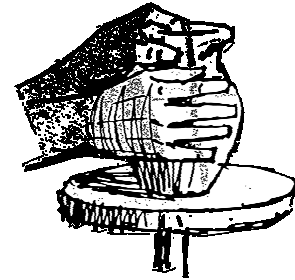


# His Workmanship at Westside

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."  
—Ephesians 2:10*



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Isaiah 64:8

## Emphasis on Worship Reflects an Inwardly-Focused Church, by Berry Kercheville

Luke repeatedly pictured churches in Acts looking outside themselves and their own personal comforts so that others could hear the gospel message. For example, *"But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison. Now those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word,"* Ax 8:3-4. The first concern of the disciples in the Jerusalem church was not finding another place to worship. On the other hand, the priority of an inwardly-focused church is the worship, and it has flawed character traits that can be seen in the way it conducts its assemblies. The reason for its inward approach comes from losing the identity Jesus expected in His people. Below are six indications of an inwardly-focused church that are seen by how it defines worship.

1. Worship takes on an "audience" and "consumer" mentality. Instead of Christians coming together to share their Biblical discoveries, growth, and love for God, they come to be *"encouraged or uplifted,"* or worse yet, *"entertained."* Bible studies are heavily dependent on the teacher's knowledge and are usually no more than a rehearsal of facts discovered and believed long ago. If the song leader, preacher, or Lord's Supper talk fall short of fulfilling their per-

sonal needs and expectations, *"worship"* is deemed unsatisfying. In a consumer-driven church the individual is never at fault for a *"failed"* worship.

2. Attendance is the primary measure of faithfulness. While coming together to stir one another up to love and good works is critical in worship, Heb 10:24, simply being present when the church gathers is hardly evidence of a growing, passionate Christian. The brethren at Ephesus were faithful to all the visible evidences of a *"sound"* church, but they had lost their first love for the Lord and were in danger of being lost. Even Laodicea had no doctrinal errors, but its passion for Christ was tepid, Rev 2:2-5; 3:15-19. The danger in considering attendance as faithfulness is that there is a tendency to stop serving one another when the attendance chart has a perfect score. Attendance may be a symptom of spiritual weakness, but by the time this symptom is observed, other sins have already caught a disciple in a deep trap from which he may be irretrievable. Thus, we are encouraged to *"exhort one another daily while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin,"* Heb 3:13.

3. Attendance is the primary duty. Worship attendance represents a significant investment in the Lord's cause for an inward-looking church. But in fact, that

is not discipleship. Jesus said, *"So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple,"* Lk 14:33. This *"attendance mentality"* results in Christians who lose sight of the high calling the Lord has for a disciple. Disciples should carry a cross and hate their own lives, Lk 14:27. Jesus came to *"seek and save those who are lost,"* Lk 19:10, and *"every disciple who is perfectly trained will be like his master,"* Lk 6:40.

4. Worship assemblies become the end-goal of the church. Worship, whether singing, praying, giving, learning, or edifying one another, are all tools to bring us to the higher goals of becoming equipped so that *"each part is working properly, making the body grow so that it builds itself up in love,"* Eph 4:16. Collective worship is not the goal, it is a means to the goal. Worship is not because God has needs, but it is one of God's ways of training us to love Him and grow closer to Him.

5. "Togetherness" and church "family" are praised. Social functions and together times are priorities in an inwardly-focused church. The church begins to resemble a club: attend the meetings, pay the dues, and follow the rules. Our spiritual family is a wonderful blessing, but Jesus admonished: *"Leave*

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**Inward-Focused Church**, from p. 1 *the ninety-nine and go after the one that went astray.* Finding it, the shepherd *“rejoices over it more than the ninety-nine who never went astray,”* Mt 18:12-13. We are to emulate the good Shepherd and look beyond our own *“church family.”* Often, this type of church unintentionally won’t receive new members or guests into its inner circle. New members find it difficult to connect because the brethren are so focused on themselves and the tight-knit friendships they have already nurtured.



