



**Forest Hill  
Church of Christ**

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Harold D. Mangrum  
Leonard Watson

**Ministers:**

Barry M. Grider, Pulpit  
Matthew Martin, Associate  
Douglas Alvarenga, Hispanic

**VISIT US SOON!**

**Sunday:**

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.  
Morning Worship.....10:30 A.M.  
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

**Wednesday:**

Bible Study .....7:00 P.M.

**HOME OF THE  
MEMPHIS SCHOOL  
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[www.msop.org](http://www.msop.org)

**Missions Supported:**

Far East/World Evangelism  
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Iglesia de Cristo (Getwell)  
In Search of the Lord's Way  
Kakinada, India  
Manila, Philippines  
Murmansk, Russia  
Truth for the World  
Words of the Master (Memphis  
Time Warner Cable ch17)

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**THE PURPOSE OF THE GLORIOUS CHURCH (PART TWO)**

Barry M. Grider

**THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH IS TO STRENGTHEN**

Those who are converted need to be strengthened. Jesus said,

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren (Luke 22:31,32).

Paul, in Ephesians 4:12, speaks of the edifying of the body of Christ. It is imperative that those who have been saved remain saved. Elders who are concerned about the flock realize the importance of keeping the sheep busy. Likewise, periods of edification and fellowship are necessary for strengthening and edification purposes. Hence so many congregations have a period of Bible study during the middle of the week with its primary focus centered on edifying the church. Let us notice some areas where the church can effectively strengthen the brethren.

- Assembling (Heb.10:25)
- Teaching (Acts 20:32)
- Praying (Acts 2:42)
- Encouraging (2 Tim. 1:16)
- Helping (Acts 6:3; 2 Cor. 8:1ff)
- Fellowshipping (Acts 2:42)
- Involvement (1 Cor. 15:58)
- Leading and Following (1 Tim. 4:16)

Since God uses the church as a tool to strengthen, do you as an individual member help to edify others?

**THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH IS TO SERVE**

Our Lord and Savior was a leader, yet he was also a servant. Now he commands, "by love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13). While the Christian is concerned about himself, he is not preoccupied with self. Consider these passages.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-3).

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith (Gal.6:2,10).

What is the purpose of serving others? Our purpose is save others by first showing them how much we care. Jesus sometimes met physical needs-healing the sick and feeding the multitudes- that he might be able to later impart some spiritual truth. The old adage may be trite, but, nevertheless true, "people don't care how much we know until they know how much we care." Once a poor, hungry little boy walked into the Madison, Tennessee church building and asked Ira North, "Is this a church that helps people?" Of course, brother North informed the boy he had come to the right place. Which congregation would the wounded man on the road to Jericho (Luke 10) desire to attend? Would it be the congregation of the Priest, Levite, or the Samaritan? We know the answer. Individually and congregationally do we present to the world what the Lord purposed? Are we loving, caring, and busy serving as the Lord has instructed?

**CONCLUSION**

The Lord's church understands its purpose. Such will not appeal to everybody. In fact, it is too simple for many. However, our mission of saving, strengthening, and serving is glorious. Together, members of the church have the same goal. That goal is going to heaven and taking as many with us as possible. Dear reader, do you know anyone who needs to be saved, strengthened, or served? Such is your purpose and the purpose of the Lord's church.

### WHAT IS BIBLICAL FAITH?

Mike Dugger

“Without faith it is impossible to please God” (Heb. 11:6). Since we must have faith to please God, we must know what faith is. Some in the religious world believe that faith and evidence, or faith and knowledge, are not compatible. That is, they believe that knowledge, or knowing, destroys the whole idea of faith. Faith to them is nothing more than a “leap in the dark,” a trust based not on evidence but on pure “hope” without proof. With that as the criteria, it could be observed that one could just as easily be a Buddhist or a Mormon, or any other type of religious category in life and be justified in so doing. Biblical faith is NOT held with a lack of evidence, it is precisely held because the evidence proves that it must be. Some might suggest that the very nature of “faith” necessarily involves doubt. Thomas Warren said of such an idea, “This claim, in the light of James 1:6, is indeed a strange one. James said, ‘But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting: for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed’” (Warren, “Logic and the Bible,” p.118). We are commanded to walk by faith and the Bible does not teach that “faith is the acceptance of that for which one does not have adequate evidence” (Warren, 117).

