

The Better Way

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SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:00 a.m.
Worship.....10:00 a.m.
Afternoon Worship.....1:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:30 p.m.
(via Zoom Meetings)

ELDERS

David P. Brown
Ken Cohn
John West

DEACONS

Bret Bailey
J. D. Gunter
Eric Paluka

EVANGELIST

David P. Brown

SECRETARY

Sonya West

THE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE OF ASHDOD

G. K. Wallace

Why do our children speak the language of Ashdod? (Neh. 13:24). Is it because they were born of a union maid in Moab? Was this language learned in the temple of Dagon? (1 Sam. 5:1-8). Have we forgotten the divine injunction to speak **“as the oracles of God”**?

“CHRIST A PERSONAL SAVIOUR”

It is not uncommon to hear such expressions as “accepting Christ as your personal saviour.” The denominational world means by the use of such an expression that they have had some *personal experience*. They say the Lord has appeared to them by signs, visions, or some inward awakening concerning which they must testify before they are accepted as members of a particular group. The Baptist people still require their converts to relate “an experience of grace” before they are immersed. This inward testimony (feeling) is the way they believe that Christ has come to them personally. The only difference in the personal appearance of Christ to Saul on the highway (Acts 26) and appearing to the average denominational preacher and to some of my brethren is the absence of the great light that shone above the brightness of the noonday sun. To them there is a “still small voice” or some strange awakening in which Christ personally appears to them and leads them.

“A WITNESS FOR JESUS”

From our pulpits we hear men saying:

...only then will we see the miracle working power of the Holy Spirit ... if we so open our lives to the leading of the Spirit of God many things that we have grown accustomed to may be drastically changed . . . If there is one thing that is predominately characteristic of the church as we know it today that it is not a witnessing group of believers. When it ceases to be a witnessing group of believers, it ceases to be the church of Jesus Christ.

It is impossible to be a witness of something concerning which one does not have personal knowledge. Any person who goes into court as a witness and relates what he has heard would be immediately excused by the judge. In Acts 1:22, Matthias was selected to be a witness with the apostles concerning the resurrection. To have personal knowledge of Jesus Christ was essential in being a successor to Judas. The one chosen must be a personal witness. He must have had a personal experience with Christ and His ministry. He must be able to testify concerning the resurrection and ascension out of his own knowledge and not what he had heard. It can easily be seen that this qualification puts to silence all the claims of brethren today who say that they can bear personal testimony concerning Christ and His work.

When the Lord appeared unto Saul on the highway to Damascus he said **“I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness**

both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee" (Acts 26:16). Paul could not be a minister until he was first a Christian. He was sent to Damascus where Ananias, a gospel preacher, told him what to do to be saved (Acts 22:16). In order to be an apostle, he had to have a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ and Paul lays this down as one of the qualifications of his apostolic office by saying **"He appeared unto me also"** (1 Cor. 15:8). Jesus said **"We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and ye receive not our witness"** (John 3:11). Jesus had personal knowledge of His Father; the disciples had personal knowledge of Jesus; Paul had personal knowledge of the resurrection of Christ and in 2 John 3:6 those who bore witness unto the truth had a personal knowledge of what the word of God had done in that community. Those who bore witness **"to the love before the church"** had personal knowledge of their love before the church.

The testimonials that my brethren are giving for the direct leading of the Holy Spirit are the same testimonials given by the Holiness, Quakers, Mormons, Pentecostals, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Incidentally, the reference here to Jehovah's Witnesses is to that religio-political organization domiciled in New York that claims to be God's witnesses in the world. The reason they claim to be God's witnesses is because they have had a *personal revelation* direct from God which made the Watch Tower Association God's mouthpiece upon the earth (Volume 7 of *Millennial Dawn*).

