

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Class 10:00 AM
Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday Bible Class 7:00 PM

Leadership

Elders Hayward Blanton
Jerry Casey
Clint Smith Sr

Deacons Clint Smith Jr
Robby Stocksdale
Joe Sweeney

Pulpit Minister Eric Welch
Associate Minister Irvin F. Williams

Mission Work

Panama Mission
Pablo Sanchez

Those Privileged to Serve

A.M. Worship Service

Song Leader Michael Hawkins
Opening Prayer John Keaton
Scripture Reading Nathaniel Welch
Sermon Eric Welch
Lord's Supper Message Robby Stocksdale
Matt 27:57-28:10
Table Attendant Jeremy Montgomery
Table Attendant Ethan Welch
Closing Prayer Clint Smith Sr

P.M. Worship Service

Song Leader Clint Smith Jr
Bible Reading Greg Blanton
Selection 13
Opening Prayer Bill Cravens
Sermon *Singing Emphasis*
Closing Prayer Leon Stocksdale

A.M. & P.M. Services

Announcements Jerry Casey
Lord's Supper Prayer Hank Tincher
Offering Prayer Rick Martin
Usher Marc Owens
Count Offering Harold Tincher
Assist Count Marc Owens

Sermon Titles

Sunday Morning: Facebook Religion - Psalm 118:1-9
Sunday Evening: They Who Wait for the Lord - Is 40:31

Last Sunday

Offering: \$2,417 Attendance: 80

Morals

"Religion I hold to be essential to morals" (John Adams to Benjamin Rush, 18 April 1808).

Where do morals come from? Atheists would have you believe that people got together and came up with a code of moral behavior over time. Bear with me. Suppose atheists are right and evolution is the answer to life. Evolution proclaims the survival of the fittest or strongest.

God given morals benefit the weak and helpless. If evolution were the basis of life, morals would benefit the strong. The strong would never surrender their rights to the weak. We know for a long time in human history kings did not allow their subjects to challenge anything they did.

Therefore, morality must come from outside human thought. Morals have to have been given from the beginning of humanity. When God confronted Cain, Cain knew that murder was wrong. Moral behavior is not evolved. It is God-given. The reason I can say that is because the morals that we have are seen in God's character. We were created in His image to have like character. We are to behave like our Creator.

God cares for the weak and helpless. He deals fairly and expects us to deal fairly with others. God is dependable, trustworthy, and honest. As we read the Scriptures, we need to look at them in order to see our Father's character. Our morals need to be patterned after our Father's characteristics.

Jesus summed up our morals, our behavior, when He said, "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12).

- Ed Wittlif is from Denver, CO; via the Church of Christ in Justin, TX.

The Worker

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Message, Not Messenger

From time to time we need to be reminded that the power of the word of God is in the message, not the messenger. A simple illustration was when Jesus was heading into Jerusalem for His final week on earth. He sent two of His disciples ahead of Him to go and get a colt that was tied up just inside the city. Why would someone let strangers untie their colt and lead it off? So, Jesus told the disciples that if they were questioned why they were taking the colt, their reply was to be, "The Lord needs it." Sure enough, the owners of the colt questioned them, but when they heard that the Lord needed it, they let the disciples take it away (Luke 19:29-34). The power was in the message, not the messengers.

Amazingly, even Jesus, the Son of God, was rejected as a messenger. He gave up equality with God to become flesh and to bring the message of salvation face to face (Philippians 2:6-7; John 1:1). For a short time, people flocked from the villages to hear Him. But even His preaching and miracles were not enough for them to follow Him and accept His message. The greatest message ever was rejected because of the messenger (John 1:11).

Human nature being what it is, we have an understandable tendency to be drawn to great messengers over great messages. We love to listen to gifted and polished speakers. We love stories and captivating illustrations, and that's natural. Nothing wrong with that in and of itself. The danger is when we fall in love with charm, personality and wit to the neglect of truth and spiritual nourishment. But the food is more important than the packaging.

I thank God for gifted preachers who can communicate God's powerful word with humility, persuasiveness and love. May their number increase. But I'm just as thankful for those men who, though less gifted, are proclaiming God's message to the best of their abilities to people who love the Lord and are anxious to hear a word from God. I'm also thankful for these patient and faithful brethren who assemble every week to hear the word of God preached, regardless of the abilities of those who are standing before them. Men should always do their best when it comes to proclaiming the gospel, but with a constant awareness that the power is in God and His word, not in their ability to preach it.

