



## 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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## We Are All Ministers

In the church today, we have come to think of only one man in a congregation as being "the minister," instead of realizing that every Christian is in reality, a minister. The ministry is not something done **TO** the church but something done **BY** the church. Those who seek to follow in the steps of Jesus would do well to heed his statement, "The son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Too many of the sons of God today come to be ministered unto rather than to minister. The result is that the saints are no longer participants in the arena but spectators in the grandstand.

Because of this attitude, we are delivering babies who never intend to grow up, enlisting soldiers who never intend to fight, registering racers who never intend to run. Our motto has become, "Here he is, Lord, send him." The Ship of Zion is no longer manned by a volunteer crew working for the sheer love of the captain, but is steered by a pilot and an assistant pilot while the remainder are paying passengers who are going along for the ride.

Somewhere along the way, we have missed the very essence of the Christian concept and the result is that we have the greatest accumulation of unused talent and the richest deposit of untouched

ability of any group of people on earth. If we are going to be honest in our plea of restoration, it is time that we began to revolutionize our thinking so that every soldier will put on the armor and every child of God will be active in ministering. Let's quit being spectators and "get where the action is."

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## **Our Present Hope**

Many suffer from what might be called emotional paralysis. We are unable to function today because we either live in the past or are preoccupied with worry about the future. While we may regret mistakes of the past, we cannot make up for those mistakes by continually reliving them in our minds. Where forgiveness is necessary, we should by all means pursue it with vigor. But there comes a time when we must move on and make the most of the present.

The apostle Paul had formerly lived in hostility to the way of Christ. He was a man obsessed with the destruction of the church. He consented to the death of Stephen (Acts 7:58). He had been "a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor..." (1 Tim. 1:13). Paul dealt with his dark past by looking forward to his bright future in Christ. He wrote the Christians at Philippi, saying, "forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14). It matters not so much where we have been as where we are going. We cannot change the past, but we can set the course for our future by how we choose to live today.

While some need to move forward out of the past, others need to take a step back from the future. It is as paralyzing to occupy today with worries of tomorrow as it is to continually relive the past. In these troubling times, how can we avoid needless worry? The inspired recipe is ours: "Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7). In the midst of his warning about coming persecutions, Peter tells us to cast "all our anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

Because God cares, there is no past so dark or future so bleak but that our present cannot be filled with the light of hope. "This is the day which the Lord has made; let us be glad in it" (Psa. 118:24).

## **The Speeding Ticket**

A man in Florida went to great lengths to get out of a simple speeding ticket. When the police officer who pulled him over was out of earshot, the man dialed 911. He told dispatchers that a murder was about to take place. He passionately described how a person was holding a gun and a murder was about to happen. The odd part was that he told dispatchers it was happening somewhere away from where he was. Several police officers were sent to the location the man specified. The dispatcher told the officers the name of the man who called in the emergency. The officer who pulled the man over recognized the name given as the same man he had pulled over and quickly put two and two together. The man confessed what he had done. It turns out he was hoping the police officer would quickly let him off and hurry to help with the “murder emergency.” Now this man has much more serious charges to face in addition to his speeding ticket.

Like the man, people often try to get away with deception to hide sin. One can’t ever deceive God though. Hebrews 4:12-13 states, “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.” There is absolutely nothing we can hide from God. We can’t trick Him. We can’t deceive Him. We won’t be able to pull the wool over His eyes. All of our thoughts and intentions are seen. Therefore, let’s live in a way that is open and honest with both God and others.

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## **God Asks, "Where is the Honor Due Me?"**

Using the language of his times, the prophet Malachi spoke words from the mind of God to His people. God asked this question, “A son honors his father, and a slave his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me? says the LORD Almighty” (Malachi 1:6 a). Malachi goes on to deal with the degeneration of Old Testament worship among his people.

Today, many people fail to honor our Lord. Some mock Him and disrespect Him openly. Others simply fail to give God the honor He is

due. He is the loving Creator who cares for us like the ideal human father should. He is the Lord (which means master). In his Lordship, our God watches over us and directs us. If we follow his directions, then our lives will be filled with joy.

Are you honoring God with how you conduct your life (1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Corinthians 6:20; Proverbs 3:9)? Are you honoring God by attending worship as you should (Hebrews 10:24-25; Psalm 122:1; Psalm 84:4)?

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## **Have The Light Ready**

The train was sweeping along in the bright sunshine when the trainman came through and lights flashed on. Passengers wondered why this should be done at mid-day; but while they were talking about it, the train plunged into the long tunnel. Then all understood why the lamps had been lit away back there in the sunshine. This providing of light in advance reminds us that God's words stored in our hearts will light our way when our path suddenly turns into a dark passage. He, who in sunny days has not made the divine promises his own, has no comforts to sustain him when troubles come; but he who pondered the holy word and laid up in memory its truths and assurances, when called upon to pass through affliction, had light in his dwelling.

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## **Two Things That Trouble Me**

There are a couple things that concern me when I observe some Christians in today's times: how much of the world is in them and how little of the Bible is in them.

I believe that there is a correlation at work here: the less of the Bible that one knows, the more of the world that will creep in. Of course, the opposite is true, as well: the more of the Bible that one knows, the less the world will influence them.

It basically comes down to this: The world or the Word — we must make our choice.

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15-17).