

Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2023.12.03

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Sermon recordings

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

Speaker-AM: Steve Helterbrand

Title: You Are Not Alone

Recording:

oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/you-are-not-alone

Speaker-PM: Kraig Benney

Title: Authority

Recording:

oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/basics-of-authority

**Fear not, for
I am with you;
be not dismayed,
for I am your God;
I will strengthen you,
I will help you,
I will uphold you
with my righteous
right hand.**

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I S A I A H 4 1 : 1 0

**WHEN JESUS CAME NEAR,
HE SPOKE TO THEM. HE SAID,
“ALL AUTHORITY IN
HEAVEN AND ON EARTH
HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME.”**

Be Strong And Courageous, 11/30/23 By Sam Bunyard

Being a successor to the man who led the Israelites out of Egyptian slavery, received the law on thunderous Mount Sinai, and penned the first five books of the Bible would certainly be a daunting assignment! The timing at which Joshua began his leadership duty just added to the pressure – it was time to enter the promised land and go to war.

Before the period of conquest began, God spoke to Joshua and said, “No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you” (Josh. 1:2-5). What a comfort it must have been to be reassured by the Creator! But the supportive relationship between God and Joshua was not one-sided.

God told Joshua, “Only be strong, and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous” (Josh. 1:7-8).

God’s support and help to Joshua was conditional upon Joshua’s obedience to God. The same is true for us today! Romans 8 describes a relationship very similar to what God proposed to Joshua – that no amount of outside forces are powerful enough to separate us! Romans 9-11 demonstrates that our disobedience severs that bond.

We face a daunting task in facing this world, but if we ‘Dare to be like Joshua’, we can share in his comfort. “Be strong and courageous; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Josh. 1:9).



Becoming A Church Member 11/30/23 By Robert Turner

For years gospel preachers have taught “one does not join the church”; and members have parroted “one does not join the church; one is added to the church.” The distinction is valid if properly understood, but I fear it is not.

Receiving Christ gives one “power to become” a child of God (Jn 1:12). A baby does not “join” the status of son or daughter – it “becomes” a child, and a member of the family. Coming into Christ one becomes a member of Christ’s body – a member of Christ’s church (Ep 2:13-23). One does not become a Christian and then, at some later date, “join” the body of Christ. One becomes both a Christian and a member of the church by one and the same process. The “church” of which we are writing is, of course, that one great universal body of saints – those called out of darkness by His gospel.

But when you have “become” a member of the body of Christ (His ‘church’ in the universal sense) you will, if possible, “join” with other disciples in your worship and service of God, as Paul sought to “join” with the disciples in Jerusalem (Ac 9:26-28). These local groups were also known as “churches” (1 Co 1:2, Ro 16:16) and exemplify the one and only church organization known in the New Testament (Ph 1:1).

The true church of Christ on earth today is not a group of congregations bound together in some “church-hood” by name, creed, or practice. The true church today is, as always, the body of called out people who acknowledge Christ as their Head and serve Him faithfully. If, in your community, there are true disciples of Christ “joined together” to do the Lord’s bidding, they constitute a local “church of Christ”. But don’t be fooled by a name. Test their teaching a practice by the Word of God. The true church welcomes such investigation. They urge you to “become” a Christian, and “join” them.