
Along the Via Dolorosa, Station #6 represents a non-biblical event of a woman named Veronica wiping the face of Jesus.



A large mosaic within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre depicting Jesus’s body being prepared for burial.



The edicule within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre that covers the traditional site of the burial of Jesus.



The Ecce Homo arch along the Via Dolorosa, Latin for "Behold the Man."



The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a large building constructed on top of the traditional locations of Golgotha and the burial site.

Station #8—The daughters of Jerusalem weep for Jesus. This event is mentioned in Luke 23:27-31.

Station #9—Jesus falls for a third time as He arrives at Golgotha.

Once again, while this could have happened due to Christ's weakened physical condition, this event is not mentioned in Scripture.

Station #10—Jesus is stripped of His clothing. This event is recorded in all four Gospels (Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34; John 19:23-24).

Station #11—Jesus is nailed to the cross. This event is not explicitly mentioned in the crucifixion account. However, after His resurrection, Jesus is with His disciples, where He shows them the scars in His hands (John 20:20). Thomas, who is not present, later declares, "Unless I see in his hand the mark of the nails and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe" (John 20:25). Eight days later, Jesus sees Thomas and says, "Put your finger here and see my hands; and put out your hand and place it in my side" (John 20:27). It is evident from these passages that Thomas knew that Jesus had been nailed to the cross and would not believe in the resurrection until he saw those scars. Later, Jesus showed him what he wanted to see. [Note also Peter's sermon on Pentecost (Acts 2:23) and Paul's epistle to the Colossians (Col. 2:14), MM]

Station #12—Jesus dies on the cross. This event is recorded in all four Gospels (Matt. 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30).

Station #13—Jesus's body is prepared for burial. This event is recorded in all four Gospels (Matt. 27:59; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:39-40).

Station #14—Jesus's body is buried in the tomb. This event is recorded in all four Gospels (Matt. 27:60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53; John 19:41-42).

When walking through Jerusalem, people who are not familiar with



A street sign in Jerusalem.

Scripture will present these events as actual historical facts. However, upon closer examination, you realize that five of these fourteen events are not even mentioned in Scripture.

One does not have to travel to Israel to have a misunderstanding about this. As I have participated in teaching opportunities on this topic, several Christians have emphatically stated that some of these non-documented events are recorded in Scripture. Upon closer study, they soon realize that they had also accepted something as fact without double-checking such information for themselves.

While it is easy to blame people when this happens, it is quite understandable. In this day and age, we have access to so much information. Often, this information can be presented in a very professional way, and it is easy to accept unfounded assertions as truth.

As I close, let me encourage you to do two things: (1) *Study God's word.* Listen to what people say and read what people write. However, we should compare everything to what God says in His word; (2) *Teach others.* Use these common misunderstandings as opportunities to start conversations with people about God's word. You never know what might happen when people learn that something as simple as the Stations of the Cross is not all biblically accurate. 📖



Barry Britnell

Barry Britnell is the founder of Exploring Bible Lands, LLC (exploringbiblelands.com) and leads Bible study tours to the land of Israel. He also works with Appian Media (appianmedia.org) to produce Biblically-sound videos used in teaching others

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- Book 1 — The Beginning of God's Way
- Book 2 — From Egypt to the Promised Land
- Book 3 — Judges to the United Kingdom
- Book 4 — Divided Kingdom to the Return

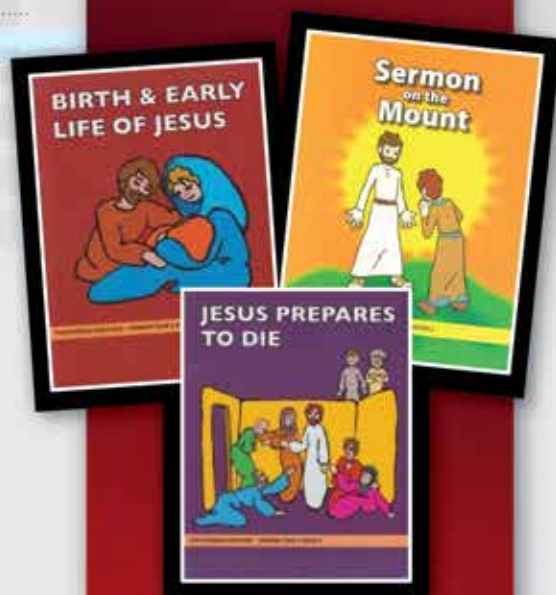
Preschool - Year 2

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Personal Observations

by Daniel H. King, Sr.

While expressing gratitude for the brotherly spirit manifested in these discussions, Dan analyzes certain arguments that were advanced and offers a simpler biblical alternative.

I was privileged to attend the public discussion between Kyle Pope and Doug Burleson that was held in Dickson, TN, on November 15, 2019. My immediate reaction to what I had seen and heard was that I was very pleased with what I had witnessed. As has been mentioned elsewhere, the Dickson discussion was a follow-up to several previous events that had been initiated by Greg Tidwell, the editor of the *Gospel Advocate*. He invited a number of us to the offices of the *Advocate* and explained that he desired a different relationship to exist between brethren on the two sides of the various issues involved and that he intended to try to make that happen. Greg felt that the alienation that has existed through the years was not healthy for either side and that we ought to do better. (This is my summation of what I remember, so please do not consider this a direct quotation from him). He was kind to us all, as were those with him, and we left that meeting with a very good feeling about what the future might bring.

In two subsequent meetings in Cullman, AL, groups from both sides met and openly discussed commonalities and differences. Those meetings were both beneficial and, generally speaking, reserved, and brotherly. There were some tense moments, but such was to be expected. What was surprising was the almost total absence of bitterness and hostility. The passing of time has allowed much of that to die out. One of those meetings had Doug Burleson from Freed-Hardeman and Kyle Pope from Truth Publications discussing issues that separate us. Both men conducted themselves in a thoroughly

gentlemanly and scholarly fashion, so it was decided for them to have this meeting in a public forum where other brethren could hear and perhaps benefit from the experience. The written discussion between them appeared in the October 2019 issues of *Truth Magazine* and the *Gospel Advocate*.

Once more, in the public discussion, these two men behaved in a fashion expected of two Christian gentlemen. Freed-Hardeman University offered its Renaissance Center in Dickson as the venue for the discussion. The setting was beautiful, and the atmosphere was outstanding. The two men were seated on blue sofa chairs in the center of the stage, with stage lights brightly illuminating the setting, and they were permitted to question one another back and forth all evening. This format and the resulting discussion, in my opinion, was the best one that I have attended. These two gentlemen expressed respect for one another, and even love for one another, something that is taught throughout the New Testament, but is often neglected during times of formal debate or public disputation (cf. John 13:34-35; 15:12, 17; Rom. 12:10; 13:8; Gal. 5:13; Eph. 4:2; 1 Thess. 3:12; 4:9; 2 Thess. 1:3; Heb. 10:24; 1 Pet. 1:22; 5:14; 1 John 3:11; 3:23; 4:7, 11-12; 2 John 5).

Overall, the Dickson discussion was a wholesome experience in every respect. Even though both men pressed their points, asking pointed and probing queries, neither ever raised his voice or showed any anger or lack of respect for the other. It was a model of Christian behavior and conduct. Every

discussion between brethren who differ on any issue ought to be like this one.

The discussion itself is now history. Each man set forth his arguments from Scripture, employing the best logic that could be offered in order to make his case. It is not our intention to revisit that aspect of the question and answer session. Nevertheless, I was quite intrigued by one argument that Doug Burleson made that I had never heard in precisely the form that he framed it and applied to these issues. He suggested that in our efforts to establish biblical authority for our beliefs and practices, we ought to give careful consideration to a full understanding of the idiosyncrasies of the cultures that surrounded ancient Israel in the Old Testament and those that affected the church in the days of the New Testament.

With much of what he had to say in this regard, we would be in total agreement. We believe that it is essential to have as educated an understanding of the background and setting of the biblical record as is possible for us to have. Failing to appreciate these concepts can lead to misunderstandings and misapplications. Indeed, issues have arisen in the history of biblical study where people have misunderstood a cultural practice, considering it to be something that taught an eternal reality and concluding that it must be duplicated in the present-day church.

The washing of feet is a perfect illustration of this. Some churches wash feet in conjunction with the Lord's Supper because Jesus washed the disciples' feet on the evening of the

Supper (John 13:4ff). We understand that the practice of foot washing was a cultural phenomenon in a setting where people wore sandals and walked on dusty roads, and thus the washing of feet, when one entered a home, was a refreshing and much-appreciated act of hospitality (cf. 1 Tim. 5:10). Jesus noted when Simon the Pharisee did not extend this common courtesy to Him (Luke 7:44). In our cultural situation, such a practice would be silly and meaningless. Hospitality is still essential and common courtesies are always to be expected and appreciated when extended, whatever the cultural means of expressing these important biblical virtues might be. Yet, this is the limit of application in regard to the present day. Practicing foot washing today in the Lord's Supper service would not only be unnecessary, but it would also be reprehensible. We see no indication, historically, where even the church of the second century duplicated this practice (even though foot washing was still being practiced as a common courtesy). Yet, it must be added that an understanding of these ideas, even though they might prove helpful and enlightening, does not require a Ph.D. in New Testament backgrounds and culture. The Scriptures themselves make these ideas sufficiently understandable so that comprehension of the text does not require anything at all besides an open Bible.

In our view, though, we fail to see the appropriateness of this observation with regard to the practices of the New Testament churches of the apostolic era, other than in its application to some particular cultural phenomenon like foot washing. We do not see how it applies in this instance, and Doug did not show how or in what particular way that was the case. His intimation was that there was something that was merely cultural that we on our side are failing to apply properly. We could have wished that he would have explained himself more clearly. However, it should be pointed out that we must resist the tendency of many in our time to depend so heavily on scholarship in the areas of linguistics, history, sociology, etc., to the point

where we are afraid to read the Bible and attempt to apply its truths to our own lives and the life of the modern church.

