

They may do quite a bit of work, but the work has to do with putting out fires and keeping things running smoothly.

On the other hand, a church pressing toward excellence is quite different:

They see the prime directive as "proclaiming the praises of Him who called us" so that a lost world will "glorify God in the day of visitation," 1 Peter 2:9-12. They do not leave evangelism to a few zealous members, but see it as a *team effort*.

Bible classes and worship assemblies are not the goal, but are used to equip saints to do the work of building up the body of Christ, Ephesians 4:11-16. Most of their work is outside the building.

They get the attention of the community because they are "light" and "salt."

Their parents recognize that it takes hard work to save their children. They do not believe "going to church" is all that it takes. They provide numerous opportunities for the spiritual growth of the younger generation.

They do not allow the grumblers and "stay-the-same" members to stop the work. Like Nehemiah, they pray and say, "hand me another brick."

Where is your church going?

Berry Kercheville, via FOCUS MAGAZINE, April 2008, num. 98

Serving In January

Lead Singing:

- 4th & 18th AM – Steve Waid
- 11th & 25th AM – Jim Campbell
- 4th PM – Neal Wood
- 11th PM – Ralph Lyles
- 18th PM – Andrew Beard

Wednesday Night Talks:

- 7th – Bob Mitchell
- 14th – Terrell Armstrong
- 21st – Bryan Allen
- 28th – Beau Yarbrough

Fourth Sunday Talk:

- 25th – Andrew Beard

Visitor Greeters:

- 4th – Robert & Esther
- 11th – Sandra & Heidi
- 18th – Matt & Heidi
- 25th – Nora O'Connor

Announcements: Ralph Lyles
Duty Coordinator: Lloyd Beard

News And Notes

- **January 23rd:** Monthly gathering at the Waid's home.

- **January 25th:** Song leader's class at 5pm and singing at 6pm.

- **Recordings:** Don't forget that we are recording the lessons. You can request a CD or listen to them in MP3 format from the website.



**"Nourished in the words of faith... exercise yourself toward godliness."
(1 Tim 4:6-7)**

A Simple Word About Us

- We're simply Christians and Christ's name is the only name we wear.

- We follow only God's word. We do not adhere to any doctrines, creeds or traditions of men.

- We seek to establish Bible authority in both our daily lives and in the work and worship of the church.

- We welcome an open discussion for all the things we teach & practice.

- We would love to study with you individually.

The Gospel Nourisher

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Changing The Mission Of The Church

By Steve Klein

Charles Paul Conn tells of living in Atlanta several years ago. He'd noticed a listing in the Yellow Pages for a restaurant called Church of God Grill. Out of curiosity he dialed the number. Conn recalls the phone conversation as follows:

A man answered with a cheery, "Hello! Church of God Grill!" I asked how his restaurant had been given such an unusual name, and he told me: "Well, we had a little mission down here, and we started selling chicken dinners after church on Sunday to help pay the bills. Well, people liked the chicken, and we did such a good business, that eventually we cut back on the church service. After a while we just closed down the church altogether and kept on serving the chicken dinners. We kept the name we started with, and that's Church of God Grill."

While this may be an extreme example, the Church of God Grill is not much different from what a lot of other churches have done in drifting away from God's purpose for the church. Examples could be multiplied of churches that are mainly in the business of providing day care, or health care, or shelter for the homeless, or recreation for their members, or civic service for their community.

www.trussvillechurchofchrist.com

Apparently, many (if not most) think that it is the mission of the church to meet every real and perceived human need and desire - that somehow Christ died so we can have a basketball team, potluck dinners and a Christian singles dating service.

If we just took the Scriptures and tried to determine what the purpose and mission of the church is, what conclusion would we reach? Notice what the church did or was to do in the following passages:

The church supported the truth. 1 Timothy 3:15 speaks of "the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

The church spread the gospel. To the church at Thessalonica Paul wrote, "For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything" (1 Thessalonians 1:8).

The church supported preachers to preach the gospel. The apostle Paul commended the Philippian church in Philippians 4:15-16: "Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities." Elsewhere he said that he took "wages" from churches to minister the gospel (2

Corinthians 11:8).

The church edified itself (built itself up) through worship and teaching. Ephesians 4:15-16 informs us that when members speak the "truth in love" and do their part in the work, it "causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love." When it comes to the worship assembly, Paul commands in 1 Corinthians 14:26 "Let all things be done for edification." Notice that he didn't mention anything being done for entertainment!

The church helped truly needy saints. Clearly the New Testament church was not the worldwide relief organization that modern men have made their churches out to be. The church helped some of its own needy (cf. Romans 15:26), but it was not charged with the mission of helping even all of them. In 1 Timothy 5:16, the Scripture says, "If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows."

Can we not see that the church has a mission that is spiritual? Her purpose has been determined by the One who built her and gave His life for her! Making money by selling chicken dinners may be a fine endeavor for an individual to take on, but it is NOT the mission of the church! May the path of the church here at New Georgia ever be guided by the question, "Is this what God wants us to do?"

--Steve Klein

Where Is Your Local Church Going?

There are two simple alternatives to this question. We can either stay the same (which eventually results in spiritual apathy and numeric dwindling), or we can be dissatisfied with "maintenance" and press toward growth. If we evaluated churches (as the Lord did in Revelation 2-3), we would find some to be mediocre, some to be good, and some to be excellent. Some Christians are satisfied with a mediocre church. A large percentage of Christians are satisfied with a good church. But the real question is, *with what is God satisfied?* Surely we know that God wants excellence.

Churches that are happy to stay the same are easily identifiable. Staying the same is easy because it is so typical. Most Christians experience this kind of church and therefore never desire anything more. Characteristics of a typical stay-the-same church are:

They exist to hold Bible classes and worship assemblies. If these have a measure of quality and the members are at peace with one another, then the goal has been accomplished. Almost all their work happens at the building.

They stand for the truth and will not tolerate false teaching. This is the prime directive. However, of much less concern is whether this truth is share with their neighbors.

They are very comfortable and give each other a good feeling because they stay within the boundaries of long established habits.

Those In Need Of Continual Prayers

- **The Lost:** Remember to [ray concerning those you know who have never obeyed the gospel & for those who have wandered away from God.
- **Howard Jones** has an inoperable brain disease & is slowly getting worse.
- **Mary Sanford**, from Pensacola, Florida is in town receiving treatments for a serious health condition.
- **Beverly Mitchell**, Bob's & Willette's daughter-in-law had surgery recently for her breast cancer. It went well.
- **Martha & Jimmy Carter**, Lisa's parents, as have health problems.
- **Rosalie Beard** as she suffers from Parkinson's disease.
- **June Barlow** continues to have panic attacks and experiences poor health.
- Lisa McNeil's mother & father** both have severe health problems
- **Bryan Allen II** for further progress
- **Glenda Marbut** as she continues to battle against cancer.
- **Jeanie O'Brien** as she is fighting cancer along with other difficulties.
- **Ruth Bibb** (Johnnie's sister), **Barbara White** (Willette's sister), and **Edna**
- **Josh Burtram**, who is away from us and Laurie at this time.

- **Shut-ins:** **Pearl Lloyd, Tom Farley, Hester Stein, Clara Gaston, George Stacy & June Barlow**

Serving in the Military: Bruce Mitchell, Philip Graves, Rob Mitchell