

THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

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**Floral Heights
Church of Christ
1814 Buchanan
Wichita Falls, Texas
76309
(940) 322 - 1650**

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Our Elders:

Mike Chancellor
(322 – 6374)

Tom Witherspoon
(923-6479)

Deacons:

Joe Cronin

Jim Hall

David Witherspoon

Preacher:

John C. Robertson

Wild Tongues and Defiled Bodies

James 3:5-12

James writes, “*So the tongue also is a little member, and boasts great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!*” (James 3:5). The “*tongue*” is likened unto a bridle in the horse’s mouth and the rudder that guides a great ship. A tongue not governed by the word of God can grow out of control like a horse that rejects the bridle and a ship whose rudder is broken. A tongue that boasts or brags of self accomplishments, in the areas of teaching, has not achieved its desired results of saving souls. Words that cause man to err can have far reaching results. A small fire from one match can turn into a devastating thousand acre forest fire. Even so, words of error can adversely affect the souls of thousands of people.

“*And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell*” (James 3:6). James states the fact. Man’s tongue is likened unto a damaging fire that can “*defile*” (cause our soul to be tainted by sin) our body through its unlawful use (i.e., an out of control tongue not governed by truth). Note that James makes a comparison between the tongue and the body once again (see James 3:1). When man’s body is defiled through the unlawful words of our tongue then it “*sets on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell!*” Note the association between fire, the tongue, iniquity, and being defiled. The tongue, being a fire, defiles and causes one to be in sin when it is out of control. The tongue can change a man’s entire outlook on life. While God’s desire and design for man is that he would be “*perfect*” (i.e., seeking above all other things in this world a heavenly home through obedience) the tongue has a way of ruining that life. The tongue, identified as a fire of sin, sets on fire (i.e., destroys) the “*wheel of nature*” (i.e., the course of man’s life). Those who use their tongues to distort or pervert the law of God are equated to the future inhabitants of hell. It is clear that God does not take lightly the perversion of His holy word such as those who would claim that faith only will save.

“*For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison*” (James 3:7-8). James affirms man’s success at taming the wild beasts of the earth. Moses records the creation of man and woman and then states, “*And God blessed them: and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth,*

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors:

We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please do come back at your every opportunity!

Summer Gospel Meeting:

Mark August 22nd through the 27th on your calendars for our 2010 summer gospel meeting.

Dennis Scroggins of Lometa Texas will be doing the preaching. The elders have set the time for each nightly meeting (i.e., Monday through Friday) at 7:00 PM (Normal times on Sunday). There will also be a daily Bible study with Dennis at 9:30 AM Monday through Friday.

John Robertson will be leaving for Houston Monday June 7th and remain until June 13th. There will be men filling in on the classes and Sunday preaching.

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home)

Ila Belle Windham
(at home but request no calls at this time).

*and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (Genesis 2:27-28). Again, to Noah, the Lord said, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the heavens; with all wherewith the ground teems, and all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered” (Genesis 9:1-2). Though all the wild beast of the earth have been subdued it is not so with the tongue. Man’s tongue is likened unto a wild out of control beast that has not been tamed. Interestingly, James stated that the man who does not “stumble in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also” (see James 3:2). Here is where Greek tenses play an important part in understanding the scriptures. The word “stumble” (*ptaio*) is parsed in the present tense which indicates ongoing action (Friberg 696). The fact of the matter is that all will at one point stumble (sin) with their tongue. James defines the perfect man as he who does not go on sinning with his tongue. There is a big difference. The word “tame” (*damazo*) = “to subdue, tame, to restrain within proper limits” (Moulton 84). While animals continue to be tamed (present tense) the tongue is not (aorist tense / i.e., it may have been tamed at some times in the past but this is not a guarantee that it will always be tamed) (see Friberg 696). James is looking to those who give efforts, through a proper understanding of scriptures and a heart that is set on making it to heaven, in their teaching through the use of their tongues. Those who use their tongues to teach false doctrine are likened unto poisonous snakes that bite and kill.*

“Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the likeness of God: out of the same mouth comes forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (James 3:9-10). James says it makes no sense to ascribe praise to God yet wish evil upon God’s created beings. To curse man is to curse God! To speak words that mislead man is to go against the Lord God Almighty. Such a man is going in two different directions and he doesn’t even seem to know it. While he praises God he curses God’s creative work of mankind. Such a use of the tongue should not be occurring among God’s created beings.

“Doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet water and bitter? Can a fig tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine figs? Neither can salt water yield sweet” (James 3:11-12). The point James makes is that it goes against nature (i.e., God’s creative purpose and design for man) to use the tongue in a damaging way that does not consider truth nor the souls of men. When a man uses his tongue to teach doctrines that comfort others in their sin (i.e., faith only) they are working against the very nature of God’s created purpose. God has created man with the innate ability to know right from wrong (Romans 2:14-15). When a man laid with another man in sexual union they went against their nature and they knew it (see Rom. 1:26-27). People may justify homosexuality and false teaching and thereby ease their mind from being pricked by truth yet truth remains truth. Let us all make sure we give great effort to use our tongues to bring glory to God.

John C. Robertson

The Church of Christ

Introduction:

Every religious body in existence can trace its origin back to some man who had some type of religious idea. The Baptist church originated in 1609 and named after the ordinance of baptism and John the baptizer. The Methodist church was established at about 1795 under the influence of John Wesley. The Presbyterian church began in Scotland under the direction of John Knocks who had been influenced by John Calvin. The Lutheran church began in the 1500's under the guidance of Marin Luther. And So on. What about the "Church of Christ?" What is the origin of the church of Christ? Who founded the church? Is the church of Christ scriptural. Is the church of Christ any different than any of the above mentioned denominational bodies? This lesson shall examine the identity and prophecy regarding the church. We shall examine the organization, work, and worship of the church. All should draw the conclusion, from this study, that the church of Jesus Christ is the only church he authorized.

I. The Identity of the Church of Christ:

- A. "*Ekklesia*" = "a group of people that have been called to an assembly" (Liddell and Scott's Greek English Lexicon 239) (Acts 5:11).
- B. Called "church of Christ" (Romans 16:16) or "church of God" (1 Corinthians 1:2).
- C. The church is the kingdom of God (Colossians 1:13-14; 1 Thessalonians 2:12).
- D. Jesus purchased the church with his own blood (Acts 20:28). The blood bought people are identified as the kingdom of priests (Revelation 5:10).

II. The Church of Christ in Prophecy:

- A. God's kingdom (the church) was foretold of coming into existence throughout the OT (see 2 Samuel 7:12ff; Isaiah 9:6-7; Daniel 2:28, 44; 7:27).
- B. The kingdom would be established in the "latter days" (Daniel 2:28), during the days of the Roman empire (Daniel 2:43-45; 11:38-40), when the new law went forth from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:2ff; Luke 24:46-49), established at Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:2-3), with power (Luke 24:49).

III. The Organization of the Church of Christ:

- A. Consider modern day church organization to God's word.
- B. The Bible instruct the church to be organized with Elders, deacons, preachers, and members on a local level alone (Acts 14:23; Philippians 1:1; 1 Peter 5:2).

IV. The Work of the Church of Christ:

- A. Evangelize community and world (Matthew 13:3-9; 1 Corinthians 1:21; 3:6-7).
- B. Edify church members (Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 10:24-25).
- C. Provide benevolent care for needy saints (Acts 4:32; 6:1; Romans 15:25-26) and widows of the local church (1 Timothy 5:1-16).

V. The Worship of the Church of Christ:

- A. The word "worship" has to do with man performing acts that express their love and adoration for another.
- B. Christians are commanded to show their love to God by performing five acts of worship on the first day of the week (i.e., Sing [Ephesians 5:19], pray [Acts 1 Timothy 2:8], partake of LS [Acts 20:7], give of our means [1 Corinthians 16:2], and participate in gospel preaching [Acts 11:26; 20:7])

Conclusion:

The firm foundation of God will always stand even though man may establish different churches that teach different doctrines and perform un-authorized works and worship (see 1 Timothy 2:9, 13, 19). Are you a member of the one true church (Ephesians 4:1ff)?