

Putting the Kingdom of God First and Church Attendance

We wish to consider the following two scriptural statements in conjunction with one another. The Lord Jesus Christ declared in the Sermon on the Mount, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt. 6:33). The writer of the book of Hebrews admonished, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25).

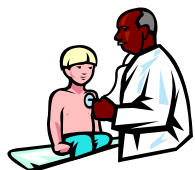
The word "church" means assembly, and the church is the kingdom of God. Therefore, a Christian's faithfulness in church attendance is a good indicator as to whether he or she is really seeking first the kingdom of God. One's priority's and values are made evident here. If Christ is first in our lives, we will meet on the first day of every week to remember the Lord's death in the Lord's Supper (Lk. 22:19,20; Acts 20:7). If we are indeed disciples of Christ, disciples meaning learners, we will meet with other disciples (learners) of Christ to learn all that we can about Christ and his teachings (about God's Word, the Bible). Remember Acts 2:42. Recall that "the disciples (learners) were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26) in connection with being assembled for that very purpose, learning. We are not to forsake the assembly. It is the church of Christ. To forsake the assembly is to forsake Christ. And if we find ourselves in a situation locally where there is no faithful New Testament church, we therewith are that church and should begin assembling as such.

Let us further scrutinize ourselves in reference to the assembly and its teaching program (and it indeed should involve real teaching, not just some little "devotionals" and meaningless sweet nothings). Recognition of God and religion has been pushed out of our public schools by the secular humanist. Consequently, young people, as they study and prepare themselves for life day after day, get the impression that God and religion are unimportant and have nothing to do with life. It is sad to say, but many professing Christians subconsciously have absorbed this godless (and ungodly) way of thinking. They would not think of their children being absent from public school, nor tolerate it, but when it comes to Bible study at church, any truancy is allowable (whether it be staying home to study for public school, sports, scouts, going to the beach, or whatever comes up). Studying the Bible and Christianity are irrelevant to real life (that is what they in essence are saying, in spite of what the Lord said in Mt. 6:33). God is not first, if at all, in their lives. At other times visitors may come. The assembly is missed. Who comes first? The assembly is missed again (especially on Sunday evenings and the midweek). "Members" are seen absorbed in their watching of television or have gone to "take in" some worldly entertainment (or to be with their worldly friends). What has taken first place in their lives? In those "perilous times" of the last days that the apostle Paul said were coming, he states that people would be "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2Tim. 3:1,4). And he is talking about religious people too, for he said that they would be "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (3:5).

We could go on with this little dissertation and even enlarge upon our thoughts derived from Mt. 6:33 and Heb. 10:25. But church attendance is only the edge of the iceberg. Faithfulness in this respect would lead us to believe that a person is likewise conscientiously trying to be faithful in other areas of his life. Absence in church attendance indicates there are problems in a person's life greater than missing church. Considering everything, is God really first in our lives? - James Gibbons

Continue to remember in prayer:

Sick Margaret Kratz, Miriam Majors, Betty & Walter Jenkins, Jim Dorsett, Martha Keith, Al Furrow, Marguerite Charles, Jo Musgrove, Evelyn Scott, Ruth Stanton, Carol Daniels, Andrea Halling, Kyle Ruf, Willard Campbell, WJ Wood, EV Wimmer, Jo Hartman



- Charlie Puckett has returned home with Hospice Care.
- Collin Gregory has been sick at home.
- Lynn Anderson is back at the Oakes.
- Pam Wright, Velda's niece, had surgery to remove a brain tumor.
- Pat Shelbourne, member at Radford, has been diagnosed with melanoma cancer.

Happy Birthday this week to:

- Mandy Tyler—3/7
- Luke Guard—3/8
- Dorothy & Sophia Mays—3/11
- Sam Valentine—3/12
- Weston Rogers—3/14



MARCH ITEMS FOR THE STAFFORDS:

Ink pens (Grip, medium Pilot, and fine Zebra) and Tic Tacs (lime). Give your items to Jeanny and she will ship them over!



