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A Model Church

giving the proceeds to the church for "distribution" to every man who had need (Acts 4:31-35).

The Jerusalem church is worthy of imitation by all who claim to belong to Jesus. She faced many of the same challenges and crises that churches have faced through the centuries. In her experiences are found the Divine answers to modern questions and religious division. Whether persecution, doctrinal purity, worship, or terms of membership is the issue we can return to the church in Jerusalem for the answer. *Credit: www.padfield.com* ♦

The saints in Jerusalem gave until they impoverished themselves for the cause of Christ and their brethren (Heb. 10:32-34; Acts 11:27-30; Rom. 15:25-27). They did not regard their possessions as belonging unto themselves, but as belonging to their brethren (Acts 2:44; 4:32).

The church of Christ

Has:

- One Builder – Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:9-11)
- One Purchaser – Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28)
- One Head – Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:22-23)
- One Savior – Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:23)
- One destiny – eternal salvation (Eph. 5:23)

IS:

- The spiritual body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23)
- The kingdom of Christ (Matt. 16:18-19; Heb. 12:28)
- The depository of those saved (Acts 2:47)
- One body, not many bodies (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23)
- One way to be added to the church:
- One must believeth that Christ is the Son of God (Jno. 8:24)
- One must repent of sins (Lk. 13:3)
- One must confess that Christ is the Son of God (Rom. 10:9-10)
- One must be baptized into Christ (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27) ♦

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
- Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
- Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
- Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
- Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

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How to Contact Us

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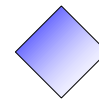


Schedule of Assembly

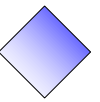
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am  
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am  
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm\*

\*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

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# The Voice of Truth



March 4, 2012

"Charges to Christians"

By Jimmy Pettigrew

One of the real problems of Christianity is a lack of dedicated service to Christ. You must serve Christ zealously and faithfully. Living the Christian life is pictured in the New Testament as: warfare (Eph. 6:10-18), an athletic event (1 Cor. 9:24-26; Gal. 5:7). A good start, so important in a race, does not insure a successful finish. Christians need to remember these charges for running the Christian race.

(1) "...stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13). Paul exhorts the Corinthians to stand fast. Meaning, stand fast in the truth (Jno. 17:17), God's word (Psa. 119:9), the New Testament (2 Cor. 3:6), the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16), the doctrine or teaching of Christ (2 Jno. 9). This is the urgency needed by all saints! We must prove our worth as a soldier of Christ and fight the spiritual warfare that Christians must wage! Stand fast in the faith, always be eager to defend (1 Pet. 3:15) and contend (Jude 3). Stand for things which Christ stood for, stand for the things which Christ died for, stand and ask for the old paths (Jer. 6:16).

(2) "Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22). When one has learned what is good or true, and what is evil and false, he should hold fast the true and abstain from the evil. In 1 Timothy 6:11-12, follow a discourse on a number of evils and the disastrous results that come upon those that follow such things. Paul addresses Timothy as a "man of God", indicating that he is one who is committed to God in this life. In view of the evils just mentioned (1 Timothy 6), Paul urges Timothy to "flee these things" (vs. 11). There are times when running is not cowardly, but wise. It is absurdity, foolishness and madness to remain in the presence of temptation needlessly. It is not wisdom to deliberately place one's soul in jeopardy. When Joseph was approached by the wife of Potiphar for the purpose of fornication, Joseph fled the scene completely. We cannot always avoid temptations, but we do not have to remain in their presence. "Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not

travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on" (Prov. 4:14-15).

(3) "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (Jno. 14:15). This says in effect, that love for the Lord is evidenced in keeping His commandments. If you'll keep on loving Me, you'll keep my commandments. "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keep-eth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him" (1 Jno. 2:3-5). "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jno. 15:9-10). This love for God is not simply an emotion. It is a disposition that seeks the glory of God. It is an attitude of submission to His will. It is the desire to do His bidding! Love is not only obeying commands; it is having them! "He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him" (Jno. 14:21). Love MUST be expressed in obedience! Such glorifies the Son and thus, glorifies the Father. Do you love the Father? Do your actions show that you do?

(4) "...Be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" (1 Pet. 1:15). We are encouraged to live lives of complete dedication to God. As the song we sing, we need to:

Take time to be Holy,  
speak oft with thy Lord;  
Abide in Him always,  
And feed on His word.

Are we taking time to be holy when we want worship services shortened? Or, when we want the sermon not to be over twenty minutes? We want the prayers short, the

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songs few. What's the big hurry? Are we in a hurry to visit the sick and erring after services? No, we want to go to a restaurant and eat a delicious meal, watch TV or whatever we desire. If the Lord's Supper is served first, some brethren will partake of it and leave on a trip the minute after they partake! Is this taking time to be holy, or is this taking time for our own desires? We need to forget the cares of

the world and take time to be holy! We should study God's word and pray every day.

The truth of God has been placed in the care of those who love the Lord. It is an awesome responsibility, so let us handle it aright, love it, obey it, live it and stand fast for it! ♦

### “Single-Mindedness” By Jarrod Jacobs

*"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this **one thing I do**, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).* With these words, the apostle Paul declares that there was not anything that would keep him from obeying God's will. The third chapter of Philippians details Paul's coming from the tribe of Benjamin, his zealousness in the Jews' religion, and how he came out of that to live for Christ (counting his former labors as "loss" and "dung," Phil. 3:8). At this point, he does not count himself as to have "apprehended" (he does not possess it, yet), but he forgot the past and is doing only "ONE THING" now, and that is, pressing forward "for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." This godly man is intent on reaching Heaven regardless of the consequences. This was first and foremost on his mind!

