

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Cole Meador

Song Leader

Jack Calvert

Lord's Supper

Mark Davis Clay Morris
Bill Brittenham Jon Barry

Prayers

Jerry Schnelle Joseph Barry

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Cole Meador

Scripture Reading

Bill Rinehart

Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper

Mark Davis Clay Morris

Prayers

Jon Barry Pete Rowland

WEDNESDAY

Announcements

Jack Calvert

Song Leader

Clay Morris

Prayers

Bill Rinehart Jerry Schnelle

Invitation

Jon Barry

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Deacons

Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Clay Morris

Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.
Worship6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16;
1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

Think On These Things

Franklin Drive Church of Christ

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Volume XXV

March 1, 2020

Issue 9

How Do You Measure the Local Church?

Tim Jennings

How do *you* evaluate a local church? Many people measure a church based on the size of their building, the number of people who attend, or the excitement of their events. Some people look for a church with a certain number of children or single people. Others gage a church by the songs they sing, or the charm of the preacher. Everyone seems to have their own picture of what the local church should look like.

But, one thing is for sure, Jesus does not evaluate local churches like we do. We see the glitz, and He sees the guts. We see the grime, and He sees the glory. For example, the church in Sardis had the reputation of being alive, but Jesus said, "you are dead" (Rev. 3:1). The church in Laodicea promoted themselves as "a church that had it all," but Jesus said they didn't even know they were spiritually destitute (Rev. 3:17). The church in Smyrna was poor and battered, but Jesus said, "I see your works, and I'll give you a crown" (Rev. 2:9-10).

Our evaluation of local churches is often wrong, fatally wrong.

We must take off the fleshly goggles that see only numbers and notoriety, and become disciples of Jesus who look full into the eyes of a cross carrying Christ. His bloodied body and resurrected glory doesn't fit comfortably into *our* lifestyle, *He* becomes our lifestyle.

The early believers were transformed by their contact with the gospel. They made shocking changes to their relationships, affections, time and possessions because Jesus was their Lord. Their lifestyle is described in Acts 2 as one of "continual devotion" on a "daily" basis (Acts 2:42-47). Acts 2 contains a pristine picture of God's design for His church, and what a church it is! Their new-found priorities transformed their lives and their culture. Those same priorities would expel the insipid, lifeless, materialistic

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Bonnie Allgor, Maxine Burnham, Ann Thomas and Francine Davis.** Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

Ladies Bible Class: The next class is Tuesday, **Mar. 10, 2020.** Noon at **Sherry Brittenham's** and 6:00 PM at **Karen Calvert's.**

The **Rowland's** son, **Gary's** surgery has been postponed.

Nancy Rowe got a good report on her 2-week checkup.

Please keep **Ann Thomas's** grandson, **Logan** and his wife, **Chelsea** in your prayers. **Chelsea** has been diagnosed with lymphoma.

Mark Your Calendar

Friday, April 3: Annual Singing
April 5-8 (Sun. – Wed.): Gospel Meeting with **Jonathan Glaesemann** from Stonewall. LA.

Please pick up some invite cards and ask for Bible studies. See Bryan if you need any help with home studies.



religion of our day, and replace it with living disciples of Jesus.

Devoted to the Words of Jesus

The energy of the church radiates from its primary passion, “they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching” (Acts 2:42; John 14:26). They met every day; and they stayed up late into the night; and they begged teachers to stay longer because they wanted to know Jesus (Acts 2:46; 19:9; 20:7).

Every spiritual revival in history began with a fresh appetite for the word of God! Read of how Israel was torn away from idols only when they turned to God’s Word. They read it, trembled before it, tore their clothes and changed their lives (i.e. 2 Chronicles 34; Nehemiah 8). And yet, the church today has the gracious message of the gospel, how much *greater* should our hunger be!?

As a preacher I know that stories and jokes delight the crowds. I feel the pull to be brief and pleasant. But, disciples of Jesus are those whose hearts are set aflame by *Scripture*, and they demand a careful explanation of the *text* (Acts 17:2,19:9), and they can’t wait to do it all over again! The lack of such hunger is a sign of a dying body, no matter how many people attend or how many activities are offered.

Devoted to the People of Jesus

The second ambition of Jesus’ church is a “devotion to the fellowship” (Acts 2:42). Churches in our culture have become consumer destination spots for people looking for pleasant programs and popular events. Like people on an airplane they sit next to their fellow-passengers, but have no true commitment or interest in each other.

Disciples of Jesus know nothing of this idolatry of self. Their life has a new

devotion—not to self, but to the saints. Jesus loved the church more than His own life, and He calls us to do the same (John 13:34). The church is to be more like our *family* gathered around a table with common interests and mutual support (Matt. 12:49-50; Eph. 4:16).

The vibrant church of Acts showed their love by sacrificially helping those in need (Acts 2:44-45). They learned to genuinely care for believers who were different and sometimes difficult (Acts 6, 11, 15). It was a dynamic fellowship that showed the world the grace of the gospel in action.

Our problem today is our lifestyle is so consumed with self, we don’t have time, energy, money, or brain power left to even think of the fellowship, much less be devoted to it! To be disciples of Jesus we must reprioritize our lives, so we can use our time and possessions to serve the family of God.

Christ’s church is guided by a central concern, “How can we learn more about Jesus, and be more committed to His people?”

Devoted to Worship

One of the clearest ways to measure the health of a church is by their enthusiasm for, and participation in vibrant worship to God, “they devoted themselves ... to the breaking of bread and to the prayer” (Acts 2:42). Luke’s use of the word “the,” twice in this phrase, suggests a reference to the Lord’s Supper and gatherings for prayer.

They worshiped God daily. They did it publicly in the temple and privately in their homes (Acts 2:46). After all,

“praising God” was their devotion (Acts 2:47). The word of Jesus filled their hearts and worship came spilling out of their mouths (Matt. 12:34; Col. 3:16).

When believers lose their passion for worship it is a sign of spiritual weakness (Heb. 10:24-25). Disciples of Jesus never see worship as a responsibility to fulfill. It is a joyful opportunity to reflect on Jesus, be conformed to His character, and give Him thanks. There is a reason why worship surrounds the throne of God—it is heavenly (Rev. 4-5). Those who are not devoted to it, are earthly.

Devoted to Sharing Jesus

However, when a church is filled with the words of Jesus, and sacrificially love His family, and joyfully worship His name, that is a church God can use to save souls. He successfully rooted out their selfishness to be a gracious instrument of salvation to others. So, “The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47).

Saving people from hell was too important to hand over to the paid professionals. The gospel was spread by literally thousands of believers sharing the message of salvation with all who would listen (Acts 8:4; see 1 Thess. 1:8). Their preoccupation was not with self, but with salvation.

Many of us have lived so long with the “American-style Church” we don’t recognize the real thing. Some don’t want the real thing because it disrupts their lifestyle. But, disciples of Jesus find being His church to be the most meaningful endeavor on earth.

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“Let all that you do be done in love” (1 Corinthians 16:14)

via Focus Online