

Welcome to the : **The Third Annual** *On April 1, 2006*

# Minnesota Bible Lectureship

**This year's theme:**

## ***THE ASSEMBLY OF EDIFICATION***

*(1 Corinthians 14:26 - Let all things be done for edification)*

8:00 a.m. - Registration (Refreshments and daycare are provided.)

9:00 a.m. - Introduction, Prayer, and Song

9:15 a.m. - ***Implementing Edification as a Goal*** - Randy Martin (Lakeville, MN)

- Pages 1-7

- Page 8 - SONG "O Worship The King"

10:15 a.m. - ***The Edifying Mechanics of the Lord Supper*** - Reed Story (Austin, MN)

- Pages 9-13

- Page 14 - SONG "Tell Me the Story of Jesus"

11:15 a.m. - ***The Edifying Meanings of the Lord Supper*** - Mike Kinzler (Moorhead, MN)

- Pages 15-21

- Page 22 - SONG "It is Well With My Soul"

12:00 p.m. - ***Lunch*** (There are many restaurants very close to the lectureship.)

1:30 p.m. - ***The Edifying Singing of the Saints*** - Dan Mayfield (Owatonna, MN)

- Pages 23-27

- Page 28 - SONG "Have Thine Own Way Lord"

2:30 p.m. - ***The Edification Through Giving*** - Kevin Morkassel (Waukeagan, IL)

- Pages 29-41

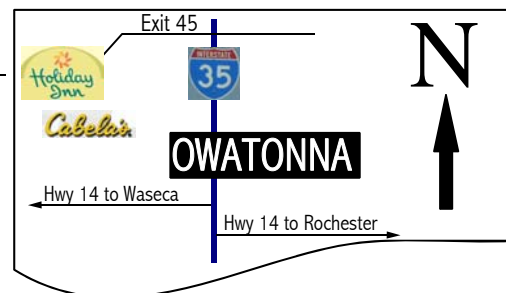
- Page 42 - SONG "A Wonderful Savior"

3:30 p.m. - ***The Edification Through Preaching*** - Rick Lanning (New Hope, MN)

- Pages 43-49

- Page 50 - SONG "There's a Fountain Free"

- This lectureship is sponsored by the Owatonna Church of Christ and the South Twin Cities Church of Christ.
- It is held in the **Holiday Inn** on the north side of Owatonna next to the Cabela's Store off of I-35.
- For more info contact
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**Randy Martin** is an evangelist and shepherd for the South Twin Cities Church of Christ and will have been there ten years this May. He has been married to his wife Robin for over 23 years and they have 7 children and 3 grandchildren. His previous work was with the Owatonna Church of Christ between 1990 and 1996. He is a graduate from the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver and has a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Biblical Studies from Southern Christian University.

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INTRODUCTION - We are excited you're here today! These lectureships have been designed to give very practical truths. They have been geared towards the essentials, but also as an impetus to help you think deeply about the fundamental aspects of Christianity. We live in times of change, and must be careful, but we also must be those examines the Scriptures daily for ourselves to see whether our practices line up with it (Acts 17:11).

Today, we are addressing the gathering of the Christians on the first day of the week. We must endeavor to make the day about what God wants the day to be. We're convinced first century Christians would not even recognize many of the gatherings today as even being related to Christianity. Many places more closely resemble a rock concert than what we read in the Bible. I'm also sure those early Christians would wonder greatly as to what is actually going on in places that have "high church," with their outrageously expensive and ornate sanctuaries where complicated systematical, ceremonial, liturgies take place.

The brotherhood is also keenly aware that worship takes place when Christians gather. All the speakers today will address their specific area that has worship, but today we are especially dealing with that which is not addressed as much, that is, the edification (building up) that takes place when Christians gather. When Christians additionally and sharply focus on the commanded spiritual building up of one another then they truly complete the picture of all the various activities that take place when the body assembles. Today we will therefore also address making edification a goal through the Lord Supper, singing, giving, and preaching. Listen closely, because this lectureship is also designed to edify you today through the teachings found in the Scripture. You will be challenged today and you will hear things you never thought about.

My area deals with making edification a goal. Sometimes it is lost in the shuffle as we all strive to worship God in our assemblies. Let's start with a very prudent question.

## **I. WHAT IS THIS GATHERING OF CHRISTIANS CALLED IN SCRIPTURE?**

- A. When religious people gather together on the first day, many things can happen, and therefore many descriptions will be attributed to their gatherings.
  - 1. Some assemble to have a dynamic *Praise Gathering*.
  - 2. Other goes to *services* that will go through a systematic liturgy and a performing of sacraments.
  - 3. Millions go to *mass* from a Latin word meaning "to dismiss."
  - 4. There is also the very common *Worship Service* that most of us use.
- B. In the Scriptures there is this simple description. (One will also see *synagogue* for Jewish Christians, which is the term for "assembly.")

**1 Corinthians 11:18** - For, in the first place, when you come together as a **church**(assembly) . . .

**1 Corinthians 14:28** - but if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the **church** (assembly); and let him speak to himself and to God.

**1 Co 14:34-35** - <sup>34</sup>Let the women keep silent in the **churches** (assemblies); for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says. <sup>35</sup>And if they desire to learn anything, let

them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in **church** (assembly).

1. Church is the Greek word **ekklesia**.
  - a. This is a special “called out” group, from a common word used for such as “town meeting.”
  - b. The esteemed Arndt & Gingrich and the numerous other lexicons state it refers to both the group and the gathering.
2. Therefore, we could literally say that the meeting on the first day of the week is:
  - a. *A Coming Together of the ‘Called-Out Group’ or The Assembling of the Assembly.*
  - b. Therefore, it can also be said that, “*The Church is going to church.*”
3. The modern religious world does not understand the term *church*.
  - a. The Old English word *church* referred to a physical structure, that which belongs to the Lord, and also to their gathering.
  - b. If it identified it with the group & gathering, vs. the building, then it is used Scripturally.
  - c. The false notion that mere buildings are *the church* would have been circumvented if past religious groups would have used the term *assembly* instead of *church*.

## II. IS THIS GATHERING CALLED A “SERVICE” IN SCRIPTURE?

- A. A **service** = (1) *The prescribed way or customary form for conducting a religious or other solemn ceremony, or (2) a liturgy.* Number one is usually what we mean when we say it.
- B. Where did *liturgy* come from?
  1. It is from the Gk. **leitourgia** - *a public service to the gods, a ministry of the priests.*  
*Heb 9:21* - <sup>21</sup>*And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the **ministry** with the blood.*
  2. It is a part of the whole body of rituals that the Old Testament priests went through.  
*Hebrews 9:1,6* - *Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary . . . Now when these things have been thus prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship.*
  3. In the above verses this *divine worship* is from a similar word like *liturgy*, it is **latreuo**.
  4. It is literally translated as a *service*, or *priestly service*.
- C. Can you think of a scripture that calls our gathering on Sunday a “service?”
  1. A *service* can imply that it is more of a service than what is going on during the week.
  2. And that is exactly what is going on in many assemblies on Sunday mornings.
    - a. There are special priests, reverends, or pastors that are performing sacraments for others.
    - b. It is really a “New Testament” styled copy of an extinct ritual the Old Testament priests did!
- D. The reality is that all Christians are priests that are in a “priestly service” all week.
  1. **Romans 12:1** - *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.* - **KJV**  
*Hebrews 9:1,6* - *Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary . . . Now when these things have been thus prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship.* The underlined words are all the same.
  2. It’s a beautiful picture of how we are the spiritual reality of their physical picture for us.
  3. Other verses that show we are in priestly (**latreuo**) service every day. Have reverence!

*Philippians 2:17 - But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.*

*Hebrews 12:28 - Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;*

- E. What can happen when one **primarily** considers the gathering of the Christians to be a service?
1. One usually endeavors to make something into that which they call it.
  2. The place of meeting can then become THE sanctuary with THE need for special reverence.
  3. To “just be there” and what we wear needs to be more special because it is a service.
    - a. It became worse for the preacher because he is a special priest who is to dress like a priest.
    - b. Like in the O.T., it also turned into special clergy performing sacraments for the laity.
    - c. Today, it can turn into a “I did my service for the week and now God is satisfied.”

### **III. IS THIS GATHERING CALLED THE “WORSHIP” IN SCRIPTURE?**

- A. Can we find one example in the New Testament of the church being said to “Go to worship.”?

1. This can only be said of when one was going to Jerusalem to be a part of Mosaic Worship.
2. We can find this phrase with the Ethiopian Eunuch and with the Apostle Paul.

*Acts 8:27 - And he arose and went; and behold, there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship.*

*Acts 24:11 - since you can take note of the fact that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship.*

3. Do you believe it is better to call Bible things by Bible names?

- B. What does it mean when we are “to worship”? Here are words I have not covered about worship.

1. Greek = **Proskuneo** - *To bow before and kiss towards, to give adoration, to praise.*

*Matthew 4:9 - and he said to Him, "All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me."*

  - a. It is something that you specifically do at a specific time. Our lives aren't all this worship.
  - b. It is also something that is different than the priestly service term.

*Luke 4:8 - And Jesus answered and said to him, "It is written, 'You shall worship (proskuneo) the Lord your God and serve (latreuo) Him only.'"*
  - c. Here is another example of this type of worship in the New Testament.

*Revelation 22:8-9 - And I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. And he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book; worship God."*
  - d. There should certainly be this type of worship in our assembly, but not all things in church are designed to only or primarily accomplish this.
  - e. For example, though all for Him, not all songs directly adore, praise, or pay homage to God.

*Col 3:16-17 - <sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in*

your hearts to God. <sup>17</sup>And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

*ILL - Dan Mayfield told me a funny story on how “Angry Words” really put him in place!*

- f. It is quite interesting that this word is never used in describing what takes place when Christian gather. However, it is used once describing what happened during church. Later!

- 2. Greek = **Eusebeo** - *To be reverent, respectful, devout, and to show piety toward someone.*

**Ac 17:23** - <sup>23</sup>“For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your **worship**, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

**1 Ti 5:4** - <sup>4</sup>but if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to practice **piety** in regard to their own family, and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God. - (NASB)

- a. The above are the only two examples of this taking place in the New Testament.
  - b. Therefore, one can see it is never used in the context of what Christians do on Sunday.
  - c. But it is certainly implied that we should have this attitude in all aspects of our life.
- 3. Greek = **Sebomai/Sebazomai** - *To revere, venerate, and express in attitude and ritual one’s allegiance.*

- a. Here is the one use of it in the gospels as an identical quote found in Matthew and Mark. You can see how it really has to deal with allegiance.

**Mt 15:8-9** - <sup>8</sup>“This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. <sup>9</sup>“But in vain do they **worship** Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.”

- b. It is only found in the book of Acts, no epistles, and since it primarily deals with venerating it is most often translated like the following.

**Ac 17:4** - <sup>4</sup>And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a great multitude of the **God-fearing** Greeks and a number of the leading women.

- c. It is also never used in describing what Christians do specifically in assemblies, but I again maintain it is certainly implied that we should have this attitude at ALL times.

- D. Why is it never used specifically as a description for the Sunday assembly or any assembly?

- 1. In my opinion, it is the same reason we don’t call these the “MN Worship Lectureships,” or “Minnesota Bible Fellowship,” or call Bible classes the “Worship Classes.”
  - a. As we saw above, teaching is related to worshipping/venerating/ and being a God-fearer. This veneration should take place all the time and is not distinctive to only our Sunday gathering.
  - b. Also, the Lord Supper, the contribution, and the gathering is specifically called fellowship (koinonia). It’s all fellowship, but we choose not to specifically call our gathering that since we know there is more to it.
- 2. Therefore the same can be said for most of the definitions given above.
  - a. For example, at this lectureship, as we do in church, we will certainly have moments of **proskuneo** type of worship (bowing down, paying homage).



- b. We will also have *eusebeo*, and be worshipful (respectful), and display an attitude of *sebomai* worship (veneration) in regards to our God. However, isn't all of that to be incorporated into all our daily lives since we are constantly in the new divine priestly service?
3. Though it would be OK to call it all these things since all this happens in our gathering, it wouldn't give the **fullest** sense, but only a **partial picture** in the area of THE specific of what is truly happening.
4. It is the opinion of most Christians that it is best to call Scriptural things by Scriptural names.
  - a. Therefore at STC we *simplify* it by calling it "The Assembly" or going to "church."
  - b. And we're certainly not condemning anyone else for calling it otherwise.
  - c. It is a gathering where we will worship through adoring, being respectful, acting devoutly, and expressing in attitude our allegiance to God. But that doesn't truly give the full picture.

#### **IV. WHAT ARE THINGS TO "BE DONE FOR" IN THE ASSEMBLY?**

- A. It just so happens that Paul doesn't say, "Let all things be done for worship, fellowship, etc."

*1 Corinthians 14:26 - What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for **edification**.*

*1 Corinthians 14:12 - So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the **edification** of the church.*

1. Edification, Greek = *Oikodome* - The first part of the word is "a building." This is a word commonly used for construction projects. It's about making something stronger, to edify it.

*1 Corinthians 14:3 - But one who prophesies speaks to men for **edification** and **exhortation** and **consolation**.*

2. Exhortation = *To urge earnestly by warning or advice.*
3. Consolation = *Comfort & solace.*

- B. ***This construction project is primarily accomplished through God's instruction.***

*1 Corinthians 14:5-6 - Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive **edifying**. But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what shall I profit you, unless I speak to you either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching?*

*1 Corinthians 14:18-19 - I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all; however, in the church (assembly) I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue.*

- C. Note all "utterances of God" that are given through His words in assemblies and what it achieves.

*1 Timothy 4:13 - Until I come, give attention to the public **reading** of Scripture, to **exhortation** and **teaching**.*

*1 Timothy 5:20 - Those who continue in sin, **rebuke** in the presence of all, so that the rest also may be fearful of sinning.*

*1 Corinthians 14:29-31 - And let two or three prophets **speak**, and let the others **pass judgment**. But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may **learn** and all may be **exhorted**;*

- D. We must acknowledge the Scriptures teach that going to church is not **just** a time of

praise pep rallies or we won't accomplish what He wants accomplished.

