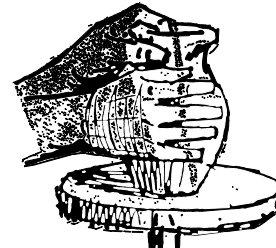


His Workmanship at Westside

*“For we are His
workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus for good works.”
—Ephesians 2:10*



Isaiah 64:8

Vol. XXII

October 6, 2013

No. 40

What Does It Hurt? *by Howard Justice with Whit Sasser*

Have you ever asked yourself, “What does it hurt?” Surely, we all have asked it from time to time. But we all know (or at least we should know) that the question itself is an attempt to justify something that is actually hurting our conscience. It chips away at our own consistent morals, standards of righteousness, and good habits. The question is unwise and leads to a continued erosion of our conscience. What we don’t seem to grasp is that justifying what we know is unwise or wrong gives Satan a foothold in our lives, 2 Cor 10:4-5.

We often use this excuse for our (lack of) attendance at meetings of the local church. God has given our elders the authority to take the oversight of the local flock, 1 Pet 5:2, to help it grow in love and godliness by edifying (building up, feeding) all its members, Eph 4:12-16. None of us is exempt from our elders’ oversight. Elders are to look out for our spiritual welfare. They do so by establishing Bible study classes for all ages, so we may grow both in truth and spirit.

The elders of most churches have determined to invest a great amount of time, money, and resources to assist Christians in spiritual growth.

When we miss an assembly or Bible study, are we thinking that the elders are not truly concerned about spiritual growth? Do we think that the elders are unwise in directing that the church meet at specified times? Do we think that the elders are not looking out for our souls, Heb 13:7, 17?

*“And they **assembled** all the congregation together on the first day...,” Numbers 1:18*

*“Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel **assembled together**...,” Joshua 18:1*

*“And the children of Israel **assembled together** and encamped in Mizpah,” Judges 10:17*

*“Also King Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel who were **assembled with him**, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be counted or numbered for multitude,” 1 Kings 8:5 (2 Chron 5:6)*

*“Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel **assembled**...,” Ezra 9:4*

Have we forgotten that we are to submit to our elders’ decisions in setting times for meeting together?

The question “what does it hurt?” needs to be answered according to God’s Word, not ours. We sing many songs dedicating our obedience to God and His Word, yet we often ignore passages such as Hebrews 10:19-27—we are not to be negligent in assembling together as some had done in that day, but we are to encourage one another to love and good works because our Lord has opened a new and living way to God by His precious blood. The Hebrew Christians had stopped attending regularly because of severe persecution. Regardless, they were told to keep meeting regularly. How much more must we not let small inconveniences hinder us?

In reality, we despise and make little of Christ’s precious blood when we neglect to meet together with others who have been consecrated by His precious blood. Why do we refuse to “draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith”? Why do we neglect to “hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering”? Do we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth”? We cannot encourage our brethren if we
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"Call a sacred assembly; gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and nursing babes; let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, and the bride from her dressing room! ...Then the LORD will be zealous for His land, and pity His people. ...Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice. For the Lord has done marvelous things!"
—Joel 2:16, 18, 21

are careless with our own attendance. This carelessness shows lack of love for God and our brothers; it shows weak faith. Read Hebrews 10:19-27 again carefully and prayerfully.

A number of Christians have children who are engaged in sports. There is nothing wrong with sports as long as the child is getting the proper spiritual nutrition at the same time. However, to neglect any child's spiritual growth in favor of his participation in sports is simply wrongheaded—crazy priorities. It shows that some parents care more for their child's athletic development than for his spiritual growth. Consider reasons for assembling faithfully:

1) Attending all the meetings of the church is the LEAST we can do. In the parable of the talents, Mt 25:14-30, Jesus argued that if we cannot handle the least of responsibilities, how can we be given more? Twice the lord said to his servants, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord," vs. 21, 23. Woody Allen said, "80% percent of success is showing up." Will we show up to hear the Lord say, "Enter into My joy"?