Similarly, in making his point about church benevolence in regard to Galatians, he argued that "much that has been written about individual vs. corporate responsibility in Galatians 6 superimposes a post-Enlightenment milieu of individualism back into a predominantly group-oriented Greco-Roman setting." He went on to say, "The patrilocal, group-oriented, first-century context of the NT writers is far removed from a context where individualism is primary in the mind of most post-Enlightenment readers . . ." Frankly, all of this seems to contradict what Paul said in 1 Timothy 5:8, where he emphasized the need for Christians to take care of their own widows and then later said, "let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened." There is a clear distinction between the church and the individual in this passage. Although Paul lived before the Enlightenment, yet he obviously believed in individualism in the sense that people ought to take care of themselves: "For each man shall bear his own burden" (Gal. 6:5); and that those who avoided work in the hope that the church and other Christians would take care of them should be allowed to go hungry (2 Thess. 3:10). Thus, it could be said that the NT teaches individualism, very emphatically, regardless of the theories of modern scholarship.

As Mark Mayberry observed in regard to arguments such as this one that are calculated to encourage us to bow to academia in such instances:

Modern scholars say we must understand the ancient world before we can understand Sacred Scripture. While I agree that it is helpful for us to have a working knowledge of the cultures that impacted the nation of Israel and the Christian church, and to understand the religious culture of Judaism in the first century, how much external knowledge is necessary before we can comprehend the Bible? Yes, it is helpful to know the meaning of biblical words (Hebrew and Greek), and to recognize the literary genre of

the Bible (historical narrative, poetry, prophecy, the gospels, the epistles, apocalyptic literature, etc.), but where do we stop relying upon scholarship and start relying upon the Sacred Text? If I have to fully comprehend the cultural, historical, and literary context of a passage before drawing any conclusions about the same, I will never be able to come to a knowledge of the truth because scholars will offer six different opinions about every event described in the pages of Holy Writ. There is no agreement among scholars on anything.

So how can I know the truth? In the Dickson discussion, Kyle showed clarity of thought and presented a much simpler approach to biblical understanding than Doug did with his professorial methodology. By employing a common man's approach to the Bible, "If I can see it, I can do it," Kyle effectively recast Paul's statement, "When you read, you can understand" (Eph. 3:4). The crowds heard Jesus gladly, often perceiving His point more quickly than did the religious scholars (Mark 12:35-37). An academic background is not required for one to fulfill the injunction of Ephesians 5:17, which says, "So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

We must be very cautious in making arguments that are based too heavily on the cultural milieu of the New Testament era and are greatly dependent on the opinions of degreed professionals rather than on the force of the text itself. As the old saying goes, "It can come back to bite you."

A case in point illustrates this observation very well: Kindalee Pfemmer DeLong (a member of the Conejo Church of Christ in Thousand Oaks, CA) in an article titled, "Woman and Culture in the NT World: Social Values Related to Paul's Teaching in 1 Corinthians" (*Pepperdine Digital Commons*, 2012), makes the case for women preachers and teachers in the modern church on the understanding that Paul's prohibition of women speaking in the assemblies was based on cultural taboos rather than on divine considerations. She draws her

Problems Pertaining to the Pattern

by David Dann

Differing approaches to establishing and applying scriptural authority lie at the root of divisions that exist among contemporary disciples regarding the collective work of the local church.

The apostle Paul instructed Timothy, “Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 1:13, NKJV). While many agree in principle that the New Testament pattern must be adhered to and respected, what does this mean in terms of what is actually practiced?

For the past several decades, churches of Christ have experienced divisions due to problems pertaining to the pattern. Some believe the New Testament authorizes each local church to use its collective funds and resources to support colleges and other humanly-devised institutions, to form sponsoring church arrangements that pool and centralize the efforts of several congregations, and to relieve the financial needs of those who are not Christians. Others object to the local church being involved in these kinds of endeavors on the basis that there is no scriptural authority for it to do so.

To explore these differences, a public discussion was held at the Freed-Hardeman University Renaissance Center in Dickson, TN on November 15, 2019, between Kyle Pope and Doug Burleson. This discussion followed a written exchange between these two men that was published in both *Truth Magazine* and the *Gospel Advocate* in October 2019. During the public discussion, both men displayed a commendable demeanor and courteous disposition toward each other even while engaged in

a very serious dialogue involving matters of intense disagreement.

The critical point of disagreement concerns the following question: How do the Scriptures authorize the local church to use its funds and carry out its work? Doug Burleson affirmed that the local church is authorized to fund human institutions, to form sponsoring church arrangements, and provide financial support to those who are not Christians on the basis that these activities fall under the umbrella of expediency. Kyle Pope, on the other hand, denied that the local church is authorized to engage in these activities on the basis that they are additions to the pattern revealed in Scripture. This discussion highlighted some essential differences that we would do well to consider.

Different Approaches to Scriptural Authority

Hermeneutics is defined as: “(1) the science of interpretation, especially of the Scriptures; (2) the branch of theology that deals with the principles of biblical exegesis” (dictionary.com/browse/hermeneutics). Like all other communication, the Scriptures must be interpreted based on that which is clearly stated, correctly exemplified, and implied. As the apostle Paul puts it, “The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil. 4:9).

In the public discussion of these issues, both men agreed in principle to employ the same hermeneutical

approach in determining what the Scriptures authorize for the local church. Both men affirmed at the outset of the discussion that the New Testament teaches what is authorized by means of commands, approved examples, and necessary inferences.

Yet, while both men affirmed the same hermeneutical approach, Doug Burleson’s approach underwent a clear hermeneutical shift as the discussion progressed. Unable to find authority for the local church to engage in providing financial relief to non-saints by means of scriptural command, example, or inference, Doug began to fall back on vague and general concepts such as “context,” “what Jesus did during His earthly ministry,” and the benevolent character of God toward the world. The problem with this approach is that, in every instance of collective church benevolence in the New Testament, what is expressly authorized is for the local church to use its collective funds to relieve needy saints (cf. Acts 6:1-7; Rom. 15:26; 1 Cor. 16:1-2).

We cannot appeal to vague principles and generic instruction when specifics have already been prescribed. When God specifically commanded Moses to make the ark of the covenant out of acacia wood, he was not free to use a different type of wood simply because, in the broad context of woodworking, other kinds are often used (cf. Exod. 25:10). When the New Testament specifically authorizes singing in worship (cf. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), we cannot argue that, in the broader context of

music, singing is only one kind of music and, therefore, other kinds may be employed in worship. Unauthorized substitutions and additions result from taking a generic approach when God's word has already specified that which is authorized. Unauthorized practices and unnecessary division are sure to follow when brethren treat as generic that which God has already made specific.

Different Approaches to Appealing to the Character of God

Does an appeal to the character of God broaden the scope of the work in which the local church is authorized to engage? In an effort to find justification for the church using its collective funds to relieve the physical needs of those who are not members of the Lord's body, Doug argued that the local church should feel free to use its funds in this manner since (1) God is benevolent toward those who are not Christians, and (2) Jesus was benevolent toward those of the world during His earthly ministry.

Nevertheless, such broad and sweeping arguments can be misleading in that an argument that proves too much actually proves nothing. While we should always imitate the examples set by the Father and the Son (cf. Eph. 5:1; 1 Pet. 2:21), we must also respect the specific instructions given by God that pertain to specific circumstances. As Kyle pointed out, on the basis that God was benevolent to the Canaanites in sending them rain and fruitful seasons, one could argue that the Israelites were also authorized to exercise benevolence toward those nations. Nevertheless, this approach ignores God's specific instruction, which directly commanded the Israelites, "You shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them" (Deut. 7:2). One may argue that, since Jesus was benevolent toward all kinds of people during His earthly ministry, He would surely approve of the church using its collective funds to provide for any widow who is a member of the church. Yet, the specific word of

the Lord through the apostle Paul limits the use of those funds to the relief of only certain destitute widows in the church whose lives conform to a very specific set of criteria (1 Tim. 5:3-11).

On the other hand, the argument that the church can do whatever seems consistent with God's character could be misused by those who would like for the church to put sinners to death since that is what God did to Ananias and Sapphira (cf. Acts 5:1-11). While those who argue that "the church is able to do whatever God or Jesus would do" seek to limit the application of their argument to only certain activities, in reality, the argument is so broad and sweeping that it cannot be so limited.

We cannot appeal to God's character for authorization while ignoring God's instruction. The only way to know what God has authorized is to apply the instruction that He has given. In the first place, the benevolent character of God and the acts of Jesus during His ministry are not the pattern for the work of the local church. The New Testament does not merely say, "Look at the benevolent character of God and the earthly works of Jesus, and then decide what you think the church should do on that basis." Instead, the apostle Paul writes, "Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern" (Phil. 3:17). Again, the same inspired apostle writes, "If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37). If the word of the Lord does not authorize our practice, then we need to change our practice so that it conforms to His will. We cannot fall back on broad, sweeping generalizations to determine what is authorized for the local church when specific instruction has already been prescribed.

Different Approaches to Collective vs. Individual Action

Does the New Testament make a distinction between the collective actions of the church as a body and the individual action of its members? Much

of the disagreement that manifested itself in the public discussion between Kyle Pope and Doug Burleson centered on the issue of what God has authorized for individual Christians as opposed to what He has authorized the church as a collective body to do. If an individual member of the church takes his own funds and donates them to a college, or uses them to provide financial relief to a neighbor who is not a Christian, is that the equivalent of the church engaging in the same activities?

During the public discussion, Doug asked how an individual Christian donating to Florida College is any different from a local church doing so. Kyle pointed out that when Ananias gave of the proceeds of the sale of his land to be used collectively by the church, the apostle Peter stated, "While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control?" (Acts 5:4). The funds were under the control of Ananias as an individual member of the church until he gave them to be used collectively by the church, at which point they were no longer his to use as he wished. When a disciple gives his money to the collection taken by the local church on Sunday, he is not then free to go and retrieve a portion of that money from the bank where it was deposited on Monday. The New Testament makes a clear distinction between the property, actions, and responsibilities of individual Christians and the collective property, actions, and responsibilities of the local church.

We cannot burden the church with responsibilities assigned to individual members. For example, the Bible says, "So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself" (Eph. 5:28). Kyle pointed out that the church can teach a man how to be a good husband to his wife, but the church cannot be a husband to that man's wife.

The distinction between the responsibilities of the individual member and the responsibilities of the church as a collective body is also clearly seen in Paul's instructions concerning the care

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The Past Is Prologue

by Steve Wolfgang

Paul said, “Whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction . . .” Similarly, we learn valuable lessons from the struggles that earlier generations faced as they sought to restore the ancient order.

It was good to attend the cordial, brotherly discussion between Doug Burleson and Kyle Pope at Dickson, TN, on November 15, 2019, and to interact in conversation before and after the discussion with brethren “on both ends of the bench.” Various examples from our shared history were described during the discussion, and it occurred to me that some historical background might help us assess where we are today, and how things got to this point.