1. We will have unbalanced views of what should happen in the assembly. Here are some quotes that I have heard from brethren.
  - a. - From brethren who see it as a powerful "Praise Gathering."  
*"We should be singing only songs that worship God. After all it is the worship."  
"When we're done singing people should be 'bouncing off the walls.'"  
"Our worship must be very energetic and entertaining."  
"We need to have a praise team, because, after all, we're here to praise."*
  - b. - From brethren who only see it primarily as a time of reverential worship.  
*"It doesn't matter if the preaching is dry, just as long as God is worshiped."  
"Yes, sometimes it's boring, but at least God was worshiped."*
2. The construction project through edification will not happen as intensely with those views.
  - a. Powerful praise performances will not build up as solidly as edifying through God's word.
    - (1. Many believe the emotional stimulus will build up more than the rest.
      - (a. There is edification through the giving of thanks in a song.
      - (b. But where are the rest of the ingredients of edification in song (teaching, admonishment, if our songs never instruct?
      - (c. ILL - What happened to songs like "There is water in the plan," and "Oh Buddha.")? These songs taught boldly about baptism and rejected other names for salvation.
    - (2. I have seen so many fall who were exciting worshipers.
      - (a. I have seen so fewer fall who were built up by the Word, and exhorted by others to follow it, and admonished not to leave.
      - b. ILL - Billy Sunday services. His services were so powerful and dramatic that some would faint. They happened right here in Austin, MN but it soon wore off after his departure and it disappeared..
  - b. God wants you to praise Him, but He also wants the assembly to be for what He wants, not just what we want or perceive. ***If He wanted church to be all about worship and praise, then He would have told us that is what He wanted.***
    - (1. Worship to God does edify, but doesn't the reverse, that is, edification lead to a great quality and quantity of worship to God through the rest of the week?
    - (2. It's amazing what God's truths do to us when we hear them!
    - (3. Remember, that one time I said ***proskuneo*** (to bow down and worship God), is never used for what a Christian does in church, but it is used once for what happens in church?
    - (4. Here it is. It's used to show that the power of hearing words of edification leads to worship.

**1 Co 14:23-26** - <sup>23</sup>*If therefore the whole church should assemble together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?* <sup>24</sup>*But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all;* <sup>25</sup>*the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you.* <sup>26</sup>*What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.*

- (2. Why was so much teaching going on? Why were they to get up one at a time and do it? Why were others to pass judgment on it? Why so orderly? Why did Paul preach so long?

*Acts 20:7 - And on the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to depart the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.*

- (a. He knew the time was rewardingly spent in instruction and encouragement.
- (b. The praising type of worship is only a part of the picture to edification.
- (c. The construction project through edification prepares them for the week ahead.

3. Our lives should be filled with worship that outweighs the amount that happens during church.

*Acts 16:25 - But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them;*

*James 5:13 - Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises.*

*1Thessalonians 5:16-18 - Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

- D. Therefore, brethren, let's make sure we additionally diligently follow the commands to not only worship, but strive wholeheartedly that the Saints are edified through all the avenues and acts we perform during church.

1. If God wanted church to be totally filled with praising and paying homage He would have said so. If he also wanted a "high church" liturgy, He would have said so.
2. The Scriptural commands indicate that God seems more insistent that assembling should be obsessed with taking care of the edification of the brethren.
3. When they leave they should be spiritually stronger through all His words of teaching, exhortation, admonishment, remembrance, praising, etc. found during church.
4. The result will be that they will leave being a stronger personal spiritual structure.
5. That means God will receive more praise, adoration, and subsequent glorification through His Saints walking in a more stable and zealous priestly service.
6. This certainly speaks to how orderly, effective, and accurate our assembly should be, doesn't it?



# O Worship the King

144

Ab/Eb

*Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom. – 1 Chronicles 29:11*

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in the key of Ab major (three flats) and 3/4 time. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system includes three numbered verses of lyrics. The second system continues the lyrics. The third system concludes the piece with a final line of lyrics. The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with some measures containing rests for certain parts.

• 1. O wor-ship the King, all glo - rious a - bove, And grate - ful - ly  
2. Thy boun - ti - ful care, what tongue can re - cite? It breathes in the  
3. Frail chil - dren of dust, and fee - ble as frail, In Thee do we

sing His won - der - ful love; Our Shield and De - fend - er, the  
air, it shines in the light; It streams from the hills, it de -  
trust, nor find Thee to fail; Thy mer - cies, how ten - der! how

An - cient of Days, Pa - vil - ioned in splen - dor and gird - ed with praise.  
scends to the plain, And sweet - ly dis - tills in the dew and the rain.  
firm to the end! Our Ma - ker, De - fend - er, Re - deem - er, and Friend!

WORDS: Robert Grant (w. 1833)

MUSIC: Attr. Joseph Michael Haydn, in William Gardiner's Sacred Melodies (w. 1815)

SEGUE TO "ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME"

LYONS

10.10.11.11.

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**Reed Story** - "I grew up in southern Minnesota, graduating from Blooming Prairie High School back in 1982. I received a B.A. in Physical Education from St Cloud State University in 1988. I also completed a two-year preacher training program at Harding University in Searcy, AK. The Harding School of Biblical Studies, graduating in 1992. Since 1997 I have been the full-time evangelist for the Cedar River church of Christ. I enjoy working with this church immensely. These people are not only my fellow Christian brethren, but some of the best friends also. As far as hobbies goes, I really enjoy lifting weights, riding motorcycles and driving my 1973 Monte Carlo."

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## **THE EDIFYING MECHANICS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

As we study the New Testament in regard to the Lord's supper, we observe that we are instructed to eat the Lord's Supper. Jesus instituted it (Mt.26:26-29; Mk.14:22-25; Lk.22:14-23). Paul refers to this in 1Cor.11:24-25. We are taught that as often as we eat the Lord's supper we proclaim His death until He comes. Therefore, by implication, we believe that Jesus died according to the scriptures, that He was raised from the dead, that He ascended to heaven and someday He will return.

It is also clear that the eating of the Lord's Supper is one purpose for our coming together on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). This is clearly implied by Paul in 1Cor. 11:20-21, when writing about the conduct of the meetings of the Christians there, he said, "Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, . . ." So what he is saying here, is that they should be eating the Lord's Supper in a proper manner. They were doing something else, something they should not be doing.

### **I. THE DAY**

We are instructed in the Scriptures to meet every first day of the week. In 1Cor. 16:1-2, we read, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you do also. On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections may be made when I come." We find the expression, "On the first day of every week," they were taught that every time there is a first day they were to put aside and save, to lay by in store, to treasure up. It is clear that they were commanded to do it. They were commanded to put into a common treasury every first day of the week. We see in this scripture that the meeting was to take place on every Lord's day, and that one purpose for their coming together was to eat the Lord's Supper.

So we may ask, "What is wrong with taking it on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday? What about taking it once per year or once per quarter?" The problem with these suggestions lies in the fact that there is no Biblical authority for partaking that Lord's Supper other than the first day of the week.

In Acts 20:6-7 we read, "We sailed from Philippi after the days of un leavened bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days. On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight." As we can see here, the purpose of the disciples coming together was "to break bread." As we know from 1Co. 11:20, Paul made it clear this as that their purpose should have been. So, one purpose of their meeting on the Lord's day was to eat the Lord's Supper.

It is significant that the Lord rose from the dead on the first day of the week. The churches of Galatia were instructed, as was the church at Corinth, to lay by in store, to put into the treasury, so that no collections be made when Paul arrived and it was to be done every first day of the week. Some have said, "The Lord's Supper is not mentioned in 1Cor. 16." This is true, but it is also the case that baptism is not mentioned in Acts 16:31, and confession is not mentioned in Acts 11:18, while repentance is. Baptism is mentioned in 1Pet.3:21, while belief and repentance

are not. These are all elements of the plan of salvation.

In Acts 20:7, we see that the disciples waited seven days according to Acts 20:6. They surely did not wait seven days to eat an ordinary meal. What they did here was evidently special, relating only to the first day of the week. And it seems they were under instruction to do as they did here. One purpose for which they came together was to “break bread,” to take the Lord’s supper.

In Acts 2:42 we read, “They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” It should be noted that they continually devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching. That means they found out what that teaching was and it means they were obeying it. Also in this passage we read of “the breaking of bread” this no doubt refers to the Lord’s supper.

Memorial feast in the Bible have stated time of observance (Passover, Feast of Tabernacles, etc.). The Lord’s supper is a memorial feast (1Cor. 11:25). Therefore it has a stated time of observance. All of the information on this topic in the scriptures points toward the keeping of the feast on the first day of the week. One may object and say that Jesus ate the Lord’s supper on Thursday night and that we therefore have Biblical authority for eating the Lord’s supper on that day, but Jesus and His apostles did not actually observe the supper on the eve of His death, because it is impossible to observe a memorial to an event which had not yet happened. Jesus was simply instructing by demonstration.

The command to remember “the Sabbath day” (Ex.20:8) meant the Hebrews were to observe every Sabbath. In the same way, the example of the disciples in Troas breaking bread on the “first day” means they broke bread every first day. The same truth can be stated as follows: Christians at Troas broke bread on the first day of the week. Every week has a first day. Therefore, Christians at Troas broke bread on the first day of every week. This is an approved apostolic example.

The early Christians understood that the Lord’s supper was an item of regular worship, and it was observed on the first day of the week. We have no biblical authority for eating the Lord’s supper on some other day. As we also have no biblical authority for eating it only once per month or once per year.

The scriptures are the basis and standard of the Christian life. In the Bible God directs both the beliefs and the practices of those who faithfully serve Him. Our practice regarding the day in which to partake of the Lord’s supper must come from the Bible.

## **II. THE ELEMENTS**

The feast of the passover was a memorial feast which God commanded the Israelites to keep (Ex. 12:14). As the Lord Jesus and His disciples at the passover meal, Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper (Mt 26:26-29). The apostle Paul told the Christians at Corinth that the Lord’s supper was of divine origin (1Cor. 11:23-26).

There are several expressions used in the New Testament to refer to the Lord’s supper. It is called the “Lord’s table,” (1Cor. 10:21). We also read the term “breaking of bread,” (Acts 2:42; 20:7). The Scriptures also refer to this sacred memorial as “communion of the blood of Christ,” and “communion of the body of Christ.” (1Cor. 10:16).

In Lk. 22:19 Jesus says that the bread in the Lord’s supper is His body. There is no dispute in what He said in this verse. But there is great disagreement over what He meant. Many have taken this obviously figuratively language and have come up with wrong conclusions.

The Roman Catholic teaching based on this mistake is transubstantiation. This is the belief that when the priest says the mass over the bread and wine they actually became the flesh and blood of Christ. Only the appearance of the bread and wine remains. Catholics deny that this observance is a memorial, or that the elements are symbols. It is claimed that the priest has the

power to change the bread and wine into the literal and actual body and blood of Christ by consecration in the mass. It is also claimed that the mass is the repeated sacrifice of Christ on the cross. It is admitted that appearance, weight, density, chemical elements, and taste do not change.

A slightly different teaching is given to the Lord's supper by the Lutherans. They teach consubstantiation, which means that the body and blood of Christ is "in, with, and under" the bread and the cup.

Both of these false doctrines are the result of mistaking figurative language for literal. Jesus was not saying that the bread was actually His body (this is impossible because He was present in His body when He made the statement), but only that it represented His body. This figure of speech is called a metaphor. Unlike the simile where one thing is said to be like another, the metaphor says that one thing is another. For example, "All we like sheep" (Is. 53:6) is a simile. "We are . . . the sheep of His hand" (Ps. 95:7) is a metaphor. The Bible is not teaching that God's people are four legged, wooly sheep.

Other examples of metaphors found in the Bible: "You are the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13); "The field is the world" (Mt. 13:38); "I am the door" (Jn. 10:9); "I am the true vine" (Jn. 15:5). When we point to a colored shape on a map and say "This is Minnesota" we are not saying that the colored shape is actually Minnesota, but only that it represents Minnesota.

The unleavened bread is a perfect reminder of the Lord's slain body on our behalf. Let us not turn this beautiful celebration / memorial into a complex, mystical nonsensical ritual that it was not intended to be.

In Mt. 26:28 Jesus said, "This is My blood of the covenant, . . ." As previously mentioned, this is a metaphor and this figure lies in the verb "is", which means "represents" and must be understood this way. In every use of a metaphor, one can substitute the verb "represents" for the verb "is" to understand the real meaning of the expression. For example:

"The field is (or represents) the world" (Mt. 13:38).

"The good seed are (or represents) the children of the kingdom" (Mt. 13:38).

"The reapers are (represents) angels" (Mt. 13:39).

"The cup is (represents) the new covenant (1 Cor. 11:25).

When Christ mentions the "cup" He is actually referring to its contents, for the "cup" itself could not be swallowed.

In that last supper, Jesus was instituting a new memorial feast. The passover had served its purpose and had now been set aside. This new supper was to be kept in loving remembrance of Jesus until he comes again (1 Co. 11:26). Faithful Christians "eat this bread" (which represents the body slain at calvary) and "drinks this cup" (which represents the blood shed at Calvary) reverently looks back to our Savior's death and forward to His coming in glory.

As we are discussing the mechanics of the Lord's supper, some will say that we have to all drink out of one cup since Jesus' disciples drank out of one cup. But the issue here is the contents of the cup - the fruit of the vine, not the container it is placed in.

### **III. THE AUTHORITY**

As mentioned earlier, the Scriptures are the basis and standard of the Christian life. Through the Bible, the Lord directs both our beliefs and practices. The Bible sets forth God's will for our conduct and is our standard for our authority.

The authority of the Bible is a very important and crucial matter. We need to know whether a particular belief and/or practice is authorized by the Scriptures. In regard to this, the Bible teaches in two basic ways: explicitly and implicitly. Explicit teaching is teaching which is

directly stated. It is what the Bible comes right out and says. Implicit teaching is teaching which, though it is not directly stated, is understood from what is directly stated. Implicit teaching is concluded from what is directly stated. Implicit teaching is derived from the implication of direct statements.

