

# Truth

## Magazine

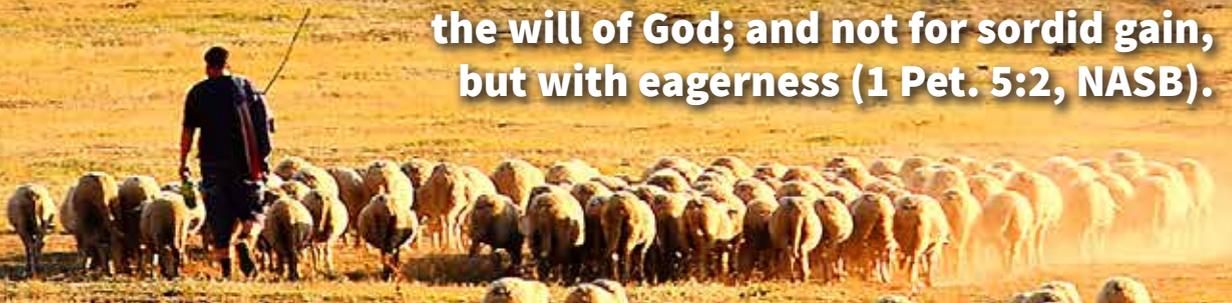
*Taking His hand, helping each other home.*



JULY 2021 | NO. 7 | VOLUME 65

# THE WORK OF SHEPHERDS

**Shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness (1 Pet. 5:2, NASB).**



# Truth Magazine

Taking His hand, helping each other home.  TM

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pg 35



## Monthly Columns

### EDITORIAL: THE WORK OF SHEPHERDS

by Phillip E. Stuckey

pg 4

This special edition of *Truth Magazine* examines various areas of the work of elders and offers practical guidance on how they care for members of the local church. Thanks to Phillip Stuckey for selecting this theme and these writers.

### MEDITATIONS: WHAT DOES HEBREWS 10:25 TEACH?

by Kyle Pope

pg 6

Historically, brethren have understood that Hebrews 10:25 emphasized the need to assemble faithfully with a local congregations. Proponents of the AD 70 Doctrine seek to redefine and reinterpret this text. What is the biblical truth?

### WOMEN'S INSIGHTS: JESUS, DRAW ME EVER NEARER

by Sherelyn Mayberry

pg 8

Gospel hymns possess the power to express our deepest spiritual longings. Drawing on tempestuous imagery, this song exhorts us to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, who will see us safely through the storm and lead us to heaven.

### CHALLENGES FACING CHRISTIANS: PROGRESSIVISM IN MODERN RELIGION

by Daniel H. King, Sr.

pg 10

We live in a perverse era in which absurdities are exalted as absolutes, and lunacy has become law. Paul's pronouncement, "Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools!" has never been more applicable.

### PRINCIPLES OF PRAISE: MINDFULNESS

By Matthew Bassford

pg 14

"Mindfulness" is "the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something," or "a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment" (Oxford). What implications does this concept have on our worship?

### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

by Bobby L. Graham

pg 16

What Is the Meaning of Luke 3:4-6?

### ARCHAEOLOGY: PAUL'S WALK TO ASSOS

by Leon Mauldin

pg 18

After preaching all night, Paul went "on foot" from Troas to Assos while his companions sailed to meet him there (Acts 20:13, NIV). Our article gives the setting for the narrative.



# The Work of Shepherds

## ■ WORKING WITH ONE ANOTHER

pg 22

by Jim Deason

Communication within an eldership is like blood to the body—it brings life. It reduces stress and increases energy. It provides for a stronger immune system and results in faster healing.

## ■ WORKING WITH THE DEACONS

pg 24

by Bruce Reeves

The Bible teaches that serving as a deacon among God's people is a rewarding and honorable work. Elders are uniquely positioned to help such men perform to the peak of their ability and grow in their spiritual service.

## ■ WORKING WITH THE SAINTS

pg 26

by Gary Watt

The work of shepherds with the saints is a critical component of a productive church (Heb. 13:7). The shepherds' primary priority is identifying and meeting the spiritual needs of their saints.

## ■ WORKING WITH THE EVANGELIST

pg 28

by Sherrel Mercer

Divine principles govern the interaction between shepherds and an evangelist. If we respect one another and fulfill our mutual roles in the local congregations, God will be glorified and the brethren will be blessed.

## ■ WORKING WITH THE WEAK

pg 30

by Max Dawson

What can shepherds do to hold on to weak sheep and help them grow? A lot! Instead of being cynical about weak brethren, let us manifest the loving concern that David evidenced toward the flock of Jesse and his heavenly Father.

## ■ WORKING WITH THE WAYWARD

pg 32

by Donnie V. Rader

Elders must use wisdom as they lead the congregation in trying to bring the wayward back home to God. When such efforts are unsuccessful, may local shepherds fulfill the difficult duty of exercising discipline properly and productively.

# The Work of Shepherds

by Phillip E. Stuckey

This special edition of *Truth Magazine* examines various areas of the work of elders and offers practical guidance on how they care for members of the local church. Thanks to Phillip Stuckey for selecting this theme and these writers.

The apostle Paul called the work of shepherding a “noble task.”

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task (1 Tim. 3:1, ESV).

One of the most encouraging and comforting truths revealed in Scripture is that Almighty God desires all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4). He accomplished this grand purpose through the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Col. 1:20). Those who respond to the gospel call are adopted into the family of God and become a part of the body of Christ, which is His church (Acts 2:47; 5:14; 11:42; Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:24).

The church of our Lord was not a mere afterthought but part of God’s eternal purpose in Christ Jesus (Eph. 3:9-11). Within the church, God has planned for the care and growth of His people and the furtherance of His work in this world. As the apostles revealed, God planned and purposed different roles within the body of Christ to help the saints grow in grace, faith and knowledge so that they would be equipped to do His will. Among those various functions, we find shepherds—or pastors—who are also called overseers and elders in other passages (Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 20:17, 28).

Finding this work spoken of in connection with the growth of the church and equipping of the saints should impress us with its need and importance. If it is part of God’s design and plan for the church, then we know it is vital to our spiritual wellbeing as Christians. Not only that, but we find that this work was

not to be done by just anyone. Only those who had demonstrated a certain level of growth and experience in the faith were to take on this work in the local church (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

There has always been an abundant need to study and focus on these qualifications. After all, no one should desire to appoint men who aren’t qualified to engage in this work. Yet, what do these men actually do in a local church?

As we look at each of the terms that refer to this work, we gain insight into the work of shepherds.

As one examines the New Testament, it becomes clear that God’s pattern is for each local church to be comprised of saints, deacons, and those who serve as overseers (Phil. 1:1). Paul speaks of the work of the overseer in his letter to Timothy, calling it a “noble task” (1 Tim. 3:1). The term, overseer, helps us understand one facet of this work. An overseer is one who is in charge; in the New Testament it is someone who was a leader in the local church (Kashow).

It is not surprising, therefore, that as the gospel spreads, we see congregations that grow so that each has a plurality of men serving as elders (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). Once again, we discern another clue about the work of these men. In the Bible, an elder was an older person or a person with authority; in the New Testament, an elder held an office of leadership in the synagogue and the local church (Victor).

Because of the nature of their work, these overseers/elders were also

identified as shepherds or pastors. Like a shepherd with his sheep, these men were responsible for watching over, protecting, and providing for the spiritual welfare of the members of the church they served (Act 20:17, 28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).

Each of these terms offers rich and rewarding studies in the Hebrew and Greek Old Testament texts, helping us gain even more insight into their work. For example, contrast David’s description of God’s shepherding (Ps. 23) with Ezekiel and Jeremiah’s condemnation of those who had failed to shepherd God’s people (Ezek. 34:1-24; Jer. 2:8; 3:15). From this quick survey, we learn that shepherds were men who were tasked with exercising authority in leading and caring for the people of God in the church where they were appointed to serve (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-2).

Nevertheless, what does that look like on a practical level? Since each congregation is to be cared for by a plurality of shepherds [i.e., not just one man serving in the role] (Acts 14:23), what are some actual steps that can be taken that will strengthen their relationships with one another? How should they deal with conflict/consensus within the eldership? How do they encourage and admonish one another? How do they interact with the deacons in some of these same areas?

What about the saints (1 Pet. 5:2)? What are some practical strategies to get to know each member of the flock? How do they recognize the strengths of various members and put them to use in serving the body? How do they plan the content

and curriculum to build up the body they serve?

What should be the relationship between the shepherds and the local evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5)? What are some “best practices” for engaging an evangelist or ending his work with a church? How do they mentor and foster growth in him? How do they work together to ensure that he is feeding the flock in ways they consider most useful??

What about brethren who are weak and struggling, whether spiritually or physically (1 Thess. 5:14)? How should they be approached? Are there limits to long-suffering in situations when the erring brother or sister is unwilling to change? Are there occasions when the shepherds should seek outside help from medical or psychological professionals?

What about those brethren who have gone astray (2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; 1 Cor. 5:11-13)? How should shepherds guide the church in admonishing or, if need be, putting the erring out of the local church? What are some effective ways to encourage the wayward to repent and return?

These are just a few of the many duties that are involved in the work of shepherding. In this special edition, we have reached out to brothers who are currently serving as shepherds or have done so in the past. We have asked each of them to examine one specific area of the work of shepherds and offer some practical guidance on how elders care for different members of the church.

We commit these articles to you and commend those who invested their time and effort to contribute to this special issue. We pray these articles will be helpful to those who aspire to shepherd a flock one day or those who are already shepherding a local congregation.

May God bless us as we diligently seek to learn more about His will and about how to live as shining lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15-16). May God bless us with brethren who will not only aspire to this work but who will carry out this noble task in the

love and spirit of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:1-4; 1 Tim. 3:1). **TL**

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# What Does Heb. 10:25 Teach?

by Kyle Pope

Historically, brethren have understood that Hebrews 10:25 emphasized the need to assemble faithfully with a local congregations. Proponents of the AD 70 Doctrine seek to redefine and reinterpret this text. What is the biblical truth?

## Introduction

Near the end of the book of Hebrews, the Holy Spirit led the author to write: “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Heb. 10:23-25, NKJV). This last verse has been emphasized in many sermons addressing the importance of faithful attendance of studies and services of the local church. Is this a valid use of this text? What is the context of the passage? What is it teaching? What application does it have for Christians today?

## Context and Content

From the earliest times, and in the earliest extant manuscripts, this book is titled “To Hebrews.” Unlike many other epistles, no addressees are named in its introduction, but the content of the book supports the validity of this historic title. The book acknowledges God’s past communication “to the fathers by the prophets” (1:1). It quotes extensively from Old Testament Scripture (1:5; Pss. 2:7; 1:7; 104:4; 1:8-9; 45:6-7; et al.). It assumes the readers’ knowledge of Abraham (2:16), Moses (3:2), the Israelites wandering in the wilderness (3:16-18), David (4:7), Aaron (5:4), Melchizedek (5:6), and scores of other things that would have been common knowledge to Jews but demand explanation to Gentiles.

Hebrews is not, however, an evangelistic book aimed at converting Jews to Christ. It is written to Jews who considered Jesus “the Apostle and High Priest of our confession” (3:1), who were members of the household of Christ (3:6), to whom he could say “we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession” (4:14; cf. 8:1). So these were Jewish Christians whom the author is urging to “hold fast” to their confession of faith in Jesus “without wavering” (10:23; cf. 4:14).

To encourage this, the author challenges his readers in several areas. “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away,” he exhorts (Heb. 2:1). They must not “neglect so great a salvation” (2:3). He warns, “Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion” (3:8) and “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. *For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end*” (3:12-14). Here we see wording repeated in our text in Hebrews 10:23-25. The author includes himself in the warning, declaring, “Let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it” (4:1) and “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience” (4:11). He does not want himself or his readers to “drift away,” to depart “from the living God,” to “become sluggish” (6:12a), to

develop “an evil heart of unbelief” given over to “the deceitfulness of sin,” leading them to “fall” by “disobedience” and “come short of” or “neglect so great a salvation.” To prevent this, he urges them to maintain their “confidence steadfast to the end.” They must move beyond “the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ,” and “go on to perfection” (6:1). They must “show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end” (6:11). Here, once again he speaks of “the end.” What end is under discussion? Throughout the book he describes a “rest” that awaits the people of God (4:11, et al.). He will describe a “judgment” that awaits all souls (9:27) and a “second time” Christ will appear bringing “salvation” (9:28). This suggests that “the end” towards which they must remain faithful is the end of life or the day of Christ’s second appearing. In the context, this is the “Day approaching” of which Hebrews 10:25 speaks.

