

# 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 23, 2015

## Contact Us:

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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

### 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.

## That They May All Be One

In his comments on the Lord's prayer as recorded in John 17, brother Guy N. Woods wrote the following on John 17:20-21,

*"When men come to respect God's word as they ought agreement on the basis of its teaching is easy; but, it will never be possible to unite on the doctrines and commandments of men. Creeds, confessions of faith, church manuals constitute a perpetual barrier to the unity of religious people. The spirit of this prayer is wholly foreign to the factious spirit which often characterizes members of the church; and those who promote parties, factions, and divisions of the Lord's body are guilty of grievous sin (1 Cor. 1:10)." (A Commentary on the Gospel According to John, p. 364)*

In an attempt to justify the many denominational bodies in existence it is said that it is a blessing that there are so many different "options" from which to choose in religion. Many believe that because we are all different (young and old, black and white) there is no possible way that we can all be one. The young need contemporary services, while the old need a traditional setting. Racial differences require more options because, "we are just too different." Does man need a variety of choices in worship due to his age or race? Is it possible to achieve the unity for which Christ prayed?

## The Prayer

Jesus prayed to the Father, *"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me"* (Jn. 17:20-21). Notice the following:

**1. The Source of Faith and Unity (v. 20).** It is the Word of God alone by which faith comes (Rom. 10:17) and through which unity is accomplished. Isaiah wrote, *"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"* (Isa. 8:20). As brother Woods noted in his commentary, the doctrines and creeds of men serve only to bring about division and parties, even within the Lord's church. The inspired word of God is the only source of absolute, objective truth (Jn. 17:17). Was Jesus praying for the impossible? Do the differences of age, race, environment, etc., make His prayer null and void? Absolutely not! Christians today are those who believe on Jesus through their (the apostles) word. Paul commanded, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, *"Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment"* (1 Cor. 1:10). The division that existed within the church at Corinth was based on Christians who

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*"I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."*  
**John 17:14-17**



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were more devoted to men than to Christ (1 Cor. 1:11-12). Paul's energy was spent in preaching Jesus Christ, and Him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2). This must be the determination of every servant of God today.

**2. The Subjects of Unity (v. 21).** Christ prayed that ALL believers be one. This excludes no one! It may seem impossible to the world, but unity among all believers is possible. Consider Paul's instructions on accomplishing this command. Unity among all believers is accomplished by possessing the proper attitudes. *"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* (Eph. 4:1-3). Sadly, there are some in the body of Christ who do not possess these attributes. However, attitude is but one area by which unity is accomplished. One must hold to the correct doctrine in order to realize the unity for which Christ prayed. *"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all"* (Eph. 4:4-6). There are those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine of Christ because they serve themselves (Rom. 16:17-18). All men are subject to Jesus' prayer for unity and Paul's apostolic command for unity (Jn. 17:20-21; 1 Cor. 1:10-13).

**3. The Success of Unity (v. 21).** The ultimate goal in Christ's prayer for unity is *"that the world may believe that You sent Me."* In the first century there were Christians who were biting and devouring one another (Gal. 5:15). There were *"wars and fights"* among Christians (Jas. 4:1). These attitudes and actions are in direct opposition to the desire of Jesus Christ. In the world there is more than enough sin, fighting, and division. We certainly do not need it within the churches of Christ. Paul withstood Peter to the face when he saw that Peter was not walking *"straightforward about the truth of the gos-*

*pel"* (Gal. 2:14). How can we convince the world to have peace with God through Jesus Christ if we cannot even have peace among ourselves as believers in Christ?

## Conclusion

Division exists in religion today because men refuse to abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 Jn. 9-11). The truth of the matter is that unity has been prayed for by Christ, commanded by Paul, and it is possible to achieve. May God give us the wisdom and may we all have the heart to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Barry O'Dell (Fulton County Gospel News, Sept.-Oct. 2014, pp. 1,4)

## 4 Signs of a Spiritually Sick Church

"Culture" has become a popular buzz word in the business world over the last few years. Successful organizations realize that they have to create a culture of productivity, accountability, and growth if they want to sustain their success. Basically, this means that those involved in the organization need to be on the same page. They all need to recognize that certain attributes will keep them from doing well with the company, and certain attributes will help entrench them as a part of the work.

As the church, we need to look at our culture and realize that we've been plagued with a sickness. This sickness must be eradicated if each of our congregations are going to grow strong in the Lord. We've created a culture where it's far too easy to slide into a comfortable Christianity, where a member can have a minimal role in the work of the church and as long as that's fulfilled, we're doing fine. But that's not the kind of discipleship Christ established. How do you know when this disease is affecting your congregation? Here are 4 symptoms of a spiritually sick church.

### Attendance isn't important

A congregation can't be healthy if it's considered no big deal when its members skip worship. When sports, school,

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### 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

**Aug. 23** Jeremiah 49-50

**Aug. 24** Jeremiah 51-52

**Aug. 25** Lamentations 1:1-3:36

**Aug. 26** Lamentations 3:37-5:22

**Aug. 27** Ezekiel 1-4

**Aug. 28** Ezekiel 5-8

**Aug. 29** Ezekiel 9-12

**Aug. 30** Ezekiel 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)



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hobbies, or any other activities are considered perfectly normal and acceptable reasons for not being present with the body on Sundays, it's a sign of a church that is a convenience in the lives of its members rather than a priority. It says that we think worship is exactly where we need to be... as long as we don't have something better to do. Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:18-19 aren't just about singing – they remind us how important it is for Christians to be together and encourage each other. Additionally, what the New Testament teaches us about the Lord's Supper goes beyond just remembering Jesus' death. It's also about the fellowship we all have together in His blood. That's not something a healthy church takes lightly or neglects when it's inconvenient.

