

**New Caney
Church of Christ**

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Assembly Times

Sundays
Bible Class 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Wednesdays
Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

***Retaining The Standard
Of Sound Doctrine***

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Know Your Bible: Answers

1. Elimelech (Ruth 1:1-2)
2. Joseph (Genesis 41)
3. Israel (2 Kings 8:1-2)
4. Egypt (Genesis 12:10)
5. Agabus (Acts 11:28)

This Week's Assignments & Events

Sunday Worship

Greeter: Casey Thomas
Announcements: Josh Emerson
Encouragement Talk: John Franks
Opening Prayer: Kevin Buckner
Scripture Reading: Truett Blazek
Luke 7:18-23
Song Leader: Kevin Buckner
Table Talk: Arturo Orozco
Contribution: Josh Emerson
Helper: Corwin Richardson
Fruit of Vine: John Franks
Helper: Billy Scherry
Helper: Aaron Heald
Closing Prayer: Scott McDearman

Sunday Afternoons

Feb 23 3PM Visitation Day
(no meeting at the church building)
Mar 2 3PM Devotionals
Mar 9 Nothing
Mar 16 3PM Yard Work Day

Wednesday Evening

Song Leader: Truett Blazek
Speaker: Tyler Blazek



Standing Firm

“Take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist
in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm”
Ephesians 6:13

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Sectarianism

In the time when Jesus walked the earth, the Jews had many sects. The Pharisees (Acts 15:5) and the Sadducees (Acts 5:17) were two of the most prominent. These two groups held widely different views about religion. For example, the Pharisees believed in an afterlife, the Sadducees did not. Sectarianism was such a strong concept in the minds of the Jews that the followers of Christ were called a sect by their enemies (Acts 24:5, 14; 28:22). Jesus opposed the sects of the Jews because they left the Word of God and followed their own traditions resulting in vain worship and invalidating the Word of God (Mark 7:7-13).

After the church was established, the mind-set of sects arose in Corinth, which was primarily composed of gentiles. *“Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe’s people, that there are quarrels among you. Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, “I am of Paul,” and “I of Apollos,” and “I of Cephas,” and “I of Christ” (1 Cor. 1:10-12).* Paul’s teaching was that there be no divisions among you. They were all part of the same congregation, but they quarreled about their differences as a result of being in a sect. He goes on to teach the Corinthians that their sectarianism indicated they were still fleshly since there was *“jealousy and strife”* among them (1 Cor. 3:3). This is also the result of sects: jealousy, strife, and quarrels.

Sects continue today in religion in the form of denominationalism. All say they follow Christ, yet there are many differences in belief which contradict each other. The result is jealousy, strife and quarrels. It is easy to see not everyone is following Christ who claims to be of Christ. God is opposed to sects. Strife, jealousy, disputes, dissensions, and factions are all listed as deeds of the flesh and those who practice them will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:20-21). God wants unity. Jesus prayed that we might all be one as He and the Father are one (John 17:20-23). Jesus did not die to establish many sects, but *“one body”* (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23) which is His Church (Matt. 16:18). The main reason denominationalism exists is because of the false teaching of man (2 Pet. 2:1) and the desire of men to have their ears tickled (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

We are quick to make applications and understand these truths when looking outward. We

struggle more when we must look inward. It troubles me that among faithful congregations of the Lord's Church, sects continue. In our country we still have many congregations that are formed and based on race (black congregations, Hispanic congregations, white congregations). While there are God-allowed differences in some of the traditions within these groups, all seem to follow the truth of God. The crossing of the racial boundaries must occur if we are to all be one as Jesus prayed. We as individuals must rise above our society because we are of Christ. All men are sinners, and all who obey God are His children. Race and nationality play no part in God's church and cannot within His children.

We also struggle to make application in regards to economic status. Many Americans are comfortable financially, but there are many who are poor and some who are very wealthy. We see that same trend among some congregations. Those who are poor are not welcomed or received well in congregations that are composed of wealthier people, and to some degree the same occurs in congregations composed of those who are not as well off when a wealthy person comes into their midst. Such attitudes of sects and the opposite (which is favoritism) are equally opposed by God (James 2:1-6) because we dishonor other Christians in such attitudes. We make "*distinctions*" between ourselves (James 2:4).

