

From the Preacher's Pen... Last week we began a look at God's view on traditions, customs and habits. We found that God objects to His people serving Him without intentional thought or consideration of what they are doing. There is no accidental faithfulness! Habits may help us head in the right direction, but if we forget why we are serving the Lord or do them for the wrong reason, it becomes a bad habit.

Inventing our own traditions that contradict God's will or imitating the wrong customs of false teachers is considered by God as a direct path away from Him. We cannot use the world's "good ideas" to improve on what God wants us to do.

Consider a bit more of God's view of this lesson and some important positive lessons for us about...

Traditions, Customs and Habits – Part 2

Some of the things we do, the habits or customs we keep, have no real right or wrong value. They are just part of our family or cultural tradition, the norm. But some of the seemingly common traditions, customs and habits in Jesus' own life are much more important for us to imitate. They help us realize what it truly means to be a part of God's family.

Consider some of Jesus' traditions, customs, habits and the positive lessons for us:

Mark 10:1: *And rising up, He went from there to the region of Judea, and beyond the Jordan; and crowds gathered around Him again, and, according to His custom, He once more began to teach them.* What a powerful lesson in evangelism! Is it normal and habitual for us to share the Good News?

Luke 2:27: *And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law.* The fact that God's Law demands our worship, obedience and service doesn't make it easy or convenient. We are the ones responsible for making it a habit of our's to do the right thing.

Luke 2:42: *And when He became twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast.* Of all the lessons that we can teach our children, none is better than doing what is right together as a family.

Luke 4:16: *And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.* Many years ago a friend commented that he envied me growing up in a faithful family simply because he had no tradition of obeying and serving God in his early life. And yet we all work hard to learn and keep customs that are important to us! How important is your faithful service to God? Important enough to work hard at making it a habit?

Luke 22:39: *And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him.* Jesus found strength in regularly taking time out to pray, to cultivate holiness. How often do we take time to be holy?

Jesus also found Himself wrongly criticized for his attitude toward customs. In Acts 6:14 Stephen is rebuked: *"for we have heard him say that this Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place and alter the customs which Moses handed down to us."* In reality, Jesus had said just the opposite! (Matthew 5:17: *"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to*

abolish, but to fulfill.") While Jesus kept many traditions without criticizing them, He was also discerning enough to reject those that were meaningless (cf. Matthew 15:2).

Traditions, customs, habits can lead to good, positive religious practices:

Esther 9:27, 32: *the Jews established and made a custom for themselves, and for their descendants, and for all those who allied themselves with them, so that they should not fail to celebrate these two days according to their regulation, and according to their appointed time annually. (32) And the command of Esther established these customs for Purim, and it was written in the book.*

The "unnamed feast" that Jesus attended in John chapter 5 appears to be Purim and, like so many other Old Testament events He would show that the great fulfilment of them was found in Him.

Luke 1:9 shows a time when God carefully used tradition to bring about fulfilment at exactly the right time. In this case a priest "just happens" to be in the Temple to learn of God's preparations for the coming of the Savior (*according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense*). A similar instance occurs in Luke 4:16 when Jesus reads the Sabbath reading at the beginning of His ministry... and it "just happens" to be fulfilled in Him!

Of course, you realize that there are no "just happens" with God and His purpose.
continued on page 3

Opportunities to worship, study & serve:

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY 10 AM

WORSHIP 11 AM

EVENING WORSHIP 6 PM

WEDNESDAY 7 PM

THURSDAY LADIES' BIBLE CLASS 10 AM

Congregational Potluck 3rd Sunday
each month after morning worship
(except June, July & August)

Welcome to all!
We are glad you are here!

Enter to Worship...
Leave to Serve

Welcome to our visitors today! We hope & pray you'll be blessed by your time with us & will join us again soon!

Our Prayer List: Keep the following in prayer this week as you "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17): Nora McNeil, Matthew Odom, Heather Ries, Hunter Shirley, Rene Turner, Ruth West, Everett Martin, Anna Mae Hardin, the Najera family, Bill Hall, Reta Wallace, Jim Holder, Kristi Martin, Wally Myers, Cindy Turpin, Millie Cunningham and...