6. Worship and social functions are expected to create unity. Paul presented a different picture, urging the church to *“stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,”* Phil 1:27. Striving side by side is what brings a church together. Working, laboring in the gospel is God’s way. Unity for unity’s sake is not the goal, nor is unity developed simply by a Sunday assembly or a potluck. Purposeful home Bible studies, joining in the *“work of ministry”* Eph 4:12, and being *“fellow laborers,”* Phil 4:2, all unite us. Disciples drop out when they lack purpose and feel disconnected. Assemblies alone do not create a strong connection.

New Testament writers spoke of worship as a means of equipping disciples for the work of *“building up the body of Christ,”* Eph 4:11-16. Worship was never intended to be the primary function of a church, and an inwardly-focused church fails God’s purpose.

**Thanks**

to the men who are filling in for the adult classes and preaching this month: Westin Cox, Kory Tope, Scott McClelland, Kenny Boyd.

## Wash First, Then Worship: “Clean Hands, Pure Heart,” by Shane Scott

When I was a little boy my grandparents would take me to Bible school and worship on Sunday morning. The routine never varied. After we all bathed and dressed, we would go by the retirement home and pick up Sister Begley. I always enjoyed sitting in the backseat with her because she invariably gave me two quarters: one for the collection basket and one for me. Then on the way out of town we would go by the local carwash, and Pop would drive the car through one of the automated washers. Finally we would be on our way to assembly. I always wondered why Pop washed his car every Sunday morning. Maybe it was all part of putting on our *“Sunday best.”* Or maybe it was just an easy way he remembered to wash his car. Anyway, the order was wash first, then worship.

In the Old Testament, the priests who served in the tabernacle and later in the temple had to prepare themselves by washing in the laver, or *“basin of bronze”* Ex 30:18. The Lord told Moses: *“When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations,”* Ex 30:20-21.

This physical washing obviously signified that God requires those who worship Him to be pure, and later the imagery of washing was used to describe the spiritual purification that must take place if we are to worship God acceptably: *“Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully,”* Ps 24:3-4. *“I wash my hands in innocence and go around Your altar, O LORD, proclaiming thanksgiving aloud, and telling all your wondrous deeds,”* Ps 26:6-7.

The New Testament picks up on this

theme of inner spiritual purity as a necessity for worship as well: *“Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded,”* Jas 4:8. *“And since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water,”* Heb 10:21-22. On a practical level, this means that in order to prepare ourselves for worship we must examine ourselves and confess our sins to God—before worship. Over and over the prophets of the Old Testament rebuked Israel for thinking that merely showing up for worship was acceptable, regardless of how they lived. *“Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they have become a burden to Me; I AM weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before My eyes; cease to do evil,”* Is 1:14-16.



It also means, as Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, that if we remember that our brother has something against us, we should leave our gift before the altar and *“first be reconciled”* to our brother, Mt 5:23-24.

Sunday mornings in your home are probably a lot like mine—hurried as everyone rushes to get ready. But let’s all remember that the most important thing any of us can do before worship is truly to cleanse ourselves spiritually as we prepare to come to praise the Lord. Wash first, then worship.



Psalm 133:1

**God's harvest we'll glean in 2016** "Please let me go to the field and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." —Ruth 2:2

**It's All About Attitude, Tommy Thornhill**

A famous writer was in his study. He picked up his pen and began writing:

"Last year my gall bladder was removed. I was stuck in bed due to this surgery for a long time.

- The same year I reached the age of 60 and had to give up my favorite job. I had spent 30 years of my life with this publishing company.

- The same year I experienced the death of my father.

- In the same year my son failed in his medical exam because he had a car accident. He stayed in the hospital for several days and had a cast on his leg for several months.

- And the destruction of the car was a second loss. *Alas! It was such bad year!*"

When the writer's wife entered the room, she found her husband looking dejected, sad, and lost in his thoughts. She carefully and surreptitiously read what he had written and silently left the room. She came back shortly with another piece of paper on which she had written her summary of the year's events and placed it beside her husband's paper. When her husband saw that she had written something in response, he read her take on the year's events:

"Last year I finally got rid of my gall bladder which had given me many years of pain.

