

The Reminder

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, TX

“Traditions and God’s Law”

In [Mark 7:1-13](#), the Pharisees questioned Jesus and His disciples about washing their hands before they ate. This was not simply a matter of hygiene for them. To the Pharisees, this was as good as Law. Of course, there was no law that said this. Certainly, the Law spoke of cleanliness and defilement. But there was no law that mandated the washing of hands, cups, pots, and vessels simply to make sure they hadn’t been defiled. By washing, they wouldn’t make their food unclean and wouldn’t internalize any uncleanness while eating.

For the Pharisees it became extremely serious business. It was a test of spirituality. It was a test of fellowship. They were sure that through their logical deductions, it was part of God’s pattern for them. Yet, Jesus turned that understanding on its head. This was a tradition they had built up around the Law. It was not God’s Law itself. Jesus accused the Pharisees of hypocrisy. They honored God with their mouths and not really with their hearts. They elevated the teachings of men to the level of God’s command.

If we are not careful, we can make the same mistake. I can and have heard some similar questions today. “Why don’t you have two assemblies on Sunday as is the tradition of other churches?” “Why don’t you have Gospel meetings that last an entire week or two weeks as is the tradition of other churches?” “Why don’t all of you wear a suit and tie or a dress to the assembly as is the tradition of the older generations?”

Is it lawful to have two assemblies on Sunday, Gospel meetings that last all week, and to dress up for our assemblies? Of course it is. Does God mandate it? No. Are we allowed to do these things? Certainly. Are we allowed to mandate these things for anyone else? No. Are others allowed to mandate these things for us? Absolutely not. Are we more spiritual for doing these things or for not doing them? Of course not.

We certainly cannot mandate traditions like multiple assemblies, week-long Gospel meetings, or formal dress for assemblies. However, when the pattern says sing, we can tell folks they should sing and not add instruments. When the pattern says celebrate Jesus’ death through the Lord’s Supper, we can tell folks they should not add extra holy-days. When the pattern demonstrates using unleavened bread and fruit of the vine for the Lord’s Supper and taking it only on the first day of the week, we can rebuke others for violating it. God expects us to use our common sense and our logic. But He also expects us to use it to understand what He has written, not mandate whatever we like and disregard whatever we don’t. We must not add our traditions to God’s laws. Neither must we allow our think-sos to disregard God’s laws.

We must forever recognize that God’s word provides us the pattern and authority for good works and continue to look to it as the guide for our behavior as Christians and work as congregations ([II Timothy 3:16-17](#)).

- Edwin Crozier

SUNDAY
AUGUST 16, 2015

BELLAIRE

church of Christ
8001 South Rice Ave
P.O. Box 1029
Bellaire, Texas 77402
www.bellairechurchofchrist.org

Schedule of Services

SUNDAY:

9:30 AM Worship
11:00 AM Bible Study
5:00 PM Worship

WEDNESDAY:

7:30 PM Bible Study

*** NOTE:** Sunday
August 30 will be our
last Sunday evening
service.



“A Fear Of Good Deeds”

Morning Lesson

“The Betrayal of Jesus”
Steve Garrett

Evening Lesson

“Forgiveness of Sins: When and How”
Jack Smith

News and Notes:

Continue praying for those of our number who have on-going health issues. Deb Haley, Janice Kimbrough, Jan Cooper, Curby Stech, Laura Claburn and Don Hurd.

Hope this is an exciting week for many reasons. 1. Eliza is out of the hospital and doing much better. 2. "We" could have a couple of babies arriving if they aren't here already. 3. We announced last Sunday and on Wed. night about a few more. Congratulations to Michael and Kristi Robinson. And to Paden and Lucy (they moved to the Dallas area, but we maintain possession). Keep these folks in your prayers.

Continue to pray for Harold as he struggles to recover from complications from surgery.

Tonight is the youth devo and the women's class. Men's Bible study breakfast has been moved to next Saturday, Aug. 22.

Won't be long till the next quarter begins. Brian will teach Joshua and Judges; Jack will teach "Great Lessons of Jesus". These are the adult classes.

Let's face it, when we hear a lot about good deeds we know where it is going to hit us the hardest—the wallet. Obviously, not every good deed is a monetary good deed. But sooner or later, we can't help but notice that in Scripture many of the good deeds affect us financially. Whether we are talking about hospitality, sending aid to Christians who are going through a famine, being a good Samaritan, feeding and clothing our brothers and sisters or helping the poor, eventually our good deeds are going to cost us money.

That's what makes these good deeds so scary, especially when the news tells us the economic sky is falling. This is where II Corinthians 9:8 comes in. Paul wrote, “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.”

Now this is not a promise from God to drop any amount of money or material goods in your lap that you claim you'll give to others. However, it does point out that when we are a blessing to others, God will bring blessings to us. That is exactly why God blesses people. Not so they can hoard the blessings, but so they can share them. We are not alone in this work of good deeds. God is extending His grace so we can be sufficient for performing these good deeds.

If I clinch my fist around whatever blessings I have received, my hand will be closed to the blessings God may want to give me. However, when I open my hand to others, it becomes open to receive more of God's blessings.

This is an extension of God's promise in Matthew 6:33. If we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, He'll take care of us. Be content. Be a blessing. Then and only then will God truly bestow His richest material blessings upon us.

- Edwin Crozier

ASSIGNMENTS

MORNING SERVICE

Announcements - M. Pharris
Hymn Director - R. McDonald
Opening Prayer - S. Clanton
Closing Prayer - M. Pharris

EVENING SERVICE

Hymn Director - S. Garrett
Opening Prayer - A. Morolez
Closing Prayer - M. Pharris

EVANGELIST

Jack Smith
Steve Garrett

ELDERS

Brian Haley
Mark Mann
Matt Miles
Mike Pharris
Jack Smith

DEACONS

Scott Clanton
David Davila
Dan Kimbrough
Jesse Knapp
Alex Morolez
Gregory Williams

BIBLE CLASSES

- I & II Corinthians
- Identifying, Tearing Down and Removing Idols from Our Hearts.