



## Cape Coral Church of Christ

1010 S.W. 20th Avenue

Cape Coral, Florida 33991

(239) 283-4880



<http://www.thelordsway.com/capecoralfl>

## Schedule of Services

Sunday: Bible Study: 9:30 A.M.

Worship: 10:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday: Bible Study: 6:00 P.M.

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## Will You Come When You Are Called?

One of the first things parents teach their children is to come when they are called. The child soon learns that well-being and favor are the rewards of obedience while punishment and problems follow disobedience. Even domesticated animals may be trained to respond to a call from its owner.

God invites us to join him in solving our sin problem. It was not he that caused us to sin, yet he is willing to save us from wrath and to bless us beyond our imagination. Isaiah wrote, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18). God invites the soul who has sinned to come to him. He has gone as far as he can go in solving the problem, the sinner must respond to his call. Will you accept his invitation?

Many know the weariness of hard labor. How desperate people must feel who must face backbreaking struggle everyday just to survive. When body and mind crave rest, yet none is provided, escape becomes the foremost thought. But escape to what? Jesus offers rest both now and forever. As well trained children, we must respond to his beckoning. He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I

will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). He offers rest from the weariness of worldly pursuit, from the tyranny of sin, from guilt, from fear, and from sorrow. What person in his right mind would refuse to be free from these things that destroy body and soul? Do you want rest from these things? Jesus says, "Come unto me." He will not force you into his rest. To come implies to move from where you are to another place. Jesus does not dwell in the place of unbelief and disobedience. To come to Jesus, you must "trust and obey." Jesus calls, will you come?

It is not consistent with Christian character to seek only comfort and peace. These things may be ours in abundance, however, Jesus calls us to "come to work." If heaven's gate stood wide open before us now, we would gladly enter at the gracious invitation to enjoy eternal life with God. That time will arrive, but not yet. Now, we have a different summons, a call to come and work. Jesus told the Rich Young Ruler, "Come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Matthew 10:21). It has been said that dying for Jesus is easier than living for him. Few are called to receive a martyr's crown, however everyone is called to bear his own cross. Will you answer? Perhaps your cross is so heavy because you are trying to carry the world too. The longer you carry the world (live according to its standards), the heavier it gets. The cross will get lighter as you learn to cast your cares on the Lord. You must respond to Jesus' call to come carry your cross. He carried a wooden cross for you which resulted in his death. Will you carry a spiritual cross for him? He wants to issue to you that final invitation when he will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34). Will you come?

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## **Sorrow Turned to Joy!**

It was a cold slab of granite. The name and date carved into the hard surface were beginning to fade. The years had taken their toll on the monument, and on the elderly woman who stood before it. Tears streamed down her cheeks as she remembered. Years earlier she had stood on the same spot as her only child had been laid to rest. Time had not lessened the loss. He was gone. She could not bring him back. She stood there thinking of what might have been.

God also lost a Son. He was placed in the heart of the earth, buried in a borrowed tomb. But, the grave could not hold Him. Her spirits lifted. The grave would not hold her son either. They would meet again. God had given them fifteen joyous years before the accident. Now, by

the grace of God, she looked beyond this life and her sorrow turned to joy as she contemplated what was yet to be.

Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also?" (John 14:1-3).

Do you have the hope of heaven? Can you see beyond this vale of tears to the sunshine of God's eternal city where all tears will be wiped away? Through Him we can live forever!

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## **Christians Only**

Is it possible to simply be a Christian today, in the 21st century? Can we avoid being entangled and weighted down by all the trappings and innovations of man which have found their way into religion over the past 2000 years?

I believe the answer is "Yes," and can be accomplished by taking an "island approach" to Christianity. What do I mean by that? Suppose there was an isolated island filled with people who knew nothing of Jesus. However, one day a chest washed ashore and contained therein was a copy of the Bible. The islanders began reading this book with great interest. After months of careful study, they came to the point of faith, turned from their sins, confessed their faith on Jesus as the Son of God, were baptized into Christ, and began worshiping God together and committing themselves to the moral standards contained in the Scriptures.

Question: what denomination were these islanders when they obeyed the gospel? What "brand" of Christian were they. It's a silly question, isn't it? They would not be a part of any denomination, sect, or party. They would simply be Christians, and Christians only.

Now friends, if people on an isolated island can be "Christians only," then why can't we be "Christians only" in our respective communities? The fact is, we can. However, it will require that we do what they did: open the Bible, unite on what it teaches, leaving behind those practices and doctrines that are not found therein.

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in me through their word; that they all may be one, as you, Father, are in me, and I in you; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me" (John 17:20-21).

# A Cappella

Church music. Without accompaniment. That's a cappella. A Cappella comes from the Latin ad: to, according, and cappella, chapel. A Cappella is the style of church or chapel music.

But the term "a cappella" could hardly be applied to the music, heard in most churches today. That which used to be the only means of praising God in churches (a cappella), is seldom seen in most houses of worship.

When Everett Ferguson was doing his graduate study at Harvard, he lived in the same dormitory with a Greek Orthodox student who was a graduate of the University of Athens and a candidate for an advanced degree at Harvard. Everett asked him if it was correct that the Greek Orthodox churches did not use instrumental music in their public worship. He said, "Yes." When asked the reasons why, he replied: "We do not use instrumental because it is not in the New Testament and it is contrary to the nature of Christian worship." Under the Old Testament, instruments of music certainly had a part to play in the worship of God. But when one comes to the New Testament they are not mentioned. The nature of Christian worship was spiritual. Thus even those who formerly used the instrument failed to adopt it in primitive Christian worship. In fact, the general introduction of instrumental music can certainly not be assigned to a date earlier than the 5th and 6th centuries. Even Gregory the Great, who towards the end of the 6th century added greatly to the existing church music, absolutely prohibited the use of instruments.

Chrysostom gives us a picture of what Christian worship was like up to the 5th century. "It was the ancient custom, as it still is with us, for all to come together, and unitedly join in singing. The young and the old, rich and poor, male and female, bond and free, all join in one song.... All worldly distinctions here cease, and the whole congregation form one general chorus." In the words of the apostle Paul, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:16-17).

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“How wonderful is the human voice. It is indeed the organ of the soul. The intellect of man sits enthroned, visibly, on his forehead and in his eye, and the heart of man is written on his countenance, but the soul reveals itself in the voice only.” – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 - 1832)