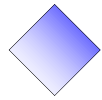


The Voice of Truth



February 2019

THE CHURCH: THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF TRUTH

BY JIMMY PETTIGREW

It is important for members of the Lord's body to realize that the church is the foundation and support of the truth. Paul told Timothy, *"but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"* (1 Tim. 3:15). God has given the truth to the world and has established the church for the up building, maintaining, practicing that truth in its purity in the world.

Sadly, too many silly, irrational and inconsistent brethren have lost sight of the purpose of the church. The purpose of the church is to make known the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3:10), to preach the gospel (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16), to edify the saints (Eph. 4:11-12, 16), and benevolence, to help needy saints (Acts 6-1-6; Rom. 15:25-27; 1 Cor. 16:1-2). This is the mission of the church! We cannot go beyond what is written (2 Jn. 9-11). Many think the purpose of the church is to entertain and have amusement and recreation. I have heard of parents doing this very thing when looking for a congregation to attend. Instead of looking for a church that practices the truth, they look to see what kind of entertainment they have for little Johnny. *"Buy the truth and sell it not . . ."* (Prov. 23:23). The truth is the only means of salvation (1 Tim. 2:4). It is the only deliverance from sin (Jn. 8:32), the only principle of holiness (Jn. 17:17), and the one thing needful (Lk. 10:42). Brethren, the gospel is being traded for games and gimmicks. If this is what we're teaching our children, then we're sending them to HELL! There is only one thing which will build up the saints of God and that is the most holy faith (Jude 20).

The Lord's church was not commanded to draw people in by gadgets, gimmicks or entertainment. But so many in the body have polluted, adulterated, and poisoned the gospel of Christ to the point that the church looks more like a three-ring circus than it does the blood-bought body of Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:19). Let us get out of the entertainment business and get back to the soul-saving

business.

There is less and less emphasis placed on the Bible teaching and preaching and more and more emphasis placed on social functions. All of this is designed to draw numbers, not save souls. It is truly sad to see our brethren go a whoring after the denominational concepts as ancient Israel went a whoring after the false gods of the heathen round about them. I'm sick to the heart of watching these foolish, brainless, ridiculous and idiotic ways of drawing people in the church and saying we got them here, let's slip in the gospel. GARBAGE! Just what would they be converted to? Brethren, we cannot use entertainment to attract people. LISTEN, if the blood of Jesus will not do the job, nothing will!

The church is a spiritual organization. Our Lord didn't die for some social body. Social activities are needed but belong to individual duty and not the work of a local church. *"And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart"* (Acts 2:46). This verse distinguishes their assemblies in the temple area from their social gatherings at home, as does **First Corinthians 11:34**. The church is not in the entertainment business. We need to all be reminded that the home is to provide for the social and entertainment side of life (1 Cor. 11:34).

The church owning a building is not specified but it is authorized because the church is authorized to provide for worship and teaching. Social activities, meals, athletics, and entertainment do not constitute such worship and teaching; therefore, the church has no authority to provide a place for such activities. The effort to slip social activities in under the guise of spiritual edification opens the floodgates to apostasy. Some people enjoy suppers, parties, and gyms, but other people enjoy association in golf-

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ing, fishing, hunting, and camping etc. Can you see all the things the church will have to plan, provide, finance, build, and oversee? If such is truly spiritual edification, why can't we read of the New Testament churches providing such things or building such things?

When will we come to the realization that when we raise a generation of young people on fun and games religion, we will lose the purity of the church in that generation (**Eph. 5:26-27**)? Has it already happened? The gospel is the power of God to save (**Rom. 1:16**). All of the gadgets, gimmicks, social functions, and entertainment one can muster cannot save a soul. In fact, it's costing many people their souls! Millions are on a train bound for hell and the church kindly and unbiblically play games with

them. Shame on us! We need to wake up! Can you really believe our Lord hung on the cross for six agonizing hours in order to promote entertainment, to bring men and women together to drink coffee and eat doughnuts?

If we truly love the church as we ought, there would be NO question concerning this . . . IT WOULD BE STOPPED! The church would be the pillar and ground of truth (**1 Tim. 3:15**), not the pillar and ground of entertainment.

Brethren, let us return to straightforward Bible preaching and teaching. Let's get back to the work of the Lord! Let us leave the ping-pong, clowns, balloons, talent shows, plays, fellowship halls, ball games, youth directors and gymnasiums to the denominations. ♦

"A SOUND CHURCH ..."

BY JARROD JACOBS

We speak often about a being a sound church and faithful to the Lord. When speaking about this subject, some may wonder, "What is a 'sound' church?" I think that this is a good question in light of the fact that churches on earth can be described as "sound" or "unsound" when we compare their works with what the Bible says churches ought to be doing. The contrast between "sound" and "unsound" is simply a contrast between something that is healthy and something that is not healthy. In this case, we are noting the difference between a church that is spiritually "healthy" and one that is not. If we are interested in being a spiritually healthy church, let us study the Scriptures and compare what we are doing with what the Bible describes as work for the church.

When we think about what is necessary to be a "sound church," let us consider the following characteristics.

- A sound church is one that follows Christ's word as its only law and practice (**Col. 3:17; I Pet. 4:11**).
- A sound church is one that is devoted to only doing as the apostles did in worship (**Acts 2:42, 20:7; Eph. 5:19**).
- A sound church is one who practices corrective discipline upon those who walk disorderly (**II Thess. 3:6; I Cor. 5**).
- A sound church is one who will not just accept "anyone" as a member, but will test and ask questions, and allow them to ask questions in return (**Acts 9:26-28**).