The Bible authorized some belief and action by direct statement. An example of this is found in Mk. 16:16 - "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned." This verse authorizes us to believe that baptism is prior to salvation and to be baptized that we might be saved. Many statements of this type are found in the Scriptures and they authorize specific actions to be taken. Again, commands are easy to understand. In Acts 2:38 Peter commanded, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; . . ." This statement obviously authorized all to comply to what was stated.

Sometimes the Scriptures authorize through questions. For example in the 1 Cor. 1:13 Paul asks, "Is Christ divided?" The context of this question makes it clear that Paul is teaching that Christ is not divided. Also, exhortation is used to authorize. For example, in Heb. 6:1 we read, ". . . let us press on to maturity, . . ." This type of statement authorized action to be taken. When Paul makes the statement in Rom. 6:2, "God forbid" he is teaching that we are not to continue in sin that grace may abound.

Some matters are authorized by example. The N.T. records at least five kinds of action or examples: (1) Action which is sinful (Mt. 26:69-74); (2) Action which was optional and temporary (e.g. preaching to the Jews only); (3) Action which was optional and permanent (e.g. traveling by boat to preach the gospel, Acts 13:4); (4) Action which was obligatory and temporary (e.g. confirmation of preached words by signs, Acts 8:4ff); (5) Action which was obligatory and permanent (e.g. baptism is a burial, Acts 8:26ff.).

In determining which examples are binding for today, one must first determine if the action was itself right. Second, is the example a part of the permanent and enduring nature of Christianity. Third, one must understand if the example is an optional matter or a matter of obligation.

When the Bible, through some direct statement, absolutely demands (i.e. implies) some non-explicit conclusion, the truth and the validity of that conclusion is just as valid and forceful as any direct Biblical statement. For example, we know through implication, that at some time in his life Lot went from Canaan into Egypt. Though this conclusion is not explicitly stated we may so conclude from the fact that at a time after his being in Canaan he came out of Egypt (Gen. 13:1). In the same manner we know that Saul's sins were not yet forgiven when Ananias told him to be baptized (Acts 22:16). Therefore our faith and action may be authorized through the implication of the Scriptures.

Last of all, we need to give attention to matters of expediency. Expedient actions are those which expedite the carrying out of any Scripturally authorized obligation. In many cases God has not specified exactly how a matter is to be carried out. In such cases we are authorized to proceed in a way with our best judgment so long as we don't violate general instructions of the Scriptures. For example, we are told to take the gospel to the whole world. But the Bible does not specify exactly how the process is to be accomplished. We are therefore left to proceed according to our best judgment (e.g. going by boat, plane, by radio or television, etc.) so long as we don't violate any other Scriptural instructions.

Scriptural authority for a particular action may be established through direct commands, approved examples, and necessary implication. It is most important that every Christian ground his every action in the authority of the Bible.

#### **IV. AN OVERVIEW**



We are told in the Scriptures to meet every first day of the week. This regular stated meetings was not to be forsaken (Heb. 10:24,25) and was to include the partaking of the Lord's supper. The Lord's supper is to be taken on the first day of the week, and on that day only. The Lord's supper is a memorial feast and as a memorial feast it has stated time of observance. The early Christians understood that the Lord's supper was an item of regular worship, and it was to be observed on the first day of the week.

As a memorial feast, the elements of the Lord's supper are symbolic. The unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine are just that, unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine. They do not become the actual body and blood of Jesus, but merely symbols as a reminder. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul all refer to this liquid element as the cup (Mt. 26:27; Mk. 14:23; Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25-28). By a very familiar figure of speech, metonymy, which puts the container for the contents, they did not drink the actual cup but the fruit of the vine within the cup.

The Lord's supper is a beautiful celebration / memorial. We cannot turn it into a complex, mystical ritual it was never intended to be. We have to remember that our conclusions on this matter came from an understanding of Scripture. As with all matters of life, let us all study the Scriptures daily to see whether these things are so!

## SAVIOR'S SACRIFICE

## 387 Tell Me the Story of Jesus

E♭/G

*You know the message telling the good news of peace. – Acts 10: 36-38*

1. Tell me the sto - ry of Je - sus, Write on my heart ev - 'ry word;  
 2. Fast - ing a - lone in the de - sert, Tell of the days that are passed,  
 3. Tell of the cross where they nailed Him, Writh - ing in an - guish and pain;

Tell me the sto - ry most pre - cious, Sweet - est that ev - er was heard;  
 How for our sins He was tempt - ed, Yet was tri - um - phant at last;  
 Tell of the grave where they laid Him, Tell how he liv - eth a - gain.

(D.S.) Tell me the sto - ry most pre - cious, Sweet - est that ev - er was heard.

Tell how the an - gels in cho - rus, Sang as they wel - comed His birth:  
 Tell of the years of His la - bor, Tell of the sor - row He bore,  
 Love, in that sto - ry so ten - der, Clear - er than ev - er I see;

"Glo - ry to God in the high - est! Peace and good tid - ings on earth."  
 He was de - spised and af - flict - ed, Home - less, re - ject - ed and poor:  
 Stay, let me weep while you whis - per, "Love paid the ran - som for me."

*Refrain*  
 Tell me the sto - ry of Je - sus, Write on my heart ev - 'ry word:  
*D.S.*

WORDS: Fanny J. Crosby (w. 1880)  
 MUSIC: John R. Sweeney (w. 1880)

STORY OF JESUS  
 8.7.8.7.D w/REFRAIN



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### **Introduction:**

While we understand the significance associated with partaking of the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine, I believe that we often overlook the blessing of the memorial feast in terms of its edification value to our lives as Christians. To “edify” is to build up spiritually.

The design of the Supper of our Lord is not solely directed toward honoring Christ. The breaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine is also designed for the edification of the church. The supper of the Lord is the main reason we assemble on the first day of the week and the highlight of our assembly.

The purpose of this message will be to focus on the edifying meanings connected with the memorial Supper of the Lord with regard to the church.

### **Preview points:**

- I. How should we refer to the Supper of the Lord?
- II. Is the Supper of the Lord a communal activity or an individual sacrament?
- III. What is the “unworthy manner” to be avoided when partaking of the Supper of the Lord?
- IV. What did Paul mean when he said, “Let him eat at home”?

### **Body:**

**TRANSITION:** Since the partaking of the elements of the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine are the central reason we gather together on the first day of the week, we should start with the name by which we call it.

#### **I. How should we refer to the Supper of the Lord?**

##### **A. The biblical descriptions of the Supper**

1. There are various biblical descriptions given of this memorial meal including: “the breaking of bread” (Acts 2:42), “break bread” (Acts 20:7), “table of the Lord” (1 Cor. 9:21).
2. The description given in 1 Cor. 11:20 is by far the most common description used in the brotherhood of the memorial meal instituted by our Lord commemorating His bodily sacrifice on the cross.
3. 1 Cor 11:20 says, “*Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the **Lord's** Supper*” (NAS)

##### **B. A closer examination of the description of the Supper given in 1 Cor. 11:20.**

1. Every major respected version of the Bible that I consulted as a reference, .i.e., NAS, KJV, NKJV, ASV, RSV, ESV the translators render “*kuriakos*”(koo-ree-ak-os') as “**Lord's.**”
2. When I began researching this aspect of my assignment the first thing I did was check my analytical lexicon by Wesley J. Perschbacher. The word “*kuriakos*”(koo-ree-ak-os') is in the accusative, singular, neuter, adjective (p. 251).
3. The New Webster's Concise Office Guide defines an **adjective** as “a word or words that are used to modify a noun, pronoun, or verbal” (p. 7). An example of the use of adjective is given on page 47: “A *happy person* faces each new day optimistically. (The adjective *happy* modifies the noun *person*.)”
4. Let's go back to 1 Cor. 11:20 and “*kuriakos*”(koo-ree-ak-os'). It is translated in the possessive case, that is “Lord's.” The adjective “*kuriakos*”(koo-ree-ak-os') qualifies or

limits the meaning of noun “Supper.” Therefore it is the Supper of the Lord.

**C. Note the following comments regarding the use of *kuriakos* in an adjectival sense from some credible sources:**

1. **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament** says, “An adj. derived from the noun *kurios* in the sense of ‘owner’ and meaning ‘of the lord or owner...the Greek adjectives formed from customary terms for Christ this was the only one which could denote the relation of a thing to Christ...If it is asked, then, why the two words *deipnon* [(dipe'-non) - “supper”] and *hemera* [(hay-mer'-ah) - “day” (Rev. 1:10)] are combined with the adj. instead of the genitive *tou kuriou*, the answer is that this is an indirect relation to the Lord...” (TDNT, Vol. 3, pp. 1095-1096).
2. **Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament** says, “of or belonging to the Lord...the same as, or equivalent to the genitive of the author *tou kuriou* [the Lord], thus *kuriakon deipnon*, the supper instituted by the Lord, 1 Cor. 11:20...” (Thayer, p. 365).
3. **New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology** says, “...The *kyriakon deipnon* [koo'-ree-ak-on - trap'-ed-zah] (1 Cor. 11:20) is the meal of the *kyrios*, the Lord’s Supper. The expression stands in parallel with *trapeza kyriou*, the Lord’s table (1 Cor. 1:21)...To sit down at the table of the *kyrios* is to receive food from him and through it enter into communion with him...” (NIDNTT, Vol. 2, p. 518).
4. Perhaps the **Amplified Bible’s** rendering of 1 Cor. 11:20 brings out the intended meaning of an adjectival use of *kuriakos* the best. It says: “*So when you gather for your meetings, it is not the Supper instituted by the Lord that you eat*”

**D. So, what should we call it “Lord” Supper or the “Lord’s” Supper?**

1. It would be correct to call it “Lord” Supper since this Supper is one of sharing, remembrance and proclamation on the part of Christians concerning Christ.
2. I believe it would also be correct to refer to it as “Lord’s Supper. In light of above mentioned references. The Lord is the institutor and owner of the Supper that bears His name.
3. Whichever one you choose to call it would be fine. There is no reason to be dogmatic one way or the other.

**TRANSITION:** Now that we have the description of the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine that we as Christians partake of every first day of the week worked out. We need to understand the proper context in which these elements are to be taken.

**II. Is the Supper of the Lord a communal activity or an individual sacrament?**

**A. What is a “sacrament”?**

1. This is a term we often hear by many in the religious community around us.
2. However, many in the Lord’s church do not understand what a sacrament is.
3. A “Sacrament” is “A formal religious act conferring a specific grace on those who receive it”(Dictionary.com).
4. Catholic and Lutheran theology teaches that when one partakes of “The Sacrament of the Eucharist” or “Altar” the participant receives the benefit of the forgiveness of sins.
5. However, the Bible never teaches that the Supper of the Lord confers forgiveness of sins upon the partaker.
  - a) Salvation comes as a result of faith in Christ (Jn. 3:16), repentance of sin (Acts 2:38), public confession of Christ (Rom. 10:9-10) and immersion in water FOR the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).
  - b) Thereafter, one must live in harmony with the word of God (Rev. 2:10; 1 Jn. 1:7).
6. Therefore the Supper of the Lord is not a “sacrament” or means of obtaining God’s grace. It is taken in obedience to the command of God.

**B. How does the Supper of the Lord become like an individual sacrament in the Lord’s church?**

1. It becomes like an individual sacrament when it is extracted from the context of the

assembly of the saints on the first day of the week.

2. There are well-intentioned brethren who take the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine to their fellow brethren who are too sick or frail to make it to the church on Sunday. Or perhaps the sick or frail brethren request the Supper of the Lord themselves.
3. Brethren are aware of the command to partake of the memorial feast of the Lord (Mt. 26:26-30; Mk. 14:22-26; Lk. 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25). They are also aware of the apostle Paul's comments in 1 Cor. 11:26, "*For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.*" So, they conclude that the sick and frail who cannot make it to the assembly must be administered the elements of the Supper of the Lord.
4. There is no direct command for this practice, there is no approved example for this practice. Those who make this a practice probably do so on the basis of inference. But it is not a necessary inference.
5. Let's leave this aspect of the assembly on Sunday and apply the same reasoning to the other four aspects which take place when the saints are gathered on the same day.

a. **Singing.**

- 1) Col 3:16 says, "*Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God*" (Also Eph. 5:19).
- 2) This too is a command.

3) The sick and frail Christian who cannot make it to church on Sunday do not do this if they are absent from the assembly.

4) So will they be lost because they were not at the assembly teaching and admonishing their brethren in song? No.

b. **Contribution.** Another command.

1) 1 Cor 16:1-2, "*I Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 2 On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.*"

2) Why is not a collection taken on the same occasion of administering the Supper of the Lord since this too is a command?

c. We can also add to this **prayer** together (Acts 2:42) and the **preaching of the word** of God hear collectively (Acts 2:42; 20:7).

6. Why is that of the five aspects of our worship on Sunday that the sick and the frail miss that the only aspect that is a concern for the absent brethren is the Supper of the Lord?

a. How consistent is this?

b. If one is too sick and frail to assemble with the saints on Sunday to sing, give, pray, hear the word why take the Lord's Supper to them?

**C. The Supper of the Lord is a "sharing" with fellow Christians.**

1. The Lord Supper is a "we" thing. It is not an individual practice.

2. Read 1 Cor. 10:16-21.

a. Paul is addressing a problem with some saints at Corinth who had been participants in feasts connected with idols. They were to cease this practice as Christians.

b. These feasts made them one with idol worshipers and put them at odds with God.

3. What I want us to notice here in the passage is "how" Paul talks about the Supper of the Lord? He calls it a "sharing" *koinonia* (koy-nohn-ee'-ah)(vs. 16).

a. The Jews under the O.T. who ate of that which they sacrificed on the altar as prescribed made themselves part of the sacrificial system (Lev. 7:15-19; 8:31; Deut. 12:18) and thus "sharers" *koinonos* (koy-no-nos).

b. Those Gentiles who offered up sacrifices to idols were really offering sacrifices to demons and the feasts they held made them "sharers" *koinonos* (koy-no-nos) at the table of demons.



