

Relationships: My God and I

How often do you think about your relationship with God? Have you given it much thought recently? Do you realize Satan wants us to live each day as though there is no God? Can we become so busy with such important things that we forget His presence and our real dependence on Him? Is it possible for you and me to become quite similar to those spoken of in Scripture who did not like to retain the knowledge of God in their minds (Rom.1:28)?

What do you think about the current state of your relationship with God? Are you and I in the great number of those in our society who would rather not think about that? Does that make us feel a bit uncomfortable? Or, do you have a healthy, thriving relationship? If you are unwilling to examine and evaluate your life in light of Scripture (2 Cor.13:5), what do you think God thinks about the state of your relationship with Him? Is God well-pleased?

Have you given thought to what changes God may want you to make to produce a stronger, more satisfying relationship with Him? Have you thought about examining the life of Jesus to determine what it was, specifically, that enabled him to have such a close-knit, tight relationship with our heavenly Father? Do you suppose Jesus can give us insight into building a stronger, more meaningful relationship with the Father in heaven (John 17:20-21)?

What relationship do you experience with another or others that is more significant than the relationship you and I are able to develop with our Creator, Savior, Redeemer, and Friend? ~Tim Childs

Kennewick Church of Christ

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Website: www.kennewickcoc.com Facebook page: Kennewick Church of Christ
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Meeting times:

Sunday:

Sunday Bible Study 9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 am
Sunday Night Worship 6:00 pm

Wednesday:

Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00 pm

Elders:

Clarence Botts: 509-521-3344; ccbotts@hotmail.com
LaVern Engelke: 509-783-6479; vern.engelke@gmail.com

Minister:

Dustin McCrickard 509-579-9068

Open Congregational meeting – 2nd Sunday at 5:00 pm. All are welcome.

Attendance 12/02: 62 | Budget \$2400.33 | Contribution 12/02: \$2505.86

December 09, 2018

Welcome to the Kennewick Church of Christ

Integrity of Heart

“Make yourself an example of good works with integrity and dignity in your teaching. Your message is to be sound beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be ashamed, having nothing bad to say about us” (Titus 2:7-8). “Integrity” is defined as a firm adherence to a code of especially moral values, or the quality or state of being complete or undivided. The term in Greek indicates incorruptness, sincerity, untaintedness. It refers to purity of motives, without desire of gain, respect of persons, as well as purity in doctrine. Paul reminded Titus this is the quality that his message, the Gospel, possesses. Not only was he to teach such a message, but that message was to impart the quality of integrity to him and his hearers. The life Titus lived, the good works he showed through his life, can be summarized in the word “integrity.” The Word of God is to be transformational in who we are and how we live, as we become less like the world around us and more like Christ in us. “We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

The opposite of integrity in one’s faith is hypocrisy. This term indicates a play actor, pretending to be what one is truly not. Jesus used the phrase of the Pharisees, who had an outward pretense of righteousness while their motives of heart were impure, self-centered and serving. “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and every impurity. In the same way, on the outside you seem righteous to people, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness” (Matthew 23:27-28). While others may not know their true motives, God does, and hypocrisy only brings condemnation (Matthew 24:51). Such attitudes were to die when the old self died and the new self was made alive in Christ (Romans 6:6-11; Ephesians 4:22-24). “So rid yourselves of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, desire the pure spiritual milk, so that you may grow by it for your salvation” (1 Peter 2:1-2).

Scripture reminds us, “The one who lives with integrity will be helped, but one who distorts right and wrong will suddenly fall” (Proverbs 28:18). God is a heart knower, and when we examine ourselves in light of His Word, we can know our hearts as well (Hebrews 4:12-13). Sin is an ever-present threat to us, with Satan deceiving us with it and it ultimately hardening our hearts (Hebrews 3:13). Without examining our hearts every day, we can move from integrity to hypocrisy without knowing it, but God will know. The deep recesses of one’s heart can be frightening, especially when it reveals what one doesn’t want to see. God, however, can cleanse our hearts, forgive our sins and prepare us for eternity. Isn’t it better to find resolution and forgiveness now rather than revelation and condemnation in judgment?