WOW

The next regular meeting will be on March 9 at 10:30.

Elder Appointment

After processing the names submitted and interviewing those qualified to serve, the elders have submitted the name of Danny Guard for your consideration as an elder. If you have any Scriptural objection(s) to Danny's being appointed, please make this known in writing, signed and submitted to one of the current elders by March 13.

Teens

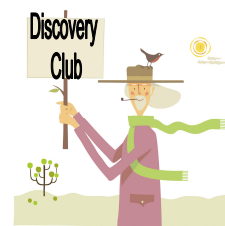
March Events



WYD at Lake Drive has been cancelled.
March 21— Teen Bible Study
Thanks for the VCC top Ten Ideas!!!



The Discovery Club will be starting back up this month. On March 14 there will be a meeting in the large classroom at 4:30; and on March 20 a Field Trip is being planned to the VWCC Gardens. Times will be decided at the meeting!



Upcoming Events:



Team 3 (Valentine) will be having a lunch after services on March 28 at the K&W Restaurant.

Bible Class Broadcast

All Bible teachers and education workers/helpers, spouses, and special friends are invited to attend the **Education Appreciation Banquet** on March 13 at 5:45. There is a new sign up sheet for this event so make sure you resign up by March 7 if you are attending!

Spring Quarter Classes start today. Teachers include: Primary: Kristie Jearls, Amanda Brown, Jennifer Laplante, Kim Brown, Lisa Valentine, Shree Lowe, and Michelle Earnhart. Secondary & Adult: Jim Harrington & Eddy Gilpin, Bob Garby & Jeff Durham, Eric Earnhart & Marc Laplante, Jeanny Gilpin.

If you can't be in Jeanny's class this quarter here is the upcoming schedule of **Ladies Classes**: Jeanny will be teaching a class in the Fall, Rebecca Durham will be teaching a class in the Winter and Michele Nikkel will be teaching a class next Spring! Jeanny will also be teaching the college age girls over the summer.

For Your Information

Weekly Reminders

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

Today we welcome Cy & Stephanie Stafford to West Side. Cy will bring our lesson this morning as well as updates from Tanzania!

MEN'S BREAKFAST

The monthly Men's Breakfast will be on March 13 at 8 AM at Famous Anthony's.

TURN, TURN, TURN

There will be a meeting on March 14 at 4:30 for the T3 Planners.

AREA WIDE PREACHERS' MEETING

The Area Wide Preachers' Meeting will be held at Radford on March 15 at 10:30. All are welcome!

MARCH LADIES NIGHT OUT

The March LNO will be held at the building on March 18 at 6:30. More details to follow!

MEN'S RETREAT

The Men's Retreat sponsored by the Lake Drive congregation will be held on March 19 & 20. Registration forms are located in the foyer. Please respond ASAP!

PRIMARY TEACHERS MEETING

The Primary Teachers Meeting to be held on March 21 has been cancelled. This event will be rescheduled at a later date!

EVENING AT WEST SIDE

There will be a meeting for hostesses on March 21 after evening services to choose invitees.

MSOP LECTURSHIPS

The Annual MSOP Lectureship will be held March 28—April 1 in Memphis, TN. See Eddy for details.



Directory Update: Modolia Rosettes new phone number is 540-494-2985. Please up date your directory!!

Prayer List:

Marguerite Charles	Collin Gregory
Lynn Anderson	Evelyn Scott
Martha Keith	Danny White
Miriam Majors	Jo Musgrove
Walter & Betty Jenkins	Ruth Stanton
WJ Wood	Carol Daniels
Margaret Kratz	Jo Hartman
Jim Dorsett	Glenn & Ruth Hartman
E.V. Wimmer	Al Furrow
Charlie Puckett	Sandra Wood
Andrea Halling	Bill Bryant
Kyle Ruf	Thelma & Velma Vaughan
Pat Shelbourne	Willard & Marie Campbell

