



Green Valley Church of Christ 19005 Cumberland Rd Noblesville IN 46060 (317) 773-4308

Green Valley CoC IOI

The Green Valley Church of Christ is growing together in the faith and grace of Christ.

"Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it."

1 Corinthians 12:27

THE PLACE OF THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

The Church is where one finds fellowship with God! The Church doesn't save anyone—it is the saved Body (Ephesians 5:23). People are saved one at a time but they are saved by being added to the Community of the Saved. The saved people are not saved in isolation, outside the Body of Christ! No one can say yes to Jesus as Savior and reject him as Head of the Body which is the Church (Colossians 1:18). He reconciles us to God in one Body (Ephesians 2:16). Being a part of the Church is not optional! Reconciliation with God is experienced by each individual within the one Body of Jesus, the Church and not outside it (Ephesians 2:16).

The Church is where one finds fellowship with other believers! Christians aren't at liberty to live as independent units. Sometimes we hear people say they are for Christ but against the Church. If Christ is willing to tolerate the Church despite her weakness it won't do for us to reject her. One of the visible signs of Christ's healing power is the coming together in the Church of Jews, Gentiles, slaves, free, rich, poor, male and female (Galatians 3:26-28 and Ephesians 2:14-22).

The Church helps to sustain the individual's faith! If you love and believe in your country, said Fosdick, a patriotic and noble-spirited meeting will help you believe in it and love it more. You come away from such meetings thrilled and renewed. Church assemblies can do that for you too. Meetings that are Christ-centered, comforting and challenging send us back to daily life with renewed trust and a deeper sense of mission and hope.

Down through the centuries the faith of the Church has been more stable and consistent than any individuals. As individuals we are more inclined to wander than we are as a Church. To be identified with the NT Church gives a person a sense of purpose, destiny that is stronger than his own personal convictions. To be part of a Community of Believers subjects him to influences and experiences deeper and richer than his own can ever be. God ordained from the beginning that there should be a Fellowship of Believers. (See passages such as Hebrews 10:24-25; 2 Timothy 2:22; Psalm 122:1.)



"And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 2:4-5

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE CHURCH

The love of God is supremely shown in Jesus Christ! God's love has been shown in a thousand ways down through the centuries before and since Christ's appearance. The NT Church joyfully acknowledges all this but it insists that, above all, he sent Christ to make his love known. By this we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us says 1 John 3:16 as if the love of God had not been made known before! In 4:9 he says: This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. The Church proclaims that!

The centrality of Christ's death, burial and resurrection! That's all Paul wants to preach (1 Corinthians 2:2). It's all he wants to boast about (Galatians 6:14). In the book of Acts we find the apostolic preaching tirelessly presents the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the foundation for salvation and life with God. See, for example, 2:22-40; 10:34-38 with Luke 24:25-27, 46. The NT is crammed with this kind of proclamation. Once you begin to look for it you'll be amazed at how much there is of it.

The Church's view of the centrality of Christ's death, burial and resurrection is seen in its insistence on baptism. Those who wanted to become Christians were told to be baptized into his death that they might share that death and experience his resurrection (Romans 6:3-7). Why has baptism remained a constant in the Church's teaching? It mirrored the suffering and resurrection of Christ which are central to the Christian faith and proclamation! People expressed their trust in the crucified and resurrected Christ by being baptized into him (Galatians 3:26-27; Colossians 2:10-12).

The Lord's Supper proclaims these blessed events. The Church has never failed to embrace this ordinance down the centuries. It too

finds its meaning and power in the Christ events and every genuine participant becomes a preacher (1 Corinthians 11:26). When Christians gather and share the Lord's Supper they are acting out, rehearsing and proclaiming the redeeming life and death of Jesus until he comes again. In proclaiming by this ordinance that he is coming again they are reminding the world that he rose from the dead, is alive and reigning and is coming to right all wrongs.

The sinfulness and inability of Man to save himself! This too has been the Church's consistent proclamation. Paul is especially blunt about it:

Man is saved by grace or he isn't saved at all (Romans 11:5-6; Ephesians 2:5, 8-9). Man is not saved by moral performance (Titus 3:4-7). If our lives don't even satisfy our own sinful hearts, how much less would they satisfy a holy God?

THE CHURCH: THE SIGN OF GOD'S REIGN

The Church must get to know who and what she is or she won't know what to do! God's purpose for her is part of her nature! She exists to witness to God's work in Christ. In her unity she exposes the divisiveness of Sin in a fragmented and warring world. In her sinful but forgiven state she visibly proclaims the possibility of forgiveness and life with God for sinful and unforgiven people.



Questions:

1. Does the church save anyone from sin?
2. Ephesians 2:16 says that God reconciled us into ____ ____?
3. Where is fellowship in Christ found?
4. What can congregational assemblies do for us?
5. What strengths do congregations have that individuals don't?
Read Hebrews 10:24-25; 2 Timothy 2:22; Psalm 122:1.
6. What's the foundation for salvation and life with God?
7. The Church's view of the centrality of Christ's death, burial and resurrection is seen in its insistence on baptism. How so?
8. What does the Lord's Supper proclaim?
9. How is man saved?
10. How is the church the sign of God ruling the world?

