

4th & Stewart church of Christ

"...upon this rock I will build my church;
and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
~ Matthew 16:18



December 15, 2013

Contact Us:

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325-646-7102
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Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study 9:45 AM
Worship..... 10:40 AM
Care, Inc. Service..... 2:30 PM
Worship..... 6:00 PM

Tuesday:

Redstone Class..... 9:30 AM

Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class On Break
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... Jim Moore

Don Smith..... James Thomas

Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children
Gospel Broadcast Network
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)
House to House, Heart to Heart
Mission Printing
Rohan Jones, Africa
The Truth in Love
World Bible School

Let us know if you want to study
the Bible to know more about
Christ and His Church.

The Word Is Not Bound

By Tom Wacaster

Through the centuries skeptics have attempted to destroy or severely restrict the word of God. Jehoiakim took his penknife, cut the pages of God's word, and cast them into the fire. When Antiochus Epiphanes became ruler in Syria in 175 B.C. he destroyed the temple, sold the people of Israel into slavery, and went about doing all within his power to do away with the sacred writings of the Jews. Emperor Diocletian decreed death for any person who owned a copy of the Bible. After two years he boasted that he had "completely exterminated the Christian writings from the face of the earth." But when Constantine came to the throne and desired copies of the Bible be brought to him, within twenty-five hours fifty copies of God's word were offered to the Emperor. Voltaire, the notorious French infidel, boasted that within one hundred years the Bible would be no more. It would not be long before the very press that printed the blasphemous prediction was used to print Bibles and the house in which he lived was later used by the Geneva Bible Society to store and distribute Bibles. Robert Ingersoll, famed American atheist of the 1800's once held a Bible in his hand and boasted, "In fifteen years I will have this book in the morgue." Within fifteen years Ingersoll was in the morgue, but the word of God lives on! Even today the atheist community is predicting that before this century comes to a close the Bible will be eradicated from the world.

Paul wrote these words to Timothy: "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel: wherein I suffer hardship unto bonds, as a malefactor; but the word of God is not bound" (2 Tim. 2:8-9). Though men have for ages sought to bind the word of God, inspiration tells us that at the time of Paul the word was not bound, and history has attested to the eternal truth of those words. The simple fact is, men will never successfully bind the word of God. They may, from time to time succeed in keeping it out of the public's sight and/or sound. But it cannot be silenced! I suggest to you the following reasons.

First, the word cannot be bound because you cannot rob it of its power. Paul declared in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." There is power in the word of God that cannot be eradicated, eliminated or expunged. The parable of the sower is recorded in Matthew 13:1-9 and Luke 8:4-8. In making application the Lord said that the "seed is the word of God" (Lk. 8:11). A seed may sit on a shelf or in a package for centuries, but once it is planted, it will produce life. It has been three decades since the Associated Press reported that some archaeologist discovered some remnants of fruits and nuts in their exploration of a Han Dynasty tomb, which dates back to the first century A.D. Seeds discovered in some of the pottery was taken and planted and it produced tomatoes. Such is the power of a seed; and such is the power of the Gospel.

Second, the word cannot be bound because you cannot restrict its preaching. In 1992 I had the opportunity to travel to the former Soviet Union. There were four Americans and one Ukrainian brother who labored for thirteen days in Barnaul. After completing that work we traveled overnight by train to Omsk. Our Ukrainian brother shared the compartment next to myself with a Russian soldier traveling to the same destination. When it came time to turn out the lights and bed down for the night's journey to Omsk, I could hear brother Kalashnikov preaching to that soldier; I knew he was preaching to him because I could

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Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.

Ecclesiastes 12:13,14

What About Cornelius?

(Why Baptism Matters Series)

By Chris McCurley

Is baptism essential for the sinner's salvation? This is the question we have been openly and honestly examining in an effort to expose what scripture has to say concerning the topic. Much debate has taken place over this all-important issue. The waters of baptism have become muddied through the years as various denominations have taught and practiced a plethora of ideas, many of which have no basis in scripture. My intent is not to ridicule or demean. My aim is to illuminate what God's Word teaches on this subject because, in the end, that should be the only thing we are concerned with.

