

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 (3)

Gabriel Rodriguez

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Because the Pharisees and scribes had elevated themselves into a position only to be held by God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ (Matt. 23:1-12), their self-aggrandizement led to an abuse of power upon the common person. Jesus exposed these men for who they really were and chronicled their false teachings and actions.

But first, Jesus exposed the Pharisees and scribes as hypocrites. A hypocrite was a pretender, an actor if you will. So in other words, the Pharisees and scribes looked the part of a devout religious leader, but their actions spoke a different story. And because of their wicked behavior, instead of helping people get to heaven, they were leading themselves and others the opposite direction - hell. He said, “*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.*”

What a lesson to be learned. What makes a difference in life is not what we say, but what we do. It's the old platitude all over again: “Actions speak louder than words!” Regardless what we teach and how we teach it, if our lives are not demonstrating it, then it does not serve

us. Listen to what Paul said in this regard, “*They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and unto every good work a reprobate*” (Tit. 1:16). Paul even told the Corinthian brethren, “*Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are the manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but the character of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the flesh*” (2 Cor. 3:2-3).

The picture was and is clear. God expected the Jews to grow from a physical mindset into a spiritual one; meaning, it's not what's done on the outside (per se) that matters, it's what is done on the inside, and the inside, when it is transformed, will reveal the true desire of God - to display actions consistent with our outward man. So this goes back to the idea of a hypocrite. Don't just play the part outwardly, our inward man, the mind, must be transformed and guided by actions that are consistent with righteousness. By doing this, we can safely lead people to God and heaven, but not obeying the will of God will cause ourselves and many to lose their souls (Matt. 5:14-16). May God be praised!

What Are We Looking For In A Church?

Church News and Announcements

CONGREGATION

The fellowship luncheon will be next Sunday, December 13, after the morning service. The menu is sandwiches and your favorite Christmas goodies (candy, cookies, etc.) Please bring enough candy, cookies, etc to share on Sunday and to put in goody bags for shut-ins and widows. Chips will be provided.

The Sunny Glen Children's Home is requesting Fabric Softener sheets and Pie Filling. The truck will be here between December 15-17. As before, you can donate funds by giving it to one of our elders, memo your check for Sunny Glenn, or purchase these items on your own and place it in the library. The donated funds will be used to purchase the items in bulk from Sam's Club. Thank you.

YOUTH

Our youth devotional will be hosted by the Dorries and C. Harris on December 11th in the Annex building, beginning at 7:00pm. Our youth are asked to bring a wrapped \$10 gift. Thank you.

YOUNG ADULT

Our young adult Christmas party will be on December 18th. More details to come later.

AREA NEWS

See Bulletin Board for area wide meetings.

There are a number of things people look for in a church - aesthetics, a myriad of church programs, a well-polished and handsome speaker, great worship time, and friendly people.

But as one considers the Bible, many would be shocked and amazed that the criteria used today in finding the "right church" is not found in the Bible. In the early church, people met in homes (Rom. 16:5), not in great architectural designed buildings; there was only one worship service (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2), and the worship was usually long (Acts 20:8-12); speakers weren't judged according to looks and speech, rather his knowledge and passion of God's word is what Christians yearned for (1 Cor. 2:1-5); programs of the church, such as youth and young adult groups were usually taken care of by parents, and not the church (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15); And friendliness was contingent upon faithfulness to the Lord's word (1 Cor. 5:13; 2 Thess. 3: 14-15), not the idea of: "We should agree to disagree!"

Our churches today, by and large, don't look like those described in the Bible. So if this is this case, why have our standards changed in looking for a church? They've changed because people have become increasingly ignorant of what the Bible teaches church is for. The prophet Hosea rightly declared, "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge....*" (4:6). When people no longer know what the Bible's requirements are for a sound and Biblical church, then you'll have those whose search for

a church becomes about their wants and not God.

