

The fact of the matter is, the Bible plainly teaches that when God Almighty establishes a system of religion, its obligations are to remain precisely in tact for as long as it is designed to last, and no man has the authority to modify it. Such was true of the Mosaic economy until God himself abolished that regime (Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14), and it is no less true of the Christian Way, which is to abide until the end of time (Matt. 28:18-20).

The inspired Paul taught those at Corinth that they were not to go "beyond the things which are written" (1 Cor. 4:6, ASV). Spiritual activity is to be circumscribed by the Word. John plainly declares that those who go beyond the "doctrine of Christ" have no fellowship with God (2 Jn. 9).

In view of a host of Bible passages, the notion of an "evolutionary church," a sort of plastic Christianity, is demonstrated to be totally false. The plea for a restoration of first-century religion is valid. It is thoroughly biblical, and those who repudiate it have sorely drifted from the Holy Scriptures.

For the complete article, with sources, see:

<https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1547-is-the-restoration-plea-valid>

## News:

**Potluck** today after services.

**Ben Atchley** is taking a medication now that has given him back his appetite.

**Dakota Short** was baptized into Christ on Tuesday, March 12.

The **Mountain Avenue Youth Rally** is scheduled for April 5-6.

## Prayer List:

**Healing:** *Tatyana's daughter Olga, Jerry Robinson's daughter Christie, Jerry Robinson's mother Norma, Mike Cavasos, Sandy Cavasos, Ben Atchley, Faye Atchley, Nicolas Self, Annie Self, Douglas and Jonda Gardner, Brandon (Gerry Clark's grandson), Inez's son Lee, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.*

Back issues are posted at  
<http://saffordchurchofchrist.org>



# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

**17 March 2013**

## Sermon Topics

**A.M.: Living Sacrifices**

Romans 12:1-8

**P.M.: A Prophecy Against Moab**

Isaiah 15:1-9

Pulpit Evangelist

*Ken Knowlton: 428-5974*

Elders

*Ben Atchley: 428-2246*

*Greg Briggs: 428-8756*

*John Cunningham: 428-0895*

## Services

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

## Encouragement in the Face of Poor Evangelism Results

He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what should I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches." And again he said, "To what should I compare the kingdom of God? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened" (Luke 13:18-21, NRSV).

These parables' meaning in Jesus' mouth fits one of two possibilities. Either they could be in answer to opponents who mock a claim that such an unimpressive group could be overwhelming

kingdom of God. Or the context could be disappointment and depression on the part of the disciples at their seeming lack of success. To each situation Jesus replies with the image of paradoxical growth: just wait and see.

Henry Wansbrough, *Luke: Daily Bible Commentary*. (Hendrickson: Peabody, Massachusetts, p. 119).

## Churches in Decline

PRESTONSBURG, KY: Fifty years ago, congregations of the Lord's people were booming in metro Detroit. Large buildings, with capacities of up to 1,000, were regularly built, and filled.

As we sat at lunch with some brethren from one metro-area congregation, they mentioned that their building, built in 1968, had a capacity of 700. Current attendance is 60-65. They have twenty classrooms. None are in use. Most members sit in the front for worship, and visitors sit aloof in the back. The disheartening scene!

Nevertheless, filling the building should be the last concern of the church. Fulfilling Christ's mission should be our concern (cf. Mt 28:18-20). We are to build relationships — seek souls. Buildings are secondary, at best.

I don't know why these churches are declining, probably a variety of culprits, including Detroit's economic woes. But it doesn't matter. The church's mission can't change.

Suppose the coal industry were shut down tomorrow. It would change our congregation! But our mission must never change! May our presence in this community never be limited to just our meetinghouse, or our mission dampened by the economy! Will God accept the excuse, "But, the economy . . .," for failing our mission? I think not!

Remember, the early church had no building, and many of them were poor (cf. Rom 15:26). And still, with God's help, the early church overturned the world (cf. Acts 17:6).

Why should we be any different?

Rick Kelley, Prestonsburg, KY bulletin  
Bulletin-Digest.com

The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried.

G.K. Chesterton in *What's Wrong with the World*. <http://gkchestertonquote.com/>

## Is the Restoration Plea Valid?

By Wayne Jackson

It is not surprising that society finds the "new Christianity" so appealing. We have been brainwashed to believe that everything new is better. Why not have a new and improved Christianity?"

This view has no scriptural basis whatsoever; yet it is advanced by many who profess respect for Jesus Christ.

Cardinal John Henry Newman, one of Romanism's most influential writers, declared that "the Church" has the right to alter its practices in the interest of converting the pagan. He conceded that the use of such items as incense, holy water, sacerdotal vestments, etc., are "all of pagan origin," but their use is acceptable for they are "sanctified by their adoption into the Church" (1920, 373).

The Protestant sects, in actual practice, subscribe to a similar "evolutionary Christianity." For example, *The Standard Manual For Baptist Churches* by Edward Hiscox states:

It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was but "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism," and no differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, "baptism was the door into the church." Now, it is different (1951, 22; emphasis added).

Statements like this presuppose men are empowered with the authority to overhaul the divine plan.

Not only has "Christendom" contended that it is permissible to change the original forms and ceremonies of New Testament doctrine, it has even radically altered its concept of morality.

Several decades ago there could not be found a solitary religious body even remotely professing Christianity that would endorse the sin of homosexuality. Now the religious defenders of sodomy are numerous.

The churches of Christ are not without some problems in this matter. Some, like Don White, editor of *The Exegete*, openly doubt that "primitive Christianity is the normative pattern for all ages." White declares, "Nowhere does the New Testament provide explicit scriptural basis for a restoration principle—no text explicitly states that later generations should follow the primitive church or restore it." White asserts: "Pattern theology is not supported linguistically by the New Testament."