

Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

20 March 2016

Topics

A.M. Bible Class:

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A.M. Lesson:

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P.M. Lesson:

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Wednesday:

Christian evidences

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

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.

***Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them. Psalm 111:2
Please silence your cell phones and other electronic devices.***

The Danger of Over-Emphasizing Baptism

March 15, 2016 by Jack Wilkie
<http://focuspressblog.com/>

Let me say this first of all, as a disclaimer: baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation, and it's something that we should all be able to biblically defend, so lest anyone put words in my mouth, realize that this isn't an article against baptism. It's against the unbalanced emphasis we often put on baptism. You don't need me to tell you that we in the churches of Christ talk about baptism a lot. It wouldn't be wrong to say that we discuss it as much as or more than just about any other biblical doctrine. But I don't think that should be the case. I think we need to examine ourselves and see if we've put too much emphasis on it, given it too much time at the expense of other things the Bible has to say. See if you recognize these three side effects of over-emphasizing baptism.

This one certainly hits close to home, as I've certainly made this mistake my fair share of times. When the church gets visitors and young people so focused on baptism, baptism, baptism, that becomes the central part of conversion, and the risk of them discounting subsequent parts of the Christian life

goes through the roof. We've all seen the people who study and get baptized, only to rarely (if ever) return to be an active member of the body. If we teach baptism first and foremost, it's abundantly clear that people can put too much emphasis on it and fade from the faith after being baptized. But if we put the majority of our emphasis where the Bible puts it – on glorifying God, submitting our lives to Him in faith, and finding our satisfaction in Christ – baptism will still be taught, but in its proper place, as an important part of an all-consuming conversion. Salvation is not a short checklist process. We have to show people how salvation is a change of life, and so we must be careful about the place we give baptism in that discussion.

There are those who think our emphasis on baptism shows that we believe in works-based salvation, and that's not true. But our over-emphasis on baptism can have a real unintended consequence, and that's that we put our emphasis in the wrong place. We have to be careful to make sure Christ doesn't become an afterthought or a supporting character in our discussions about baptism. Beyond that, we have to be careful that our emphasis doesn't become focused on what makes us different, which I suspect is often the case. When we spend so much time discussing the things that make us

different from other churches, we help label ourselves as “the people who believe in baptism for salvation” or “the people who don’t use instruments.” While those are accurate statements, they should never, ever be the first things people think of when they think of the church. We should be known as the people who will do anything for the cause of Christ, the people who truly treat each other like a family, the people who make a difference in the community because of the love of Christ.

Baptism and instrumental music. Instrumental music and baptism. Baptism and instrumental music again. Maybe women’s roles sprinkled in here and there. Lectureships, sermons, articles, Facebook posts... all dedicated to these few issues. Yes, they’re important. But at some point we have to move past milk (Hebrews 5:12-14). If your child was still having to recite the alphabet for school every morning in high school, you’d probably have something to say about that. For the same reason, church auditoriums filled with people who have been Christians for decades have no business rehashing these few core doctrines over and over and over. Shouldn’t we be a little embarrassed if we’re still stuck in the kindergarten of the faith?

Sure, we need to revisit these issues from time to time. I’m not saying we should stop talking about them completely. But think about how much deeper we can go in our study if we all realize that we’re in agreement and don’t have to spend much time on it in our gatherings. That way we can free up time to talk about some of the difficult questions the world is bringing to our attention today, and we can start answering the difficult questions about God to build a deeper theology.

At some point, we have to start looking at how we can grow instead of constantly talking about how everybody else is wrong. Our teaching and writing needs to be focused on how we can all build a more solid foundation, and at some point that has to mean we stop rehashing the basics at the expense of other teachings.

It’s not how we make mistakes, but how we correct them that defines us.
- Rachel Wolchin
- Matthew 3:8. Bear fruit worthy of repentance.

Luke 6:46, NKJV. “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?”

Prov 17:9. He who covers a transgression seeks love,
But he who repeats a matter separates friends.

Prayer list:

Joy Gibson has requested prayers for her family.

Dan Keele—mission work

Christian Children’s Home in Portales, New Mexico

Sam Appleton—declining health

Robin Richards—depression, back pain

John Cunningham—cancer

Norma Robinson—health

Linda Boling—health

H.L. Boling—general health and complications from leukemia

Tatyana Knowlton—macular degeneration

Nic and Ani Self—health and personal needs



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These passages were cited on a milkshake cup and on a French fries boat at In-And-Out Burger:

Prov 3:5. Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding.

Prov 24:16 For a righteous man may fall seven times
And rise again,
But the wicked shall fall by calamity.