

Washington church of Christ

27 Grand Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882

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washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com

Order of Services

Sunday, December 2, 2012

Song Leader	Tom Dolan
Prayer	Lee Redd
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Brian Jeffries
Prayer for the Cup	Glenn Montgomery
Prayer for the Collection	David Osinski
Assisting at the Table	Gennaro Ruggiero
Closing Prayer	Bob Celentano
Announcements	Matt Grimaldi

Sunday, December 9, 2012

Song Leader	David Osinski
Prayer	Scott Thomas
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Cameron Wydro
Prayer for the Cup	Ralph Ruggiero
Prayer for the Collection	Lee Redd
Assisting at the Table	Bob DeGrado
Closing Prayer	Glenn Montgomery
Announcements	Matt Grimaldi

Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm

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The Importance of the Church...

The most important institution in the world is the body of believers which Christ referred to as "My church" (Matthew 16:18). Men frequently lose sight of this truth, either through the influence of their religious teaching, or by their failing to study the Bible to learn and understand what God has said relative to the church.

Let me first state that all of the references and points that are contained in this article are to the church we can read about in the Bible. Among these teachings are the facts that "... Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;" (Ephesians 5:25); and that He purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28).

The Bible states that the saved are added to the church (Acts 2:47) ... and that the church is the house of God (I Timothy 3:15). The term church is also used to designate the family of God (Acts 10:2; 16:34).

Many passages throughout the New Testament can be found that emphasize the importance of the church, but probably the most complete dissertation on this point is Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Through the wisdom and foreknowledge of God, every misconception which men advocate today about the church has been anticipated, and refuted, in this letter.

For the most part, these misconceptions can be grouped into two categories ... the first, which is the most prevalent, is that the membership in the church we can find in the New Testament is unessential, and has no bearing at all on the salvation of man. Those holding this position contend that a man can be saved and go to heaven through any of the many churches in existence today.

The second is that the church is a recent innovation of man, created to fill a need which men of inferior intellect recognized within themselves. Those taking this position place the church on the same level as a secular school system or a fire department. They contend that when men saw the need of educating their children, the school system came into existence ... and, that recognition of the need for protection from the loss of property from fire caused the organization of local fire departments.

Furthermore, they say that men of unstable emotions needed a vent for these emotions which they were intellectually incapable of controlling, so they devised the church as an outlet. These doctrines, which would discredit the church, are based on human theories rather than Divine revelation.

The book of Ephesians contains only six chapters, made up of about 155 verses. By reading this book, the average reader in just about 30 minutes can "prove all things, hold fast to that which is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21) on the subject of the importance of the church.

The indispensable position of the church in the salvation of man is emphasized throughout Paul's letter to the Ephesians. The love that Christ showed for the church (Ephesians 5:25), is indicative of the importance which He placed upon it. In the same passage he states;

For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. (Ephesians 5:23 KJV)

Since Paul had already make a correlation of *the church to the body* (Ephesians 1:23), when one recognizes that Christ is the Savior, it becomes impossible to separate the church from salvation.

In the first chapter of this book Paul states:

“which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” (Ephesians 1:20-23 NKJV)

In this passage we can see the things that God did in Christ in order to exalt Him supremely. And, when He had done these things He gave Christ to be the Head of the church, which some dare to call nonessential to salvation!

Paul also states in this letter;

and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, (Ephesians 3:9-10 NKJV)

This disputes the contention that the church is of recent origination and design.

The permanency of the church is also substantiated in this letter. The Saints at Ephesus were assured that they had been *“sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.* (Ephesians 1:13-14)

But when the church, which was purchased by Christ (Acts 20:28), is redeemed, this will not be the end of its existence, for Paul further states;

to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:21)

Truly the church is that kingdom spoken of by Daniel;

And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (Daniel 2:44 NKJV)

The Ephesians were further reminded that Christ *“sanctifies and cleanses the church with the washing of water by the Word”* (Ephesians 5:26). This is identical to being *“born of the water and of the Spirit”* (John 3:5), and enables a man to enter the kingdom of God.

Furthermore, both of these statements are synonymous with the promise of Jesus when He spoke,

He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. (Mark 16:16)

Are you a member of the Lord’s church?

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ... And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:41, 42, 47 NKJV)

... Bob James

Our Prayer List...

- ^ Everett Guyton ... Donna Banghart ... Georgia DeLorenzo ... Glenn Montgomery’s father ... Mary Celentano ... our young people here at Washington ... our young people away at college ... the men and women in military service ... leaders of our nation ... leaders of our congregation ... our congregation ... those impacted by the hurricane.
- ^ As we have entered the holiday season we will have many of our members, family, and loved ones traveling. Let’s all keep them in our prayers.

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.” (1 John 5:14-15 NIV)

Coming Events - Home & Away...

- ^ There will be a Men’s Spiritual and Business Meeting this afternoon at 4:00pm.
- ^ Though it’s still a few months away, we are planning our Spring 2013 Gospel Meeting with Tommy Peeler from FC. The dates are March 10th – 13th ... that’s Sunday – Wednesday. Please plan your 2013 spring vacations and travels around that date if at all possible.

Items of Note...

- ^ Remember, as a part of our Bible School program each family should strive to have a review each week of the material discussed in our classes. This week we are studying The Flood (Genesis 6 – 9), and next week we will cover The Scattering of the People and start the Patriarchs with an introduction to Abraham (Genesis 10 – 12). The remaining studies for this period are ...
 - ^ December 16th & 19th - Abraham & Melchizedek (Genesis 13 – 17)
 - ^ December 23rd & 26th - The Son of Promise & Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18 – 22).
- ^ The Winter II - 2012 Bible School period starts on Sunday, December 30th. All current teachers and those scheduled to teach during the new period are asked to participate in a short Teacher’s Meeting on Sunday, December 9th at 5:00pm. Please see Bob James if you are **NOT** able to participate in this meeting.
- ^ Anyone desiring a family or an individual Bible Study should contact me (Bob James). I typically keep Tuesdays and Thursdays open for these studies.