Our Missionaries: Jack Farber and Aaron Knotts and families.

Previously Announced Family & Friends: Robin & Marc Estabrook (Julie Evan's sister & nephew), David Reffner (Flora Doster's grandson with MS), Art Stoneking & wife (friends of Carl Catozzi, cancer), Jeremiah Haller (Flora Doster's grandson), Annette (Cindy Turpin's sister), Cole Myers (grandson of friend of Myers), Sheila Simpson, Lillian Wilhite & Mirlene Smith (relatives of Lynn Shirley), Teresa Acosta, Rosemary Glasier (Crystal Mora-Landroth's mother), John Hoover's relatives with personal difficulties, Shelly Cooper (friend of Carl Catozzi), Lucas Espinoza (Brian Campbell's friend), Kaesha Raffterfer (Gene Pinkston's cousin, cancer), Chuck Keels (friend of Grubbs with cancer), Terri Fillipski (cancer, Julie Evans' cousin).

Special Requests: WBS & WEI Bible study students; Kevin & Nancy Chambers & World Christian Broadcasting; Judy Hagner, son Preston, daughter Angela & son James. Brandi Schroeder (Flora Doster's granddaughter with MS); Dallas Purcella's mother; Paulina's father (Arnold); Julie's father; Laurel's father.



OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL: Nate Panka (Cleo Wise's grandson); Javier Najera; Fernando Najera, Frank Torres (Javier's brother & cousin); Eric Shirley; Trevor Farrow (Allen's son); Scott Hoover (John's son); Ariel Gomez; Paul Sipes & April Belovedstone (Sue Wolfe's son & daughter); Robert Strickland (Cleo Wise's grand-nephew); Ismael Lopez; Robinson Goldman (Cindy Turpin's son-in-law); Destanie Aragon; Nathan Bagley.

New: Jason: son of Carl Catozzi in need of prayers; Dr. Yanni: friend of John Hoover with cancer; Michael Lightheart: son-in-law of Flora Doster, health problems; Jimmy Handtegen: friend of David Davis following a stroke; Derwin Jackson & family: with his job; Sean & Vickie: Carl Catozzi's friends with struggles in their lives; Terri Hoover: John's daughter-in-law with serious health issues; Monica Lopez: George Mora's aunt with breast cancer; Jacob Shirley: struggles; Rhett Booher: Gary & Toni Pierce's grandson: Traumatic Brain Injury while in the Army; Ray Stephenson family: youngest son's cancer has spread; John Mark: in Afghanistan in danger for his faith; Jimmy Davis: friend of Mike Evans with melanoma; Adele Fink: recovering from colon cancer; George Ponter: Brian Campbell's cousin with multiple struggles; Amy Vestal: lupus and intestinal problems; Anna Price: via Kimberlee Myers; Chuck Hedrick family: with multiple health problems; Kathy Gonzalez: grandmother of Heavyn & Tatum with cancer.

Sue Wolfe; LaVerne Jackson's mother; Celeste Wallace: health

problems; Sandra Watson, Sue Shepperd & Elzie Shirley: Lynn's family with illnesses; Ed Baum; Chuck Hedrick; Ray Stephenson.

Thomas Vestal: Amy's cousin having head surgery February 5.

Steve McDonald: Jean Grubbs granddaughter's husband, tests.

Larry West: complications of diabetes.

Donald Helton: having a kidney & liver transplant.

Gene Pinkston: back problems as he continues to work.

Delbert White's Granddaughter Jessica.

Tom Hoover: (John's brother).

Frank Campbell: recovering from a broken collarbone.

Kirrin Kerby: (Jean Grubbs grandson).

Anna Mae Hardin: was back in hospital.

Also Our New Christians, those travelling and especially those with spiritual struggles.

Boxes for 6"x9" books are needed for mailing free copies of "Worship the First-Century Way" as requests come in. So far this year we've mailed out 39 copies. Most requests are for one copy but some have been up to 10. It does not matter if the boxes have writing on them.

The special website set up just for this is <https://1st-century-christianity.com/> Share the website with your social media friends and relatives. The book ends with chapters on music in the church and baptism.