- c. To “partake” *metecho* (met-ekh'-o) of the one bread, the table of the Lord or the table of demons was a sharing together or fellowship, either with regard to the Lord or demons.
4. “Sharing” (NAS) and “Communion” (KJV) both come from the Greek word “*koinonia*” (koy-nohn-ee'-ah).
  - a. It means “to share with someone in something” (TDNT, Vol. 3, p. 804).
  - b. The Lectureship today is an example of *koinonia*. We, brethren who are gathered together now are sharing in the Minnesota Lectureship.
5. The proper context of the Supper of the Lord is only when the saints are assembled on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).
  - a. **Jesus instituted the Supper on the occasion of the Passover where the twelve disciples were together.** Mt. 26:26-28 says, “26 And while *they* were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to *the disciples*, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” 27 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to *them*, saying, “Drink from it, *all of you*; 28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.”
  - b. **The 3, 000 Christian converts on Pentecost.** Acts 2:42, “And *they* were continually devoting *themselves* to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship [*“koinonia”* (koy-nohn-ee'-ah)], to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”
  - c. **Acts 20:7.** “And on the first day of the week, when *we were gathered together* to break bread, Paul began talking to *them*, intending to depart the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.”
6. Although the Lord instituted the Supper the biblical emphasizes of fellowship with regard to the memorial meal seems to be focused horizontally rather than vertically.
- D. The Supper of the Lord is a “sharing” not a solo act. The sharing takes place when the church assembles on the first day of the week to partake of the memorial meal. Listen again to the words of the apostle Paul, 1 Cor 10:16-17** “16 Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? 17 Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.”

**TRANSITION:** It is not enough to take the Lord’s Supper simply to obey the command to do so. It must be taken in the right way to be acceptable to God. Men often pray something to the effect of “Lord, help us to partake of this bread and this cup in a ‘worthy’ manner.”

III. What is the “unworthy manner” to be avoided when partaking of the Supper?

**A. Read 1 Cor. 11:17-26 & explain context.**

1. To answer this question in context we must consult the context.
2. Verse 17 indicates there is a problem with the Corinthian brethren and their assembling together on the first day of the week!
3. What is the problem? Divisions. This goes back to chapter 1:10ff. Division in a church is a cancer that spreads and consumes the church. It affects everything the church does.
4. The extent of this division, according to verse 21 is seen in the partaking of the Supper of the Lord.
  - a. What is suppose to be a “sharing” or fellowship activity of the body has been destroyed by division.
  - b. It also looks like the brethren turned the occasion of the Lord’s Supper into a feasting time.
  - c. Those who were rich brought an abundance for themselves and let poor brethren who had nothing go hungry.
5. In verse 22 Paul reprimands the Corinthian brethren for their lack of respect for the church.

- a. The Supper of the Lord is not a common meal. It is not an occasion to satisfy hunger and thirst.
- b. He also reprimands them for their lack of love and concern for the brethren they let go hungry while they were feasting.
6. Next, in verses 23-26 Paul reinstates the Supper of the Lord as it was revealed to him by the Lord.
7. And then we get to the warning of condemnation, verse 27 about eating the bread and drinking the cup in an “unworthy” manner.
- B. A common belief in the church concerning the nature of the “unworthy manner.”**
  1. I have come across brethren who have refrained from partaking of the Lord’s Supper at times because of sin in their lives.
    - a. They are either aware of a particular sin or it is sin in general in their lives which causes them to decline to partake of the Lord’s Supper.
    - b. Well, if one knows they have a sin problem in their life and decides to decline the Lord’s Supper until they fix the sin problem, where does that put this brother or sister spiritually in the mean time while they intentionally refuse to partake of the Lord’s Supper continuously as commanded.
  2. But what of the question, If one practices sin in their life and partakes of the Lord’s Supper is that not partaking of it in an “unworthy” manner? Of, course it is.
  3. If you read through the gospel accounts of the institution of the Supper of the Lord it could be argued that Judas partook in a n unworthy manner. Jesus knew the Judas would betray Him that very night and yet Jesus never admonishes or prevents Judas from partaking of the Supper in an “unworthy manner.”
  4. But 1 Cor. 11:17-34 is NOT talking about an unworthy manner in general. Rather, it is talking about a specific unworthy manner.
  5. One should never partake of the Lord’s Supper in an “unworthy” manner. But the solution when self-condemned about one’s sin in his life is to stop the practice of sin rather than stopping one’s participation in the Supper of the Lord.
- C. What is THE “unworthy” manner of partaking of the Supper of the Lord?**
  1. The word “unworthy” comes from the Greek word is *anaxios* (an-ax-ee'-oce) and it means “in an unworthy or careless manner”. The idea of this word used with regard to the Lord’s Supper is an “improper” partaking of it (Bauer, p. 58).
  2. The same context from whence came the reference to an “unworthy manner” also supplies the definition of the “unworthy manner.”
  3. Contextually, the “unworthy” manner is to be found in Paul’s concluding remarks concerning correcting the abuses of the Lord’s Supper. Read verses 33-34.
    - a. Wait until all of the brethren are assembled before serving the Supper of the Lord so that the church can take it together as originally intended by the Lord.
    - b. Do not regard the Supper of the Lord like a common meal which is taken to satisfy one’s hunger and thirst. This Supper is a memorial feast recognizing the gospel event of the death burial and resurrection.
  4. Every person who partakes of the Supper of the Lord must “examine” himself prior to observing the Supper.
    - a. “Examine” comes from the Greek word *dokimazo* (dok-im-ad'-zo) meaning “put to the test, examine” (Bauer, p. 202).
    - b. It is an examination as to the WAY in which the Christian partakes of the Supper of the Lord.
    - c. To observe the Lord’s Supper without waiting for the whole church to assemble or to eat this Supper to satisfy one’s hunger and thirst is the unworthy manner to which Paul was referring to. This sinful behavior brings with it divine condemnation.

**TRANSITION:** Let’s go from the discussion of the “unworthy manner” to another controversial statement made by Paul, “...let him eat at home...”

IV. What did Paul mean when he said, “Let him eat at home”?

**A. We need to add with the above statement what Paul said in 1 Cor. 11:22,** *“What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God, and shame those who have nothing?...”*

1. There are some brethren who see this as prohibition against brethren eating in the church building.
2. The problem with this interpretation is that first century Christians assembled together in their homes on the first day of the week (SEE Rom. 16:3-5 (1 Cor. 16:19); Col. 4:15; Philemon 1:2; Acts 12:12).
3. There were no “church” building as such.

**B. How are we then to understand and apply, “Let him eat at home” (v. 34)?**

1. The problem and the condemnation was not that the Corinthian brethren were eating a common meal in the PLACE where they were assembled together for worship on the first day of the week.
2. Early Christians enjoyed rich fellowship beyond the assembly.
  - a. **Acts 2:46**, *“And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart”*
  - b. Jude refers to “love feasts” (v. 12) which were a common practice among brethren in the first century.
3. The problem clearly has to do with the “how” rather than the “where” of Lord’s Supper.
4. When Paul said, *“...Let him eat at home...”* he was talking to brethren who were coming to the assembly hungry and using the Lord’s Supper as a means to satisfy their hunger.
  - a. A common meal is for the purpose of satisfying hunger. These hungry brethren must satisfy their hunger apart from the Supper of the Lord.
  - b. However, the Supper which Jesus instituted to commemorate His sacrifice on the cross was strictly a memorial eating and drinking.

**C. If one applies “...let him eat at home...” to prevent brethren from eating in the church building they must apply it first to the original recipients of the letter of first Corinthians.**

1. It is here that the application makes no sense since they had no “church” building to begin with.
2. The homes where Christians assembled on the first day of the week were occupied by families who ate in them all through the week.
3. They shared their table with brethren that they invited to eat with them at various times.
4. It is therefore odd in light of all of this to then reach the conclusion that the brethren are forbidden to share a fellowship meal together in the same place where worship was held.

### **Conclusion:**

A. Review points:

- I. How should we refer to the Supper of the Lord?
- II. Is the Supper of the Lord a communal activity or an individual sacrament?
- III. What is the “unworthy manner” to be avoided when partaking of the Supper?
- IV. What did Paul mean when he said, “Let him eat at home”?

B. Drive home the CI:

The purpose of this message will be to focus on the edifying meanings connected with the memorial Supper of the Lord with regard to the church.

C. Appeal to act:

The Supper of the Lord is a privilege given to Christians to remember what the Lord did for us on a cruel cross in Jerusalem nearly 2,000 years ago. “Never Forget.” When we partake of it we honor Christ and gospel event. But let us also be edified in the fellowship and

meanings of this event. That which the church does not understand cannot edify the church.

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# CHRISTIAN ASSURANCE

## It Is Well with My Soul 490

D/A

*I will extend peace...like a river. – Isaiah 66:12*

• 1. When peace like a riv - er at - tend - eth my way, When sor - rows like  
 2. My sin— Oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous tho't— My sin, not in  
 (faster) • 3. And, Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight, The clouds be rolled

*(st. 3: rall., then broadly to Refrain)*

sea - bil - lows roll; What ev - er my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,  
 part but the whole, Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more:  
 back as a scroll, The trump shall re - sound and the Lord shall de - scend,  
 (cues: vs. 3 only)

*Refrain*

"It is well, it is well with my soul."  
 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! It is well  
 "E - ven so" it is well with my soul. It is well

*Repeat Refrain broadly for final ending*

with my soul, with my soul, It is well, it is well with my soul.

WORDS: Horatio G. Spafford (w. 1873)  
 MUSIC: Phillip P. Bliss (w. 1876)  
 END OF HEART AND SOUL MEDLEY

VILLE DU HAVRE  
 11.8.11.9. w/REFRAIN





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### THE BUILDING THROUGH SONG

There is a right way to build and a wrong way to build. Jesus said this after warning that not everyone who is religious would go to heaven (Mt. 7:21-23). To build a fine house that will stand for eternity, you must use good materials in the Word of God. If you want your house to stand, you build (edify) it on the solid ground (Mt. 7:24ff). If you want to grow and mature spiritually, it must be according to God's plans. Spiritual songs are one way to build a spiritual house. I'm here today to talk about *edification* that is given and received in song.

### SINFUL MAN NEEDS EDIFICATION

The Holy Spirit gave extraordinary gifts to the church for the purpose of edification. With the use of these gifts, Paul wrote, "when you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification (1 Cor. 14:26). Because these were mostly teaching gifts, the passage sounds similar to when Paul says God "gave some as Apostle's, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors and teachers (why?)...to equip the saints for the work of service, for the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11,12). God's gifts were given to build or edify the church.

What does it mean to "edify"? *OIKODOME* is in noun form in a number of places in the New Testament (Rom. 14:19; 2 cor. 10:8; 13:10; Eph. 4:12,16,19; 2 Cor. 14:5,12). The literal sense of the verb is to "build, construct, establish." Jesus uses the word in a figurative way, saying, "I will build my church", and Paul says, the church is "God's building" (1 Cor. 3:9). It is the non-literal sense of the word that is our concern in this lesson. In this sense it conveys the idea of "moral improvement, spiritual growth through religious instruction." This being the case, if the song service is edifying, then it needs to be free of man's opinion and tradition, and strong on the sound doctrine of the Bible. Edification is essential if individual and kingdom growth is going to occur.

### EDIFYING THROUGH SONG IS THE WILL OF GOD

"speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;" (Eph. 5:19)

"Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God." (Col. 3:16)

When it comes to singing, we can be too timid. Sometimes it seems we don't understand that God wants us to sing to others. We discourage any attempts to hype up spirituality which is emotionalism, as some modern song-leaders like to do; but we need to sing from the heart. Some singing from Christians is more like whispering, mumbling, miming, and otherwise mimicking singing. The churches that received these instructions knew they were to sing. Some need to ask themselves if their timidity is a valid excuse for not speaking up. Singing is a way to teach others

#### THE PURPOSE OF ASSEMBLING IS TO WORSHIP, AND THEN EDIFY

When we assemble, the #1 thing we do is bring worship to God. It is, as it was, the Lord's Day when we, as they did, observe the Lord's Supper. God seeks worshipers who will worship Him in "spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:23,24). This is accomplished in private, but also in public worship. The Hebrew writer said, "let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of the lips that gives thanks to His name" (Heb. 13:15). The great and first command is to love God and put Him first (Mt. 22:38). Therefore, our first priority is to bring praise and honor to the Lord.

With worship there are two general and five specific guidelines to follow. In general, Jesus said "those who worship God must worship in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:24). This implies that any other worship, NOT in spirit or truth, is false. True worship is according to the Word. We can read the Bible and know what specifically is to be offered to God as worship. Jesus said we are sanctified "in truth, thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). But worship must also occur in the heart, which is the seat of emotion. According to Jesus, it isn't enough to offer the sacrifice by going through the motions. To worship God in spirit occurs in the other region of self. Truth is apprehended and understood through the intellect and it is shown in song that comes from the heart. In general, worship must be in spirit and truth.

What specific ways do Christians worship God? As already stated, there are five acts of worship in the New Testament that are authorized, which is seen through command and example. They include:

- \* Partaking the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23ff)
- \* Praying (1 Tim. 2:8)
- \* Giving (1 Cor. 16:1,2)
- \* Reading and exhorting from the Word (1 Tim. 4:13; Acts 20:32)
- \* Spiritual Singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)

Beyond these five, nothing else is authorized. An expedient like a pitch pipe, song book, a building, etc., does not constitute a new act of worship and is not an addition to the Word. An expedient is something necessary to accomplish the command. Any act of worship beyond these five is an addition to the Bible and is vain. It is important that spiritual edification be considered in light of the principles guiding worship.

## WHEN WE ASSEMBLE TO WORSHIP, WE ALSO EDIFY

Edification is accomplished through the five acts of worship. If this wasn't the case, then other things would be done in the worship. There is no way to logically add some new item to the period of worship and justify doing so by claiming that it is edification, and not worship. It would rightly be recognized as a new form of worship. Examples would include introduction of instrumental music, burning incense, the introduction of icons, and etc.,.

