

December 22, 2019

“Seek Ye First”

By Michael Hickox

Olney Church of Christ

220 North Van Street
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Services

Sunday

| | |
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| Bible Study | 9:30 am |
| A.M. Worship | 10:20 am |
| P.M. Worship | 2:00 pm |

Wednesday

| | |
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| Bible Class | 7:00 pm |
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Elders: Mike Gerber, Travis Hall

Deacons: John Frost, Dave Goff,
Roger Sholders

Visitors are welcome

We offer Bible classes for all ages

We also offer in-home Bible studies

We have Bible lessons on the radio
(92.9 FM) Sundays from 8:00-8:30 a.m.

In **Matthew 6:25-34**, Jesus stresses *prioritizing* rightly. His words “**seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you**” (**Matt. 6:33**) do not mean that following Christ is a recipe for having earthly wealth. Rather, the teaching is that if we serve God to the best of our ability, we can trust that things will be OK (cf. **Rom. 8:28**). Faithful servants of Christ’s can be content, joyful, and at peace even in the midst of life’s hardships (cf. **Phil. 4:4-13**).

Contrast this with the reverse mindset of “if everything is good in my life, *then* I will obey God.” This is the *opposite* of what our Lord taught. If we follow Christ, we will see life very differently than the world sees it.

Consider the people deemed successful by the world. Those who gain riches, fame, power, or prestige are often praised. Gaining such things is not necessarily wrong, but what makes one truly rich is far different from this (cf. **1 Tim. 6:6**). The (materially) poor who seek first the kingdom of God have far deeper blessings than the (materially) rich who put God’s will on the backburner (cf. **Rev. 2:9; 3:17**).

Regardless of what the world stresses, we can choose to pattern our thinking and values according to what *God* says.

May we truly seek first the kingdom of God, prioritizing our service to Him above all else, and thus be *spiritually* rich.

“Do You Still Maintain Your Integrity?” (By Michael Hickox)

The book of Job details Job’s loss of children, servants, and possessions (**Job 1:14-19**). After Satan also harmed Job physically (**Job 2:7**), Job’s wife asked, “***Do you still maintain your integrity? Renounce God, and die***” (**Job 2:9**). Job answered, “***You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?***” (verse 10).

Job did not understand why things happened to him as they did, and this sparked a conversation between him and his friends (**Job 3-37**). This conversation and God’s response teach lessons about trying to answer questions that are part of the secret things that belong to God (**Deut. 29:29**).

An important lesson from the beginning of Job, though, is that obedience to God should not be grounded on “having our way.” The song “*Have Thine Own Way, Lord*” expresses a mindset that leads to obedience at whatever cost. “Mold me and make me after *thy* will” is far different from, “if God makes my life what *I* want, *then* I will serve Him.”

Loving God with all of the heart, all of the soul, all of the mind, and all of the strength will lead us to serve God to the best of our ability and be content with all else.

Job’s wife viewed obedience as something that is contingent on God giving us what we want. Job saw differently.

The answer to the question, “***Do you still maintain your integrity?***” should always be, “Yes.” Our love for God must be unconditional.

“Your Church Doesn’t Have Special Christmas Services?” (By Michael Hickox)

It is often expected that any religious group which recognizes Jesus as the Son of God will have special services during the Christmas season to celebrate Jesus’ birth.

Yet, Scripture does not tell us what day of the year Jesus was born on. Moreover, God never commands us to celebrate Jesus’ birth in the way man has chosen to. Scripture tells of Jesus’ birth (**Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-20**), but there is no mention of Christmas, nor is there a command to pick a day of the year to remember Jesus’ birth above all other days.

Jesus *did* establish a special memorial for the church to observe in remembrance of Him (**Luke 22:19**). This is not Christmas (or Easter), but what the Holy Spirit calls the “***Lord’s supper***” (**1 Cor. 11:20**). The Lord’s supper was observed in the New Testament on the first day of the week (**Acts 20:7**). It is interesting how many neglect following this observance established by Jesus Himself, yet eagerly practice a celebration of Jesus established by men.

This does not demean the importance of God the Son coming to earth (**Phil. 2:5-7**). Nor does it imply that there is anything wrong with individuals celebrating Christmas in a non-religious way.

These points *do*, though, remind us of the difference between commands of God and manmade traditions promoted *as though* they are from God (**Mark 7:7**).

Christ’s Word specifies the worship He desires of the local church. May we simply submit to His pattern, instead of going beyond what He authorizes (**2 John 9**).

God's Plan for Saving Man

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
| God's Grace | Ephesians 2:8 |
| Christ's Blood | Romans 5:9 |
| The Holy Spirit's Gospel | Romans 1:16 |
| Sinner's Faith | Acts 16:31 |
| Sinner's Repentance | Luke 13:3 |
| Sinner's Confession | Romans 10:10 |
| Sinner's Baptism | 1 Peter 3:21 |
| Christian's Work | James 2:24 |
| Christian's Hope | Romans 8:24 |
| Christian's Endurance | Revelation 2:10 |

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Words to Consider

“Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen...By faith, Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill treatment with God's people than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked to the reward. By faith, he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.” – Hebrews 11:1, 24-27

Prayer List

Holly G
Sandy S
Betty P
Mabel H
Cheryl S
Norma C
Joe B
Allen S (Cancer)
Raymond & Maxine
Randy & Kim S
Ken & Chris F
Brandon O's Grandmother (Lung Cancer)
Betty H (Cancer)
June's Niece, Debbie
Roger H (Heart Surgery)
Berlyn & Guyla Y
Jeanette's Mother, Fontella

Daily Bible Reading

December 22 – Amos 7-9; Revelation 8
December 23 – Obadiah; Revelation 9
December 24 – Jonah; Revelation 10
December 25 – Micah 1-3; Revelation 11
December 26 – Micah 4-5; Revelation 12
December 27 – Micah 6-7; Revelation 13
December 28 – Nahum; Revelation 14

“So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”
– Romans 10:17

Prayer Leaders

Sunday, December 22, 2019

Bible Study: Dan D

Worship: Travis

Evening: Jim

Wednesday, December 25, 2019

Dave

Clean Building

Paula

Prepare Communion

Paula

Upcoming Reminders

Dec. 28: Ladies' Bible Class @ 9:30 a.m.

Study: The Genealogy (Ruth 4:13-22)

Assignments

Sunday, December 29, 2019

Reading: Larry

Announcements: Dave

Table: Roger

Serve: Travis

Mark

Dan H

Jim

Wednesday, January 1, 2019

Invitation: Dave

Anniversaries

January 1 – Jerry & Sandy

January 3 – Dave & Donna

Birthdays

December 22 – Jailyn

December 22 – Lauren

December 23 – Joe

January 9 – Maxine

January 9 – Douglas

January 10 – Cynde

January 15 – Mike

January 17 – Raymond