Divisive Issues

A century ago, during the “Roaring Twenties,” the brotherhood of churches of Christ churned with controversy. Christians a generation earlier had made common cause to preserve the New Testament practice of acappella music in the worship of the church. However, other disagreements had surfaced among fellow believers. The Great War of 1914-18 had strained the agreement of many (brought on mainly by the bitter experiences of the Civil War two generations prior) that Christians should not participate in carnal warfare.

By the 1920s, the “war question” was only a part of the network of issues disturbing churches which had rejected instrumental music. Other divisive issues had arisen, including church support of human institutions such as a “Christian college” or the few orphanages in existence at the time; separate Bible study classes (and use of “human literature” or “lesson leaves”); women teaching such classes or speaking in the assembly; issues concerning the bread and cup in communion; doctrinal issues including

“sect baptism” and premillennialism; Christians holding political office, or voting; and many other personal moral/ethical matters including divorce and remarriage, “social” drinking, and many more such issues.¹

Daniel Sommer had become known for his participation over the decades in debating and editorializing about many such issues.² Enrolling in Bethany College in 1869 (only three years after Alexander Campbell’s death), he observed first-hand the growing demand for various institutions. In 1889, at the Sand Creek church in central Illinois, Sommer participated in the composition and announcement of the “Address and Declaration” (a reversal of the title of Thomas Campbell’s 1809 “Declaration and Address”). This document became known as the first public proposal for the disfellowshipping of those who were introducing instrumental music into the church’s worship, and church support of various “institutions.” Sommer also was often called as an expert witness in numerous trials over church property as congregations divided over instrumental music and parachurch agencies.³ As late as 1926, Sommer debated with Texan J.N. Cowan at Sullivan, IN, regarding several such issues that had divided the church there and elsewhere.

Yet, a lifetime of conflict caused Sommer and many who had agreed with his various positions to reflect on the outcome of their extensive involvement in spiritual controversy. He spent the last decade of his ninety years on earth attempting to bridge differences with his alienated brethren.

Unity Discussions

Sommer began his explorations toward unity with his disaffected brethren in the Christian Churches who, during his lifetime, had introduced instrumental music into the worship of the church. He formed a personal friendship with Frederick D. Kershner of the Christian Churches, just as those churches were dividing into the International Convention of the Disciples of Christ and the more conservative “Christian Churches and Churches of Christ.” The latter group created a new religious “fellowship” in 1927 by organizing themselves into the North American Christian Convention (NACC). As the Disciples of Christ increasingly moved toward the “mainstream” of denominationalism and the ecumenical movement, churches which had agreed to adopt instrumental music a generation or so before discovered that they had increasingly more, and more serious, differences that drove them further and further apart. Usage of instrumental music in worship was not enough to hold them together.

Kershner, educated under J.W. McGarvey at the College of the Bible in Lexington, KY, and then at Princeton University, became friends with Sommer, who lived near the campus in Indianapolis when Kershner became Dean of the Butler University School of Religion.⁴ Kershner also arranged for Sommer to visit and discuss matters with other influential Disciples such as Peter Ainslie, who was prominently involved in the ecumenical movement.

After several years of such discussions, it became apparent that the differences were so significant that further discussion with those in Christian Churches (especially the Disciples of Christ), was futile and unproductive. Sommer turned his attention toward his brethren in the non-instrumental churches, who he said had at least “kept the worship pure.”

The “Rough Draft” for Christian Unity

Sommer was the long-time editor (since 1886) of the *American Christian Review*, an influential paper begun by the “restoration” pioneer Benjamin Franklin. Sommer had re-named it the *Apostolic Review*, and in 1932, an article appeared in the *Review*, endorsed by Sommer but written in collaboration with others, which became known by its sub-title: The “Rough Draft for Christian Unity” (The actual title was “Can’t We Agree on Something?”).

In 1933, shortly after the publication of the “Rough Draft,” Sommer embarked upon the first of several extensive trips to visit brethren in “the Southland” where many of the non-instrumental Churches of Christ (and all of the Bible colleges associated with them) were located. Sommer had earned a reputation as an opponent of the “Bible colleges” through several debates with representatives of those institutions in the early twentieth century. His opposition was fierce enough that the epithet “Sommerism” (originally coined as a result of his opposition to instrumental music) became a code-word for opposition to the colleges. Much of his adverse reaction to the colleges was their extremist attitudes demanding financial support of the institutions. One such example was a letter to churches from J.N. Armstrong, son-in-law of James A. Harding (and later president of the college named for Harding). Armstrong wrote, “the starting of this work does not depend on your gift. . . . Your salvation may depend upon it, but the school does not. If you have means in your hands and are a servant of God, it is God’s means”⁵

As Sommer visited the colleges (including Lipscomb, Freed-Hardeman, and Abilene Christian), speaking with their presidents and other brethren, he began to hear a much more moderate appeal regarding church support of colleges and other institutions. He perceived a change in the college advocates to defend their existence as individually-supported “adjuncts to the home” rather than “church institutions” and thus was willing to consider them “in the light of Romans 14th chapter.” Some may have perceived Sommer’s reaction to these changes as an “apology” for his prior objections, but actually it was a response to the changing nature of the position argued by college advocates. Some of Sommer’s children, who operated the *Review* office while he was on the road, later opined that Daniel had been deceived into believing that the colleges did not accept church support, when in fact, they did. As his protégé, W.W. Otey put it, “They all do it, and they all deny it.”

Sommer died in 1940, within an eighteen-month “window” which also saw the deaths of J.D. Tant, Joe Warlick, F.B. Srygley, and other well-known preachers who had resisted earlier “innovations.” A new generation of church leaders bought into the boosterism of post-World War II years, and the number of institutions mushroomed, all seemingly begging churches for funds.

So What?

Past historical practice, or “tradition,” is certainly no authority for defining scriptural practices. One point in this long, historical excursion is this: *I have often wondered if the ideas expressed in the “Rough Draft” had been adopted and more consistently applied, perhaps much of the heartache of divisions of the last century might have been avoided.* What if brethren had simply left the financial support of colleges (or the skyrocketing number of orphanages which sprang up) to individual conscience and participation? This would not likely solve issues relating to instruments or other “congregational” issues, but

it certainly would have created an environment to better discuss such issues, or personal moral questions such as “carnal warfare,” divorce/remarriage, on a congregational, case-by-case basis. Another take-away is that “we” are not the first generation to wrestle with divisive issues. Such issues will not be resolved with a single discussion, but will necessitate an on-going process. It is also true that historical accounts serve as actual, real-life examples of the outcomes of continually insisting on church support of human institutions. Hopefully, we can do better!

Looking to the Future

Enough of the past. There are a few things I’d like to see and consider, going forward, and hoping that this discussion might continue in one format or venue or another.

First, though the discussion on this point, like others, was slightly disjointed, there seemed to be some contention that the body (the church) may (or must?) do whatever the head of the body (Christ) did while on earth. An illustration of the point is: Jesus feeding the multitudes authorizes churches to do the same, not limiting it to Christians. In some ways, this seems a “first cousin” to an older argument: “Whatever the individual can do, the church can do.”

Second, Jesus’s feeding the multitudes occurred miraculously, a phenomenon not available to Christians today. One question to address, going forward, is whether this same reasoning applies to other (or all?) of Jesus’s acts. He also healed individuals miraculously, including non-Israelites. Would this same rationale authorize churches to organize medical/healing enterprises (e.g., maintaining church-sponsored hospitals or medical clinics)?

Third, when I reviewed a previous meeting involving Kyle, Doug, myself, and others,⁶ I commented that I heard nothing “new,” which had not been advanced beforehand. At Dickson, Doug did inject some new terminology into the discussion, briefly referencing recent scholarship pertaining to patron-

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Fissures and Fractures

by Ron Halbrook

In offering historical reflections on the Burlison-Pope exchanges, Ron asks, “What shall we do?”

It is famously good and pleasant “for brethren to dwell together in unity” (Ps. 133:1), but what shall we do when there are fissures and fractures among us? Like divorce, division is neither good nor pleasant. In fact, it is sinful, violating the express will of Jesus Christ (John 17:17-21; 1 Cor. 1:10). When divorce or division occurs, the conduct of either one or both parties causes it. Resolution and reconciliation require removing the cause.

It is tragic that changes among churches of Christ since the 1950s have resulted in division. People who once worked and worshiped together as brethren in Christ, and who shared similar backgrounds, gradually followed different pathways regarding the complex of issues identified by such terms as non-cooperation/anti/conservative versus cooperation/institutional/liberal. The breach has widened over the years as changes and innovations have multiplied.

Substantial Issues Produced Division

I grew up in a congregation that was gradually slipping into institutionalism, and at first, we all considered it as progress. I was born in 1946 and remember well the events of the late 1950s-60s among God’s people. We read such institutional papers as the *Gospel Advocate* and *Firm Foundation* and faithfully listened to the *Herald of Truth* (a radio program financed by the sponsoring church arrangement—many churches donating money to a large church in Abilene, TX which in turn donated funds to the *Herald of Truth*).

I was baptized at a “church camp” and made my first talk there. I have bound volumes of the *Gospel Advocate* dating to 1913 and copies of the *Firm Foundation* dating to the 1940s. I still take the *Gospel Advocate* and am conversant with a wide range of other publications all across the spectrum (*Wineskins* to *Christian Chronicle* to *The Spiritual Sword* to *Contending for the Faith*, etc.).

G.C. Brewer baptized my father during a gospel meeting that was conducted by N.B. Hardeman, one of the founders of Freed-Hardman University. I knew such men as B.C. Goodpasture (attended his funeral) and Guy N. Woods (used to visit him in his *Gospel Advocate* editorial office, have autographed copies of his books). Many readers no longer recognize these names of well-known leaders and defenders of the institutional movement.

