

Washington church of Christ

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washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com

Order of Services

Sunday August 10, 2014

Song Leader	Derald Sanchez
Prayer	Scott Thomas
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Ralph Ruggiero
Prayer for the Cup	Stan Thompson
Prayer for the Collection	David Osinski
Assisting at the Table	Bob DeGrado
Morning Closing Prayer	Arnold Thompson
Evening Opening Prayer	Bill Duryea
Announcements	Brian Jeffries

Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

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The Select Few...

The word *few* is a comparative term, which always brings to mind the contrasting greater number ... the many. In fact, when we consult a dictionary we see that this word defies definition, except by comparison.

Most typically, in its general application, the word is used to denote the unfavorable part of the "few vs. many" comparison. However, the contrast can also assume the form of a warning, or admonition, which is often the case when the word is used in the Scriptures.

In 1 Peter 3:20 we read:

who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. (1 Peter 3:20 NKJV)

Although there had been 10 generations of man living on the earth since God created Adam, when the great flood came, only a few, eight souls, escaped its destruction. Sin had brought on its great calamity, and only Noah and his house were selected from the multitude of people on the earth to be preserved by the grace of God. (Genesis 6:8)

The patriarch Job impresses the brevity of life upon our minds with the use of the word *few*:

"Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. (Job 14:1 NKJV)

Here we have the most, and the best, that can be spoken of life ... for if we live the full "threescore years and ten" (Psalms 90:10), we are still "but a vapor that appeareth for a little while" (James 4:14)

At best, our days will be filled with challenge, even trouble. But recognition of the fact that we are here on this earth only a few days should keep us busy doing any good deed or worthwhile endeavor which we desire to do ... we dare not delay, for our days are few.

The nearness of death, with its irreparable effects, is also emphasized by the use of *few* in the same book of Job:

For when a few years are finished, I shall go the way of no return. (Job 16:22 NKJV)

We all know that death is inevitable, yet we are often reluctant to recognize that there are but a few fleeting years between us and it. This departure, from which we will never return, can be made safely if we will number our days, and prepare for this journey.

I think that it is in this respect that we can find the greatest error of the human family, as shown by Jesus in this use of the word *few*:

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13-14 NKJV)

What a great warning conveyed by this contrast!

Only two destinations await man, and if we fail to find the way of life, the broad way brings us to destruction. This destruction will be so horrible that all rationally thinking people express a desire to escape it and find the way that leads to Heaven.

The Bible assures us that God desires our salvation (1 Timothy 2:4), and is *“not willing that any should perish”*. (2 Peter 3:9) He has also pointed out the way of holiness in such a manner that *“Whoever walks the road, although a fool, Shall not go astray.”* (Isaiah 35:8 NKJV)

In His Word God gives us *“all things that pertain to life and godliness.”* (2 Peter 1:3), and gives us this assurance:

Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. (Revelation 22:14 NKJV)

And yet the warning of Jesus rings loud and clear ... only a few will find the way of life. Since God desires us to find it, and Jesus *“came to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Luke 19:10), we might look upon the destruction of the many as mass spiritual suicide, committed by all who fail to accept God’s offer of deliverance.

If all men desire heaven as their eternal destination, and since few will find the way, it should be obvious that more is required than the many are willing to do in order to go there.

The same Lord who said *“no man can come to the Father but by me”* (John 14:6) has laid down the entrance requirements for heaven ... and perhaps a brief look at them might help us understand why only a few of our current generation will be in that number when the redeemed are gathered home.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus stated that the pure in heart shall see God. (Matthew 5:6) Here is one of the sweetest promises of heaven. Purity of heart is required to see God, and this will eliminate many who would desire to see His face.

The wise man Solomon said, *“as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.”* (Proverbs 23:7) Jesus added, *“Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.”* (Matthew 12:34) Immoral lives and impure speech, which seem to characterize this generation, do not emanate from hearts that are pure. Sin abounded in the days of Noah, and caused the destruction of all but the select few, because *“every imagination of the thoughts of man’s heart was only evil continually.”* (Genesis 6:5) The same is true today, to which man’s actions and speech will attest.

Hear the words of David...

Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the LORD, And righteousness from the God of his salvation. (Psalms 24:3-5 NKJV)

If our hands are unclean, and our hearts impure, in order to go to heaven we must, as David who had sinned, desire that God *“create in us a clean heart.”* (Psalms 51:10)

In God’s Word we read that we purify our souls by obeying the truth. (1 Peter 1:22) Jesus said, *“now you are clean through the words that I have spoken unto you.”* (John 5:4)

Purification is obtained by obeying Christ, which we do when we obey His commandments found in the Bible, the Word of God.

Everyone who has the hope of seeing God *“in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”* (1 John 3:3 NKJV)

Then, if we maintain that purity of heart, which will produce purity of life we will be among the select few.

Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. (Proverbs 4:23 NKJV)

Our Prayer List...

For Spiritual Responsiveness – All of our wayward members

For Physical Healing – Bill Duryea's mother took a fall and is in rehab ... Georgia DeLorenzo is still at home convalescing.

For Wisdom and Good Judgment – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

For God’s Care and Good Providence – Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation ... the Evangelist and Teachers We Help Support

EVENTS AND NOTES

- ⤴ THERE IS A MEN’S BUSINESS MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THIS AFTERNOON STARTING AT 4:00PM.
- ⤴ WE HAVE A NEW **ONLINE** BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE THAT IS **NOW** AVAILABLE FROM OUR WEBSITE. **CHECK IT OUT! ... INVITE THOSE YOU KNOW TO TAKE IT AND LEARN MORE ABOUT GOD AND HIS WORD!!!**
- ⤴ WE ARE WANTING TO START A WEEKLY “MEET-UP” BIBLE STUDY IN A LOCAL PUBLIC LOCATION. THE DAY WOULD BE EITHER TUESDAY OR THURSDAY. PLEASE SEE BOB IF YOU WOULD PARTICIPATE AND HAVE A LOCATION SUGGESTION.
- ⤴ PLEASE KEEP YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION CURRENT ON THE WEBSITE. THE INFO IS USED TO COMMUNICATE NEWS AND EVENTS