For spiritual edification, there are two general requirements: speak the Word of God, and speak it in love. Paul said knowledge puffs up, but love edifies (1 Cor. 8:1). Paul is not discounting the importance of spiritual truth, since he said to the Ephesian Elders, "I commend you to the word of His grace, which is able to build (edify) you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). To edify spiritually, it takes both love and the Word of God. The Word communicated without love will be cold, and ungodlike, and love without knowledge will be untrained, undiscerning, and even loving what should be hated. True edification, in the most general of terms occurs when we "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15).

Worship and edification are not the same, but edification happens when the church worships God. Worship is happening vertically with God while edification happens horizontally between the worshipers. When the church praises God, the church is edified. When the congregation is edified by preaching in the Word, God is worshiped. God doesn't need edifying and Believers don't get worshiped. So when we sing "Amazing Grace" or "Angry Words", we are worshiping God and edifying one another. When we partake of the Lord's Supper, we worship the Lord and proclaim our faith to one another, and edify one another. When we preach the Good News, we worship the Lord and we edify the Church.

The power of singing the truth in love is to convict of sin, to lift up the downtrodden, to encourage the persecuted, and generally to instruct in righteousness. Singing in sound doctrine is profitable and is part of equipping the church for the work of God (2 Tim. 3:16,17). Let no one downplay the power of spiritual song.

## FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO ENSURE EDIFICATION

First, we need to assemble because it is commanded (Heb. 10:24,25). There is no possible way for Christians to edify if they refuse to gather with other Christians. By assembling and singing, we stimulate one another to love and good deeds.

Second, don't adulterate the worship of God by making it a means to attract people to the building. Worship is an end in itself. To lose sight of this is to invite offending God.

Third, spiritual songs must be rich in sound doctrine, without any opinion. The same rules that apply to preaching apply to singing, because worshipful singing is teaching. James could easily have said, "teachers and song leaders shall incur a stricter judgment." So pick the

songs with care.

And fourth, edification speaks to the mind. Noise cannot edify in the Biblical sense of the word. Instruments talk to the physical senses, but the truth instructs the mind and edifies. If I hummed a few bars of a song, you wouldn't know what was said. You wouldn't know if I hummed, "Amazing grace" or "When we've been there" or "O My, it's a beautiful morning." The noise of instruments has the same problem for the unbeliever, or uninitiated who don't understand and aren't convicted to give an "Amen" (1 Cor. 14:16). Tongues actually meant something, being a real language, so that without interpretation they meant something. But instruments say nothing. What others say about instruments in worship:

- \* McKinnon, historian, researched through the equivalent of the Encyclopedia Britannica of Church History, called the Ante-Nicene, the Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers, and found that the church only sang for over 600 years.
- \* CATHOLIC: *"For almost a thousand years Gregorian chant, without any instrumental or harmonic addition was the only music used in connection with the liturgy. The organ, in its primitive and rude form, was the first, and for a long time the sole, instrument used to accompany the chant.... The church has never encouraged and at most only tolerated the use of instruments. She enjoins in the 'Caeremonials Episcoporum', - that permission for their use should first be obtained from the ordinary. She holds up as her ideal the unaccompanied chant, and polyphonic, a-capella style. The Sistene Chapel has not even an organ."* (Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 10, pg. 657-688.)
- \* LUTHER *"The organ in the worship Is the insignia of Baal... The Roman Catholic borrowed it from the Jews."* (Martin Luther, McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia Volume VI, page 762)
- \* CALVIN *"Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papists therefore, have foolishly borrowed, this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostles is far more pleasing to him. Paul allows us to bless God in the public assembly of the saints, only in a known tongue (I Cor. 14:16) What shall we then say of chanting, which fills the ears with nothing but an empty sound?"* (John Calvin, Commentary on Psalms 33)
- \*PSALLO (Eph. 5:19) means sing, not play or pluck: SCHAFF "It is questionable whether, as used in the New Testament, 'psallo' means more than to sing . . . The absence of instrumental music from the church for some centuries after the

apostles and the sentiment regarding it which pervades the writing, the fathers are unaccountable, if in the apostolic church such music was used" (Schaff-Herzog, Vol. 3, p. 961).

#### UNDERSTAND THE POWER OF SONG

"After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." (Mt 26:30) *"But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them."* (Acts 16:25) *"Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises?"* (Jas. 5:13).

In times of joy and great sorrow, Christians have sung. With song we draw near to God. With song we tell the truths of the Gospel and call for men to repent. A song that communicates the truth can fire the mind and lift the spirit. God wants His church to grow, becoming mature and full-grown. Knowing this, be glad to have your voice. Use it in song to worship God and to help others grow in the Christian walk.



# 552 Have Thine Own Way

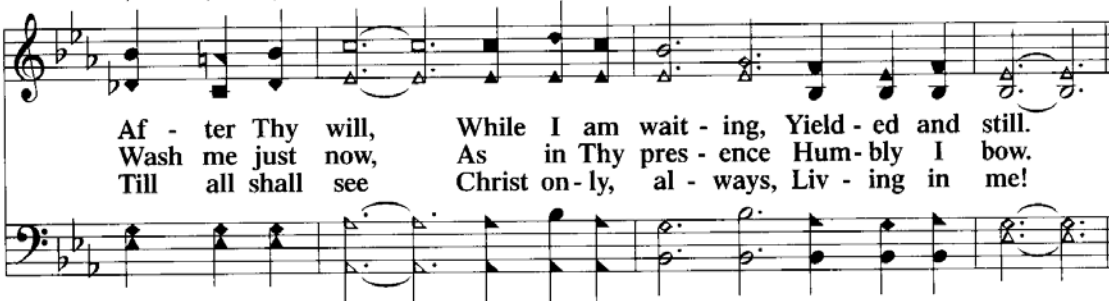
Eb/G

*We are the clay, You are the potter. – Isaiah 64: 8*


• 1. Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Thou art the  
 • 2. Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Search me and  
 3. Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way! Hold o'er my



Pot - ter, I am the clay. Mold me and make me  
 try me, Mas - ter, to - day! Whit - er than snow, Lord,  
 be - ing Ab - so - lute sway! Fill with Thy Spir - it



Af - ter Thy will, While I am wait - ing, Yield - ed and still.  
 Wash me just now, As in Thy pres - ence Hum - bly I bow.  
 Till all shall see Christ on - ly, al - ways, Liv - ing in me!

WORDS: Adelaide Pollard (w. 1902)  
 MUSIC: George C. Stebbins (w. 1907)

ADELAIDE  
 5.4.5.4. D



**Kevin Morkassel** was born on July 18, 1970, in Warren, Minnesota and became a Christian at the age of twelve. He married Traci Gilstrap in March, 1993. They have two daughters; Kaitlin is twelve years old and Kelsey is eleven years old. In high school, Kevin was involved in track, chorus, and the Elite Singers, and he participated in the school musicals. Kevin regularly attended Flaming Pine Youth Camp near Ely, Minnesota, and competed in Minnesota area Bible Bowl competitions. In the summer of 1988, Kevin was a counselor at Camp Sunshine. (A camp for mentally and/or physically handicapped children.) In May 1990, Kevin graduated with an Associate of Arts degree from York College in York, Nebraska. At York College, Kevin was the Devotional Director of Kingsmen men's social club. The summer of 1989 Kevin worked as an Admissions Ambassador for York College

visiting Christian youth camps in Illinois, South Dakota, Colorado, and Wyoming. The summer of 1990 Kevin served as the youth minister at the Placerville Church of Christ in Placerville, California. In May 1993, Kevin graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing from Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas. At Harding, Kevin participated in four evangelistic campaigns: (1) Duluth, Minnesota; (2) Kaleningrad, Germany; (3) Rifle, Colorado; and (4) the European Chorus Campaign. He also served as the Devotional Director of Lambda Sigma men's social club and led Bible studies for the Cloverdale Church of Christ. After graduation from Harding, Kevin began his managerial career with Enterprise Rent-A-Car. After eight and a half years of employment at Enterprise, Kevin decided to become a minister of the gospel. He has been guest speaker in congregations all over Northern Illinois, in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and in Missouri. While doing much of this, he also served as deacon in charge of youth activities at the Church of Christ in Crystal Lake, Illinois. Kevin has been preaching fulltime for the Church of Christ in Waukegan, Illinois since the beginning of 2004 and he has a passion for sharing God's word with the world, which desperately need to hear it.

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### **INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:**

- WELCOME!
- 

### **INTRODUCTION:**

So far today, we have heard four lessons about the edification that we receive through some of the different aspects of our worship service.

- I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to Randy, Reed, Mike & Dan for the time and effort that they have taken in putting those lessons together.
- You may have noticed that each of them are from different towns all over Minnesota and that Rick, who will be speaking next is also from Minnesota.
- Some of you may be thinking that there is one outsider among us... some guy from a Chicago suburb.
- I just wanted to assure all of you that I am in fact, originally from Minnesota.
- I was born and raised in Warren Minnesota and attended the Crookston church of Christ up until the age of eighteen years old.
- I am now 35 years old so (if I do the math correctly) I am still more than half Minnesota-Boy!
- So I just wanted to give each and every one of my fellow Minnesotans the reassurance that when the Chicago bears are playing the Minnesota Vikings, I'll be wearing Purple!
- So please... don't view me as an outsider... Though my address includes the word "Illinois"... my roots are right here in Minnesota.

This afternoon, it has come time for us to address the topic of edification that we receive through our giving.

- Before we really get into the details about edification that Christians receive through their giving, I would like for us to take a look at the example of giving in the Bible and how it applies to us today.

- Please turn with me to **1 Corinthians 16:1-2**.
- Much of the letter, that we refer to as **1 Corinthians**, was written as a response to some questions that the Christians in Corinth had regarding Christian living.
- As you go through this letter you can see how Paul systematically addresses their questions.
- It is my understanding that every time Paul uses the words, “**Now concerning**”, he is addressing another one of the questions that they had asked him about.
- He uses this phrase in **Chapter 7:1** and again in **verse 25** of that chapter.
- He begins **Chapter 8:1** and **Chapter 12:1** and finally we see it again here in **1 Corinthians 16:1**.
- Please read with me the words of Paul in **1 Corinthians 16:1-2**...

*1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.*

*2 On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.*

Now, even though this passage is very short, it tells us a great deal about how the early church was instructed to take up a collection.

- This passage tells us how often a collection was to be taken up.
- It tells us who was to do the giving.
- It demonstrates that the giving was to be anticipated.
- That it was to be according to a person's ability.
- And that it was not just for special occasions.

Let's break down **verse 2**... I have divided the verse into five distinct and separate parts.

1. First, we see that giving was to be PERIODIC. “*On the first day of every week...*”
  - a. It was to be done regularly and consistently.
  - b. Giving to the church was to be something that could be considered habitual.
  - c. This regular giving, results in many benefits for the church then and for us today as well.
2. Second, we see that giving was to be PERSONAL. “*On the first day of every week let each one of you...*”
  - a. The KJV says “*let every one of you...*”
  - b. This makes it very clear that every Christian was to give to the church.
3. Third, we find that giving was to be PROVIDENT. “*On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save...*”
  - a. The word “Provident” means showing prudent forethought, which means that our giving needs to be planned. It needs to be deliberate and well thought out.
  - b. This verse even seems to imply that a person would need to set aside a certain amount daily so that when the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week rolled around, they would have something to give.
4. Fourth, the giving was to be PROPORTIONATE. “*On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save as he may prosper...*”
  - a. A person was to give based on his or her ability to give.
  - b. The old 10% rule of tithing had apparently been done away with.
  - c. Paul was saying that they were to give in accordance with what they had earned.
  - d. **Acts 11:29** says, “*And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.*”
5. And Finally, the giving was to be PREVENTATIVE. “*On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save as he may prosper that no collections be made when I come.*”
  - a. Apparently, Paul didn't want them to think that collecting money was just for special occasions.

- b. This money was being collected so that the saints in Jerusalem would be able to continue spreading the gospel.

To summarize this verse...

- The giving was periodic (It was every week)...
- It was also personal (Every person was to give)...
- It was provident (In other words, it was planned and involved prudent forethought)...
- It was proportionate (It was based on each person's ability to give)...
- And finally, it was preventative. (It was not just for special occasions, but it allowed the saints to dedicate themselves to spreading the gospel)...

I think that it is important for us to understand this pattern of collecting funds that we find in the Bible.

- We don't see the Apostle John having a bingo night.
- We don't ever read about James, Barnabas or Timothy hosting a cookie sale for a church benefit..
- There is no evidence that Peter cast his net over the other side of the boat in order to have a Friday Night Fish Fry for the church!
- Paul didn't ever hold a tent-makers Training Seminar in order to raise money for the Lord's church.
- As a matter of fact, there is not one example of the church ever receiving funds from anyone outside of the church.
- All collections that we read about are on the first day of every week and they are a free-will offering from the saints within the Lord's church.

Look back up to **1 Corinthians 16:1** for a moment...

- Keep in mind that Paul was apparently answering one of the questions that they had regarding the collection and how it should be done.
- This is how Paul responded, "*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.*"
- The NIV says, "*Do what I told the Galatian churches to do.*"
- The NKJV says, "...so you must do also."
- This was not just a suggestion for one church on one occasion some time in the history of the church.
- This was a command! And it was not just for Corinth, it was for all the churches of Galatia.

I believe that there was a very specific reason that Paul directed all of these churches to collect funds in this way.

- I believe that it all comes back to the very focus of our meeting here in Owatonna this afternoon.
- And that is because the saints are edified because of their free will offerings that they make to the church.

If we were to have a fund-raiser and offer all kinds of services to the community, what personal benefit do each of our members receive from that?

- If we invite the general public to join us for a craft sale, or bingo, or a fish fry, or a cookie sale, or any other kind of sale, would we personally receive any edification because of it?
- Edification means spiritual improvement...Would we gain some kind of spiritual improvement from it?
- The end result of these sorts of solicitations is that we have put ourselves in the same mindset as a Starbucks or a Piggly Wiggly.

