



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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It's Not about Me!

We live in a society that basically believes, "It's all about me." Almost every message that advertisers use promotes "me." Check them out and see if I'm right. Pamper yourself. Please yourself. Protect yourself.

No wonder so many marriages are breaking up. No wonder so many people are having a difficult time at work. No wonder there's so much crime and overcrowded prisons. No wonder there's so much mud-slinging in politics. No wonder there's so much road rage. No wonder children are so difficult to control. No wonder there are so many lawsuits. No wonder there are so many people crying that their rights have been violated. No wonder there are so many churches being split.

One of God's irrefutable laws says that whatever you sow, you reap. We are seeing the vivid results of sowing the seeds of self-centeredness, and it's not pretty.

However, God's law of sowing and reaping works both ways. If we actively sow seeds of selflessness and service to others, we will definitely reap a different harvest. What we see in Jesus, and what actually cost his life, is that God is not happy with self-centeredness

in any realm of human existence: not in the home, not in the workplace, not in the church. So, Jesus repeatedly taught us that Christianity is not about “me,” it’s about others.

- The greatest command is to love God (not self) (Mark 12:29-30).
- The next greatest is to love our neighbors (not self) (Mark 12:31).
- We are to die to ourselves (Luke 9:23).
- We are to bless those who persecute us (Romans 12:14).
- We are to do nothing out of selfish ambition (Philippians 2:3).
- We are to consider others better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3).

As much as we are bombarded by advertisers, politicians, educators, and even clergy to “look out for #1,” it will be difficult to believe and practice the teachings of Jesus that it’s “not about you.” But we must.

Yet, here’s the blessing. When we learn to do things the way Jesus taught and lived, we learn that putting others first is the best thing we can do for ourselves. There’s nothing on earth to compare to becoming like Jesus!

Why Do Some Attend The ‘Optional’ Worship Services And Bible Classes?

It has always been a struggle to get every member of the local church to attend all Bible classes and worship services. Yes, they will come to the A.M. worship service, but not to the other periods of Bible study and worship. When asked why, they will respond: “Those services are optional. They are not commanded by God.”

My question is: “If these are optional services, why do some people choose to attend them?”

- Could it be their love for God?
- Could it be their love for truth?
- Could it be their love for worship?
- Could it be their desire for Christian fellowship?
- Could it be their level of Christian maturity?
- Could it be their hunger for spiritual things?
- Could it be their commitment to the local congregation?
- Could it be their desire to set a good Christian example?

- Could it be they long to grow in Christ?
- Could it be additional worship and study keep them faithful?
- Could it be they understand they are to be subject to the elders?
- Could it be they want to be like the first century Christians?
- Could it be they realize the need to sacrifice?
- Could it be a combination of these things and more?
- Could be!

Some Christians seem like they want to try to skim by when it comes to the final judgment. It is not about their heart, their faith, and their love for God. It is about doing just enough to get by. Their Christianity is not about a relationship with their Savior. Their Christianity is more about guilt, shame, and fear.

Personally, I love attending the “optional” things, including the various works of the church: VBS, gospel meetings, work days, clothing giveaways, men’s breakfasts, men’s days, etc. Why? I enjoy them because I realize the benefits I derive from participating in such works. I am the one blessed. Too, there is a deep sense of satisfaction in knowing that I have served my Lord by serving His church.

Yes, many believe that so many things the church does are optional. I also know some of my brethren who would say: “These are not as optional as some brethren might think they are.” I am thankful that in most churches the majority of brethren are still interested in what some call “the optional” aspects of the church.

Teaching with Food

Jesus is the master teacher. One reason was His masterful use of stories. He could take the relatable events and situations and impart heavenly truths through them. Preachers joke that they can re-preach their sermons as long as they change the illustrations. We sometimes remember the “story” longer than the lesson. The best illustrations contain the lesson. Jesus does that in Luke 14, centering His thoughts on food or at least dinner parties. Notice three things He teaches through this commonly understood analogy.

Develop a Taste for Humble Pie (Luke 14:7-11). Jesus was watching a pitiful, prideful act among His disciples. They were trying to pick out places of honor, apparently feeling pretty self-important and entitled. Jesus urged the very opposite approach to honor and recognition. He says it is better to take the lowest seat and to be asked to come up higher than to

take a seat of honor and be asked to yield to one greater. Jesus asserts that reaching for greatness brings disgrace, but assuming a humble posture brings honor. He summarizes this principle, saying, “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (11).

Take Medicine to Avoid Heartburn (Luke 14:12-14). Jesus’ next illustration also focuses on what’s in the heart. This deals more with one’s motivation for hospitality. The worldly impulse is to do for those who can return the favor, to get something back from those you show kindness to. Jesus teaches them to extend kindness and hospitality to those who cannot repay you so that you can eternally be rewarded by God in the end. This is a basic heart issue, and Jesus dispenses the remedy.

Don’t Lose Your Sense of Taste (Luke 14:15-24). The longest of the three illustrations regards accepting the invitation God extends to sit at His banqueting table in His eternal kingdom. Jesus illustrates how some inexplicably rejected the invitation to this “big dinner.” At the appropriate time, the call comes, “All things are ready, come to the feast” (17). But, notice the profoundly sad response: “But they all alike began to make excuses” (18). They chose finance and family, but these represent any excuse that keeps one from accepting the heavenly call (18-20). Then, the Master extends the invitation to any and all who will come (21-23). But, those who had no taste for what only the Master can give will miss out on what only He offers (24).

These stories illustrate the kind of character and ethics that should not characterize a disciple. The culinary character of the stories should live in us. Jesus wants us to get and incorporate His lessons, so He makes them palatable. May we digest them and receive the intended nourishment.

Wrong Is Always Wrong

1. Even if it seems right in your own eyes!
2. Even if the temptation is very strong!
3. Even if you never get caught!
4. Even if "everyone is doing it!"
5. Even if others are engaged in far worse!
6. Even if some Christians are involved!
7. Even if the wrong doesn't bother you!
8. Even if it is commonly perceived as right!
9. Even if your parents allow such behavior!
10. Even if your best friend is doing it!
11. Even if the Lord's church looks the other way!