(The truth has nothing to fear, you know.)

- A sound church is one who knows the truth, will defend it, and will spread the truth wherever possible (**I Thess. 1:8; II Tim. 4:2; Jude 3**).
- A sound church is one who will not be involved in unauthorized ways of handling the Lord's money such as: the support of orphan homes or benevolent societies from its treasury (**Phil. 4:15-16; Jas. 1:27**).
- A sound church is one that realizes "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink" (**Rom. 14:17**). Thus, she will not be like the denominations in support of "fun, food, and frolic" in order to "win" people to them. (**Rom. 1:16**)
- A sound church is one who remembers her first love (**Rev. 2:4; Eph. 4:15**).
- A sound church is one who reverences Christ (**Acts 4:12**).
- A sound church does not tolerate or coddle worldliness among its people (**II Cor. 6:17; II Thess. 3:14-15**).
- A sound church wears the name of Christ (**Acts 20:28; Rom. 16:16**).
- A sound church is properly organized, having no connections to any other organization! A sound church can be scripturally unorganized for a while (When

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Conclusion

churches were started in the first century, there were not men qualified to be elders or deacons at first. **Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5**); but there comes a time when a congregation, in order to be sound, must be scripturally organized, having elders to oversee the local group, deacons to serve, and saints to do God's will, and be under the oversight of the elders (**I Pet. 5:2-3; I Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-9; Phil. 1:1**).

- A sound church will love one another (**I Cor. 13:4-8**). In loving one another, it is evident to the world that we are the disciples of Christ (**Jn. 13:34-35; I Jn. 4:7-11, 21**).

Such characteristics as the above give us a taste of what a sound church looks like. In light of what we have learned in these passages, let us examine ourselves and ask whether or not God would consider us a "sound" (spiritually healthy) church meeting in Caneyville, KY. God has given us the blueprint. Will we follow it or not? The answer to this question will determine whether we truly are a "sound" church, a church "of" (belonging to) Christ! *Credit: The Old Paths - 4/5/15 ♦*

WHEN IS THE CHURCH THE TRUE CHURCH?

BY DAVID J. RIGGS

Many people believe that if the church of which they are members was Scriptural and right at one time, it will always be right. No greater doctrine of error has ever been taught by man. The evil Jews of Jesus' day thought if they had been God's chosen people, they would always be. John the Baptist told them not to say, "We have Abraham as our father" for God was able to raise up children to Abraham from stones (**Matt. 3:7-9**). Jesus showed them that their whole religion was vain because it was based on the traditions and doctrines of men (**Matt. 15:1-14**). The churches of Galatia stood in danger because they had been "bewitched" and "hindered" from obeying the truth (**Gal. 3:1; 5:7**). The church at Pergamos was told that if it did not purge out false doctrine, the Lord would execute judgment upon it (**Rev. 2:13-16**).

The moment a church begins to teach or practice anything which cannot be found in the written Word of God, it is in danger. Truly, a church becomes a false church when it has either an unscriptural name, faith, or practice. If it refuses to repent of error, in due time, it ceases to be the church of the Lord. Speaking of the religious sect of the Pharisees, Jesus said, "*And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men...Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted will be*

uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch." (**Matt. 15:9, 13-14**).

For a church to be the New Testament church, it must be identical to the one in the New Testament. It must have the same name, foundation, law, worship, etc., as the church in the Scriptures. In Order to accomplish this, it must determine to build according to the pattern given in the Word of God (**Cf. Heb. 8:5**). Churches which differ from the New Testament one have not followed the pattern. Also, it must plant the seed, the Word of God (**Luke 8:11**), in the hearts of men. Churches today are unlike the New Testament church because the seed or doctrine of men has been planted. Furthermore, it must continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (**Acts 2:42; 2 John 9**). Churches today with variations in name, work, worship, etc., are not following the apostles' doctrine and, thus, are not one with the apostles. When men have all things in faith and practice patterned exactly as the New Testament church, they are in fact the New Testament church. Indeed, many churches of our time would be abolished if the teaching and practice of the New Testament were enacted. *Credit: oakridgechurch.com/riggs/ ♦*

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3

Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27

Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF JIMMY L. PETTIGREW
1958-2019**

This issue of "The Voice of Truth" is dedicated to the memory of Jimmy L. Pettigrew; he passed away on January 29, 2019, at the age of 60.

Jimmy was an inspiration to everyone around him; he made a positive and lasting impression, and touched the lives of everyone here at the Hillcrest church of Christ.

Jimmy dedicated his life to Jesus Christ, and to His cause; from 2006 to 2019, he labored with us here at the Hillcrest church of Christ as an evangelist. He labored with other congregations prior to coming to Hillcrest as well.

The Hillcrest church of Christ is thankful for Jimmy's service to our congregation, for his dedication to the Lord's work, and for his friendship; he will be greatly missed. The Hillcrest church of Christ extends its heartfelt prayers and sympathies to the Pettigrew family for their loss. ♦

Jimmy was also a loving husband, father, and grandfather.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" - Matthew 5:4

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." - Psalm 116:15

"The righteous man perishes, and no one lays it to heart; devout men are taken away, while no one understands. For the righteous man is taken away from calamity; he enters into peace; they rest in their beds who walk in their uprightness." - Isaiah 57:1-2

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing." - 2 Timothy 4:7-8 ♦

ABOUT THE HILLCREST CHURCH OF CHRIST

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OUR ADDRESS

SCHEDULE OF ASSEMBLY

Telephone: (920)499-5677
E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*



*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.net