- I turned 60 with sound health and retired from my job. Now I can utilize my time to write better and with more focus and peace.

- The same year my father, at the age of 95 without depending on anyone and without any critical conditions, met his Creator.

- That same year God blessed my son with life. My car was destroyed, but my son was alive and without permanent disability. This year was an immense blessing and it passed well!"

The same incidents but different viewpoints—it's all attitude.

## Discipleship Here At Home

In our daily lives we must see that it's not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy. There is always, always, always something to be thankful for. Attitude is everything—and attitude is the one thing where we always, in every circumstance, have control. "The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past...; we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% of how I react to it. And so it is with you...; we are in charge of our attitudes." Charles Swindoll.

**Obama's LGBT Pride, from p. 4**

"The truth is that homosexual behavior is dangerous, self-destructive, unnatural, and immoral. The truth is that marriage is, and always will be, one thing only: the union of a man and a woman. Anything else is a perverse mockery of marriage, and no amount of lawless court decisions will change that fact.

"The truth is that there is no such thing as 'transgenderism.' Anyone who imagines he is the opposite sex is mentally ill and needs help aligning his mind with reality. The truth is that a man can never be a woman—ever—no matter what he does to his body. He remains a man. The truth is that Obama's illegal decree to the nation's public schools, directing them to allow boys in the girls' restrooms, locker rooms, and showers is evil lunacy, and it puts our kids in danger."

**Travel** Howells and Witheringtons in OK; Reingrovers traveling; Letha Fink on 3-week trip to NM and GA; River and Forest Cox on 3-week camping trip with mother in the West

**MEMORY VERSE LIST Adults/Kids**  
**Luke 1:37**                      **Matthew 26:41**  
**Colossians 3:2**                **Galatians 6:2**  
**1 John 4:8**                     **James 2:17**  
**Romans 8:31**                 **Luke 12:15**

**PRAY FOR healing, protection, help**

- **Mike Strand**—to St. Anthony's rehab, recovering from broken ribs, tibia, fibula, ankle, collapsed lung, surgical repair

- **Janelle Hall**—chemo for breast cancer

- **Jennifer Clayton**—battle w/Lyme disease for last 18 mos; symptoms worsened in April, including muscle & joint pain, neurological issues; pray 2-mo regimen to kill babesia, bartonella, and parasites will be effective, not require additional treatment, and not prevent Jennifer from work and worship

- **Brittany Tope's** grandmother—on dialysis, in ICU recently in Colorado Springs; **Brittany's** mother **Gayle**—breast cancer spread, 3 tumors on liver, spine; upcoming surgery

- **Judy Sartin**—fall last Wed; chronic rotator cuff pain; spinal stenosis

- **Brett Witherington's** mother **Cheryl**—last week's lumpectomy ;successful; radiation; **Sylvia Chapman, Brett's** grandmother—3rd stage pancreatic cancer; grandmother **Sue** recent heart attack; **Sue & Aunt Connie Doss**—cancer

- **Mike Menard, Virginia's** son—pancreatic cancer; home, weakening; **Virginia** wrenched leg; macular degeneration

- 10-year-old **Benjamin Hymel**, of Longmont church—brain cancer; at home, school after surgery; now starting year's chemo and radiation cycles; eye patch

- **Valerie Greenwalt**—recovering from surgery to remove broken needle in elbow

- the **Boyd's** extended families are undergoing hardships: **Wendy's** father, **Dan Gutierrez**, back in care center with cognitive problems; pray for **Eileen** and **Dan**; **Kenny's** sister and brother-in-law—divorce; pray for family **Jennifer, Kevin, Chloe, & Elijah Whittemore**