Unlike the book of Galatians, Hebrews does not focus on a specific false doctrine (i.e. turning back to the Law of Moses). He warns generally about “various and strange doctrines” (13:9a), but the Hebrew writer is concerned about the individual faithfulness of his readers. He writes, “Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise” (10:35-36). They must not *draw back* but “live by faith” (10:38). Like those of faith in the past (chapter 11), they must *in faith*, “lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us,” including himself “and let

us run with endurance the race that is set before us” (12:1b). Only if they “consider” Jesus, will they avoid becoming “weary and discouraged in your souls” (12:3). His hope for them is that they look “carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God” (12:15). They must not “refuse Him who speaks. For if *they* did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall *we* not escape” (including himself once again) “if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven” (12:25). The way to avoid this is through reverent service and worship of God. Finally, the author encourages his readers (including himself yet again), “Let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (12:28b)—“let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God” (13:15a).

## Meaning in Context

Hebrews 10:23-25 falls within this context. To those who have confessed Christ (3:1; 4:14), he urges them (as in 4:14), to “hold fast” their confession. To avoid drifting away (2:1) and wavering they must cling to their hope, the “anchor of the soul” (6:19). In this text the author spells out a vital way to achieve this end. They must “consider one another” with the goal of stirring up “love and good works.” This tells us something important about what this means. How can I “stir up” something in someone if I am not with them? This is more than just a few Christian friends talking now and then. How can we “stir up” these things in “one another” if we are not together as a group? The writer offers further clarification by warning what must not be done if we hope to accomplish the stirring up of “love and good works”—we must not (1) *forsake* something; (2) that something is “the assembling of ourselves together”; instead, we must be “exhorting one another.” Let’s consider each of these elements.

## What Is “Forsaking”?

The word translated “forsaking” in Greek is *egkataleipō*. It is used nine times in the New Testament. Jesus used it of His sense of being forsaken on the cross (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). It describes how Jesus, in death, was not left in Hades (Acts 2:27). Paul used it of those who deserted him in his trials (2 Tim. 4:10, 16) and yet his confidence that God had not forsaken him (2 Cor. 4:9). At the close of Hebrews, the writer echoes this same confidence, quoting Jesus to say, “I will never leave you, nor forsake (*egkataleipō*) you” (Heb. 13:5). From these examples we see a picture of what this means. We are not forsaken when we must face a trial, when others have done all within their power to support us, or a circumstance places us in an unusual condition. To forsake is to abandon care, support, association, and encouragement.

## What Is “the Assembling of Ourselves Together”?

The word translated “assembling” is the Greek noun *episunagōgē*. It is only used here and in 2 Thessalonians 2:1 (which we will discuss later). Its verb form is used several times for different types of assemblies, including gatherings of people seeking healing or teaching from Jesus (Mark 1:33; Luke 12:1), of the desire of Jesus to gather Jerusalem like a hen gathers her chicks (Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34), and even of the gathering of Christ’s “elect” at the Final Judgment (Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27). The root of this word is very familiar to us and has come into English as the transliteration *synagogue*—meaning “a gathering together” which came to apply to the place Jews assembled for worship and Bible study. Clearly, some Jewish Christians used this name for their own place of assembly to worship Christ. This is the word used in James 2:2 of an “assembly” of Christians gathered for worship. In the context of Hebrews, this is the assembly they must not forsake. The

author clearly identifies the nature of the assembly in describing its purpose: It is intended to “stir up love and good works.” It is in these assemblies that they may “serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (12:28b) and “offer the sacrifice of praise to God” (13:15a). Paul would speak of the same assemblies in chapters 11-14, and 16 of 1 Corinthians. These were times when Christians came “together as a church” (1 Cor. 11:18), came “together in one place” (1 Cor. 11:20), would “come together to eat” the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:33; cf. Acts 20:7), “when the whole church comes together in one place” (1 Cor. 14:23), as they would “come together” to sing (1 Cor. 14:26; cf. Heb. 13:15), and contribute to the collection for the saints (1 Cor. 16:1-2). The Hebrew writer is commanding his readers not to abandon the regular observance of these assemblies of Christians in the local church.

## What Is “Exhorting One Another”?

Earlier in the book, the writer employed language similar to Hebrews 10:23-25, when he urged them to “exhort one another daily” (3:13). When the church was first established in Jerusalem, assemblies of the church were held daily (Acts 2:46; 5:42). As the gospel spread into Gentile regions, this practice doesn’t seem to have been possible among all churches, as worship on the first day of the week became the prominent time of assembly (cf. Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2). It is unclear, however, if the daily assembly ever ended in Jerusalem. Was the book of Hebrews addressed to Jewish Christians in Jerusalem and Judea—a region with probably the largest population of Jewish Christians prior to AD 70? Perhaps. The Greek word translated “exhorting” is translated by several English words, including *consolation*, *comfort*, and even *encouragement* in some translations.

Continued on Page 34

# Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer

by Sherelyn Mayberry

Gospel hymns possess the power to express our deepest spiritual longings. Drawing on tempestuous imagery, this song exhorts us to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, who will see us safely through the storm and lead us to heaven.

In the song, *Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer* (Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, #650), we implore Jesus to draw us close as we navigate the storms of life. James tells us that if we draw near to God, He will draw near to us. As we submit to Him and resist the devil, God will give us strength to overcome the trials we face in our daily walk (Jas. 4:7-8). Striving through the Lord's power helps fulfill our work of love even when facing difficult times (Col. 1:29). Faithfully travelling life's journey requires us to labor through the storms, keep our spirit staid and sure, and gather treasures through the trials.

Labor requires hard work and effort. It is necessary to exert one's power over mind and body with sometimes painful or strenuous effort. Christians should recognize that this labor is most effective because the Lord is on our side (Phil. 4:13). We must bear our own load and we will be held accountable for the way we carry our burden. As the Thessalonians were called through obedience, they manifested their "work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 1:2-4). Faithful sisters in Christ, you will receive your reward after your works are tested by fire (1 Cor. 3:8, 13). God blesses those who persevere through the storms of life. When they die in the Lord, they will rest from their labors (Rev. 14:13).

Through Jesus's guidance, our spirit can remain staid and sure. He teaches us to be earnest and serious about our passage through life. When our thoughts are governed and guided by the Father's will, we should be confident and

undoubting. Rather than falling from your steadfastness when tested by error, grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus (2 Pet. 3:17-18). Take hold of Jesus's right hand and let Him guide you with His counsel. When life is over, He will receive you to glory (Ps. 73:23-24). Lay aside the encumbrances and sin that tempt you and fix your eyes on Jesus. Seeing what He endured will help you to not grow weary and lose heart (Heb. 12:1-3). Peter walked on the water toward Jesus until he shifted his focus to the wind and waves, doubted, and began to sink. (Matt. 14:28-31). Therefore, draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so you may receive mercy and help in time of need (Heb. 4:16). The Philippians supported Paul through many trials and he prayed for them that their love might abound still more as they grow in knowledge and spiritual discernment. He wanted them to be sincere and blameless (Phil. 1:7, 9-10).

Lay up heavenly treasures through the trials of this life. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." So, let us focus on eternity through the storm, and we will enjoy the reward one day (Matt. 6:20-21). In the parable of the dragnet, fish (the treasure) were gathered. The good fish were placed in containers for positive use, and the bad were thrown away (Matt. 13:47-48, 52). Out of your good treasure bring forth what is good, so speak words of encouragement and righteousness even in tough times (Matt. 12:35). Our treasure is in earthen vessels, so the power of God will be glorified as we let our light shine, even if we are being afflicted and tried on every hand (2 Cor. 4:7-10). "Our momentary light affliction

is producing for us an eternal weight of glory," so look to what is eternal—not temporal (2 Cor. 4: 17-18).

Focus on the blessing at the end of earth's testing, when the faithful will rise to be with the Lord. Maintain joy through trials, because testing of your faith produces endurance. Let endurance have its perfect work (Jas. 1:2-4). The Israelites were tested to be humbled, so God would know whether they would keep His commandments. When good fruit was borne through trials, they experienced God's bountiful blessings (Deut. 8:2, 16). Therefore, let us rejoice in the fiery ordeals wherein we share in Christ's suffering. When He comes to take us home, we can exult in triumph and awake to see and share in His glory (1 Pet. 4:12-13). ■

## Note

The song, "Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer" was written by Margaret Becker (2001), tune by Keith Getty (2001), arranged by Charles L. Willis. *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. David Maravilla, Mark Coulson, Steve Wolfgang, C. E. Couchman, & Craig Roberts, editors. Athen, AL: Sumphonia, 2012.



Sherelyn Mayberry

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————— Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer • 650 —————

1. Je - sus, draw me ev - er near - er, As I la - bor through the storm.  
 2. Je - sus, guide me through the tem - pest; Keep my spir - it staid and sure.  
 3. Let the treas - ures of the tri - al Form with - in me as I go.

You have called me to this pas - sage, And I'll fol - low, though I'm worn.  
 When the mid - night meets the morn - ing, Let me love You e - ven more.  
 At the end of this long pas - sage, Let me leave them at Your throne.

# Progressivism in Modern Religion

by Daniel H. King, Sr.

We live in a perverse era in which absurdities are exalted as absolutes, and lunacy has become law. Paul's pronouncement, "Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools!" has never been more applicable.

Conceptually speaking, progressivism assumes that history is linear and that we are therefore moving persistently toward a state of perfection in society. Formally, it is alluded to as Critical Theory, Social Justice, or Progressivism. Critical Race Theory has grown out of this approach to the problems associated with race relations.

In a sense, this whole phenomenon is a resurrection of the pre-World War I mentality that saw the world and human society as steadily evolving (that being the key term) toward a higher state. Evolution was the overarching concept of academia. These idealistic notions were borrowed from Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Hegel. However, two world wars shattered that flimsy hypothesis. The horrors of war dispelled the notion that things were steadily improving toward the ultimate goal of human perfection. Worldwide warfare and the frightening destruction it wrought represented devolution rather than evolution!

Some have thought that progressivism should not be referred to in religious terms, or be seen as a religion *per se*, but rather be viewed as a philosophy in support of social reform. This is true because most people who embrace progressivism are opposed to religion, are usually associated with atheism, and self-identify as non-religious. They consider formal religion to be a means of oppression. Nevertheless, we understand that those who claim to have no religion, or are philosophically opposed to religion, are often deeply devoted to the religion of atheism. After all, what is

religion anyway, except "that which gives life direction and meaning"? So, even though this religion does not involve "the service and worship of God or the supernatural, or devotion to religious faith and service," it is inarguable that in this case it is "that which gives life direction and meaning" for those who follow its tenets. Thus, referring to it as "their religion" may not make these dedicated agnostics and atheists very happy with us, but it is quite clear that this is true despite their claims otherwise.

Dr. Kelly Burton has given a critique of Progressivism that alludes to it as a religion, even though she is reticent to outrightly describe it in those terms. She refers to Rod Dreher's book, *Live Not by Lies: A Manual for Christian Dissenters* (2020), in which he has a chapter devoted to "Progressivism as Religion" that makes several important points: (1) Progressivism functions as a religion for those who are dedicated to its precepts. (2) Reason and rationality have been rejected within this movement. (3) It has thus shifted from rational to non-rational feelings or the will to power or power dynamics, and both have frequently been associated with religion. (4) Authority, a key aspect of religious praxis, in this case is invested in the self at times and in the state at other times. (5) Every religion has an idea about what the good life is, the human problem, and the solution to the human problem. Here the good life is about deconstruction of the current social order and reconstructing it based on liberation and empowerment of racial minorities. The human problem consists of oppression and unacknowledged

privilege by Caucasians, and the solution is "wokeness," acknowledgement and confession about how one has contributed to social oppression and a promise to work for social justice. (6) The state is the primary institution of human society that must be scrutinized for its own signs of oppression and then forced into the service of this new reality. (7) Religions all provide hope through some narrative about human destiny and the continuity of life beyond one's mortal lifetime; through science and technology, it is believed that the all-powerful state will force compliance with progressivism's goals, leading to societal utopia. (8) Every religious person uses the set of beliefs at the heart of the particular system to give their own lives significance; progressive beliefs are used thus by its adherents. On all these fronts, progressivism is indeed a religion. It is clear from what we have seen of it in action in the last few years, it is manifestly an anti-Christian religion as well.

A recent book by Helen Pluckrose and James Lindsay (2020) describes "How Activist Scholarship Made Everything About Race, Gender, and Identity." Entitled *Cynical Theories*, it is a critique of the cult of social justice in the academy and in society generally. In recent years we have all been told things that seem ludicrous, but we are expected to accept them despite this: namely, that language is violence, science is sexist, mathematics is racist, science and reason are tools of oppression, obesity is good, criminals with dark skin should not be punished for their wrongdoing, jails should be abolished and emptied onto the streets,

police departments should be defunded, only white people can be racist, all human interactions are sites of oppressive power play, there is no such thing as biological sex, there are many different sexual orientations that are healthy and acceptable, cancel culture is good, social-media bullying is healthy, etc. Logically all of these ideas are absurd and infeasible on the surface of them, but for the “social justice warriors” of our time they have become truisms, nevertheless. Attempts to reason with such people are futile because they have rejected reason as a measure of what is right and true. Only their baseless beliefs and twisted feelings matter.