"DIALOGUE AND NOT DEBATE"

Some of the new would-be saviours of the church today are ridiculing the time honored and thoroughly demonstrated method of discussing issues before the public in the form of orderly debate. They are now turning to what they call "dialogue." The nearest thing revealed in the Bible to which this may be compared is found in Nehemiah 6:2. Old Sanballat said to Nehemiah, **"Come, let us, meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono."** They did not want to meet to really learn truth but to compromise. In these so called "dialogues" in which my brethren participate there has not been a real plea for the restoration of New Testament truth. Religious leaders get together in these so called "dialogues" to see what they can invent or organize in order to unify. These sectarian bodies with which brethren are meeting could give up everything that is peculiar to them and lose nothing that is revealed in the New Testament. There is not one thing that

is peculiar to any denominational body that is found in the New Testament. If they would return to the Book of God, unity would be with us in the form for which Jesus prayed. Who among all these so-called *"ecumenical councils"* have in their speeches or "dialogues" made a direct and personal plea for the return to the old Jerusalem gospel?

It could be that such a plea has been made but judging by the literature that is being published and that passes my way there is no indication that such is being done. There is no place for the builders of the walls of Jerusalem on the plains of Ono.

"THE CROSS AND THE SWITCHBLADE"

Such literature, as is being sent out by my brethren, even from large congregations, is such as the book titled *The Cross and the Switchblade* written by "Reverend David Wilkerson with John Elizabeth Sherrill." This book is being passed out by brethren, given to young people in youth camps and it is called by publishers "an amazing, breathtaking description of one man's adventure into the darkest area of New York gangland. From the beginning, he was directed by the Holy Spirit." This book is one of the most sectarian, hair-raising, holy roller denominational books ever published and it is being placed in the hands of immature boys and girls with an insistence that they read it. **"If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"** (Mat. 15:14).

Brethren, we are not only speaking the language of Ashdod we are circulating the literature produced by the priests who serve in the temple of Dagon.~

Deceased

RELIGION IN THE HOME

J. Walker Whittle

RELIGION

Webster's Third New International Dictionary Unabridged defines religion in this way:

"the personal commitment to and serving of God ... with worshipful devotion, conduct in accord with divine commands especially as found in accepted sacred writings .. a way of life recognized as incumbent on true believers The profession or practice of religious beliefs. A cause, principle, system of tenets held with order, devotion, conscientiousness, and faith ...

One could possibly make most anything a religion—Masonry, making money, even civic club service, our work, or devotion to God. The religion which we practice should be related to

commitment, service, and devotion to Jehovah God. Not all religious people are pleasing to almighty God. The Athenians were very religious (Acts 20:22, 23) but religiously wrong. Pure religion is to care for the fatherless and widows and to stay away from worldly practices (Jam. 1:27).

HOME

Webster defines the home as “the social unit formed by a family living together in one dwelling. The family environment to which one is emotionally attached; focus of domestic affection.” The word has other meanings, but the one given seems appropriate for the subject under consideration. There are several uses made of the word *home* in the Scripture, but John used it in the manner to be considered here when he said of the mother of Jesus, “And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home” (John 19:27).

RELIGION IN THE HOME

With these definitions fixed in our minds, the two concepts need to be brought together. The theme is to bring a commitment, service, and devotion to Jehovah God into a social unit, made up of blood relatives normally, living together in one dwelling, consisting of one emotional and a physical environment emanating domestic affection. But how is all of this to come to pass?

COMMITMENT TO GOD

One cannot serve and be committed to that of which he has no understanding. Therefore, as man learns about God he comes to believe in him and to love him with his whole being—“**with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might**” (Deu. 6:4). There is but one Jehovah, and this was to be taught. Much of this teaching was to be done in the home, “**when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up**” (Deu. 6:7; 11:19). If our children are not taught the commands of God in the home how can we expect them to have the proper commitment to God or to serve Him fully? There is not enough teaching in the Bible classes and from the pulpits of our land to lead our children to love God without reservation. As tragic as it may seem, this is all that some children receive, and then we wonder why they fall away in time of temptation or when they go out on their own.