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March 2010

Announcements:	Charlie Gwaltney
Song Leader (AM):	David Brown
Communion:	Marc Laplante (preside) Glenn Hartman, Bob Garby Greg Edwards, Josh Whitlow
Prayer:	Bob Martin (open) Squeaky Valentine (close)
Next week prayer	Adam House (open) Charles Maness (close)
Song Leader (PM):	Eric Earnhart
Scripture Reader:	Ethan Rogers
Prayer:	Jeff Durham (open) Gene Benefield (close)
Next week prayer:	John Black (open) Collin Gregory (close)
Communion:	Sam Valentine, Jimmy Harrington

Song leader (Wed):	Garrett Durham
Prayer:	Herb Baker
Next week prayer:	Charlie Gwaltney

Open/Close Building:	Bob Garby
Greeters:	R. White, D. Guard
Nursery:	Velda Gearhart (AM) Linda Maness (PM)

Ushers:	Roger Mays, Tom Rogers
Handouts:	M. Brooks, D. Tyler, C. Jearls
Prepare Communion:	Lori Cook Jean Argabright

Attendance 2/24&3/3/10
Sunday Class—150 Worship—171
Sun. Eve.—120 Wednesday—129
Contribution—\$8909

Monthly Reminders

Turn off your cell phones

Lock your car and hide any valuables.

Last one out turn off all the light and check the doors!

First 100 Days

Bibliolatry

Mar. 7 (Romans 2)

- Read Romans 2 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Romans 2
 - Jewish world under sin (before the cross)
 - Memorize Rom. 2:11
- Write a note or card this week
- *Increase your contribution by \$1 today

Mar. 8 (Romans 3)

- Read Romans 3 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Romans 3
 - Universality of sin
 - Memorize Rom. 3:23

Mar. 9 (Romans 4)

- Read Romans 4 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Romans 4
 - Illustrations of the law of faith
 - Memorize Rom. 4:7

Mar. 10 (Romans 5)

- Read Romans 5 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Romans 5
 - Blessings of obedient faith (1-11)
 - Contrasts between Adam's sin and Christ's atonement (12-21)
 - Memorize Rom. 5:8

Mar. 11 (Romans 6)

- Read Romans 6 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Romans 6
 - Freedom from sin's dominion
 - Memorize Rom. 6:3

Mar. 12 (Romans 7)

- Read Romans 7 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Romans 7
 - Freedom from the law of Moses
 - Memorize Rom. 7:4

Mar. 13 (Romans 8)

- Read Romans 8 three times today
- Pray today
- Memorize contents of Romans 8
 - Spiritual nature of the new life in Christ
 - Memorize Rom. 8:1

At first glance this word might seem like a good word. After all, any word containing the Bible as its root must be a good word, right? To the contrary, this word is defined as “excessive reverence for the Bible; extravagant devotion to or dependence upon books.” While the Bible should be revered, one who is guilty of bibliolatry has more reverence for the leather bound volume, its paper and ink, than he does for its contents. For him, the book itself holds more meaning than the commands it gives, the sentiments it conveys and the principles it teaches.

I remember well studying the Scriptures with a man and his wife for an extended period of time. Throughout the course of that study the man refused to lick his finger and turn the page in his Bible. He was adamant about not wrinkling a page or otherwise doing any damage to the book itself. In due time, this man came to see the truth of what God's word teaches. He saw such things as the uniqueness of Christ's church, the essentiality of baptism and the requirements of approved worship. However, when called upon to leave his present religious affiliation and obey what the Bible teaches in order to be added to the Lord's church, he decided he would stay where he was. This man thought more of the Bible (the ink and paper) than he did of the Scriptures. To him, the Bible was nothing more than an idol, a token, a symbol.

What about us? Do we see the Bible as some mystical production that is better seen than studied? That is better possessed than proclaimed? That is better enshrined than examined? If we hold the product dearer than the Producer, the pages more precious than the proclamations, or the material more relevant than the message, we, too, are guilty of bibliolatry. If we count our Bible as dear to us, but then refuse to obey what it says, are we really an better off with it than without it? Remember the words of Jesus: “If you love me, keep my commandments” (Jn. 14:15).

-Eddy