- We're doing it for a profit, not because we personally are making a sacrifice for the sake of the Kingdom of Christ.

In **2 Corinthians 2:17**, the Apostle Paul said, ***"For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God."***

- When we start charging for services...we lose sight of God's intended purpose for giving... It should be out of sincerity, not for profit like a peddler.

And so, at this time, I would like us to begin thinking more in depth about some of the spiritual improvements that we receive from this act of worship.

- That sounds kind of strange, doesn't it? The collection is a part of our worship!
- I think that in some ways, the collection time of our worship is more important than any other time of our worship service... and not because that is how the church is supported, but because that is when we each have opportunity to evaluate our level of dedication to the Lord.
- We can demonstrate our level of commitment to the church through our generous giving.

With all of that being said, I would like us to take a look at three ways in which we are edified by our giving.

- At this point, we have looked at the five "P"s of **1 Corinthians 16:2**...and now I would like us to consider three more "P"s.
- Each of these "P" words represent another way in which we are edified by our giving.

### **The first "P" is Perspective:**

Regarding what is important in life, I would like to contend that our generous giving can cause our perspective to change.

- Our perspective is completely different, when we put our sole focus on being prepared for the after life and when we take our focus off of the things of this world.

My family and I recently watched a very interesting movie on TV called K-PAX.

- It is one of those movies that really plays with your mind and gets you thinking about things from a different perspective than usual.
- It is about a man, named Prot, who is convinced that he is from a planet called K-PAX and he is on earth for a five-year vacation.
- Since he was not shy about telling others that he was from another planet, he spent most of his time being evaluated by psychologists.

As one particular psychologist worked with Prot, he was continually amazed by the things that Prot said and did.

- For example, Prot was able to see ultraviolet light, which is not possible to see with human eyes...
- He was able to help star experts answer questions regarding the solar system where his planet is located.
- He was apparently able to communicate with his psychologist's dog and informed him that the dog was hard of hearing on the left side.

The psychologist spent a great deal of time with Prot and he began accepting the fact that he could actually be from K-PAX; Prot was very convincing.

- Unfortunately, Prot's 5-year vacation came to an end and he informed everyone that he would be returning to K-PAX on a beam of sunlight on July 27th, at 5:51AM.



- As the movie draws to a close, Prot stands at the window at 5:51AM and waits for the morning's first beam of sunlight to come across his body and as it does it takes Prot back to his home and leaves behind another man who just happened to look exactly like him.
- All of the other patients at the hospital were convinced that Prot was on his journey and this other guy was just a stranger that took his place.

The thing that I really like about the movie is that it works on your imagination and gets you thinking about things from a completely different perspective.

- In a similar way, I believe that when Jesus came to live as a man, he spent much of His time, trying to convince people to see things from a different perspective.
- Jesus said some things that seem very bizarre to us today.
- *“blessed are those who mourn...blessed are those who have been persecuted...blessed are you when men cast insults at you...”* (Matthew 5:3-11)
- He also said, *“whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either.”* (Luke 6:29)
- He said, *“Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury.”* (Mark 12:43)
- On another occasion, He said, *“love your enemies, do good to those who hate you...”* (Luke 6:27)

Jesus always looked at things differently than most everyone else.

- In our teen class in Waukegan, we have been studying the book of **John** and I have been noticing that Jesus frequently speaks about eternal life.
- It seems that Jesus' main goal in His life on earth was to get people to consider eternal life rather than simply seeing the things of this life.

Let us consider for just a moment the book of **John**, chapters 3-6 for example...Take note of how many times Jesus spoke about eternal life.

- Jesus said, in **John 3:16**, *“...whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”*
- In **John 4:14**, He spoke of Himself giving the *“living water”* that leads to eternal life.
- In **John 4:36**, He said, *“...he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal...”*
- In **John 5:24**, Jesus said, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life...”*
- In **John 6:27**, He said, *“Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life...”*
- Again, in **John 6:54**, Jesus said, *“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life...”*
- I think that you probably get the picture.
- Jesus uses the word *“eternal”* 17 times in the book of **John**, however there are perhaps dozens of more times in the Bible that Jesus makes reference to the after-life.
- We have barely even touched the surface in the book of **John**.

My point is... the overlaying message that Jesus delivered throughout his lifetime was that there is more to life than what we can see, hear, and touch.

- In **Luke 12:23**, after Jesus spoke about the man who built bigger barns, He said, *“...life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.”*
- There are things that are far more important than the earthly pleasures and the earthly treasures that so often become our main focus in our lives.
- Jesus delivered a message that everyone, everywhere needs to change his/her perspective and see things through a new set of eyes!

- Through a set of eyes that recognize that our feeble lives on this earth are but a blink of the eye.

As we begin taking a look at how a person's perspective changes through their giving, I would like to focus in on a portion of the Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew 6**.

- It is my opinion that for a Christian in the United States of America ,as far as sins are concerned, our worst enemy is Materialism.
- I would like to, therefore, begin to take a look at this passage, which clearly demonstrates the impending danger that we face, when our main focus is on the things of this world.
- Let us consider for a few moments today, three Dangers of Materialism...
- Please read with me the words of Jesus Christ... **Matthew 6:19-24**...

**19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.**

**20 "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;**

**21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

**22 "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.**

**23 "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!**

**24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.**

As we consider this passage this afternoon, there are a number of conclusions that we can draw from these words of Christ, regarding the dangers of Materialism.

**III. First of all, I believe that Jesus wanted to make it perfectly clear that OUR MATERIAL POSSESSIONS ARE TEMPORARY AND WE WILL ONLY HAVE THEM FOR A SHORT TIME.**

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, ***"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal."***

- Here's an interesting fact about the Bible that you may not be aware of... Every time that the word ***"Moth"*** is used in the pages of God's word, it is referring to how fragile human life is.
- Here's another interesting fact... Every time that Jesus uses the word ***"thief"*** in the Bible, He is doing so to indicate something that will happen unexpectedly.
- Jesus is clearly saying that not only are our lives on earth fragile, but our lives will most likely be taken from us when we do not expect it.

I had a conversation with someone recently that I would guess is in her mid 50s.

- She expressed to me that she had been to a number of funerals in recent months and suddenly realized that all of those funerals were for people younger than herself.
- We have no guarantee of life for another hour...
- As Job said, in **Job 13:28**, ***"I am decaying like a rotten thing, Like a garment that is moth-eaten."***

It always makes me think twice when I hear about an Athlete who dies unexpectedly.

- I think that the state of Minnesota was taken by surprise recently when one its most well-liked athletes of all time died of a stroke.
- Kirby Puckett was only 45 years old.
- That's only 10 years older than myself and younger than many of you... and yet Kirby's acquired possessions could not save him from the fate that was due to him and is still due to every one of us.

- Our material possessions are temporary and we will only have them for a short time.

These are facts that have been preached for literally thousands of years!

- Moses said a prayer in **Psalm 90:3-4**... *"Thou dost turn man back into dust, And dost say, 'Return, O children of men.' For a thousand years in Thy sight are like yesterday when it passes by..."*
- And again he said in **verses 9-10**, *"For all our days have declined in Thy fury; We have finished our years like a sigh. As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away."*

David also spoke about the shortness of life and said in **Psalm 39:11**, *"Surely every man is a mere breath."*

- He also said in **Psalm 103:15-16**, *"As for man, his days are like grass; As a flower of the field, so he flourishes. When the wind has passed over it, it is no more..."*
- The writer of **Psalm 102** said, *"My days are like a lengthened shadow; And I wither away like grass."*
- The Prophet Isaiah said something very similar... *"All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, When the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass."* (Isaiah 40:6-7)

Following through into the New Testament, James the brother of Jesus spoke about the foolishness of materialism saying, *"...let the rich man glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. For the sun rises with a scorching wind, and withers the grass; and its flower falls off, and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away."* (**James 1:10-11**)

- Please turn with me to **James 5**.
- In this passage, James gets even more condemning of those who focus on earthly treasure.
- James makes it very clear that in the after life our stored up riches will avail nothing!
- He makes a statement that is very similar to the one Jesus made.
- Please read with me **James 5** starting at the beginning of the chapter...

**1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you.**

**2 Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten.**

**3 Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!**

You see, the thing is... James clearly understood the teachings of Jesus Christ.

- He may have been there when Jesus spoke to the Rich young ruler who would not give up his possessions and follow Jesus.
- James probably heard Jesus speak of the poor widow who put two coins in the collection.
- He probably heard Jesus say, *"Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God"* and then shortly after saying, *"But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full."* (**Luke 6**)
- James probably witnessed the parable about the rich man who built bigger barns and was called a fool by Jesus because he, *"stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."* (**Luke 12:21**)
- I'm sure that James was familiar with the story of Lazarus and the rich man who spoke to Abraham while in torment in Hades.

Godly men for thousands of years have acknowledged that our riches cannot be taken with us and that our lives are only but a short while and then we pass away.

- I think that perhaps Paul said it best in **1 Timothy 6:17-19**, *“Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.”*

The first danger of materialism that we have learned from Jesus in **Matthew 6**, is that our possessions are temporary and we will only have them for a short while.

- Rather than having a focus on material possessions, Jesus said, in **verse 20**, to *“store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal...”*

**III. As we take a look at verse 21 of Matthew 6, we notice a second danger of materialism. That is that MATERIALISM TAKES OUR FOCUS AWAY FROM LIFE ETERNAL.**

I'd like to share with you a poem about an old man who was known for charging a high rate of interest on loans...

Here lies old Twenty-Per-Cent  
The more he made, the less he spent,  
The less he spent, the more he craved,  
If he gets to heaven, we'll all be saved.  
--Unknown--

In **verse 21** Jesus said, *“for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

- It seems that Jesus is saying that when you treasure your material possessions, your heart will long for more material possessions.
- At the same time, if you treasure the reward of heaven, your heart will long for the reward of heaven.
- Where ever your treasure is...there your heart will be also.

Again we come back to the idea that we started with.

- Jesus' goal in coming to this Earth was to turn people's hearts to things eternal rather than having a focus on worldly things.
- When we begin to view all of the pleasures of earth and treasures of earth as unimportant and when we begin to view the goal of heaven and bringing others to heaven with us, we will have the proper perspective that Jesus was trying to encourage.

There are several treasures listed in the Bible for which we should set our hearts...

- In **Proverbs 2:1-5**, King Solomon suggested that we should treasure God's commandments, His wisdom and understanding.
- In **Proverbs 15:16**, he also said that we should treasure a *“fear of the Lord.”*
- The Apostle Paul said that we should treasure *“sound words”* in **2 Timothy 1:13-14**.
- And our Savior indicated that there is something else that we should treasure.
- In **Matthew 13:44**, Jesus said, *“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”*
- Heaven is a treasure that is worth making great sacrifices for!

- I think that in **Matthew 6**, Jesus was trying to say that if you put your focus on the treasures of heaven, that is where your heart will lead you!
- *“where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

The early Christians used to greet one another by using the word “*Maranatha*.”

- “**Maranatha, Paul.**” ... “**Maranatha, Silas**”
- This word, Maranatha means, “**Let the Lord come.**”
- They sincerely, and honestly longed for the world beyond this one.
- Their perspective on the importance of earthly possessions was very different from the rest of the world.

Again, we’ve been looking at the fact that materialism can take our focus away from eternal life, but listen for a moment to what Jesus says in **Matthew 10:28**... “*And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*”

- Jesus is clearly saying, “**Get your mind off of the here and now and get your heart set on the life beyond!**”

**II. There is a 3<sup>rd</sup> danger of Materialism in Matthew 6:24 and that is that EITHER WE POSSESS OUR POSSESSIONS, OR THEY POSSESS US.**

Jesus said, “*No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.*”

- I find the terminology that Jesus used here very interesting.
- He is basically saying that we have a choice between serving God and serving wealth.
- Now, serving God, I can understand that... but how does one serve wealth?
- He is basically saying that we can serve our possessions in the same way that an employee might serve the boss... The boss says what to do, and we do it.
- We can serve our possessions in the same way that a child will serve their parents... Our parents tell us to do the dishes and we have no choice... we do the dishes!

Our wealth can literally have this same controlling effect on us!

- We can either serve God, or we can serve our wealth.
- We either focus our attention on making a living, our family, our worldly pleasures OR we focus our attention on bringing souls to Christ and keeping our own soul on the right track!
- Which focus do you have in your life?
- Do you spend the majority of your time doing things to please God? Or do you use the majority of your time for pleasing yourself?
- Do you have control of your possessions? Or do they have control of you?

I’d like to share with you a little story about a selfish fly who the wrong attitude.

- There once was a fly who landed on a nice gooey strip of sweet-smelling fly paper.
- As he arrived to what he thought was a magnificent treasure, he proudly announced, as if staking his claim to his fellow flies, “**MY FLY PAPER!**”
- Sinking his nose in the syrupy stuff, he dined sumptuously. Then he blissfully took an afternoon siesta.
- As the fly peacefully slept like a king in all his glory, the flypaper whispered... “*My fly.*”

Before we take a look at the next spiritual improvement that we receive from our giving, I would like to share with you one more passage about the danger of our possessions possessing us.



- I'll be reading from **1 Timothy 6:9-10**. *"But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang."*

Jesus wanted all of creation to look at the world from a different perspective.

- He expressed that our material possessions are temporary and we will only have them for a short while.
- He warned that our possessions have a way of taking our focus off of things eternal.
- And He seemed to be concerned about the fact that we either possess our possessions, or they possess us.

Materialism is probably Satan's strongest tool that he uses to win us over, and generous giving is God's strongest tool in helping Christians overcome their materialistic tendencies!

- It has been said that **"Giving is the process of separating ourselves from the world."**
- When we give, we are saying to the Lord, **"My possessions do not possess me."**
- This is our way of declaring our freedom from the death-grip of the world!
- We are edified through our giving, because our perspective on what is important in life is changed and we no longer value our material possessions in the same way.

This brings us to the second way in which we are edified by our giving...

**We are edified though our giving because it brings us Personal Satisfaction:**

I don't know about you, but I have never felt joy about writing out a check for an expensive car repair.

