

church of Christ

TRIUMPH

“Do you know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it” (1 Cor. 9:24)

Matthew 23 (5)

Gabriel Rodriguez

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What a tragedy when all our efforts are accounted for nothing. This is what will happen on the Day of Judgment with many “Christians,” and for that matter other religious entities and folks. Jesus said in Matthew 7:21-23, “*Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, in your name cast out devils, and in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, the that work iniquity.*” It doesn’t matter whether we are religious, or engage in acts consistent with that religion, the point of Jesus is, unless it is done in the right spirit, according to the Father’s truth (Jn. 4:24; 17:17), then all our efforts will be in vain.

The Pharisees and scribes continued to be reprimanded by Jesus, and in verse 15 he said, they (Pharisees and scribes) would “*compass land and sea to make one proselyte,*” and when he was made, made him “*twofold more than the child of hell than yourselves*” (v. 15). Jesus’ words were consistent with those in Matthew 7:21-23. Although seen as spiritual leaders, their efforts were fruitless, and consequently, those that

followed their lives also became fruitless. And much to their chagrin, instead of counting worthy of God were headed to hell. What a tragedy, but one that could have been avoided if people would have questioned and fact checked their beliefs, being honest about their conduct and character, which were clearly inconsistent with the Old Testament Scriptures, logic, reason, and common sense.

What this teaches us is, we must make sure we are following and doing what God truly commands. This means checking any and all religions (and its leaders) to see whether it and they are consistent with teaching and practicing the truth (Acts 17:11). Once we can independently determine this, we then can avoid our efforts to be in vain. What shock and sadness it will be, when people’s action didn’t account for nothing because they were not following the correct doctrine and example. All of their time, money, and efforts will mean nothing for them in the end. We must make sure that the path I’m traveling is the one that will take me and my family to heaven, not hell. This is our responsibility to “save ourselves” from the untoward generation. May God be praised!

Give Me A Church That Teaches Truth

Church News and Announcements

CONGREGATION

The family home devotional will be on December 31 at 8:00 pm in the annex. Come bring in the New Year with brethren. Please bring games and finger foods.

YOUTH

The elders are looking for a host family for Januray's devotional. See brother Hipp if you can help.

YOUNG ADULT

No news at this time.

AREA NEWS

See Bulletin Board for area wide meetings.

As we noted last week and the week before, the popular mindset among people is finding a church that will make them feel good emotionally. Hence, the more programs it has, the better the facilities are, and the more polished speaker(s) and emotionally charged messages it contains, is what people look for. But according to the Scriptures, there is only one concern the First Century Christians had when it came to religion and a church. It had to teach and practice the truth.

We have our criteria so messed up today that *truth* is least of our concerns. And because of this, many so called "religious people" will have a rude awakening on the Day of Judgment. But what is truth? The word "*truth*" is mentioned 111 times in the New Testament and is used to identify the importance of fact, reality, and objectivity as it pertains to the duties of man - moral and religious (Jn. 3:21; 4:24; 8:32,40,44; 14:6; 15:26). In other words, God is concerned with thinking, saying, and acting out things that correspond with fact and reality. So when our main focus is on what makes us feel good, then of course, we'll accept things inconsistent with fact and reality.

This is the reason why churches today, instead of preaching and practicing truth, will say and do things that appeal to one's emotions, rather than the intellect God so desperately wants used.

What all this means is, truth is intellectualism. But what does this mean? In John 4:24, Jesus said, "God is MIND and they that worship him must worship Him in MIND and TRUTH." In other words, God desires we use our intellect, that which He gave us in creation (Gen. 1:26), to live life. But the only way to build up the intellect is by studying and meditating upon His will. By doing this, we then can assure ourselves that we'll understand what God wants from us (Eph. 5:17), which will then lead to proper application (actions). Unfortunately, emotions is what is dominates the religious landscape, not the building up of the mind with truth (Acts 20:32).

This is why true worship and religion is so boring to many folks, because it focuses on the mind of man. Although an emotional response can and will be experience when the intellect is stimulated, true worship involves more thinking and changing one's life to please the Father.

So why not make a search for a church that builds the mind through the correct knowledge and understanding of God's word, making us wiser unto salvation? Let's leave behind religions that only seek to stimulate the feelings, which are capacious and fleeting. Truth will give religion its true aim and goal, which is to teach people what they need to know and follow in order to get to the next level. May God be praised!

Bro. G. Rodriguez

WHAT SAITH THE LORD?

Nearly two thousand years ago an important question was raised before the Apostles after they had delivered the good news of Jesus's life, death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 2:21-36). The hearer's conscience were pricked of sinful conduct (2 Cor. 7: 10-11) and asked: "*Men and brethren, what shall we do* (in order to be saved)? (Acts 2:37). Without hesitation, Peter elevated his voice and proclaimed: "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 2:38).

Upon hearing the words of Peter, the people obeyed. This demonstrated their belief in Christ (Jn. 8:24). Hence, they repented of sin and confessed allegiance to the name of Christ (Matt. 10:32-33). Afterwards, the people were baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:41, cf. Mrk. 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).

