

Washington church of Christ

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washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com

Order of Services

Sunday, December 16, 2012

Song Leader	Cameron Wydro
Prayer	Derald Sanchez
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Lee Redd
Prayer for the Cup	Brian Jeffries
Prayer for the Collection	Tom Dolan
Assisting at the Table	Gennaro Ruggiero
Closing Prayer	Scott Thomas
Announcements	Matt Grimaldi

Sunday, December 23, 2012

Song Leader	Derald Sanchez
Prayer	Bob Celentano
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	David Osinski
Prayer for the Cup	Bob Wydro
Prayer for the Collection	Brian Jeffries
Assisting at the Table	Bob DeGrado
Closing Prayer	Ralph Ruggiero
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

The Washington Messenger

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Be a Builder...

When I was a young boy I loved to take "stuff" apart. My favorites were old radios. This in and of itself was not a bad thing, except I kept all of the parts. One day my Dad, probably in an effort to stop the proliferation of junk in my bedroom closet, challenged me to take my box of "parts" and put something back together. I quickly learned how much easier it was to tear down than it was to put together. Seeing that I was having no success with my "parts", Dad bought me a radio kit from Heathkit. It took a few days, but I was able to successfully assemble a working shortwave radio. This taught me another lesson ... being a builder was much more fulfilling than being a destroyer!

I think that in some way this is one of the messages of Scripture. Relative to our relationship with our brethren, we as Christians are to be builders ... not destroyers. Sin brings destruction, but spiritual life brings growth and building!

In the book of Jude the writer condemns the false teachers who would destroy and tear down. Jude then provides at least five instructions for building ourselves up spiritually...

1) ***"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit", (Jude 1:20 NKJV)***

Faith is a vital essential to the life of spiritual growth. The writer of Hebrews declares that *"without faith it is impossible to please God"* (Hebrews 11:6). He then goes on to quote from Habakkuk 2:4 ... *"the just shall live by faith"*.

The Bible teaches that this is a faith that comes from God and is toward God. Paul writes, *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17). This faith is lived out through our active obedience to God's Word and Will.

Jude also encourages us as builders to be those who would be praying in the Holy Spirit. The context constructed from his previous verses was of exposing false teaching ... and we know from the Scriptures that the battle against such teaching is not to be won by mere argument or intellect ...

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:12 NKJV)

God has given us spiritual weapons to be used not only in refuting error, but in growing and in building. One of God's greatest gifts to His children is the gift of prayer. Prayer is essential to our spiritual vitality. Prayer is not something we merely do in the flesh ... when we pray we are assisted by the Holy Spirit. Prayer is spiritual, and the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us according to the will of God

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:26-27 NKJV)

2) ***“keep yourselves in the love of God” (Jude 1:21 NKJV)***

If we are to be builders, we must also be given to love ... and that love must flow from God Himself. Paul teaches us clearly about the relationship of love and building...

“but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:15-16 NKJV)

Paul also declared, *“... knowledge puffs up while love builds up.”* (1 Corinthians 8:1 NIV)

Jesus said, *“Abide in my love”* (John 15:9), and then proceeded to say, *“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love”* (John 15:10). That is the truth which Jude is teaching. Stay within the bounds of God's love.

3) ***“looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” (Jude 1:21 NKJV)***

The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be enjoyed day by day. As Jeremiah wrote...

Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23 NKJV)

But Jude reminds us of the ultimate purpose of God's mercy ... eternal life. When our eyes are set on that goal, and as we enjoy the daily mercies of God, we are not as apt to be led astray by the false teachers and become as those who tear down rather than build up.

4) ***And on some have compassion, making a distinction; (Jude 1:22 NKJV)***

The mercy of God should not only be enjoyed by us, but we should joyfully share it with others. The Greek word rendered here as "compassion" is often translated as "mercy".

Those who walk with God through faith in Jesus Christ do receive His mercy. And we should share that mercy with those who are weak and may have gone astray.

Jude states that we should do so "making a distinction." In other words, we should attempt to reach out with mercy and compassion to those who have gone astray. We should attempt to rescue them from the error of the false teachers. Our deepest concern should not be to condemn them but to restore them to the fellowship of Christ and His church. This is being a builder!

5) ***but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. (Jude 1:23 NKJV)***

I like the imagery Jude uses here ... the act of mercy should reach so far as to attempt to actually snatch them from the fire of judgment. The need of rescuing those who have strayed from the faith is vital.

This act of mercy of reaching out to snatch others from the fire should be done with "fear". Paul teaches the same truth in his letter to the Galatians ... *“You who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted”* (Galatians 6:1).

Tearing down is often easy ... building up often requires more effort and focus. Let us all strive to do the latter, and in so doing we will strengthen our brethren ... and ourselves!

... Bob James

Our Prayer List...

- ⤴ Everett Guyton ... Lee Redd ... Donna Banghart ... Glenn Montgomery's father ... Mary Celentano ... Georgia DeLorenzo ... 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 .
- ⤴ 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...

- ⤴ 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.
- ⤴ Additionally, our Fall 2013 Gospel Meeting is scheduled for October 11th – 13th. Joe Works from the Fair Lawn, NJ congregation will be preaching.

Items of Note...

- ⤴ This week's Bible School classes will continue to study the Patriarchs. We will focus on Abraham (Genesis 12:10 – 17:27). The next studies for this period are ...
 - ⤴ December 23rd & 26th - The Son of Promise & Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18 – 22).
- ⤴ 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.
- ⤴ The Winter II - 2012 Bible School period starts on Sunday, December 30th.
- ⤴ Anyone desiring a family or an individual Bible Study should contact me (Bob James). I keep Tuesdays and Thursdays open for these studies.