Moreover, at this point in time they have become axiomatic on the popular media platforms and in “mainstream” journalism. “Wokism,” as it is popularly identified, is a mind-virus that is Marxist in nature, and destructive to the core. It may have started out among well-intentioned people who wanted to halt racism and social injustice, but in the real world it has led to tyranny, divisiveness, hatred, and destruction. Never mind the fact that all these ideas were born in radical activist scholarship and are alarmingly inconsistent and ethically illiberal. In fact, they challenge the very logic of Western society and are anti-Enlightenment in their orientation. Most of us ordinary folks consider this stuff stupid and vacuous. Unfortunately, the elitists who are pushing this foolishness hold the reins of power in Washington, DC at present, and in most universities and colleges their tenets are not subject to challenge. Anyone who dares to object risks losing his job and being pilloried in the public media. His professional career may be over. Therefore, even though most people consider it all to be nonsense, they simply “shut up and obey” out of morbid fear. They adhere to the requirements of the woke mob, doing nothing that might attract attention to themselves and lead to their personal and professional cancellation. A few lonely voices have been heard to speak out against this hateful mob, but for most,

publicly opposing progressivism has proven a route to career-ending suicide.

Eric Mason’s recent book, *Woke Church: An Urgent Call for Christians in America to Confront Racism and Injustice*, is solid evidence that this religious fascination has become front and center in the inner city churches of America, especially where this new form of despotism has gained a foothold. Mason is founder and pastor of Epiphany Fellowship, a mega-church in Philadelphia. He defines being Woke as “no longer being naive nor in mental slavery. . . it is a term for being socially aware of issues that have systemic impact. . . it has to do with seeing all of the issues and being able to connect the socio-economic, philosophical, historical and ethical dots” (p. 25). He believes it is important for the Woke church to “Be in the business of doing something to stem the tide of injustice in our nation” (p. 133). It is his opinion that the evangelical (conservative and Bible oriented) churches of the US are asleep to the tensions related to race and injustice and in need of being “awakened” to the problems involved (p. 22).

We could not agree more with one African-American gentleman, who in his review of the book, wrote:

Justice is not the Christian’s focus. God has not called us Christians to ‘seek justice.’ Rather, he has called us to ‘make disciples.’ All the biblical data related to ‘Justice’ from man’s perspective are found in the OT and relate to the nation of Israel. The Church on the other hand (a.k.a. the body of Christ) is called to make disciples (Matt. 28) and wait on Christ who will one day make all things right (1 Thess. 1:10). As followers of Christ, we will *never* right the wrongs of this broken world, *but* what we can do is rescue as many perishing as possible (Jude 23). I’m sorry; Dr. Mason has this one wrong. We are *not* called to confront racism and injustice in order to fix them (not our job), we are called to confront the world with the Gospel (Mark 16).

This reviewer blames Mason’s Reformed Theology which believes

everything in this world will be fixed before the Lord returns and that “Christ will return to a truly Christianized world.” However, the Bible does not teach either the postmillennialism of Dr. Mason or the premillennialism of the reviewer. Neither view is scriptural teaching.

Critical race theory has also entered the portals of many of the religious institutions of modern America. Churches and religious colleges and universities have many promoters of this perspective. It is important, therefore, that we understand where it came from and what its implications are.

Originally, the Marxist Left built its political program on the theory of class conflict. Marx taught that the primary characteristic of industrial societies was the imbalance of power between capitalists and workers. The solution to that imbalance, according to Marx, was a revolution on the part of the workers. They would seize the means of production, overthrow the capitalist class, and usher in a new socialist utopia. This movement never had much support in the US because of the massive middle class that was continually upwardly mobile; in a dynamic economy, they moved higher up the economic ladder and enjoyed greater success over time. Erosion of the middle class by wage stagnation in recent years has threatened this reality that has heretofore protected us from communism.

Critical race theory was developed as an academic discipline in the 1990s, on the intellectual framework of identity-based Marxism. In recent years, this Marxist ideology has been injected into governmental agencies, teacher-training programs, public school systems, corporate human resource departments, diversity-training programs, etc. The watchwords (euphemisms) of this divisive manner of speaking are: “equity,” “social justice,” “diversity and inclusion,” and “culturally responsive teaching.” In this manner of speaking about racial issues, the Declaration of Independence, the Civil Rights Act of

1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, etc., are all merely “camouflage” for white supremacy, patriarchy, and oppression of women, minorities, homosexuals, and transgenders.

What this Marxist ideology is aiming for is the overthrow of the present free market capitalist system: the end of private property rights, federalism, curtailment of the right of free speech, ending of equality under the law and establishment of group-based rights, weapons confiscation, redistribution of property and land on the basis of racial identities, and so forth. If these concepts were imposed on the people of this country, there is little doubt we would experience tremendous political upheaval and major disruption. Unfortunately, this ideology continues to make inroads into the major institutions and governmental agencies of our nation. The consequences of this could prove to be exceedingly dangerous. Christopher F. Rufo, a contributing editor of *City Journal*, said this in a lecture at Hillsdale College on March 30, 2021:

Thus far, attempts to halt the encroachment of critical race theory have been ineffective. There are a number of reasons for this:

First, too many Americans have developed an acute fear of speaking up about social and political issues, especially involving race. . .

Second, critical race theorists have constructed their argument like a mousetrap. Disagreement with their program becomes irrefutable evidence of a dissenter’s “white fragility,” “unconscious bias,” or “internalized white supremacy.”

Third, Americans across the political spectrum have failed to separate the premise of critical race theory from its conclusion. Its premise—that American history includes slavery and other injustices—is undeniable. But its revolutionary conclusion—that America was founded on and defined by racism and that our founding principles. . . should be overthrown—does not rightly, much less necessarily, follow.

Fourth, and finally, the writers and activists who have had the courage to speak out against it have tended to address it on the theoretical level, pointing out the theory’s logical contradictions and dishonest account of history. . . They fail to force defenders of this revolutionary ideology to defend the practical consequences of their ideas in the realm of politics (“Critical Race Theory. . .” *Imprimis*, p. 5).

It is our sincere hope that many of these ideas will die the death of most faddish notions, but the fact they have lingered for so long already seems to suggest we may be in for a long ride before they eventually disappear. Let us be praying. . . 🙏

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<b>THUR.</b>	<b>MEN'S TRACK</b> <i>Does the Bible Teach Reincarnation?</i>	STEVE WALLACE
<b>THUR.</b>	<b>WOMEN'S TRACK</b> <i>Does the Bible Teach Reincarnation?</i>	JENNIFER MAXEY

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# Mindfulness

by Matthew Bassford

“Mindfulness” is “the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something” or “a mental state achieved by focusing one’s awareness on the present moment” (Oxford). What implications does this concept have on our worship?

## Introduction

In Matthew 22:36-37, the Lord tells us that the greatest commandment is to love God with all of our heart, soul, and mind. If we succeed in this, everything else in our spiritual lives will be sorted out. Sadly, this also gives the devil a clear avenue of attack. If he can keep us from loving God with either our hearts, our souls, or our minds, he can separate us from Him altogether. Spiritual imbalance in the way we love is a recipe for ruin!

Nowhere is this more obvious than in the realm of song worship. People intuitively seem to understand that worship should be heartfelt and soulful, but they object to the notion that it should be mindful too, especially when it comes to a mode of worship or a song that they love. “God knows my heart, and that’s all that matters!” they retort.

Well, no. That’s *not* all that matters. Saul of Tarsus was a sincere, passionate man with a lack of understanding. His bold ignorance led him to persecute the church! The devil is subtle and crafty, and if we are not thoughtful in our worship, he will exploit our thoughtlessness to corrupt and debase it. Let us, therefore, consider several ways in which mindfulness must impact our worship.

## Mode of Worship

First, we must be mindful of the means that we use to approach God. This is a problem first identified by Isaiah in Isaiah 29:13-14, and Jesus explores the issue further in Matthew 15:7-9. The rendering of Isaiah 29:13 in the Christian Standard

Bible presents the difficulty most plainly: “The Lord said, ‘These people approach Me with their speeches to honor Me with lip-service, yet their hearts are far from Me, and human rules direct their worship of Me.’”

These Jews of Isaiah’s day were people who believed that saying something that sounded good was all that mattered. Notwithstanding, they weren’t personally invested in their worship, and they offered their worship according to the rules that they made up rather than the rules that God handed down. In verse 14, God reveals His response. They thought they had everything figured out, but in His wrath, He was going to show them that they didn’t.

All of us would do well to heed this sober warning! In our day, there are all too many people who have used their human wisdom to figure out how to worship. For example, they advise churches to imitate the sounds of popular music so that they can draw in the unchurched with fleshly appeal.

Whose rules are these? Not God’s, clearly! Nothing in the law of Christ tells us to take such an approach. Nor is the will of God evident in churches that point to their liturgical tradition as justification for their worship practices. If we think to follow God’s rules instead, we will find ourselves imitating the simple singing of the first-century church.

## Approach to Worship

So too, we must be thoughtful in choosing our approach to worship. Jesus identifies a potential problem here in His discussion of prayer in Matthew 6:7. He warns His disciples not to pray like the Gentiles, who thought the best way to get the attention of their gods was to babble on endlessly. Solomon offers a similar admonition in Ecclesiastes 5:1-3. He tells us that prolixity in worship reveals the heart of a fool. It is far better, he says, for us to speak a few words only.

The true problem identified here, though, is not length. At times, Jesus spent all night in prayer, and we should not imagine that His prayers ever were babbling or foolish! Instead, the actual issue is thoughtfulness. Both the Gentiles of Jesus’s day and the fools of Solomon’s thought that they could win God’s favor through rote, mindless prayers that were offered in vast quantities. One is here reminded of the joke about the Chinese buffet: “The food isn’t any good, but at least there’s a lot of it!”

Both song leaders and prayer leaders should be wary of this check-the-box mentality. We have not necessarily pleased God because we sang seven songs or prayed for seven minutes, especially if the leader in question has not taken much thought for the content of those seven songs or seven minutes. Nor should worshipers think that singing seven songs while operating on spiritual autopilot has won His favor, even if all seven were completely a cappella. It is far better for us to offer one hymn thoughtfully than to offer seven thoughtlessly. The former

is the sacrifice of a thankful people; the latter is the sacrifice of fools.

## Content of Worship

A mindful approach to worship also will lead us to adopt mindful content in worship. If we don't want to offer the sacrifice of fools, we will think about what we say, and that in turn will lead us to choose hymns with something to say. The Scriptures leave us in no doubt about what the content of our singing should be. Though Colossians 3:16 is famous among us as an a cappella proof text, that isn't really the point of the verse.

Instead, Paul is concerned in Colossians 3:16 with content issues. Our song worship ought to begin with God's word dwelling richly inside each worshiper. Because of that rich indwelling, we will use our singing to teach and admonish one another as we glorify God.

Obviously, this verse warns us against false doctrine in our singing. Less obviously, it also is a warning against lack of doctrinal depth. Few of us would accept "feel-good TV-preacher preaching" from the pulpits of our local congregations, but too often, we turn to "feel-good songs" that don't have any more to them than does a typical TV preacher. In defense of these songs, we too often accept emotional arguments that we wouldn't tolerate in any other area of worship or service. We like to sing them, so we do.

The only cure for this spiritual disease is to compare our hymn repertoire to the depth and richness of the word of God. The greatest hymns have enough meat to them that they could be sermon outlines. "Give Me the Bible", for example, is built around Psalm 119:105. It explains that God's word is a lamp and a light for us all, offering enlightenment when we are sorrowful, when we are tempted, and when we are dying. If I heard a sermon with such content, I would count myself richly fed. I feel the same way when I finish singing "Give Me the Bible." Ideally,

every hymn we sing in worship should attain to this God-honoring standard.

## Conclusion

Certainly, worship should be a time when we pour out our hearts before God. Yet, as the example of Cain shows, we should not expect that merely offering what we want to offer will be good enough. None of us would be permitted to approach the Holy One on our own, so all of our worship necessarily takes place on His terms. When He tells us, then, that we must involve our minds as well as our hearts, we ought to listen!

As in all other things, God's instructions in this area reveal not what is best for Him, but what is best for us. Our worship is most powerful when it involves our whole selves. It best glorifies Him and best transforms us. It lodges truth so deeply in our hearts that even the devil will have to struggle to get it out. **T**



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A blue speech bubble with a white 'Q.' inside, pointing towards the right.

by Bobby L. Graham

A green speech bubble with a white 'A.' inside, pointing towards the left.

## QUESTION.

### What Is the Meaning of Luke 3:4-6?

## ANSWER.

This passage appears in the context where John the Baptist was teaching people to prepare them for the entrance of Christ upon the scene. Remember that John came as a harbinger or forerunner of Jesus for the purpose of making ready a people prepared for the Lord. In this section, he described such work in the language of road construction, because he was preparing a way/road upon which the Messiah might enter. Because the different parts of the passage are significant, we will quote Luke 3:3-6 here for study.

