

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

HONESTY

Roy J. Hearn

Diogenes was born in Pontus, Asia, and lived from 412 to 323 B.C. He has been termed the most famous cynic philosopher. He was an ascetic and was banned to Athens, Greece; he was an oddity to society. One time Alexander the Great saw him sitting by the side of the road and asked Diogenes what he might desire. He replied: "I would that you get out of my sunlight." Diogenes is perhaps best known for his going about the streets of Athens in daylight with a lantern searching for an honest man. Another philosopher in a different vein commented on the cynic's view and said: "He who says there is no such thing as an honest man, you may be sure is himself a knave." So he who says that nobody is honest, by universal application, declares himself to be dishonest.

There is a need to eradicate the impression, fatal to so many, that one cannot live by being perfectly honest. It is never necessary to be dishonest, and one can never be dishonest without hurt to himself. "Be sure your sin will find you out." Cicero believed that nothing is useful that is not honest. George Smith, father of "Raccoon" John Smith, great pioneer preacher, had a peculiar sense of honesty. He decided that a bushel of corn was worth only 75 cents, so regardless if the market thought it might be \$2 a bushel, he would accept only 75 cents.

There have always been those who are dishonest to their hurt and to others. Today there is to be found much dishonesty among politicians, public officials of all kinds, teachers in public and private schools, merchants, church members, elders, deacons and preachers. There is more dishonesty among the last three classes than many think.

HONESTY DEFINED

Webster's Dictionary says honesty, "Implies a refusal to lie, steal or defraud, or deceive under any circumstances." It carries the idea of genuineness, candor, frankness, and fairness.

Honesty is allied with honor, which adds to honesty the implication of high mindedness or a nice sense of allegiance to one's profession, which is especially true in the case of those who profess to be Christians. Honor is that which rightfully attracts esteem, especially in excellence of character; in men, uprightness and integrity; in women, purity and chastity.

From these definitions, one might conclude that they who think it honorable to uphold or shield that which is dishonorable, are neither honest nor honorable. This scribe found that in the college situation, students were averse to expose drinkers of alcohol, thieves, cheaters, and other types of evil doers. There were few exceptions. However, it was not honorable nor honest for any real Christians not to do so. Even so it is in local churches, sometimes.

CHRISTIANS MUST BE HONEST

First Corinthians 6:19,20 states:

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Christians are to honor Christ in all things. One who claims to be a Christian and does not respect God's word lacks honor and honesty. Real Christians seek to know the will of God and put forth every effort to pursue it. Such respect cannot help but produce honesty in all who so do.

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES?

First Timothy 2:2 says: **"Pray for kings, and all in authority, that we may all lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."** This indicates the possibility, therefore, a requirement. God does not require what is impossible to do. Romans 13:13 states: **"Let us walk honestly as in the day..."** Evil doers often seek cover of darkness to hide their acts. The honest person has nothing to hide and can face the world with peace of mind. It is a good feeling to know one is right before God and man. It has been said in substance: "One can fool most of the people most of the time, and some of the people some of the time, but one cannot fool God any of the time. (Nor, all of the people all of the time)."

1. Hear the Holy Spirit in 2 Corinthians 13:7: **"Now I pray to God that ye do no evil ... but that ye should do that which is honest"** (honorable, ASV). It takes little courage to follow the crowd and yield to pressures, and do evil, but it takes much courage to do that which is right, hence, the ones who participate in things dishonest, and those who shield and encourage such are cowards; they are weaklings. Anyone who shields evildoers becomes a "particeps criminis," a partaker in the sin.

2. Romans 12:17 states: **"Provide things honest in the sight of all men."** Do such things in a way that will be regarded as honorable by all people. 1 Peter 2:12 says: **"Having your behavior honest among the Gentiles ... that they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."** If Christians are not honest, how does that affect the sinners in the world? We are supposed to be lights in the world (Mat. 5:14-16). By our conduct, how are we impress-

ing our associates? For good or evil? Are we ashamed to always try to do right (Mark 8:38)?

