

# Washington church of Christ

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[washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com](http://washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com)

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## Order of Services

### Sunday, November 11, 2012

Song Leader	Tom Dolan
Prayer	Scott Thomas
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Lee Redd
Prayer for the Cup	Matt Grimaldi
Prayer for the Collection	Bob Wydro
Assisting at the Table	Bob DeGrado
Closing Prayer	Bob Celentano
Announcements	Brian Jeffries

### Sunday, November 18, 2012

Song Leader	Derald Sanchez
Prayer	Ralph Ruggiero
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Pete Ferencze
Prayer for the Cup	Bill Duryea
Prayer for the Collection	Bob Celentano
Assisting at the Table	Gennaro Ruggiero
Closing Prayer	Lee Redd
Announcements	Brian Jeffries

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## Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm

# The Washington Messenger

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**November 11, 2012**

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## *The Source of Authority in Religion...*

What is our source of authority in religion today? Is it the Word of God, or is it the edicts and pronouncements of some man, church, or council?

All religious people typically admit freely that the Bible is the Word of God. All likewise express a desire to please God, by assembling for the professed purpose of worshipping Him. But the diversity of their attempts to fulfill this purpose shows clearly that all are not recognizing the same authority. The Apostle Paul states;

*For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.* (1 Corinthians 14:33 NKJV)

Until the sole source of authority in religion is recognized, and obeyed, this hopeless confusion will continue.

After Christ had selected His Apostles, and had taught them intensively for three years, He commissioned them to carry on His work (Mark 16:16). He did not trust their fallible human memories, but for complete accuracy in their teaching He promised...

*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.* (John 14:26 NKJV)

Since they were *inspired* by the Holy Spirit, their teaching was identical with that of Christ. They were soon inspired to commit this teaching in writing, for Paul said...

*"by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: "* (Ephesians 3:4-5 NKJV)

The Bible was written by men that were inspired, (2 Peter 1:21), or *moved*, by the Holy Spirit. After the Bible was completed the inspiration was in the Word itself, and not in fallible man. (2 Timothy 3:16).

So, the question of "What is our source of authority in religion today?" is most vital. Do we trust the leadership of the inspired Word, or do we place our confidence in uninspired man?

How perfect and complete is this Word which we received by inspiration? The Apostle Peter tells us...

*"... His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness"* (2 Peter 1:3 NKJV)

The Apostle James wrote that the message was the *PERFECT* law of liberty, (James 1:25). Paul informed the elders of the church at Ephesus...

*"... I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house ... For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God." (Acts 20:20, 27 NKJV)*

If these leave any doubt concerning the ability of the Bible to be our only source of authority in religion, this should settle the issue...

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV)*

Inspired writers did not stop with these claims that the Bible is our only reliable guide in religion. They also issued warnings against accepting any other source.

*But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:8-9 NKJV)*

Jesus said of the religious Pharisees...

*"... and in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9 NKJV)*

When the aged Apostle John had received the Revelation, his inspiration was concluded with the warning against *"adding to ... or taking away from the words of the book of this prophecy"* (Revelation 22:18, 19).

We have NOW the complete and perfect Word, *"the faith once for all delivered unto the saints"*. (Jude 3).

To summarize these teachings of God's Word, which most all religious people profess to reverence...

- It is inspired (2 Timothy 3:16)
- It is written for our learning and admonition (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11)
- It is complete and perfect (2 Timothy 3:17)
- It has been once for all delivered (Jude 3)
- We must not go beyond the things which are written (1 Corinthians 4:6)

We must either accept these Biblical claims on their own merit, or reject the Bible all together. There can be no halfway measures of acceptance, for these claims are exclusive in nature. Whatever we accept, or practice in religion must be found in the Bible or we have rejected its authority.

With this reverent attitude towards God's Word, many questions come to mind. The religious world is divided into literally hundreds of *"churches"*. Do all these have the approval of the Authority?

Each of these groups recognizes an earthly head, though some claim that it is only in title. What does the Authority state in Colossians 1:18 about the head of the church? Was any Apostle the earthly head of the church, as some claim? Were the Apostles to have successors? Were any men to speak by inspiration after the days of the Apostles? May infants, who cannot believe be baptized? Can any person who has reached the age of accountability be saved without baptism? May instrumental music be used in the worship?

To all of these questions men answer affirmatively. But to these, and similar, the Apostles who were empowered by inspiration to remember all that Jesus taught, have told us not to go beyond the things which are written in arriving at our answers.

In answer to all of these questions their silence is eloquently negative!

... **Bob James**

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## ***Our Prayer List...***

- ⤴ Donna Banghart ... Georgia DeLorenzo ... Glenn Montgomery's father ... Mary Celentano ... Linda Davis of the church at West Point ... our young people here at Washington ... our young people away at college ... our men and women in military service ... leaders of our nation and the upcoming election ... leaders of our congregation ... our congregation ... those impacted by the hurricane.

*"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him." (1 John 5:14-15 NIV)*

## ***Coming Events - Home & Away...***

- ⤴ Though it's still a few months away, we are planning our Spring 2013 Gospel Meeting with Tommy Peeler from FC. We are currently targeting the week of March 10<sup>th</sup>, so please plan your 2013 spring vacations and travels around that date if at all possible.

## ***Items of Note...***

- ⤴ We continue to receive queries from Christians offering assistance to Brethren who may have been significantly impacted by the storms that we experienced over the past few weeks. Anyone with questions should see Bob James.
- ⤴ We are continuing our work to complete our new two year Bible School Curriculum based on Bob and Sandra Waldron's *17 time Periods of the Bible*. All teachers are asked to review the Teachers Roster in the foyer and sign-up for the class and period you would like teach.
- ⤴ Our new Washington church of Christ website has launched and is now online at [www.washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com](http://www.washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com). We are already receiving comments and Bible questions from visitors to the site. We also encourage each member to register for access to the "members" section. Once your register you can view and update your directory information. Please feel free to give me your suggestions and or questions ... Bob James