THE WAY OF MAN

The devil has succeeded in dethroning God from the hearts of many parents today—the permissive age (Luke 8:12-14). Before me is *The Chronicle of Higher Education* of November 12,

1973 and on the back page this statement is found:

Resistance to the idea of recreational sex began crumbling first within the confines of marriage. The wall of resistance still has not fallen completely, but now wide acceptance of the proposition that married persons ought to have most of their sex for fun, deliberately restricting the possibility of procreation and limiting the size of the family.

The author, Mr. John Money, further states that “Marriage is ... an institution to safeguard the family and the rearing of children. ... It is so ancient an institution ... that we do not know who designed it.” When such an elite journal permits untruths like this to be printed, it seems paramount that mothers and fathers be more aware of what their children are being taught in school, and much, much more concerned about teaching and examples in the home. This man does not even know that God ordained the home.

The divorce rate per thousand has doubled since 1940. Today we are hearing about no-fault divorce to protect the child from legal harangues. We hear that this protection is supposedly good for the child. However, parents should be learning how to live together in love, honesty, and peace that the child may receive the greatest good. And how can this be done without loving God and studying fervently His commandments and teaching them to our sons that they may become men? (1 Kin. 2:2). There is no way. Are children spoiled and unprepared for marriage and child-rearing? Possibly so. But this is a very old complaint. The basic missing ingredient is a knowledge of the word of God on the part of our children. Preachers and elders will not have to bear all of the responsibility, because the home is a divine institution. Parents have the grave responsibility of teaching their children the blessed word of God.

A young man led the prayer in service one day, and the father later remarked: “I sat there and cried, because it was the first time I had ever heard my son pray.” Have your sons and daughters ever heard you pray in the home? Have you ever heard your son or daughter pray? Parents have you ever sat down with your children and read the Scriptures to them? Have you ever heard them read the Bible? “**Nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord**” (Eph. 6:5). That word *nurture* means to educate. What can we give our children? There could be no greater gift than a true Christian heritage—commitment, service, and devotion to Jehovah God.~

Deceased

A Study Of THE GOSPEL OF JOHN



Teacher:

David P. Brown

WEDNESDAY NIGHT
BIBLE CLASS VIA ZOOM



A Study In



THE MAJOR PROPHETS



Sunday Morning Bible Class

David P. Brown

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.churchesofchrist.com

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- Today, February 25th: Monthly meal
- Tuesday, March 26th: Ladies' Bible Class
- Saturday, May 11th: Graduation Banquet
- Saturday, May 25th: Fish Hatchery Rd Lectureship (Part #2)
- Mon-Wed, July 15th-17th: VBS at Spring
- Saturday, September 28th: Fall Fellowship
- Saturday, October 26th: Fish Hatchery Rd. Lectureship (Part #3)

THOSE TO SERVE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2024

Announcements John West
Scripture Reading Gary Blasingame
Rev. 9:1-11

Song Leader Bret Bailey
Prayer Steven Johnson/Andrew Paluka (A.M.)
J.D. Gunter/Stephen Cohn (P.M.)

Speakers Eric Paluka

Lord's Table (A.M.)
(Luke 18:28-33)

Steven Johnson Gary Blasingame
Andrew Paluka Jonathan West

Lord's Table (P.M.)

Stephen Cohn Ben Gunter

Audio/Video Monitor Zack Nero
Camera/Door Monitor Joshua West

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024

(via Zoom Meetings)

Announcements J.D. Gunter
Speaker Steven Johnson
Bible Class Teacher David Brown

FOR FEBRUARY

Prepare Communion Mercier
Lock Buildings Blasingame
Prepare Bulletin Board TBA

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Edith Young, Bob Terry, Glenda Hackworth, Zack Nero, Cynthia Jackson, Elnora Oxendine, Bernice Hastings, Charles & Ann Nero, Nathaniel Rimmer, Chuck & Nancy Verkist, Freda Smith, Noah Hackworth, Orlinda Chumbley, Carmen Hardy, and Roelf & Janice Ruffner.

TEST YOUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

Who was Og?

Answer to last week's question:
Moses; Num. 32:23