Many years ago I made a patient, tedious, longterm study of this complex of issues by reading everything I could find on both sides, by attending debates, and by listening to competent men preach from opposing viewpoints. It is necessary for one to look beyond emotional appeals, anger, zealots, intemperate outbursts, rash words, personality clashes, and other factors that may have been evidenced on either side at times. *Substantial differences that ultimately produced the division must be examined in the light of Scripture.*

My conclusion was that there is no Bible authority for the following practices commonly accepted among institutional churches:

1. Churches donating money to human institutions for evangelism, edification, or benevolence (i.e., the *Herald of Truth*, World Bible School, and similar evangelistic organizations; colleges and other schools, camps, medical clinics and hospitals, childcare agencies, convalescent homes, retirement centers, etc.);
2. Centralizing the work of many churches through the eldership of one church (i.e., the sponsoring church arrangement);
3. Donating money from the church treasury for benevolence to those who are not Christians (such work should be done on an individual basis);
4. Churches planning and providing for social and recreational activities such as church-sponsored parties and picnics, “fellowship” halls and “family life” centers (euphemisms for recreational rooms and gyms), ball teams, bowling leagues, etc. (Such wholesome activities are responsibilities of the individual and the family relationship.)

No one has to explain to me the emotional barriers which must be overcome to study these issues objectively. I have been through the fires of family and friendship ties and pressures, the trials and tears, the alienation and stigma. I decided none of those things compares to what Jesus endured in providing the way of salvation, and none of those things matters in the light of eternity. I simply want to know and do what is right in the sight of God, as revealed in His word. If I am wrong now, I still want to learn the difference and stand for the truth, as revealed in God’s word.

Therefore, I am thankful that brethren Doug Burleson and Kyle Pope have given all of us another opportunity to study the institutional issues. I commend Doug and Kyle for manifesting a good spirit and effectively representing their respective positions in their written exchanges published jointly in the October issues of the *Gospel Advocate* and *Truth Magazine* and also in their oral exchange at Dickson, TN, on November 15, 2019. Doug defended the institutional programs and practices as authorized expedients while Kyle denied that Christ authorized such things in the New Testament.

Substantial Issues Divided Israel

The history of Israel included the development of fissures and fractures. On numerous occasions, discontented individuals caused rumblings which disturbed the unity of God's people, but which were resolved (Num. 6; Josh. 22:10-34; Judg. 19-21). A significant fracture occurred when Jeroboam took liberties with the Law of Moses under the claim that certain changes would make the organization and worship more efficient and effective (1 Kings 12:25-33). He regarded these changes as authorized expedients and not steps of apostasy. In reality, none of the practices that he introduced was authorized by God's word. The result was the formation of Israel as a separate state from Judah. As time passed, more and more "expedients" were added, and the breach widened.

What was the solution to this division? The answer was to return with heartfelt sincerity to God's original pattern of truth and remove the causes of division. Careful analysis of each change that Jeroboam introduced would show the Law of Moses authorized none of them—all were departures from it. God's people in every age should heed Jeremiah's plea: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jer. 6:16).

Substantial Issues Produced Division During and after the First Century

The New Testament is replete with warnings about the dangers of departing from the original teaching of Christ revealed through His apostles (Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim. 4:1-5; Jude 3). Fissures appeared as a result of differing judgments and scruples of conscience, which did not actually violate the teaching of Christ. Division was averted so long as brethren did not press these matters as binding on the whole church (Rom. 14). The potential for open division was met with pointed controversy when men attempted to bind circumcision as essential to salvation, or denied the resurrection, or claimed that sin did not impede fellowship with God (Acts 15:1-35; 1 Cor. 15; 1 John). Regardless of the rationale, such concepts and practices were not authorized by Christ.

Ultimately, there were cases where division could not be avoided in the first century. Paul wrote, "No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval" (1 Cor. 11:19, NIV). John said, "They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us" (1 John 2:19, NIV). Oil and water do not mix.

Incremental steps viewed as authorized expedients after the first century resulted in changes in doctrine, organization, and worship. One elder in an eldership was elevated to the status of "presiding bishop." This office was elevated to the status of "the bishop" exclusive of the other men serving with him as elders. The bishop in big-city churches exercised authority over several churches in a region and later became "archbishop." This trend toward centralization culminated in Boniface III proclaiming himself as the bishop of the universal church in AD 606.

Having a pope was too much "progress" for some brethren, but the trajectory moved on with more changes

to come. Professed Christians embracing and rejecting these changes separated.

Was there no solution? The only real solution was to examine each change in the light of Scripture and to discard doctrines and practices not authorized in order to return to the original faith and practice as revealed in the New Testament. God preserved the Bible as the standard of truth to which all men must be called again and again (2 Pet. 1:12-15; 3:1-2).

Substantial Differences Produced the Christian Church Division

The corruptions of Catholicism finally produced a reaction called the Protestant Reformation, during which men abandoned the control of Catholic institutions and doctrines, only to formulate their own doctrines and institutions. Subsequent disappointment with denominationalism provoked men to search for the original faith and practice of the New Testament era. This restoration movement spread rapidly during the mid-1700s through the 1800s.

As happened after the first century, so it happened in the second and third generations of saints in the restoration movement, especially during 1875-1925. Incremental changes in the name of expediency led to changes in the organization, worship, and work of churches. Human institutions were formed to centralize the work of the churches in evangelism, edification, and benevolence. Churches engaged in all sorts of social welfare programs and recreational activities. Instrumental music, choirs, solos, and entertainment invaded the worship. As oil and water do not mix, division was inevitable. Most of the digressive churches took the name Christian Church.

Was there no solution at hand? Yes, the answer was to examine each of these practices in the light of Scripture, discard what Christ did not authorize, and return to the New Testament pattern of faith and practice. Many of the churches became so "progressive," they embraced

Continued on page 32

Personal Observations

(continued from p.22)

by Daniel H. King, Sr.



David Shannon, president of Freed-Hardeman University, welcomes the audience to the discussion.

extensive argument to a conclusion with the following summation:

When approaching Scripture we must remember that the culture of the first

century was far different from that of modern America—not just in mores related to behavior, but in deeply rooted conceptions of space, honor and the nature of human beings. Writers of Scripture sometimes rejected these values by reason of theology; most often, however, they lived their faith within the context of their world. When Paul limited women’s behavior, we must ask whether he did so to accommodate culture. Living in a culture in which a woman’s public behavior no longer brings shame to her family, we must also ask whether accommodations to a very different culture remain central as we strive to live out our faith in God today (4, 5; *Leaven*, Vol. 4, Issue 2; *Women and Ministry*, Article 8).

The problem with Ms. DeLong’s whole case that Paul’s prohibition of women’s public participation in the assembly is based on culture rather than divine principle is the fact that the apostle made his case against it on divine principle rather than culture: By inspiration, Paul said, “...for Adam was

first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled fell into transgression; but she shall be saved through her child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety” (1 Tim. 2:13-14). I might also add that a very strong case could be made for female leadership in the Greco-Roman period, but we shall save that for another time.

Suffice it to say that scholarship can be quoted on every conceivable side of every imaginable argument. In the end, the Lord’s people will have to depend on their good judgment of the biblical text itself. Also, it is the text of Scripture that must determine the issue: “No creed but Christ, no book but the Bible.”



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Problems Pertaining to the Pattern

(continued from p.24)

by David Dann

of widows. Paul writes, “If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows” (1 Tim. 5:16).

There are certain obligations placed upon an individual Christian (which he must use his own funds to fulfill) that are different from what has been assigned to the local church as a collective responsibility. As Kyle correctly stated toward the end of the discussion, the distinctions made

in Scripture concerning collective and individual action will have to be correctly understood and applied in order for him and Doug to be united. The bottom line is that no man has the right to burden the local church by bearing a responsibility that Scripture has instead assigned to the individual member.

Conclusion

Even after the discussion that took place in Dickson, Tennessee, problems pertaining to the pattern revealed in Scripture persist. Further discussion

accompanied by open Bibles and open hearts is what is needed to unite brethren upon the truth of God. Only by holding fast the pattern of sound words can we have the assurance that we are pleasing to God.



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The Past Is Prologue

(continued from p.26)

by Steve Wolfgang

client relationships and the roles of benefactors/mediators. As intriguing as this might be, even commentators like N.T. Wright have cautioned that “We should not be overly hasty, however, either to draw immediate exegetical or historical conclusions from this . . .” and warning that some have drawn conclusions which are “overdrawn.”⁷ I’d like to hear more about how Doug thinks citing these recent studies alters the clear meaning of New Testament texts which have been the subject of this discussion for decades. As interesting as grasping the cultural context of biblical circumstances might be, invoking such contexts does not alter the essence of the biblical text. Ancient cultural backgrounds may provide “color” to the biblical picture, but that context is not the primary picture.

Finally, what about church support of human institutions (including colleges)? Past appeals for church support of institutions were made under the emotional plea of “helping poor, starving orphans.” N.B. Hardeman’s appeal in 1947 that the orphanage and college “stand or fall together” was largely rejected by a brotherhood not interested in supporting educational institutions (often perceived as inevitably drifting into apostasy and taking like-minded churches with them). The same argument, proposed a generation later by Herald of Truth preacher Batsell Barrett Baxter, was more favorably received. Recent developments, including distributions to churches from the Comer Trust, seem to have re-ignited the interest of various colleges in openly soliciting contributions from churches. This is a “sticking point,” which deserves more specific attention in future discussions.

Let brotherly discussion continue! 

Endnotes

- ¹ More information regarding these divisive issues among churches of Christ, and Sommer’s later attempts to mitigate them, can be found in Steve Wolfgang, “Controversy Concerning Unity Movements Among Churches of Christ,” in *Their Works Do Follow Them: Florida College Annual Lectures*, edited by Melvin Curry (Temple Terrace, FL: Florida College Bookstore, 1982), pp. 212-239.
- ² For a brief introduction to Sommer’s life and influence, see J.S. Wolfgang, “Daniel Sommer (1850-1940),” in *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), pp. 692-694. This indispensable reference work also contains more detailed information on other individuals discussed in this article, including Benjamin Franklin, Frederick D. Kershner, Peter Ainslie, James A. Harding, J.N. Armstrong, Roy E. Cogdill, and others.
- ³ A much more detailed account of these events is in James Stephen Wolfgang, “A Life of Humble Fear: The Biography of Daniel Sommer” (Butler University MA thesis, 1975)—including Sommer’s relationship with Kershner, his “Southern tours” in the 1930s, and how this relates to various divisive issues among churches of Christ. Appendixes include reprints of the “Address and Declaration” and “The Rough Draft for Christian Unity,” as well as Frederick D. Kershner’s eloquent obituary of Daniel Sommer.
- ⁴ Kershner was a highly respected figure among the Disciples who tried to prevent the division between the increasingly alienated branches of the Christian Churches, serving as president of Texas Christian

University and holding editorial positions at both the NACC-oriented paper, the *Christian Standard*, and the more theologically-liberal Disciples’ paper, the *Christian-Evangelist*. Kershner publicly commended Sommer’s writings for their consistency and biblical orientation and invited him to speak several times at the Butler lectureship (known as the Mid-Summer Institutes).