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God’” (Luke 3:4-6, NKJV).

These verses set forth the essence of John’s preaching: a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. He instructed people in the region of the Jordan River, a quite limited area for his work, to “make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1:17). He taught them to be baptized on the basis of their repentance and desire for forgiveness, that they might become a people ready to hear and follow Jesus Christ. Repentance is still requisite to following Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30).

Next, we learn that John taught the people to prepare the way/road of the Lord. This way was not physical, but spiritual, because it wound its way through the hearts and lives of spiritually prepared people. In order to be included in this spiritual way for the Lord, they would have to repent and be baptized that their sins might be forgiven. Unrepentant, unbaptized people would not be ready, because sin still stained their lives.

John then told them five different actions they must take—actions involved in repentance—to bring their lives into line with God’s will. Each is expressed in the terms used for building a road, for they were building a spiritual road upon which the Messiah would enter and serve: (1) Make his paths straight; (2) Fill the valleys; (3) Make the mountains/hills low; (4) Straighten the crooked places; (5) Smooth the rough ways. By repenting, John’s listeners could change their lives so that the special road for the Messiah *would run through their hearts and lives*. They must bring low their mountains of pride, fill in the spiritual valleys void of righteousness and goodness, conform their crooked ways to the straight ways of the Lord, and smooth out the spiritually rough paths of unbelief with faith in Jesus Christ. These changes would constitute the fruits worthy of repentance, which John mandated they produce in Luke 3:8-14.

Jesus could definitely use such penitent souls as John urged them to live for His work of preparing others for His coming kingdom. They could become His servants assisting Him in the great work of causing all flesh to see the salvation of God. In addition to repenting, John instructed them to believe the gospel (Mark 1:14-15). By their acceptance of the gospel, they would be provided the information motivating them to be a people prepared for the Lord, ready to receive/enter the coming kingdom of the Messiah. I trust this study helps all readers to understand John's work better.



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# Paul's Walk to Assos

By Leon Mauldin

After preaching all night, Paul went “on foot” from Troas to Assos while his companions sailed to meet him there (Acts 20:13, NIV). Our article gives the setting for the narrative.

In our present article, we wish to notice an incident in Paul's travel on his return route on the Third Missionary Journey. Luke narrates the event:

Now when he [Paul] had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till daybreak, he departed. And they brought the young man [Eutyclus] in alive, and they were not a little comforted. Then we went ahead to the ship and sailed to Assos, there intending to take Paul on board; for so he had given orders, intending himself to go on foot. And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene (Acts 20:11-14, NKJV).

While Acts 20:7 records that at Troas, Paul “continued his message until midnight,” the context indicates that he continued his discourse (i.e., from the Greek, *homileō*) *even till daybreak*. In other words, Paul preached all night long! The ship, with Luke and seven other traveling companions (v. 4) sailed on to the next stop—Assos. Paul purposefully by himself traveled overland, and then rejoined his traveling companions on the ship at Assos. The overland route was thirty-one miles!

Luke does not supply the reason Paul left the group and traveled overland to Assos. However, in the context of this event, Paul made a statement that may be helpful: “See, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me” (Acts 20:22-23). Though not knowing the details, Paul knew that his freedom would soon be taken away, that he was about to enter a period of confinement/imprisonment once he arrived at

Jerusalem. On the ship, there would be little if any opportunity to be alone. It would seem that those miles on his walk from Troas to Assos furnished time for deep thought and prayer. Certainly, it would be the final such opportunity before he became “Paul, the Prisoner” (from the point of his arrest in Jerusalem [Acts 21:26ff] until Luke's account concludes [Acts 28:30-31], Paul will be a prisoner in chains).

In addressing this episode of Paul's walk to Assos, brother J. W. McGarvey



Columns from the harbor at Troas on the Aegean Sea in the area where the ship would have sailed for Assos



*Atop the acropolis (781 feet high) there are some well-preserved ruins of the temple of Athena built on the Doric order*

wrote, “Paul had received in every city on his journey prophetic warnings of bonds and imprisonment awaiting him (v. 23); he was agitated by the critical state of the churches everywhere; he was saddened by the final farewells which he was giving to the churches on his way; and he longed for a season of meditation

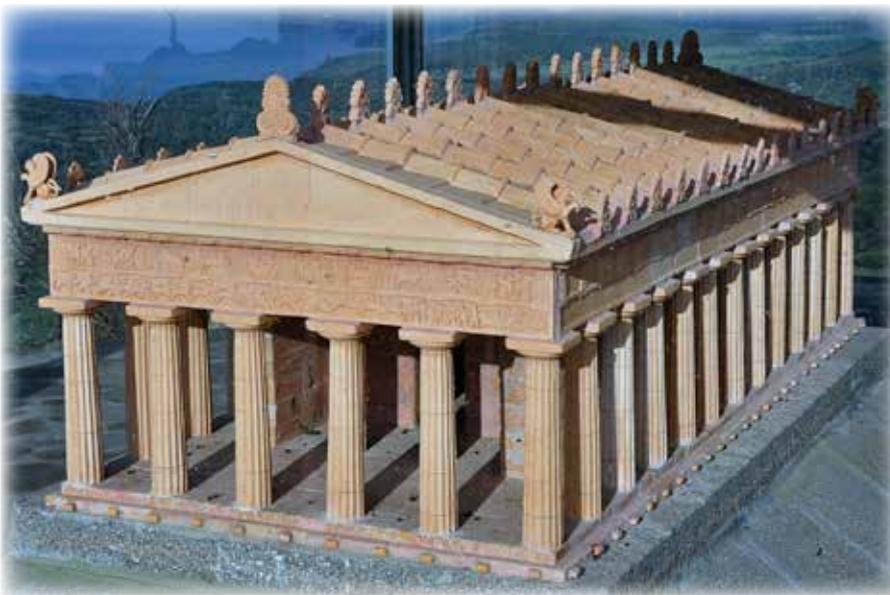
and prayer which could be found only in solitude” (McGarvey 1892, 183). Truly, I stand amazed at his stamina, as well as his devotion!

Craig Keener writes, “The temple of Athena in Assos may have been six centuries old by Paul’s day. The city also hosted the imperial cult”

(Keener 2014, 2982). Of course, this serves as a reminder that idolatry was thoroughly pervasive in the biblical world, as witnessed in both the Old and New Testaments. Idolatry was truly everywhere! The gospel entered the world in the first century to challenge idolatrous concepts, along with every false system (2 Cor. 10:4-5); to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Today Assos is in a village called Behramkale, in the Turkish province of Çanakkale. Incidentally, the philosopher Aristotle lived at Assos from 348-345 BC.

The island of Lesbos lay opposite Assos. After taking Paul on board, their next stop was Lesbos, at Mitylene (Acts 20:14). From there, the journey continued until its conclusion in Jerusalem (21:17).



*On-site model of the Athena temple which could have been seen by sailors miles away*



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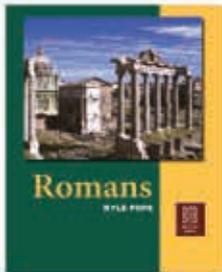
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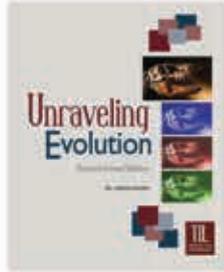


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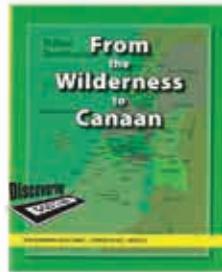
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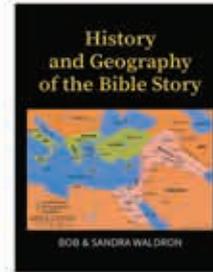
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# Working with One Another

by Jim Deason

Communication within the eldership is like blood to the body—it brings life. It reduces stress and increases energy. It provides for a stronger immune system and results in faster healing.

## Introduction

The first mention of elders in the New Testament church is in Acts 11:29-30, “In the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the *elders*.” This term is rich in Old Testament tradition and pregnant with meaning. It is clear from the teaching of the New Testament that God intended that there be elders in every church (Acts 14:23). In churches where no elders exist, something is “wanting” (ASV) or “lacking” (Titus 1:5 NKJV).

In the New Testament, local churches always had a plurality of elders (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Phil. 1:1), *never just one!* In meeting the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, these are deeply spiritual men. They are capable, through their collective wisdom and insight, of overseeing, shepherding, and ruling the church of God (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17). No *one* elder has any more authority than any other member of a local church, but within the *eldership* as a whole there is delegated decision-making authority and shepherding responsibilities that require a willingness and ability to work together. Group dynamics may vary a bit because of specific personalities, but there are common principles that can and should guide

each eldership in functioning as a unit. The thoughts mentioned here are not exhaustive, but serve as a good starting place to enable an eldership to work together profitably.

## What Does the Bible Say?

Every decision, every act of shepherding a weak, wandering, or lost soul must be viewed through the prism of divine revelation. The Scriptures are inspired by God to equip us for *every* good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17). This principle is easy to express and even easier to forget. Various factors go into the process of making important decisions: The consequences of a

decision, who is going to be affected, and how, etc. These are important considerations. They are normal and appropriate. Our polar star, however, must always be “Is what we are doing pleasing God? Are we doing the right thing and leading the church in the right direction?”

## Open Communication

Someone once said that “communication is to a relationship what blood is to the body—it brings life.” In no relationship is this more important than in an eldership. Consider this from two standpoints: First, it is vitally important that elders communicate with



one another. While there may be a rare exception (maybe when someone is in the process of revealing a confidential matter that is being worked through, etc.), all the elders need to be aware of things that are going on in the congregation. Intentionally withholding information from one another can destroy trust, while open communication strengthens it.

Second, communication is important between the eldership and the congregation. In administering money collected from the churches of Macedonia and Achaia for the relief of brethren in Judea, Paul and his companions “(took) precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift; for *we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men*” (2 Cor. 8:20-21). Elderships should approach their congregational responsibilities in a similar manner: Transparency is a good thing. It applies not only to business decisions but also to matters relating to discipline, etc. If you want to motivate people to take part in the work of the church, they need good communication from their leaders. When an eldership paints a good picture of work to be done and the beneficial outcome of their labor, people usually join in with enthusiasm. On the other hand, weak communication frequently leads to failure and disappointment.

## No Unilateral Decisions

Earlier we mentioned the fact that no one elder has any more authority than any other member of a local church. When an elder goes rogue, makes a unilateral decision, and communicates to the congregation without considering the views of the other elders, it creates serious tension and, sometimes, outright division.

It is not unusual for someone to ask an elder, “Could we \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)?” and then expect an immediate answer. It is easy for one to offer an answer, while assuming that he knows the feelings of the other elders. Wisdom

and common courtesy, however, cry for you to not commit your fellow elders to a course of action without first consulting them. To do so in a moment’s weakness and without forethought is bad enough, but to act intentionally while knowing that the other elders would not approve is problematic and perilous.

## Implicit Trust

Experience has taught me that working with elders whom you trust is a wonderful thing. Trust among elders, as in any other relationship, is built up gradually, brick-by-brick, on the small decisions made together on a daily/weekly basis. In particular, trust is strengthened as you see each other operate in crisis mode and realize, ultimately, that you think the same way. The approach may be slightly different from one man to another, but each desires the same outcome. Learning one another, respecting each other, and working through problems together builds trust. The ability to rely upon and trust your fellow elders brings two blessings: (1) it strengthens the eldership as a whole, and (2) the congregation will rest easy in the knowledge of this trust.

## Willingness to Cooperate

Let’s face it, we don’t always agree with one another in matters of judgment. Paul taught the Corinthian church to “agree” and “be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10). If this is expected in the church as a whole, it certainly must be true within the eldership. So, we must develop consensus of thought. Unfortunately, I’ve seen one elder hold other elders hostage on a matter of personal judgment and be unwilling to budge. It is very difficult to work with someone like this, especially when it happens repeatedly.

Further, when an eldership allows this to happen, it has the potential to turn the eldership into a one man show destroying the reason for having an *eldership* in the first place. Compromising truth is out of the question, but the ability

to build consensus by learning to come to agreement is vital to the health of an eldership, even and especially when your will bows to that of others.

## A United Front

Perhaps it’s not *always* possible, but maintaining a united front needs to be the rule rather than the exception. When an eldership makes a decision, and you are the lone dissenting voice, supporting your fellow elders is the right thing to do. Saying publicly, “Well I went along with it, but . . .” is never healthy or helpful. Furthermore, if you take this approach, and their collective wisdom turns out to be the obviously right decision, *then* “you’ve got egg on your face.” Learn to support one another.

## Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing

The work of shepherds is to feed and tend sheep; to seek and search for the one who is lost to bring him safely back into the fold. That is a big job! Don’t lose sight of it. Perhaps you have heard it said that “some preachers do the work of elders, the elders do the work of deacons, and the deacons do nothing at all.” If that happens, and regrettably sometimes it does, those charged with overseeing the flock are at fault. Elders/shepherds should stick to the work they’ve been charged to do, empower the deacons to perform their tasks, and encourage initiative in the other members. Use your time effectively by shepherding souls.

By doing this, God will be glorified, churches will be unified, and individual disciples will be edified and bear much fruit. **T**



Jim Deason

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# Working with the Deacons

by Bruce Reeves

The Scriptures clearly teach that serving as a deacon among God's people is a rewarding and honorable work. Elders are uniquely positioned to help such men perform to the peak of their ability, and grow in their spiritual service.

## Introduction

Biblical edification means much more than merely feeling good after a worship service or as a result of a sermon. The Scriptures use the term “edify” to refer to being built up in the faith (Jude 20) and equipping one another to serve God at the highest level possible. This happens through the teaching and correction of God's word, the praise of His name in worship, and the encouragement that we receive from His promises (Acts 20:28; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). It is not about being a Christian for someone else, but encouraging one another to serve the Lord and His children. The apostle Paul writes, “He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-12). When we ponder the overseers's work, we must consider how they are to shepherd their brethren in Christ, including those who serve as deacons in the local congregation.

## Show Appreciation

Scripture makes it clear that serving as a deacon (see note #1) is a rewarding and honorable work among God's people. The inspired apostle emphasizes the significance and value of deacons in the very beginning of his letter to the church at Philippi: “Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and *deacons*” (Phil. 1:1). Paul reveals the qualities that shepherds possess (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus

1:5-11), and also instructs Timothy regarding the character of those who serve as deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13).

These special servants must be devoted “to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Tim. 3:9). They should also be men of dignity, exercising self-control, exemplify a commitment to Christ, and being godly leaders of their families (1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12). The apostle writes, “Those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 3:13). Those who serve as deacons can be assured that their work will provide them with frequent opportunities to manifest steadfast faith and a Christ-like spirit among believers. Jesus exalts the virtue of servitude in His teaching when He says, “Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your servant” (Matt. 20:26-27; cf. Phil. 2:6-8).

## Mentor and Encourage

We may have different roles and abilities, but the same Father, Lord, and Spirit blesses and strengthens us all (1 Cor. 12:11-27). The apostle admonishes us to support one another, “Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing” (1 Thess. 5:11). Shepherds should express their appreciation to deacons in their work for the Lord and His people. They are uniquely positioned to encourage deacons in personal and powerful ways.

Too often, there is a wall between elders and deacons that should not

exist. Communication, encouragement, transparency, and constructive critique are not tolerated. As a result, there is no real fellowship, relationship, or growth. Brethren, these things should not be! Shepherds can mentor deacons through meeting with one another, discussing the work of the congregation, and sharing the reasoning behind decisions when appropriate. Such joint participation can shape the thinking of deacons, inform them of complexities that may arise among brethren, and lead them to have more insight into the biblical leadership model. Sometimes elders are not at liberty to share all the details of a situation, but more often than not, there will be opportunities for mutual openness between overseers and deacons. There may even be situations in which the deacons can share concerns with the elders for the benefit of the local church.

Nevertheless, it must be recognized that there is a clear scriptural distinction between the work of elders and deacons. Elders are overseers and pastors who focus on feeding the flock with the word of God (Acts 20:28), caring for souls (Heb. 13:17), and tending to spiritual matters (1 Pet. 5:1-4). Deacons are servants of the church who assist physical needs, fulfill tasks assigned by the elders, and function in submission to the shepherds. Deacons can alleviate pressures that may distract elders from fully devoting themselves to the spiritual work of shepherding. They can express mercy to those who may be suffering (Acts 6:1-7) (see note #2). A rewarding aspect of the mentoring process is to know one another well enough to identify

talents and abilities and to help one another mature in Christ. Shepherds must exercise discernment and wisdom in assigning responsibilities to men who serve as deacons to benefit God's work and encourage those striving to serve.

## Be Peacemakers

There is practical wisdom in the requirement for shepherds to be men of "self-control," "not self-willed," and "not quick-tempered" (Titus 1:6-7). Often there are highly emotional and volatile situations that demand a calm but resolved spirit. These circumstances can occur in surprising ways. For instance, it may arise through ungodly attitudes from members in a local church toward the elders but may be expressed against a deacon who only does what he was asked to do. Differences and disagreements may occur among deacons over certain issues. We must seek to be of one mind and one spirit (Phil. 1:27-2:1-5). If there is alienation, we must be open, honest, and gracious toward each other for the sake of Christ (Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 4:29-32). Godly attitudes must be modeled and encouraged by shepherds (Heb. 13:7). There is no room for divisiveness, slander, or gossip by those serving the Lord's people as elders or deacons.

## Know How to Delegate

One of the keys by which shepherds can help congregations grow is by allowing deacons to be deacons while shepherds fulfill their own spiritual work. Elders can end up frustrating faithful deacons by micromanaging their responsibilities. While elders must faithfully oversee deacons' work, there must also be a willingness to allow servants of the church to do what has been delegated to them. Congregations will stagnate if elders end up doing the work of deacons, deacons will be frustrated because they are not permitted to do what they should do, and preachers will be expected to perform the job that shepherds ought to be doing. The solution is for each of us to carry out the

responsibilities of our given roles, and mutually support one another.

## Encourage Growth

Not only should shepherds encourage growth in the entire congregation, but they should also encourage growth among the deacons. This does not mean that every deacon will eventually serve as an elder, but we must encourage and exhort deacons to reach their potential as servants of the Lord. This includes challenging and mentoring these brothers to develop and grow (Eph. 4:16; 2 Pet. 3:18). This will include prayer, Bible study, encouragement, conversations, compassion, edification, and being of the "same mind and the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10). May God bless us all in our fellowship to be all that we can be through His amazing grace and powerful word! 🙏

## Notes

#1: In Scripture, the term *diakonos* simply means "servant." Sometimes it is used in a generic sense of believers and gospel preachers. However, it is also used in a technical sense of men who are appointed by a local congregation to serve God's people (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8-13).

#2: Although there may be some distinctions in the specially appointed servants in Acts 6:1-7 and the deacons mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, it must be acknowledged that we have an example of the congregation appointing godly men to serve particular needs to enable the leaders to focus on spiritual matters. Because two things are not identical does not deny that there are parallels.



Bruce Reeves

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# Working with the Saints

by Gary Watt

The work of shepherds with the saints is a critical ingredient to a productive church (Heb. 13:7). The shepherds' primary priority is identifying and meeting the spiritual needs of their saints.

From the time I was first selected by a congregation to serve as one of its elders, and in the years since, the admonition from the inspired writer of Hebrews has always been at the front of my mind:

Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, *for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account.* . . . (Heb. 13:17).

Without diminishing the qualifications of one who would serve as an elder (clearly set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), the Hebrew writer succinctly describes the nature of their work, and responsibility toward the local congregation in which they serve. All elders do well to remember this thought.

This verse in Hebrews harmonizes with the comparison of elders and their congregation to that of a shepherd and a flock of sheep. The New Testament is filled with analogies that effectively relate God's word to the common life-experiences of first-century disciples. Even today, most people understand the responsibility of a shepherd to protect and provide for his flock. The Master Teacher of the New Testament, Jesus Christ, is identified as the "great Shepherd" just three verses later (v. 20), and the "Chief Shepherd" (1 Pet. 5:4). In the same context, Peter exhorts his fellow elders, saying, "Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers" (1 Pet. 5:2). Luke records that Paul spoke in a similar fashion. Summoning the elders of the Ephesian church to Miletus in order to encourage them, Paul said,

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit

has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28).

Shortly before Saul's conversion, individuals who composed local congregations were identified as "saints" (Acts 9:13). Not too long afterwards, they were first called "Christians" in Antioch (Acts 11:26). Thus, we identify the focus of this article: We are considering ways in which shepherds work with the saints, i.e., individual disciples who share fellowship in a local congregation.

The work of shepherds with their saints is best summarized by the word "service." A shepherd will have difficulty building a productive relationship unless he first has the heart of a servant. The lyrics of the hymn, "Servant's Song," remind me of this important point: they apply to Christians in general and elders in particular. Paul said, "Though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more" (1 Cor. 9:19). No greater example of spiritual service can be offered than that of Jesus Christ. Speaking to the Jerusalem Jews, Peter said, "To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities" (Acts 3:26). Indeed, "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45).

An abiding commitment to service is at the root of an elder's successful relationship with those for whom he is spiritually accountable and responsible. Such relationships blossom and grow when they are built on trust rather than scriptural authority alone (Heb. 13:17).

Shepherds are encouraged to serve, not as "being lords over those entrusted to you," but through "being examples to the flock" (1 Pet. 5:3). My leadership experiences in the secular and business world (over many years and in a variety of scenarios) have taught me the relationship benefits of "leading from the front."

When considering the qualifications of one who "desires the position of a bishop" (1 Tim. 3:1), a potential (or even existing) elder should recognize the implied relationship between his ongoing service to the church and the necessity of consistently showing the qualities of being "temperate. . . of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach. . . (of being) gentle, not quarrelsome" (1 Tim. 3:2-3). Similarly, he must "not (be) self-willed, not quick-tempered, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught" (Titus 1:7-9). These traits serve as building blocks of the trusting relationship between a shepherd and his fellow Christians.

The shepherds' first priority is identifying and meeting the spiritual needs of the flock. Secular business experience taught me not to assume the needs of my customers, but to have them express their needs in their own terms. I often remind myself of that as I work as a shepherd with my fellow saints. Shepherds need to devote their full attention to this vital task. Unfortunately, elders can be distracted by other issues, such as the fiscal needs of the congregation. Too often, congregations are unable or unwilling

to appoint more than the minimum two elders needed to satisfy the scriptural requirement of a plurality (Titus 1:5). Moreover, there may not be enough men who are qualified or willing to serve as deacons. Worse still, deacons may fail to perform their assigned tasks. When these situations occur, assorted burdens often default to the elders, resulting in an “unequal yoke” between spiritual and fiscal responsibilities. This can be a dangerous distraction—allowing error to creep into the congregation without early detection or prevention. Shepherds should encourage the saints to assist in the local work. As a shepherd, I have experienced the mutual benefit of having each member periodically complete a volunteer task list, which enables the shepherds to “spread the workload” while simultaneously encouraging the saints to contribute of their time and talents.

There are several key actions that shepherds must consistently exhibit in order to identify and meet the spiritual needs of their saints. Two of the most important follow:

## Excellent Communication

While a shepherd’s personality is likely well established before he meets the scriptural qualifications to serve in that role, he should, nevertheless, continually devote effort to be outgoing and proactive in communicating with the brethren. Listening is a trainable skill and shepherds must seek to excel at it. Saints should feel that their shepherds are approachable, accessible, and dependable. May they also understand that shepherds are not being nosy when it is necessary for them to ask certain questions in keeping with their charge in Hebrews 13:17. Saints should also have confidence that information shared with their shepherds is confidential unless Scripture dictates otherwise. Prudence should guide whether one-on-one meetings between shepherds and saints are appropriate. Having multiple elders in a meeting with a member is often more productive in discussing and finding solutions for the spiritual or benevolent needs of that individual and their family.

As a shepherd, I have been told that such meetings can sometimes be intimidating, but I believe this concern can be avoided through cultivating a trusting relationship.

Frequently exercising a shepherd’s qualification of being “hospitable” (1 Tim. 3:2) provides excellent opportunities for informal communication between shepherds and saints. Meetings between shepherds and those wishing to place membership provide a helpful setting for establishing good communication. They give all a better understanding of the spiritual needs of prospective members. Another useful communication builder is periodic group meetings between the shepherds and the saints to share information of general interest to the church. To be clear, this is not the typical format often used for men’s business meetings in congregations lacking elders. Technological tools, such as group emails or a members-only portal in the church’s website, can expedite congregational communication when used appropriately.

## Scripturally Sound Teaching

Before being appointed to the role, shepherds must have shown that they are “able to teach” (1 Tim. 3:2). Just as Paul encouraged Timothy, a shepherd’s teaching should reflect his abilities in “rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). The primary duties of an actual shepherd to his flock includes guiding, feeding, and protecting; such terms also define the work of a spiritual shepherd. Saints need a steady diet of God’s Word along with guidance from their shepherds on how to grow in their knowledge of it and continually apply it to their daily lives. A strong Bible class program, targeted preaching, and periodic gospel meetings are excellent ways of providing for increased knowledge. While topic suggestions are always helpful from the saints, it remains the responsibility of the shepherds to select proactively those topics most needful for the congregation.