- **Sheryle McNeill**—boil removed recently; pinched nerve

- **Berney Charo's** brother **Eliud**—prostate cancer

- **Ian Anderson, Mina Gonzalez's** nephew—rehab

- **Letha Fink's** brother **Kenneth Morrison** of GA—liver disease, diagnosed with neuro-muscular disease

- **Bill Dennis**—improving; recurrent infections

- **River** and **Forest Cox's** great grandmother **Martha Rowe**—in rehab for knee strengthening

- **Noah Hadders's** teacher **Sharolyn Elmore**—radiation for breast cancer; **Randy Reames's** co-worker **Diane (D.D.) Estes**—ocular melanoma surgery successful; regaining eyesight

**CHRONIC CONDITIONS**

Christian Harrod; Addison Tope; Rocco Jr.; Ann Cox; Joel Walker; Logan Corray—asthma

**Orchid Cox**—chronic blood clot condition

**Autumn Hadders**—epilepsy; celiac disease

**Jonathan Hadders**—RA

**Delmer Hice, Lynda Szymanski**—COPD

**Kirk Johnson**—MS; **Amanda Mailloux**—IBS

**Eric Perry**—pre-diabetes

**Sandra Perry**—breathing and diabetes complications

after hospitalizations in April and May

**Cheryl Reames**—fibromyalgia; diverticulitis



## Exposing current trends *gender and propaganda*

### Obama's LGBT Pride Month, *by Gina Miller*

Last week, President Obama signed a presidential proclamation declaring June to be "LGBT" Pride Month. This is a big deal. This is the President of the United States, on behalf of our nation, officially celebrating the pride of sin—sin that the Bible calls an abomination to God. Far from being "love," God's Word calls homosexuality and related behaviors exactly what they are: "vile affections."

What Obama has done is a dangerous thing to do; it reflects what the degenerates in Sodom and Gomorrah did. Compare this prophecy against Jerusalem and Judah to today's America: "The look on their faces testifies against them; they parade their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to them! They have brought disaster upon themselves," Is 3:9. Disaster is being brought on our nation, and Obama is making it official. Don't doubt it for a minute.

Obama's proclamation reads like the communist propaganda it is. It's full of lies because it equates perverse, sinful sexual behavior with "human rights" and "civil rights." Sodomy and "transgenderism" are not human rights or civil rights. They're bad behaviors that no sane society condones, much less celebrates.

You might say that Obama's proclamation doesn't speak for you. Oh, but it does! In his capacity as President of the United States (however harmful to America you think he is), his proclamation speaks for this nation, whether we like it or not. And, there will be consequences for this nation as a result of the degenerates who proudly parade their sin with the President's official endorsement.

This does not end well for America, because God is not mocked. Whatever a man—or a nation—sows, that will he/it reap. Disaster is what God's Word assures us will result from this kind of wicked "pride."

Paul warned us this time would come when people would no longer accept the truth, but would instead embrace lies and delusion. When people firmly turn their ears away from the truth, there is no longer a way to reach them by simply speaking the truth and expecting them to accept it. Dark days are ahead if we don't stop this sexual anarchy insanity.

An aggressive Human Rights Campaign crusade has sprung up against a new law in Mississippi that aims to protect the rights and freedoms of those who resist the demands of militant homosexual/"transgender" activists. Those opposed to the reasonable new law falsely claim that it promotes "hate." In response to the campaign this reporter wrote a letter to the Sun Herald: "The 'No Hate In Our State' protests funded and organized by the militant homosexual activists of the Human Rights Campaign are based on lies. None of our resistance to this movement is inspired by 'hate.' It's inspired by truth, our God-given freedoms, and what's right and wrong. Regardless of whether or not anyone today has a functioning moral compass to see it, right, wrong, and truth have never changed, and they never will.

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DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

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## Assembly Schedule

### Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

### Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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### Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class**, "Courage to Live Holy Lives," DeWayne Howell

- **sermon**, "A Time for Every Purpose," Westin Cox

### Sunday afternoon

- **sermon**, "Joseph (Genesis 37, 39-48, 50)," Scott McClelland