

The Prattmont Church of Christ is just what the name suggests, a church that belongs to Christ. We are not a denomination; we are simply a group of Christians trying very hard to practice the teachings of our Head, Jesus Christ. The New Testament offers a complete pattern for what each local church should be like—its organization, its worship, its work, etc. We are committed to following that pattern. We cordially invite you to attend our services. We would also welcome any comments or questions about this bulletin.

**TIMES OF SERVICES:**

*Sunday*

Bible Study..... 9:00 A.M.  
 Worship ..... 10:00 A.M.  
 Training Class .....5:00 P.M.  
 Worship.....6:00 P.M.

*Wednesday:*

Bible Study ..... 7:00 P.M.



*Weekly Bulletin*  
 January 12, 2020

**Situation Slaves**

*by Dan Shipley*

Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent. Three times he told the Jews, “I find no fault in him” (John 18:38; 19:4, 6). Still, “he delivered Him to them to be crucified” (John 19:16). Why? Because he gave in to the pressure of the moment. He was influenced more by prevailing circumstances than by what he knew was right. Pilate was a slave to the situation.

A similar situation is recorded in John 12. “Among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they be put out of the synagogue” (v. 42). They cared more about pleasing the people around them than pleasing God. They, too, became situation slaves.

Peter was another who relented to peer-pressure. Here’s what he said **before** he denied Jesus: “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You” (Matthew 26:35). But, just a short time later, when he was warming himself by the enemies’ campfire,

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he denied Jesus three times. Like Pilate and the rulers of John 12, he was a slave to his situation. And this wasn't the only time. Peter repeated his mistake at Antioch by refusing to eat with the Gentiles in the presence of certain Jews, "fearing those who were of the circumcision" (Galatians 2:12). To make matters worse, he influenced others to do the same: "And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him..." (v.13). Situation slaves seldom serve alone.

Shame on Peter and Pilate and the rulers! Yes, shame on them, but shame on us, too, because we're just as guilty—whenever we yield to the pressure of the situation; whenever we seek the favor of our peers instead of God; whenever our fear of God is replaced by the fear of man; whenever we conform to the world (Romans 12:1) just to make it easier on ourselves. We don't have to hear the rooster crow to know that we have denied Christ just as surely as Peter did.

What do we need to do? First, we need to avoid deliberately placing ourselves in compromising and tempting situations. This means mean avoiding such places and people (1 Corinthians 15:33) that we know will put undue pressure on us. The broad way is filled with former Christians who thought they could run with the world and walk with Christ at the same time. However, when it is not possible to isolate, we must insulate. We must develop the kind of character that repels every appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22); the kind that yields only to God and His will and not to the pressure of the moment.

## Dependence Upon God

*by Robert Turner*

When the Israelites wanted a king "like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:4-5), the problem was much deeper than the name by which the world would call their ruler, or the form of government. Moses had told them the time would come when they could have a king (Deuteronomy 17:14-20); but it was to be one that God would choose (vs. 15) and he would be the means of God's rule over them (1 Samuel 12:12-15). Their basic sin was the lack of dependence upon God.

The same fault was apparent with regard to the Jews chosen status. In Romans 9 Paul points out that Ishmael and Esau were also descendants of Abraham, but Isaac and Jacob were chosen—wholly dependent upon God. The lineage of Christ was God's business—and arguing with Him was like clay arguing with the Potter.

Paul then asks, "What if God..." chose to show mercy to the Gentiles as well as to Jews? "What if God..." made Christ the testing stone—so that He saves those who accept Christ, and rejects those who reject Christ. It is His business; who are we to complain? This chapter does not teach particular election. It emphasizes our dependence upon God—who will save only those who put their trust in Him.

Salvation is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8), something promised. (Check multitudes of "promise" in Galatians 3:8-25 and 4:21-31). A "promise" is a statement of intent which prompts expectation and hope. The Jews failed to please God when they forgot their dependent position and acted as if God owed them honor. We will likewise fail to please God if we forget our constant dependence upon Him and His gift, and begin to act as if He owed us something.

We are to beseech Him for daily bread (Matthew 6:11) and be not anxious for other needs (vs. 31-34). We may cast all our cares upon Him (1 Peter 5:6-7) but this requires that we humble ourselves "under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." There is no room for demands. We come before God as sinners, unworthy; "Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me." Without Him, we are nothing.