The people's submission to the words of salvation granted them a relationship with God the Father by accessing citizenship into the church of Christ (Acts 2:47, cf. Matt. 16:18; Mrk. 9:1; Acts. 2:1-4). As a member of Christ's body (Acts 8:4) the people were then encouraged to live faithful unto death by conquering sin in their lives (Rev. 2:10; Rom. 6: 4-12; 2 Tim. 4: 6-8). We then await for the coming day in which all men shall be judged the word of God (Jn 12:48; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Cor. 5:10). Will we be ready?

SHEPHERD'S CORNER

Finding Peace With Ourselves

Probably the principle reason for strife between people is the strife within people. It is very difficult to be at peace with others when there is a war raging within us. The apostle Paul said, "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. But he that boubteth is condemned if he eat...Herein do I exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and man always" (Rom. 14:22-23; Acts 24:16). One just cannot have peace within himself while he lives in a way that he believes to be wrong. Living at variance to what we have learned is right is a sure guarantee that we will be at war constantly with ourselves.

The "Prince of Peace" grants peace through our faith in Him: "Casting all your care on him, for he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7). When we se that "God hath made him both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36) and that He has "all authority, both in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18), we have the basis for real peace. "If God is for us, who is against us?...Lo, I am with you alway...Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me" (Rom. 8:31; Matty. 28:20; Jno.14:1). You see, nothing can hurt you, if Christ is your Protector, if He cares for you and has the power to take care of you in all circumstances. And He does! Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jno. 14:27). The assurance that Jesus cares, that He protects and that "He is able to save to the uttermost" (Heb. 7:25) should give us that "peace of God which passeth understanding" (Phil 4:7).

"The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked" (Prov. 10:3).

Bro. W. Holmes

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

BISHOPS/SHEPHERDS/ELDERS

(1 Tim. 3: 1-6)

Brother Elwyn Hipp (830) 510-6311,
Brother Wayne Holmes (210) 696-8597

DEACON

(Acts 6: 1-5; 1
Tim. 3: 7-12)

Brother Raul Baltierra
(210) 843-9730

GOSPEL PREACHER

(1 Cor. 9:1-16; 1 Tim.
4:6; 2 Tim. 4: 2-5)

Brother Gabriel Rodriguez
(210)315-4453



December 20

AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *G. Rodriguez*
 Opening Prayer: *R. Baltierra Jr*
 Song Leader: *E. Hipp*
 Lord's Supper: *T. Mayces; R. Trevino; B. Dorries; E. Lerma*

Scripture: *Matt. 27:45-54*
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*
 Benediction: *N. Esenowo*

PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *G. Rodriguez*
 Opening Prayer: *B. Dorries*
 Song Leader: *R. Trevino*
 Lord's Supper: *R. Baltierra; Z. Watkins*

Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*
 Benediction: *E. Hipp*

After Greeter: *C. Empett*
 Greeter/Usher: *S. Hernandez*
 AV Duty: *M. de la Garza*
 Elder in charge: *W. Holmes*

REMEMBERING OUR BELOVED

(by writing, calling, and praying)

Wayne Holmes
 Juanita Mahan
 Richard Rodriguez
 Rina White
 Joe Guillen
 Sarah Cannon
 Olga (Joe's mother-in-law)
 Ina Dial
 David Sudhoff
 Elijah Sudhoff
 Roy Guajardo (battling Parkinsons)
 Rose Scott (grandmother of Clay and Wes Bond)
 Caral O'Banon

BATTLING CANCER:

Barbara Oakes Johna Dorries
 Abigail Reyes Graciola Anderson
 Lydia Cowan George Jackson
 Briana Nieves Sonny Cary
 Elwyn Hipp Gwen Parker

SHUT-INS:

Dorothy Harper
 Dazel Ball
 Mildred Geest

TRAVELING:

A. Jacob; Courtney Cobb (Japan)

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES DECEMBER

Organizing Monthly Luncheon:
P. White
 Preparing Lord's Supper:
Moras
 Auditorium Service Duties:
Open
 Wash baptismal garments; clean cry
 room
Open
 Brother in charge of services:
J. Guillen

AM Theme:
 "Praising God" - A Study in the book of
 Psalms
 PM Theme:
 Setting the Church in Order - A Study in
 the books of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus

AM Sermon:

Psalm 33

PM Sermon:

*"Perilous Times" (1) - The Challenge to
 Living Faithful*

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

December 16: *R. Baltierra*
 December 23: *E. Lerma*
 December 30: *B. Dorries*

FOR THE RECORD

December 13

Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study 41
 Sunday AM Worship 64
 Sunday PM Worship 49
 Wednesday Bible Study 54
 Budget/Offering: **\$2,450.00/ \$1,799.27**

Weekly Bible Readers: NA (Adult Bible class)

SHENANDOAH CHURCH OF CHRIST

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shenandoah@shenandoahcofc.org

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

Sunday: Bible Study at 9:30 am; Worship at 10:30 am;
 Worship at 5:00 pm.
 Wednesday: Bible Study at 7:00 pm