God's only desire for the church was to become a vessel for teaching and proclaiming His blessed will (Isa. 2:2-3; Acts 8:4), and not to become a social symbol. Leaders of God's church were never judged on physical looks and polished speaking abilities, rather they were judged on whether they taught and proclaimed the truth of God's will (Gal. 1:6-10; 2:11; 4:16). Therefore, a "true Christian's" main concern is not about aesthetics, a myriad of church programs, and church friendliness, it should be about whether the church and its leaders are preaching and teaching what God has authorized.

This is why many of the Lord's churches, as well as those in the denominational world, have lost their focus on what is important to God. Many are concentrated on looking well outwardly, but unfortunately, inwardly they are as dead men's bones (Matt. 23:27-28). This is why the Christian religion has become the laughingstock of our nation, because we are more interested in looking the part, rather than truly transforming ourselves inwardly. And an inward transformation can only come from a thorough study of God's word and a challenged mindset (Eph. 4:17-23). It's time we get back to studying, knowing, understanding, and applying the word of God to our lives. It's time that we start looking for and demanding the church God truly desires. 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 Other People

The psalmist exclaimed, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psa. 133:1). Ever since "Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him" (Gen. 4:8), man has been seeking ways to be at peace with his fellow-man. When trouble arose over the grazing rights of Abraham and Lot, the former said, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me, for we be brethren" (Gen. 13:8). When the apostle Paul found strife in the church at Corinth, he wrote, "Let there be no divisions among you" (1 Cor. 1:10).

We can never have peace with those around us while ignoring the principles of peace which are set forth by the Prince of Peace. Jesus said, "As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also likewise unto them...Love thy neighbor as thyself...Turn the other cheek. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive" (Matt. 7:12; 22:39; 5:39; 6:12). Following these principles will certainly change us, but it also will change those with whom we deal every day! When we "serve one another" (1 Pet. 5:5) and "bear ye one another's burdens" (Gal. 6:2), it will change the way people respond to us.

It isn't only what we do, but how we react to what is done to us, that makes for peace. Jesus, hanging on the cross, prayed for those who put Him there: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). When the world is moved by that kind of spirit, man will be at peace with his fellows. Jesus tells us to "love one another, even as I have loved you" (Jno. 13:34). The apostle Paul explains that "love suffers long and is kind...seeketh not her own, is not puffed up...taketh not account of evil" (1 Cor. 13:4-5). That is the real peace formula: seeking the good of the others while refusing to be offended. That will make peace in our time: in our families, in our communities, in our nation and in our world.

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 6

AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *T. Mayces*
 Opening Prayer: *A. Maldonado*
 Song Leader: *R. Trevino*
 Lord's Supper: *N. Esenowo; R. Baltierra; G. Rodriguez; E. Hipp*

Scripture: *Isa. 53:6-9*
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*
 Benediction: *S. Hernandez*

PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *T. Mayces*
 Opening Prayer: *J. Guillen*
 Song Leader: *A. Maldonado*
 Lord's Supper: *R. Baltierra Jr.; J. Mora*

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

After Greeter: *E & K Hipp*
 Greeter/Usher: *B. Dorries*
 AV Duty: *J. Guillen*
 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
 Mary Louese Hughes
 Dazel Ball
 Mildred Geest

TRAVELING:

A. Jacob; Courtney Cobb (Japan); Joe and Nadia Guillen; Celia Empett; Mayces

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 31

PM Sermon:

Protecting the Reputation of God (4)

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

November 25: *R. Baltierra Jr.*
 December 2: *T. Mayces*
 December 9: *A. Maldonado*

FOR THE RECORD

November 29

Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study	45
Sunday AM Worship	68
Sunday PM Worship	38
Wednesday Bible Study	34
Budget/Offering:	\$2,450.00/ \$1,474.00

Weekly Bible Readers: 3/19 (Adult Bible class)

SHENANDOAH CHURCH OF CHRIST

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 (210) 696-5532

Fax: (210) 696-5181

Church email Address:

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