When we consider and examine ourselves, are we as single-minded as he? Is reaching Heaven first and foremost on our minds? Do we think about Heaven very often? Do we think about Heaven daily? Weekly? Ever? Notice that with the apostle, this was the "one thing" on his mind. It was not one among many things! This was the ONLY THING! His highest goal, and greatest thought was reaching Heaven. Is it the same for us?

In II Timothy 2:4, Timothy is told, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." As soldiers of the Lord, it is necessary for us to make sure that we are not so involved in the affairs of this life that we forget about our goal of Heaven! Yet, many are like this, aren't they? People get involved in work, school activities with the children, sports, TV, friends, etc. With so many things vying for our attention, it can be easy to forget our purpose for being upon this earth (Ecc. 12:13-14)! I believe that this is what Jesus was talking about when He said, "He also that received seed among the thorns is he

that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Matt. 13:22). If we are not single-minded in our pursuit of Heaven, it becomes very easy to allow this world to "choke out" the word of life until we do not care about Heaven, and the life to come. Understand, God wants man to enjoy things in this world, but they MUST be placed in perspective. Heavenly matters must always come first (Matt. 6:33; II Tim. 2:4).

Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). Friends, here is another reason for being "single-minded" in serving the Lord and "pressing" toward Heaven. This is because we cannot have it both ways! We cannot be a friend of the world and a friend of God at the same time. In fact, James says, "the friendship of the world is enmity with God" (Jas. 4:4). Which will it be, friend? Will I be the one who is more concerned about worldly, physical things than spiritual, Heavenly things? Many are like this, never realizing that, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I Jn. 2:17).

When Jesus was in the house of Mary and Martha, it was clear that Mary was interested in Heavenly matters, while Martha was concerned over many other things. When Martha complained to the Lord to tell Mary to help her, He said, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Lk. 10:41-42). Notice that Martha was worried about "many things" when in fact, Jesus said she needed to be worried about only "one thing." That one thing was God's word, the "good part." Mary was interested in what to do to get to Heaven, so she let other things go for a time to learn all she could. Is this YOUR attitude? Or, are you going in so many directions that you

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cannot be "single-minded"?

We need to think seriously about this subject. Let us not get distracted by this world and all its glitter that soon

### Jerusalem: A Model Church By Jeff Asher

*"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:40-47).*

A model is "the plan from which an item not yet constructed will be produced." It is "an example to be imitated or compared" (*The American Heritage Dictionary*). It is that which is "worthy of imitation or duplication." It is the "ideal," an "exemplar," the "standard" (*Roget's Thesaurus*).

The Jerusalem church is the working model after which every congregation should pattern itself. It began according to inspired prophecy, and the apostles of Christ organized and oversaw it.

The Jerusalem church had a supernatural beginning under a Divine providence that resulted in a perfect model of the local church to follow in every age.

#### A Model Of Organization

The apostles organized the church according to a plan that preserved its autonomy and independence. Elders were installed as the overseers of the flock (Acts 15:6, 22) and deacons were chosen to serve the needs of the saints (Acts 6:1-7). These men were taken from among the Jewish converts that exemplified the qualifications later outlined and applied in all the churches (1 Tim. 3:1-10).

There was no organization in the early church tying the congregations together in either a denomination or a society. Every church had its own elders which directed the

passes away (I Jn. 2:17). If we are not "single-minded" in our pursuit of Heaven, making sure that the things we do are things conducive to our going to Heaven, then how can we be sure we will go at all?? *Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦*

work of each church (Acts 11:29, 30). There was nothing but independent, autonomous cooperation between the churches.

#### A Model In Worship

The church at Jerusalem was a worshipping church. There was a distinct pattern to their worship established by the apostles. It included teaching, preaching and reading the Scriptures, the Lord's Supper, prayer, a collection and praise (Acts 2:42, 47).

From the very beginning the church assembled on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's Supper and give (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2). They often assembled to pray (Acts 4:23-31; 12:12) and to teach (Acts 2:46; 5:42). Moreover, as did the Gentile churches, the saints in Jerusalem sang praises to God (Eph. 5:19; 1 Cor. 14:26).

#### A Model Of Church Growth And Evangelism

The Jerusalem church came into existence when a prepared people were in the prepared place at the prepared time. The first gospel sermon ever preached resulted in three thousand conversions in one day (Acts 2:41). These were followed by five thousand more on another day (Acts 4:4). Men and women were added to the church daily (Acts 2:47). The success of their efforts extended even to the teachers of false religion (Acts 6:7). Jesus had said that the fields were white unto harvest (John 4:35).

#### A Model Of Liberality

The Jerusalem church was filled with cheerful givers (2 Cor. 9:7). From the first service, there were critical financial needs to be met by the saints in Jerusalem. The circumstances were unusual – thousands of people hundreds of miles away from home unprepared for the extended stay. The need was pressing – "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The only way to feed, clothe and house these converts was for the "possessors of lands or houses" to sell them,

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