

Washington church of Christ

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The Washington Messenger

Volume 3 – Number 45

December 7, 2014

Order of Services

Sunday December 7, 2014

Song Leader	David Osinski
Prayer	Brian Jeffries
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Ralph Ruggiero
Prayer for the Cup	Tom Dolan
Prayer for the Collection	Stan Thompson
Assisting at the Table	Bob Celentano Jr
Morning Closing Prayer	Arnold Thompson
Evening Opening Prayer	Scott Thomas
Announcements	Bill Duryea

Schedule of Weekly Services

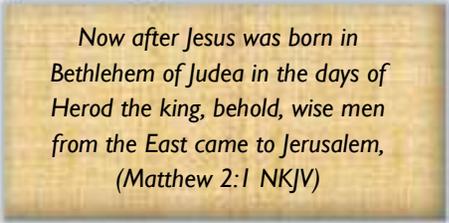
Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

How Many Wise Men?

Suppose that you were being given a test to determine your knowledge of the Bible, and that one of the questions is of the multiple choice type, and asks ...

“How many Wise Men came from the East to Bethlehem to worship Jesus when He was born?”

- a) Two
- b) Three
- c) Seven
- d) I don't know



Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, (Matthew 2:1 NKJV)

Could you check the correct answer?

Many would say, “Certainly, everybody knows that there were three wise men!” And, if you challenged them to go to the Bible and validate their answer, they may be surprised to find that they can't.

The popular belief is that there were three, but the Bible does not give the exact number.

This unfounded belief has been carried on from year to year, and has become religious tradition such that it is not uncommon to hear a preacher refer to the **three** wise men. This tradition is based on the three types of gifts which the wise men presented to the baby Jesus...

And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

(Matthew 2:11 NKJV)

It demonstrates the influence of human reasoning on religious teaching in our world. The other numbers, two and seven, have also been accepted by some individuals as accurate. They reach this conclusion by citing the travel customs in the times of Christ or by referencing some non-biblical historical account associated with wise men of that day.

We should attach no spiritual significance at all to the number of wise men, since this information is not essential to our salvation.

But, the fact that men will site a definite answer to a question on which the Bible is indefinite should emphasize the importance of allowing the Bible to provide the sole

answer to all questions which are concerned with the salvation of man. Neither the voice of tradition, nor the voice of any man has authority in these matters.

The Bible is the only source from which man can learn what to do to be saved (Mark 16:16); Acts 2:38), how to worship God acceptably (John 4:24; John 17:17), and how to live such that we are pleasing to Him (Titus 2:11, 12).

Jesus warned the scribes and Pharisees that they had *transgressed the commandments* of God by following their traditions (Matthew 15:3), and by their actions they had *“made the commandment of God of no effect”*, and, consequently, their worship vain (Matthew 15:6, 9).

Those who hold the position that the body of tradition handed down over the years within their religious groups is of equal authority with the New Testament should learn from this passage that Jesus does not agree with them.

The Bible is filled with examples of men who erred by following human reasoning and conclusions.

The propensity of man to follow the wrong guide in matters of religion has received much attention in the Bible, and many warnings against it have been left for our learning.

Solomon twice warns us...

There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.
(Proverbs 14:12; 16:25a NKJV)

Jesus adds this admonition...

Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. (Matthew 15:14 NKJV)

Paul further states that one who is unconcerned about the truth of God’s Word may be deluded to the extent that he believes a lie, and he will be destroyed despite the fact that he is under a delusion (2 Thessalonians 2:10 - 12).

Neither tradition nor human reasoning can replace revelation.

O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. (Jeremiah 10:23 NKJV)

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

(2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV)

Many popular present day religious practices are followed by people who are as confident that they are authorized by the New Testament, as they are that they can find the number of wise men in Matthew 2.

We must give all diligence to make sure that all we do in service to God is truly authorized by Him.

Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica...

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. (1 Thessalonians 5:21 KJV)

May our efforts to do only what is found in God’s Word mirror what was written of the Saints in Berea...

These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. (Acts 17:11 NKJV)

Our Prayer List...

For Spiritual Responsiveness – Those studying with us in the Thursday morning Perkin’s Study ... All of our wayward members

For Physical Healing – Ellen Jinks - Bill Duryea’s Parents ... Kathy Syracuse (Fair Lawn) ... Georgia DeLorenzo

For Wisdom and Good Judgment – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

For God’s Care and Good Providence – Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation ... the Evangelist and Teachers We Help Support

EVENTS AND NOTES

- ⤴ WE HAVE A MEN’S BUSINESS MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THIS AFTERNOON STARTING AT 4:00PM
- ⤴ WE ALSO HAVE A LADIES BIBLE STUDY SCHEDULED FOR THIS AFTERNOON STARTING AT 4:45PM
- ⤴ WE WILL HAVE OUR PERKIN’S THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY THIS WEEK AT 10AM. ALL ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE WHENEVER YOU CAN ... MORE IMPORTANTLY INVITE THOSE WHO MAYBE SEEKING JESUS!
- ⤴ ALSO, REMEMBER THE TUESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY AT THE PANERA BREAD IN HACKETTSTOWN.
- ⤴ DON’T FORGET TO JOIN OUR “MEET-UP” SITE ON THE WEB ... [HTTP://WWW.MEETUP.COM/THURSDAY-MORNING-BIBLE-STUDY-AT-PERKINS-IN-PHILLIPSBURG-NJ](http://www.meetup.com/Thursday-Morning-Bible-Study-at-Perkins-in-Phillipsburg-NJ) ... CHECK IT OUT!