

Crossville Church of Christ

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COMPASS

Using God's Word to Chart The Course
Of A Congregation

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Elders:

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Jonathan Loveday
Larry McDuffee
Brian McLaughlin
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Deacons:

Jim Bell
Kyle Fairman
David Kerley
Doug Loveday
Greg Maxwell
Mark Roberts
Roger Smith
Jason Wyatt
Jerry Wood

Minister:

Barry Kennedy

Missionaries:

Don Iverson
Jim Waldron
(India)

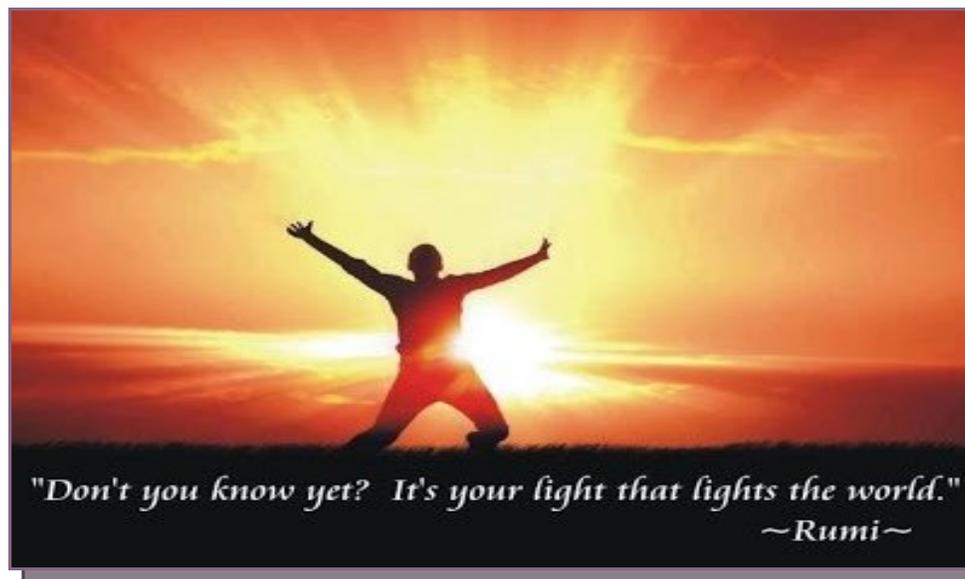
Service Times

Sunday Bible Study	9 AM
Sunday Worship	10 AM
	6 PM
Wednesday	6 PM

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Ladies Bible Class	
Tuesdays	11AM
Prayer Meeting	
Tuesdays	10 AM
Joyful Generation (Youth Devotional & fellowship)	
1st Sunday	7:00 PM

January 4, 2014



*"Don't you know yet? It's your light that lights the world."
~Rumi~*

EVERYTHING NEW FOR THE NEW YEAR

Barry Kennedy

We all love bright shiny new things. Many reading this may have just recently received something new as a Christmas gift. Gifts are expressions of our love and consideration. God has blessed man with the opportunity to not only have a new gift, but to also be a new gift.

The gift God has offered to man is the hope of eternal life in Christ. *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"* (Romans 6:23). It is a brand new life unlike any other. The life we know is temporal, the gift God offers is eternal.

The gift that we have to offer God is a new life lived in service to God. *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service"* (Romans 12:1). A sacrifice carries the idea of an ending. A living sacrifice implies a newness on a continual basis.

With the new year in full swing, are we embracing the new gift of eternal life? Are we offering the new gift of our living sacrifice? Have we the hope of everything new for the new year?

HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE RELIGIOUS UNITY

Bob Prichard

As Jesus was preparing to face the cross, He went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray fervently for the disciples, knowing that they would face difficulty in sharing His message of peace and love with the world. Having prayed for the disciples, he also prayed for Christians down through the ages: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20-21). His prayer was that all who would believe in Him through the word of the apostles would have the same unity that He experienced with the Father. Sadly, men seek disunity and division, ignoring Christ’s prayer. The consequence of this is that many have rejected the gospel of Christ because of the divisions they see within “Christendom.”

