

Upcoming Events...

Galatians Class: Every Thursday at 1:00 p.m.

Barnabas Group Meeting: April 24

Ladies Bible Class: today at 4:00 p.m.

Making Progress

When Pablo Casals reached 95, a young reporter threw him a question: "Mr. Casals, you are 95 and the greatest cellist that ever lived. Why do you still practice six hours a day?" And Mr. Casals answered, "Because I think I'm making progress."

Our goal is to make progress every day of our life.

April Birthdays

1 Daniel McKnight 11 Dolly Cashion 23 Shannon Hudson
3 Amanda Hoffman 16 Alana Hudson 26 Stori Rose Hoffman
6 Susan Hudson 17 Belva Meanor

April Anniversaries

19 Bill & Kena Brown

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
Mike McKnight

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Christ and the Church

By David A. Sargent

It is not uncommon today to hear people devalue the church. Some say in effect, "Christ, yes; the church, no." While some profess they love Jesus, desiring even to follow Him, they have little use for "the church." The Scriptures, however, are clear: one cannot have the church without Christ, and one cannot have Christ without the church.

The church was God's idea. God's plan. It is not man-made. In fact, observe the close relationship between Christ and the church. Christ is the head of the church (Ephesians 5:22-23a); He is the complete voice of authority. Christ is the Founder of the church. Christ said to Peter, "*On this rock [the confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God], I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*" (Matthew 16:18). Christ is the foundation of the church. No building or institution can be stronger than the foundation on which it rests. And for the church, "*no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ*" (1 Corinthians 3:11). Christ is the Savior of the body, which is the church: "*For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body*" (Ephesians 5:23).

Indeed, as has often been noted by some in an attempt to minimize the church; "the church doesn't save anyone." However, Christ saves the church! In fact, the church is composed of the saved (Acts 2:47). Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it (Eph. 5:25). We usually judge the value of something by the price we pay for it. For what price was the church purchased? Christ purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). One cannot separate Christ from His church.

A low estimation of the church may be due to a lack of understanding of what the church truly is, as taught in the Bible. There is also a misconception of what the church is all about. One of the most simplistic, yet one of the most beautiful images of the church in Scripture is that of the family of God. As such, the church is designed to be a place of loving encouragement (1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:213) to those who are seeking to follow Christ. Also, it is God's desire for His family, the church, to grow and grow. God wants His family to share the good news about Jesus Christ, as Jesus instructed His disciples: *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen"* (Matthew 28:19-20).

How does one become a member of God's family, the church? To those who were convicted of their sin and believed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, Peter said, *"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"* (Acts 2:38). *"Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them"* (Acts 2:41). *"And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved"* (Acts 2:47). Only the Lord can add one to His church when one obeys the Gospel as Peter and the apostles presented it. Has the Lord added you to His church?

The One Message of the Bible

By David R. Ferguson

The Bible has one message, not 5 or 10 or 100. From Genesis all the way through Revelation the Bible reveals many great truths that all fit together like a glove to reveal the glory and plan of God in His creation, His redemption of mankind and the glorification of His people. It has one coherent, dovetailing message that links the truths of the Old Covenant with those of the New Covenant. The former, with its sacrificial system being made year after year, was but a shadow of the New. The Old Covenant could not make the people perfect: *"For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the*

same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh." (Hebrews 10:1) With the Old Covenant the sins of the people were remembered year after year, *"because it was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away our sins"* (Hebrews 10:3-4). With Jesus Christ, the perfect sacrifice, the sacrifice was made once and for all (Hebrews 10:10). Our faith in that shed blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us: *"Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in His blood, to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforesaid, in the forbearance of God...."* (Romans 3:24-25).

Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Covenant: *"Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished."* (Matthew 5:17-18) He has ushered in the New Covenant by His fulfilling of the Old: *"For He is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in the flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that He might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace...having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out that way, nailing it to the cross...."* (Ephesians 2:14-15; Colossians 2:14) Jesus Christ, our perfect sacrifice, now acts as mediator of the New Covenant: *"And for this cause He is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it."* (Hebrews 9:15-16)

Jesus offered Himself freely as our Redeemer. He understands what we go through while living in this world. Because He understands, Jesus became that perfect sacrifice by living a sinless life: *"For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* (Hebrews 4:15) Today, through our Mediator and Redeemer, we may *"...draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace...."* (Hebrews 4:16). May we do so now!