

SLIDELL CHURCH OF CHRIST

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January 11, 2015

Preacher's Point

By Dan Schillinger



Why Did the Early Church Grow?

Why did the early church grow as rapidly as it did? One college history text offers the following explanation:

The reasons for the Christian advance were many. The Roman peace facilitated communications and the exchange of ideas. Christians moved easily from community to community within the Jewish Diaspora [dispersion through foreign lands], and they found a convenient forum for their preaching in the synagogues. By claiming for their own the sacred writings of the Jews (the Christian Old Testament), they appropriated a rich and impressive collection of religious law and literature. They also pointed to a historic founder, who was presented as the central figure in a total explanation of human history. Like the Jews, they made no compromises with paganism--either with pagan polytheism or pagan morality. Above all, they claimed to have an explanation for suffering and misfortune--evils, to be sure, in the pagan view, but benefits, in God's gracious governance, for those who must bear them. The meek, they promised, in a future life and another world, would inherit the earth... Understandably, the teachings of the new religion initially appealed to the slaves and the poor...[but then] Christianity was making inroads among the intellectuals, who found the teachings of the pagans stale and unconvincing. (pp. 149-50, *The Western Experience*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979)

Today's Sermons

a.m. "How Good Are Your Prospects for Salvation?"

Acts 11:14; chapter 10:1-6, 9-16

p.m. "Submitting to Government"

Romans 13:1

All of these reasons given in the context of human history ring true, serving to illustrate the truth of Paul's statement found in Galatians 4:4, ***But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law.***

One of our challenges as God's people today is to identify and discern whatever historical forces may be at work in our own time so that we can take advantage of them to further the spread the Good News of Jesus. Esther 1:13 speaks of ***wise men who understood the times***, and my prayer is that we too would be wise enough to understand our own times.

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Welcome Visitors

We are pleased to have the opportunity to welcome you to our service. We think you will find our congregation family to be one that enthusiastically embraces newcomers and warmly welcomes them into our fellowship. We hope you feel right at home as you join us in worship, praise and thanksgiving.

When I Grow Up

Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is Christ. (Ephesians 4:15, NIV).

How do we know when we have really “grown up”? What is the benchmark of true spiritual maturity? Paul reveals the answer in First Corinthians 13. Spiritual maturity is not measured by what a person can do (v. 1), how much he or she knows (v. 2), or how committed he or she is (v. 3). Rather, the quality that distinguishes a mature Christian from everyone else is how much he or she loves (vs. 4-8). This includes how patient and kind he is with those who are “behind” him in their level of service, knowledge, or commitment to the Lord. Jesus, the ultimate example of spiritual maturity, modeled this aspect of love. When his disciples acted foolishly, demonstrated a lack of knowledge and understanding, or failed to follow through on their commitments, he didn't pour on the guilt or brandish whips of harsh words. He didn't toss them aside to find others who could do better. Instead, he called them to him and gently, patiently instructed them again, looking ahead to their future potential rather than dwelling on their present deficiency. We, too, will reach spiritual maturity only when we learn to love as he loved.

Heavenly Father, please help us to grow up in you by learning to see others through your eyes and love them with your heart. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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REMEMBER IN PRAYER

&

“ENCOURAGE”

With Visits, Calls, & Cards



Donald Boudreaux (Joyce LeBlanc's brother-in-law) - scheduled for kidney cancer surgery.

Irvin Briant, Jr. (Greg Briant's brother) – receiving Hospice care at home. Pray for his comfort and encouragement.

Dorothy Bryan - recovering very well from recent cancer surgery and is doing well with her chemo treatments.

Jean Cook - thanksgiving that she is feeling better and able to get out more now.

Leonard Cousin (friend of Nayla's) - has a brain hemorrhage.

Janet Despenza - still awaiting a corrective leg brace, while suffering foot pain.

Cheryl Elkins (an elder's wife in Pigeon Forge, TN) - undergoing chemo treatments.

Becky Gilbert - diagnosed with breast cancer.

Terri Jones - thanksgiving that she's in a better phase now in her Epstein-Barr syndrome.

Claire Keith (granddaughter of Susan Mooney) – tumors found on her occipital nerves where they meet on the brain. Continues to make a trip to St. Jude's Hospital every three months for a check-up.

Angela Keys - diagnosed with cancer.

Terry McKenzie (friend of the Caseys in Jackson, MI) - not given much time to live.

Ernest Moragne (brother of Paul Moragne) - has incurable lung cancer.

August J. Mura Jr. (father of one of Angela Richardson's friends) - had a clot in his lung, went through surgery. Recovering in the hospital.

Sara Myers - suffered a recent auto accident that thankfully left her uninjured.

Fairie Roig - recovering from knee surgery.

Zach Steele - health issues.

Sydney Zanco (8 year-old daughter of Angela Richardson's friend) - was in an ATV accident, has extensive injury to her right leg, will be in hospital for at least a month. Physicians are hoping they can restore all blood flow and nerves so she won't lose the leg.

