

# 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



August 24, 2014

## Contact Us:

3201 4th Street  
Brownwood, TX 76801

325-646-7102

www.4thstreetcoc.org  
office@4thstreetcoc.org

## Meeting Times:

### Sunday:

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

### Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class..On Break  
Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

## Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

## Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... 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

## Can Worship Be Vibrant And Meaningful Without Becoming Faddish And Unscriptural?

The current demand for change in worship among churches of Christ is more than a clash between the baby boomer mentality and the so-called "Traditionalist" approach. The demand is not merely a rural church versus city congregation clash—it is basically a challenge from the world to dictate to the church the kind of worship that will be appealing and worthy of applause.

The call for change in worship is a demonstration of the relevant nature of God's warning when He, through Paul's inspired pen, said, "*Be not conformed to this world*" (Rom. 12:2). The word translated "*world*" means "age." Every period of human history has certain salient characteristics. Competent historians can identify these characteristics.

If the Lord delays His coming (2 Pet. 3:15) for another century and historians assess our era, they will surely record that in the closing part of the 20th century, the United States had produced the most entertainment-oriented age that the world had ever known.

Discovering the real cause of the demand for change in worship may save some of us from faddism and practices foreign to God's revealed will for our worship to Him. We shall consider the entertainment mentality, the impact of this mentality on the denominational world and how all of this is creating confusion and turmoil among some churches of Christ.

### The Entertainment Mentality

Dr. Reo M. Christenson, in an article entitled, "Shame, Shame on the Entertainment Industry," said that no force has greater influence on young people than the entertainment industry. He further observed, "The major cultural difference between today's world and that of an earlier period is the involvement of the young in a vastly greater amount of mass entertainment than previous generations ever experienced."<sup>1</sup>

Any informed person knows that television is the number one force shaping American thought. The Canadian scholar, Marshall McLuhan, observed that television can burn images into the brain. The opportunity television has to influence people is appreciated when it plays about seven hours each day in most American households.<sup>2</sup>

Television is full of action. Studies reveal that the average length of a shot on network television is only 3.5 seconds, "so the eye never rests, always has something new to see."<sup>3</sup> Postman denotes one chapter in his book to a discussion of television and religion. The chapter is entitled, "Shuffle off to Bethlehem." Although he watched forty-two hours of television religion, he said he could have arrived at two obvious conclusions by watching five hours of Robert Schuller, Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart, Jerry Falwell, Jim Bakker and Pat Robertson. His two conclusions were: "On television, religion, as everything else, is presented quite simply and without apology as an entertainment." The second conclusion Postman reached concerned the loss of the "religious atmosphere." He observed, "The television screen itself has a strong bias toward a psychology of secularism." In fact, he declared that religion on television is "so deeply associated with the commercial and entertainment worlds that it is difficult for it to be recreated as a frame for sacred events."<sup>4</sup>

The influence of television on religion in America had been studied by Quentin J. Schultze.

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*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."* John 3:16-18

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



He said,

"It appears that televangelism alters Americans' concept of the church, it also transforms their notion of worship...local congregational worship seems more and more like a Hollywood production... The key words used by advocates are "relaxed," "informal," "interesting," and "relevant" - but the inevitable result is TV-styled services. Televangelism has helped submerge worship into popular culture, and the effects have been mostly negative."<sup>5</sup>

### The Impact on Denominational Worship

John McArthur, Jr. has explained the changes being seen in denomination worship services. He wrote, "Churches zealous to attract the unchurched have baptized virtually every form of amusement."<sup>6</sup> He observed, "More and more churches are eliminating preaching from their worship services and opting instead for drama, variety shows, and the like."<sup>7</sup> In discussing the way some churches relegate Bible teaching to a mid-week service and others drop it altogether, he set forth the rationale for the change: "They say the church must adopt new methods of innovative programs to grab people on the level where they live."<sup>8</sup>

Does any of this sound like things that are currently being said by some who claim to be preachers of the gospel?

### Now We Know

Now we know why the call for change has become popular in some churches of Christ today. Brethren, the call did not originate with the brethren. The call comes from the influences of television, via the medium, and denominationalism.

The idea that drama is more effective than a proclamation of God's word or that the Lord's Supper can be enhanced by having someone walk down the aisle carrying a cross did not originate with our brethren. These are manifestations of the secularizing of religion. Do we not think it is a little incongruous for someone to walk down a carpeted aisle in a building with controlled temperature supposedly to enforce the suffering of our Lord?

Worship services today where people who know and love God are honored to sing His praise may not be a "moving" to a world that neither knows nor loves God, but these services are times when God's people are bringing glory and honor to God.

