

Times of Service

Sunday Morning
Bible Study - 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Morning
Worship - 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Night
Bible Study - 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday Night
Bible Study - 7:00 p.m.

March Birthdays

March 4
Robert Lee
Kathryn Cole

March 5
Payton Staples

March 7
Britney Hendrick
Wanda Thompson

March 9
Kristy Burgett
Craig Peay

March 10
Kane Martin

March 14
Eugene Coop
Nancy Parsley

March 18
Bonnie Lamberson

March 22
Dean McGuffey
Shelley Hickman

March 23
Leah Watt

March 26
Pearlie Furlong

March 27
Dane Parsley

Anniversaries

March 24
Patrick & Melanie
Staples

Three Forks Church of Christ

March 2009

The Lamp

... as a light shining in a dark place. 2 Peter 1:19



A Condensed Presentation of the Gospel

Sin separates us from God – Isaiah 59:2

Only the gospel can save us. – Romans 1:16

The gospel is the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ – 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

We reach His cleansing blood in His death – Ephesians 1:7

His blood allows us to be blameless before Him – Jude 24

Jesus was raised from the dead so we can be also – 1 Corinthians 15:20-23

There are life & death statements in the Bible: Luke 13:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

How do we “obey” the gospel? – Romans 6:1-6; 17, 18

Baptism with faith in Christ puts us into Christ – Galatians 3:26-27

Jesus preached that the gospel must be believed and obeyed – Mark 16:15-16

We must also count the cost of discipleship – John 15:20

Jesus commands commitment – 2 Peter 2:20-21

It would be my hope that you would read the few scriptures that are mentioned above and ask yourself these questions “Have I obeyed the gospel? Is there something that I need to do? Is there sins that I have not repented of? Have I been baptized for the remission of my sins (Acts 2:38)?”

What about those life and death statements? Have I given them any thought? Should I give them some thought? Do I know what eternal fate awaits me? Paul understood and Ananias asked him, “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away our sins calling on the name of the Lord.” (Acts 22:16) Are you ready to do the same?

The Nature of the Church & The Function of Leadership

The nature of the church must be the starting point to which we examine the leadership of the church. I'm afraid that a lot of confusion and fracturing of the church is caused by not understanding what the church is. There are many ideas out there of what the church is that are simply not accurate. Many think the church is the building to which we conduct services. Some think the church is simply a religious club. Yet the scriptures share with us that the church is very special in its nature and its structure.

We need to first understand the nature of the church is not physical or worldly. Jesus talked about his kingdom and his kingdom "is not of this world." Of course any discussion about the kingdom of God must take into account all aspects of Christ's rule, but Christ himself equates the church and the kingdom for listen as our Lord speaks, " *Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*" (Matthew 16:17-19 NKJV).

We also notice the use of the idea of the church being a nation or a kingdom by the apostles. Peter refers to the church as a "holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9). Paul says, "our citizenship is in heaven." (Phil 3:20). The reference to it being a nation and

especially a kingdom does give us a few insights to the nature of the church. It first tells us there are citizens of this kingdom. A kingdom without citizens is not much of a kingdom. It also tells us there is a king. Kingdom's are ruled by kings, hence the name kingdom. This church, this kingdom, this "holy nation," to which we hold citizenship is not worldly but spiritual and heavenly.

The church is more than a collection of subjects under a king. The church is the body of Christ. We are told that Christ is the head of the body (Col 1:18). Two things are stressed in this picture of the church. First the head has the authority over the body. It doesn't take a Ph.D. in biology to understand the head, the brain, tells the body how to operate. Again the authority of Christ is depicted. It is depicted first by the picture of a king and now by the head of the body. The second item involved in this illustration of the body is the closeness, the stress of relationship. Jesus had prayed for His disciples to be one with one another and in Him (John 17). he also demonstrates the closeness of the relationship through these well known words, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5). The idea of the closeness shows us the reality that Christ, our king, our head, does feel our pains, cares, stresses and distresses. If you drop something on your little toe, your head is certainly aware of it! So it is with Christ. The Hebrew writer stressed Christ's ability to relate to us, "For we

do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15).

