

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

Some Things That May Surprise You About The church of Christ!

By Ernest Finley

1. You may be surprised that everyone in the assembly is invited to participate in the singing portion of the worship services. We have no choirs, special groups or solos. We use no pianos, drums, organs or guitars, etc. All music is a capella (vocal) as the New Testament indicates it was in the apostolic days (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Contrary to what you may have heard, the singing is good singing, soul stirring and encouraging!
2. You may be surprised that visitors are NOT requested to make a contribution. Local members contribute on the first day of the week, each and every week. This is done without demand in the form of “dues” or “assessments.” Free-will giving on the basis of other New Testament principles is impressed as the plan of scriptural giving. No pie-suppers, crab feeds, raffles, or money raising schemes are used! We do not bum or beg from those outside the Lord’s own family. All contributions, if the Lord’s Will is respected, are freely given.
3. If you visit with us on any Lord’s Day (the “*first day of the week*”), you may be surprised to find that we commemorate the death of Christ by partaking of the Lord’s supper, which was instituted by Christ and commanded and taught by Paul, the Apostle (Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-26). In the first century, “*upon the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread*” (Acts 20:7). Therefore, since every week has a first day, it follows that the Lord’s death must be commemorated every week! Not once every six months, or only on “Easter Sunday”!
4. You may be surprised that no hyper-emotional appeals are made. You will not be urged to act or move in response to the invitation of the Lord until you have sufficient knowledge of the Truth, to serve as a basis for your faith (Jn. 20:30, 31; Acts 16:32).
5. It may surprise you that most Christians attend every assembly of the church because they want to, enjoy it, know it is commanded and because they realize that assembling to worship is vital to their spiritual growth and service to God (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25).
6. You may be surprised to know that we have no man-made prayer book, no church-authorized discipline, manual or creed and no ritualistic worship (2 Tim. 3:16, 17 and 4:1-4).
7. You may be surprised at the manner of our services. You will not hear shouting, screaming or any other manifestation of unbridled emotions. No one will fall out in a faint, roll around on the floor or speak in “unknown” tongues. You will see that the admonition of the apostle Paul that all things “*be done decently and in order,*” is sincerely observed (1 Cor. 14:40).
8. You may be surprised that the service is NOT conducted by a man claiming to be a part of a special priesthood. Since the Lord Jesus Christ is our High Priest and all Christians now make up a general priesthood and can themselves approach God and offer their prayers and sacrifices, it should be evident that no special earthly priesthood is necessary today (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Heb. 4:14-16).
9. With virtually all denominations having earthly headquarters, it may surprise you that the church of Christ has neither earthly headquarters nor an earthly head. Christ alone is head of His body and the church’s headquarters is in heaven, where Christ now sits and rules with ALL authority (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22, 23; Phil. 3:20, 21).

10. Contrary to what you may have heard, you may be surprised to know that the church of Christ is not intent on condemning everyone to Hell, but invites all to come to our Lord in obedient faith, in faithful service and worship and in Godly living, that one may enjoy the benefits of His grace and strive for the hope of eternal life (Titus 2:11, 12; 1 Jn. 2:25).

11. Finally, you may be surprised to learn that the Lord's church is neither Catholic, Protestant, sectarian nor denominational. The Lord's church in the first century was obviously none of these. If we are correct in our claim that we follow His Word alone (admitting that not all "*churches of Christ*" can honestly make this claim) and in every way seek to be simple New Testament Christians, then we are the same as it was in the first century. Being of the same head, doctrine and practice results in being the same body the Lord purchased or built and therefore antedates both Catholicism and all Protestant denominations (Acts 20:28; Matt. 16:18).

We greatly desire the unity for which Jesus prayed, but, we believe that scriptural unity is found only in Christ (Jn. 17:20-21). Both Catholicism and denominational sectarianism stands opposed to this unity. We stand upon the Word of our Lord alone, respecting His authority in everything and speaking only as He directs us if we "*all be one*" in Christ as He so fervently prayed (Matt. 28:18; 1 Pet. 4:11). **PLEASE ATTEND OUR SERVICES AND SEE FOR YOURSELF! – Washington Street church of Christ. ■**

Essential Church Members

By Greg Gwin

In every healthy congregation you will find certain people that comprise the essential "heart and soul" of the church. Note...

They are always present at the assemblies. They make it a point to never miss any of the services. If it is necessary to make changes, adjust schedules, suffer inconvenience or simply miss out on other activities, they will do so because they are committed to being present every time the doors are open.

These folks actually look for opportunities to serve. If there is work to be done, Bible classes to be taught, weak members to be encouraged, sick folks to be visited, menial chores to be fulfilled, they will step up and get the job done. They are not waiting to be told what to do. Instead they are searching for more and more that can be accomplished.

In matters of personal purity and morality, these people are setting a worthy example. They don't look for "loopholes" to justify untoward behavior. Rather they "go the extra mile" to make sure that there is not even an "*appearance of evil*" (1 Thess. 5:22). In the clothes they wear, the language they use, the places they go, the movies and TV they watch, these brethren are determined to do the right thing.

Most surveys indicate that 80% of what is contributed in any church comes from about 20% of the membership. The kind of people we're describing here are among that 20%. They are truly sacrificial in their giving.

When conflicts arise in the church, these people can be counted on to help make resolution. They are not the sort to get their feelings hurt easily. Instead, they work hard to address situations that—unheeded—could lead to serious division. They stand firmly and without compromise for the truth, they love their brethren, and they care about the church.

More could be said, but the picture is pretty clear. Local churches depend on these members. In fact, without them a congregation will never prosper. Now, the simple question is: Are you one of these "essential" church members? Think! — *Collegue Church of Christ Bulletin*, July 7, 2017. ■

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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