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- Audio Sermons
- Bible-based Articles
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- We can also be found on Facebook (Jones Road Church of Christ) and Twitter (@jonesroadchurch). Email: study@jonesroadchurch.org

Please Join us for Bible Study and Worship

Sundays

9:30am - Bible Study

10:20am & 5pm - Worship

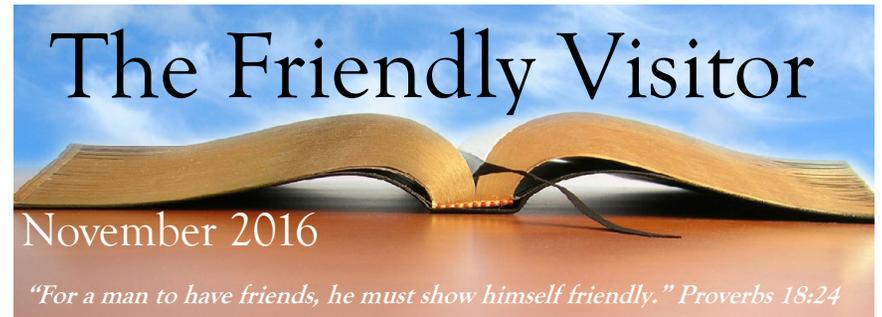
Wednesdays

7pm - Bible Study

Jones Road Church of Christ

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"As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious."
1 Peter 2:2-3



Why Aren't They Mentioned?

By John R. Gibson

Why are the following never mentioned in the New Testament in connection with the work and worship of local churches?

- ◆ **Worshiping under electric lights?** While they used many lamps in Acts 20:8, since electric lights did not become available for common usage until many centuries after the close of the New Testament, we are not surprised by the complete lack of mention in the Scriptures.
- ◆ **Churches buying a preacher a plane ticket to go preach the gospel in other areas?** While men were sent out to preach (Acts 13:1-3), they didn't get on airplanes because it would be about 1900 years before the Wright brothers would take off from Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

- ◆ **Prayers to and through Mary?** This one is different, for there are many references to prayer and Mary was alive when the church began.
- ◆ **What about church-sponsored athletics?** Athletic endeavors were common in the first century and are even used as an illustration in 1 Corinthians 9:24-26, so the absence of church-sponsored recreation from the New Testament can't be explained by saying games are a modern invention.


We could keep going with a number of things, but these should be enough to establish the point. We don't expect to read in the New Testament of technologies which did not exist in the first century, but when we notice the complete absence of things which would have been avail-

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able to these early disciples, it should cause us to think on God's plan and purpose for local churches. Matthew 7:21-23 makes it crystal clear that man's view of his religious duties may differ sharply from that of God.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

Rather than seeing the local church as an entity to be guided by apostolic teaching (1 Corinthians 4:17) and set in order by the revealed word of God (Titus 1:5), many churches today have been molded into social and political organizations designed to fit the perceived needs of people. Instead of being "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15), churches have become centers of secular education, the focus of family recreation, a place to fill the belly or meet with others wanting to lose weight, pillars of political activism, and a host of other things never even hinted at in the New Testament.

When it comes to worship, little effort is made to search for God's revealed truth on the matter (John 4:23-24) and then to abide in the teachings of Christ (2 John 1:9); instead, worship has become an entertainment experience intended more to bring pleasure to the participants than to praise the One whom we are instructed to worship. When the Corinthians had corrupted the Lord's Supper, the apostle responded with a number of admonitions and instructions about what was to be done in the assembly, what was to be done at home, and the proper ritual to follow in remembering Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:17-34). We might also consider the regulations imposed in 1 Corinthians 14 when the saints turned from the divine order to doing their own thing. Instructions were given regarding who could speak and when, and 1 Corinthians 14:40 concluded with the admonishment that all things be "done decently and in order," which is vastly different than worship as you desire.

If we find ourselves doing things not found in the New Testament, we need to stop and ask ourselves these questions:

- ◆ Are we still heeding the will of the Father (Matthew 7:21) while availing ourselves of some tool or help such as electric lights which was not available in the first century?
- ◆ Or have we gone beyond the doctrine of Christ (2 John 1:9) to practice things different from the "order" of the New Testament (Titus 1:5; 1 Corinthians 4:17; et al)?

"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."

Galatians 1:8-9

"For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Revelation 22:18-19

From the Jones Road Facebook Page

"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith...commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." 1 Timothy 4:1-5

The Lord has richly blessed us, but never forget that our right to enjoy these blessings is contingent upon our giving thanks to Him. Let's give genuine thanks for the good food our Father bestows upon us.

"God is love." 1 John 4:8

"Our God is a consuming fire." Hebrews 12:29

We must see both. To see only the love can lead to carelessness and complacency, while to see only the fire produces discouragement and despair. Seeing both motivates us to wholeheartedly serve the Lord with both reverence and confidence.

If we can truly understand and appreciate what was done for us at the cross, our lives will forever be changed.

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20