- ⁵ Lloyd Cline Sears, *For Freedom: The Biography of John Nelson Armstrong* (Austin, TX: R.B. Sweet Publishing Company, 1969), p. 74. Sears was Armstrong’s son-in-law and Dean of Harding College. When questioned years later about the extremism of his statement, Armstrong replied, “I like it yet.”
- ⁶ That discussion is available in book form as *Pursuing the Pattern*; reviews of that meeting appeared as “Exploring Current Issues,” in *Truth Magazine*, January 2018; see also “Ten Things to Know About Orphan-Hating Antis” by Steve Wolfgang in the same issue.
- ⁷ N.T. Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters: Some Contemporary Debates* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), p. 251. Wright is here referencing recent works on patron/client relationships in honor/shame cultures by scholars such as DeSilva, Malina, and Neyrey.



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Fissures and Fractures

(continued from p.26)

by Ron Halbrook

a plethora of denominational practices. They accepted denominational baptism, used religious titles, observed “holy days,” exchanged pulpits with denominational preachers, and cooperated with denominational groups in social welfare and recreational activities. Some embraced modernism, denying the miracles of the Bible, its verbal inspiration, and the pattern nature of truth. J.H. Garrison edited a collection of more conservative sermons under the title, *The Old Faith Restated* (published in 1891), but to no avail. In 1927, this more conservative element formed the North American Christian Convention (which was replaced by the Spire Conference in 2019), but the liberal progressives paid no attention to these “reactionaries.”

The old guard who still considered the Bible to be the inspired standard of truth at times reached out to the “anti’s” or “non-progressives” in the hope of forging a united front against

the “progressives.” Yet, there could be no healing of the division without giving up the initial innovations which caused the division. In 1939 at a “unity meeting” in Indianapolis, IN, H. Leo Boles reminded the participants that division was caused by centralizing the work of churches through missionary societies and by adding musical instruments to the worship. He insisted that “each one lay aside all opinions, ways, inventions, devices, practices, organizations, creeds, confessions, names, manner of work, except those plainly presented and clearly required in the New Testament.” These unity meetings ultimately failed, and the progressives continued to “wax worse and worse” as the old guard faded away (2 Tim. 3:13).

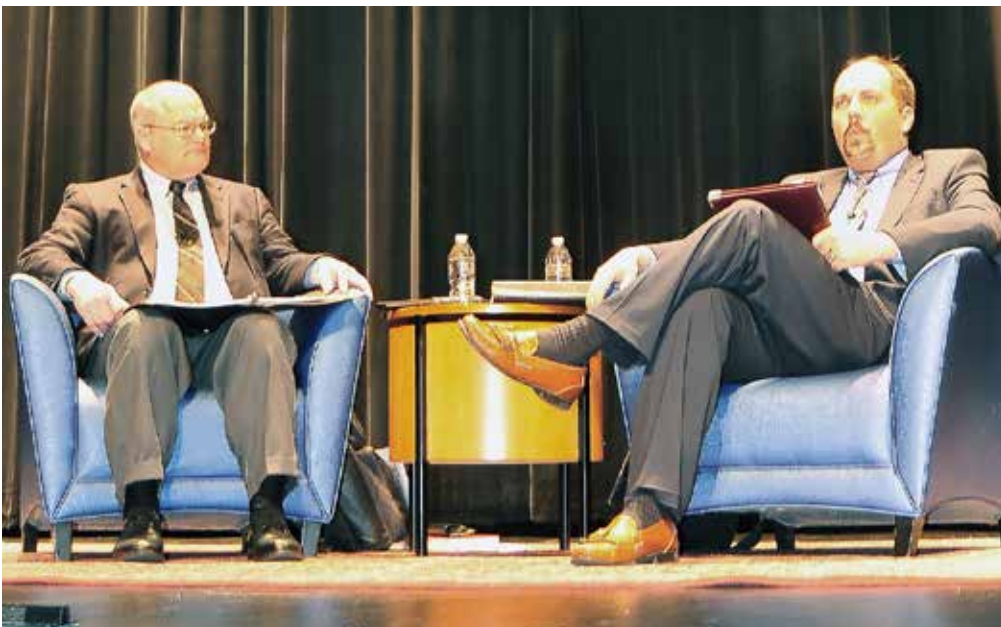
What Is the Solution Now?

A couple of generations after the division of the 1950s-60s, men who had been educated in institutional churches, camps, and colleges began to advocate

all sorts of denominational practices. The old guard is rightly alarmed about where the progressives are headed. Is there no way to heal the division over institutionalism and make common cause in opposing this headlong stampede into denominationalism, modernism, and post-modernism? Yes, we need to earnestly, honestly, sincerely re-examine every practice which separates us, abandon those that are without Bible authority, and unite in returning to the New Testament pattern of faith and practice.

Thank you, Doug and Kyle, for urging brethren to search the Scriptures, like the noble Bereans in Acts 17:11, in order to test all things. I fervently pray discussions occurring among divided brethren in recent years will result in a renewed determination to restore the original teaching of Christ as the final and absolute authority in all things that we preach and practice. This is the road to unity which we preach to

our denominational friends and that we must apply among ourselves. Let us never lose confidence that God’s word is the solution to all fissures and fractures among His people. 📖



Kyle Pope and Doug Burtleson during the discussion in Dickson.



Ron Halbrook

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The Mission of the Church

(continued from p.5)

by Mark Mayberry

Paul is an example of evangelistic zeal (Acts 19:8-10), as are the saints at Philippi and Thessalonica (Phil. 4:15-16; 1 Thess. 1:8-10).

Edification

The English word “edification” is defined as “(1) improvement, instruction, or enlightenment, especially when morally or spiritually uplifting; (2) the act of edifying or state of being edified” (CED). The Greek word *oikodomē*, translated “edification,” refers to “the process of building” or “the result of a construction process” (BDAG).

In both an individual and collective sense, Christians endeavor to build up the body of Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 14:19; 15:2; 2 Cor. 13:10; Eph. 2:20-22).

Whenever the church fulfills its mandate, good is accomplished and growth occurs (Col. 1:3-6).

Benevolence

Benevolence is defined as “(1) an inclination to perform kind, charitable acts; (2) a kindly act, or a gift given out of generosity” (AHD). The Greek word *charis*, normally used of “grace” or “kindness,” is used to describe the financial “gift” in for the needy saints in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1-3, esp. v. 3). The Greek word *eulogia*, normally used of “praise” or “blessing,” refers to this same “bountiful gift” (2 Cor. 9:1-5, esp. v. 5).

In both an individual and collective sense, disciples of Christ must be benevolent. As individuals, we must do good unto all men, but especially the household of faith, visiting the orphans and widows in their distress (Gal. 6:10; Jas. 1:27).

Collectively, the church helps with the physical needs of local saints (Acts 4:32-37), and in times of distress, comes to the aid of needy saints in other places (1 Cor. 16:1-4).

The Subtle Danger of Mission Creep

Definitions

“Mission creep” describes “the tendency for a task, especially a military operation, to become unintentionally wider in scope than its initial objectives” (CED). It represents “a gradual shift in objectives during the course of a military campaign, often resulting in an unplanned long-term commitment” (Lexio). Merriam-Webster defines it as “the gradual broadening of the original objectives of a mission or organization.”

Dangers

While the problem of mission creep may not initially seem to reflect a radical departure from God’s word, subtle shifts in our mission will have the gradual but cumulative effect of moving us far away from our real purpose.

An Old Testament Example

Consider the example of King Saul’s disobedience in 1 Samuel 15. God provided sufficient rationale (1 Sam. 15:2; cf. Exod. 17:8-16; Deut. 25:17-19). He provided a clear set of instructions (1 Sam. 15:3; cf. Num. 24:20). He provided sufficient resources to accomplish the divinely-ordained task (1 Sam. 15:4; cf. Prov. 21:31). Although Saul tried to justify his actions, he was rejected as king because of his disobedience. Today, we would say that King Saul and the people were guilty of mission creep. God says it affirms a spirit of disobedience, rebellion, and insubordination (1 Sam. 15:7-23).

Application to the Home

Does the danger of mission creep have an application to the home? Recently, I observed the headline: “Vigilante couple ‘lured thieves to steal bikes then battered them with

baseball bats” (Jimmy McCloskey). Acknowledgement of the castle doctrine is one thing; vigilante (in)justice is quite another. However, the greater danger is neglecting the primary mission of the home, and expecting the church or the government to take up the slack.

Application to Civil Government

Does the danger of mission creep have an application to civil government? Of course. Witness the radical expansion of the civil government into every aspect of modern life. The concepts of “individual liberty” and “limited government” are wholly forgotten virtues among political progressives.

Application to the Church

Does the danger of mission creep have an application to the church in the areas of evangelism, edification and benevolence? Again, the answer is, “Yes.”

Many have expanded the scope of church responsibility in the areas of evangelism, edification, and benevolence. Instead of proclaiming the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, modern pulpits often resound with messages conforming to the mores of contemporary culture, coupled with platitudes, psychobabble, and sentimentality (Col. 2:8).

Many have expanded the scope of the church in the areas of edification. Instead of focusing upon spiritual growth, many churches extended their mission to include responsibilities assigned to the home, namely, entertainment, recreation, and social activities (cf. 1 Cor. 11:22).

Many have expanded the scope of the church in the area of benevolence. Fellow-Christians are objects of benevolence from congregations, as is evident by Paul’s collection for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem ►

(Rom. 15:26, 31; 1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:1, 12). Please note that, from the verses above, along with earlier apostolic examples (Acts 4:32-37; 6:1-6; 11:27-30), the consistent focus of church benevolence is “needy saints.” Even 2 Corinthians 9:13, which refers to “the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,” does not depart from this pattern. When the Greek word *pas* (meaning “all” or “every”) is understood contextually, we see that Paul praises the Corinthian’s willingness to assist needy saints in Jerusalem (them), along with destitute brethren in other places (all).

Conclusion

Let us acknowledge the authority of Jesus Christ, faithfully proclaiming His word and humbly submitting to His will (Col. 3:17; 1 Pet. 4:11). Respecting the roles that God/Christ has given to the home, civil government, and the church, may we be faithful to the mission and mandate of each, and not allow ourselves to become involved in “mission creep.”