Pray for all who are travelling.

Pray for the Spanish Bible study.

Pray for our elders: Courtney Cheri, Dwight Jones and Gerald Molina.

Pray for President Obama and all our elected officials.

Pray for our men and women in our armed forces, both here and abroad!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Consider the churches of Christ

Jesus promised to build his church (Matthew 16:18). His promise was fulfilled when the church came into existence on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Peter commanded the multitude assembled on that day: ***“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins”*** (Acts 2:38). Those who gladly received his word were baptized (Acts 2:41), and three thousand were added (Acts 2:47).

Of what denomination did those three thousand become members? Our contention is that they joined no denomination. Indeed, denominationalism such as we know it in today’s world did not even exist then. They simply obeyed the Good News and were added by the Lord to his church. They wore no sectarian name, adopted no denominational creed, and belonged to no ecclesiastical hierarchy. They were simply children of God, members of the church, and later came to be called Christians (Acts 11:26)

Churches of Christ plead for a return to that same church with that same simplicity. We do not claim to be a denomination. We find no denominations in New Testament times, but we do find the church purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). Our goal is to be that church-- nothing more, nothing less--just basic New Testament Christians as people were in the First Century.

We teach the same plan of salvation--faith, repentance, confession, and baptism for the remission (forgiveness) of sins. We practice the same worship--teaching, giving, observing the Lord’s Supper, praying, and singing praises to God (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19). We follow the same congregational organization--elders, deacons, saints

(Philippians 1:1), without offices and positions unknown to the original Christians.

If you want to be just what people were in the New Testament, then we urge you to consider churches of Christ. We strive to speak where the Bible speaks and to remain silent where the Bible is silent.

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THE Angel of the LORD (Yahweh)

Throughout the Old Testament, ***“The angel of the LORD (Yahweh)”*** identifies himself with Yahweh; (b) he is identified with Yahweh by others; (c) he accepts worship due only to God. Though the phrase ***“angel of the LORD”*** is sometimes used in the New Testament of the King James Version to denote a merely human messenger or created angel, it seems in the Old Testament, with hardly more than a single exception, to designate the pre-incarnate Logos (Christ), whose manifestations in angelic or human form foreshadowed his final coming in the flesh:

(a) Gen 22: 11, 16, ***“The angel of the LORD called to him [Abraham, when about to sacrifice Isaac] ... By myself have I sworn, says the LORD”***; 31:11, 13, ***“the angel of God said to me [Jacob]...I am the God of Bethel.”***

(b) Gen. 16:9, 13, ***“The angel of the LORD said unto her ... and she called the name of the LORD that spoke unto her “You are a God who sees”***; 48:15, 16 -- ***“the God who has fed me ... the angel who has redeemed me.”***

(c) Ex. 3:2, 4, 5, ***“The angel of the LORD appeared unto him ... God called unto him out of the midst of the bush ... “Remove your sandals from off of your feet”***; Judges 13:20-22, ***“The angel of the LORD ascended ... Manoah and his wife ... fell on their faces ... Manoah said ... We shall surely die, because we have seen God.”***

The ***“angel of the LORD”*** appears to be a human messenger in Haggai 1:13, ***“Haggai the LORD’s messenger”***; a created angel in Mat 1:20, ***“an angel of the Lord [called Gabriel] appeared to Joseph”***; in Acts 8:26, ***“an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip”***; and in 12:7, ***“an angel of the Lord stood by him”*** [Peter]. But commonly, in the

O.T., the “*angel of the LORD*” is a theophany, a self-manifestation of God. The only distinction is that between the LORD as himself and the LORD in manifestation. The appearances of “*the angel of the LORD*” seem to be preliminary manifestations of the later incarnate Christ, as in Gen. 18:2, 13, “*three men stood over against him* [Abraham], “*and the LORD said unto Abraham*”; Dan. 3:25, 28, “*the aspect of the fourth is like a son of the gods ... Blessed be the God ... who has sent his angel.*” The N.T. “*angel of the Lord*” does not permit, the O. T. “*angel of the LORD*” requires, worship (Rev. 22:8, 9, “*Don’t do that!*”).

--adapted from A.H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1907), pp. 319-320.

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Atheists

If there were no God, there would be no atheists.
There is a God, therefore, we have atheists.

Our Leaders!

Elders

Dwight Jones
Courtney Cheri
Gerald Molina

Preacher

Dan Schillinger

Deacons

Jesse Fowler
James Richardson

Our Services

<i>Sunday Morning Bible Class</i>	9:30 a.m.
<i>Sunday Morning Worship</i>	10:30 a.m.
<i>Sunday Evening Worship</i>	5:00 p.m.
<i>Wednesday Evening Bible Class</i>	7:00 p.m.
<i>Ladies Bible Class</i>	Tuesday 10:30 am