



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 Bride of Christ and the Household of God

We read in Ephesians 2:19-20 (NKJV) "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." One way to understand the nature of the church is to realize that those who are in the church are called members of the household of God. Again, we can understand the nature of the church when we see how the New Testament describes it, using the metaphor of a marriage. Paul writes, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25). "For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:29-32).

When we rightly understand the church as the bride of Christ and the household of God and also the body of Christ, can anyone rationally say that the church is unimportant or non-essential? Certainly not. Christ is still the head of the church. He is still adding those who are saved to

His church according to Acts 2:47 and those who are saved make up His body and His household. This same church still exists today. Jesus said, "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

Just as the New Testament teaches in 1 Corinthians 12:13 that one is baptized into the body of Christ, so also, through baptism, one becomes a child of God in His household. We read, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27). To be saved is to be a child of God and to be a member of Christ's body and God's household. Those who say the church is unimportant or non-essential have a fundamental misunderstanding of the New Testament's teaching on salvation and the church. Let's get back to the Bible and adhere steadfastly to its teaching and reject the teachings of man which lead one away from God.

"What Will It Profit a Man?"

Jesus asked a question that has eternal consequences for the soul. He said, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). Generally most people wander through life ardently seeking earthly concerns and material wealth to gain happiness. While at the same time, they are selling their souls to gain things that will never satisfy or bring true happiness and peace.

Have you ever looked back through your life and realized that you have made a terrible mistake? One you wish you could have changed but it is too late. Often this is the way it is. We will make a wrong choice or spend too much time seeking something that is not needed to bring us to a state of well being that is true contentment. We wonder and are amazed at how quickly time has passed only to find out we have been sold a bill of goods that are not important anymore to our life.

Each day there are breakthroughs in science and medicine to extend life and make it more enjoyable. We are told that they are profitable to our life, yet we will die. All the advances in the world do not mean a thing when we breathe our last breath of air. There can be no effort that is more important than saving of our soul. It truly is tragic to spend a lifetime seeking and saving things that one will lose at death. It is written, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die , but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

One day when death has control over our life and we look back at all the things that have been important, will we be happy or miserable? It will be too late for us to realize that we sold our soul to gain the world and that is not important anymore. Jesus said, "For what will it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36-37).

Let us not exchange our souls for things that are not important.

Babies

"Of all the joys that brighten suffering earth, what joy is welcomed like a new-born child?" - Caroline Norton

When babies enter the world, we smile and marvel at something that is so innocent, yet defenseless and vulnerable. And we don't just speak to them, but often find ourselves making faces and smiling at these little bundles of joy.

It is hard to believe that we too were once held in someone's arms. We were nurtured and cradled, and perhaps heard various songs or lullabies. No matter who you are, we all enter the world the same way.

For young couples, bringing a child into this world is such a great joy. "Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them ..." (Psa. 127:4-5).

In a sobering reality, as we look upon a new-born baby, comes the thought of responsibility. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

And while we know the joy of a new-born child, think of this also in terms of a new-born Christian. The Lord Himself said that one must be "born again" (John 3:3, 5). Peter admonished, "As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2).

But one other thought comes to mind, that little children, i.e. babies, need to be taught about God from the time they are born into this world. "And that from childhood (as a babe or infant) you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15).

Faith Cometh by Hearing

According to the Bible, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Many who misunderstand faith believe it is merely a mental acknowledgment of one's belief in Jesus as the Son of God. But God's Word shows that faith is believing and heeding the information God has revealed. Because you believe this information, you are then inclined to follow the instructions that it presents. Hebrews chapter 11 describes various actions individuals took by faith. When we examine these actions closely, we see that they were following instructions that were provided to them. They received information and then adhered to the instructions that came from it. As a result, they accomplished these acts by faith.

For instance, by faith, Moses forsook Egypt; he was instructed to do so. By faith, he kept the Passover, which he was also told to do. By faith, the Israelites passed through the Red Sea, following instructions they had received. And by faith, the walls of Jericho fell down, as they were told. None of these actions accomplished by faith would have resulted in the blessings they received if they had not heeded God's instructions. God provided them with information that included instructions to be followed. By faith they obeyed.

When you read your Bible and understand that faith refers to the information God has provided, complete with instructions, your understanding of faith will become much clearer. Notice that the gospel was made known to all nations for the obedience of faith (Romans 16:26), indicating that faith includes information accompanied by commandments we are expected to obey.

Run for Your Life

There is an old fable about a dog that boasted of his ability as a runner. One day he chased a rabbit but failed to catch it. The other dogs ridiculed him. He retorted, "Remember, the rabbit was running for his life, but I was only running for the fun of it."

People play games for fun. In fact, the basic reason for playing them is just that; fun and amusement. Too many times we find that Christians are just playing the game and are not really serious about their soul's salvation. Christianity is a run for your life - eternal life. If we play it like a game, however, we will find ourselves losing - just like the dog that was running for the fun of it.