The only difference seen in Scripture between Christians are levels of maturity. Some are called "*unruly, fainthearted, and weak*" (1 Thess. 5:14). Others are called "*spiritual*" or "*strong*" (Rom. 15:1). Clearly there are various degrees between these two as well. Despite these differences, we cannot allow sects to arise between those who know more and those who know less. "*Accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions*" (Rom. 14:1). Even if someone with a weaker understanding is stricter in application than God demands, we do not judge them for this. We are to be one in Christ. Some congregations have elders and deacons which view themselves as an elite whose attitudes and behaviors demonstrate a sectarian attitude. Elders are not to lord over the flock, but prove to be an example (1 Peter 5:3). That example must include a removal of all bias and sectarianism, accepting and helping all those who have obeyed the gospel of our Lord and Savior.

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26-28).

By Charles Willis

Know Your Bible

Famine

1. Who moved with Naomi to Moab to escape famine?
2. Who was food shortage supervisor in Egypt when famine came?
3. What nation was the victim of a seven-year famine during Elisha's ministry?
4. Where did Abram go when famine struck?
5. What New Testament prophet predicted a worldwide famine?

Answers On Back

Sunday Sermon

Point your phone camera at the square below, then click on the link to hear the sermon. Recordings will change mid-week.



Phylacteries: Reminders of Reminders

Jerry Fite

Jehovah wanted the Israelites to cherish, remember, teach, speak, and obey all His commandments revealed through Moses. They were to "*lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul*" (Deuteronomy 11:18). God's words were to be "*for frontlets between your eyes*" (Deuteronomy 11:18). They were to "*write them on the doorposts of thy house, and upon thy gates*" (Deuteronomy 11:20). Parents were to share God's words with their children by "*teaching them*" and "*talking of them*" in daily interaction with them (Deuteronomy 11:19). They were to show the proper love for God and cleave to Him by diligently keeping "*all this commandment which I command you, to do it...*" (Deuteronomy 11:22). God's revealed word was centered in His peoples' minds, cherished in their hearts, communicated by their mouths and carried out in their lives.

The Jews of Jesus' day placed God's words as frontlets between their eyes by putting them in a leather box connected with ribbon to wrap around their head. The piece of parchment with God's words inscribed upon it was also put in another box and worn on the inner forearm by attaching it with ribbon spiraling across the forearm to finally connect to the top of the middle finger. Strategically placed, whenever the person bent their elbow, the box pointed to the heart.

Which of God's words were put in a phylactery? On the folded parchment, four passages were inscribed: Exodus 13:2-10; Exodus 13:11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; and Deuteronomy 11:18-21. While these passages specifically taught the Jew they were to keep the passover feast, offer the ransom price for their firstborn, and teach their children God's word; these passages were just reminders that taught God's people to remember to do what God commanded. They were really reminders of reminders to remember.

When Jesus interacts with the Jews of His day, phylacteries were being enlarged for affect. Why? Jesus says, "*But all their works they do to be seen of men; for they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge their borders of their garments*" (Matthew 23:5). The fringes on the border of the garment were comprised of a cord of blue to remind them to "*...remember all the commandments of Jehovah, and do them*" (Numbers 15:39).

The phylacteries and the fringes were being enlarged to make one look like God's word was even more important to him than it was to the other guy. But how does placing Scriptures reminding us to remember make us right with God?

Only if we do what we are to remember will we be right with God: "*But be ye doers of the word, not hearers only*" (James 1:22). Posting Exodus 13 on a door post would not save the firstborn if there were no blood applied. We will not be a blessed man if we post Psalm 1 on our refrigerator door, and still stand in the way of sinners, while we remind ourselves to meditate on God's word daily. We will still be having fellowship with a false teacher's evil works by giving him God's speed regardless how loud we speak out about abiding in Christ's doctrine (2 John 9-11). We can post on our Facebook page Ephesians 6:4 and never be the father that pleases God if we do not speak of the Scriptures to our children (Proverbs 1:8-9;18). Take the string off your finger, and let us do what God reminds us to do!