- I just got my brakes repaired, and I received no enjoyment whatsoever in handing over my debit card.
- It also really bothers me to have to pay \$296 for a thermostat in my house that I could have replaced myself for a fraction of that cost. (Had I only known)
- It is no fun to pay for medical expenses that I thought would be covered by my insurance.
- But... It is truly a joy to be able to write out a check to the church knowing that lives are going to be touched and souls are being saved because of what the church is doing in our community!

The best way for giving to the church to be personally satisfying, is for that giving to come from the heart.

- Giving from the heart, goes back at least to the time of Moses.
- In **Exodus 25:2**, God spoke to Moses saying, ***"Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution."***
- There is no doubt that this same motive for giving has carried over into the New Testament and is still supposed to be our motive for giving today.
- In **2 Corinthians 9:7**, Paul said, ***"Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver."***

In **Luke 16:15**, Jesus was speaking with the Pharisees and He understood that they were ***"lovers of money"*** and He said to them, ***"...God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God."***

- My point in bringing this up is that when we give to the church, if we are ***"lovers of money"*** and giving to the church with wrong motives, that is ***"detestable in the sight of God."***
- A perfect New Testament example of this is found in **Acts 5** regarding Ananias & Saphira.
- In contrast, Jesus highly praised the poor widow who generously gave to the treasury.

I recently read an article written by a brother down in Crossville, Tennessee.

- He told a true story about a very poor widow in India who was more than seventy years old in 2002, when she was taught the gospel and baptized into Christ. This brother wrote...

**“Upon her conversion she not only began to worship regularly, but to be active in doing other things such as cleaning the meeting hall on a regular basis. Since she had gotten too old to do much other work the church began to help her a little each month. She now lives in one small room that is about 9’ X 12’ with no bath or indoor water tap. She cooks on a small open fire. The use of the room is donated to her by a kind neighbor.”**

As it turns out, the church where she was converted has now outgrown the rented facility that they have been using.

- To make a long story short, this past November the preacher there announced that they were thinking about buying property for their own building.
- And greatly to his surprise, this elderly widow had a savings account with the equivalent of thirty-three months wages saved up and she wanted to donate all of it to help construct the new building.
- At first the brothers refused to receive it, however she refused to take “no” for an answer saying, **“I planned to give this to the Lord, please take it, “ and “use it properly,” “don’t waste it.” “God gave it to me and I am giving back to Him to eternal life.”**
- On top of that she also had a gold ring, which she had worn for decades.
- Now, this type of jewelry in India is a prized possession and is usually treasured for a lifetime.
- This ring was worth the equivalent of another five months wages and again, she insisted that it be sold and the money be used for construction of a new building.
- What an excellent modern day example of giving from the heart...

We find many examples in the New Testament of the saints being pleased and overjoyed to be able to give to the Lord’s church.

- In **Romans 15:25-27**, Paul said, “... ***I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. Yes, they were pleased to do so, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things.***”
- Again in **2 Corinthians 8:3-4**, Paul spoke of the saints in Macedonia who were themselves in what he referred to as a “***deep poverty***” and yet Paul said, “***For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints...***”

This kind of giving from the heart demonstrates not only our love for God, but also our love for the brethren.

- Just a few verses after the passage in **2 Corinthians 8** that we just read, Paul urged the saints in the city of Corinth to also give freely, followed by this statement in **verse 8**... “***I am not speaking this as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love also.***”
- In other words, our giving proves the sincerity of our love.
- Paul followed up that statement with yet another in **verse 24** of the same chapter by saying, “***Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.***”

When we give to the Lord's church and we do so out of a sincere love, and we give from the heart, not only does that help us change our perspective about material possessions, but it also gives us a great deal of personal satisfaction.

- Before we move on to the third way in which we are edified by our giving, I would like to share with you another modern day example of someone who has been greatly edified by her giving.

A very faithful woman wrote the following letter to her congregation...

**"My account seems to be overdrawn. I deposited myself; I withdrew a way of life. I deposited my wedding vows, I withdrew a wonderful, satisfying marriage. I deposited time; I withdrew all the joys and blessings of motherhood. I deposited more time; I withdrew friendship of old and young. I deposited money. Now that seems to be a touchy subject. What did I get for my money?**

**A beautiful building... Yes. But more than that; an investment in the children and young adults in our church. A place to worship, a place to meet friends, old and new. A place where I feel good deep within, knowing I am doing right.**

**A minister...well, who can measure in dollars and cents the value of a person who baptizes our children, marries our young, visits our sick, and comforts the bereaved, in addition to the other normal duties of the church, guiding us to do God's will? I am getting a good return on my money.**

**I know of no other organization where I am free to decide how little I want to deposit in it., and still feel free to withdraw as much as I need. I will try in the future to make greater deposits, but please don't count on my being able to balance my account, as I know I'll always be overdrawn."**

I think that we would all agree that this woman has the proper perspective on her giving and it is also obvious that she receives a great deal of personal satisfaction from what she does.

There is a final thing that we receive from our giving to the church.

<b>The final "P" is <u>Purpose</u>:</b>
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As followers of Christ we recognize that there is no greater purpose in life than to get to heaven and to bring others with us.

- There is no place other than the church, where our money could be used for a better investment.
- I've heard it said that, **"The only money we will ever see again is the money that is given to the Lord."**
- If we put our money in the stock market... yes, there can be a good return on those investment.
- However, if I was just involved in a serious car accident, the last thing on my mind would be how my portfolio is doing!
- At that point, the portfolio has no value to me!

Jesus said in **Matthew 25:29**, ***"For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away."***

- As Christians we understand that life is short and so we know that we have been given a purpose in life.
- We recognize that giving to the church helps to fulfill that purpose and that is why we hear about extreme generosity from women like the poor widow in India.
- When we know what we know, we can afford to be generous to the church.

I once read about a man in New York City whose wife had a cat.

- The wife absolutely loved that cat, but the husband couldn't stand it.
- He was allergic to the cat, he couldn't stand the litter box, the constant hassle, the scratching on the furniture, and he could never get a good night's sleep, because the cat was always jumping on the bed in the middle of the night.
- And so, when his wife was out of town for the weekend he did a very cruel thing... he put the cat in a bag with some rocks and dumped the bag in the Hudson River.
- When the wife returned and could not find the cat, she was obviously upset.
- So the husband, out of his great love for his wife, put an ad in the paper and offered a reward of \$500 for anyone who would find the cat.
- Of course, the cat never showed up, so a few days later, he really tried to impress his wife, and he raised the reward to \$1,000.
- A friend saw the ad and told the man that he must be crazy to offer so much since no cat is worth \$1,000.
- But the man replied, **"When you know what I know, you can afford to be generous."**

In a slightly similar way, we could say the same thing about our giving—when we know what we know, we can afford to be generous.

- Our giving to the Lord is an investment.
- **Proverbs 11:24-25** says, *"There is one who scatters, and yet increases all the more, And there is one who withholds what is justly due, and yet it results only in want. The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered."*
- **Malachi 3:10** says, *"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows"*
- **2 Corinthians 9:8** says, *"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed."*

#### **SUMMARY:**

Because of our giving...

1. God greatly rewards us with the proper PERSPECTIVE in life.
  - a. We recognize that our material possessions are only temporary and we will only have them for a short while.
  - b. Because of our change in perspective, we realize that our material possessions only take our focus away from life eternal.
  - c. And this change in perspective helps us to not allow our possessions to possess us.

Because of our giving...

2. God grants each of us a great deal of PERSONAL SATISFACTION.
  - a. I think that one of the greatest satisfactions in life comes from helping others.
  - b. Bringing others to the faith and giving hope to a lost and dying world.
  - c. We demonstrate our love to each other and to God by our generous giving.

Because of our giving...

3. God gives us PURPOSE in life.
  - a. That purpose becomes more clear to us as we give more generously to the church.
  - b. We begin to recognize that there is no way to make a better investment for our future.
  - c. When we know what we know, we can afford to be generous.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Most importantly, we give, because Jesus Christ gave up everything on our behalf...

Long ago, there ruled in Persia a wise and good king. He loved his people. He wanted to know how they lived.

- He wanted to know about their hardships.
- Often he dressed in the clothes of a working man or a beggar, and went to the homes of the poor.
- No one whom he visited knew he was their ruler. One time he visited a very poor man who lived in a cellar. The king ate the coarse food the poor man ate. He spoke cheerful, kind words to him.
- Then he left. Sometime later he visited the poor man again and disclosed his identity by saying, "I am your king!"
- The king thought the man would surely ask for some gift or favor, but he didn't.
- Instead the man was simply overjoyed with honor and was very grateful that the king was willing to do these things for him.

In conclusion, our King of Kings was willing to leave the riches of heaven in order to come down and give us opportunity to receive a great inheritance.

- The Apostle Paul said in **2 Corinthians 8:9**, ***"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich."***

# CHRISTIAN'S ASSURANCE

## A Wonderful Savior 508

D/A

*And He will be called Wonderful Counselor. - Isaiah 9:6-7*

• 1. A won - der - ful Sav - ior is Je - sus my Lord, A won - der - ful  
 • 2. A won - der - ful Sav - ior is Je - sus my Lord, He tak - eth my  
 3. With num - ber - less bless - ings each mo - ment He crowns, And filled with His  
 4. When clothed in His bright - ness, trans - port - ed I rise To meet Him in

Sav - ior to me; He hid - eth my soul in the cleft of the rock, Where  
 bur - den a - way; He hold - eth me up, and I shall not be moved, He  
 full - ness di - vine, I sing in my rap - ture, O glo - ry to God For  
 clouds of the sky, His per - fect sal - va - tion, His won - der - ful love, I'll

*Refrain*

riv - ers of pleas - ure I see.  
 giv - eth me strength as my day.  
 such a Re - deem - er as mine!  
 shout with the mil - lions on high.

He hid - eth my soul in the cleft of the rock

That shad - ows a dry, thirst - y land; He hid - eth my life in the depths of His love,

And cov - ers me there with His hand, And cov - ers me there with His hand.

WORDS: Fanny J. Crosby (w. 1890)

MUSIC: William J. Kirkpatrick (w. 1890)

END OF WONDERFUL SAVIOR MEDLEY

KIRKPATRICK  
11.8.11.8 w/REFRAIN





**Rick Lanning** - "Born into the world October 18, 1952 in Jackson, Tennessee. Born again into another world April 26, 1964 in Memphis, Tennessee. Raised by godly parents who set my course in life early with love for souls. I will forever be in debt to them for raising me to love God and care about others. After high school I attended a small college in Florida where I studied occasionally but made a lot of friends. My parents think I majored in "social" studies. I began trying to preach while in college and made the decision that God had given me at least one talent for His purpose, so set my sails to do the best I could for the rest of my life. I have preached locally in the states of Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Texas and now in Minnesota for the past 20 years. Easily, Minnesota is now "home" and my favorite place on God's green earth. A southern boy is now a Yank. Go figure. While in college I met and won the hand of Benita, and we married in June of 1977. Second best decision I ever made. From that union God has blessed us with three great children. Ryan, age 22. Jesse, age 20. Meredith, age 17. The apples of my eye. My hobbies are few. Besides a voracious love of reading (history primarily), I used to love to run daily until the old hips said "enough is enough." Maybe again in the next life God will let me do it again. I enjoy watching virtually all sports. I preach for the Northwest church in New Hope, Minnesota. My passion is to teach home Bible studies to whoever will allow me to come over. The gospel of Mark, along with Ecclesiastes, is where I like to begin studies to lead folks to know Christ and find His grace and salvation. I thank Randy and Dan for the opportunity to preach today. If you have any questions about my lesson, I live with an open door policy to study anything I believe or teach. May God bless us today as we search the scriptures."

Gospel Preacher. Ever since my first feeble attempt to preach back in my college days of the early 70's, I have stood in meekness and fear at the thought of being called a gospel preacher. I have seldom stood before any audience, whether large or small, without the nervous feeling and heavy weight of James 3:1 hanging over my head. *"My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."* I would to God that all men who stood to preach would feel this burden of responsibility. It is the highest calling man can know, for all who take up this sacred mantle step softly in the footsteps of that Man of Galilee who preached 2000 years ago. Jesus, the very Logos of God, preached to edify and save lost souls, and then died to forever give divine sanction to the power of the gospel. Gospel Preacher. I have learned the hard way, it is not a title. It is a mission.

My task is to address the subject of gospel preaching in regards to edification during the assembly of the saints. My job is to teach what I believe to be God's truth on this topic, your job is to "search the scriptures" to see if what I say is true (Acts 17:11). Let us both do our jobs knowing we will give an account to God (2 Cor. 5:10).

### **THE SPIRIT OF WORSHIP IN PREACHING**

Have you ever heard a preacher talk about "the five acts of worship?" As a child I did not question this concept, but as a young man beginning to preach I toed the traditional party line while secretly trying to grasp how preaching could be an "act" of worship. Since worship is a reverence toward God, I could easily understand how singing praises to God, remembering and honoring Christ around the Lord's table, praying to God through Christ, and giving to God could all be described as worship. But preaching was unto men, not toward God, thus how could it be labeled as an act of worship?

The answer to my dilemma was easily resolved by a simple study of worship in the first century church. The very first gathering of Christians was described in Acts 2:42 *"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."* All four of these actions led to praise of God and edification of saints. As surely as the Lord's Supper and prayers were found in those assemblies, so was the proclamation of inspired teaching.

A specific assembly can be read in Acts 20:7 where it reads: *"Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight."* Partaking of the Lord's Supper and Preaching were part of their worship. Other examples could be cited, but that convinced me, and hopefully you, that it is scriptural to consider preaching as part of our worship unto God.

I take this line of reasoning in order to persuade you to think as soberly about preaching as you do the taking of the Lord's Supper. We all know the gravity of eating and drinking the Lord's Supper unworthily. Paul speaks bluntly and to the point when he says, *"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep."* (1 Cor. 11:28-30) Clearly, it is vain worship, and therefore without edification, when one eats and drinks judgment to himself when he does not properly discern Christ's death at the Lord's table. If it is true with one action of God-ordained worship, then why not with all actions ordained by God? Singing and praying are to be *"with spirit and understanding"* (I Cor. 14:15). Giving is grace money offered to God as a sacrifice of worship (2 Cor. 8-9). If it is not done with love toward God it as a clanging cymbal and profits me nothing (I Cor. 13:1-3).