Our last blog post focused on a common argument intended to illustrate that baptism is not a prerequisite to salvation. It was the contention that the thief on the cross was accepted into paradise by Christ without being baptized, therefore, baptism is not essential to salvation. We pointed out the error of using the thief on the cross as the standard for how we are saved. In this post I want us to dissect another all-too-common argument—the case of Cornelius. The reasoning typically goes something like this: Cornelius received the Holy Spirit before being baptized (Acts 10:44-48). Only a child of God receives the Holy Spirit; therefore, Cornelius was a child of God prior to baptism.

Before we go any further, what must be understood is that Cornelius was the first Gentile to be offered the gospel. The fact that he received the Holy Spirit had absolutely nothing to do with his personal salvation, and had everything to do with convincing the Jews that the Gentiles had equal right to the kingdom of heaven. Make note of a few passages that confirm this fact:

Acts 10:45—*“All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentile also.”*

Acts 11:17—*“Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?”*

Acts 15:8—*“And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us...”*

The Jews were once the chosen people of God. With the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the New Covenant was established, which offered salvation to both Jew and Gentile. Peter states in Acts 15:9, *“[A]nd He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.”* Paul wrote in Galatians 3:28, *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave or free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

God didn't alter the plan for Cornelius. Peter commanded him to be immersed (Acts 10:48) because baptism was essential. It was essential for the Jews and it was essential for the Gentiles. The fact that Cornelius had received the Holy Spirit did not change this, nor did it mean that he was saved prior to being baptized.

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Television	God's Plan for Redeeming Man	Bible Study Schedule
<p>The Truth In Love (Robert Dodson) Sunday @ 7:00 am on KTAB</p> <p>In Search of the Lord's Way Sunday @ 7:30 am on KTAB</p> <p>Gospel Broadcasting Network Online: 24/7 @ gbntv.org and on Roku TV: Sunday @ 6:30 am on Dish: 267, DirectTV: 376</p> <p>Radio</p> <p>Preaching the Word (Michael Light) Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3</p>	<p>Hear Learn the saving message of Christ's sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17).</p> <p>Believe Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24)</p> <p>Confess Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33)</p> <p>Repent of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5)</p> <p>Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)</p> <p>Live faithfully (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)</p>	<p>Week 103 Psalm 135-140 & Hebrews 1&2</p> <p>Study sheets are available at the back of the auditorium.</p> <p><i>“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”</i> <i>(2 Timothy 2:15)</i></p>



The Known Sick & Other Prayer Requests:

Visitation Meeting

Remember our visitation meeting each Sunday night following the evening worship to sign cards and discuss the work going on. Last week **12 contacts** were made.

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Also, consider the fact that, according to Peter, the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius just as Peter “began to speak” (Acts 11:15). Why is this crucial? Because, this would have been before Cornelius had even heard the gospel message and, thus, before he could respond in faith. If the argument that Cornelius was saved because he received the Holy Spirit is true, then he was also saved without faith.

For more on this topic check out: *Was Cornelius Saved Without Baptism?* By Wayne Jackson. <http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/186-was-cornelius-saved-without-baptism>.

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recognize certain words that are similar in both English and Russian. The next morning I asked brother Kalashnikov if he was preaching to his room mate, and he said "yes." "Did he listen?" I asked. To which brother Kalashnikov replied, "What choice did he have?" Men may make it illegal to preach publicly or at some open air meeting; but they cannot control what goes on the privacy of one's home or with an acquaintance with whom we might have casual conversation. The word of God went forth in the first century with great success in spite of every effort on the part of Rome to stop the preaching. So it was then; so it will be in every generation.

Finally, the word cannot be bound because you cannot retard its progress. Speaking through the prophet Isaiah our Father said long ago: "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:11). Some years ago I came across a very interesting story. A lady of a congregation in Arkansas had sent a copy of a World Bible School lesson to a student in Africa. It was found in the roadway by another person, who then searched for the church of Christ in his village. He was baptized two days later. What makes the story amazing is the fact that the lesson was mailed seven years before it was found. Time did not retard the progress of the word, and it eventually found its way into the presence and then into heart of the precious soul who was desirous of learning the truth. The same point was illustrated in the following true story which was related to me almost forty years ago. Someone was evidently handed a tract about the Lord's church; but he or she, for some unknown reason, threw the tract into the waste basket and it eventually ended up on the curb waiting for the garbage man to carry it away. When the garbage man picked up the container (that was in the days when such was still done manually) the tract fell out on the ground. The garbage man picked up the tract, put it in his pocket, later read it, and eventually contacted a church of Christ, leading to his obedience to the gospel. The reason I know the story was true is that it was told me by the garbage collector himself. Happenstance? Coincidence? I prefer to attribute it to divine providence. Such is the power of the progress of the Gospel.

