



Cape Coral Church of Christ

1010 S.W. 20th Avenue

Cape Coral, Florida 33991

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<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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The True Church

Any student of the Bible knows that the New Testament speaks of only one church. In Matthew 16:18, following Peter's confession of the divinity of Christ, Jesus promised, "I will build my church." The emphasis is on the fact that Jesus promised to build his church, not churches. The apostle Paul wrote, "There is one body" (Ephesians 4:4). The body and the church are one and the same (Colossians 1:18). If there is one body, there can only be one church. There is no mention of present day denominationalism in the New Testament. Denominationalism is non-biblical and anti-scriptural. Jesus' prayer for his disciples was that they would all be one (John 17:21).

Conditions in the religious world today portray anything but a united church. Those who profess to follow Christ are divided into hundreds of factions. For one seeking to find the church of the Bible, it is an exceedingly difficult task. Each denomination believes that it is the true church, but that all other churches are acceptable too! How can that be? It is generally argued that the various denominations comprise the visible church, and that the invisible church consists of the true believers from all denominations. Is that the case? The Bible says nothing about the visible and the invisible church.

We believe that it is possible to have one church. We believe that it is desirable to have one church. We believe that Jesus died to purchase one church. It is not our purpose to condemn denominationalism, but it is our desire to preach the truth! We do not seek to sit in judgment of others, but we do want to teach what the Bible says about Christianity. Paul pleaded with the church at Corinth that they "all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10). Why should it be any different today?

What Defines You?

Are you known for your knowledge of the great outdoors, your keen political awareness, the expertise in your profession, or your ability to understand what it takes to build a superb athletic team? I enjoy hearing good hunting stories, listening to whether or not we are on the right track in our country, and seeing the excitement when a great game has been played. Do we allow these things and other passions of ours make us who we are or define us?

Do we identify with the One who died for us? As followers of Christ, we should be known as Christians. Acts 11:26 says, "And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch."

Do we seek to be like our mentor or the only One who understands us? As followers of Christ, we understand He is our standard and understands us. Hebrews 4:15 says, "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin."

Do we seek man's opinions or follow God's instruction? Matthew 7:21 says, "Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in Heaven."

Do we mirror the language of the world or are we mindful of our Creator when we communicate with others? Colossians 4:6 says, "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."

If someone spent a day with us, would they know our interests or understand our commitment to Christ? What defines you?

For Such a Time as This

"... yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14b)?

The asking of questions can be done for a variety of reasons. For instance, there are:

1. Rhetorical questions that have answers so obvious that the question is actually stating a fact such as Romans 8:31.
2. Inquiring questions which seek instruction or clarification from the answer such as in Acts 2:37.
3. Thought-provoking questions like the one above asked by Mordecai of Esther.

The book of Esther is a textbook example of the providence of God. It shows us just how God can place the right people in the right places when He needs them there the most.

The future of the Jewish people was in doubt when King Ahasuerus issued an edict that would have spelled their doom. God's answer to this threat was a young and beautiful Jewish lady named Esther who had just recently become the king's favorite wife. Her uncle saw in this more than coincidence, more than blind luck, he saw the hand of God working behind the scenes of life to put this young woman where she needed to be to save her people.

Our God was capable of awe-striking miracles! He could do things that left men speechless! But He is also capable of doing things so quietly that we don't even take notice of them until we ponder the end result. God has chosen to lay the miraculous aside in this Christian Age in which we live (1 Corinthians 13), but that, by no means, is to suggest He is idle and uninvolved.

He will use people, events, conditions, etc. to accomplish His purposes when it is needful for Him to do so. Such feats are no less effective than the miracles of old; they show divine power just as much and bring about what He desires just as surely as the supernatural ever did - they just aren't as showy as the others.

Be available, be watching out, be willing; God may have placed you where you are for such a time as this. He will always accomplish His will, the real question is, "Will I allow Him to use me or not?"

Priceless Love!

"Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods ..." (Hosea 3:1).

Gomer was a woman with a questionable reputation. Nevertheless, Hosea obeyed God's command, and they married. But their marriage soon crumbled. Gomer, a promiscuous woman, left Hosea for other men, just as Israel had left the Lord for other gods.

What was Hosea supposed to do? God told Hosea to do the unthinkable: "Show your love to your wife again." Gomer had humiliated Hosea by pursuing prostitution and empty promises of love from other men. But Hosea paid to bring Gomer back. And as they began their renewed life together, Hosea insisted on a renewed pledge of faithfulness.

An unlikely story? Maybe. But it's our story! The world whispers its seductive and empty promises to us: "Money brings happiness." "Thin means beautiful." "Every one's doing it!" Like an unfaithful spouse, we chase false promises, but we soon find we are enslaved by destructive lies and sin.

The amazing news of the gospel is that God demonstrated priceless love to redeem us. Hosea bought his wife's freedom with fifteen pieces of silver, but God has bought our freedom with the blood of his own Son! Because he has redeemed us, he calls us into a renewed relationship of adoration and obedience.

What are we doing to show our gratitude to God for all He has done?

The God of Hope

Mankind has made up many gods. As a result, their hearts have been filled with fear, hatred, hopelessness, and doom, but the God of the Bible is called "The God of hope." "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

If we desire lasting joy and peace, it is only available through the God of hope. If we want to abound in hope, it is only available through the power of the Holy Spirit. And all of this comes through faith - believing and trusting in God's word. Paul is not referring here to salvation based on faith alone - he is addressing Christians, and encouraging them to continue in faith. They have already been saved and he addresses them as "brethren" in the next verse, Romans 15:14. The stronger our faith, the more we will be filled with joy and peace, and abound (have more than enough) in hope.

We Christians overflow with hope because we serve the God of Hope. Don't be discouraged. Trust in God. He will fill you with hope.