

Announcement!!

Great News: New Christian! **Kurt McGraw** as baptized September 18! His address is 82549 Bari, Indio, CA 92203; his phone number is (760) 219-0209.

Condolences...

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Chuck Limburg; Chuck went home to God Saturday morning. A memorial service is tentatively scheduled for next Saturday, October 8. More details will be announced.

Reminders...

Business Meeting: Today at 4:00 p.m.

Gospel Meeting: October 9-12 with **David Barnes**

Read through the Bible in 2016!

Suggested chapters to read so that we might read through the entire Bible during 2016! **This week's "schedule":**

- **Day 270** - Nehemiah 6-7 Monday
- **Day 271** - Nehemiah 8-10 Tuesday
- **Day 272** - Nehemiah 11-13; Psalm 126 Wednesday
- **Day 273** - Malachi 1-4 Thursday
- **Day 274** - Luke 1; John 1:1-14 Friday
- **Day 275** - Matthew 1; Luke 2:1-38 Saturday
- **Day 276** - Matthew 2; Luke 2:39-52 Sunday

October Birthdays

3 Betty Heitmeyer 25 Christina Bruni 28 Allan 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

Church of Christ

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The Value of Gospel Meetings

by David Dann, Truth Magazine, January 2012

The apostle Paul writes, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes*" (Romans 1:16). The gospel message is the power that God has decided to use to work on the hearts and lives of men and women in order to draw them to Himself. But in order for the gospel to do any good, it must be preached (10:13-14).

The book of Acts demonstrates that the gospel was preached to those who were already Christians, as well as to those who were not, by preachers who traveled to various places. The Scriptures describe various preachers traveling and preaching for various congregations for short periods of time in order to reach the lost and build up the saved with the gospel of Christ (Acts 14:21-22; 15:36, 40-41; 20:6-7). An incredible amount of good was accomplished through the efforts of these churches and preachers as the saving message was spread. Many local churches and preachers engage in something similar today. We commonly refer to these modern efforts as "gospel meetings."

It seems that many brethren have grown weary of "gospel meetings." Meetings are becoming shorter in length, less frequent in number, and are not as well attended as they used to be. Furthermore, for those that have not abandoned the practice of having gospel meetings altogether, there exists the danger of continuing to have meetings each year simply out of habit. In addition to these concerns, the question is sometimes raised as to whether or not there is really any value in having gospel meetings anymore. For these reasons, we would do well to give some much-needed consideration to the subject of gospel meetings.

What is the value of a gospel meeting?

The value of reaching the lost with the gospel of Christ. Jesus is the only hope of salvation for the sinner (John 14:6; 8:24). In fact, the apostle Paul states that the Lord will one day come *"in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (2 Thessalonians 1:8). In order for a lost sinner to obey the gospel he must first hear the gospel. Many of our religious friends regularly attend religious groups in which they hear the opinions and doctrines of men, rather than the gospel. They may never visit the services of a church that is serving as "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15) in their community on a Sunday morning due to obligations already in place. But they may be willing to come visit one of our services during a gospel meeting, since the gospel meeting presents opportunities in addition to our normal meeting times on Sunday. There are people all around us who are in dire need of hearing the gospel and, contrary to what many seem to believe, lost sinners do still attend gospel meetings when invited by members of the church. A gospel meeting is used as a valuable tool for evangelism when the lost are invited to hear the good news.

The value of spending more time together worshipping God. It is obvious that the early disciples of Christ spent as much time as possible together praising the Lord and studying His word (Acts 2:42, 46-47). Gospel meetings provide an opportunity to take time out of our busy schedules in order to spend some more time worshipping God and studying His word together. Are you interested in doing that? Gospel meetings provide those who have a sincere interest in spiritual things with a great opportunity to meet together more often in order to glorify God. Time spent stirring one another up to *"love and good works"* is valuable time (Hebrews 10:24).

The value of edifying the members of the church. One of the primary responsibilities of each local church is to edify, or build up its members (Ephesians 4:14-16; cf. 1 Corinthians 14:26). Each local church of Christ is responsible for seeing to it that each of its members is built up and strengthened spiritually. Edification takes place when we worship together in spirit and truth and study God's word together. Gospel meetings provide a great opportunity for edification as the members of the church gather each scheduled meeting time to sing, pray, and listen to God's word being taught. Those who are bored with gospel meetings, or who ignore gospel

meetings are sure to discourage their brothers and sisters in Christ. Any time spent in the interest of edifying the saints is time that is spent in a valuable pursuit.

The value of learning and growing. The apostle Peter charges God's people with the responsibility to *"grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"* (2 Peter 3:18). A gospel meeting provides a great opportunity for the local church to hear a faithful man preach the word of God. While we may have the opportunity to hear eight or ten sermons in an average month, a gospel meeting may present the opportunity to hear that many lessons over the course of only one week. Do not forget that *"faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17). What value can be placed upon an opportunity to learn and grow by hearing the word of God proclaimed?

The value of putting spiritual things ahead of worldly matters. Jesus expects those who follow Him to seek the kingdom of God first in life (Matthew 6:33). A gospel meeting provides a unique opportunity to focus on spiritual matters and to put the kingdom of God ahead of other things. In many ways, a gospel meeting also exposes one's priorities in life. We will prepare for social occasions, weddings, fun events, and holidays and circle them on our calendars so that we will be sure to set time aside for them even if it means booking time off of work. How many of us place the same emphasis on setting time aside to attend a gospel meeting? There is inestimable value in laying aside worldly matters in order to focus on things of eternal importance.

Conclusion: Gospel meetings are certainly not the only method by which the local church may seek to reach the lost and edify the saved. But at the same time, gospel meetings can be used as a very effective tool in accomplishing the Lord's work once we recognize the potential value of such concentrated efforts to *"proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light"* (1 Peter 2:9). Don't give up on gospel meetings!

Remember ours...Next week, beginning Sunday!! October 9-12 with **David Barnes**

(Postponed until next week)...**The Unique Jesus, Part 2**