

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)

ONLY A FEW

Gabriel Rodriguez

Inside This Issue:

True Worship (3)

*Shepherd's
Corner:*
**Ways We Should
Seek God**

In the April 2015 edition of the *Christian Chronicle*, an international newspaper for the churches of Christ, its editorial oped read: “*Church in decline: US culture to blame?*” The author listed three reasons for the rising trend, according to the Barna Research Group, (1) increasing number of atheists, (2) a growing number of nominal Christians disengaging completely from churches, and (3) more pressure on well-intended churchgoing families who don’t attend as many weekends per year as they would have 10 years ago. But, should this data surprise us? No.

The Bible teaches that only a **few** will embrace the portals of heaven (Matt. 7:13-14, e.g., Gen. 6:8-9; 7:1-5; Ex. 23:2; Num 13:28-31). Therefore, we shouldn’t expect rising or big numbers when it comes to church attendance or work, rather as the Bible has proffered, “*In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof....*” (2 Tim. 3:1,5).

Second, we’re told in Matthew 13:34-43; 47-50, that not all “*church goers*” will be saved. In fact, Jesus said in Matthew 7:21:

“*not everyone who saith unto me Lord, Lord, will inherit the kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father.*”

Third, the path to God is extremely difficult (Matt. 7:13). Jesus said, “*Enter ye in at the strait gate....*” The word “*strait*” comes from the Greek root word *histemi* which is defined as “to make firm, to be of a steadfast mind; of quality, one who does not hesitate or waiver.” The idea is, the way to God is filled with great difficulties of life, and **only a few** who possess a determined mindset to stand on God’s laws and principles to conquer the world will make it.

The point is this, although church doctrine and its leaders are partially to blame for the decline, ultimately it’s the people that are at fault. In other words, we’ve allowed life to influence us, thus making us mentally weak. Instead of studying and understanding Scripture, and disciplining ourselves unto righteousness, people are giving up and in giving up, we’re allowing evil and wickedness to persist and win. The few that make it will have been those that have maintained and willed righteousness in their lives. May God be praised!

Church News and Announcements

CONGREGATION

The fellowship luncheon will be next Sunday, May 10, after our morning services. This will be a Mother's Day luncheon, so we're asking our men of the congregation to fix our ladies something special.

Our High School Graduates will be honored after evening services on May 17 in the annex. Everyone is invited to stay and congratulate these young people.

The Sunny Glenn Children's Home will be here the week of June 9-11 to pick up Liquid Laundry Detergent. As before, you can either purchase this item and place it in the library, or give a donation to one of our elders, who will then purchase this item in bulk. Thank you.

YOUTH

Our next youth devotional is set for May 22. The Dorries' will host this event in the annex. All our youth are encouraged to attend.

YOUNG ADULT

Our next young adult devotional is scheduled for May 29th. More details to come later.

AREA NEWS

Our men are invited to a Men's Day on May 9 at the Ft. Sam Houston congregation. Details are in the foyer.

There are more area wide meetings. See bulletin board.

TRUE WORSHIP (3)

Let's take a look at the five acts of worship, commanded by God, observed by early Christians (cf., Acts 2:42). Since all acts of "true" worship were given to support and sustain the mind, then it naturally follows that Christians "*continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine....*"

The word "*doctrine*" (*didache*) means the art of teaching, instruction; that which is taught. This involves the function of the mind/thought and communication. The reason the apostles' teaching was paramount was because Christ left these men in charge in disseminating His message (Jn. 14:26; 15:26; 16:13, cf. Lk. 24:46-49; Eph. 2:20). Recall, that the message of Christ was the message of the Father (Jn. 12:48-50), and since Christ returned unto the Father (Acts 1:9-11), Christ left His apostles to preach and teach His gospel (Matt. 28:19-20; Mrk. 16:15; Acts. 2:22-38; Rom. 1:16). This message was to impact the intellect of man, by allowing him to think and meditate upon the words uttered, and it was those words, coupled with man's desire to hear and obey, that would produce an intellectual response unto God. This was seen in many conversion accounts found in the book of Acts, where the message of Christ was taught and the people responded with intellect (Acts 2:22-38; 8:1-16; 10:1-45).

Therefore, after people were saved through information (*wisdom*), then it would make sense that further instruction was needed to help God's people stay saved (Matt. 28:20; Rom. 6:4-23; Rev. 2:10). This is why

Christians continued vigorously in the teachings of God's given by the apostles (Eph. 2:20).

What this means for us today is, since we follow the same pattern of salvation - an intellectual endeavor - then it makes sense that our continued study and meditation of God's word is vital to our sustained salvation. In other words, in order to remain saved, we (*Christians*) must continue to read, study, and understand what the Scriptures says (1 Tim. 4:13,16; Eph. 5:17). This is why "*true*" worship is dedicated to hearing and studying God's word. We don't come to church to simply feel good, we come to church to learn God's will more perfectly and to obey it (2 Tim. 3:15-17).

