

Good News

From Getwell

Published by
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The Spiritual Sword Lectureship

Radio Program
The Truth in Love
WHBQ-AM 560 / FM 98.5
Sundays, 8:00 a.m.

SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY ACTIVITY

SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:20 a.m.
Worship.....5:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

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ON THE HOME FRONT

Getwell is still reeling from the shock of Bro. Ron Wallace passing away so unexpectedly. Ron was an elder and associate minister, as associate minister he wore many hats. He preached when our regular minister was gone or unable to preach. He taught bible classes, especially on Wednesday evenings. He did the bulletin articles each week, he worked with the secretaries and took care of building problems and repairs. These are a few things he did willingly and well.

Getwell's attendance is low. Most of us are old in years and are having the problems associated with old age. Few are able to lead or direct the worship service. Getwell's future is uncertain.

On a good note we have a good minister in Michael Wyatt and we are blessed with the avenue of prayer. We are praying constantly and we need the prayers of all of you who read this bulletin. The elders pray for wisdom to make the right decisions. We know God's will will be done.

God bless you all.

Dewey Murray

Is the Church Jesus Built on the Earth Today?

We are not interested in a church that is like the church Jesus built any more than we are interested in a Savior like the Son of God. He either is or He isn't; it either is or it isn't.

A cow is like a horse in that it has four legs and a tail, but a cow is not a horse. A monkey is like a man in that it is a mammal that walks on two legs, but a man is no monkey.

The worship of Cain and Abel was similar (both worshipped the same God, at the same time, in response to blessings), but Cain's was rejected, and Abel's was accepted (Genesis 4:4-5; Hebrews 11:4). Tares and wheat were close in appearance, but one was edible and desirable, and the other was poisonous and hated (Matthew 13:24-30).

We are interested in finding the same church Jesus promised Peter He would build (Matthew 16:18). On that occasion Peter did not say that Jesus was "like" the Son of God. He called Him "the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16).

Since it is not possible for any church to prove historically that it has existed from the time of the New Testament, is it even possible that the New Testament church still exists today? Yes, because it is not necessary to trace a line of succession back two thousand years. That possibility is easily proved by considering three simple principles. Come, "let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18).

CONSIDER THE SEED PRINCIPLE

If we wanted to grow Alabama tomatoes in Texas, would we need a row of tomatoes stretching across Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and into Texas? No, just take the seeds from Alabama to Texas, plant them, and they will grow.

The succession of the plant is in the seed, not in the row. One of God's eternal laws is that a seed produces "after his kind" (Genesis 1:11-12). When we plant beans we reap beans, not watermelons or corn; when we plant a peach seed it can produce only a peach tree, nothing else. Paul used this fact to illustrate a spiritual lesson: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatian 6:7). All institutions on earth -- from

Chinese Communism to Dell computers, from pro football to the Army—are perpetuated by their "seeds" (doctrines). So are all religious organizations. Each has a body of doctrine that it plants as seed. What is planted (taught) determines what grows.

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"The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). When it was planted in the first century it produced Christians (individually) and the church of Christ (collectively). Let's apply the seed principle to today's religious situation:

- Do we have the same seed today as what was planted in New Testament times? Yes, we have the Bible (1 Peter 1:22-25).
- Has the seed become inert? No, it is alive (1 Peter 1:22-25).

- Do we have the same soil? Yes, human hearts (Matthew 13:19–23). It grows the same thing that it did then— Christians (Acts 2:22–47; 11:26). What else could it produce?
- What church will the seed produce? The same one it produced then; the one Jesus died to purchase, over which He reigns, and which bears His name (Acts 20:28; Romans 16:16).

The perpetuation of the church is in the pattern, not in the history of following it. It is in the seed, not in a perennial crop. It makes no difference how long the gospel seed may have been stored. If there had not been a church upon the earth after the New Testament order for a thousand years, so long as God's Word still survived, then Christ's church would sprout up when people read, understood, and obeyed the gospel.

CONSIDER THE CODEBOOK PRINCIPLE

A game, government, or gadget can be reproduced if its specifications are preserved in a book or computer. If there were no Monopoly board on earth, but a diagram of the board and rules of the game were discovered, it could be recreated in a short time. If the planet's last television finally ceased to flicker, a talented person could take a description of it and make another one. If Communism or Islam conquered democracy all over the world, a future "Continental Congress" could take our Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, and a high school government textbook and begin to govern a free people yet unborn.

The Bible is the standard for Christianity. Paul wrote, "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing" (Philippians 3:16; cf. 2 Timothy 3:16–17). It simply contains the "rules" of Christianity. It is the diagram of what a church is to look like. It is the textbook of the Christian religion. Thus, in any place a Bible is read, understood, believed, and obeyed, the church will come into existence. This will happen regardless of whether a church has ever existed there before, is in existence at the time anywhere else, or even if it has been extinct for a century.

CONSIDER THE RESTORATION PRINCIPLE

Many people like to restore old automobiles or antebellum homes. They get the original plans and painstakingly restore the car or house as it was in the beginning. Such a restoration is occurring presently on Thomas Jefferson's summer home in Forest, Virginia. Those involved even test the soil to determine what kind of trees and bushes were originally planted near the house, so they can plant the same plants in the same places.

Isaac began a similar restoration project in the days of the patriarchs. The Bible records,

And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them (Genesis 26:18).

A spiritual restoration project has been done with Christ's church. Christ set the water of life flowing from the wellspring of His church. Over the centuries, it slowly became stopped up by man's teachings. Man became thirsty for more than tradition, Protestantism, and cults. He longed for the satisfying water of the original well. Restorers consulted the original blueprint within the pages of the New Testament and began to dig again the original doctrines. One by one they identified first century practices and called them by their original names (1 Peter 4:11). Careful workers eventually restored the church just as it was then—the same plan of salvation, organization, officers, acts of worship, love and zeal, and moral teachings. "Come and see" (John 1:39)

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word of God.
- Luke 8:11*