

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Mark Davis

Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper

Jerry Schnelle Jon Barry

Joseph Barry

Prayers

Rodney Ellis Jack Calvert

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Scripture Reading

Song Leader

Lord's Supper

Prayers

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Via Zoom

When brethren "go a-gadding" after strange doctrines, human institutions, the social gospel, etc., they have neglected their first love — their espousal to Christ. (2 Cor.11:1-3) They profit little by tongue-lashings, ridicule, or even sound high-powered argumentation — especially if they are so selfwilled as to be no longer interested in the Bible pattern. Unless their love for and determination to serve Jesus Christ can be rekindled, all else is vain.

Please join hands — with the Lord!
— via *Plain Talk*, June, 1968

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

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.

WWW.TXKCHURCH.COM

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



Volume XXVI

February 14, 2021

Issue 7

Church - God Centered or Man Centered

Sewell Hall

Religion by its very definition would seem to involve God. The word godly means God-centered. However, there are those who practice a religion that is all about man rather than God. To say that such religion is godly is not to say that it is wicked, but simply that it is not centered in God.

Jesus described such people in his day in the words of Isaiah: "These people draw near to me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:8-9). Paul writes of those who are "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" while at the same time "holding a form of godliness" (2 Timothy 3:4-5). Jude describes some who are in the church, but are "ungodly men, who turn the grace of God into licentiousness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

Why would ungodly individuals continue to profess religion? Some do so, "supposing that godliness is a way of gain" (1 Timothy 6:5). Others, like Diotrophes (3 John 9), love the preeminence that they have attained in the church. Or, like the rulers of (John 12:43), they may love "the praise of men more than the praise of God."

Contrasting Churches

Local churches may be led either by godly or by not-godly men — that is, by men who are most concerned for God and things of the Spirit or by men whose concerns are primarily human and temporal. Such churches can be distinguished by the following:

Goals: Godly leaders have as their goal "the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Bonnie Allgor, Maxine Burnham, Ann Thomas** and **Francine Davis**.

Sandy Burnham is scheduled for a biopsy Tuesday.

Bryan and **Jennie Garlock and the kids** are dealing with the Covid virus.

James Rayborn has also been diagnosed with the virus.

Cathy Monaghan's appointment in Little Rock is being rescheduled.

Others who have been diagnosed with the Covid virus are:

Randy and **Audra Ellis**
Chris and **Tara Stinson**
Jack Calvert

Nancy Rowe
Brooke Scott

Willie and **Melody Standokes**
Maggie Barry

Please remember **Joey Avance** in your prayers. He continues to have various medical problems.

Bible Study: 9:30 AM (and Zoom)

Services: 10:15 AM (and Zoom)

Kids Only: 5:00 PM (Zoom)

Monday: 7:00 PM (Zoom)

Wednesday: 7:00 PM (Zoom)

Thursday: 7:00 PM (Zoom)

we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things unto Him who is the head — Christ" (Ephesians 4:12-15). Men whose thinking is not dominated by God have as their primary goal increasing numbers — a big church. They consider numerical growth proof of God's approval.

Doctrine: Godly leaders are determined to abide in the doctrine of Christ and not to go beyond it (2 John 9). Not-godly men, knowing that most of the public "will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables" (2 Timothy 4:3-4), provide the teachers that will tickle their ears.

Discipline: Godly leaders will insist that, in harmony with God's instructions, the church "withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly" (2 Thessalonians 3:6). Not-godly leaders advertise: "Come as you are" and boast that they are not judgmental, receiving everyone regardless of lifestyle.

Worship: Godly leaders insist that God be worshipped "acceptable with reverence and godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28) while not-godly men place great emphasis on "worship" that pleases the public and they seem concerned only that everyone leave "feeling good about themselves" and eager to return.

Preachers: Godly leaders are not nearly as concerned with excellence of speech or of wisdom as that preachers be "determined not to know anything... save Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:1-2). Not-godly leaders insist that preachers be entertaining and personally popular, even with the world.

Activities: Godly leaders test every proposed action by all the scriptures, determined to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus (Colossians 3:17), while not-godly leaders offer whatever people want — sports, entertainment, education, feasts, travel — with little apparent concern for what God wants.

Testing Ourselves

The Bible blesses those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). By contrast it condemns those who have "pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:12). Our taste in churches will help us determine which we are. How will a person who has "pleasure in unrighteousness" feel about a church whose goal above all other things is to remake him into the image of Christ, whose doctrine is "the apostles' teaching," a church where he is put on notice that he must live a godly life or be disfellowshipped, where worship is designed exclusively to please God, where preachers preach only the word of God — reproving, rebuking and exhorting — where activities are altogether spiritual?

On the other hand, how will one who is hungry and thirsty for righteousness feel about a church he visits where he receives nothing but entertainment, where the "sermons" are little more than jokes and pop psychology, where sin is never rebuked, sinners never convicted or exhorted, and where activities are the same as those offered at a public school, theater or country club.

What kind of church are you seeking — the church of your choice or the church of God's choice? A godly church or an un-godly church?

First Love

Robert Turner

A tap at the study door announced a timid and frightened young couple. Their marriage was "coming apart" — or so they thought — and since I had "performed their ceremony," they had come to me for help.

The timid approach fooled me. What should have been an easy "patch-up" job grew more complicated as we discussed the details. Recalling each incident of friction led to charges of blame, efforts to justify, defense of pride. The situation was growing steadily worse when, in desperation, I tried the magic of "first love."

"Please arise, and stand here," I requested, indicating the exact spot where they had made their vows. Picking up my Bible, I stepped into place before them. "And now, will you join right hands." Then, as they grew silent with their memories, I reminded them of the pledges they had made "before God and to one-another" on that eventful day some months earlier.

Before my little speech was finished — maybe I was over-playing my part in the drama they interrupted to thank me, and hurried out of the room, hand in hand. Perhaps they had heard little of what I said, but they recalled their own hopes and determinations of first love, and that was enough.

The Hebrew writer urged faithfulness by saying, "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions...." (Hebrews 10:32). When we "leave our first love," (Rev. 2:4f) it must be restored if our union with Christ is to survive.