In closing, I reaffirm my appreciation to Doug and Kyle for their willingness to discuss issues that have divided brethren in the modern era. I value my friendship with both men. I am grateful to Greg and Randy for opening the pages of the *Gospel Advocate* to hear both sides of this discussion. This is a welcome and wholesome change from earlier days when “the yellow tag of quarantine” was assigned to all who could not accept or conform to the institutional mindset of the age. I am grateful for the spirit of brotherly love, and the desire for unity that was manifested in the Dickson discussion. My hope and prayer is that such open and honest dialogue will continue. 🙏

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Mark Mayberry and bro. Don McCaslin visiting at the Dickson discussion.



Doug Burluson ponders a point during the Dickson discussion.

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Ashburton Drive church of Christ
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John Humphries (334) 306-4172

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Contacts: Brian Moore: (334) 279-1077
Charles Martin: (334) 283-2983

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Eastside church of Christ
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Worship 10:30 P.M., Wednesday Summer 7 P.M.
Wednesday Winter 6 P.M.
Evangelist: Aaron Andrews
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Sunday Worship 10:30 A.M.
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1232 State Highway 248
Sunday Bible Study:10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Preacher: James Strickland, (479) 299-4763
strick93124@gmail.com

ARIZONA

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church of Christ
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Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:40 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Chance Ruffino

TUCSON

church of Christ
145 N. Country Club Road
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Hugh Delong
(520) 326-3634 or 722-3179

CALIFORNIA

BELLFLOWER

Rose Ave. church of Christ
17903 Ibbetson Ave.
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(562) 866-5615, <http://www.roseavenue.org>

FOLSOM

church of Christ
900 E. Natomas St. • P.O. Box 492
Sunday Bible Study 9:30 A.M.,
Sunday Worship 10:30 A.M.,
Sunday Bible Study 5 P.M.,
Wednesday Bible Study 7 P.M.
Evangelist: David Posey
(530) 676-9514 or (916) 608-4866
www.folsomchurch.com

LONG BEACH

church of Christ
3433 Studebaker Road
Bible Study 9:50 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
JP Flores (562) 420-2363
Mark Reeves (562) 377-1674
www.JustChristians.org

OCEANSIDE-VISTA

church of Christ
2020 Sunset Dr.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(760) 940-8003

COLORADO

FORT COLLINS

Poudre Valley church of Christ
126 West Harvard St., Suite 6
Bible Study 9:30 A.M.
Worship 10:30 A.M. and 1:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Richie Thetford
www.poudrevalleychurchofchrist.org

MONTROSE

San Juan church of Christ
1414 Hawk Parkway, Unit C
Worship 11 A.M., Bible Study 2 P.M.
Evening 1:30 P.M., (970) 249-8116
sanjuanchurchofchrist.org

DELAWARE

MILTON

Lighthouse church of Christ
14574 Coastal Hwy. Rt. 1
Worship 9:30 A.M., Sunday School 10:45 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M., (302) 644-7379

FLORIDA

DESTIN

South Walton church of Christ
64 Casting Lake Road
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(850) 622-3817
www.southwaltonchurchofchrist.com

FORT LAUDERDALE

Northside church of Christ
912 NW 19th St.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(954) 763-1404

FORT MYERS

Southside church of Christ
13641 Learning Court
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: David P. Schmidt
(239) 433-2838 or 482-2158

FROSTPROOF

Frostproof church of Christ
40 W. "A" St., Frostproof, FL 33483
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M., (863) 635-2607 or 635-4278

GENEVA

church of Christ
Ave. C and 2nd St.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
(407) 349-9998

KEY LARGO

Key Largo church of Christ
100695 N. Overseas Hwy.
33037 m.m. 100.7 on US 1
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: William LeDent (305) 451-1194

MARY ESTHER

church of Christ
6 Lane Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Joey Rankin (850) 244-9222

MIAMI

church of Christ
Eglise du Christ de Miami
8343 NE 3rd Court
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Minister: Junot Joseph (305) 244-8295

MIAMI

Flagler Grove church of Christ
(Nearest to Airport), 500 N.W. 53rd Ave.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: John Buttrick (305) 634-5924

MIAMI

church of Christ
12780 Quail Roost Dr.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Clark Pace
(305) 233-9590 or (954) 430-1437

OCALA

Anthony church of Christ
9778 N.E. Jacksonville Rd., Anthony, FL 32617
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Wednesday 6:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Greg Cruz (352) 629-5505
www.anthonycoc.com

ORLANDO

Azalea Park church of Christ
6800 Lake Underhill Rd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(407) 277-7931

ORLANDO

church of Christ at S. Bumby
3940 S. Bumby Ave.
Sunday Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship w/ communion 10:55 A.M. (No Evening Service), Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Ken Chapman and Greg Kline
Office: (407) 851-8031

ORLANDO

Pine Hills Church of Christ
890 Hastings Street
Sun. Bible Study 10 A.M., Sun. Worship: 11 A.M.
Sun. Evening Worship: 6 P.M.
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30 P.M.
(407) 293-2851 or (407) 290-8650

PALMETTO

Palmetto church of Christ
1575 14th Avenue W.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
www.palmettochurchofchrist.com
(941) 722-1307

PANAMA CITY BEACH

Beach church of Christ
8910 Front Beach Rd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(850) 234-2521

SEFFNER

church of Christ
621 E. Wheeler Rd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Bobby Witherington (813) 684-1297
www.seffnercoc.org

GEORGIA

CENTERVILLE

Centerville church of Christ
250 Collins Ave. (Near Robins AFB)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: J. Wiley Adams (478) 922-1158

COLUMBUS

River City Church of Christ
3900 River Road, Columbus GA 31904
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists Jeff McCrary & Bo Couchman
(205) 451-9028, rivercitychurchofchrist.com
backtothebible@rivercitychurchofchrist.com

CONYERS

Rockdale church of Christ
East Metro Atlanta, 705 Smyrna Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Building (770) 929-3973

PINE MTN. VALLEY

church of Christ
Route 116 (near Callaway Gardens)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Tommy W. Thomas
(706) 628-5117 or 628-5229
www.pmvchurch.com

SAVANNAH

Coastal church of Christ
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
(912) 344-1687
coastalchurchofchrist@outlook.com

VALDOSTA

church Of Christ
4313 North Valdosta Rd.
(Located 1 mile E. of Exit 22 off I-75)
Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Communion 11 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(229) 244-8630, www.northvaldostacoc.com

IDAHO

BLACKFOOT

church of Christ
370 N. Shilling • P.O. Box 158-83221
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(208) 785-6168 or 681-1552

IOWA

DES MOINES

church of Christ
1310 N.E. 54th Ave.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:40 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M., (515) 262-6799

GRINNELL

church of Christ
1402 Third Ave.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
(641) 521-6485, (641) 236-3883
www.grinnellcoc.com

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO

church of Christ
1514 West 74th Street
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: James E. Scott
Bldg. (773) 224-9279, (708) 339-6126

DOWNERS GROVE

church of Christ
1236 63rd St., (1 and 1/2 mile E. of I355)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:55 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(630) 968-0760 • www.dgccc.org

GLEN ELLYN

Glen Ellyn Church of Christ
796 Prairie Ave.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
Sunday Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Sunday Evening 5 P.M.
Evangelist: Keith E. Brown
(630) 858-2290, (630) 377-3990

MATTOON

Southside church of Christ
1100 S. 17th Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(217) 234-3702

SOUTH HOLLAND

Southeast church of Christ
16224 S Vincennes Ave.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 4 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Donald Hawkins, (708) 339-1008
www.southeastchurchofchrist.com

INDIANA

CLARKSVILLE

Clarksville church of Christ
407 W. Lewis & Clark Parkway, 47129
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Brian Anderson (812) 944-2305
or (812) 948-9917
www.clarksvillechurchofchrist.org

GREENWOOD

Greenwood church of Christ
371 W. Main Street
Sun. Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 4:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists: Neil Tremblett
(317) 888-8288
www.churchofchristatgreenwood.org

HOBART

church of Christ
300 N. Liberty Street
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jerry Cleek (219) 942-2663

INDIANAPOLIS

Castleton church of Christ
7701 East 86th Street, 46256
Sun. Worship 11 A.M., Sun. Bible Study 10 A.M.
Wed. Worship 11:15 A.M., Wed. Bible Study 7 P.M.
(317) 710-1204

JAMESTOWN

church of Christ
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:25 A.M.
Evening 4 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: David McPherson
(765) 676-6404 or (270) 994-4397
www.jamestowncoc.com

OOITIC

church of Christ
400 Lafayette Ave. • P.O. Box 34
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M. Wednesday 7 P.M.
(812) 279-4332

PEKIN

church of Christ
(First St. & Karnes Ct.)
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jeremy Goen
(812) 967-3437 or 967-3520
www.pekinchurchofchrist.com

PLAINFIELD

church of Christ West
2028 Stafford Rd., Ste. C., (Marsh Shopping Cntr.)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Johnie Edwards
(317) 964-9404 or (317) 839-1769
www.churchofchristwest.org

SAINT LEON, IN

Church of Christ
7140 Hyland Rd., Guildford, IN 47022
174 exit 164 1 mile south on SR 1
Bible study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
812-637-1252 or 513-367-7871

SALEM

Westside church of Christ
2000 West State Rd. 56
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(812) 883-2033, www.westsidechurchofchrist.net

TRAFALGAR

Spearsville Rd. church of Christ, 6244 S. 500W.
(1.2 mi. S. of Hwy. 135)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Charles Wright
(317) 878-5969 or (317) 300-8790
www.trafalgarchurch.com

KANSAS

TOPEKA

17th Street church of Christ
5600 SW 17th St.
Bible Study 9:15 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
(785) 235-8687 or 273-7977
www.17thstreetchurchofchrist.org

KENTUCKY

AUSTIN

Peter's Creek church of Christ
856 Thomerson Park Rd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M.
Evangelist: David Cox (270) 579-8074 or
(270) 646-0498, www.peterscreekcoc.com

BEAVER DAM

church of Christ
1235 Williams St.
Worship 10 A.M., Bible Study After Worship
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jerid Gunter
(270) 274-4451

BRANDENBURG

Brandenburg church of Christ
612 Broadway
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 6:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Charles J. White (270) 422-3878

