

Light and Life

Plan to Grow

“...grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (II Pe. 3:18).

How is your New Year’s Resolution going? No matter what time of year, it is important that we set goals for ourselves to stimulate our spiritual growth. Growth doesn’t just happen. It is the result of diligently adding to what is already there (II Pe. 1:5-9).

In physical terms, we understand that “he who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows frivolity will have poverty enough” (Pr. 28:19). The same is true spiritually! It takes effort to grow – that’s why Paul instructed Timothy, “be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a *worker* who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Ti. 2:15).

The problem with many resolutions is that people make a goal for themselves but make no plan to achieve it! Can you achieve a goal to grow in your faith without planning time in study? “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Rm. 19:17)! Can you achieve a goal to grow in prayer without planning time to “go into your room and shut your door” and “pray to your Father who is in the secret place” (Mt. 6:6)? Can you achieve a goal to grow in benevolence without financially planning to “lay something aside” (I Cor. 16:2)? Can you achieve a goal to grow in hospitality without making a plan to “entertain strangers” and “remember the prisoners” (He. 13:2-3)? Can you achieve a goal to grow in evangelism without looking for opportunities and preparing “that you may know how to answer each one” (Col. 4:6)?

Goals are important, but they are worthless if we don’t prepare for them. Lay the groundwork first! “Prepare your outside work, make it fit for yourself in the field; and afterward build your house” (Pr. 24:28)!

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Perceptions of Christ’s Church

World scholars seem to agree that the church was established in Jerusalem, the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ. Acts 2 gives the record, and only a few with some creed to defend offer objection. But **WHAT was established when the church was established? Foolish question?** Well, read Acts 2 carefully. Any “dedication” services? “Chairman” appointed? Any of the “institutional” procedures one would expect if today’s common conception of “church” were correct? It just isn’t there. Today the emphasis is upon the party – the church is something like a lodge, or “Royal Order of Saints” – a society, somehow related to certain buildings. This conception is missing in God’s record of establishment.

Prophecies concerning the establishment of the church invariably refer to the relationship, or the basis for the relationship, between God and individuals. Isaiah says, “the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains” (Is 2:2–3) – referring to **the establishment of God’s law for all nations**. The promised kingdom was a promise of peace according to divine government (Is 9:6–7). The ransomed of Jehovah would walk in “The Way of Holiness” (Is 35:8–10) ...

The Lord’s church consists of people identified with truth – not people identified with a party. What God established, truth, never changes (1 Pe 1:23–25). But the party, the people, can fall away (1 Ti 4:1–3). First their attitude toward divine authority is altered, then their practices, then, usually many years later, their terminology. Because the **rule** is one thing and the **people** who supposedly follow the rule is another, Paul said we must not measure ourselves by ourselves (2 Co 10:12). We need to restudy our perceptions of Christ’s church. It is the purified and cleansed church – not the ‘party’ – that Christ promises to save eternally (Eph. 5:26–27).

- Robert Turner (edited for space)

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

RADIO PROGRAM

The Bible Speaks



Sunday 9:00–9:30a.m.
Thursday 11:30a.m.–noon
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

P.O. Box 447
201 W. Chestnut Street
Rogers, AR 72757
479-636-3575
www.downtowncoc.net



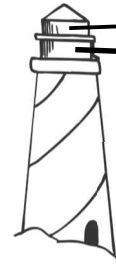
**We are not called to do
what makes us happy,
but to glorify God.**

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
Randy Shell



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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

January 7, 2024

The Regret of Moses

As Moses delivered his farewell address to the people of Israel in the book of Deuteronomy, he recalled several times what God had told him – that he would not be going over the Jordan River into the promised land. It must have weighed heavy on his heart in the twilight of his life.

Several have asked me through the years if that meant that Moses was not able to go to heaven, given the whole type/antitype thing with the land of Canaan. Though I do not presume to judge in God's place, we can be confident of Moses' salvation given the high praise accorded him in the NT. After all, he was a man of obedient faith – He 3:2, 11:24-28.

But the bitter remorse which Moses must have felt at the very time when his people – God's people – were about to cross over into The Land serves as a lesson for us all.

Though we serve a God who is kind and forgiving – and we can rejoice in His grace – yet sin can still leave us with a heavy burden in this life. That one moment of sin, in which we feel invincible, can lead to a lifetime of regret. Even if we humble ourselves and find His forgiveness, pridefully striking the rock will leave its mark on our psyche until the day we die.

The best plan: when God says speak to the rock, **just do that!** - *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

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

Sick: Fletchers, Swims, JMarshall, RStarr, MiBader, ADosier

Shut-ins: Betty Jo Young, Billie Pennington, Shirley Cole, Susan Wiese, V Carter

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

EVANGELISM WORKSHOP – Sam will host an evangelism workshop this

Tuesday at 7 at the building. “Evangelism – it's not about door knocking!”

CONGRATULATIONS – We rejoice with Bailee Miller and Spencer Shell who were recently married! Let's encourage all our young married couples!