

**Thank you Mario Marin ...
...for being our speaker for today!**

June Birthdays

9 Debbie Pescador

June Anniversaries

5 Kurt and Debbie Hoffman
5 Aaron and Esmeralda McCollum

*"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the
Lord is, there is freedom."
2 Corinthians 3:17*

Regular Meeting Times

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

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*"Trust in the Lord with all
your heart and do not lean on
your own understanding."*

Proverb 3:5

- *"Fight the good fight"*
- *"Keep the faith"*
- *"Finish the course"*

The Center

By Kevin Cauley

When we think of the word center we think middle or mean. In politics, the center is the middle point between radicals on the left and right; we call them moderates. When we think of an object such as an apple, the center is the core or middle, the part of the apple that contains the seeds. In religion, however, the center involves religious dogma or teaching. It is that teaching that most influences the whole of the religion. What ought we to put at the center of our theology? The answer to such a question would surely influence how we, as believers, behave.

Some have suggested that we put grace at the center of our theology. Grace is God's unmerited favor toward man. God has demonstrated this favor in sending His Son, Jesus, to the earth for the purpose of dying on the cross for the sins of man. Through Jesus sacrifice, God made it possible for man's sins to be forgiven. There's no doubt that grace is a very important part of theology, but is it the center? Ephesians 2:5 says that we are saved by grace through faith which puts faith in an equal position with grace. So, grace, by itself, can't be the center of our theology.

Some have suggested that we put the Bible at the center of our theology. The Bible is definitely important. Without it we would have no knowledge about God, salvation, Jesus, faith, and just about any other subject in the Christian religion; after all, faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). However, the Bible is a tool for learning. It, in and of itself, isn't the object or center of our theology. The Bible (God's word) points back toward the giver of that word, God Himself.

Some have suggested that we put Jesus at the center of our theology. Certainly this comes closer in our efforts to define what is at the center of our theology. Jesus is our Savior; He is our King; He is our Lord. He is the one to whom we give allegiance as Christians and there's no doubt that He ought to be constantly in our thinking. However, even Jesus acknowledged that He was here to do the Father's will. Jesus said, "*I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me*". (John 5:30). Jesus certainly comes closer than any particular doctrine or teaching and He points the way to what is at the center or heart of our theology (John 1:17).

So what ought to be the center of our theology? I would suggest that the word theology answers that question itself. God, with all of His attributes, is the center of our theology. Grace comes from God; faith comes from God; obedience comes from God as exemplified in the life of Jesus; the Bible comes from God as it is inspired by the Holy Spirit; love comes from God for God is love. Simply taking one aspect of God and putting it at the center of our theology really misses the point. God is at the center and His characteristics the subject of theology. The more we learn about God, the more we will be able to imitate His attributes and be like Him. Ephesians 5:1 says, "*Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children*".

What is Truth?

By Doug Dingley

"*What Is Truth,*" Pontius Pilate asked Jesus Christ (John 18:38). Although Jesus didn't answer him there, He answered that question for us in John 17:17, stating simply that God's word is truth. Just because millions today choose to deny that, does not change that; not one iota (Psalm 119). Many want to tell us today that "truth" is relative; that is, that whatever you believe to be true for you is true for you, and whatever I believe to be true for me is true for me, and even if these two "truths" are both diametrically opposed to each other *and* God's standard, they're both somehow still "true." They call that "relativism;" I call it "ridiculousism."

Let's say that the local authorities have determined that the speed limit on your town's Main Street is 25 MPH. If your "truth" states that it ought to be 50 MPH, and your teenagers' "truth" states it ought to be 75 MPH, that isn't going to avail you one whit when the blue lights of authority start flashing behind you. The all-authoritative and exclusive standard of well-established written truth is what you will ultimately be judged by. The same is true in Christianity (see: John. 12:48; Acts 13:46).

So; whom do you truly believe? That is to say, where and whom is your faith really centered in and on? God, or man (Rom. 3:4)? What is your soul worth to you? Are you truly interested in God's truth – which is in fact, the only real truth according to Jesus? If so, come and study God's word with us and we'll be glad to answer your questions, "book, chapter, and verse," straight out of the very Word of God. Otherwise, what are those people called again who refuse to hear or listen to God's word which is truth, according to Jesus (John 8:31-47)? And you shall know the truth...