Preaching is no different. Jesus specifically connected teaching and worship together in the following breath-taking scripture: *"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."* (Matt. 15:8-9) Mark it down and write it on the tablet of your heart, false teaching was called "vain worship!"

Why was false teaching vain worship? Simply because it did not give honor to God, and did not edify and draw the hearer into the very presence of God. Remember, preaching that does not bring you into the throne room of the Almighty, and stir your heart to draw near to God's heart, is not gospel preaching. Preaching must create an atmosphere of God's presence because it is speaking God's words.

For example, the great Water Gate Revival found in Nehemiah 8. Read that text and tell me this would not be every preacher's dream. Ezra the scribe opens The Book before the assembled nation, reading God's very words to their attentive hearts. This caused them to stand in reverent awe and then to weep with penitent hearts. Verse 6 is especially enlightening: *"And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. Then all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen!' while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground."* Preaching caused worship. That day the nation went home happy and blessed. They had grown in faith and honored their God. If it could only be so today.

I think also of Cornelius' words to Peter in Acts 10. *"Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you."* 33 *"So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, **we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God.**"* Is that not what gospel preaching is supposed to do? Is it not to bring us into the presence of God and cause the assembly to seek *"all things commanded you by God?"* We all should leave the assembly as Jacob left Peniel after that night of wrestling, saying, *"I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved"* (Gen. 32:30). We should depart from here today and feel like Moses descending from Sinai (Exo 34), when his face glowed from having seen the face of God. God's word brings us into His presence, to see His face, which leads us to humbly worship. Thus we

shall be edified (built up in the most holy faith).

## **THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL IN PREACHING**

I love the gospel. I trust you do too. Let me tell you why I love it so much.

It is called the "***gospel of God***" (Rom. 1:1) because it existed in the mind and plan of God from eternity. It is called the "***gospel of His Son***" (Rom. 1:9) because Christ is the center and circumference, the Alpha and Omega, of its message. It is called the "***gospel of the grace of God***" (Acts 20:24) because it comes not from human merit or our moral goodness, but from the loving favor of God's heart. It is called the "***gospel of your salvation***" (Eph. 1:13) because it is the only instrument that can destroy sin and save souls. It is called the "***gospel of peace***" (Eph. 6:15) because it reconciles us back to a God from whom we had been separated by sin (Isa. 59:1). It is called the "***gospel of the kingdom***" (Matt 4:23) because it is the good news that Christ reigns as King of kings in a realm where we are now heavenly citizens (Phil. 3:20). It is called the "***everlasting gospel***" (Rev. 14:6) because it cannot be altered, superceded or become obsolete as it lives and abides forever (I Pet. 1:23-25).

When we preach the gospel as the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, we show that we look beyond the mere words to the Source. The power lies not in the words, but in the God behind the words. We often quote Romans 1:16 without considering the whole context. When Paul said, "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation,*" he immediately followed that up by a revelation of the God behind the gospel.

Read all of Romans 1. The "gospel of God" (vs. 1) was a part of "the Holy Scriptures" (vs. 2) foretold by prophets of old. The heart of this gospel was revealed in the resurrection of Christ, which forever proved God's power (vs. 4). Paul desired to come to Rome to preach this gospel to fulfill a debt he owed them (vs. 14-15). While the Greeks and Romans saw the message of the gospel as foolishness (prayerfully read I Cor. 1-3), Paul saw the God behind the gospel and felt its intense power. In fact, he goes on to talk of that mighty God whose attributes included the power to create the heavens and earth (vs. 20) and to remain incorruptible (vs. 23).

God's power. Just think of it. When Alfred Nobel asked a friend for the Greek word for "explosive power" he was told it was ***DUNAMIS***. The great Swedish chemist immediately named his invention Dynamite. The gospel is the dynamite of God. This power so impressed the suffering Job that he spoke these immortal words about God:

*"7 He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing. 8 He binds up the water in His thick clouds, Yet the clouds are not broken under it. 9 He covers the face of His throne, And spreads His cloud over it. 10 He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters, At the boundary of light and darkness. 11 The pillars of heaven tremble, And are astonished at His rebuke. 12 He stirs up the sea with His power, And by His understanding He breaks up the storm. 13 By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent. 14 Indeed **these are the mere edges of His ways**, And how small a whisper we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?" (Job 26).*

Follow that up with a reading of Job 38 and try answering those same questions God asked Job.

The same power that said, "*Let there be light,*" is the same power that said, "*Go into all the world*

*and preach the gospel to every creature, he who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned"* (Mk. 16:15-16). The *DUNAMIS* that made the worlds is the *DUNAMIS* that can save the world! Have you made that connection? Have you connected the dots that God's creative power and God's revealed gospel both pack the same explosiveness. He created the world, and He will one day explode the world in a fireball (2 Pet 3:10). Likewise, He gave the world an antidote for sin, leading to the possibility of the whole world being saved (1 Tim. 2:4-5).

David connected these two powers beautifully in Psalm 19. He saw that the "World Book" was linked to the "Word Book." Verses 1-6 said *"the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork,"* and followed that immediately in verses 7-14 by revealing the words of that Creator. *"The Law of the Lord is perfect ... the Testimony of the Lord is sure ... The Statutes of the Lord are right ... The Commandment of the Lord is pure ... The Fear of the Lord is clean ... The Judgments of the Lord are true and righteous..."* Why were these things so? Because God is perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, true and righteous! Until we see the God behind the gospel, we will remain ashamed of the gospel.

Which brings me back to Romans 1:16. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because Paul was not ashamed of God. To know the power of God was to know the power of the gospel. To be ashamed of one was to be ashamed of the other. Paul did not have to look any further than the mirror to realize this point. He once told the Corinthians, *"the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are saved it is the power of God"* (1 Cor. 1:18). While you would have been hard pressed to find even one disciple, including Barnabas, who would have thought Saul of Tarsus could ever be reached, this "chief of sinners" had been powerfully reached and saved by the message of the gospel (Acts 9). All of us who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb have a similar story to tell. Like Paul, we know of the power of God and His gospel.

### **ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL**

It breaks my heart, and God's heart, and hopefully your heart, to live in a world that is ashamed of God and the gospel. I do not refer only to those of the world who *"do not know God and obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ"* (2 Thess. 1:8). I do not speak only of those in the realm of so-called "Christendom" who cried out "Lord, Lord" but refused to do the will of God and were told by the Lord, "I never knew you!" (Matt. 7:21-23). Sadly, I speak also of many that have been washed in the blood, but now believe and preach another gospel. I feel like Paul who said, *"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ"* (Phil. 3:18). The gospel that saved them has now been cast aside in shame.

What am I talking about? Who am I talking about? Preachers and brethren who no longer are content with the simple drawing power of the gospel of God. Like Israel of old, they seek to be like the nations (or denominations) around them. Some brethren are not content to plant and water with the gospel, letting God give the increase (1 Cor. 3:6-7). They are not content to "preach the word" by reproving, rebuking and exhorting, but instead heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, not willing to endure sound doctrine (2 Tim. 4:1-4).

It must have broke Paul's heart to write Galatians 1:6-10. It breaks my heart just to read it.

*6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to*



*a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel** to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be **accursed**. 10 ¶ For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to **please men**? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. 11 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

They want preachers who will give them another gospel ... a different gospel ... a perverted gospel ... an accursed gospel ... a man-pleasing gospel (Gal. 1:6-12).

As it happened in Paul's day, it has happened in ours. Brethren are "turning away so soon ... to a different gospel." They have forgotten that the drawing power of the gospel is in simple verses like the following:

*"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." (John 12:32)*

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35)*

*"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father except by Me" (Jn 14:6)*

*"Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:37-39)*

*"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. 4:3-6)*

*"but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (I Tim. 3:15)*

These, and so many other scriptures, are now cast aside and sacrificed on the altar of Ecumenicalism. That is a big word with a simple meaning: "I'm okay, you're okay, let's agree to disagree agreeably." Or to misquote Paul's words with a paraphrase: "I have become all things to all men that I might be all means save **none**!" That is surely what has happened in this age of the Mega-Church movement. The gospel as preached by Peter, Paul and John has been set aside in shame and replaced with "another gospel" preached by the likes of Rick Warren, Bill Hybels and Max Lucado. Instead of reading Acts to convert the lost, preachers now read "*A Purpose Driven Church*" and "*The Contagious Christian*" to find the secrets to growth. Instead of looking to the pattern of Jerusalem and Antioch, they look to the Saddleback church in California, the Willowcreek church in Chicago, and the Southeast Christian church in Louisville to see how the mega-churches are doing it. Instead of relying upon Christ's gospel, they appeal now to the Social Gospel to "seek and save the lost." Many of our own have fallen lock-step into their ways.

Let me tell you what I think about this movement. While there are surely some good things to learn from the writings of Warren, Hybels, Lucado and others (I have personally learned a few good points myself); and while there are surely crowds numbering into the tens of thousands in these giant assemblies drawn from this social gospel; and while millions are now numbered in the roll books of these growing churches – brethren, let me say to you with tears and sorrow, I question whether one more soul has been written in the Lamb's book of life! The message being preached is a perverted gospel that Paul said will cause men to be accursed. Instead of God's dynamite to explode sin and transform lives, they offer only sparklers and firecrackers to amuse the crowds. To the point, the "Sinners Prayer" is not in the Bible and never saved one lost man.

This deadly disease has infected so many preachers and churches today. They argue, "they must be doing something right," and thereby justify getting on board this train going places. They haven't stop to ask what direction it is headed and what station it will stop at. But that is nothing new. Exactly a century ago there was the national census of 1906 which officially recognized the split between the churches of Christ and the Christian Church. What had begun back in the mid 19th century with the introduction of the mechanical instrument into worship, and the man-made missionary societies into evangelism, had grown into further digressions from the gospel until there was no longer any recognition of fellowship. The apostasy was complete.

The twentieth century found brethren in a constant tug-of-war again and again. Issues kept surfacing that caused friction and debate, resulting once again in the breaking of fellowship.

For example, appeals have been made for a "New Hermeneutic" that no longer allows for divine commands, approved God-given examples, and necessary inferences to determine truth from error. Instead, they argue for loosening of restrictions and broadening of fellowship. This has resulted in the rejection of such teachings as a male-only leadership in public, as taught in I Cor. 14:34-35 and I Tim. 2:11-15. It has likewise resulted in a Unity-in-Diversity that is based on a doctrine of "preach the Man, not the Plan." Scriptures like 2 John 9-11 are treated with silence. Worship is no longer relevant, therefore the call for "Contemporary Worship" with drama plays, handclapping, and other emotionally uplifting features added to give spice to the assembly.

The Social Gospel, based on the carnal incentives of what I refer to as 3F Fellowship: Food, Fun and Frolic – have replaced the old Jerusalem gospel based on the spiritual incentives of redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, justification, salvation and glorification found in Christ. Just as Paul could no longer speak to the Corinthians with spiritual words because their hearts were set on carnal things (I Cor. 3:1-3), so it is difficult today for the same reason. Jesus worked a miracle with bread and fish to feed the 5000 in Galilee, yet instead of being impressed with His Deity, which was its very purpose (John 20:30-31), they were drawn only to Him for the welfare meal (John 6:26-27). If we try to convert people with chicken and ice cream, they will likely soon be as cold as the ice cream and dead as the chicken. Trust in the gospel's power.

Change-Agents are busily at work among us trying to sanitize the gospel to become palatable to the masses. They are ashamed of the gospel of Christ and thereby neuter it of all power to save souls. They cheapen grace by claiming God will broaden His fellowship to include those not yet baptized. But the grace I read about in the Bible says, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age" (Titus 2:11-13). Grace is not cheap. It is demanding of us a disciplined life. It is full of tough love.



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## THE APPEAL OF GOSPEL PREACHING

I pray this study has helped you better understand the purpose of preaching. The assembly of God's saints is intended for edification that leads to salvation. We have come to worship the God of heaven, and the Creator of our souls. He has loved us with a love that cannot be adequately defined or described. But it has been divinely demonstrated (Romans 3:21-26).

*"6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." (Romans 5:6-9)*

But the question from that text remains, how are we justified by His blood and saved from wrath? What did that divine demonstration ask of me? Read Romans all the way through chapter six.

*"3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin."*

The power of the gospel rests in the power of God. If He can make the worlds, He can save your soul. Trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

I close with borrowed words from a gray-headed psalmist to speak from my gray-head to you:

*"O God, You have taught me from my youth; And to this day I declare Your wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, do not forsake me, Until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to everyone who is to come." (Psalm 71:17-18)*

# HEAVEN'S CALL

## There's a Fountain Free 909

G/G ...water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing...from God. - Revelation 22:1

1. There's a foun-tain free, 'tis for you and me: Let us haste, O, haste  
 2. There's a liv - ing stream, with a crys-tal gleam: From the throne of life  
 3. There's a rock that's cleft and no soul is left, That may not its pure

to its brink; 'Tis the fount of love from the Source a - bove, And He  
 now it flows; While the wa - ters roll let the wea - ry soul Hear the  
 wa - ters share; 'Tis for you and me, and its stream I see: Let us

*Refrain*

bids us all free - ly drink. Will you come to the  
 call that forth free - ly goes. Will you come, Will you come,  
 has - ten joy - ful - ly there.

foun-tain free? Will you come? 'tis for you and me; Thirst - y  
 Will you come,

soul, hear the wel-come call: 'Tis a foun-tain o-pened for all.  
 Thirst - y soul,

WORDS: Mary B. C. Slade (w. 1876)  
 MUSIC: Dr. A. B. Everett (w. 1876)

FREE WATERS  
 10.8.10.8.w/REFRAIN

The Third Annual  
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*Thank you for coming today.  
Make plans to come next year!*