

WORDS OF TRUTH

A Weekly Bulletin for the Sunrise Acres church of Christ

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Sunrise Acres CHURCH OF CHRIST

Meeting at:
8625 Robert Drive
El Paso, TX 79904

915-755-8137 (Building)
915-525-5794 (Preacher's Office)

OUR MEETING TIMES:

Sunday Bible Class: 9:45 AM
Sunday Worship: 10:55 AM
Tuesday Bible Study: 7:00 PM
Thursday Bible Study: 7:00 PM

Are You Visiting With Us?

If you are visiting with us, we want to welcome you to the Lord's church (Matthew 16:18 and Colossians 1:18). Our goal is to simply get to Heaven and to help you do the same. We use the Bible as our standard to govern what we do in our work and worship for the Lord (Colossians 3:17, II Timothy 1:13, II Timothy 3:16-17, and I Peter 4:11).

We welcome your questions and would love the opportunity to study further with you. Luke recorded a fascinating statement we all need to consider: *"Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able"* (Luke 13:23-24). We invite you to join us in being one of the few that are saved!

Five Reasons You Don't Want to Be a Member Here

By: Brian A. Yeager

Whenever some member of the Lord's body (I Corinthians 12:27; cf. Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4) moves to a new area they are faced with the dilemma of finding a faithful congregation wherein to work and worship. In a military town like El Paso there are periodic influxes of soldiers to the area. They find themselves needing to have fellowship with a faithful congregation in the Lord's work. That is always a difficult thing to have to accomplish. It is much easier to find error in our day than it is to find truth. Some may even teach the truth, but their error is found more in that they do not apply it or that they do not teach the whole truth (they omit certain facts of the faith).

Congregations often "court" prospective members. Instead of being cautious (Matthew 7:15-20 and Acts 20:28-31), they are looking to grow numerically. They advertise their services like they are a business looking for customers instead of an assembly looking to please the Lord. When visitors arrive their sales pitch begins. They want numbers, rather than to help save souls. So, why are we here at Sunrise different? Why do people find that there are other so-called "churches of Christ" in El Paso that are more appealing to them? Let me suggest that what Paul wrote to Rome has a lot to deal with the minds of those "looking for a congregation to 'identify' with": *"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit"* (Romans 8:5). There are some reasons people would not want to be members here at Sunrise. Let's consider them.

Reason #1: We Are Too Focused on the Lord

When many have pulled up to the building here at Sunrise they take a step back because of the fence surrounding the building. They wonder if this is a place they want to attend when we fence in the building. These people shouldn't attend services at Sunrise for we are too focused on proper worship (Colossians 2:20-23 and Revelation 4:10-11), rather than the facility we assemble in. People ought to reconsider membership here because we are too concerned in being good stewards of God's money (I Corinthians 4:2; 16:1-3, and Matthew 25:14-30) wherein we won't spend His funds on a new location in a neighborhood where there is no vandalism. People notice that our meeting facility does not have a "fellowship hall". They wonder where the church eats common meals. Well, they ought not attend Sunrise because we

understand that the local church as a body has no authority to involve herself in social work (Romans 14:17; cf. John 6:26-27 and I Corinthians 11:22; 34).

Reason #2: The Sunrise Acres church of Christ is not Guided by What Others Say or Do

Some will not feel at home here with the congregation at Sunrise because we are not instructed through “brotherhood” standards. Some will feel that we are too different. God forbid, we actually do provide a Scripture for everything that is said and done (Colossians 3:17). There are “churches of Christ” here in El Paso that will follow what others say (Montwood, Eastwood, Westside, etc.). These are where those who want to please men ought to go (Galatians 1:10). As for the congregation here, we will continue to be too different until the day when those around us decide to come back to God’s standard rather than man’s doctrines (Mark 7:1-9)!

Reason #3: We Have a Real Preacher

I don’t want to sound vain in this point, but some things need to be stated (II Corinthians 11:18ff.). Some don’t believe in having a preacher who will “set things in order” (Titus 1:5; cf. II Timothy 4:2-5, I Corinthians 4:6; 16-17, and Titus 2:1). Paul told a preacher: *“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee”* (Titus 2:15). Here in El Paso real preachers are not too welcome. Thus, those looking for a congregation with a hireling need not look too far. Joe Wright (a Las Cruces public school teacher / part-time pulpit preacher at “A” church of Christ in El Paso) believes it is a twist of the Scriptures for a preacher to set things in order (Gospel Truths; March 2007; Page 18). Like Joe Wright (same article), some believe preachers that are capable of memorizing and quoting Scriptures are just talented men looking to hold a group in awe of their abilities. Thus, these types of part-time preachers practice complete ignorance in front of their followers so that they fit in among the blind (Matthew 15:14). They backbite against those of us who know the Scriptures saying we are “dictators” to try and get past their ignorance. These churches are where those who don’t want preachers like Jesus, Paul, Peter, etc. to be imitated today really belong (I Corinthians 11:1).

Reason #4: The Lord is the Head of the Congregation at Sunrise

Some who pose to be brethren are merely professional politicians. Thus, they look for congregations where the men or elders can be manipulated into their way of thinking. These would not find Sunrise a comfortable place for membership. There are country club churches in El Paso such as the Eastwood church of Christ or the Montana Street church of Christ where these would fit in more perfectly. These churches have their “Diotrephes” to follow (III John 9-11). Here at Sunrise we are just too serious in believing that the Lord is the Head of His body the church (Ephesians 5:22-32 and Colossians 1:18). We do not allow what “churches of Christ” have done in the past to be our guide.

Reason #5: The Congregation at Sunrise Does Not Have Fellowship with the Unfaithful

Those who are looking to pretend to be Christians would not fit in at the congregation here. We understand that we are to practice scriptural discipline on EVERYONE that walks out of step (II Thessalonians 3:6; 14-15). We will not allow endless debate with foolish questions to justify sin (II Timothy 2:23 and Titus 3:9-10). Thus, those who want to live half-Christ-like and half-worldly will not like the congregation here at Sunrise (James 4:4; cf. I John 2:15-17 and Colossians 3:1-3). Those who are looking to be “in fellowship” with those who are apostate Christians will also not like Sunrise. Why, because we simply must just take the Lord’s teaching on fellowship too seriously (Romans 16:17-18, II Corinthians 6:14-18, Ephesians 5:11, and II John 9-11). Yes, you guessed it. Any congregation named in this article would be the better place to be. They accept any and most who come their way. We allow the Lord to decide who we are to have fellowship in His work with (I John 1:3-7).

Conclusion

I know that this article is a little sarcastic. Some reading this online might not understand the frustrations of trying to be a sound congregation in El Paso when the others aren’t. However, the points need to be realized (more could be made too). You’d only want to be a member of the Sunrise congregation if you could appreciate New Testament congregations like THE church of Christ in Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-11). Any counterfeit Christians would do better in other congregations here in El Paso.

What must one do to be saved (Acts 2:37)? Hear and believe the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16 & Romans 10:17), repent of their sins (Acts 3:19), confess Christ (Acts 8:37), and be baptized (immersed) for the remission of sins into the church of Christ (Acts 2:38, I Corinthians 12:12-13, and Romans 6:1-6). One must then remain faithful (Rev. 2:10).