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East Columbus Bulletin

A Changeless Church

The church that Jesus built is a changeless church. This concept goes against the thought of modern society who feels the church must change with the times. This is contrary to the teaching of the New Testament, which tells of the church's founding and growth. While some things can change from a human standpoint, the pattern of the church – from the divine side faith, doctrine, and worship – are not changeable if one wants to please God.

When Jesus promised to build His church/kingdom (Matthew 16:18-19), He declared nothing would prevent it from being established (not even death and hades), and once it was established, nothing would be able to destroy it. It was going to be an everlasting and unchangeable church/kingdom as foretold in Daniel 2:44. The writer of Hebrews 12:28 declares, "*we are receiving a kingdom, which cannot be shaken.*" The church and kingdom are the same people, described under two different aspects: the church as a family relationship and the kingdom as subjects under the rule of God. This kingdom/church was established on Mt. Zion, the place where the church was prophesied to begin when the word was proclaimed (Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:2-4) and where the foundation stone was laid (Isaiah 28:16) [which was Jesus Christ – 1 Peter 2:5]. Even though the church was started in

Times of Services

Sunday

10:00 a.m. Worship only

Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

Study and Worship Opportunities

Notice: (Due to the concerns for the COVID -19 virus, services are temporarily limited to worship on **Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m.** and **Wednesday Bible Class - 7:00 p.m.**

News and Notes

- **Home Bound Members:** Mike Butler, Willena Woods.
- **Prayer Requests:** Frank Butler.
- **Others to Remember:** Steve Coburn, Wade McCrary, Jim Ratcliff, Jerry Paschall, Elbert Logan, Mike & Marion Butler, Lee Gallop. Willena Woods is at Windsor Place Room 205.
- **Sick:** Allen & Carolyn Jones' daughter-in-law Leisha suffered two strokes and is undergoing therapy in Columbus. Steve Coburn, son of Steve and LaNette Coburn and his family have been battling COVID-19.
- **Deaths:** We were all saddened by the passing of sister Joyce Manasco on Saturday, August 29th. Funeral arrangements are still pending at this time, due to Mike Manasco having surgery.

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the literal city of Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, it was to be a spiritual church/kingdom made up of people, not buildings.

The church was in God's eternal purpose (Ephesians 3:10-11). After it was established—its spiritual nature, purpose, founding, identity—the church would always exist, not always visible, but always in seed form. As long as the seed exists that produces the church, the church will never pass away. The seed is the word of God, and it will never pass away (Luke 8:11; Matthew 24:35).

Some ignore these facts and want to say that since the world changes, then the church should change to meet the needs of a changing society. The church needs to go forward and not stay in the rut of past centuries. But sometimes change is not the right or the best course to follow.

Let me present what some might think is an enigma (a riddle, something mysterious, hard to understand or explain). There are times in human experience that the best way to go forward is to go backward. This is true of the church. When I say, "go backward," I am not talking about going backward and ignoring the modern advances developed to help us in our physical lives. I am talking about going backward and finding original Christianity as it was taught in the 1st century.

I mean that to go forward in Christianity and at the same time be right with God, one must go back to the beginning of Christianity, back to the New Testament, not the modern creeds, catechisms and doctrines of men. I mean by "backward" to go back and find the original blueprints or rule book and follow it. That way you will restore it to its original order as God ordained it to be. American culture, religiously, does not speak for God; rather it is a departure from divine revelation. The world may change, but God doesn't. change

(James 1:17; Hebrews 6:16-19; Hebrews 1:10-12; 1 Peter 1:24-25).

Hebrews makes it clear that as God's spokesman "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever*" (Hebrews 13:8). Whatever He has revealed and purposed, willed, and said does not change. His purpose and plan do not change in respect to His nature and purpose for salvation and the church.

In Hebrews 1, the writer declares Jesus to be God's final spokesman and, as such, He is superior to all things, even angels (Hebrews 1:10-12; cf. Psalm 102:24-28). The world and all things in it are in a constant flux of change, sometimes for bad, but Christ has not and will not change (Hebrews 13:7). His nature and His purpose have never changed. Jesus is God's final spokesman. He is greater than the angels and is absolutely unchangeable.

So it is with the church He built. The one eternal God planned the church. The only begotten Son of God promised to build His church and be its Savior (Ephesians 5:23). He sent the one Holy Spirit to reveal His plan and inspire men to write His system of faith and doctrine. The one church, one body is the one to which all saved people are added (Acts 2:41, 47). The inspired writers gave us the one book, the New Testament, the standard that must be followed if one wants to be a part of the only church that Jesus recognizes as belonging to Him. Do we need more? Deity is unchangeable, so also the church and the word that produces it.

The kingdom has always existed. It existed in Purpose, in the mind of God. It next existed in Promise, delivered unto the patriarchs. It then existed in Prophecy, and in Preparation. Finally, it came into being in Perfection. It exists today in the word of God, the seed, which produces the church.

Tommy Thornhill, 8-25-17