



## 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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## Urgent versus Important

*"But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection" (Colossians 3:14).*

In the verses immediately preceding the above text, Paul had mentioned such things as mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering, bearing with one another, and forgiveness. No one would argue the importance of any of these things. They help to form the very heart of the Christian religion. But Paul says that the one thing that we must have above any of these is love!

Many things are important and must be attended to as best we can. Some things, however, are necessary and we dare not ignore or be lacking in them. One of life's greatest challenges is learning to tell the difference between the two.

I sometimes speak to others about the "TYRANNY OF THE URGENT." Simply put, that is the way in which some things seem so important at the time that we think they cannot be put off. Unfortunately we often tend to such matters only to discover later that we allowed something that was truly necessary go undone in the process.

We are not arguing that urgent things aren't important, in fact, we would argue that such things need to be attended to in a timely fashion.

But we would argue that we should not be so overcome by a sense of urgency regarding such things that more important things are ignored.

There are many crucial truths in the Christian religion, but Paul says that there are also "first of all" truths upon which all those crucial truths rest (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). If one should miss the significance of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, then nothing else in our faith can survive. Peter says that being secure in our faith involves a "knowing this first" truth (2 Peter 3:3). He goes on then to stress the importance of expecting Jesus to come again even though some might reject this promise as misleading.

Learning to tell the urgent from the necessary isn't easy. The key is to recognize what things cannot be ignored, even for a little while, without major consequences and what things need done, but can wait awhile if need be, so that more essential things might be attended to. Need help distinguishing? Ask God for wisdom (James 1:5).

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## Faith Check

It is always good for a person to do regular checkups on themselves and their lives. We know the importance of this physically, mentally, and even financially. But too often we neglect to do this spiritually - and this is the most important area of all.

In Micah's day, there were questions of how best to demonstrate one's faith in God. Was it simply just going through the motions of required sacrifices and offerings? No. Their faith was to be more than an outward ritual - it was to be proper outward actions based upon the proper inward attitude. The prophet summed it up with these words: "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). In this verse are three areas that each of us must check up on regularly in regard to our faith.

**Christian, Check Your Righteousness.** The first check point was "to do justly." Being just is being right with God and His will. It is living right, living morally, and living properly in our daily walk. It is always conducting oneself in an upright and upstanding manner. The internal attitude that creates this is a passion to please God. So, Christian, check your life - is it one that is admirable according to God's standard?

**Christian, Check Your Respect for Others.** The second bit of advice from Micah 6:8 was "to love mercy." Properly respecting

others is treating them as God treats us - with kindness, love, and forgiveness. It is selflessly giving to others what is needed in their lives. The internal attitude that brings this forth is a joy of the mercy and salvation that God has given us. So, Christian, check your Life - is it one filled with eagerly helping others?

**Christian, Check Your Relationship With God.** The final part of our faith checkup is mentioned as "to walk humbly with your God." Walking with God implies harmony and fellowship. This is attained through reading and studying the Scriptures, regular and fervent prayer, and heartfelt, proper worship. The internal attitude that strengthens this is a desire to grow closer to God.

So, Christian, check your life, is it one that honors and involves God in every way.

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## Boldness

What does it mean to be bold? In Acts 4, while publicly teaching in the temple, Peter and the apostles were arrested by the Jewish leaders. After a night in jail, they were brought before the authorities and asked in regard to the miraculous healing of the lame man. "By what power or by what name have you done this?" (verse 7). Peter's response in verses 8- 12, prompted them to see "the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And realized that they had been with Jesus" (verse 13). The word boldness comes from the Greek word *parresia*. It carries the idea of "freedom in speaking ... openness, frankness ...publicly." (Mounce, E-Sword). Thayer's Greek Lexicon also defines it as, "freedom in speaking, unreservedness in speech ... free and fearless confidence, cheerful courage, boldness, assurance." (E-Sword). From this chapter, God teaches us several things about boldness.

1. Boldness is doing God's will, in spite of persecution. Their boldness was not just in what they said, but in their willingness to be arrested twice in chapters 4-5, continuing to preach Christ even after being beaten.

2. Boldness is speaking what God wants you to say. When Peter spoke to the authorities, he was "filled with the Holy Spirit" (verse 8). In context, this is in reference to being divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 10:19-21; 16:17-19; Acts 2:1-8; 2 Peter

1:19-21). However, in controversial, intense moments today, God still calls us to "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11).

3. Boldness is being respectful, yet not afraid to offend. In observing Peter's words to the Jewish authorities, he did not "speak his mind" by using abusive, unkind speech; yet he spoke the truth when he revealed that they were guilty of killing the Son of God, but God raised Him from the dead, and salvation can be found through no one else (verses 10-12).

4. It is not essential to have credentials or college degrees in order to be bold. Some feel inadequate when it comes to defending truth or teaching truth because they have no formal training in ministry, or any higher education in the Bible. Neither did the apostles (verse 13).

5. Boldness can be encouraged in fellowship with other Christians. After Peter was released from prison, he didn't go off on his own. Instead, he went to be with other Christians (verse 23).

6. Prayer and boldness go hand in hand. Together, the disciples prayed, "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak your word, (30) by stretching out your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus" (verses 29-30).

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## **Planning for Tomorrow and Acting Today**

O Henry tells the story of a New York artist who planned a great masterpiece. His picture was to be a colossal one. Those who heard him tell his plans were thrilled by the conception. It would send his name echoing forever down the ageless corridor of time. It would make him a peer of the immortal Da Vinci, and the great Rembrandt.

Unfortunately, he could not start the picture today. Things were not right; a touch of rheumatism; a gloomy day; bad light; and so it went until one day his friends found him dead in bed. His friends took up his lifeless body and buried his masterpiece with him.

How many Christians have the same attitude that this great artist displayed in his life. We may concur with Acts 17:28 and say, "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being ..." but if we are not doing that everyday, then we are kidding no one but ourselves. May we not meet our Maker with a pocket full of promises, but rather, may we live daily for the Lord, and paint our masterpiece in living for Jesus.