### Prayers focus only on the physical

It's important to pray for the sick, the injured, the traveling, and such, but if that's all we focus on in our prayers and our requests, it shows just how earthly-focused we've become. Though Paul often mentioned the physical needs he and his fellow workers shared, his prayers showed his true priorities. He prayed that his brethren would be filled with the knowledge of God (Ephesians 1), that they would know the love of Christ and that He would live in their hearts through faith (Ephesians 3), and that they would walk in a manner worthy of the Lord (Colossians 1). While we don't have the gift of Paul's eloquence, we do need to make sure our prayers aren't lacking in focus on our spiritual growth, opportunities to reach the lost, and our relationships with God.

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## Celebrate

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

**August Birthdays:** Joe Dennis (9), Jessica Dennis (13), Don Smith (14), Royce Ford (16), **Anita Alexander (25), Roy Dodson (29).**

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

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



## Records

	Aug. 9, 2015	Aug. 16, 2015
Bible Class	40	48
AM Worship	54	63
PM Worship	41	52
Wednesday PM	43	36
Contribution	\$2,053	\$1,855

	This Week: 8/23/15	Next Week: 8/30/15	August 2015	
<b>Sunday AM:</b>	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	<b>Make Announcements:</b> Joe Dennis	
<b>Greeters</b>	John Barnum Family	Tom & Carol Wilcox	<b>Prepare Communion:</b> Randy & Laura Huckaby	
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	James Fuller	John Barnum	<b>Clean Building:</b> Dennis / Guthrie	
<b>Communion</b>	Ken Maninger*, Chase Churchwell Gene Bannister, John Barnum	James Thomas*, James Fuller Joe Dennis, Caleb Dennis	<b>Hostess Committee:</b> Laura Huckaby's group	
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Don Smith	Randy Huckaby	<b>September 2015</b>	
<b>Attendance Cards</b>	Jaceton Evetts	Chase Churchwell	<b>Make Announcements:</b> John Barnum	
<b>Sunday PM:</b>	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox	Song Leader: Ken Maninger	<b>Prepare Communion:</b> Lisa Greer	
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Randy Huckaby	Mike Bannister	<b>Clean Building:</b> Huckaby / Bland	
<b>Scripture Reading</b>	Hank Wheeler	Tom Wilcox	<b>Hostess Committee:</b> Laura Huckaby's group	
<b>Communion</b>	Ken Maninger	James Thomas		
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Allen Bland	Gene Bannister		
<b>Wednesday Devotionals:</b>	August 26 Singing / Tom Wilcox	September 2 Prayer Night	September 9 Don Smith	September 16 Joe Dennis

## 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 August 23, 2015

Sunday Class ..... Rafael Ramirez  
Wednesday Class ..... Singing

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#### **Conversations don't include spiritual matters**

It's no wonder why evangelism is so difficult sometimes. If we can't bring up Scriptural, spiritual matters of discussion with our Christian family, what makes us think we'll be able to do the same with the lost? Just imagine having a discussion with Paul or Peter that didn't include the work of the church or some point about Jesus. That seems incredibly unlikely, and we need to make it our goal to make it just as unlikely that we won't discuss such important matters with our brethren. Take note of the kind of conversations that happen before and after worship at your congregation. Are they all focused on the weather, sports, and other current events, or is there continued discussion on the topics brought up by the sermon or Bible class? What about your own interactions? Do you think to bring up the Bible, prayer requests, or words of encouragement, or do you remain on a shallow level in most of your interactions? If we want our congregations to grow spiritually, we need to make the Word a bigger part of our lives as individuals.

#### **Fellowship ends when the doors close**

If the lights being turned off and the doors being locked on every Sunday night signals the last time members are going to see each other before Wednesday night (or the next Sunday morning), we can hardly claim a commonality with the

church of Acts 2. Yes, life is busy and hectic and crazy sometimes, but a church that isn't involved in each other's lives won't ever be able to connect with each other beyond shallow, superficial interests (like the conversation topics mentioned above). It's that genuine love and care for each other that is supposed to distinguish us from the world (John 13:35 [Open in Logos Bible Software (if available)]).

Hopefully we can all truthfully claim that we want to be active workers in thriving congregations. While there is always work to do, the good news is that it's not all that difficult. We just need to commit ourselves to God and to each other. Consider your prayers and the things you're saying. Pay attention to how much you bring God into your conversations. Spend more time around your Christian family.

Most will react in one of two ways: they'll grow along with you and start being accustomed to greater fellowship and increased focus on the Word, or they'll become uncomfortable and avoid Christian activity. Truthfully, that's what we need. We need to start having congregations where it's awkward and uncomfortable to be inactive and lukewarm. Too many times it's the other way around, where the passionate members are the ones that stand out as being different. Let's all purpose to start changing that culture.

Jack Wilkie (focuspressblog.com)