

6). No one could perform his service or worship for another.

They lived godly lives. They cared for their poor. They taught others. They sent out preachers to teach others in far communities. With simplicity of faith and fervor there was no need of centralization. Without organized machinery, the gospel was preached to the whole of civilization in a short time (Col. 1:23). These disciples of Christ were known as Christians (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16). They wore no sectarian names. Their religion was not materialistic or sensual. They did not seek to impress men with pious ceremony, rather, they sought to impress God with the only thing that has ever impressed Him,

contrite obedience (2 Sam. 15:22). Their appeal was not social or recreational. They offered the gospel, for they knew it was God's power to save (Rom. 1:16), and any other appeal was beneath them.

Many sigh, "Oh, if only such could be today." But it is! Free men and women over the earth have despaired of denominationalism, seeing in it neither necessity nor relevance but only a cause of division. They desire the simplicity of what Christ authored, and their number is increasing. How many have taken such a stand? Who knows! They are related and connected only in Christ and not in some organization with machinery to keep a tally. We will not try to number them. What is

important, though, is that a group of such people meet within minutes of where you live.

They are just Christians. They worship and serve God in the same way the early disciples did. Christ is their only creed and the Scriptures their only guide. They are not members of any human organization, they are simply a congregation, or church, of Christ. They, in turn, would like to share Christ with you and with all the world.

You too can be just a Christian and serve God without belonging to any denomination, bound by denominational laws or obligations. If such freedom appeals to you, please contact us. ~

NAVARRE MESSENGER

Volume 3 Issue 63

October 19, 2008

The Pillar and Ground of the Truth

by Wayne Greeson

Before the beginning of this world God prepared a plan. Within that eternal purpose God designed His kingdom, the church, which would display to the powers of Heaven His divine wisdom (Eph. 3:10-11).

Through the Old Testament, God promised by His prophets to set up His eternal kingdom of peace which would never be destroyed (cf. Dan. 2:44; Isa. 2:1-4). In the New Testament, Jesus began His public ministry proclaiming, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. 1:15). Jesus promised to build this kingdom which would be His church (Matt. 16:18-19).

This long planned and awaited promise became a reality on the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection. On that day the kingdom of God, the church of Jesus Christ, was established as those who obeyed the instruction of Peter to repent and be baptized were added to the church (Acts 2:36, 47). The church of Christ was and is built upon the immovable foundation of Jesus Christ



everything it is and does.

But how is the church to carry out this heavenly mission? The church has not been left to stumble in the dark. The God of heaven and earth revealed to His apostles and prophets His complete and final will to men (Eph. 3:1-5; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). "His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness," (2 Pet. 1:3), leaving the church a perfect pattern to follow in all it does (Col. 3:17; 2 Tim. 1:3). This pattern is not to be altered, added to, or diminished from (Rev. 22:18-19; Gal 1:6-10).

(1 Cor. 3:11). It is a special body of people belonging to Christ, the head of this divine institution. In this relationship the church is the glory and fullness of Christ (Eph. 1:23; 3:21). To this special body, Christ has given a special work of universal scope and everlasting consequence. The church is to be the "pillar and ground of the Truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). The church is to support and uphold the eternal Truth of God's Word in

The work of the church in upholding the Truth, according to God's pattern in the New Testament, is three-fold: evangelism, edification and benevolence. Evangelism involves preaching the gospel of salvation to those lost in sin. Edification refers to the work of teaching and building up those who are members of the church. Benevolence is the work of the church in relieving destitute Christians (cf. 1 Thes. 1:8; Eph. 4:12-16; Rom. 15:26-27).

We meet on James M Harvell Rd next to the public library in Navarre.
Call for directions and more information (850) 939-8109



Assembly Schedule Sunday

Bible Class for all ages ___ 9:00 AM
Morning Worship Service ___ 10:00 AM
Evening Worship Service ___ 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class for all ages ___ 7:00 PM

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

If you know of someone who would like to receive this publication, please let us know.

For a free Bible correspondence course by mail, call us.

Navarre church of Christ
8490 James M Harvell Rd
Navarre, FL 32566

Place
Stamp
Here

Since God has given the church a complete pattern in His Word for the work of the church, then it naturally follows that He has thoroughly equipped His church to do everything He has commanded it to do. His church is all sufficient to perform its work of evangelism, edification and benevolence.

