

## Washington church of Christ

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# The Washington Messenger

Volume 3 – Number 23

**June 22, 2014**

## Order of Services

**Sunday June 22, 2014**

Song Leader	Daniel Wydro
Prayer	Bob Celentano
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Ralph Ruggiero
Prayer for the Cup	Glenn Montgomery
Prayer for the Collection	Derald Sanchez
Assisting at the Table	Scott Thomas
Morning Closing Prayer	Stan Thompson
Evening Opening Prayer	Antonio Ruggiero
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

### **Christianity Is Not Denominational**

When Christ came into the world He found religious conditions which were strikingly similar to those of today. Religious division was the order of the day, with the Jews being grouped into four major sects, and with other minor sects among the remnant of that nation.

As is always the case when divisions exist, the peculiar traditions of men were more widely followed than the Law of God. People were more concerned with the edicts of their particular groups than with what God had spoken in His Law. And, it seemed that each religious group took pride in the peculiar qualities that separated them from all others. To this point, we can read in Luke 18:11 where a certain Pharisee had the audacity to thank God that he was not like other men. No wonder ... the name Pharisee meant that he was separated from other religious people.

Today men who are seemingly religious stand in the presence of intelligent audiences and actually thank God that religious division exists, so that men may be allowed "the church of their choice". But since God is not the author of confusion, but of peace (1 Corinthians 14:33), religious division is directly opposed to Christianity, and every supporter of it is actually working against the salvation of the world.

On the night that Jesus went to the cross He prayed...

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. (John 17:20-21 NKJV)

Without doubt or reservation, one of the most prolific sources of skepticism in our day is denominationalism, or religious division, just as Jesus had foreseen. I've had men emphatically tell me that all religious people can go to heaven ... for while believing and teaching differing doctrines they have nothing to fear because they can go, believing nothing.

In the Great Commission Jesus taught that the Gospel is universal...

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark 16:15 NKJV)

The glad tidings of the risen Lord were to be preached to all men alike regardless of race, nationality, or previous religious training. The Gospel was not limited to a few, nor dispatched to any one group as their exclusive property. The one Gospel was for all men of all nations, and since this "seed of the Kingdom" (Luke 8:11), produces only Christians, this universal character of Christianity demands that it be undenominational.

The conditions of our salvation, which were stipulated by the Savior in that great commission, were the same for all men...

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. (Mark 16:15-16 NKJV)

There is not a case of conversion in the Divine record after these conditions were stated by the Lord that differs from any other. In New Testament times when men obeyed the gospel they were required in every case to do the same things, and that was, what the "Author of eternal salvation" had decreed in His great commission.

But, according to many theologians of our day, the desired results determines what a man is told that he must do ... for example, if a man simply wants the forgiveness of sins and the assurance from these teachers that he is saved, all that they require is that he believes AFTER he repents. Obviously, this teaching completely disregards Hebrews 11:6, where we are told that faith is a prerequisite for pleasing God, so repentance before faith would avail the sinner nothing.

Additionally, if the candidate wanted membership in a particular denomination, then he would be required to add baptism to his repentance and subsequent belief. This is "denominational Christianity", which can only be effected by the creeds and standards of men ... and, as in most things which are devised through feeble human wisdom, it is a display of inconsistency. More is required of an individual to become a member of a denomination than to enter heaven. This seems to make the denomination purposeless and unnecessary.

But the universal requirements of the gospel of Christ demands that Christianity be undenominational, for if all did the same thing to be saved, they would be identical in their obedience.

The Apostle Paul emphasized that in Christ, all peculiarities and affiliations must be given up for the all-sufficient calling of a Christian;

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:26-28 NKJV)

After becoming a Christian, the Jew would no longer boast of his impressive ancestry and the Greek could no longer chant songs to a pagan god. When they obeyed the gospel they became one in Christ Jesus. The Bible is not the origin of the "different kinds of Christians" idea, for it never suggests anything that could be remotely construed to support such a theory.

There is a natural law of cause and effect which says that like causes always produce like effects. This law holds true in the religious realm also (Galatians 6:7) ... just as corn produces corn and wheat produces wheat, doctrines of men produce religious denominations.

Conversely, the doctrine of Christ produces Christians and Christians only!

It did in the first century, and will do so today if it is followed according to God's Word.

This gospel will make a person today the same thing that it made the Jews on the day of Pentecost.

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. ... praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:41, 47 NIV)

The results will always be the same, for the word of the Lord endureth forever, and it cannot be changed ... so Christianity cannot be denominational!

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

***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 DATES FOR THE FAIR ARE SATURDAY, JULY 26TH THROUGH SATURDAY, AUGUST 2ND. OUR BOOTH WILL BE OPEN FROM 12 NOON UNTIL 10:00PM EACH DAY. THERE ARE STILL TIMES AVAILABLE FOR ANYONE WILLING AND ABLE TO HELP MAN THE BOOTH. PLEASE SEE THE SIGN-UP SHEET POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD.

- ▲ WE HAVE A NEW **ONLINE** BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM OUR WEBSITE. IT SHOULD BE ACTIVE SOON ... WATCH FOR IT!
- ▲ CHECK OUT SCOTT SMELSER'S WEBSITE "[3MINUTEBIBLESTUDY.COM](http://3MINUTEBIBLESTUDY.COM)".