I confess my reluctance to embrace a growing trend among non-institutional churches of Christ to reduce or

“repackage” the number of services/classes each week in an apparent attempt to make such more convenient for the saints. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 restrictions of the past year and a half have inadvertently made it easier for Christians to attend services “in their pajamas.” I fear that, after all restrictions are lifted, the returning numbers will be reduced as some have felt the tug of the world and grown comfortable with a reduced spiritual commitment. Shepherds must repeatedly remind their saints to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matt. 6:33)—arranging their life priorities accordingly.

Through his teaching, an elder demonstrates his knowledge and wisdom. By correctly applying God’s word, he is able to vigilantly protect the saints from false teachers, spiritual error, and apostasy (Matt. 7:15; 1 Pet. 5:8; 2 Pet. 2:1-3). Like the secular shepherd protecting his flock of sheep, an elder must be ever watchful. Although threats today seem to be different, they are every bit as real as they were in the first century. Faithful shepherds must be continually vigilant. The best preventive is to identify spiritual threats early and deal with them promptly.

Elders should also provide ample opportunities for members to grow in their teaching skills. Teaching development and proficiency come from doing. There is a natural reluctance from some Christians to step into this role. Many excuses, as opposed to reasons, are offered. Yet, teaching usually requires increased study and results in a growing knowledge of God’s Word. How can that not be a good thing? As well, elders should recognize the added benefit of systematically preparing the next generation of shepherds. ■



Gary Watt

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# Working with the Evangelist

by Sherrel Mercer

The interaction between shepherds and an evangelist is governed by divine principles and by common sense as they honor the scriptural instructions for performing their own tasks.

## Introduction

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine (2 Tim. 4:2).

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God. . . (Acts 20:28).

With these two exhortations, the apostle Paul defines important continuing activities of a congregation. While these instructions require the interaction of the elders with the evangelist, there are few specific directives in the New Testament which govern the interaction.

The relationship of elders and the evangelist must therefore incorporate by default the lofty principles found in Sacred Scripture, not the least of which is the Golden Rule: “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them” (Matt. 7:12). Common sense and integrity are, of course, also required.

The interaction is overshadowed by the divine imperatives to preach and to save souls. A local congregation is to be a light in its community. The church is the “pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). Its unity declares the divinity of Jesus to a dark world. The interaction under the authority of the elders

should show a high standard that is recognized by all the members of the congregation. When an evangelist accepts his responsibilities and faithfully discharges them, he is following the scriptural plan.

Proper interaction may be observed in the activities of elders who define the need, method, and subject of the teaching material and “place it on a serving platter,” directing the evangelist to present the material to the congregation. Through this cooperative relationship, they fulfill the divine imperative to feed the flock.

*Understanding this interaction should be the starting point* of a relationship between an evangelist being considered and an eldership that is seeking. Once an evangelist begins his work, there are more principles that will govern the relationship.

## Patience

The virtue of patience must be present. Timothy was told to preach “with all longsuffering and doctrine.” The persuading of minds does not often happen overnight, no matter how intent the efforts of the teacher. Likewise, the familiarization with the members required of an evangelist serving well is not an instantaneous occurrence. There is also the patience required by all as the evangelist personally develops. Not every preacher has an orator’s command of the pulpit with his thoughts or vocabulary.

## Understanding

The evangelist and the elders should be capable and informed Bible students. The letters to Timothy and Titus contain much teaching that defines the work of the evangelist. Other key passages in the New Testament also define the work of elders. These tasks are designed to be mutually supportive, not mutually exclusive.

It is imperative that the *preaching* is supported, as well as the individual *preacher*. A close relationship between the elders and the evangelist is required. There should be open and regular discussion between both parties from the beginning. This is especially important when discipline of the unruly is considered.



The preacher and his whole family should be invited to come when the work is discussed. Sometimes elders make the mistake of inviting only the evangelist to come on a trip to be considered. Remember that the benefit of having a located preacher is not just to have someone who regularly occupies the pulpit. By virtue of his work environment and flexibility, he and his family can and should choose to be capable ambassadors for truth to the community. His special service to the cause of Christ includes every waking hour, not just some short periods on Sundays and Wednesdays. The needs of the family of the preacher must be openly considered, especially if there are children in the family.

## Encouragement

Attention must be given to the need for encouraging the preacher, as well as the need to avoid discouragement. As encouragements, remember that there is special tax treatment of preaching income in the United States. Every effort should be made to facilitate the ability of the preacher to take advantage of those special provisions. Some written documentation to protect him is often necessary.

Elders should willingly serve as mentors to the evangelist. They should encourage his efforts, provide constructive criticism, gently correct errors and misconceptions that may be expressed in a sermon. They must uphold the truth and display unity in the bond of peace. They should also feed him ideas for sermons, and work with him on thorny subjects, all with a goal of properly *feeding the flock*.

The elders should assure his availability for conducting gospel meetings, and for attending or participating in lectureships, special training sessions, and debates. The resultant encouragement is invaluable. Continuing education is required. A preacher should have other congregations considering his services for a gospel meeting. He should be encouraged

to participate in a mutually agreeable number of meetings. The elders, in order to support those efforts, need to always—*always*—have the ability to replace the preacher in the pulpit and any of his Bible classes when he is gone, even on short notice. Remember that elders are supposed to be apt to teach.

## Compensation

The preacher is a professional, in a proper and positive sense, and should be compensated as such. The choice made by a man to earn his living by preaching the gospel is not to be considered as his taking a vow of poverty. There is no virtue in forcing him to “live on less.” If he honors the scriptural instructions given to preachers, he will be a professional of the finest sort, giving of himself when needed, and always behaving according to the highest standard.

Some preachers are routinely discouraged by elders who wish to count only the time spent in the pulpit to determine how he is paid. When he is out sick, gone to lectures, or holding a meeting, his salary may be cut or suspended. Remember that a preacher’s benefit to the congregation far exceeds the time he spends in the pulpit. Instead, encourage the preacher by establishing his salary on an annual basis, and providing him with monthly earnings during the year. When he is away from the pulpit, his salary continues, and he is free to accept meetings even when his services are unpaid for such efforts. When the preacher cannot preach because of illness, continue his support. He does not need another burden to overcome while recuperating. Remember: Support the *preacher* as well as *preaching*.

## Confidence

Sometimes a preacher becomes discouraged by an eldership that seeks to control the hours that he spends in an office and thus restricting his exposure in the community. Such a posture fails to recognize the benefit of a located

preacher. Limiting his outside activities can limit his effectiveness.

The elders need to encourage the congregation to give the evangelist their enthusiastic support. No one is perfect, and no preacher will satisfy everyone’s thirst for learning. However, a well-taught congregation will honor the spoken word and the authority of the elders, no matter who occupies the pulpit.

## Conclusion

Elders must sometimes conclude that the services of an evangelist are no longer desired. He may not discharge the obligations and expectations that were given to him when he began the work. Recognition of such failures, especially if they cannot be resolved, will cause the elders to take action. The members of a congregation should heartily support the decision of the elders and encourage their efforts to find a capable man to occupy the pulpit. Remember the obligation that God placed on all churches to be the pillar and ground of the truth. A departure needs to be amicable. It does not have to be sudden, secretive, or hostile. Some time may be required for a preacher to locate a new congregation where he can labor. He should not be forced to live on his savings while searching for a place to which to move. Once a new preacher is engaged, the former’s salary should cease, unless there are other mutually agreeable arrangements.

Both the preacher and the elders serve divine appointments that must be honored. Their relationship should be exemplary to all, and the results of the relationship will be positive. ■



Sherrel Mercer

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# Working with the Weak

by Max Dawson

What can shepherds do to hold on to weak sheep and help them to grow? A lot! Instead of being cynical about weak brethren, let us manifest the same loving concern that David evidenced toward the flock of his earthly father and his God.

## Introduction

Working with weak Christians is one of the most challenging tasks given to shepherds. One reason for this sad reality is that the weak often do not see themselves as weak.

In helping the weak, we must first determine what kind of weakness of which we are speaking. New converts are often weak in their knowledge and need to grow (2 Pet. 3:18). Some Christians are weak in their understanding, especially with matters of conscience (Rom. 14:1-15:1). Others are weak in their conviction in serving Christ. It is this last circumstance that I want to address.

The apostle Paul directs us to “uphold the weak” (1 Thess. 5:14, NKJV). Although shepherds are discussed in the larger context, this directive is given generally to all saints. If it is given to all, it certainly applies to shepherds, since they have the greater responsibility. The words used in this text are interesting. “Weak” could apply to those who are weak in understanding, knowledge, or in conviction. A.T. Robertson observes that the word for “uphold” in this verse means “to cling to, to hold on to.” We want to hold on to those who are weak. I remember a preacher from years ago who said to me, “If people want to go, then just let them go.” While we cannot force anyone to stay with the Lord, the admonition is that we should “hold on to” the weak. We do not want to “just let them go.”

There are six things I would suggest that shepherds can do to hold on to the weak.

## 1. Urgency

Shepherds must have a sense of urgency. Do not delay in addressing the needs of weak Christians. Sometimes we wait until a person is almost gone before doing anything. Then we conclude, “They have left us, so we need to identify them as being out of fellowship.” Urgency is needed. *Now* is the time to act (2 Cor. 6:2). A time is coming when it will be too late to help those who are weak and drifting away. Jesus operated with a sense of urgency, and thus serves as our example (John 9:4).

## 2. Concern

Shepherds need to express personal concern and interest in weak Christians. Jesus Christ is our model for shepherding. In John 10:11-14, the Lord contrasted Himself with the uncommitted hireling who flees in the face of danger and “does not care about the sheep” (v. 13). The hireling does not care. Jesus cares. Shepherds must care. The weak Christian must see that in the shepherd. To accomplish that, there needs to be an intimate relationship between shepherds and the sheep. Such relationships need to be built as early as possible—don’t wait until the weak Christian is nearly gone. Once again, Jesus is the model. He said, “I know My sheep” (John 10:14). Not only did He know the sheep, but the sheep also knew Him. That’s about developing a relationship!

## 3. Instruction

Shepherds need to teach weak Christians. One who is weak in his faith will never be strong until he is taught

and well-grounded in the faith. Elders cannot rely on the pulpit and Bible classes to do all the teaching. If a disciple is to grow (2 Pet. 3:18), someone must take the time to personally teach him. Weakness is overcome by means of the gospel. If he is to be rooted and built up in Christ (Col. 2:6-7), someone must teach him. Overseers in the local church are not to be mere decision-makers for the congregation, but are to labor among the saints and admonish them (1 Thess. 5:12). This verse requires urgency on the part of the overseer, his personal concern for the members of the flock, and his efforts at teaching the weak sheep.

## 4. Involvement

Shepherds should enlist the help of others to hold on to the weak. Perhaps there are persons of influence within the congregation who might have sway over the weak saint. While it is the shepherd who will give account for the souls in his charge (Heb. 13:17), that does not mean he can’t turn to others for help. One of the mistakes that both elders and deacons make is in thinking that they must do all their work by themselves. How many times did Paul enlist men like Timothy and Titus to assist in his larger work? What about Phoebe? She was a helper of Paul (Rom. 16:2). The simple point is that sometimes others may be able to reach a weak Christian better than I can. That does not mean I am dodging my duty. Instead, it means that I want to use all the resources at my disposal to hold on to the weak saint.

## 5. Patience

Shepherds should be patient with the weak. The same verse that tells us to “uphold the weak” also tells us to “be patient with all” (1 Thess. 5:14). This text instructs us to admonish the unruly and to encourage the fainthearted. It is easy to give up on any of these persons. The “unruly” are those who break ranks and seem to always be a thorn in the side of the church. The “fainthearted” are those who easily give up and need encouragement. Whether they face persecution, family problems, or conflict with someone in the congregation, elders have to deal with them. It is worth noting that the apostle closes this verse with “be patient with *all*.” The disorderly circumstances of each of these believers will try the patience of leaders, but don’t give up on them. You don’t want any of them to give up on the Lord, so we must not give up on them. I say that, while recognizing that there is a limit to what we can do with any person. Nevertheless, patience is needed!

## 6. Prayer

Finally, don’t leave God out of your work to hold on to the weak believer. Pray to God for help. The Lord Jesus already cares more about the weak sheep than do you! He died for the sheep (John 10:11). God is eager for weak Christians to grow and be strong. He desires that every Christian be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29). Our prayers for the weak must truly come from our heart’s desire. That’s what prayer is: the verbal expression to God of what is the utmost desire within our hearts. (See Paul’s example in Romans 10:1. His heart’s desire and prayer were one and the same.) Perhaps this point about prayer should be first on the list rather than last. Pray to God for help.

## Conclusion

The things mentioned in this brief article are within the reach of every shepherd. Are their times when there is a need for tools beyond the skillset of local

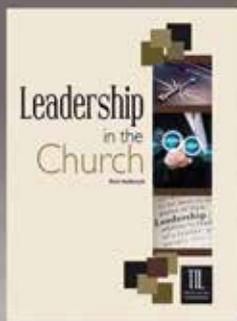
elders? We have all seen circumstances where we are unequipped to deal with a particular problem. That is especially true with addiction issues involving drugs, alcohol, or pornography. Sometimes professional help is necessary to assist a weak Christian. Yet, in the larger scheme of God’s economy, elders need to be confident that they have the necessary tools to help the weak grow.

