

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



January 4, 2015

Contact Us:

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Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study9:45 AM
Worship10:40 AM
Care, Inc. Service 2:30 PM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class.10:00 AM
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

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

Kernels of Knowledge From our Daily Bible Reading Genesis 1-11: Historical Fact or Literary Fiction?

Just how are we to understand the early chapters of Genesis, the narrative of Creation, Fall and Flood? Is this a recounting of real events that actually happened, or is it literary fiction with the good intention of giving us what some ancient people thought about human nature? For many years Liberals have dubbed these chapters as myth, fable, legend, saga, parable etc. They are an attempt to explain "spiritual" things from man's point of view, but have no basis in "what actually happened". I believe quite differently: the events of these chapters are historical facts recording what actually happened. This view is borne out when we consider how Scripture itself views the early chapters of Genesis.

1. **The Nature of Revelation.** The starting point is 2 Timothy 3:16, "all Scripture is God-breathed..." This includes Genesis 1-11 as infallible, inerrant revelation to be taken on face value. As E.J. Young writes, "The Bible is either a revelation from God, or is simply the mental gropings of the Hebrew nation. If it is a revelation from God in which he tells us about the creation then we should believe that it is historical, that it actually took place, because God has spoken" (In the Beginning: Genesis 1-3 and the Authority of Scripture).

2. **The Teaching of Scripture Generally.** It is clear that the rest of Scripture assumes the historicity of Genesis. Take one example from the Psalms. In Ps. 136 the Psalmist gives three reasons for praising God for His love revealed. The first is for His work of creation (vv. 5-9). Then, without a break or indication that we are now "moving to history", he gives the second reason, His work of redeeming his people from Egypt (vv. 10-22). The third reason for praise then follows, the psalmist's own experience of God's care (vv. 23-25). It is clear that the Psalmist is recording God's work in history and he makes no distinction between the acts of God in creation and the other events of the past. He views the Genesis account as history.

3. **The Teaching of Christ.** Did our Lord consider the early chapters of Genesis as historical? Clearly he did. Again take one example. In Matt. 19:3-6, when answering the Pharisees, he specifically refers to Gen. 1:27 and 2:24, showing God to be the Creator of the first man and woman, and the one who instituted marriage. Christ obviously treated the two parallel accounts of creation in Gen. 1 and 2 as compatible and historical.

4. **The Teaching of Paul.** In Rom. 5:14-19, it is clear that Paul teaches that the human race has descended from a single father, the historical figure of Adam (cf. Acts 17:24,26). Again he teaches the literal historicity of Adam and Eve in 1 Tim. 2:13-14.

Given then the historicity of Genesis, it is clear that if we want really to understand anything in the Bible, or in the world, we must first understand the teaching of each word in the all-important declaration that Gen. 1:1 makes about the historical beginning of everything, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

"**God**" The first occurrence of the divine name is "Elohim," the name of God which stresses His majesty and omnipotence. This is a plural name with a singular meaning which some see as suggesting the uniplurality of the God-head (that He is one, yet more than one). The Bible teaches that though the Father was the primary agent in initiating the act of creation, the Son and the Holy Spirit were also at work in creation. The Bible does not set out to prove the existence of God, it simply tells us we must begin all our thinking with the reality of the God who is there, the cause beyond everything.

"**Created**" The verb "*bara*" here is used always and only to describe the work of God. It means "to call into existence that which had no existence." Man can make or form things by organizing already existing materials into more complex systems, but he cannot create because this involves calling into existence things whose materials had no previous existence except in the mind and power of God. This universe was created "ex nihilo" ("out of nothing"). When he began to create nothing existed except God Himself. Denying creation out of nothing means that matter is eternal like God. As W. Grudem says, "This idea

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"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.... And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good."

Genesis 1:1,31



Sacred Cow Tipping

Mark Twain once said, "What gets us into trouble is not what we don't know. It's what we know for sure that just ain't so." For most, the term "sacred cow" has come to represent a stubborn loyalty to a long-standing tradition or institution that impedes natural process. For as long as the church has existed, there have been differences among the brethren and there will continue to be differences among the brethren until the Lord comes back. How we handle such differences is key. A crucial part of the Christian life is getting along with the brethren.

Unity did not come easy in the Lord's Church, and it certainly doesn't come easy in the Lord's Church today. People fill our auditoriums every Sunday and Wednesday with all sorts of personalities, from a variety of backgrounds and with many personal scruples. There is a wide variation from one brother or sister to another. There are those who have been a Christian for many years and those who are babes in Christ. There are those who have deep biblical knowledge and those who have much to learn. There are those who cling tightly to certain sacred cows because to let go of them would violate their conscience. And then there are those who see these sacred cows as, perhaps, silly or splitting hairs.

