

# Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2024.10.27

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## Sermon recordings

Click or type the short URL, or visit [oakgrovecofc.org/Sermons](http://oakgrovecofc.org/Sermons).

**Speaker-AM:** Steve Helterbrand

**Title:** What's Wrong With The Church Part 1

**Recording:**



**Speaker-PM:** Steve Helterbrand

**Title:** What's Wrong With The Church Part 2

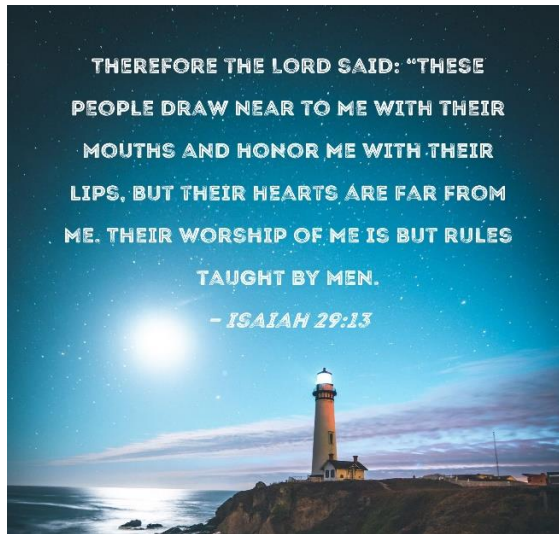
**Recording:**



THEREFORE THE LORD SAID: "THESE  
PEOPLE DRAW NEAR TO ME WITH THEIR  
MOUTHS AND HONOR ME WITH THEIR  
LIPS, BUT THEIR HEARTS ARE FAR FROM  
ME. THEIR WORSHIP OF ME IS BUT RULES

TAUGHT BY MEN.

- ISAIAH 29:13



## Articles

### The Songs of Ascents, 10/26/2024 by Terry Wane Benton

Psalms 120-134

There is a special grouping of Psalms that were often used to prepare the Israelites for making the worship at the temple very special. It was like anticipating the worship to ensure it would not be a vain and wasted moment. You sang or meditated on what would be accomplished or enjoyed by ascending that mountain to the place of worship. You prepared your mind and heart for the occasion. As you “ascended” up the mountain to the Jerusalem temple, these were songs you would sing and reflect upon, and these meditations prepared your mind and heart for the worship occasion.

A great thing we might learn from this is that we too might better engage our hearts for true worship (John 4:21-24) if we prepared to ascend with our hearts to the “heavenly Jerusalem.” There are things we need to get out of the way before we can worship acceptably, like critical attitudes toward others or unresolved conflicts that block goodwill. Jesus said to settle things with your brother “*and then come and offer your gift*” (Matthew 5:23f). Can you ascend immediately into “true worship” in spirit and truth with unresolved conflicts eating at your heart? God sees this and expects us to come into assembled worship with a clear mind and conscience and with determination to put our best into the songs, prayers, communion, fellowship, and edification of listening and learning.

Have we ascended the spiritual mountain of worship if we always go home empty? Isn't it emptiness that we brought, and therefore emptiness we return home with?

In the coming days and weeks, let us learn something from these Psalms of Ascents that might help us learn to ascend, draw nearer, and come better prepared for our assemblies so that we are always bringing something **to** the assembly, and what we bring helps us to return home justified before God, with a heart filled with good things. If you put nothing in, you get nothing out! If you put great things into even the preparations of heart, you will get a lot out of the assembled worship of the Lord's House, His great church that He gave His all for!

Let us learn to ascend to greater heights of faith, hope, and love and to worship God sincerely in spirit and truth!