May God bless all those men who have taken on the responsibility of seeing to the needs of sheep (Heb. 13:17). May the Lord of heaven and earth reward them for their labors. 🙏



Max Dawson

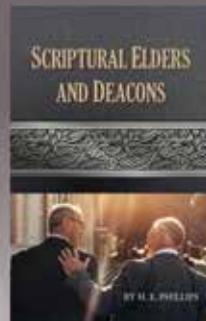
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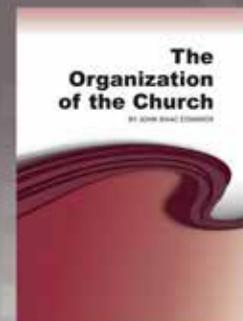
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# Working with the Wayward

by Donnie V. Rader

Elders must use wisdom as they lead the congregation in trying to bring the wayward back home to God. When such efforts are unsuccessful, may local shepherds fulfill the difficult duty of exercising discipline properly and productively.

## Introduction

Some sheep among the fold of God that will go astray (Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19-20). Shepherds of the local church must lead and guide the rest of the flock in trying to bring the wayward home. What should elders do in their work with those who are wayward?

## Lead the Church in Watching for Souls

Elders have the responsibility of watching out for souls (Heb. 13:17). Several things are included in that task.

### *Make Sure the Congregation Knows God's Will on Discipline.*

In some churches discipline is not practiced and God's will on the matter is not taught. When such is the case, the command to withdraw will be forgotten (1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3). Shepherds who properly feed the flock make sure the church is well informed about all aspects of church discipline.

### *Provide Teaching That Will Strengthen Faith and Prevent Departures.*

Shepherds are responsible for all the teaching that takes place within a local congregation (Acts 20:28). If the truth is being properly taught, it will build up those who hear (Acts 20:32).

### *Watch for Drifting and Evidence of Problems Developing Among the Sheep.*

Shepherds who care about the sheep will know them well enough to see early signs of any change taking place. Such problems are more easily dealt with in the early stages.

## Make Multiple Efforts to Restore

Despite the best efforts to prevent departure, some will still stray from the fold (Jas. 5:19-20). When that happens, what should the elders do?

### *Make It Your Goal to Restore the Erring (Gal. 6:1).*

When one is wayward, we should seek to restore him before any consideration is given to withdrawing. As an elder, I have often gone to see one who is unfaithful. Such individuals may ask, "Are you going to withdraw from me?" My response always is that withdrawing is not even on our radar at the moment. We are hoping that he will change his heart before that discussion needs to take place.

### *Exhaust Every Effort to Win the Soul Before Determining He Is Disorderly.*

Even the heretic is not to be rejected until there has been a second admonition (Titus 3:10). Those efforts will involve, not only each elder making an appeal, but also encouraging the congregation to visit, call, or in some way contact the erring. If the church may later be asked to

withdraw from the unfaithful (1 Cor. 5:4), surely, they should be involved in the effort to restore.

### *Don't Drag Your Feet So Long That Discipline Becomes Ineffective.*

While elders should not be trigger-happy on withdrawing from the unfaithful, neither should they wait so long that any discipline becomes ineffective. The church at Corinth was rebuked for not taking action before they did (1 Cor. 5). I have known of churches waiting for a year or two before they begin to suggest they may need to withdraw from one who persists in sin.

## Warn the Wayward

Paul wrote to the Thessalonians saying that those who are over you (elders) admonish you (1 Thess. 5:12). The NKJV footnote says, "instruct or warn" (which is the same word as "warn" [v. 14]). Those who are "unruly" (i.e., same word as disorderly [2 Thess. 3:6]) are to be warned (1 Thess. 5:14).

By warn, we do not merely mean that he should be warned that he will be subjected to disciplinary action; rather, warn him of the danger that awaits if he does not change his spiritual condition. He is in sin, separated from God (Jas. 1:15; 5:19-20; Rom. 5:12), and will lose his soul eternally if he does not repent (Rom. 6:23).

## Lead the Congregation in Withdrawing

Despite the best efforts to bring the erring to repentance, some will persist in sin and the time will come when action must be taken to withdraw (1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3). Here, leaders must exercise wisdom. How they (the elders) and the congregation handle the matter of discipline will make all the difference in its effectiveness.

### Manifesting Clarity

Clarify to the congregation that this is the action of the whole church. The case at Corinth shows that the whole church was involved (1 Cor. 5:4; 2 Cor. 2:6). It is not just the elders taking action, but the whole church. Since the whole church is expected to agree and support the disciplinary action, they are entitled to know the facts. Think of the power that has if every member worked toward restoring the erring (Gal. 6:1).

### Manifesting Wisdom

This is where elders can use wisdom. Don't make announcements that sound like "We, the elders are withdrawing from this brother." Rather, clarify that we are leading the congregation in the matter.

### Manifesting Purpose

The purpose of disciplinary action is two-fold. Shepherds should not only know but instruct the congregation of the purpose. If withdrawing is commanded (1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3), then it has some important purpose. "The Scriptures do suggest, however, that discipline has both a *corrective* and *protective* function" (Jackson).

First, this is a continual effort to bring the erring to repentance. The church at Corinth was told to withdraw from the fornicator so that his spirit might be saved (1 Cor. 5:5). The church at Thessalonica was told to withdraw that the brother might be ashamed (2 Thess. 3: 6-15).

Secondly, this action is to keep the church pure. In dealing with the fornicator, Paul said that "a little leaven leavens the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6), so he says to put away the one living wickedly (v. 13). When such action is taken, others take note and learn that sin has consequences (cf. Deut. 21:18-21; Acts 5:11; 1 Tim. 5:20). When discipline is not practiced, the sinner persists in his sin, as was the case at Corinth (1 Cor. 5). As a result, the church is then corrupted.

### Manifesting Understanding

The one who is the subject of withdrawal walks disorderly. Paul instructs the Thessalonians to withdraw from those who *walk disorderly* (2 Thess. 3:6). The same writer clearly shows a difference in one who is *weak* and one who is *unruly* (1 Thess. 5:14). Please note that this same word is translated "disorderly" in 2 Thessalonians 3:6.

The word translated "disorderly" is a military term meaning "not keeping rank" (Vine, 174). *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon* says the word means, "disorderly, out of ranks, (often so of soldiers). . . deviating from the prescribed order or rule" (Thayer, 83).

### Manifesting Leadership

Elders must lead in the procedure. Since the Bible does not specify the details of the procedure, this is an area in which shepherds must exercise wisdom. After ample admonition, the erring should be informed of the intent to withdraw from them. The instructions of 1 Corinthians 5 and 2 Thessalonians 3 imply that the erring know what is going on—otherwise, how effective will it be? How the elders inform the erring is not specified. They may deliver the message personally and orally, or they may inform him by letter. How much time is allowed between informing the wayward of the intent to withdraw and the action of withdrawing is also a matter of judgment.

## Conclusion

There is an aspect of this action that takes place in the assembly (1 Cor. 5:4). This lets the church know what is going on and marks the point at which the brethren no longer have fellowship with the erring. How this public action is handled by the elders will make a tremendous difference. In taking such action, they should show love and kindness (Rom. 13:10; 1 Cor. 16:14). Their sincere desire to bring the wayward back should be evident to all. 🙏

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# What Does Heb. 10:25 Teach?

by Kyle Pope (continued from page 7)

It describes efforts to motivate behavior. In the context of Hebrews 10:23-25, “exhorting one another” is another way of saying “stir up love and good works.” While exhortation and encouragement often involve our actions as individuals, the New Testament emphasizes that assemblies in the church (or synagogue) are vital to “exhorting one another.” Proper use of spiritual gifts allowed “edification, and exhortation, and comfort” (1 Cor. 14:3; cf. Acts 15:30-31). Those who spoke in the synagogue offered a “word of exhortation” (Acts 13:15). The verb form is often a way of describing preaching and teaching within such assemblies (cf. Acts 2:40; 11:23; 15:32; 20:2). So, clearly, Hebrews 10:25 encourages faithful attendance of studies and services of the local church as a means of encouraging one another and avoiding drifting away from faith in Christ.

## Hebrews 10:25 and the AD 70 Doctrine

Unfortunately, this passage has been misused to promote an erroneous theory espoused by advocates of the AD 70 Doctrine. Here is how. Matthew 24:31 reads, “And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together (*episunagō*) His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” AD 70 advocates (and even some who don’t accept all of its teachings) argue this is talking about what happened in the destruction of Jerusalem—not the Final Judgment! They argue it is a fulfillment of prophecies such as Hosea 1:11: “Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together (*sunagō*, LXX 2:2), And appoint for themselves one head; And they shall come up out of the land, For great will be the day of Jezreel!” They then argue that Hebrews 10:25 is not talking about church assemblies, but

the gathering together of the Jews under the Messiah—which they argue didn’t happen on Pentecost, but in AD 70. So, they define “forsaking the assembling of ourselves together” as turning back to Judaism and ignoring (what they argue was) the spiritual gathering that would happen in AD 70. To further their theory, they appeal to 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2, where Paul writes, “Now, brethren, concerning the coming (*parousia*) of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together (*episunagōgē*, as in Heb. 10:25) to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.” So, to express it mathematically, for them Matthew 24:31=Hosea 1:11=2 Thessalonians 2:1-2=Hebrews 10:25.

First, we should note that Hebrews 10:25 speaks of “the assembling of OURSELVES (*heautōn*) together.” *Heatōn* is a reflexive pronoun that directly applies to those to whom the writer is speaking. His readers are the ones whose “assembling” is in danger of being forsaken. Turning back to Judaism or ignoring a future gathering under the Messiah would not be abandoning their own assembling. Second, Hosea 1:11 foretold a restoration of Israel and Judah under “one head.” The Hebrew writer described Jesus as “that great Shepherd of the sheep” (Heb. 13:20). The Jewish Christians to whom the book was written had already “come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem” (12:22). They were already part of “the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven” (12:23). So, the *gathering* of Hosea 1:11 had already occurred. Third, in 2 Thessalonians 2:1, in speaking of the “coming (*parousia*) of our Lord Jesus Christ,” Paul uses the word *parousia* that literally means “being beside” someone or something (cf. Phil.

2:12). It is applied to Christ’s first coming in a literal, visible, and actual manner (2 Pet. 3:4) and is never used in biblical or non-biblical writing of a figurative or representative coming [see Note]. Christ was not literally present in the events of AD 70, so 2 Thessalonians cannot be describing the destruction of Jerusalem. Finally, Matthew 24:31 comes in the same discourse that ends with the description of Final Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46). That description begins, “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats” (25:31-32). This parallels wording in Matthew 24:30-31. “All the nations” were not judged in AD 70. Paul wrote that at the “last trumpet” the “dead will be raised incorruptible” (1 Cor. 15:52). That did not happen in AD 70, so Matthew 24:31 has not yet occurred. This theory is a forced attempt to connect diverse passages that all describe *gatherings* but ignores the details and context of the different texts. Hebrews 10:25 is talking about assemblies of local congregations for worship and exhortation. **■**

[Note] For a thorough analysis of the biblical and extra-biblical use of this word see my study, “What is the Focus of the Mount of Olives Discourse,” in “*When Will These Things Be?*: Questions on Eschatology,” Mark Mayberry and Kyle Pope, eds., Athens, AL: Truth Publications Inc., 2021, pp. 343-370.