Religious scruples are not always bad. Everyone holds opinions and everyone is entitled to do so, but when it comes to religious scruples and the Lord's church some guidelines have to be set. Why? Because when it comes to opinions, most people think theirs are right and, consequently, most people think theirs is best.

Scruples have absolutely nothing to do with biblical truth. They are personal opinions. Many who hold these opinions do so with such deep conviction that they become matters of salvation in their own mind. When this happens, scruples get pushed within the congregation and forced on others. What was once a personal religious opinion becomes a matter of life and death spiritually and, in turn, a source of contention among the brethren for all those who refuse to accept the scruple as absolute truth.

As a minister of the gospel for 14 years, I have come in contact with many individuals who promoted their personal sacred cows. Sadly, these sacred cows became a point of contention and threatened to divide the congregation. Opinions such as the King James Version of the Bible being the only valid translation, or men wearing a tie and women wearing a dress are just a couple of the issues I have witnessed threaten the unity of the local church. This should never be. There is nothing inherently wrong with many of the scruples people adhere to. However, we are wrong to bind these scruples on the brethren.

Paul approached the subject of religious scruples in Romans Chapter 14. Paul strikes a contrast between the weak and strong brother. The weak brother is not as mature in the Christian faith. He has some doubts (14:1). He sees meat and wine as a stumbling block (14:21). His conscience is not ready to accept certain things that God has allowed. Paul characterizes the weak brother as not being able to clearly discern be-

tween matters of faith and matters of opinion. Paul exhorts the weak brother not to violate his conscience; however, he is not to sow discord among the brethren either.

It would be easy for one to make the passing judgment that the weak are the ones who need to step it up. After all, they're weak! They need to get stronger! They need to get over their little hang-ups, move past them and get with the program! But notice that the bulk of Romans 14 is not focusing on the weak brother but rather, the strong brother.

The strong brother is confident that God has accepted him (14:3). He is strong in the faith. He is a Christian who enjoys the freedom of being in Christ without violating his conscience. Paul admonishes the stronger brother to accept his weaker brother. He is not to despise him (14:3). He is not to show contempt (14:10). He is to get along with his brother, even though they differ on matters of opinion (15:1). The stronger brother should not destroy his brother with his liberty (14:15b, 20a). A strong brother must care more for his brother than for meat. He must care more about the Lord and His church than for trivial scruples. In short, he must care more for the brethren than for himself. We must be prepared to restrict our rights or our freedom for the benefit of others. We may have to give up personal freedom to do things that are unimportant in the grand scheme of things but may negatively impact others. The goal is unity! That is the thrust of Paul's admonition to both the strong and the weak.

When all was said and done, Paul's resolution to the matter was to accept one another in spite of scruples. The word for "receive" or "accept" is *proslambano*. It's a compound verb. The prefix *pros* is a preposition that intensifies the basic verb making it a command. Paul is not simply suggesting that strong believers accept weak believers. He is commanding it. *Proslambano* literally means "to take to oneself; admit to friendship or hospitality." This doesn't mean that we avoid the weaker brother in the foyer, that we exclude them from fellowship activities, or that we refuse to acknowledge or speak to them. To *accept* or *receive* them means to treat them as a brother or sister in Christ, to swallow our pride and to set aside our petty differences for the sake of the church.

We must not be stricter than God is. If God is not going to send a brother or sister to hell for believing or doing something then we shouldn't either. If God has accepted a brother or sister then so should we. We cannot unite on falsehood. We must be united in the truth. We don't have to be united on opinions.

Somebody doesn't have to be wrong. Seeing things from two different perspectives doesn't necessarily mean that one person must be wrong while the other must be right. Scruples are religious opinions. They are not governed by Biblical authority, which means that they should never be bound on another or present a stumbling block to fellow Christians.