Jesus "gave gifts for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ" which will bring us "to a mature man, the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:8-13).

There is absolutely no room for human "wisdom," "organizations" or "improvements" to supplement any aspect of the work of the church. Unfortunately, there are

those in the body of Christ who may make a claim to believe in the all sufficiency of the church, yet manifest contrary actions (cf. Matt. 7:15-20). Some churches contribute money to organizations to do the work God has given them to do. They make a mockery of Christ's provisions for His church.

The church has been hacked to pieces by those who have distributed the church's work to missionary societies, benevolent institutions, schools and colleges. These human organizations are not built upon the foundation of Christ nor are they charged with upholding the Truth as is the church. When the church distributes its work to human organizations it has repudiated the eternal divine wisdom and planning of God and de-

stroyed the glory and fullness of Christ.

In the New Testament local churches did their own work of evangelism, edification and benevolence without human organizations or schemes. In evangelism they supported preachers directly rather than making contributions to "missionary societies" (Phil. 4:14-18). In the work of edification and benevolence, churches never sent money to colleges or benevolent organizations, but carried out this work within the local congregation and under its oversight (1 Cor. 14:26; Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 6:1-6; 11:27-30).

Let us recognize and return to the beauty, simplicity, wisdom, glory and perfection of God's pillar and ground of the Truth. ~

The Door of the Sheep

each morning, each shepherd begins to speak to his flock, they recognize his voice and they follow him, and only him.

How hauntingly beautiful then are the words of our Lord...

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep." John 10:7

"...and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." John 10:3b-4 ~



Above is a photo of a sheepfold from the Middle East. Notice that the entrance has no closure (the rock would be too heavy to move easily). At night as the shepherd is bedding down his

sheep, he leads them into this shelter then lies down in the opening, becoming the "Door."

Some of these are large enough for several herds to share, so

Simply Christians



by Gene Taylor

Many people are growing disenchanted with present religious forms which originated in the middle ages and have become meaningless. There is displeasure with denominational structures and dogma. Some, because of such views, have even decided that "Christianity" is not relevant today. We believe they have made that decision because they are not sufficiently acquainted with the Scriptures to be able to distinguish between the gospel of Christ and what men over the centuries have attempted to add to it.

If some of these things have troubled you and you have felt a yearning to return to the simple, uncomplicated religion of Christ, stripping away all the nonessential elements of relig-

ion and simply abiding by the truths of Christ, truths which transform the soul and bind it to God, let us suggest that it can and has been done.

The Bible, God's word to man, presents Jesus Christ as the Son of God. He was foreshadowed and predicted in the Old Testament which God used to govern His people until Christ should come and establish the New (Jer. 31:31-33; Gal. 3:19, 23-24). That New Testament reveals the religion of Christ. By studying it we learn all there is to know of the way of Christ.

We learn that among the followers of Christ there existed no denominational organizations whatever. All began at a later time. In the New Testament we see people hearing the gospel and obeying the conditions of

God's grace. Being thus saved, they were added to the Lord's people, the church (Acts 2:36-47). As the gospel spread, we find them assembling together in congregations in various localities. Each congregation was under its own elders (Acts 14:23) and no one else on earth. These elders could not make laws and be masters. They were given the responsibility of tending and caring for the congregation as shepherds would a flock (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet. 5:1-3). The only headquarters those disciples knew was heaven, where their head, Jesus Christ, was and is (Eph. 1:22-23).

Their worship was something in which to participate, not something to watch. On the first day of the week, for instance, they would eat the Lord's supper and hear preaching (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-29), they would all sing (Eph. 5:19), they would all pray with various ones leading (1 Cor. 14:15-16), and they would share in their mutual responsibilities by sharing their prosperity (1 Cor. 16:1-2). We find no contributions being collected on any other day than the first day of the week and no hierarchy taxing them or telling them how much to give. They had no organizations clamoring for their support. They gave as they individually purposed in their own hearts (2 Cor. 9:6-7). In all this they were all necessarily involved for each saved person was a priest (Rev. 1:5-