

Service Opportunities

Announcements: Ted Wheeler
Usher: Delbert Leavens

RECORD

Attendance: 96

Contribution: \$ 3294.00

Weekly Budget: \$ 2920.00

Thought for The Day

“The distance between heaven and hell is just one choice.”

RICHARD FREDERICK

Church of Christ of Venice

4301 SR 776
Venice, FL 34293

MORNING SERVICES

Opening Prayer: Mike Weber
Songs: David Coffman
Sermon: Ted Wheeler
Closing Prayer: Dick Navarre

EVENING SERVICES

Opening Prayer: Dale Schwartz
Songs: David Coffman
Sermon: Ted Wheeler
Closing Prayer: Glen Law

COMMUNION

Tim Simmons Dale Schwartz
Troy Wheeler Kaden Simmons

Sermons:

Something About That Name, *James 2:1-7*
The Good News #2, *Romans 3:21-31*

Church of Christ of Venice

"A friendly church, proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ"

January 14, 2007

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Hearing God in the 21st Century

by Eric Lyons, M.Min.

In the Garden of Eden, God spoke directly to Adam, commanding him to refrain from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17). Centuries later, “the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision” while he dwelt in the land of Canaan (Genesis 15:1). The patriarch Jacob received a message from Jehovah via the “Angel of God,” Who spoke to him in a dream (Genesis 31:11). The Lord spoke directly to Moses at the burning bush on Mount Horeb (Exodus 3-4). The angel Gabriel brought messages from God to Zacharias, who was dwelling in Jerusalem (Luke 1:11-21), and to Mary, the mother of Jesus, who lived in Nazareth (Luke 1:26-33). Even Saul, who was on his way to Damascus to imprison any Jewish Christians he might find, received a “heavenly vision” (Acts 26:19; cf. Acts 9). A list of God’s appearances and messages to men seems almost endless. No Bible believer can dispute the fact that God has revealed messages to men countless times, either directly or through avenues other than written revelation.

The question often asked today is, “How do we hear God **now**?” Does He still communicate to people through dreams and visions like He did in biblical times? Should we expect Him to call upon us directly at any moment to do some great work, like Saul was called to do? Will God send an angel to me to disclose more revelation than what is given in the Bible? Or, similar to how Eli instructed Samuel, should I “go lie down” and wait on Jehovah to reveal some message to me (1 Samuel 3:9-10). In view of the fact that for millennia God communicated to people either directly or through avenues other than written revelation, why do some today claim that God communicates to man **only** via the Bible? Just how is it that we “hear God” **today**?

According to Hebrews 1:1-2, “God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, **has in**

A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!

Please fill out a blue visitor card so that we might have a record of your visit. If needed, there is a **nursery** available at the rear of the auditorium. **Bible classes** for all ages are available Sundays at 10:00 am and Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. We hope that you will join us for these studies. Please come and worship with us again soon.

Elders

Delbert Leavens
Wayne Vowell
Ted Wheeler

Minister

Ted Wheeler

Sunday Services

Bible Study-10:00 am
Worship-11:00 am
Evening Worship-6:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study-6:30 pm.

Church of Christ

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these last days spoken to us by His Son" (Hebrews 1:1-2, emp. added). In another contrast between the prophets of old (namely, Moses and Elijah) and Jesus, God instructed Peter, James, and John, saying, "This [Jesus] is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **Hear Him!**" (Matthew 17:5, emp. added). Jesus informed His listeners on one occasion of the reason we must "listen" to Him: "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day" (John 12:48, emp. added). For one to be pleasing to God, he must learn and obey the words of Jesus.

But how do we "hear" Jesus? According to the New Testament, people come to know Jesus and His words by way of the of the apostles' teachings. Consider the following line of reasoning from the Scriptures.

- The night of Jesus' betrayal, He prayed to the Father, saying, "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me **through their word**; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me" (John 17:20-21, emp. added). The "their" of verse 20 refers to those for whom Jesus was praying in the preceding verses (17:6-19)—**the apostles**. Jesus prayed for the unity of future believers, which He stated would be based upon the apostles' "word."
- On that same night, Jesus told the apostles: "Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who receives whomever I send receives Me**; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me" (John 13:20, emp. added). After Jesus' resurrection, and before His ascension into heaven, Jesus told these same disciples: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (John 20:21). To receive the apostles' teachings, then, was to receive Jesus.

But how do we receive the apostles' doctrine today? Since all of the apostles are dead, via what method do the apostles speak to us in the twenty-first century? Paul answered this question in Ephesians 3:1-5.

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets (emp. added).

Today, a person can understand "the mystery of Christ" through the written revelation of men like the apostle Paul, who received the Truth "through the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12).

Still, some ask: "Haven't other men who have lived through the centuries, even into the twenty-first century, been inspired by God to reveal His message?" Actually, the Bible indicates that **all Truth necessary for salvation** was revealed during the lifetime of the apostles. The night before Jesus' crucifixion, He promised His apostles that after His departure from them, the Spirit would come and guide them "into all truth" (John 16:13), teaching them "all things," and bringing to their remembrance "all things" that Jesus taught them (John 14:26). After His crucifixion and resurrection (but before He ascended into heaven), Jesus then commanded these same disciples to "make disciples of all the nations...**teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you**" (Matthew 28:19-20, emp. added). The "faith...was **once for all** delivered to the saints" in the first century (Jude 3), so that since that time Christians have had "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3).

Hearing God's will in the twenty-first century is as easy as picking up the providentially preserved Bible and reading what Jesus' "apostles and prophets" recorded for our benefit. God's revelation thoroughly equips us for every good work (cf. 2 Timothy 3:17), so that no modern-day messages, dreams, or visions

Continued on page 3

Our Weekly Budget ... \$ 2820.00

Recently the elders met and set the budget for 2007. Although some of our utilities have increased and we had our scheduled increase in our bond payments - we were able to trim some of the budget and hold the rest of the budget at last year's level. As a result our budget for 2007 is \$ 2820.00 per week.

In 2006, we ran under our budget for a considerable part of the year. In addition to that, we had to replace a large portion of our roof at a cost of over \$28,000. This along with the deficit in our budget used up nearly all of our available funds. In the past, it was these funds that helped us continue to pay our bills during the summer months. Our giving over the next few months will determine whether we will be able to continue to meet our obligations this summer and our overall budget for 2007.

Over the years we have been blessed with a very generous membership. For which each of you are to be commended. We ask each of our members to consider their giving so that we might meet our budget for 2007.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this request.

The Elders

are needed. Nearly two thousand years ago, God revealed "all truth" to the apostles and prophets, who recorded it "by inspiration." This "truth" is the standard by which all people are to live. And anyone teaching a contrary message will suffer eternally (cf. Galatians 1:8-9).

Apologetics Press

<http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/print/1815>

Remember in Prayer

KERRY KEATHLEY

JANET WEBER

DORIS WHITE

CLARENCE RIGGENBACH

PATRICA SMITH

FRANK SMALL

IVA & LEM TURNER

PATRICIA FORD

JEANETTE THOMPSON

TED WHEELER

Mark Your Calendars

✓ Jan. 15-18, 2007: Florida School of Preaching. *32nd Annual Lectureship: **Do You Understand The God Of The Bible?*** The 15th is a holiday and hopefully we can get a group to go up on that Monday.

✓ Jan. 28: Song Service



If you are unable to attend the lectureship you can listen to it live via the internet. Beginning January 15th - just go to the school's web site (www.fsop.net) and click on the link "Listen Live".