CAMPBELLSVILLE

Sunny Hill Dr. church of Christ
A.M. Worship 9:30 A.M., A.M. Bible Study 10:30 A.M.
A.M. Worship 11:30 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Lee (270) 789-1651
stevelee4510@windstream.net
www.sunnyhillcoc.com

CANEYVILLE

Caneyville church of Christ
103 N. Main St. • P.O. Box 233
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jarrod Jacobs (270) 589-4167 or
(270) 274-3065

DANVILLE

church of Christ
385 E. Lexington Ave.
Worship 10 A.M., Bible Study 11:15 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: B.J. Sipe (859) 236-4204

FRANKLIN

31-W North church of Christ
1733 Bowling Green Road
Bible Study 9 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Monts, (270) 776-9393
www.31wchurchofchrist.com

HODGENVILLE

Hodgenville church of Christ
613 S Lincoln Blvd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Don Brady (270) 358-6053
Dbrady1295@aol.com

LEITCHFIELD

Mill St. church of Christ
733 Mill Street, Highway 62 E.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:55 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Michael Hardin
(270) 259-4968 or (270) 300-3239
www.millstreetchurchofchrist.org

LOUISVILLE

Valley Station church of Christ
1803 Dixie Garden Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Dudley Ross Spears (502) 937-2822

LOUISIANA

GONZALES

Southside church of Christ
405 Orice Roth Road, 70737, (Baton Rouge area)
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: R.J. Evans (225) 622-4587
rjevans@eatel.net

MANY

Lakeside church of Christ
12095 Texas Hwy. (Hwy. 6 W.)
12 miles west of Many
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(318) 256-9396

STONEWALL

N. DeSoto church of Christ
2071 Highway 171 (South of Shreveport)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(318) 925-2733

MARYLAND

SEVERN

Southwest church of Christ
805 Meadow Rd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Brandon Trout
(410) 969-1420 or (410) 551-6549
www.swcofchrist.com

MAINE

PORTLAND

church of Christ • 856 Brighton Ave.
Leave Maine Turnpike at Exit 48
(Breakwater School)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Second service immediately following morning
worship. Mid-week Bible Study. Please call for
times & places. (207) 839-3075 or 839-8409

MICHIGAN

CEDAR SPRINGS

W. Michigan church of Christ
Sr. Citizen Center, 44 Park Street
(Grand Rapids Area)
Worship 11 A.M., Bible Study 12:30 P.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Joseph Gladwell, (616) 975-2778
westmichcof10@yahoo.com

MINNESOTA

DULUTH

church of Christ
4401 Glenwood St.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Bible Study 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Taylor Ladd (218) 728-3233

ST. CHARLES

church of Christ
939 Whitewater Avenue
Bible Study 11 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Bible Study 2:15 P.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M., call for location
FREE Bible correspondence studies
Evangelist: Robert Lehnertz (507) 534-2905

MISSISSIPPI

BOONEVILLE

Oakleigh Dr. church of Christ
101 Oakleigh Dr.
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 4 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Building: (662) 728-1942

CLINTON

McRaven Rd. church of Christ
301 McRaven Rd. (I20, exit 36)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Leonard White
(601) 925-9757 or 924-2645

MERIDIAN

Grandview church of Christ
2820 Grandview Ave.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Wednesday 6:30 P.M.
Ron Cooper: (601) 934-3675
roncooper@bellsouth.net
Ricky Ethridge: (601) 737-5778
[rickymarsha@bellsouth.net](mailto:ricky-marsha@bellsouth.net)

MERIDIAN

7th Street church of Christ
2914 7th Street
Sunday Mornings:
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.

SOUTHAVEN

church of Christ
2110 E State Line Rd. (Exit I-55), (Memphis area)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: James A. Brown
(662) 342-1132 – church Building

MISSOURI

BLUE SPRINGS

Southside church of Christ
4000 SW Christiansen
Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship 11 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Brett Hogland (816) 228-9262

BRANSON

Eagle Rock Road church of Christ
432 Eagle Rock Road
Sun. Worship 9:30 A.M., Bible Study 10:30 A.M.
Sun. Evening Worship 2 P.M., Wednesday 6 P.M.
Minister: Philip North (417) 239-1036
Email: primrosenor@suddenink.net
www.eaglerockroadchurchofchrist.org

CAPE GIRARDEAU

North Cape church of Christ
121 S. Broadview St. Suite 2,
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703
Sunday Bible Study 9:15 A.M. & 10 A.M.,
Worship 11 A.M., No Evening Service
Wednesday 6 P.M./CST, 7 P.M./DST
Evangelist: Jerry Lee Westbrook (573) 334-9673

DONIPHAN

Southside church of Christ
Hwy. 142 E. ½ mile (P.O. Box 220)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(573) 996-3251 or 996-3513

FAIR GROVE

church of Christ
217 N. Orchard Blvd.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship 11 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Walter Myers (417) 830-8972 or
(417) 736-2663

KENNETT

church of Christ
703 Harrison St.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(573) 888-6778 or (870) 650-1648
Preacher: Nolan Glover
www.westsidechurchofchrist.us

LILBOURN

church of Christ
211 Benton Street
First Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.,
Second Worship 10:45 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Ben Lawrence, (501) 470-5390

RAYTOWN

Sterling Ave. church of Christ
5825 Sterling Ave. (Near Sports Complex)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Justin Berss
(816) 356-3096 or (270) 320-6157
www.sterlingavechurchofchrist.org

ST. JAMES

church of Christ
685 Sidney St.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:15 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Lynn Huggins (573) 265-8628

ST. JOSEPH

County Line church of Christ
2727 County Line Rd.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
(816) 279-4737
www.countylinechurchofchrist.com

NEBRASKA

BEATRICE

church of Christ • 7th and Bell
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., 233-4102 or 228-3827
www.churchofchrist7bell.com

NEW JERSEY

VAUXHALL

church of Christ
Milbourn Mall Suite 6., 2933 Vauxhall Rd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Contact: Harry Persaud
phone: (908) 964-6356 • cell: (908) 964-8570

NEVADA

RENO

Central church of Christ
2450 Wronel Way, Suite A
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(775) 786-2888

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte church of Christ
5327 S. Tryon Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Sun. Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(704) 525-5655
www.charlottechurchofchrist.org

OHIO

BEAVERCREEK

Knollwood church of Christ
1031 Welford Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
and 3 P.M., Wednesday Bible Study 1 P.M.
For Adults and 7 P.M.all ages.
Evangelist: Heath Rogers
(937) 426-1422
www.knollwoodchurch.org

CINCINNATI

Blue Ash church of Christ
4667 Cooper Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Russell Dunaway, Jr. (513) 891-3174
www.blueashchurchofchrist.com

CLEVELAND

Lorain Ave. church of Christ
13501 Lorain Ave.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(330) 723-0111 or (330) 590-0227
or (216) 322-9392
www.lorainave-churchofchrist.com

COLUMBUS

Laurel Canyon church of Christ
409 McNaughton Road
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(614) 868-1375, www.lccoc.net

DAYTON

West Carrollton
28 W. Main Street, 45449
Early Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 9:30 A.M.
Worship 10:25 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists: Michael Grushon (937) 866-5162
or Alan Beck (937) 469-3311
www.wc-coc.org

FRANKLIN

Franklin church of Christ
6417 Franklin-Lebanon Rd. 45005
Sun. Bible Study 10 A.M.
Sun Worship 10:45 A.M.
Tues. Bible Study 6:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Josh Lee (937) 789-8055
or (937) 746-1249, www.franklin-church.org

FREMONT

church of Christ
3361 W. State Street, 1 mi. W. of Fremont
on U.S. Rt. 20
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(419) 849-3340 or 849-2980
www.fremontchurchofchrist.com

HAMILTON

Westview church of Christ
1040 Azel Ave.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:45 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Eugene Ford (513) 856-9288

HILLIARD

church of Christ
4840 Cemetery Rd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(614) 876-4089

MANSFIELD

Southside church of Christ
687 Mansfield-Lucas Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Wednesday 4:30 P.M.
James Bond: (419) 564-3878
Mr. Kim Walton: (419) 651-3488
church: (419) 522-8982
<https://northsidecof.us/>

NEW LEBANON

New Lebanon church of Christ
1973 W Main Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.,
Evening 5 P.M., Wed. Bible Study 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Bruce Hastings (937) 687-7150 or
(937) 478-0367

MARIETTA-RENO

Marietta-Reno church of Christ
80 Sandhill Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Daniel Ruegg: (740) 222-9160 or
Steve Foutty: (740) 473-9028

NORTHWOOD

Frey Road church of Christ
4110 Frey Rd. (Toledo Area)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Donald Jarabek
(419) 893-3566, (567) 694-5062

UHRICHVILLE

church of Christ
638 Parrish Street
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Mid-week 6:30 P.M.

OKLAHOMA

MCALESTER

North A St. church of Christ
2120 No. A Street
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Rob Lungstrum, Cell: (918) 931-1362
Office: (918) 423-3445

OKLAHOMA CITY

Seminole Pointe church of Christ
16300 N. May Avenue
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: John M. Duvall (405) 340-3189
or (405) 513-6691, www.seminolepointe.church

OREGON

SWEET HOME

Church of Christ
3702 E. Long Street, Sweet Home, OR
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 7 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Building: (541) 367-1599

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA

church of Christ
7222 Germantown Ave., 19119
Bible Study 10:15 A.M., Worship 11:15 A.M.
Tuesday night 7 P.M.
Evangelist: James H. Baker, Jr. (215) 248-2026
www.mtairychurchofchrist.org

SOUTH CAROLINA

COLUMBIA

Lower Richland church of Christ
3000 Trotter Rd. (Hopkins, SC)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(803) 730-0452, <http://lowerrichlandchurch.org>

SUMTER

Woodland church of Christ
3370 Broad St. Extension
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: A.A. Granke, Jr. (803) 499-6023

WEST COLUMBIA

Airport church of Christ
4013 Edmund Hwy. (Hwy. 302)
**OUR WEB SITE DISPLAYS OUR
CURRENT ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE.**
Evangelist: Terry W. Benton, Bldg. (803) 834-6978
<http://airport-church-of-christ.com>

TENNESSEE

COLUMBIA

Mooreville Pike church of Christ
417 Mooreville Pike
(.8 mi. N. of Hwy. 50/Jas. Campbell)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 3:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(931) 388-5828 or (931) 381-7898
www.moorevillepikecoc.com