The simplicity of worship revealed in the life of the early church may not be as "spiritually uplifting" as listening to a group mimicking instruments of music, or an orchestra playing Handel's "Messiah" or an expensive pipe organ playing "How Great Thou Art," but God is looking for sincere hearts and dedicated lives to undergird true worshippers who understand that the power of worship is not in performance, but in sincere participation (John 4:23,24).

The new approach to worship is actually a rejection of the biblical nature of worship. "Worship" means acts of reverence paid to God. True worship is not performance for consumers but participation in honor and praise of God. The late Dean Sperry of Harvard University said, "Worship is the adoration of God, the ascription of supreme worth to God and the manifestation of reverence in the presence of God."<sup>9</sup> Our Lord said that true worshippers worship God (John 4:23,24). When so-called worship caters to the whims of the world, it ceases to be worship to God.

There is a sacredness of worship that must not be sacrificed on alters of superficial spirituality, fads of the day, emotion-rousing hand-clapping and entertainment-oriented quartets and choirs. The profound dignity of worship should not be sacrificed to shallow, sensational displays of drama. We should not be surprised by anything we hear our brethren doing in worship. Once brethren get on board the old ship of subjectivity, there is no shoreline.

The world has plenty of entertainment to offer. However, let God's people come together to worship in spirit and in truth, because in this true worship, our God is glorified, and we are truly edified.

Tom Holland

<sup>1</sup> "USA Today," May 1987, 92-95.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Neal Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, 86.

<sup>4</sup> Op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>5</sup> *Televangelism and American Culture*.

<sup>6</sup> *Sufficiency in Christ*, p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> A. C. Reid, *Christ and Human Values*, 31.

(Brother Holland wrote this article in 1999. The issue has only gotten worse. Some of the data may be slightly dated, such as the influence of the internet has become greater today than the influence of TV. However, his point is still very sound.—Johnny)

### Television

The Truth In Love (Robert Dodson)

Sunday @ 7:00 am on KTAB

In Search of the Lord's Way

Sunday @ 7:30 am on KTAB

Gospel Broadcasting Network

Sunday @ 6:30 am on Dish:267, DirectTV:376

### Radio

Preaching the Word (Michael Light)

Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3

### Internet

TheGospelRadioNetwork.org

Gospel Broadcasting Network

Gbntv.org and on Roku

### God's Plan for Redeeming Man

**Hear** Learn the saving message of Christ's sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17).

**Believe** Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24)

**Confess** Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33)

**Repent** of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5)

Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being **baptized** for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)

**Live faithfully** (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)

### Bible Reading Schedule

Aug. 24 Jer. 51-52

Aug. 25 Lam. 1:1-3:36

Aug. 26 Lam. 3:37-5:22

Aug. 27 Ezek. 1-4

Aug. 28 Ezek. 5-8

Aug. 29 Ezek. 9-12

Aug. 30 Ezek. 13-15

*"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

(2 Timothy 2:15)



**The Known Sick:**

- ◆ Updates will be announced.

*Special Announcements*

- ◆ **Cindy and I will be gone today, as well as this coming Wednesday evening.** We are in Tennessee attending **Polishing the Pulpit: Family Conference & Preacher's Workshop.**
- ◆ **Jason Nicholas** will be teaching Bible class and preaching at both services for me today. Thank you, Jason!

*Upcoming Events*

- ◆ October 5-8—Fall Gospel Meeting Speaker: Johnny McCaghren, Theme: "The Scheme of Redemption"

*In The Area*

- ◆ Sept. 13 **Ladies Day @ Hamilton**—"Being at Peace" Mona Popejoy. Flyer on bulletin board.
- ◆ Sept. 19-21 **26th Annual Bible Lectureship @ 5th & Grape**—"Knowing the Will of God." Flyer on bulletin board.
- ◆ Sept. 20 **Ladies Day @ 5th & Grape**—"The Will of God: Unity of the Sisterhood." Flyer on bulletin board.
- ◆ Sept. 27 **Annual Auction @ Cherokee Home for Children** (Requested donation list on bulletin board)
- ◆ Oct. 2-4 **Texas Ladies in Christ Retreat.** Information & registration forms are on the bulletin board.

**Pack Your Bags!**

1 Peter 2:11 reads, "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." Our birth certificate or passport may state that we are a citizen of the U.S. or some other country. Our driver's license may confirm that we reside in a particular state. We may have a physical address substantiating where we live. But in the grand scheme of things this world is not our home; we're just passing through. As children of God our citizenship is in the kingdom, not in the world. Our permanent dwelling place is heaven, not here on earth.

This life is not meant to be our destination. This life is our journey. Anytime we embark on a journey we understand that there are certain things necessary for survival. We pack specific items depending on the type of trip we are taking. For instance, if you were going on a hiking excursion through the Rocky Mountains you would make certain you

had the proper boots, warm clothing, food, water, a first aid kit, etc. You would not take off up the mountain without packing some very essential items. Before embarking on a journey we must make preparations. We don't take everything along with us because that would be too much to carry. We must decide what things are necessary.