3. In Luke 8:15, in connection with the parable of the soils, seeds, and sowers, the Lord said: **"But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."** In this parable Jesus deals with the hearer, not the teacher. Honest hearts bring forth good fruit through hearing the word and keeping it. Conversely, the heart that does not bring forth good fruit is not honest. The reason many are not affected for good is that they will not listen, or will not properly apply the word when needed.

4. Paul said: **"Pray for us for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly"** (Heb. 13:18). Honesty does not mean we cannot make mistakes, nor mean perfection (Phi. 3:12). But honesty demands we correct the mistakes we make. One should seek to know what is right then try to do it, and as the apostle Paul did: **"Exercise selves to always have a conscience void of offense toward God and man."**

5. In view of the definitions of honesty and a few passages quoted from God's word, a few questions are in order.

Are we honest with God when we as Christians fail to have proper respect for God's will? There is no way we can hide. Hebrews 4:13 says: **"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto him with whom we have to do."** The wise man stated: **"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil"** (Ecc. 12:14).

Back in the days of prohibition, a bootlegger went to deliver some of his wares. In those days there were automobiles called "touring cars." They had canvas tops, double thickness, but no windows. The man looked east, west, north, and south before he pulled out a bottle of whiskey from the top to deliver. However, he failed to look up, and a man in a second story across the street saw him. So many engaged in wrong doing today are concerned about people seeing them, but never look up to see that God is watching, too.

Are we honest with ourselves? Do not be deceived into thinking that believing a thing to be different will make it so. Neither think that one can be honorable by upholding that which is

dishonorable. Am I what I say I am? Am I willing to purge my motives? Honesty will demand that we seek to improve ourselves. Honesty is a fundamental virtue. It gives courage and confidence. The dishonest man is forever afraid of his deeds coming to light, while the honest man can face the world with nothing questionable about which to wonder. Honesty makes one

humble and unselfish. Shakespeare said: "This above all, to thine own self be true; and it must follow, as night the day, thou canst not be false to any man." How many of us preachers can say: I have never dealt dishonestly, in the least, in any way, with any church with which I labored?~

Deceased

A LIVING HOPE

Guy N. Woods

If it is in order, as is sometimes done, to style John the apostle of *love*, and Paul the apostle of *faith*, we may, with equal propriety, designate Peter as the apostle of *hope*. This word, and its equivalents, occur often in his phraseology. Addressed to saints who were then suffering a fiery trial of persecution and designed to strengthen them to greater endurance in the conflict it is not surprising that the apostle often alluded to those desires and expectations which constitute the basis of hope.

The word *hope* does not occur in the books of Matthew or Mark. In the classical writers, the word means no more than expectation, the element of desire not being included. It is through the impact of Christianity and the anticipations which it creates that, to expectation, desire was added to constitute Christian Hope.

In the first of his epistles, Peter alluded to the quickening of his hope which had vanished in the tragic events of Gethsemane and Calvary:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Pet. 1:3-5; ASV)

The emphasis here is on the word *again*. Peter, and the other apostles, had been begotten before, but in the dreadful and tragic hour of our Lord's seizure and death their faith failed and they forsook Him. Peter, along with the rest, clung tenaciously to the view that Jesus would restore the Jewish political state and establish Himself as an earthly ruler on a throne in Jerusalem. When, therefore, He suffered Himself to fall into the hands of the Romans, and to die on

the cross, the hopes of the disciples were blasted and their faith failed them. The attitude of them all was feelingly expressed in the words of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, when they sadly commented, "**But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel**" (Luke 24:21.)