In Paul’s day there was “one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all” (Ephesians 4:4-6). Yet men today claim there are many bodies and many faiths. Most claim to be what might be called “hyphenated Christians.” A person who is a “Denominational-Christian” is subject to the creeds, handbooks and bylaws of his denomination. Why not give up the denominational names and creeds? Why not be just Christians, not members of any denomination?

Lasting unity among the followers of Christ can come only one way--by going back to the Bible and throwing out the creeds, manuals, and man-made traditions. Paul wrote to a very divided congregation at Corinth, pleading with them to have real Christian unity. “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10). They could only find unity by being “perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” Christians can have this unity of mind and judgment only by uniting in the teaching of the Bible, the Word of God. Creeds and handbooks can never bring unity.

There are sometimes unity or “ecumenical” movements among the churches, and some good may be accomplished by these groups banding together for a common cause. There is usually agreement however, that doctrine will be forgotten or overlooked, or else how can one group that teaches baptism is immersion unite with another group that teaches baptism is sprinkling, etc.? But is this really being joined together in the same mind and the same judgment? If they will not agree on the Bible, how can God’s people agree on anything? The Bible is not a dead letter from two thousand years ago. It is “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). It must be followed for unity today.



FULL ASSURANCE

Barry Kennedy

Have you ever had full assurance in something? The word assurance, as defined in Webster's II Dictionary Office Edition, means "1. a statement intended to inspire confidence: guarantee. 2a. Certainty. b. Self-confidence. 3. Audacity: boldness." No doubt, we all have experienced full assurance in some area of our lives. It could be (should be) the case that we have full assurance in our marriage relationships (Genesis 2:24, 25; Matthew 19:6). Maybe we have full assurance in our careers? No matter how much confidence we may have in this world, there is a possibility that we can be wrong. Solomon put it this way, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 16:25). What really matters is whether or not we have full assurance in our spiritual lives. This in turn will help to sure up the other aspects of life (i.e. marriage, career, etc.).

Do we have full assurance in our origin? Where did we originate? Many "great minds" have sought an answer to this question. Some have become so intelligent that they cannot accept the truth that God is the source of all life. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). The problem many have, realize it or not, is man does not like to be held accountable. Wayne Jackson, Kyle Butt, and Eric Lyons have written the book "Surveying the Evidence" which deals with the evidences of creation and God's existence. In this book on page 27 they state:

Let us thus sum up like this: (1) Life was either spontaneously generated by accident from inorganic substances, or it was created purposely by an eternal force. . . (2) But all **evidence** indicates it does not, and could not, start spontaneously by chance. (3) The evidence forces one to believe that life originally was created by an Eternal Life Force!

Please notice that in Genesis 1:1 there is no attempt made to try and establish the existence of God. Moses set forth to proclaim that the origin of this earth, the cosmos, and all things in them are from God. This is important because of the destination we all face. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall **return unto God who gave it**" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Do we have full assurance in this truth?

Do we have full assurance in our God? Many people profess a faith in the God of Heaven and earth. The problem is that far too often this "faith" is not one of full assurance. Think about how close the apostles were to Jesus, yet they still found themselves lacking in faith (full assurance) from time to time. Peter walked on the water until he lost his assurance (Matthew 14:25-31). Jesus accused Peter of having "little faith" because he doubted. Thomas is another example of one needing full assurance (John 20:24-29). When Jesus was real to him he had the assurance enough to say "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). Is God real to us? Is He in fact our Lord and our God?

Why should we have full assurance in God? This is a good question and one that should be answered. There are many reasons as to why we should trust in God. **First**, because God cannot lie (Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18). **Second**, because of who God is, Creator and Sustainer of life. Design requires a designer, effect must have a cause, and nothing only produces nothing. "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is. . ." (Exodus 20:11). God is also the sustainer of life according to Hebrews 1:3, and Colossians 1:17. **Third**, because God will be our judge in the last day. "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe" (1 Timothy 4:10).

We are given such wonderful blessings in this life (John 10:10). However, those blessing of an abundant life are non-existent to the soul that lacks full assurance. Would Jesus say to us today, "Wherefore didst thou doubt" (Matthew 14:31)? Fear is a dreaded enemy to the Christian life. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7). "Sound mind" can be looked at as being synonymous with full assurance. Take inventory of your own life and ask the question, "In what do I have full assurance today?" Make sure it is in God.