COSBY

Cosby church of Christ
4894 Hooper Hwy., 37722
(15 mi. E. of Gatlinburg on Hwy. 321)
Bible Study 10A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday Bible Study 6:00 P.M.
Evangelist: Olie Williamson
(423) 487-5540 or (423) 748-0844

JACKSON

Sunset View church of Christ
3618 Hwy 70 East
(Exit 87 off I-40, 7mi. @ Spring Creek)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Wilkerson (731) 967-0590
or 968-9851

JOHNSON CITY

Brookmead church of Christ
2428 Lakeview Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Kevin Kay (423) 282-6251 or 426-1836

JONESBOROUGH

11-E church of Christ
240 Headtown Road
Bible Study 10:30 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Evangelist: David Wheeler
(423) 557-9119 or (423) 948-6464
www.christianadmonisher,jigsy.com

KINGSTON SPRINGS

Kingston Springs church of Christ
350 North Main Street
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Walker, www.kscoc.com

MT. PLEASANT

Locust St. Church of Christ
108 Locust Street • Mt. Pleasant, TN 38474
931-379-3704 or 931-964-3924
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Daniel H. King, Sr.
www.lscoc.com

KINGSPOORT

Kingsport church of Christ
4938 Fort Henry Dr. • P.O. Box 554
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:00 P.M.
Evangelist: Tom Kinzel, Bldg.# (423) 239-3979
or (423) 579-2002 • www.kptcoc.org

MARYVILLE

Smokey Mt. church of Christ
2206 Montvale Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Harold Tabor (865) 977-4230
Lon Sargeon (865) 388-8749
<http://tinyurl.com/smchurch>

MEMPHIS

Rocky Pt. Road church of Christ
516 E. Rocky Point Rd., Cordova
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
rockypointchurch@gmail.com
www.rockypointchurch.org

MURFREESBORO

Cason Lane church of Christ
1110 Cason Lane
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(615) 896-0090 (Building)
www.casonlanechurch.org

MURFREESBORO

Northfield Blvd. church of Christ
2091 Pitts Ln. at Northfield Blvd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: David Bunting (615) 893-1200

NASHVILLE

Hillview church of Christ
7471 Charlotte Pike
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(615) 952-5458 or (615) 356-7318
Evangelist: Lee Wildman

NASHVILLE

Perry Heights church of Christ
423 Donelson Pike
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:55 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Johnny Felker (615) 883-3118
<http://perryheights.faithweb.com>

SHELBYVILLE

El Bethel church of Christ
1801 Hwy. 41-A North
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Donnie V. Rader (931) 607-9099
dvrader@live.com

SHELBYVILLE

Shelbyville Mills church of Christ
1222 W. Jackson St.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jeff Curtis (931) 607-9118
djcurtis1963@hotmail.com

TEXAS

ALLEN

West Allen church of Christ
1414 W. Exchange Blvd. (2 miles west of Hwy. 75)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Jerry King (214) 504-0443
Building phone (972) 727-5355

ALVARADO

I-35 church of Christ
E. Service Rd. off I-35, N. of Alvarado
Bible Study 10:00 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:00 P.M.
(817) 295-7277 or 790-7253

ALVIN

Adoue St. church of Christ
605 E. Adoue St
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Mark Mayberry (346) 216-1707
www.ascoc.org & www.markmayberry.net

AUSTIN

Schultz Lane church of Christ
Faber Rd. & Schultz Ln., Pflugerville, TX 78660
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 2 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Ron Lehde

BAYTOWN

church of Christ at Pruett & Lobit
701 North Pruett Street
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:40 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jesse Flowers (281) 515-8939
Building: (281) 422-5926, Weldon: (713) 818-1321

BEAUMONT

Dowlen Rd. church of Christ
3060 Dowlen Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists: Max Dawson & Benjamin Lee
(409) 866-1996

CONROE

Woodland Hills church of Christ
410 Woodland Hills Dr., 77303
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
phone: (936) 756-9322
www.conroechurch.com

CORPUS CHRISTI

Hwy. 9 church of Christ
Worship 10 A.M., Bible Study 11 A.M.
Worship 12 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Call for location: Keith Kalies (361) 776-2304
or Patrick Frazier (361) 235-1990

DICKINSON

church of Christ
2919 FM 517 Road E.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 9:45 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M., (281) 534-4870
www.dickinsonchurchofchrist.org

DALLAS

Methodist Street church of Christ
211 Methodist St. • Red Oak TX, 75154
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: D. LeRoy Klice
(972) 576-3119 or 363-7672
www.methodiststreetchurchofchrist.com

DUNCANVILLE

Whispering Hills church of Christ
2126 S. Main (South Dallas)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(214) 874-5701, info@whchurchofchrist.net

EDNA

church of Christ
301 Robison Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(361) 782-5506 or 782-2844

EL PASO

Eastridge church of Christ
3277 Pendleton Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(915) 855-1524

FORT WORTH

West Side church of Christ
6110 White Settlement Rd. 76114
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(817) 738-7269

GRANBURY

church of Christ
4313 Old Granbury Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
817-913-4209 or 817-279-3351

HOUSTON

Fry Rd. church of Christ
2510 Fry Road (77084)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
www.fryroad.org

HOUSTON

Spring Woods church of Christ
9955 Neuens Rd. at Witte Road
Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship 11 A.M., Evening 6 P.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: (713) 419-1750
www.springwoodschurhofchrist.com

IRVING

Westside church of Christ
2320 Imperial Dr. (closest to DFW Airport)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Mark Roberts (972) 986-9131
www.JustChristians.com

LANCASTER

Pleasant Run church of Christ
831 W. Pleasant Run Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(972) 227-1708 or 227-2598

LUBBOCK

Indiana Avenue church of Christ
6111 Indiana Avenue
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(806) 795-3377
www.lubbockchurch.com

LUFKIN

Timberland Dr. church of Christ
912 S. Timberland Drive
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists: Harold Hancock & Reagan McClenny
(936) 634-7110 or 632-7070

MANSFIELD

Northside church of Christ
1820 Mansfield-Webb Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 5:30 P.M.
www.northsidecoc.us
Evangelist: Tom Roberts (817) 466-3160

NACOGDOCHES

Stallings Dr. church of Christ
3831 N.E. Stallings Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists: Randy Harshbarger & Jay Taylor

PLANO

Spring Creek church of Christ
2100 W. Spring Creek Pkwy., (North Dallas Suburb)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(972) 517-5582, www.planochurch.org

SAN ANTONIO

Grissom Rd. church of Christ
5470 Lost Lane at Grissom Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78238-2700
Bible Classes 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday (Ladies Class) 10 A.M.,
Wednesday (Bible Class) 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Terry Starling
www.grissomroadcoc.org

SAN ANTONIO

Pecan Valley church of Christ
268 Utopia Avenue, (I-37 S.E. Exit Pecan Valley)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Clyde W. Carter (210) 337-6143

SHERMAN

Westwood Village church of Christ
314 N. Tolbert
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Ronald Stringer

TEMPLE

Leon Valley church of Christ
4404 Twin City Blvd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Jason Garcia
yourfriendjgar@gmail.com
www.biblemoments.org

WACO

Sun Valley church of Christ
340 E. Warren St. (In Hewitt, a suburb of Waco)
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Marc Smith
(254) 666-1020 or 420-1484

THE WOODLANDS

Woodlands church of Christ
1500 Wellman Road • P.O. Box 7664 (77380)
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(281) 367-2099
www.woodlandschurchofchrist.org

VIRGINIA

CHESAPEAKE

Tidewater church of Christ
217 Taxus Street
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Schlosser (757) 436-6900

CHESTER

Chester church of Christ
12100 Winfree St., (Central to Richmond,
Hopewell, Petersburg, & Colonial Heights)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
church Building: (804) 796-2374, (804) 385-2725
or (804) 271-0877

RICHMOND (METRO)

Courthouse church of Christ
Courthouse Rd. at Double Creek Ct.
(2.2 miles S of Rt. 288)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Nathan L. Morrison (804) 790-1629
www.courthousechurchofchrist.com

RICHMOND

Forest Hill church of Christ
1208 W. 41st Street
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:00 P.M.
Evangelist: Jack Bise, Jr. (804) 233-5959

RIDGEWAY

church of Christ
2970 Old Leaksville Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(276) 956-6049
www.churchofchristatridgeway.com

ROANOKE

Blue Ridge church of Christ
929 Indiana Avenue N.E. (5 min. from Roanoke
Convention Center)
1st Lesson 9:15 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship 11 A.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(540) 344-2755

VIRGINIA BEACH

Southside church of Christ
5652 Haden Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Robert Mallard (757) 464-4574

WASHINGTON

BELLINGHAM

Mt. Baker church of Christ
1860 Mt. Baker Hwy.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Joe Price (360) 752-2692 or 380-2960
www.bibleanswer.com/mtbaker

SEQUIM

Sequim church of Christ
American Legion Hall
7 W. Prairie St. at Sequim Ave.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Wednesday night Bible study 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jerry MacDonald
(360) 808-1021 or biblepage@att.net
www.churchofchristinsequim.com

TACOMA

Manitou Park church of Christ
(meets at Gray Middle School)
6229 S Tyler Street
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
(253) 242-3098
tacomachurch@gmail.com
www.tacomachurch.com

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON

Oakwood Road church of Christ
873 Oakwood Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
oakwoodrdcoc@suddenlinkmail.com
www.orcoc.org • (304) 342-5637

CLARKSBURG

Westside church of Christ
Davison Run Road
Sunday Morning 9:30 A.M.
(304) 622-5433
www.westsidechurchofchristwv.net

FAIRMONT

Eastside church of Christ
1929 Morgantown Avenue
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(304) 363-8696 or (304)844-2437

GLADESVILLE

Gladesville church of Christ
2906 Gladesville Rd., Independence, WV 26374
Sunday Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Sunday 7 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(304) 864-3078

MOUNDSVILLE

Moundsville church of Christ
210 Cedar Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Mid-week 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Tony Huntsman (304) 845-4940

PARKERSBURG

Marriott church of Christ
825 Marriott Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(304) 422-7458 or 893-5227

WYOMING

RANCHESTER

Ranchester church of Christ
Hwy. 14 West, Ranch Mart Mall
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 6:30 P.M.
Contact: Bob Reich (307) 655-2563

CANADA

CALGARY, AB

Northside church of Christ
803 20A Avenue NE
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday Bible Study 7 P.M.
+1 (403) 452-5116
www.churchofchristcalgary.com

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