The inspired writers give yet another description of the church. This is the picture of the family of God. Those in the church, that is those who have been saved and added by Christ (Acts 2:47) are called sons of God and children of God. One such occasion is Galatians 3:26. But the relationship is yet closer than that. It is a relationship of brothers. Christ said those who do the will of the Father are His brothers and sisters.

With this brief synopsis of the nature of the church what does this mean for the function of the leadership? It means the function of the leadership is to provide for the needs of citizens, it is to provide direction to the body, it is to support, nurture and mature, as would a family.

We often get to talking about the function of leadership and then skew the issue by one side of the picture or by the stress of one function. We talk about authority and sometimes neglect the providing of nourishment and maturing. Or we will stress needs and neglect authority. The true function of leadership though is to provide all of

these things. What would happen to the body if it was provided nourishment but had no way of deciding how to operate or what to do? Would the leg decide for itself how to operate and the lungs for itself? What would be the result of such an arrangement? The body would cease to live no matter how much nourishment was provided. How long could a well operating body in which every part knew its place and function and knew where to receive such direction live without nourishment? Again not very long. Still yet, picture a family. Who decides appropriate behavior? The father or the children? Yet if the father neglects the concerns and needs of the children or stifles the children, to what function would that family relationship truly have?

Quite simply leadership must provide all of the needs of the body, including law, order, direction, nurturing, nourishment, maturing, discipline, and caring. So what is leadership that provides all of this, in a word... Jesus. This means one who desires to be a Christian leader must desire to lead in Christ and not in the ways of worldly leadership. Christ is the example ever before us in life, in deed and in leadership.

By: Nick Secula

Women of Worth

The 7th Ladies Bible study will be held on March 20th at 7:00pm. If you have not yet been to a class please come and check it out. There will be a ice breaker with door prizes, refreshments after class, and an indepth look at a bad girl of the bible, the life of Delilah. We are studying the lives of women in the bible, their roles in God's plan, and how their examples, good or bad, relate to us today and what we can gain from their experiences. If you need lesson materials please see Tiffany and she will be glad to get you a copy.

PRAYER LIST

Sick

Gerald Watt
 Bette Gilmer
 Leah Botma
 Riley Daniels
 Vivian McDaniel
 Cane Kinser
 Richard Hurt
 Phil & Joyce Crick
 Natalie Williams
 Cassie Dubree
 Kane Martin
 Becky Dubree
 Rouble & Wilma
 Lawrence
 Tammy Edwards
 Billy Burnett
 Phillip Ginsler
 Ruth Ann Cayton
 Daniel Pedigo
 Lana Young
 Jackson Blackford
 Kent Madison
 Bettye Hendrick
 Warren Lindsey
 Diane Zelsnickar
 Toni Dearing
 Jonell Phelps
 Lily Dishman
 Juliette Butler

Soldiers

Theo Raymer
 Jason & Melonie Jones

Mission Work

India
 Athens
 Disaster Relief

Shut-Ins

Maxie & Dorothy Grounds

Special Requests

Bonnie Lamberson for
 Strength

SERVICE LIST

Announcements

Wade Cole

Preparing Table

Don Mills

Waiting on Table

*Gene Grinstead *Terry Crabtree
 Leonard Lee Billy Webb

Reading

March 1 - Patyon Staples
 March 8 - Thomas Watt
 March 15 - Timmy Watt
 March 22 - Patrick Staples
 March 29 - Gene Grinstead

FEBRUARY

Average Attendance:

Sunday Morning Worship: 89

Contribution

Total for Jan. 25 - Feb. 15
 \$5351

MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING

March dates to be announced.

*"Who shall separate us from the love of
 Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or
 persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger,
 or sword? No, in all these things we are more
 than conquerors through him who loved us."
 ~ Romans 8:35, 37*


THREE FORKS
 CHURCH OF CHRIST

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