When Paul wrote those beautiful words to Timothy he set forth an eternal truth that gives comfort and consolation to those seeking to carry the gospel to a lost and dying world. As you carry that word to others, rest assured that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Celebrate

"Rejoice with those who rejoice..." (Romans 12:15)

December Birthdays: Freda Cox (05), Estelle Guthrie (07), Laverne Thomas (13), Veneta Nolen (17), Kaci Churchwell (18), Priscilla Smithey (18), Linda Griffith (20), Mia Stroope (22), Joyce Hill (24), John McCaghren (27).

December Anniversaries: Linda & Allen Griffith (20), Phyllis & Horace Hooper (24), Jo & Ken Maninger (25).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Dec. 1, 2013	Dec. 8, 2013
Bible Class	53	26
AM Worship	77	36
PM Worship	43	Cancelled
Wednesday PM	46	45
Contribution	\$1883	\$809

Privileged To Serve

"...be ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1)

	This Week: 12/15/13	Next Week: 12/22/13		
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	December 2013 Make Announcements: Joe Dennis Prepare Communion: Jim & Peg Moore Clean Building: Jessica Stultz Keep Grounds: Tom Wilcox January 2014 Make Announcements: Ken Maninger Prepare Communion: Don & Darlene Smith Clean Building: Jim & Peg Moore Keep Grounds: James Fuller	
Greeters	Jim & Peg Moore			
Opening Prayer	Allen Griffith	Tom Wilcox		
Communion	James Fuller*, Don Smith John Barnum, Caleb Dennis	Don Smith*, Chase Churchwell Ken Maninger, Gene Bannister		
Closing Prayer	Kevin Wilcox	Jim Moore		
Attendance Cards	Caleb Dennis	Chase Churchwell		
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: Joe Dennis	Song Leader: James Fuller		
Opening Prayer	Jim Moore	Hank Wheeler		
Scripture Reading	Tom Wilcox	Joe Dennis		
Communion	James Fuller	Don Smith		
Closing Prayer	Gene Bannister	Billy Chism		
Wednesday Devotionals:	December 18 Don Smith	December 25 Jim Moore	January 1 Joe Dennis	January 8 Allen Griffith

Search the Scriptures

Be like the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

Studies for the week of December 15, 2013	<i>Sunday Class Divine Designations for the Church and Members Wednesday PM.....Mark: Chapter 1</i>
<p><i>The Purpose of the Christian's Relationship to God</i> <i>Text: Ephesians 2:10</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Christian is a <u>Worker for Christ</u>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Christian has work to do. • Some act as if there were nothing important to do. • Others declare, "I served so many years and I've done my part." • Some compare their work with that of other Christians. ◆ The Christian is to be a <u>Zealous Worker</u>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus condemned the church at Laodicea (Rev 3:15-19). • Paul's argument for Jesus' resurrection from the dead (1 Cor 15). • Jesus' vocabulary was filled with action words. ◆ The Christian is to be a Zealous Worker of <u>Good Works</u>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian should not just be busy, but busy doing the right things. • The Christian must create an appetite for good works. • Any good work the Christian is capable of doing must be zealously performed. ◆ God can do great things with small things! 	<p><i>Unleashing God's Word In Your Life</i> <i>Lesson 1</i></p> <p>Mankind has always sensed the existence of an ultimate power. Christianity, unlike other religions, serves a God who has revealed Himself to us through His Word.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ When God Is Silent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because of our own rebellion and refusal to listen and obey Him (1 Sam 28:6; Jer 14:11,12; Pr 1:23-28) • God freely shares Himself, but if we finally reject Him, He will reject us. ◆ God Is Personal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I AM WHO I AM" (Ex 3:14) • God is not an "it" - He is a "person" • He is tri-personal (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) ◆ God Is Moral (Ex 34:6,7) ◆ God Is the Beginning, the Maintainer, and the End of All Creation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul describes "The Unknown God" to the Athenians (Acts 17:22-27) • Man's search for God must begin and end in the Scriptures ◆ God Is Available—He wants us to know Him <i>We begin with the premise that God is, that He can be known, and that He has something to say to us.</i>