

# Washington church of Christ

27 Grand Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882

Phone: 201-546-1284

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

# The Washington Messenger

Volume 3 – Number 21

**June 8, 2014**

## Order of Services

**Sunday June 8, 2014**

Song Leader	Tom Dolan
Prayer	Derald Sanchez
Preaching	Antonio Ruggiero
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Stan Thompson
Prayer for the Cup	David Osinski
Prayer for the Collection	Scott Thomas
Assisting at the Table	Arnold Thompson
Morning Closing Prayer	Brian Jeffries
Evening Opening Prayer	Cameron Wydro
Announcements	Bill Duryea

## 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
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

## Love versus Acceptance

*By Sewell Hall*

On *Parade Magazine* a number of years ago, an article introducing "Brotherhood Week" began with the following lines:

He drew a circle that left me out

Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.

But love and I to wit to win;

We drew a circle that took him in.

The article continued with the observation that the universal love of God should be the ideal which all of us should seek to attain.

### God's Circle of Love

It is certainly true that God's circle of love is universal. It is a circle as big as the whole world.

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16 NKJV)*

### God's Circle of Acceptance

To say, however that God loves all men is not to say that He approves or accepts all men as they are. His circle of acceptance and fellowship is drawn much tighter and is much more exclusive.

God's circle of acceptance excludes those who do not know Him.

*"... the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power," (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 NKJV)*

God's circle of acceptance excludes those who do not believe in Jesus. Jesus said,

*"... if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." (John 8:24)*

God's circle of acceptance excludes those who will not repent. Jesus said,

*"... unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3 NKJV)*

God's circle of acceptance excludes those who have been born only once.

*Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." ... Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I*

say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:3-5 NKJV)

God's circle of acceptance excludes those who fail to bear fruit.

*Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; ...* (John 15:2 NKJV)

God's circle of acceptance excludes the immoral.

*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV)*

God's circle of acceptance excludes all who walk in darkness.

*This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. (1 John 1:5-6 NKJV)*

It is clear from these passages that God's circle of acceptance encompasses only a small portion of the world's population. Jesus affirmed this fact when He said,

*"... narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Matthew 7:14 NKJV)*

#### **Our Circles**

We must draw our circle of love as large as God has drawn His. We must go beyond loving family and friends and love even our enemies.

*But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ... Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:44-45, 48 NKJV)*

At the same time, we must avoid any appearance of approving, condoning or accepting attitudes or conduct which God rejects. The world, some brethren, and even members of our own family may call us unloving if we refuse to accept an ungodly lifestyle. They may call us judgmental, bigoted or narrow-minded, but so be it. Being *"followers of God as dear children"* (Ephesians 5:1), we must *"have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them."* (Ephesians 5:11)

Note, however, that God takes *"no pleasure in the death of the wicked"* (Ezekiel 33:11). It behooves us even less, as sinners saved by grace, to be self-righteous or to take any delight or pleasure in condemning, or refusing fellowship to those who persist in sin. Godly love, while refusing acceptance of sinners in their sin, reaches out sacrificially to try to save them.

*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8 NKJV)*

*Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (1 John 4:11 NKJV)*

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

**For God's Peace and Comfort** - Miguel Rosario of the Upper West Manhattan congregation passed away this last Friday morning. Services are planned for Wednesday at Thomas C. Montera Funeral Home, 1848 Westchester Avenue, Bronx, NY

**For Spiritual Responsiveness** – All of our wayward members

**For Physical Healing** – Georgia DeLorenzo ... Sharon Ferencze's Mother ... Everett Guyton

**For Wisdom and Good Judgment** – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

**For God's Care and Good Providence** – Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation.

**The Evangelist and Teachers We Help Support** – Jon Focht – Tim Bunting – Scott Smelser – Dan Wydro

### ***EVENTS AND NOTES***

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT WE ARE AWARE OF ARE ...

- ⤴ THE NEXT MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING AND LADIES BIBLE STUDY IS SCHEDULED FOR TODAY, SUNDAY, JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>.
- ⤴ WE ARE DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITY OF HOSTING A BOOTH AT THE WARREN COUNTY FARMERS FAIR. ANYONE WILLING TO HELP MAN THE BOOTH SHOULD SIGN UP. A FORM IS POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD.
- ⤴ CHECK OUT SCOTT SMELSER'S WEBSITE "[3MINUTEBIBLESTUDY.COM](http://3MINUTEBIBLESTUDY.COM)".