

Diligently Seeking God (Hebrews 11:6)

PRAIRIE VILLAGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Scripture of the Week



Acts 2:23-24

“This Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.”

Confusion can often ensue when we're faced with the convergence of God's sovereign power and man's free will. The Apostle Peter convicted the men gathered in Jerusalem in Acts 2, of being answerable for the death of Jesus. He held them personally responsible for nailing the spikes through the Lord's hands and feet, when they handed Him over to the Roman authorities to be crucified for crimes that were not His own. There were many in the crowd that day at the feast of Pentecost who were, no doubt, a part of the same mob that, just three days prior yelled, “*away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!*” (John 19:15). Peter insisted that they nailed Jesus to a cross, and yet in nearly the same breath, that He

was delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God. Was Jesus handed over by the Jews or delivered over by God? The answer to both questions is “Yes”. God had a plan in place to offer up His Son for the sins of the world. Long before He put it into action, He knew the perfect time to send Him into the world (Galatians 4:4), and He knew Jesus' murderers would kill Him of their own free will. God also knew that death could never hold His Son within its grasp, and so, the resurrection was a part of God's wonderful plan of salvation as well. Because Jesus arose, all faithful people, likewise, have the hope of the resurrection of life eternal. In the next article we'll explore our part to play in the plan of salvation.

The Plan of Salvation

There can be no doubt about the fact that the plan of salvation was designed, enacted and carried out by God. Only He had the wisdom to devise the plan and the power to execute it. That having been said, we still have a part to play in God's perfect plan. The plan belongs to God, the power belongs to God and the glory is His and His alone. But Hebrews 5:9 still tells us that Jesus is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. What commands must we obey? What steps must we take?

1) Hear — Romans 10:14 — “*How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard?*” People must hear the good news about Jesus to have

any hope of salvation. Ignorance of the Gospel will be no excuse. The first step in the plan is to listen to the truth.

2) Believe — John 3:16 — In the most famous passage of the Bible, God tells us that whoever believes in Jesus will have everlasting life. Unfortunately, most believers want to stop at this stage of the plan and fail to finish the stair steps to heaven.

3) Repent — Luke 13:3 — “*Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.*” To repent is to change your mind about sin and turn away from it. Sin is the problem. Sin is what killed our spirits and got us lost to begin with. Jesus said without repentance, sin destroys & spiritual death dominates.

4) Confess — Romans 10:9-10 — “*If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*”

5) Be Baptized — Acts 2:38 — “*Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*” Sins cause us to be lost. Baptism is for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus said in Mark 16:16 that we must believe and be baptized in order to be saved.

6) Be faithful till death — Rev 2:10.

Please Come Visit Us At...

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www.pvchurchofchrist.com

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



True Greatness

In Mark 10:37, the Apostles James and John came to Jesus with a special request. They asked Him if they could sit at the right and left hand of His throne when He received His kingdom and His glory (Matthew 20:21). On the one hand, it was admirable of them because it showed great confidence that their Teacher would soon reign as the supreme ruler of the world. But on the other hand, it showed that they still viewed the kingdom of God from a worldly perspective. This desire of theirs was for positions of the highest privilege and authority. Jesus had just previously promised the Apostles in Matthew 19:28 that they would sit on twelve thrones, ruling the twelve tribes of Israel. The two brothers,

James and John, demonstrated their desire to not only rule over the loyal subjects of the future kingdom, but over the other ten Apostles as well. Of course, when their fellow ambassadors heard of this request, they became indignant with the two brothers for their selfish, power-grabbing scheme (Mark 10:41). At this time Jesus pulled them aside to teach them the error in their worldly manner of reasoning. He told them their way of thinking was no different than that of the Gentile rulers who only viewed greatness by the power and authority they held over the heads of the people beneath them (Mark 10:42). Jesus told them in the next three verses, "*But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become*

great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." True greatness in the Kingdom of heaven is not expressed by selfish ambition and the acquisition of power, but by humility and humble service to our fellow man. Jesus didn't just teach this precept in theory. He demonstrated it daily by the life He lived, and ultimately by the sacrificial death He died. If we want to acquire great esteem in the eyes of our Savior, we must strive to follow His great example of selfless service. The place of highest honor in the kingdom is reserved for the lowest of servants.

OUR GOSPEL MEETING WITH GERRY SANDUSKY

If you missed any of the lessons from our Gospel meeting of August 15-17, they are posted on our website at www.pvchurchofchrist.com. Click the tab that indicates that meeting, and you can either "left click" the "play" button and listen to the sermon from your computer, or you can "right click" and save that sermon to file and listen to it elsewhere. Thanks to everyone who attended and prayed for our special meeting.