2) Every member of God's household needs to be a team player, Eph. 4:16, and needs encouragement. The church grows best when each member contributes to it, shares in it, participates. When you are not at a meeting you are missed, and you are missing good and important words from God. There is no special member here to carry on without you. We all have equal responsibility to be involved.

3) We need a sense of obligation;

we owe a debt to our Lord Jesus Christ that we can never repay. So Christians joyfully come to worship Him, to learn about Him, to praise Him and commune with Him. If we don't have a sense of joy in meeting with other Christians, at least we can view attending like we do work, school, or other duties—with high priority. When it is time to go to work or school, other activities may have to be canceled, some may have to be interrupted, and

"Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries." —Hebrews 10:19-27

generally we just do not schedule things that would be in conflict with what is important. We should regard the meetings of our church as the

highest priority, and if we cannot have an attitude of joy in meeting with God and His people, we can motivate ourselves into a joyful attitude by doing our duty to consider our brethren and meet with them.

David said by the Holy Spirit, "I was glad when they said let us go up to the house of the Lord." Ps 122:1. He also said, "O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory. Because Your loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You. Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips," Ps 63:1-5. See also Ps 27:4; 28:2; 61:4; 143:6.

The sons of Korah said, "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God," Ps 42:1; 84:2.

In World War II, Adolf Hitler said, "Give me your young child, and I will make a true Nazi out of him." Today, Satan is lurking around every corner seeking the souls of our young people so that they will turn to him and serve him. Do parents not know that Satan is seeking their own children?

Why won't parents bring small children to the Bible classes on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening? Sure, children have homework, but there is no homework more important than God's homework. Let us encourage these parents to pay attention to their own and their children's spiritual growth. "If you miss Heaven, you've missed it all."



Psalm 133:1



Fill your can-teen in 2013

“May you be filled with all the fullness of God.”

—Ephesians 3:19

Managing Multiple Priorities

“And Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things,’” Lk 10:41. Even in the simplest life we can live, there are still many things to be done. Those who would grow strong spiritually must learn to work energetically and productively without being eaten up by the time pressures that characterize so many of our lifestyles. We must discover how to manage multiple priorities without sacrificing our highest priority: to glorify God. This is a discipline that we can learn, but learning it will be anything but easy in this age.

It is possible to be very busy and not suffer from the corrosive stress that many of us feel. Jesus, for example, was extremely busy, and He certainly knew what it was to be tired, Jn 4:6, but His activities were always surrounded by the serenity of complete surrender to the will of God. Although He was busy, He was never frantic. He felt no need to “make things turn out” according to selfish demands. Our anxiety, on the other hand, is often the result of an urge to control certain outcomes. It springs from the desire that things should happen as we want, rather than as God wills. Yet if we can let go of this desire, much of the compulsiveness that drives our activities will disappear.

Having said that, however, we should

also say that most of our lives would profit from some serious simplification. As a people, we are over-committed and strung out. We try to do more than one human being can do effectively. The result ought to alarm us greatly: we are at a disadvantage when it comes to the devil. Richard J. Foster, who has written perceptively on the value of the simple life, has said, “*Our adversary majors in three things: noise, hurry, and crowds. If he can keep us engaged in ‘muchness’ and ‘manyness,’ he will rest satisfied.*” Spiritually, we are never more vulnerable than when we are, like Martha, “*worried and troubled about many things.*” Thus one of the most constructive spiritual steps that we can take is to simplify our interests and our activities. But even when we do, there will still be many matters to claim our attention. We must learn the art of God-centered restfulness.

“*Lord Jesus, make my heart sit down,*” African Proverb. *by Gary Henry*

Line in the Sand from p. 4

to the faith of our fathers or a prayer for the ill and the bereaved. Military chaplains have been told to withhold the consolations of faith to troops en route to die for their country lest unbelievers suffer cramps of the soul. High school valedictorians are warned not to offer the benediction of “God bless you” because it might offend a scruffy atheist-in-training.