Kyle Pope

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## ALASKA

### ANCHORAGE

#### *Rose St. church of Christ*

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

## ALABAMA

### BIRMINGHAM

#### *Pine Ln. church of Christ*

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

#### *Vestavia Hills church of Christ*

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

## FLORENCE

#### *College View church of Christ*

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

## MOBILE

#### *West Mobile church of Christ*

129 Hillcrest Rd.  
Sun. Worship: 9-9:30 a.m. | Bible Study: 9:30-10:30 a.m. |  
Worship: 10:30-11:30 a.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.  
342-4144 or 342-2041  
Evangelist: Ken Sils (765) 307-8048

## MONTGOMERY

#### *Ashburton Dr. church of Christ*

(formerly Southeast)  
70 Ashburton Dr.  
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.  
Contacts: Kirk Moore (334) 546-3788  
John Humphries (334) 306-4172

#### *Eastbrook church of Christ*

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

## PARRISH

#### *McArthur Heights church of Christ*

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

## SCOTTSBORO

#### *Eastside church of Christ*

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

## ARKANSAS

### CONWAY

#### *Eastside church of Christ*

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

#### *Hwy 65 church of Christ*

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

#### *Prince St. church of Christ*

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

## FORT SMITH

#### *South 46th St. church of Christ*

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

## HARRISON

#### *Capps Rd. church of Christ*

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

## JONESBORO

#### *StoneRidge church of Christ*

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

## LITTLE ROCK

#### *Church of Christ*

7115 West 65th St.  
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.  
Evangelist: Don McClain, Res. (501) 847-6677  
Study (501) 568-1062

## MARVELL

#### *Marvell church of Christ*

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

## PINE BLUFF

#### *Hwy 79 S church of Christ*

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

## POCAHONTAS

#### *Westside church of Christ*

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

## TEXARKANA

#### *Church of Christ*

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

## WALDRON

#### *Westside church of Christ*

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

## ARIZONA

### GLENDALE

#### *Church of Christ*

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

## TUCSON

#### *Church of Christ*

145 N. Country Club Rd.  
Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.  
Evangelist: Hugh Delong  
(520) 326-3634 or 722-3179

## CALIFORNIA

### BELLFLOWER

#### *Rose Ave. church of Christ*

17903 Ibbotson Ave.  
Sun. Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. | Worship: 10:50 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.  
(562) 866-5615  
roseavenue.org

## FOLSOM

#### *Church of Christ*

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

## LONG BEACH

#### *Church of Christ*

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

## OCEANSIDE-VISTA

#### *Church of Christ*

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

## COLORADO

### FORT COLLINS

#### *Poudre Valley church of Christ*

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

## MONTROSE

#### *San Juan church of Christ*

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

## DELAWARE

### MILTON

#### *Lighthouse church of Christ*

14574 Coastal Hwy. Rt. 1  
Sun. Worship: 9:30 a.m. | Bible Class: 10:45 a.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.  
(302) 644-7379

## FLORIDA

### DESTIN

#### *South Walton church of Christ*

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

## FORT LAUDERDALE

#### *Northside church of Christ*

Pompano Plaza Shopping Center  
70 East McNab Rd., Pompano Beach, FL 33060  
Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 12:30 p.m. | No Sun. p.m.  
Services  
Wed. 7:30 p.m.  
(954) 822-1974 | northsideflauderdale.com

## FORT MYERS

#### *Southside church of Christ*

13641 Learning Court  
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.  
Evangelist: David P. Schmidt  
(239) 433-2838 or 482-2158

## FROSTPROOF

#### *Frostproof church of Christ*

40 W. "A" St. | Frostproof, FL 33843  
Sun. Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:30 a.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m. | (863) 635-2607 or 635-4278

## GENEVA

#### *Church of Christ*

Ave. C & 2nd St.  
Sun. 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  
Sun. Bible Study: 10 a.m. | Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.  
Evangelist: William LeDent (305) 451-1194

## MARY ESTHER

#### *Church of Christ*

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

## MIAMI

#### *Church of Christ*

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

#### *Flagler Grove church of Christ*

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

#### *Church of Christ*

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

## OCALA

#### *Anthony church of Christ*

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

# ChurchDirectory

## ORLANDO

### *Azalea Park church of Christ*

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

### *Church of Christ at S. Bumby*

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

### *Pine Hills church of Christ*

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

## PALMETTO

### *Palmetto church of Christ*

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

## PANAMA CITY BEACH

### *Beach church of Christ*

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

## SEFFNER

### *Church of Christ*

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

## GEORGIA

## CENTERVILLE

### *Centerville church of Christ*

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

## COLUMBUS

### *River City church of Christ*

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

## CONYERS

### *Rockdale church of Christ*

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

## PINE MTN. VALLEY

### *Church of Christ*

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

## SAVANNAH

### *Coastal church of Christ*

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

## VALDOSTA

### *Church Of Christ*

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

## IDAHO

## BLACKFOOT

### *Church of Christ*

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

## IOWA

## DES MOINES

### *Church of Christ*

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

## GRINNELL

### *Church of Christ*

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

## ILLINOIS

## CHICAGO

### *Church of Christ*

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

## DOWNERS GROVE

### *Church of Christ*

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

## GLEN ELLYN

### *Glen Ellyn church of Christ*

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

## MATTOON

### *Southside church of Christ*

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

## SOUTH HOLLAND

### *Southeast church of Christ*

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

## INDIANA

## CLARKSVILLE

### *Clarksville church of Christ*

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

## GREENWOOD

### *Greenwood church of Christ*

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

## HOBART

### *Church of Christ*

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

## INDIANAPOLIS

### *Castleton church of Christ*

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

## JAMESTOWN

### *Church of Christ*

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

## OOLITIC

Church of Christ

### *400 Lafayette Ave. | P.O. Box 34*

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

## PEKIN

### *Church of Christ*

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

## PLAINFIELD

### *Church of Christ West*

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

## SAINT LEON

### *Church of Christ*

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

## SALEM

### *Westside church of Christ*

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

## TRAFALGAR

### *Spearsville Rd. church of Christ*

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

## KANSAS

## TOPEKA

### *17th St. church of Christ*

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

## KENTUCKY

## AUSTIN

### *Peter's Creek church of Christ*

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

## BEAVER DAM

### *Church of Christ*

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

## BENTON

### *Fairdealing church of Christ*

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

## BRANDENBURG

### *Brandenburg church of Christ*

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

## CAMPBELLSVILLE

### *Sunny Hill Dr. church of Christ*

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

## CANEYVILLE

### *Caneyville church of Christ*

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

## DANVILLE

### *Church of Christ*

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

## FRANKLIN

### *31-W North church of Christ*

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

## HODGENVILLE

### Hodgenville church of Christ

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

## LEITCHFIELD

### Mill St. church of Christ

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

## LOUISVILLE

### Valley Station church of Christ

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

## LOUISIANA

## GONZALES

### Southside church of Christ

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

## MANY

### Lakeside church of Christ

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

## STONEWALL

### N. DeSoto church of Christ

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

## MARYLAND

## SEVERN

### Southwest church of Christ

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

## MAINE

## PORTLAND

### Church of Christ 856 Brighton Ave.

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

## MICHIGAN

## CEDAR SPRINGS

### W. Michigan church of Christ

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

## MINNESOTA

## DULUTH

### Church of Christ

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

## ST. CHARLES

### Church of Christ

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

## MISSISSIPPI

## BOONEVILLE

### Oakleigh Dr. church of Christ

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

## CLINTON

### McRaven Rd. church of Christ

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

## MERIDIAN

### Grandview church of Christ

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

### 7th St. church of Christ

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

## SOUTHAVEN

### Church of Christ

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

## MISSOURI

## BLUE SPRINGS

### Southside church of Christ

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

## BRANSON

### Eagle Rock Rd. church of Christ

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

## CAPE GIRARDEAU

### Cape County church of Christ

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

## DONIPHAN

### Southside church of Christ

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

## FAIR GROVE

### Church of Christ

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

## KENNETT

### Church of Christ

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

## LILBOURN

### Church of Christ

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

## RAYTOWN

### Sterling Ave. church of Christ

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

## ST. JAMES

### Church of Christ

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

## ST. JOSEPH

### County Line church of Christ

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

## NEBRASKA

## BEATRICE

### Church of Christ at 7th & Bell

Sun. Bible Study: 9 a.m. | Worship: 10 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.  
233-4102 or 228-3827 | churchofchrist7bell.com

## NEVADA

## RENO

### Central church of Christ

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

## NORTH CAROLINA

## CHARLOTTE

### Charlotte church of Christ

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

## OHIO

## BEAVERCREEK

### Knollwood church of Christ

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

## CINCINNATI

### Blue Ash church of Christ

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

## CLEVELAND

### Lorain Ave. church of Christ

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

## COLUMBUS

### Laurel Canyon church of Christ

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

## DAYTON

### West Carrollton church of Christ

28 W. Main St., 45449  
Sun. Worship: 9 a.m. | Bible Study: 9:30 a.m. | Worship: 10:25 a.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.  
Evangelists: Michael Grushon (937) 866-5162 or Alan Beck  
(937) 469-3311  
wc-coc.org

## FRANKLIN

### Franklin church of Christ

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

## FREMONT

### Church of Christ

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

## HAMILTON

### Westview church of Christ

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

## HILLIARD

### Church of Christ

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

## MANSFIELD

### Southside church of Christ

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

## NEW LEBANON

### *New Lebanon church of Christ*

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

## MARIETTA-RENO

### *Marietta-Reno church of Christ*

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

## NORTHWOOD

### *Frey Rd. church of Christ*

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

## UHRICHSVILLE

### *Church of Christ*

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

## OKLAHOMA

### MCALESTER

#### *North A St. church of Christ*

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

### OKLAHOMA CITY

#### *Seminole Pointe church of Christ*

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

## OREGON

### SWEET HOME

#### *Church of Christ*

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

## PENNSYLVANIA

### PHILADELPHIA

#### *Church of Christ*

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

## SOUTH CAROLINA

### COLUMBIA

#### *Lower Richland church of Christ*

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

### SUMTER

#### *Woodland church of Christ*

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

## WEST COLUMBIA

### *Airport church of Christ*

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

## TENNESSEE

### COLUMBIA

#### *Mooresville Pike church of Christ*

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

### COSBY

#### *Cosby church of Christ*

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

### JACKSON

#### *Sunset View church of Christ*

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

### JOHNSON CITY

#### *Brookmead church of Christ*

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

### JONESBOROUGH

#### *11-E church of Christ*

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

### KINGSTON SPRINGS

#### *Kingston Springs church of Christ*

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

### MT. PLEASANT

#### *Locust St. church of Christ*

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

### KINGSFORT

#### *Kingsport church of Christ*

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

### MARYVILLE

#### *Smokey Mt. church of Christ*

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

## MEMPHIS

### *Rocky Pt. Rd. church of Christ*

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

### MURFREESBORO

#### *Cason Ln. church of Christ*

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

#### *Northfield Blvd. church of Christ*

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

## NASHVILLE

#### *Hillview church of Christ*

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

#### *Perry Heights church of Christ*

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

## SHELBYVILLE

#### *El Bethel church of Christ*

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

#### *Shelbyville Mills church of Christ*

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

## TEXAS

### ALLEN

#### *West Allen church of Christ*

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

### ALVARADO

#### *I-35 church of Christ*

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

### ALVIN

#### *Adoue St. church of Christ*

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

### AUSTIN

#### *Schultz Ln. church of Christ*

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

## BAYTOWN

### *Church of Christ at Pruett & Lobit*

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

## BEAUMONT

### *Dowlen Rd. church of Christ*

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

## CONROE

### *Woodland Hills church of Christ*

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

## CORPUS CHRISTI

### *Hwy. 9 church of Christ*

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

## DICKINSON

### *Church of Christ*

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

## DALLAS

### *Methodist St. church of Christ*

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

## DUNCANVILLE

### *Whispering Hills church of Christ*

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

## EDNA

### *Church of Christ*

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

## EL PASO

### *Eastridge church of Christ*

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

## FORT WORTH

### *West Side church of Christ*

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

## GRANBURY

### *Church of Christ*

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

## HOUSTON

### *Fry Rd. church of Christ*

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

### *Spring Woods church of Christ*

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

## IRVING

### *Westside church of Christ*

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

## LANCASTER

### *Pleasant Run church of Christ*

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

## LUBBOCK

### *Indiana Ave. church of Christ*

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

## LUFKIN

### *Timberland Dr. church of Christ*

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

## MANSFIELD

### *Northside church of Christ*

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

## NACOGDOCHES

### *Stallings Dr. church of Christ*

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

## PLANO

### *Spring Creek church of Christ*

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

## SAN ANTONIO

### *Grissom Rd. church of Christ*

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

### *Pecan Valley church of Christ*

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

## SHERMAN

### *Westwood Village church of Christ*

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

## TEMPLE

### *Leon Valley church of Christ*

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

## WACO

### *Sun Valley church of Christ*

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

## THE WOODLANDS

### *Woodlands church of Christ*

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

## VIRGINIA

### CHESAPEAKE

### *Tidewater church of Christ*

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

## CHESTER

### *Chester church of Christ*

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

## RICHMOND

### *Courthouse church of Christ*

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

### *Forest Hill church of Christ*

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

## RIDGEWAY

### *Church of Christ*

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

## ROANOKE

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

## VIRGINIA BEACH

### *Southside church of Christ*

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

## WASHINGTON

### BELLINGHAM

### *Mt. Baker church of Christ*

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

## SEQUIM

### *Sequim church of Christ*

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

## TACOMA

### *Manitou Park church of Christ*

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

## WEST VIRGINIA

### CHARLESTON

### *Oakwood Rd. church of Christ*

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

## CLARKSBURG

### *Westside church of Christ*

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

## FAIRMONT

### *Eastside church of Christ*

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

## GLADESVILLE

### *Gladesville church of Christ*

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

## MOUNDSVILLE

### *Moundsville church of Christ*

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

## PARKERSBURG

### *Marrtown church of Christ*

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

## WYOMING

### RANCHESTER

### *Ranchester church of Christ*

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

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## Publications

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