Integrity or hypocrisy is the reputation of our character before God and what will commend or condemn us before Him. God through His Word seeks to transform us into people of integrity and dignity (Romans 12:2), to leave the influence of sin behind and find life in Christ. May we allow God into our hearts that our hearts will be pleasing to Him. “Guard me and deliver me; do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in You. May integrity and what is right watch over me, for I wait for You” (Psalm 25:20-21). ~Robert Johnson

<p>Keep these Dates in Mind: 12/02 Holiday Potluck</p> <p>Open Congregational meeting will not be held in December Game night has been suspended until January Soup night has been suspended until January</p>	<p><i>December Birthdays and Anniversaries</i></p>			<p>Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful</p>
	<p>Mark Minor 12/4 Laiken McCrickard 12/15 Bill & Linda Lafferty 12/24</p>			
<p>And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.</p>	<p><i>Bible Studies</i></p>			
	<p>Adult Class – Fellowship Hall (S) – Galatians (W) – Acts</p>	<p>Youth Classes Classroom Wing Teen Class - Teen Room</p>	<p>Ladies Class – Ladies Class Will resume again in January</p>	



Issues (ongoing): Karen McBurney, Bob Childers, Shirley Childers, Amanda McCrickard, Kaleb McCrickard, Joshua Hickman, Vern Mast, Sue Aldrich, Lupe Mendoza, Marji Lindholm, The Johnson family, Brent Bryant, Marilyn Davis, Randy Hargus, Eunice Petros

Melinda Botts, Bob Childers, Sandi Gray, Tami Pennington, Mary Beth Walker and Bill Henniger as they continue to recover

. **Mary Beth Walker** is in rehab. Short visits if you wish to visit

Helen Pierce is struggling with her health please keep her in your prayers.

Mary Minor related to Sue Minor found several lumps related to her previous cancer and they came back positive. Please keep her in your prayers.

Our Ministries

Mountain States Children's Home

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. (James 1:27)

Peru Ministry – Oscar and Anna Maria in Peru

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the son and of the Holy Spirit

Food Pantry - Our food pantry is located in the small room next to the library.

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.” (Proverbs 19:17)

Austin and Kennadie McCrickard – Bear Valley Bible Institute

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-12)

Practicing What We Hear

There have been times in my life when my parents or my wife have accused me of not listening to what they were saying. In an attempt to defend myself, I would often quote verbatim what they said to me. The point that was often brought out is that though I heard what they said, I did not do what was asked of me. While I was hearing, I was not really listening. How often do we do the same in regard to our Christianity? How many sermons and Bible classes have you heard in your lifetime? Might it be at times that we hear what is being said, but fail to put into practice because we are not listening with the intent to obey or be made better? James admonishes us to “be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (James 1:22). Self-deception is fraud of the worst kind. Yet, we may be guiltier of such than we realize. Thinking we are truly religious when we are not prompted to act or are not made better by the hearing of God’s word is to be deceived in the worst possible way. Some have well said that God gave us two ears and one mouth, so we should lend ourselves to hearing twice as much as we talk. James put it this way: “Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath” (James 1:19). But to hear with no desire or intent to obey is utter foolishness. Let us consider in greater detail James’ comparison of the hearer versus the doer.

God gives a Divine illustration of the one who fails to practice what he hears. “For if any be a hearer of the word, And not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was” (James 1:23-24). How many times have we acted about less important matters in much the same way? Maybe you have taken a look at yourself in the mirror first thing in the morning. Perhaps you saw some things that required your attention. At times, it is likely that you ignored what you saw and remained just as you were. Maybe you made a few superficial changes that really did not address the issues at hand. We may very well treat our spiritual lives in the same manner. God’s word is a mirror that reflects an accurate image of who and what we really are. We are able to see ourselves as God sees us. No doubt there are times when the reflection we see is not one we appreciate or admire. Self-examination (2 Corinthians 13:5) often reveals flaws and shortcomings that need to be remedied by a heavy dose of humility (James 4:6, 10), penitence (Psalm 51:1-19), and storing up God’s word in our hearts (Psalm 119:11). How is it that those who hear the same message can respond in such vastly different ways? Why does a sermon move one to repent and obey while the same message to one in the same condition causes no reaction? The Hebrews writer gives us insight into such: “For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it” (Hebrews 4:2). Those who come to the hearing of God’s word with faith will leave rejoicing, while those who come void of faith will leave having made no change in their current condition. It may also be that as we hear the word of God, we feel it necessary to respond in some way, but only out of a sense of obligation to do something. Upon realizing that our lives are not what they need to be, we may then make changes to the façade, being contented to address only the symptoms rather than seeing to the problem and the necessary alterations it will require. Problems of the spiritual heart and its associated maladies must be tackled head-on.

We must be careful that we not deceive ourselves into thinking that by treating a few symptoms we have conquered the problem. The mirror of God’s word will give us an accurate picture of ourselves through the eyes of God. It is our responsibility to make appropriate changes that we might be conformed to the image that God desires we show forth (Romans 8:29). ~Word of Truth Publication