

MAY 7, 2023

CHURCH OF CHRIST



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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY:

Bible Classes.....9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes.....6:00 p.m.

*Minister, John Keith
(304) 266-9027*

WELCOME!

We invite you to all of our services.

“...the churches of Christ salute you” (Romans 16:16)

“TODAY THOU SHALT BE WITH ME IN PARADISE”

Luke 23:39-43

INTRODUCTION: Let’s notice three reflections about the thief on the cross.

I. REVILE (Mt. 27:44).

A. Who They Were.

1. “Malefactors” (kjv), “criminals” (nkj), “robbers”, (esv), “rebels” (niv), “revolutionaries” (Jos.).
2. 3rd cross likely for “Barabbas”—a “robber” (Jn. 18:40); murder & insurrection” (Mk. 15:7; Lk. 23:19).

B. What They Did (Matt. 27:44, 39-43): blasphemed & mocked.

C. What They Did Was Anticipated (Psa. 22:6-8).

D. What Will Happen To the Revilers (Psa. 2:4-7; Acts 13:33).

II. REPENT (Lk. 23:39).

A. Reflections About The Penitent Thief.

1. Thief believed when all others had forsaken Jesus (Mt. 26:56).
2. He stood in defense when all others mocked.
3. He wanted to be a part of the Lord’s kingdom when the King looked anything but kingly.
4. He confessed during pain, disgrace, distress, and suffering.
5. Admitted his own guilt & confessed the Lord’s innocence.

B. Reality Of Christ Our King (Mt. 16:17b-19). Peter’s confession: Christ would give keys to *kingdom*. Let me in Your *Kingdom*-

III. REWARD (Lk. 23:43).

A. Paradise-Persian word= “garden of pleasure”, place of delight

1. Luke 23:43; Acts 2:31 Hadean realm Lk. 16:22a “Abraham’s bosom”—not a parable (2 personal names used); Jesus never told a lie to teach the truth!
2. Hadean realm – torments Lk. 22b-23, 26. 3x (Lk. 23:43; 2_Cor. 12:1-4; cf. Acts 14:19; Rev. 2:7).

B. Prove thief on cross never baptized!

1. Christ forgave him under the Law of Moses which was in force until after Christ died (Col. 2:14).
2. NOBODY since the crucifixion has or can be saved like the thief on the cross!

CONCLUSION: Is Jesus the King of your life TODAY? Is He seated on the throne of your heart TODAY? Will you rest in Paradise

THE ANATOMY OF A BACKSLIDER

Steve Higginbotham

There are many reasons why one would choose to leave a church; some of them are valid, others, not so much. But frequently, when it does happen, their departure follows a too familiar pattern. Consider the following anatomy of a backslider:

A Backslider Usually Suffers from Pride.

“Peter answered and said to him, ‘Even if all are made to stumble because of you, I will never be made to stumble’” (Matthew 26:33).

Backsliders often suffer from pride, and pride is the precursor to a fall (Proverbs 16:18). The backslider’s pride will feed discontentment, resentment, frustration, and disillusionment in any ideas or actions taken by church leaders that differ from the backslider’s way of thinking. Because of their pride, the backslider can only see his thoughts and his ideas as worthwhile and dismisses the thoughts, wisdom, and contribution of others.

A Backslider Usually Becomes Undependable.

“Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, ‘What! Could you not watch with me one hour’” (Matthew 26:40).

Backsliders frequently become undependable. Though they may have once been a go-to person everyone could count on, the backslider begins to “drop the ball.” They begin to divest from ministry and church programs. They resign from works in which they were involved. They’re no-shows at “extra” activities outside of worship. They won’t take on responsibility but do their best to hand off the responsibilities they once had to others. Their presence is sketchy. Their monetary contributions become spasmodic and decreased. And their help cannot be counted on.

A Backslider Usually Begins to Follow at a Distance.

“Having arrested him [Jesus], they led him and brought him into the high priest’s house. But Peter followed at a distance” (Luke 22:54).

Seldom does a backslider wake up one morning and decide to “quit church.” Rather, backsliding involves a gradual process. I remember many sermons wherein my dad would say, “Cars are a lot like people. They begin missing before they completely stop running.” The same is true with backsliders. They remain present just enough to keep concerned brethren from inquiring about their spiritual well-being, but their misses soon become more of a pattern than an aberration.

A Backslider Will Finally Disassociate Himself from the Church.

“And a certain servant girl, seeing him [Peter] as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, ‘This man was also with him.’ But he denied him, saying, ‘Woman, I do not know Him’” (Luke 22:56-57).

After months of withdrawal and lack of dependability, the backslider will muster the courage to make it official. There will be no more gradual decline and abduction of responsibility. They will finally muster the courage to say, “I’m done,” “I quit,” confirming the suspicions of concerned brethren. (*Continued on back*)

Welcome! We are thankful for your presence. To our visitors, please fill out one of the blue cards and place it in one of the collection plates.

AM Study: Romans 1:1

AM Lesson: “Today, Thou Shalt Be With Me in Paradise (Luke 23-39-43).

PM Lesson: Zechariah’s Messianic Prophecy (Zech. 12:10).

Wednesday Bible Study: Revelation 14:1f

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Join us this evening after worship as we celebrate **Hayden Douglas** upon his **GRADUATION** from High school.
- “There will be a memorial service held for **Nellie Bichard** on Saturday, May 20, at 2 p.m., here at N. 10th St. & Clairmont Ave. We hope you can join us as we honor her memory. Our love and thanks for the many kindnesses you showed her over the years . . . the family.”
- There is an update on the *Missions Board* from **Jordan Smith**, one of the preaching students we are helping to support at *WVSOP*. Jordan is slated to graduate on June 16th.

REMINDERS:

- ❖ **May 21-25**—Our *Gospel Meeting* with **Phil Grear**. Potluck on 21st
- ❖ There are change cans for **Potter Children’s Home** on the back table.
- ❖ **Oct. 7**—*Men’s Encouragement Day* here with **Roger Rush**.

IN OUR PRAYERS: Kevin Adkins, Diann Bachmann, Betsy Cook, Erma Endly, Mike & Karen Grove, Cathy Jackson, Bruce & Kim Johnson, Gary Jones, Rick Lambert, Jody Main, Carol Mitchell, Bev Singleton, Linda Steele, Helena Tewksbury, Jean Whitley, and Randy Yost.

SHUT-INS:
Debbie Jones,
Nancy Love,
DEPLOYED
Daniel Wayble

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Weston Boulet (great-grandson of Shirley Patterson), **Betty Cox** (Diann Bachmann’s sister), **T.J. Hart**, **Trudy Kerby**, **Linda Potts** (Joyce Starrett’s sister-in-law), **Addy Reed**, **Rodney Reeves** (Erica Cunningham’s father), **John Rockhold**, **Conrad Schultz**, the **U.S.A.**, **Ukraine** and remember to pray for **one another**.

AM STUDY	SUNDAY AM	SUNDAY PM	WED. STUDY	GIVING (\$2,460)
38	72	44	40	\$2,878

(continued from inside) More than likely, [we] have seen this pattern play out far too many times. Maybe you’re in the throes of this process as you read. Let me tell you, there’s good news! There’s hope! As I have tried to make clear in this brief article, even the apostle Peter traveled this well-worn path. But he returned! Just as there is a path that leads one away from Jesus and his church . . . [there is] a pattern that will bring one back.