Sadly, instead of conforming to the pattern of adorning the doctrine of God (Ps. 119:97-104), many churches have adopted the mindset of pleasing people, and thus reading and study of God's word is held to a meager 10 - 20 minutes endeavor, where no substance is ever given. This is why many of our churches have become weak, because the strengthening of the mind with God's mind and communication is held to a minimum. True worshippers love the word and can hear it for any extended period of time (e.g. Neh. 8:3; Acts 20:7), but for "*false worshipers*" the study of God's word for an extended period of time becomes burdensome and these can't wait for services to end! Hmm, no wonder true worship isn't practiced these days, because it requires work and thought. 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

Ways We Should Seek God

Paul found the Athenians were seeking to appease God by their worship. Even though their worship was wrong, based on ignorance of the true God and His nature, it was still a seeking process for them. Abel was "seeking after God" when he offered the sacrifice (Gen. 4:4; Heb. 11:4,6). Jesus explained to the Samaritan woman, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers" (Jno 4:23). Our worship is designed by God for the express purpose of providing a way for us to "seek after God." When we gather together as the Lord's church (Acts 2:41-42,47) to pray, sing, study, eat the Lord's Supper and lay by in store, we are "seeking after God."

We seek after God by obedient service: "Fear God and keep his commandments" (Eccle. 12:13). The Bible says, "By faith Abel offered...By faith Enoch walked with God...By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, and moved with fear, prepared an ark...By faith Abraham when he was called, obeyed". 11:4,5,7,8). The key verse, though is v. 6, "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." Each of these, in doing what God told him to do, was "seeking after God." When we listen to God today and humbly do His will, we are "seeking after God." By His grace, we conform our lives into what He wants us to be: that is "seeking after God." "Put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:10).

It really should not be that difficult to find God, for, as Paul stated, "He is not far from each of us, for in him we live, and move, and have our being...for we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:27-28). Our purpose is to "seek after God" for He is our Creator, our Source, our Life. What a shame for a person to go through life and never realize the purpose for which God created him. That was the case with the people of Athens. Don't let it be the case with you. "Seek after God."

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



May 3

AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *S. Hernandez*
 Opening Prayer: *J. Guillen*
 Song Leader: *R. Trevino*
 Lord's Supper: *Open; A. Maldonado; R. Baltierra Jr.; G. Rodriguez*

Scripture: *Isa. 53:6-9*
 Sermon: *Guest Speaker*
 Benediction: *J. Cardenas*

PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *S. Hernandez*
 Opening Prayer: *J. Mokry*
 Song Leader: *Open*
 Lord's Supper: *R. Trevino; R. Baltierra*

Sermon: *Guest Speaker*
 Benediction: *M. Neaves*

After Greeter: *W & K Holmes*
 Greeter/Usher: *T. Mayces*
 AV Duty: *M. de la Garza*
 Elder in charge: *E. Hipp*

REMEMBERING OUR BELOVED

(by writing, calling, and praying)

Wayne Holmes
 Juanita Mahan
 Richard Rodriguez
 Rina White
 Argelia (Janie's mother)
 Joe Guillen
 Sarah Cannon
 Roberto Garcia
 Lorenza Bejarano
 Olga (Joe's mother-in-law)
 Anthony Harris Sr
 Ina Dial
 David Sudhoff
 Elijah Sudhoff
 Eloise Creek (is recovering at Rehab center)
 Roy Guajardo (battling Parkinsons)
 Carolyn Harris
 Gerri Mayces (medical issues)
 Rose Scott (grandmother of Clay and Wes Bond)

BATTLING CANCER:

Barbara Oakes	Johna Dorries
Edna Wilks	Abigail Reyes
Lydia Cowan	George Jackson
Briana Nieves	Sonny Cary
Mary Purkey	Elwyn Hipp
Graciola Anderson	Zeke Watkins

SHUT-INS:

Dorothy Harper
 Mary Louese Hughes
 Dazel Ball
 Mildred Geest

TRAVELING:

A. Jacob; Courtney Cobb (Japan); Rodriguez's (Houston)

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES MAY

Organizing Monthly Luncheon: *Dorries*
 Preparing Lord's Supper: *Dorries*
 Auditorium Service Duties: *Hipp*
 Wash baptismal garments; clean cry room *Harris*
 Brother in charge of services: *B. Dorries*

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:
Open

PM Sermon:
Open

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

May 6: *B. Dorries*
 May 13: *W. Holmes*
 May 20: *G. Rodriguez*

FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 26

Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study	36
Sunday AM Worship	56
Sunday PM Worship	30
Wednesday Bible Study	41
Budget/Offering:	\$2,450.00/ \$1,555.00

Weekly Bible Readers:
 NA (Adult Bible class)

SHENANDOAH CHURCH OF CHRIST

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 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