

Washington church of Christ

27 Grand Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882

Phone: 201-546-1284

washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com

Order of Services

Sunday, February 3, 2013

Song Leader	Cameron Wydro
Prayer	Stan Thompson
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Ralph Ruggiero
Prayer for the Cup	Bill Duryea
Prayer for the Collection	Bob Wydro
Assisting at the Table	Gennaro Ruggiero
Closing Prayer	Brian Jeffries
Announcements	Scott Thomas

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

Volume 2 – Number 5

February 3, 2013

Responding to the Truth...

How accurately does this passage describe the current day! It was not that Israel did not have a "king", the God of heaven was their King, but they did not accept Him as their King, and sought out human kings from among themselves.

It seems today that for the most part many still live, doing "what is right in their own eyes", failing to acknowledge the sovereignty of God. And when they are presented with God's Word, their reaction is not like the earnest and humble response of Josiah when the "lost" Book of the Law was read to him...

Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes. (2 Kings 22:11 NKJV)

... but more like the reaction of those to whom Stephen preached God's Word...

"When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. ... Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him..." (Acts 7:54, 57 - 58 NKJV)

And so it is today that "by and large" the Truth of God's is not positively received. For example, when one presents God's position relative to "alternative lifestyle" and same sex issues they are most always taken to task and painted as narrow minded, racist, hateful, and unloving. The words of Paul come to mind as he preached to the Galatians...

Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth? (Galatians 4:16 NIV)

How do we respond when presented with the Truth of God's Word?

When Jesus stood before Pilate He testified concerning His Kingship and Kingdom (John 18:33-37). When Pilate hears Jesus' reference to the truth, I can see him shrug his shoulders. Being a skeptic this subject no longer holds any interest for him. It could be that he, like many leading Romans had given up all the traditional pagan beliefs with respect to the gods. O surely, the gods might exist after all, and might take revenge if one should offend them. Hence, many of these people were filled with superstitious fears; but any settled conviction or deeply rooted faith with respect to God did not exist for them. It might have been in that spirit of extreme skepticism and cynicism that Pilate blurts out: "What is truth," (John 18:38), not realizing that the answer was standing in front of him (John 14:6).

In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (Judges 17:6 NKJV)

God's Word is essential to our being accepted of Him. The Hebrew writer tells us...

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
(Hebrews 11:6 NKJV)

And, we read in Romans 10 ...

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ. (Romans 10:17 NIV)

When presented with the Truth of God's Word do we accept it as such? Or do we make light of it, questioning its validity and the very existence of God Himself? If God's Word is not taken as the foundation of truth for all things spiritual ... then what is?

We read of another reaction to God's Word in Acts 24...

And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."
(Acts 24:24-25 NKJV)

Josephus tells us that Drusilla was the daughter of Herod Agrippa the elder, and was engaged to be married to Epiphanes, the son of King Antiochus, on condition that he would embrace the Jewish religion; but as he afterward refused to do that, the contract was broken off. Afterward she was given in marriage, by her brother Agrippa the younger, to Azizus, king of Emesa, upon his consent to be circumcised. When Felix was governor of Judea, he saw Drusilla and fell in love with her, and sent to her Simon, one of his friends, a Jew, by birth a Cyprian, who pretended to be a magician, to persuade her to forsake her husband and to marry Felix. Accordingly, in order to avoid the envy of her sister Bernice, who treated her ill on account of her beauty, "she was prevailed on," says Josephus, "to transgress the laws of her forefathers, and to marry Felix" (Josephus, Antiq., book 20, chapter 7, sections 1 and 2). She was, therefore, living in adultery with him, and this was probably the reason why Paul dwelt in his discourse before Felix particularly on "temperance," or chastity. While we don't know this to be fact, we can see that when Felix heard the Truth he was genuinely moved ... but not enough to obey it. He procrastinated!

When we are presented with the Truth of God's Word do we, deep within our being, realize that we stand in danger of God's judgment, and like Felix choose to continue living in our sins rather than obey God? Or do we heed the words of David...

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart..." (Psalms 95:6-8 KJV)

Would it not be a great thing if all who hear God's Word respond as did those on Pentecost ...

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" ... Then those who

gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. (Acts 2:37 - 41 NKJV)

... or like the Eunuch in Acts 8 ...

Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.
(Acts 8:35-38 NKJV)

... Bob James

Our Prayer List...

- ▲ Georgia DeLorenzo ... Doug Focht ... Everett Guyton ... Donna Banghart ... Glenn Montgomery's father ... Mary Celentano ... our young people here at Washington ... our young people away at college ... the men and women in military service ... leaders of our nation ... leaders of our congregation ... our congregation.

"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)

ITEMS OF NOTE...

- ▲ The Men's Business Meeting is scheduled for **today**, starting at 4:00pm. All men are encouraged to review the previous meeting's minutes that are posted on the website prior to the meeting.
- ▲ The weekly topics and reading assignments for the Bible Studies are posted on the home page of our website and the lesson material can be printed from the Member's Shared Files section.
- ▲ Remember, as a part of our Bible School program each family should strive to have a review each week of the material discussed in our classes.
- ▲ Anyone desiring a family or an individual Bible Study should contact me (Bob James). I keep Tuesdays and Thursdays open for these studies.