

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Bible Class 9:45am
Morning Assembly 10:35am
Evening Assembly 6:00pm

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00pm

RADIO PROGRAM

The Bible Speaks



Sunday 9:00-9:30a.m.
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

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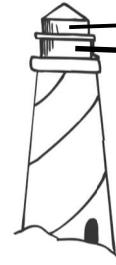
**God can use little
to accomplish much.**

CLASS SCHEDULE

Today
All Classes
2 Cor & Galatians

Next Sunday
All Classes
Ephesians

**This info is provided
to help everyone stay
in synch during our
three-year study thru
the Bible (Sunday AM).**



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

**PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST
ROGERS, ARKANSAS**

April 19, 2020

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: Mary Lou Lewis, Kathy Fletcher, Marsha Swim, Nellie Shell, June Self,

Diane Willis, Shirley Cole, Etta Frazelle, & Rai Starr *Military:* Logan Dickey

Shut-ins: Betty Jo Young, Margaret Abel, Erton Usrey, & Billie Pennington

HANG IN THERE! The current pandemic will be over soon. In the meantime, remember to reach out to your Downtown family for any needs or concerns you may have. We can't always see each other, but love remains.

SENTENCE SERMON- What is poured into a child is not as important as what is planted.

Does It Really Take a Village?

Some have remarked that it ‘takes a village’ to raise a child — and it certainly has the ring of goodness. After all, we are all part of a global community and strong personal relationships are an important part of living successfully in that community.

But, how does the Bible address the issue of ‘raising children’? Is it the duty of the tribe at large? Well, Moses laid the onus of responsibility on the parents (De 6:5-7), and Solomon did the same (Pr 1:7-9). New Testament writers follow the same template (Ep 6:1-4, 2 Ti 1:5).

There can be no doubt what God’s expectations are.

Of course, societies have long utilized schools as an educational adjunct to the family; and, we have no problem with that. After all, I would not want to teach calculus to my teenager. But, when parents abdicate their role as primary teacher, counselor and disciplinarian, society suffers.

The Old Law DID suggest one role for the village in dealing with children (De 21:18-21). But I don’t think we’re there yet.

- *WKing*

Another Perspective

The Social Gospel

Faith in Context

Advocates of the ‘Social Gospel’ fail to recognize the true purpose of the gospel. Jesus said, *“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Lu 19:10). Some churches address social ills and injustices while forgetting that **the goal is not to alleviate temporal suffering but eternal suffering.**

Some would object that this ignores the needs of a suffering humanity. “You can’t preach to one whose belly is empty.” But those who argue in this way fail to distinguish between what is the work of the church, and what is the work of the individual. No one is advocating that the ills of society be ignored. The Christian is to be empathetic to the poor and helpful to the hungry. But the question is, “For what purpose did God establish **the church?**”

The church is a **spiritual** institution. The primary mission of the church is twofold: The edifying of itself in love (Ep 4:16), and the proclamation of the gospel to the lost (Ac 8:1-4). God expects each **individual** to be active in benevolent work; but **the church is not the family** (it is not charged by God to raise children). **The church is not a business** (it is not charged with supplying services or making profit). **And, the church is not a social organization** (it is not charged with affecting social change). Those who would involve the church in any of these serve to dissuade her in her primary work of saving souls!

- Stan Cox (edited for space)

By the time of the first century, Greco-Roman cultural concepts of patronage and reciprocity were deeply imbedded in all the minds of the known world. Patronage simply refers to a person who provided support or goods for another’s benefit. Reciprocity (which comes after the support of a patron) was a back and forth exchange of ‘returning the favor’, so to speak.

Any patron could choose whoever he wanted to provide for. This was called grace. He freely offered this gift of grace, and any who received it would — out of a thankful heart and with honor — reciprocate anything that he could in order to express the legitimacy of his appreciation.

In the context of our Christian faith, God is our patron. He has

chosen to support us and has given the gift of His son who offers us eternal life (Rom 6.23). Notice how Paul used this patron language to describe God. He does this again in Eph. 2.8, writing that grace is the “free gift” of God.

Today many preach grace as something which requires nothing in return. But Paul’s understanding of grace is far from what they suggest. They have forgotten the other half of the equation, reciprocity — our expression of gratitude for the gift of His Son and eternal life.

Patronage and reciprocity were never about even exchange but on-going exchange. We can never return a gift to God equal to what He has given us, but we can come to Him with a long-term commitment of always being thankful, always honoring Him through our very obedience — our reciprocity — to Him. This is our faith.

- WHSmith