Peter, his faith gone and his hope destroyed, returned to his nets. The others, likewise discouraged, bewildered, and confused, returned to their various earthly pursuits. It was, truly, an hour of dark despair when they saw the Saviour taken by His enemies. But, though their hopes died with Christ on the cross, and were buried with Him in Joseph's tomb, they surged forth to new life and to a "**living hope**" by His resurrection from the dead. The fisherman disciple describes this resurgence of hope by the word *living* to emphasize the distinction which obtained between it and the temporal and perishable expectations of men which, however attractive and alluring for the time, must with all earthly things, eventually fail. Moreover, in the quickening to new faith and life, he saw in it an exhibition of God's "**great mercy**." Unbelievers and apostates from the faith, the disciples were utterly unworthy of the rich provisions of grace so wondrously afforded them, and he attributed all of it to the "**great mercy of God**."

In addition to the "**living hope**" unto which they had been begotten, Peter adds that there is "**an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled**," and that fades not away, "**reserved in heaven**" for the faithful. This "**inheritance**" is reserved (kept in watchful custody, *tereo*), in heaven, and awaits us at the end of this age. The inheritance is "**incorruptible**" (immortal, imperishable, undying, enduring, *aphthartos*), and thus not affected by the lapse of ages. In this, it is wholly unlike the inheritances of earth which, however attractive and satisfying for a

time, must ultimately yield to dissolution and decay. The inheritance is also “**undefiled**” (unstrained, unsoiled, therefore pure and chaste, *amiantos*). The word occurs in Hebrews 7:28, where it is used to describe the undefilement characteristic of Jesus, our High Priest. Being undefiled, this inheritance does not partake of the contamination characteristic of the inheritances of men. The earthly Canaan was not able to escape this defilement (Lev. 18:27, 28), but into the heavenly Canaan—the home of the soul—nothing shall ever enter to defile or make it unclean (Rev. 21:27). Another characteristic of the heavenly inheritance is its unfading permanence. The words, “**that fadeth not away**” translate the beautiful word *amarantos* (that which does not fade or wither). The amaranth was a fabled flower whose bloom was perpetual, and whose loveliness never faded. The inheritance which awaits the children of God will not deteriorate, nor will passing ages render it less desirable or attractive. There is an assonance obtaining between the words translated “**undefiled**” and “**that fadeth not away**” not apparent in the English translation, but which may be reproduced by the English reader by pronouncing slowly the words *am i an tos* and *am a ran tos*.~

Deceased

THOSE TO SERVE

SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 2024

Announcements John West
Scripture Reading Gary Blasingame
Rev. 16:1-7

Song Leader Jonathan West
Prayer Bret Bailey/Ken Cohn (AM)
 Steven Johnson/Andrew Paluka (PM)

Speaker David Brown

Lord’s Table (AM)
 (Mark 15:27-32)

J.D. Gunter Andrew Paluka
 Steven Johnson Gary Blasingame

Lord’s Table (PM)

Joshua West Ben Gunter

Audio/Video Monitor Eric Paluka
Camera/Door Monitor Bret Bailey

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2024

(via Zoom Meetings)

Announcements Ken Cohn
Speaker Eric Paluka
Bible Class Teacher David Brown

FOR JUNE

Prepare Communion Nero
Lock Buildings Bailey
Prepare Bulletin Board N. Cohn

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Zack Nero, Debbie Brannon, Edith Young, Noah & Glenda Hackworth, Cynthia Jackson, Elnora Oxendine, Charles & Ann Nero, Nathaniel Rimmer, Chuck & Nancy Verkist, Freda Smith, Orlinda Chumbley, and Roelf & Janice Ruffner.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.churchesofchrist.com

- . Live broadcast
- . Sermon videos
- . Articles
- . Lectureship videos
- . Debates
- . Bible Study Course
- . Bible Reading Schedule
- . Links to Faithful works

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- **Tuesday, June 25th:** Ladies’ Bible Class
- **Sunday, June 30th:** Monthly meal
- **Mon-Wed, July 15th-17th:** VBS at Spring
- **Saturday, September 28th:** Fall Fellowship
- **Saturday, October 26th:** Fish Hatchery Rd. Lectureship (Part #3)

TEST YOUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

Who told a riddle in the O.T.?

Answer to last week’s question:

4 times; Acts 26:5; Gal. 1:13, 14; Jam. 1:27