The Bible teaches that faith is a law (Rom. 3:27), a system (Acts 6:7), and a choice (Acts 2). The Bible uses the word “faith” as a noun, never as a verb. What is Biblical faith? It is hearing and obeying God. Joseph Thayer in his Greek Lexicon says that “faith” is “trust...conjoined with obedience.” Hebrews chapter eleven fully demonstrates that faith is heading and obeying God.

Some suggest today that if a miracle were to really occur, witnessed by many people, it would be possible to bring many to Christ. However, even in the days of miracles (First century) people believed due to the testimony of others (John 4:39), due to the Old Testament writings of God (Luke 16:31), and due to that which was written by the Apostles (John 20:30-31). Apart from miracles, we have all of these avenues available today, and God says it is enough to know the truth (John 8:31-32).

Faith is not mysterious. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17), for God chose preaching to save them that believe (1 Cor. 1:20-21). We are defended by faith (Eph. 6:16) and we can defend the faith (Jude 3). Biblical faith involves six facts that can be proven beyond any doubt: (1) God exists; (2) Man exists; (3) God can and has revealed Himself to man; (4) Man has the ability to respond to God; (5) The Word of God is God’s only revealed Word; (6) Evi-

dence is necessary to have faith.

Faith can be misplaced, and misplaced faith will not save (Deu. 28:52; Luke 18:9). The only faith that will benefit us is faith that is “in Christ (Gal. 3:26; Eph. 1:3).

There is no shame in wanting evidence for what one believes. Jesus never rebuked Thomas for wanting to put his hand on Jesus’ nail pierced body before he would believe. Thomas merely wanted as much evidence as was possible. When Thomas saw and accepted the evidence he said, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). Jesus said, “Because thou hast seen me thou has believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed (John 20:29). Though some had not seen, they did have evidence—from the testimony of others, from the Old Testament, from the disciples, from the empty tomb, and from the many eyewitnesses. Today, the evidence which we must acknowledge is the Word of God, and when we accept the evidence therein, we will be able to walk by faith (evidence) even though we cannot see (physically those events that are recorded) (2 Cor. 5:7; John 20:30-31).

**HOW THE AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL  
SPENDS  
HIS TIME ON EARTH**

Average Lifespan	70 years	
Sleep	23 years	32.9
Work	16 years	22.8
Watching T.V.	8 years	11.4
Eating	6 years	8.6
Traveling	6 years	8.6
Leisure	4.5 years	6.5
Illness	4 years	5.7
Getting Dressed	2 years	2.8
Religious Matters	0.5 years	0.7

**“WORDS FROM THE MASTER”**  
 Forest Hill Church of Christ  
 Wednesdays: 5:00-5:30 P.M.  
 Time Warner Cable - Channel 17

## DEALING WITH A LIFE-CHANGING EVENT

Matthew Martin

Perhaps our readers have noticed a lack of articles on this page the past couple weeks. The reason: Lauren and I welcomed into the world our first son on Thursday, September 7. Jack Walker Martin was born at 5:56 p.m. and weighed 7lbs., 6ozs.

I suppose there is no way to be totally prepared for a first child. I've had nine months to think about it, and even today almost two weeks since his birth, it still does not feel totally real.

Like with any life-changing event, one should always look to the Bible for guidance. Though the verse is in direct reference to enduring temptations, 1 Cor. 10:13 contains a strong message of comfort. Paul writes:

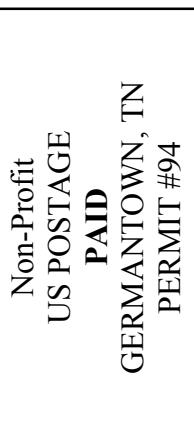
There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

In its context, Paul is saying that no temptation (outward trial, not inward lust) can affect me but such is common. In other words, any temptation that affects you could easily affect me too. This verse is not saying that God will keep piling temptation after temptation on us, until we reach our limit. Rather it is a passage that shows that *when* we are tempted there is a way to escape it.

That "way to escape" as Paul puts it, is God's faithfulness. When outward trials (or changes) come there is one sure thing on which the Christian can lean: God's faithfulness. God is unmovable (faithful) and even in the hardest trial He is our way out. Likewise, even amidst life's biggest changes, if one will simply lean on the everlasting arms of God, those changes can be.

You can't stop change. But you can deal with it in the right way: by resting on the One who is never changing (Mal 3:6), unmovable, and **always** faithful.

Lauren and I solicit your prayers as we begin this wonderful (if not a little scary) change in our lives. We know (like all Christians, when faced with life-changing events), that no matter how difficult or unprepared we may be at times, there is a God in heaven, who never changes, and will be our constant forever.



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