Chris McCurley, "Life in the Light"

Television

The Truth In Love (Robert Dodson)

Sunday @ 7:00am on KTAB

In Search of the Lord's Way (Phil Sanders)

Sunday @ 7:30am on KTAB

Life In The Light (Chris McCurley)

Sunday @ 10:30am on KTAB

Radio

Preaching the Word (Michael Light)

Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3

Internet

TheGospelRadioNetwork.org

Gospel Broadcasting Network (Gbnv.org)

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

Jan. 4	Job 1-5
Jan. 5	Job 6-9
Jan. 6	Job 10-13
Jan. 7	Job 14-16
Jan. 8	Job 17-20
Jan. 9	Job 21-23
Jan. 10	Job 24-28
Jan. 11	Job 29-31

"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)



Sympathy:

- ◆ Our sympathy is extended to the family of **Joyce Hill**. Joyce passed away last Saturday and her service was Tuesday. She will be missed by all—but especially Jack, Paula, Terry, Jackie and all the family.
- ◆ Our sympathy is extended to the family of **Jeff Kite**. Jeff passed away very unexpectedly at home last Wednesday (12/24). His memorial service was held here at the building Friday afternoon. Our sympathy to Larry Petty, Walan Kite, and all the family.

New Members:

- ◆ **Larry Petty** came forward last Sunday, expressing his desire to work with this congregation and under the oversight of our elders. He also ask for prayers and forgiveness for unfaithfulness. Welcome Larry!
- ◆ Also **Anita Alexander** has expressed her desire to be a member of this congregation and under the oversight of the elders here. Anita is a resident at Care Inc. Nursing Center and attends our services there each Sunday afternoon. She was a member at Early. Welcome Anita!

Visitation Meeting

- ◆ Each Sunday night immediately before the evening worship. Last week **26 contacts** were made.

Special Announcements

- ◆ A big “thank you” for everyone’s help with the two funerals this week.
- ◆ **Fellowship Meal** following services this morning.

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would challenge God’s independence, his sovereignty and the fact that worship is due to him alone: if matter existed apart from God, then what inherent right would God have to rule over it and use it for his glory? What confidence could we have that every aspect of the universe will ultimately fulfil God’s purposes, if some parts of it were not created by him? The positive side of the fact that God created the universe out of nothing is that it has meaning and a purpose...namely, to bring glory to God Himself” (Systematic Theology).

“**The Heavens**” This is a plural noun which is best translated here as “heavens”, meaning “space.” We speak of the universe as a universe of space and time. “Heavens” here refers to the component of space in the space-matter-time universe.

“**The Earth**” Although this can be translated to mean the world which is man’s home, it may also be translated here as the component of “matter” in the basic space-time-matter universe. The term “matter” would include energy. Thus in the beginning we have God creating all the basic building blocks of the universe. Over a period of six days He would mold and shape the earth to have all the physical properties needed for man to survive, multiply and have dominion over.

“**In the Beginning**” The scientist H. Morris writes, “The universe is a continuum of space, matter and time, no one of which can have a meaningful existence without the other two. ‘Matter’ must function in both space and time. ‘Space’ is measurable and accessible to sense observation only in terms of the entities that exist and the events that happen in space, and these require both matter and time. The concept ‘time’ is meaningful only in terms of entities and events existing and transpiring during time, which likewise require space and matter. Thus Gen. 1:1 can be paraphrased: The transcendent, omnipotent Godhead called into existence the space-time-matter universe.” (Commentary on Genesis). The sovereign God created time, the succession of moments one after another. However, before there was a universe and before there was time God always existed, without beginning or end, without being influenced by time. Grudem makes the point: “Time does not have existence in itself, but like the rest of creation, depends on God’s eternal being and power to keep it existing. When we think of God’s existence ‘before’ the creation of the world we should not think of God as existing in an unending extension of time. Rather, God’s eternity means that he has a different kind of existence, an existence without the passage of time, a kind of existence that is difficult for us to imagine. The fact that God created time reminds us of his lordship over it and our obligation to use it for his glory.” (Systematic Theology).

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created” (Rev. 4:11).

Adapted from an article by N. Wilson

Celebrate

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

January Birthdays: Tom Wilcox (17), Anita Boyd (19), Jaceton Evetts (20), Mattison Churchwell (25), Karen Bland (29) and Judie Turner (29).

January Anniversaries: None

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Dec. 21, 2014	Dec. 28, 2014
Bible Class	39	37
AM Worship	49	55
PM Worship	37	44
Wednesday PM	28	30
Contribution	\$1,485	\$1,493

