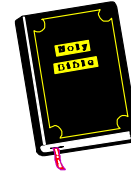


WEST COLUMBIA CHURCH OF CHRIST



“every disciple that is perfect shall be as his master.” Luke 6:40b

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

“For the husband is the head of the wife,
even as Christ is the head of the church.” - Ephesians 5:23

There is a common sentiment that it makes no difference what church one belongs to, if any at all, and that church membership is not essential to salvation. So the indifferentism of “*join the church of your choice*,” as though God had none, is age-old in religious nomenclature. Such expressions can only be viewed as a sort of “pious profanity” by those who know and believe what the Bible says about the church.

Jesus built the church; he died for it and purchased it with his blood; ransomed and redeemed it; washed and cleansed it. He is the Saviour of it and he will come again to own and claim it. Yet we are told that it is a very “non-essential” thing.

There are only two senses in which the church can be scripturally viewed. First, the comprehensive, or universal, sense, to include all the saved of the earth—all who have obeyed the gospel. Second, the limited, or local, sense, to include all Christians, or saved people in a particular place described and limited by geographical terms. The denominational idea does not fit either case. A denomination is smaller than the whole church, but larger than a local church in that it is composed of many local churches of the same faith and order; therefore, a denomination is both too large and too small to be scriptural.

It is admitted that one can be saved without belonging to any denomination. The Lord adds saved people to the church (Acts 2:47). Therefore a man can be added to the church and never belong to a denomination. Hence, it is the denomination and not the church that is non-essential.

The Church Is The Body: Paul's theme in the book of Ephesians is the church in its relation to Christ—Christ and the church. In the first chapter he compares the church to a body, with Christ as head (vv. 21-22) and in chapter four he declares that “there is one body” (v. 4) ...in chapter five he compares Christ to the husband and the church to the wife (v. 21-23). Hence, Paul's view is: one head and one body—one husband and one wife.

- Continued on page 3

Choose the Strait Gate in 2008!

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 46 November 23, 2008

RECORDS 11/16/2008

SERMONS 11/23/2008

Sun 10 AM Bible Study:	57	AM:	Donald Klieves
Sun 11 AM Assembly:	102		
Sun 6 PM Assembly:	71	PM:	Tom Rinehart
Weds 7 PM Bible Study:	52		
CONTRIBUTION:	\$2158		

“But he that hateth his brother is in darkness,
and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth,
because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.” - 1 John 2:11

SERVICES

Sunday 10 AM Bible Study
Sunday 11 AM, 6 PM Assembly
Wednesday 7 PM Bible Study
Office Phone (803) 794-5320
Nursery provided
Bible Classes for all ages

LADIES CLASS

2nd Tuesday of month 7-9 PM

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A Warm Welcome awaits you at all our services. Come see!
www.WestColumbiaChurchOfChrist.org

The Bulletin
USPS-994-500
Periodicals Postage Paid
West Columbia, SC
Published Weekly By:

West Columbia Church of Christ
1701 Augusta Road
West Columbia SC 29169

“PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER” - James 5:16

- **REMEMBER IN PRAYER:** Beryl Parks, Nina Ruth Meadows (Marcella Klieves' mother), Jack and Elma Berrier, Lynn Drago (Jerry's sister) and Phyllis Johnson.
- **Betty Mathis** is doing well after hip surgery. She's in rehab at National Healthcare (NHC) Parklane, Room 104A, phone 741-9090.
- An MRI shows **Ron Banks** has a herniated disk in his back. He's already had 5 surgeries. Pray for his relief as he desperately wants to do more for the Lord.
- **Dianne and Tiffany Dillard** will be traveling to Key West this Friday for a 50th Anniversary celebration for her uncle. They are to return next Tuesday.
- **Donald Klieves** hurt his back at work, but is recovering well.
- **Marcella Klieves** had to go to the ER last Monday for a kidney stone.
- **Brian Parks** is doing fine after having 4 wisdom teeth extracted.
- **Anne Louise Gordon** has been studying the bible with some other women inmates who now wish to be baptized. Pray they will be able to do so.
- **Remember Jean Boyd and Phyllis Johnson** as they recover from surgery .
- **Jeanette Reeves** continues to struggle with sin. Pray for her repentance.
- Remember all these, our new brothers and sisters in Christ, and brother **Manning** and those he studies the Bible with, in your prayers.

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." - Acts 14:22

“AND THEY CONTINUED STEADFASTLY” - Acts 2:42

- **Ladies Bible** class is now meeting Tuesday evenings at 7 pm.
- **MISSION TRIP:** Remember brother **Manning**, and Lynn and the boys, in your prayers as Jerry is in India on a mission trip with Billy Bland. They got there safely and are doing well.

"and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor."
- 1 Corinthians 3:8

WORK TEAM SCHEDULE: 11/23—B 11/30—C 12/7—D 12/14—A

Choose the Strait Gate in 2008!

Are you choosing the Strait Gate in 2008? How?

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

—(Continued from Page 1)

Continuing his comparison, Paul uses the family analogy—God the Father, the church the family (Ephesians 3:15). Hence, one Father and one family. And reverting to the second chapter, he points out the unifying power of the cross of Christ in making the "twain"—Jew and Gentile— "one new man" —the church—thus reconciling them "in one body."

If Christ would not accept Jew and Gentile in separate bodies, but united them that they should be "one fold and one shepherd," what must be his attitude toward the spectacle of (more than) 200 denominational bodies today that dishonor his name and ignore his prayer? (John 17:20-21).

Salvation Is In The Church: The idea that one is first saved by some mystical or mystified, unintelligible or intangible process, and afterwards "joins some church" is a common religious delusion. Yet there is no truth more plainly emphasized in the Bible than the fact that the process of being saved is the process of entering the church (Acts 2:47).

First, it is affirmed in Acts 4:12 that salvation is in Christ. Then, to have salvation, one must get into Christ. But Paul, by analogy, in Ephesians 5:30, teaches that as husband and wife are one, so Christ and the church are one. "I speak concerning Christ and the church," he said. Christ and the church being one, how can one be in Christ and out of the church?

Second, Paul makes the fact that Christ is "the Saviour of the body" (Ephesians 5:23) the ground of his exhortation to the Ephesians concerning the church as the bride of Christ (v. 25). He washed it and sanctified it; cleansed and saved it; purchased it with his blood and redeemed it; reconciles us to God in it, and adds all the saved to it. Therefore, out of the church there is no cleansing, no blood, no redemption, no reconciliation to God, no salvation.

Third, the relation between Christ and the church is the same as that which exists between God and Christ. Christ is the "fullness" of God (Colossians 1:19), and the church is the "fullness" of Christ (Ephesians 1:22). Therefore, no man can come to Christ and ignore the church for the same reason that no man can come to God and ignore Christ.

We exhort the unsaved to come to Christ, "gladly receive the word," be "baptized into Christ," and the Lord will add you to his church.

- Foy E. Wallace, Jr 1896-1979, Gospel preacher

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” - John 17:20,21