If you would like a free copy, either request one (or more) on our website or give a note to Charlie Stephenson, Lester Bagley or Katheryn Haddad.

*Praise
the Lord*

**Kay Baker
was baptized into Christ by
Charlie Stephenson last Sunday**

her address is:

2200 N. Trezell Rd

Casa Grande, AZ 85122

Upcoming Events...

Men's Business Meeting: February 11 after evening worship.

Potluck: February 18 — Group #2 [Toni Pierce's group] set-up, serve & clean-up

Monthly Singing: February 25 at 2:30 in Eloy

5th Wednesday Prayer & Song Meeting: May 30.

Traditions, Godly traditions are part of God’s purpose to accomplish His will!

Traditions, customs, habits can have a positive context for our Christian practice:

Acts 17:2: *And according to Paul’s custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures.*

1 Corinthians 11:2: *Now I praise you because you remember me in everything, and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you.*

2 Thessalonians 2:15: *So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.*

2 Thessalonians 3:6: *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep aloof from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.*

Hebrews 10:25: *not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.*

Once again we are reminded of the many good customs and traditions, but also notice how the writer of Hebrews carefully reminds us of *both* good and bad habits? Let’s face it, according to God there are some “traditions” that we as Christians should never forsake!

Are you spiritual enough to appreciate the fact that some customs are good, positive and right in God’s sight, and, just as important, that some are wrong?

May we never be found holding on to those things that are not good for our souls just because we’ve always done it that way. Likewise, may we never be found forsaking and making fun of those things that bring us closer to God.

As the Apostle Paul reminds us, *Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you — unless indeed you fail the test?* (2 Corinthians 13:5)

— Lester P. Bagley



Monday with the Master

Ages 10 through college meet tomorrow at 6 pm for dinner & Bible study in the Fellowship Hall.

See Lou Bagley THIS MORNING if you don’t already know what to bring!

Men’s Training Class, 5 pm today...

for leading prayers, doing talks & devotionals, & song-leading.

2018 Directory Update

NEW FULL DIRECTORY sheets (if you’ve not gotten one yet) and ADDITIONAL UPDATES for those already picked up are available.

If you need a complete directory with a binder, please see Lester.

Updated birthday and anniversary lists are also on the table.

Last Week: 10+ Pew-Packers



Be “in the picture” every week!

✓ Checkup ✓ How are we doing?

Attendance Last Week:

Sunday Morning Bible Class = 79

Sunday Morning Worship = 110

Sunday Evening Worship = 65

Wednesday Evening = 72

Giving

2018 Weekly Budget = \$3,015.00

Contribution Last Week = \$5,536.30

Church of Christ
805 East Racine Place
Casa Grande, AZ 85122

Postage

TO:

Privileged to Serve

Sunday Morning February 4

Adult Bible Class: • *Acts of the Apostles* Lester Bagley
Announcements: Bill Hall
Song Leader: Allen Farrow
Prayer: Charlie Stephenson
Serve Communion: Gary Pierce, Bill Hall, Tom Haney,
Frank Campbell, Max Compton
Sermon: • *I Can Do Something for God* Lester Bagley
Closing Prayer: Mike Evans

Count Contribution: Tom Haney & John Hoover

Sunday Evening February 4

Song Leader: Allen Farrow
Prayer: Ron Cook
Sermon: • *Three Little Lessons* Lester Bagley
Serve Communion: Delbert White
Closing Prayer: John Hoover

Wednesday Evening February 7

Song Leader: George Mora
Prayer: Curt Odom
Devo: Lester Bagley
Closing Prayer: Mike Evans

Anniversaries



February 18: *Nick & Samantha Odom*
February 19: *Curtis & Jackie Odom*
February 23: *Sam & Sherri Fields*
February 23: *Bill & Phyllis Hall*
March 1: *Chris & Mickey Didelotte*
March 5: *Everrett & Jeanne Martin*

Birthdays



February 4: *Ed Baum*
February 5: *Greg Huffman*
February 6: *Richard Reid*
February 15: *Cheryl Campbell*
February 19: *Tom Haney*
February 25: *Jim Holder - Nancy Robbins*
February 25: *Louise Terpstra*
February 27: *Matthew Odom*