The First Amendment is intended to protect religious faith from the state, not the state from religious faith. A mild act of summertime rebellion by Dekker and those who want to worship God on the beach was wholly an appropriate way to celebrate our nation’s freedom.

Special Sunday next week—“I Sought for a Man.” What does God say a real man should be? Invite your family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors!

Discipleship

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Christina Adams’s daughter Kayla—kidney infection with early pregnancy
Bella Gonzalez—breathing problems
Delmar Hice, Pat Campbell’s father—recurring lung infections; home from hospital
Mark Campbell—improving at Rocky Mtn Brain Injury Svc in CO Springs
Megan Sangellino’s grandmother, Norma Trump—hip surgery, in rehab; depressed
Pat Wilkes—hyper parathyroidism; day surgery to remove 1 (we all have 4) parathyroid gland in 2 weeks
Remember **Megan Aki** and the girls; the **Andrew Tope** family; the **Reames** family;
Forrest Corray, Jordan’s brother—addiction
Wes Nichols—stage 4 cancer in tongue, lymph nodes, no insurance, young family in Parker. Donate at nickels4nichols.com

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr; Addison Tope; Pat Wilkes—asthma
Pearl Chapman—leg pains; pancreatitis
Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain
Rod Green—thyroid trouble
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy
Danielle Huelsman—vertigo, CV syndrome
Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; needs help around his house
Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak;
Virginia, worsening rapid macular degeneration; high BP
Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes
Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia
Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; severe arthritis
Judy Sartin’s grandson Tristen—autism
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung

Job concerns Megan Aki, Lorenzo

Gonzalez, Linda Szymanski, and Andrew Tope are seeking jobs.

Expecting Liz Kosik, early April

Rejoice Rod Green has a job! The Wilkeses’ niece, **Amanda Carmichael** got a dream job after looking for 2 years, 4 months, and 27 days.



Exposing current thoughts & trends

A Line in the Sand (Religious Freedom) *Washington Times* editorial

A Presbyterian preacher on the Delaware coast drew a line in the sand on the beach this summer to celebrate freedom, which was the original point of Independence Day. Robert Dekker sought permission from the neighboring city of Rehoboth Beach to hold a series of eight early Sunday morning church services on the beach during the summer tourist season. He application was denied. "I'm sorry to inform you," wrote Rehoboth's city manager, "that I can't grant your request to have church services on the public beach in Rehoboth. I cannot mix church and state. I trust you understand." The preacher didn't, and neither do we.

Dekker doesn't understand how the city could claim this religious expression as impermissible in a nation founded by men and women seeking to express their religious beliefs in their own way. The preacher does not intend to establish a church on the beach; his congregation worships in a substantial edifice miles away. He asks no municipal sanction on his reading of the Scripture, a few remarks of thanksgiving, and the singing of a hymn or two. Now he plans an act of civil disobedience in an unapproved "peaceful worship service" on the beach "in defiance of tyranny."

The service will likely take place without incident; it's highly unlikely that the town of Rehoboth would be so foolish as to send the cops to break up an innocent religious service. The congregation is likely to leave the beach as clean as they find it. Cleaner, probably.

The controversy is how a church service on public property has become the "mixing of church and state." Daniel Dreisbach, a law professor at American University and author of *Thomas Jefferson and the Wall of Separation Between Church and State*, says the "wall" is a myth, originating not in 1789 but in 1947 with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Everson v. Board of Education*. The Court was asked to interpret the First Amendment's prohibition on laws establishing a religion. It took cues, or thought it did, from Jefferson's famous 1802 letter to the Baptist Association of Danbury, CT, mentioning a "wall of separation," but his words were twisted out of context. President Jefferson's views of religion and the state were nothing like the anti-church, pro-state mindset that 65 years of jurisprudence since *Everson* have given us.

The city manager of Rehobeth Beach got his history and civics mixed up with current events. Visceral hostility to religion is the order of the day. The convictions of the millions are held hostage by governments intimidated by tantrums of the very few, who faint at the sound of a hymn

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Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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This morning: "Discipleship Motivation," by Jim Reingrover

The fall quarter begins today.