In the journey through this life the Christian must do the same. We must focus on the things necessary to reach our destination. As *aliens* and *strangers*, we must be aware of what we're going to need and we must pack our bags wisely. What are the essentials that the Christian needs for the journey through this life? Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1:4-11:

*"For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you."*

The destination is the eternal kingdom. What is the estimated time of arrival? No one knows. We do know, however, that the journey goes through this life and that we must be prepared for departure. Peter gives us a checklist of the things we will need: Faith, moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. These virtues are the essentials that every Christian must pack for the journey to their ultimate destination. Notice that it is a process—a process of addition. The child of God must add these qualities to his or her life. One might also look at it like a ladder with each virtue representing a rung. The journey is an upward climb towards the top with each step signifying further development of Christian charac-

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**Celebrate**

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

**August Birthdays:** Joe Dennis (9), Michael Fuller (10), Jessica Dennis (13), Don Smith (14), Royce Ford (16), Roy Dodson (29).

**August Anniversaries:** Susan & Chipper Bridges (1), Matthew & Kaci Churchwell (15), Terry & Pam Teague (16), Don & Darlene Smith (29).

*Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...*



**Records**

	Aug. 10, 2014	Aug. 17, 2014
Bible Class	30	NA
AM Worship	49	NA
PM Worship	40	NA
Wednesday PM	43	NA
Contribution	\$1,613	NA

	This Week: 8/24/14	Next Week: 8/31/14		
<b>Sunday AM:</b>	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	<b>August 2014</b> <b>Make Announcements:</b> Joe Dennis <b>Prepare Communion:</b> Don & Darlene Smith <b>Clean Building:</b> Cindy Fuller <b>Keep Grounds:</b> Tom Wilcox  <b>September 2014</b> <b>Make Announcements:</b> Ken Maninger <b>Prepare Communion:</b> McCaghren Family <b>Clean Building:</b> McCaghren Family <b>Keep Grounds:</b> James Fuller	
<b>Greeters</b>	Dennis Family	Gene & Barbara Bannister		
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Joe Dennis	James Thomas		
<b>Communion</b>	Don Smith*, John Barnum Hank Wheeler, James Fuller	Ken Maninger*, Chase Churchwell Allen Griffith, John McCaghren		
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Billy Chism	Gene Bannister		
<b>Attendance Cards</b>	Chase Churchwell	Caleb Dennis		
<b>Sunday PM:</b>	Song Leader: Ken Maninger	Song Leader: Joe Dennis		
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Gene Bannister	James Fuller		
<b>Scripture Reading</b>	Tom Wilcox	Don Smith		
<b>Communion</b>	Don Smith	Ken Maninger		
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Mike Bannister	Billy Chism		
<b>Wednesday Devotionals:</b>	August 27 Don Smith	September 3 Joe Dennis	September 10 Allen Griffith	September 17 Johnny McCaghren

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ter.

Peter's supply list includes everything that we aliens will need in our journey through this world. If we pack our bags with only these things we will be adequately supplied. It is human nature to over pack. Anytime we go on a prolonged trip somewhere we tend to take more than we need just in case. Many times we want to pack things that are unnecessary and only take up space. We want to fill our bags with the material because it's the material that makes us happy. In the end, our material possessions will be nothing more than ash. As much as we might like to, we cannot take them with us. They are destined to perish and we cannot save them. It was also Peter who wrote:

*"The day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10).*

When you understand what truly has value and what does not, you find it's easier to let go of some things. It's okay to have possessions, but we should keep a loose grip on them. Our security and strength comes from our relationship with God, not from our relationship with possessions. The Apostle Paul stated it this way:

*"Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I*

*have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:11-13).*

What was the secret to Paul's contentment? It was the fact that he was adequately supplied for the journey. When you are adequately supplied, you can be content. Paul cut out the "wants" and took only what was necessary. He traveled light. He found contentment in the journey because he had all he really needed. If we fill our bags with material things we are going to run out of room. Like Paul, we must cut out the "wants" and take only what is necessary. We must travel light, knowing that in Christ we are adequately supplied.

As Christians, it is easy to be event-minded people. It is easy to find ourselves focusing more on the destination and less on the journey. Doing so can be detrimental. We cannot reach our destination without focusing on the journey because it's the journey that gets us there. The journey is what prepares us for entrance into the kingdom. The journey is a process. It is a process of growth and maturation. Christians should be journey-minded individuals. If you focus on the journey the destination will never be in question.

High in the Alps there is a monument raised in honor of a faithful guide who perished while ascending a peak to rescue a stranded tourist. Inscribed on the memorial stone are these words: "He died climbing." May the same be said of us right up to the end of our lives. Good luck on your journey.

Chris McCurley, via "Life in the Light"