

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mr. Dowling, Mr. Garner, Mr. Hadley, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Owens, Mrs. Siota, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

Oak Grove Church of Christ Bulletin
2922 NW 76th Terrace, Jennings, FL 32053

November 7, 2021

A Glorious Church

By Derek Long

Ephesians 5:25-27 tells us some things about Christ's love for the church. Christ's love for the church was demonstrated by Him giving Himself for her (Ephesians 5:25). Acts 20:28 speaks about the church being purchased with the blood of Christ. Ephesians 5:26-27 gives us some information about why Jesus would give Himself for the church. Jesus gave Himself for the church, "that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:26-27, NKJV). One of the things Christ wanted the church to be is "a glorious church." What is it that makes the church "a glorious church"?

The glory of the church is not based upon things men might think of as glorious. When the Jews were returning from captivity and rebuilding the temple, the work they were engaged in may not have appeared impressive to men but it was glorious in the sight of God (Zechariah 4:8-10; Haggai 2:1-9). God does not look at things the same way men may look at things (1 Samuel 16:7). Jesus pointed out to the Pharisees,

“what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15, NKJV). Men may determine how glorious a church is based upon the type of building they meet in, how many members they may have, how much money they are capable of raising, what sort of institutions they may support, or how many “programs” they have for people. How glorious a church is to God is not based upon these things. In fact, some of these things which churches engage in like building elaborate buildings, supporting human institutions, and many of the “programs” would not be authorized by the Lord in the first place (Colossians 3:17). A church could be viewed by men as small or weak but be pleasing in the sight of God (Revelation 2:8-11; 3:7-12).

A glorious church in God’s sight is one which consists of members whose lives are holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:27). A church may be respected in the community but be tolerating sin in the lives of its members and not be the glorious church Jesus longs for. Paul rebuked the church at Corinth for not dealing with a brother who persisted in sin (1 Corinthians 5:1-13). Jesus rebuked the church at Thyatira for having members whose lives were not what they ought to be (Revelation 2:18-29). A glorious church is a church filled with people who are committed to righteous living.

A glorious church in God’s sight is one which is doctrinally sound. When one reads about the early church in Jerusalem, we find they were a group of people who, “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” (Acts 2:42, NKJV). In Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus, an emphasis is placed upon holding to sound doctrine (1 Timothy 1:3-4, 10; 4:6, 16; 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 1:13-14; 4:1-5; Titus 1:9; 2:1, 7-8). A church which

departs from following the doctrine of Christ is no longer a glorious church in the sight of the Lord. In Revelation 2:12-17, Jesus addresses the church at Pergamos and rebukes them for their toleration of those who would teach other doctrines. God intends for the church to be, “the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15, NKJV), but the church cannot be the pillar and ground of the truth if it compromises the truth. Failure to abide in the doctrine of Christ results in people being separated from God. 2 John 9-11 teaches, “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds” (NKJV). Paul wrote about his concern that the Corinthians would not be a church which Jesus would be pleased with because they followed a different teaching. In 2 Corinthians 11:2-4 he writes, “For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted - you may well put up with it!” (NKJV). When an individual or a church fails to abide in the doctrine of Christ, they no longer have a relationship with God. Moral and doctrinal purity are important if the church is going to be the glorious church which Jesus desires.