

Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2023.07.23

Website: oakgrovecofc.org

Facebook: facebook.com/oakgrovecofc

Sermon recordings

Click or type the short URL, or visit oakgrovecofc.org/Recordings/.

Speaker-AM: Rob Moreland

Title: But God

Recording:

tinyurl.com/RobButGod

Speaker-PM: Steve Helterbrand

Title: Where Is God?

Recording:

tinyurl.com/SteveWhere

Summary

We

- Will have issues
- We are powerless
- We were dead
- Might hesitate to answer God's call

But God

- Will help us prevail
- Is powerful
- Gave us life
- Is waiting and ready to save

Acts 17:23-31

"for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,



Articles

Accomplishing God's will on God's Terms, 07/17/2023 By Isaac Helterbrand

In 1 Samuel 4:1-22 a grave thing happens to the children of Israel. First, they are defeated in battle and four-thousand soldiers die. When they are defeated, they try again, this time bringing the ark of the covenant with them. The idea was that having the ark of the covenant join them in battle would invoke God to fight for them. However, God was not with them in the battle and they were defeated again! This time losing thirty-thousand foot-soldiers and losing the ark of the covenant. The Philistines took the ark of the covenant back to their territory and completed a total defeat of Israel. It was not until 2 Samuel 6:1-19 that the ark of the covenant was brought back to the land of Israel. When David and the people of Israel try the first time to bring the ark back from the Philistines, they transport it on a cart. This was not the way that the Lord had commanded the ark be moved. When the oxen pulling the cart stumbled, a man named Uzzah reached out to stabilize the ark, even though touching the ark was against the law of God. The Lord struck Uzzah down and killed him. David was afraid of the Lord after that outbreak against Uzzah and determined to bring the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem a different way.

“So, David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness. And so it was, when those bearing the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, that he sacrificed oxen and fatted sheep.” (2 Samuel 6:12-13).

The second time David tried to bring the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem he was successful because of the reverent way he treated the task. All too often, when people want to worship God or do something that He deems a good deed, we want to try to do it our own way. The problem here is that God expects us to serve Him His way, not our way. Examples of this would include anything that goes beyond or goes away from God's word. Instrumental music in worship, missionary societies, seminaries, etc. All practices that we do not have a command, approved example, or an absolutely necessary inference from the scriptures, are not authorized by the Lord and will not be pleasing to Him.

“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.” (2 John 1:9).

It is of utmost importance that we abide in the doctrine of Christ, not moving to the right or left, not adding to it or taking away from it. We must “understand what the will of the Lord is” (Ephesians 5:17), and obey it. Be a part of a group of Christians that believes this and practices the will of the Lord only. We are to accomplish God's will and accomplish it on His terms.

Do We Find Repenting Hard to Do? July 17, 2023 by Perry Hall

Do we find it hard to deeply and truly repent because we are basically a "good person" who has literally been "going to church" our whole life? How do we get better at doing the basic and primary requirement of repenting because the kingdom of God is near (Matthew 3:2)?

Why else do we have difficulty truly repenting? Biblically, children are "safe" having been born without sin; and are by God's design not yet sinners. But when that time comes, when we become accountable for our actions and sins, where do we begin?

Process this, that no one is literally a "Christian" their "whole life".

We haven't even literally been "religious" our "whole life", since religion etymologically and therefore literally means, "again-connected" as in a ligament becoming reconnected through surgery.

We haven't even been "in the church" our whole life because only those cleansed by blood are in the church of God which is purchased by Jesus (Acts 20:28). We aren't "in the church" of Christ unless we are "in the body" of Christ.

So, what does that leave? What have we been doing our whole life, from childhood to now, before becoming a blood-bought Christian? I'm speaking here to a particular type of person and not to those raised without God.

Have we been "raised in the pew"; and when the time comes, we walk out the door because we are basically a "good person" who has literally been "going to church" our whole and don't see the need for forgiveness? No one can be forgiven without repenting! Have we processed that no one is good (Romans 3:10-12)?

If not raised in the pew, then what?

Do we see how we are being prepared - or have been prepared - by godly parents raising us up in the training and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4), to be raised up in Christ? The day of preparation becomes realized when the day of repentance comes and we are baptized to become a disciple and Christian. Then we start preparing to live in God's goodness for our whole remaining life.

Jesus told a very religious person, "You are not far from the kingdom of God" (Mark 12:34). Repentance is made harder when we think we already are where we need to be.