

Diligently Seeking God (Hebrews 11:6)

PRAIRIE VILLAGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church Bulletin Articles from August 7, 2011

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Scripture of the Week



1 John 4:16-18

"We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love."

Not a more wonderful message could possibly be taught than the one John teaches us here. The Apostle tells us the key to acquiring something we should all want to have, and discarding something we'd all just as soon live without. First of all, he tells us how to have confidence on the day of Judgment. One day very soon we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ to be paid back for the things we've done upon this earth (2 Corinthians 5:10). That's a terrifying prospect because every person deserves death. Thanks be to God that He sent His Only Begotten Son to die in our place and pay the price required for our salvation (verse 10). Secondly, John tells us how to cast fear out of our hearts. The Greek word used

there for "fear" is "fobos". It's where we get our English word "phobia" and it means "exceeding fear" or "terror". It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:31), without having first been covered by the blood of Christ. The key to acquiring the confidence and casting out the fear is the love of God. Verse 16 says we must come to know the love that God has for us, believe in that love and abide in the love of God. He went on to write in verse 3 of chapter 5, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments..." It is easy to say, "I love God." It is much more difficult to keep His commandments and prove it. God loved you enough to sacrifice His Son for you. Do you love Him enough to obey Him?

The Love of God

Have you ever felt completely alone and thought there was no one in the world who loved you? To think that nobody cares about what happens to you has to be one of the worst feelings possible. We all want to be loved, even independent people who think they're completely self-sufficient. Feelings of loneliness and rejection drive people toward all sorts of unhealthy and dangerous behaviors—from sexual immorality, to drug and alcohol abuse, to even taking their own lives. I want you to know that even if everyone else on earth has turned his back on you, you always have a God in heaven who loves you. God gave life to you, He placed you in

a world where all your physical needs could be met, and He provides a means for all your spiritual and emotional needs to be met as well. And He's not just sitting by idly in heaven waiting for you to reach out to Him for a loving relationship. He actually initiated contact and made the first move by sending His Son, to let you know how much He loves you. 1 John 4:9-11 says, "By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Propitiation simply means an atoning sacri-

fice. God loves you so much that He made the greatest sacrifice He could make, so you could have a relationship with Him on earth, and share eternal life with Him in heaven. 1 John 4:16 says "God is love". Love isn't something that God has or does. Love is what God is. If you will turn to God for the love you need, you'll never have to worry about rejection, disappointment or being used. People often offer love that has strings attached. But God is in it for what He can give to you, not take from you. Maybe some people in your life have made you feel unlovable. Don't you worry about that. God loves you even if you're having a hard time loving yourself!

Please Come Visit Us At...

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Times of Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study.....9:30

Sunday Morning Worship Service.....10:30

Sunday Evening Worship Service.....6:30

Wednesday Evening Bible Study.....7:30



Samaritanism

In 2 Kings 17:24-41, we read about a bizarre situation that existed in the region of Samaria. Samaria was the name of both the capitol city and the prominent region of the northern kingdom of Israel. Israel broke away from the Kingdom of Judah in the south in about 930 B.C., and all the kings of Israel were unrighteous, and its people were noted for their idolatry. After about 200 years of dealing with His rebellious people, God finally got fed up and He sent the mighty Assyrian armies into Samaria to defeat His people and punish them for their sinfulness. We read in 2 Kings 17:24-25, “The king of Assyria brought men from Babylon and from Cuthah and from Avva and from Hamath and Sepharvaim, and settled them in the cities of Samaria in place of the sons of Israel. So they possessed Samaria

and lived in its cities. At the beginning of their living there, they did not fear the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them which killed some of them.” The king of Assyria brought an Israeli priest back from captivity to Samaria to teach the foreigners how to serve God properly so they could live in security. The result was that the new inhabitants of Samaria “feared the Lord and served their own gods according to the custom of the nations from among whom they had been carried away into exile” (2 Kings 17:33). People today can learn some valuable lessons from the absurd religion of the Samaritans. First of all, it is impossible to serve the true God of heaven and idols at the same time. People in our culture might think this doesn’t apply to us, but idols are anything we place before God in impor-

tance in our lives. Jesus tells us clearly that it is impossible to serve two masters (Matthew 6:24). We can’t truly love God if our heart is divided between trying to serve Him and the lusts of the world. Secondly, the Samaritans only served God from a sense of fear. The text says they feared God, but they didn’t fear Him the right way. They were scared of the lions and they were scared of God, but they didn’t love and reverence God enough to honor and serve Him consistently and devotedly. We shouldn’t turn to God only when we’re frightened or hurting or when things aren’t going right in our lives. God wants us to love Him with all our heart, mind and strength. We must learn to serve God at all times, with reverence and with our undivided love, if we want to be right with Him.

OUR GOSPEL MEETING WITH GERRY SANDUSKY BEGINS MONDAY!

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, August 15, 16 and 17, the Prairie Village Church of Christ will conduct a special series of Bible lessons entitled “There’s A Great Day Coming!” Lord willing, each night brother Gerry Sandusky of Madison Indiana will be bringing a lesson about the reality of Christ’s return and how to be prepared for that great day. Each night’s service begins at 7:30 PM. Hope to see you there!