

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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Some Facts About the Church #3

By Brian Meade

There are many beliefs and opinions in the world today about the church that are simply inaccurate. However, the Bible gives us the facts that can be proven in the scriptures. It is not for us to speculate or form opinions separate and apart from these facts. Therefore, there is nothing that an open Bible can't fix.



V. The Church is All-Sufficient, Not Dependent.

The definition of sufficient is having “*enough to meet a need or purpose*,” When God planned and built the church, He built it in such a way that God's people (the church) would have everything they would need to do the work He gave them to do. This is what is meant by the church being “all-sufficient,” as the church does not rely or depend on any outside organizations or institutions to carry out its mission.

Other terms such as *independent* and *autonomous*, also describe the local church at each locality. Autonomy is defined as, “*Self-governing*.” This describes what the Bible teaches concerning the elder's (or bishop's) limited oversight of the local church to which they are a member. Notice how Peter describes their oversight, as he says, “*Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight.....*” Elders of one local church do not have any power or authority to oversee the work of other local churches, as each church should have their own overseers (Acts 14:23), thus they are independent.

In God's arrangement, there is nothing higher or lower than the local church. Unless we learn from the lessons of the past, we are doomed to repeat the same sins. Men began from the 2nd century onward to give bishops more power than the scriptures allow. Bishops began to control not just the congregation to which they belonged to, but several in an area, called a Diocese. This system of church arrangement violated church autonomy and attempted to activate the universal church in its human scheme.

Brethren make the same mistake with the Missionary Society, when they thought that more was needed than the local church in the area of evangelism to the whole world. Brethren made the mistake and sin of centralizing funds through the institution of the first American Christian Missionary Society. Alexander Campbell and others, thought the local church was not capable of reaching the lost in every nation without an institution to manage the funds and send out preachers. It may have never occurred to them that the burden of evangelizing the whole world did not rest on the shoulders of just American churches, but local churches in and of all the nations.

The local church does not have to have *sending* and *receiving* churches to pool funds into a bigger pot, but each church use its own resources to evangelize. Later on after the Missionary Society, came the advent of church supported Colleges and Orphan Homes, and Church Sponsoring Arrangements like the “*Herald of Truth*”— which is parallel to the Missionary Society in that it pools funds from other churches to the hands of one eldership (equally wrong).

Incidentally, the Baptist Church also believes in church autonomy, but they fail to practice it. They, like liberal brethren, give autonomy only lip-service.

VI. The Church is One Body in Christ, Not Divided (A Denomination).

Paul told the church at Ephesus, *“being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.”* This passage refers to unity and the oneness of the church and the need to preserve it.

Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, *“I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.”* (John 17:20-21) The way that we are one is just like the Father and Son were in agreement in aims, purposes, and goals. Jesus never dissented from anything God the Father desired of Him in doing His will (John 8:29; 12:49-50). If there were differences of doctrine or division at all over anything God expressed to His Son, They would NOT have been one! And men need to have the same attitude and give up anything that goes against the unity and oneness of Christ’s body.

Denominationalism is fundamentally wrong because it assumes that God will accept a unity based upon division (diversity). The whole Denominational system not only allows everyone a right to believe whatever one chooses to believe and call it *the truth*, but celebrates that right! *“Join the church of your choice,”* is the slogan of our day. But the Bible holds in contrast to this spirit— a spirit of saying and doing God’s will the same exact way in every church (I Corinthians 1:10; 4:17; Philippians 3:16-17), teach no other doctrine (Galatians 1:6-9; I Timothy 1:3), and when men teach a different doctrine they are no longer standing for truth, but error (2 Peter 2:1-3; I John 4:1; 2 John 9-11).

(Conclusion-BM)

The Attire Of The Christian

By Kent E Heaton Sr.

There is a lot of interest in schools to impose a certain dress code and in many cases have a uniform dress for all students. Educators understand the importance of what young people wear and what many times they fail to wear as having an impact upon the environment of the schools. As from the beginning, the attire worn by an individual says a lot about who they are.

The attire of the Christian is a very important part of their character. Having obeyed the gospel of Jesus, we have given our lives in service to Jesus the Christ. This means we should no longer seek to dress as the world does, but rather to glorify God with our bodies. This point is made clear in I Corinthians 6:19-20, *“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*

The Lord wants His disciples to know that their bodies are members of Christ and what we do with our bodies matter to Him. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit whom we received from God when we were baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38-39; 5:32). We are to glorify God with our bodies and we *“are not our own.”*

Disciples of Christ made a covenant with God to put Him first in their lives in everything. That covenant is to regard our lives as complete before Him and in accordance with His will. The argument people use about having the right to dress as they desire is not acceptable to God. God said, *“You are not your own.”* Why? Because Jesus Christ died to redeem us and we were *“bought at a price.”* The price of the life of God’s Son is why we have no right to dictate to God what we shall wear or what we shall put on. He— and He alone— has that right! Paul then states, *“Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*

Does it matter what I wear? What does my attire say about me? Consider what the Bible says about what statement is made in what I wear. Proverbs 7:10 describes the harlot in this fashion. *“And there a woman met him, with the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.”*

The attire of a harlot is the statement made about a harlot regarding the way she dresses. Judah thought Tamar was a harlot by the way of her apparel in Genesis 38:13-15. Isaiah described the children of God in their wantonness and wickedness: *“Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a jingling with their feet.”* (Isaiah 3:16)

The truth is very clear— even to the minds of people today— we show our lives by the way we dress.

The attire of the Christian is not based on the world’s fashions. But the attire of the Christian is found in the love of God and obedience to Jesus Christ. 1 Timothy 2:9-10 says, *“In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.”*

Godly apparel is glorifying to God and what many wear in the world today does not glorify God. *“You are bought at a price”* needs to be posted on our mirror to remind us of that fact! Christians dress modestly!

News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Betty Hurst, Steve Switcher, Gail Armstrong, Nicky Curtis, Janis Johnson, Cheryl Ridgeway, Elmo Wilson, Martha Little, Kimberly Mccullough, Martha Norvell (in Ripley Rehab) Charlene Newborn.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Russell Briggs
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon: *"Apostasy Versus Steadfastness"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service: Jerry Kennemur
The Book of Luke (Mike Willis)
Page 65, Question #1

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Fred Johnson
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Tony Whittemore
Acts 20:28-31
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Lord's Table: Paul Busby
Assisting: Chris Callahan & Nathan Meade
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon: *"How Apostasy Happens in the Church Today"*
Closing Prayer: Lee Busby

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

January 24th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Russell Briggs
1 & 2 Samuel (Mike Willis)
Page 21, Question #11
Invitation: Dan Cottrell
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Closing Prayer: Brian Meade