Privileged To Serve

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

	This Week: 1/4/15	Next Week: 1/11/15	January 2015	
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Ken Maninger	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Make Announcements: Don Smith	
Greeters	Maninger Family	James & Cindy Fuller	Prepare Communion: Billy & Peggy Chism	
Opening Prayer	James Fuller	Allen Griffith	Clean Building: Jack & Judy Turner	
Communion	Gene Bannister*, James Thomas Hank Wheeler, John McCaghren	Garrett Barnum*, John Barnum Ken Maninger, Chase Churchwell	Keep Grounds: James Fuller	
Closing Prayer	Garrett Barnum	Gene Bannister	February 2015	
Attendance Cards	Caleb Dennis	Chase Churchwell	Make Announcements: Joe Dennis	
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: Ken Maninger	Song Leader: John McCaghren	Prepare Communion: Peggy Moore	
Opening Prayer	John Barnum	Tom Wilcox	Clean Building: Johnny & Cindy McCaghren	
Scripture Reading	Allen Griffith	Hank Wheeler	Keep Grounds: Tom Wilcox	
Communion	Gene Bannister	Garrett Barnum		
Closing Prayer	Billy Chism	James Fuller		
Wednesday Devotionals:	January 7 Prayer	January 14 Garrett Barnum	January 21 Joe Dennis	January 28 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 January 4, 2015

Sunday Class Acts 2:29ff
Wednesday Class Personal Evangelism

Church Leadership: Qualities Needed by Elders
<p>I. Communication</p> <p>A. We are a family and it is important to communicate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication flows in two directions. 2. Communication involves letting people know "what's going on". 3. Communication can and will prevent problems from developing. <p>B. Shepherds must know the sheep - Elders should try to visit a certain number of families each month.</p> <p>C. Communicate the budgetary needs and financial status of the church.</p> <p>D. Communication of those in need should take place on a daily basis.</p> <p>E. Show support of the preacher when he preaches on hard issues.</p> <p>F. Communication is key to love and unity within a congregation.</p> <p>II. Decision Makers</p> <p>A. Decision making has always been necessary among God's people.</p> <p>B. Decisions should be made by consulting Scripture and prayer.</p> <p>C. Each elder must support the decisions made by the eldership.</p> <p>D. Decision making without procrastination is critical in overseeing the Lord's church.</p> <p>III. Problem Solvers</p> <p>A. Elders will always face problems.</p> <p>B. Always begin with prayer and Bible study - be patient.</p> <p>C. Collect all the facts - be impartial and objective.</p> <p>D. Elders cannot escape problems.</p> <p>E. God needs men who are not afraid to face and solve problems.</p> <p>IV. Men with Vision</p> <p>Pr. 29:18 "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (KJV)</p> <p>A. Elders should be more than "housekeepers" for the church.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We must be pushed beyond our comfort zone. 2. The future of the church belongs to every member - not just elders, deacons, preachers, and Bible class teachers - All should be a part of the vision set forth by the eldership. 3. Every congregation needs a master plan of where it is going. <p>B. Good leaders look up and beyond what is before their eyes.</p> <p>C. Set the direction and purpose of the congregation - present & future.</p> <p>D. We are limited only by the will of God and by our own faith in Him.</p> <p>E. Vision can see opportunity where others might see only obstacles.</p> <p>F. Lack of vision leads to a dead congregation - the right vision leads to souls saved and a congregation on fire for the Lord.</p>

1 John - Chapter 4
<p>III. God is Love 3:1-5:12</p> <p>A. Spirit of Truth and Spirit of Error Contrasted 4:1-6</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Test (try) [prove] <i>Have gone out.</i> 2. By this you know. *** JOHN'S 1st TEST! *** <i>Every spirit.</i> This is the individual making these statements. <i>Confesses - continues to confess:</i> 3. Does not confess. 4. Have overcome them. - "have conquered and are still victorious." 5. Listens [hears]. - to listen to, to hear, to pay attention to. 6. *** JOHN'S 2nd TEST *** <i>We...us...us...we</i> - the apostles. <p>B. Brotherly Love Commanded 4:7-21</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Let us love one another. 8. Does not know. - has not known (from the beginning). <i>God is love.</i> This is a compressed statement of the gospel. 9. The love of God was manifested toward us. <i>His only Son.</i> Only one of its kind, single one, only, unique. 10. But that He loved us and sent His Son. 11. We also ought. In other words, "We must!" 12. No one has ever seen God. 13. He has given. - "He has given us and we still have." 14. We - the apostles. 15. Whoever confesses. 16. We have come to know. - "We have come to know and still know." <i>Believed.</i> <i>Abides</i> - total fellowship. 17. Confidence [Boldness]. Confidence and love go together. 18. There is no fear in love. This "fear" is terror or dread. <i>Perfect.</i> Mature, full grown. <i>Casts out fear.</i> <i>Fear has to do with punishment [involves torment]</i> 19. We love [Him] because he first loved us. 20. He who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. 21. Must love his brother also. Cf. Mt. 25:31-46.