If we are not reminded of this occasionally we will naturally drift toward elevating the messenger over the message. It has always been this way, and always will. People have always had their favorite preachers. This problem quickly arose in the 1st century. Paul heard about "preacheritus" in Corinth and needed to correct it ASAP (1 Corinthians 1:10-13). Believe it or not, not everyone in the church at Corinth was a fan of Paul ... or of Peter ... or even of Apollos (a gifted and powerful speaker; cf Acts 18:24). Quarreling over preachers has been around a long, long time. That kind of division may be human nature, but it's not God's nature. God chose the "foolishness of preaching" the message of the cross so that our faith might not rest in the messenger, but in the message (1 Cor. 1:20-2:5).

- Joe Chesser preaches for the Fruitland Church of Christ, Fruitland, MO.

Could Sacrifices of the Old Law Forgive Sin?

Eric Welch

A long-standing debate has existed about whether animal sacrifices under the Law of Moses could forgive sin. Some have answered “no,” while others answer “yes,” but only in the sense that they are “rolled forward.” I choose not to use “roll forward” because I do not find this phrase in Scripture. We have understood that sacrifices temporarily covered sin until the death of Jesus Christ. This idea is partially correct, but it indicates a basic error regarding the nature of sacrifice and the way they prefigure the Messiah.

The mandatory sin and guilt offerings were indeed designed by God to be temporary. However, they were temporary, not in their covering of sin, but because they had to be repeated endlessly. They were a reminder (Hebrews 10:3) that human exertion, no matter how endless, could never atone for sin. The sacrifices had no power in themselves to alleviate the judgment for sin.

Psalms 51 and 40 offer an inspired commentary on the meaning of sacrifice for sin. David wrote Psalm 51 in connection to his confession of his sin against Bathsheba and Uriah. He says that the heart of the matter is humility and repentance before God and that the sacrifices were just a symbol of them. The sacrifices were good only if their real purpose was understood.

David writes in Psalm 51:16-17, “For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise” (bold text mine – EW). In 2 Samuel 12:13-14, David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” And Nathan said to David, “The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die.” Sacrifice was a function of repentance.

Again, in Psalm 40:6, David writes, “In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required (bold text mine—EW). The author of Hebrews in 10:3-4 says, “But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” Then, he quotes from Psalm 40:6-8, presenting the meaning and purpose of sacrifice as he interprets Psalm 40. The sacrifice was an annual reminder that humans need a Savior.

The prophets also understood the purpose of sacrifice by pointing out the opposite of this truth. Their hearers would offer sacrifices, but they were made without faith, repentance and obedience, which they were supposed to symbolize (1 Samuel 15:22; Isaiah 1:10-20; Jeremiah 6:20; Hosea 6:6; Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6:6-8).

Psalms 40, 51 and the prophets teach that the meaning of the sacrifices was symbolic. They were a tangible way of expressing one’s humility and repentance. The sacrifices represented one’s faith and repentance. They could not in themselves appease God’s wrath against sin; God is the one who forgives. He “in his divine forbearance passed over former sins” (Romans 3:25). What did the Jews do during the Babylonian exile when there was no temple to go to for sacrifice? God could simply forgive the sin of the one who repented without the sacrifice. But there was a catch.

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While the sacrifices represented the faith and repentance of the offeror, they were also a concrete, three-dimensional type or image of THE ‘Lamb of God’ (antitype) (Jn. 1:29)” (christiancourier.com). God has always forgiven sin only on the basis of the death of His Son Jesus the Messiah, whose sacrifice was effective once and for all (Hebrews 9:12-15; 10:10-12). Salvation from sin was a gift of grace based on the “sacrifice of atonement through faith in his blood” (Romans 3:25).

Hamburg Pike Happenings

The Monday Night for the Master group will meet Monday March 27th at 6:30 p.m. The meal theme is soup and sandwiches.

Congratulations to Brandon Montgomery; his basketball team won their 10th sectional championship. They will travel to Indiana State University to play in the state finals next week. Keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

Marian Stephens’ new cell phone number is 502-641-0766.

Congratulations to Jaren Smith! He received his brown belt in Karate last Wednesday. Mom and Dad are very proud!

Our Spring Gospel Meeting with Kevin Moore from Henderson, Tennessee is scheduled for April 7th, 8th and 9th. Friday and Saturday evenings will be at 7:00 p.m., Sunday at the usual times. Flyers are available in the foyer.

Our fellowship meals are scheduled for: March 26th after the morning worship service; the meal theme is Mexican. April 9th after the morning worship; fried chicken will be provided.

The next ladies’ Bible class is scheduled for Saturday March 25th at 10:00 a.m.

A singing emphasis service is scheduled for Sunday evening March 26th. Men and young men of the congregation who would like to lead a song or read scripture please sign-up.