

Washington church of Christ

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washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com

Order of Services

Sunday, April 14, 2013

Song Leader	Cameron Wydro
Prayer	Ralph Ruggiero
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Brian Jeffries
Prayer for the Cup	Bill Duryea
Prayer for the Collection	Bob Celentano
Assisting at the Table	Gennaro Ruggiero
Morning Closing Prayer	Derald Sanchez
Evening Opening Prayer	Bob Wydro
Announcements	Matt Grimaldi

Our Prayer List...

▲ Doug Focht ... Everett Guyton ... Georgia DeLorenzo ...
Donna Banghart ... Glenn Montgomery's father ... 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.

*"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)

The Washington Messenger

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The Greatest Aspiration...

The various things to which we aspire in this life, if compiled and read as a volume, would probably seem to be a fantasy born of much wishful thinking. Men, who are ambitious to surpass the achievements of others, often aspire to accomplish feats that are generally considered humanly impossible. The desire of some to excel, has been seemingly insatiable.

Because the emphasis is most always focused on material accomplishments, the greatest aspiration that is attainable to mortal man is ignored almost completely. The Apostle Peter wrote;

by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:4 NKJV)

How grateful we should be for this unique privilege ... and, we must be careful to recognize that promises through which we can partake of the nature of God form the only basis for the attainment of the lofty aspirations man has had since creation.

These aspirations have not been noble and just in every instance. The desire of man to share equality with our creator has been the root of much evil. But, in every instance where a man's ambition has fueled his desire to attain this equality through devious human methods, they have been defeated.

The first two persons recorded to have inhabited the earth were possessed by an unlawful desire to be as God. The evil one persuaded Eve that God was being unjust in restricting them from the tree of knowledge of good and evil...

For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:5 NKJV)

By tempting them to raise themselves to the status of God, the evil one succeeded in his efforts to alienate them from God ... the opposite of that which they desired, for in sinning against God, they became ungodly.

In Genesis chapter 11 we read that the whole earth was of one speech and language, and that all the people came together on a plain in the land of Shinar. The Bible reads;

And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." (Genesis 11:4 NKJV)

But here again, their humanly devised efforts were futile;

So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. (Genesis 11:8 NKJV)

King Herod was smitten by God and eaten by worms because he failed to restrain his subjects from rendering undue praise upon him, (Acts 12:20-23). The people of Tyre and Sidon, upon hearing an address from the King, shouted, *"It is the voice of a god and not of a man"*. This flattering appraisal of his ability proved disastrous to Herod, for he accepted their praise, and allowed them to glorify him as God. He died for failing to give God the glory. It is characteristic of all godly men to refuse the worship, or veneration, of men. Peter refused to allow Cornelius to worship him...

As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man." (Acts 10:25-26 NKJV)

When Paul and Barnabas realized that the people of Lystra were making plans to offer worship to them as gods, they responded;

But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you..." (Acts 14:14-15 NKJV).

Even though we have seen that men cannot through our own methods attain equality with God, it is a sublime thought that God has given us *"exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these (we) may be partakers of the divine nature"*. No ordinary accomplishment is comparable to this, for we must incorporate into our nature the Divine attributes in order to be permitted to live with God and the redeemed of all ages in that eternal home called Heaven.

Jesus stated;

Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God. (Matthew 5:8 NKJV)

God is pure, and in order for us to see, and live with, Him we must have *"clean hands and a pure heart"* (Psalms 24:4).

John adds that everyone who hopes to see God as He is *"purifies himself, just as He is pure"*. (1 John 3:3 NKJV)

Since purity is a part of the Divine nature, we have great and precious promises that we may be pure;

Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, (1 Peter 1:22 NKJV)

In His prayer to the Father, Jesus said, *"Thy Word is truth"* (John 17:17). From this we can conclude that God's Word contains commands which must be obeyed in order to purify the soul. All must hear the gospel (Romans 10:17), believe that Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24), repent of sins (Acts 17:30), and be baptized for the remission of sins, (Acts 2:38). When sins have been washed away in baptism (Acts 22:16), the soul has been purified.

Holiness is also a part of the Divine nature. (1 Peter 1:15). It is also a requirement for man to see God (Hebrews 12:14). Here again, the great and precious promises assure us that this aspiration is attainable. The Christians in Ephesus were reminded to *"put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness"*. (Ephesians 4:24)

The result of regeneration, a holy new creature, is obtained when we get into Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17) ... and admission into Christ is a promise to all those who are *"baptized into Him"*. (Galatians 3:27).

By faithfully following the instructions in God's Word each day, we may receive the most precious of all promises by being permitted to partake of the eternal pleasures of God as He bestows upon us a Crown of eternal life. (Revelation 2:10).

...Bob

EVENTS AND NOTES

WE WILL HAVE THE THURSDAY MORNING STUDY THIS WEEK STARTING AT 11AM ... ALL ARE WELCOME.

MEN, PLEASE SEE BOB JAMES WITH YOUR PREFERRED DAY AND TIME FOR THE MONTHLY MEN'S CLASS.

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT WE ARE AWARE OF ARE ...

- ▲ NORTHEAST FC CAMP, JUNE 30TH – JULY 5TH.
- ▲ BOB AT WEST POINT ON SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 28TH. STAN WILL DELIVER THE LESSON HERE
- ▲ WASHINGTON LADIES' RETREAT – SEPTEMBER 6TH & 7TH.
- ▲ OUR FALL GOSPEL MEETING WITH JOE WORKS OF THE FAIR LAWN CONGREGATION ON OCTOBER 11TH – 13TH.

ANYONE DESIRING A FAMILY OR AN INDIVIDUAL BIBLE STUDY PLEASE CONTACT ME (BOB JAMES).