



Cape Coral Church of Christ

1010 S.W. 20th Avenue

Cape Coral, Florida 33991

(239) 283-4880



<http://www.thelordsway.com/capecoralfl>

Schedule of Services

Sunday: Bible Study: 9:30 A.M.

Worship: 10:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday: Bible Study: 6:00 P.M.

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The Boy Who Lost His Boat

Tom had just finished making a toy boat. He carried it to the river and let out the string tied to it. He admired how smoothly it cut through the water. Suddenly, a strong current took hold. Tom tried to pull his boat back, but the string snapped. He sprinted along the bank to catch it, but soon his boat drifted out of sight. He desperately searched until dark. Unsuccessful, he finally gave up.

Days later as he walked home from school, Tom passed a toy store and a boat caught his eye. He pressed his face against the window for a better look. Sure enough, it was his lost boat. He ran inside and told the manager, "Sir, that's my boat in your window. I made it myself."

The manager replied, "Sorry, Son, but someone else brought it in this morning. If you want it, you'll have to buy it." Tom hurried home and counted all of his money; he had just enough. He rushed back to the store and purchased his beloved boat. As he walked home, he held it tightly to his chest and said, "Now you're twice mine. First I made you, and now I bought you." [*Good News Publishers, "The Boy Who Lost His Boat"*].

This story illustrates God's relationship with us. He designed, crafted, and breathed life into each of us. Sadly, people drifted from Him on the sweeping currents of sin. To bring us back, God paid a substantial price - He gave His own Son to die (John 3:16). With that sacrifice God now owns us twice. He made us and He bought us.

Diligently Remembering the Poor

Zealous evangelism, one of the outstanding characteristics of the early church, was complemented by genuine care for the poor and needy. Peter, James, and John evangelized primarily among the Jews, while Paul and Barnabas concentrated on the Gentiles. As they discussed their fellowship in the Lord, one of their concerns was "that we should remember the poor." Paul said he was eager (diligent) to do that very thing (Galatians 2:9, 10).

Paul demonstrated his diligence by organizing a collection to help the poor saints in Judea (see Romans 15:26; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9). Just how much work went into this project becomes evident from reading the second letter to Corinth. The fact that these were predominantly Gentile churches sending aid to Jewish brethren made it even more notable.

Later in his life, Paul became a recipient of assistance from a faithful brother who diligently remembered him in his hour of need. Oh how Paul, the prisoner, must have rejoiced to see Onesiphorus! "He often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but when he arrived in Rome, sought me out very diligently and found me" (2 Timothy 1:16, 17).

How diligent are we about serving the poor and needy? Hear these disturbing words from Jesus, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor your rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:12-14). When is the last time you did this? Do you know anyone who has actually done this? Can we honestly say we take the Lord and His word seriously?

This isn't just a "church" obligation; it's an individual one too. Putting a check in the plate on Sunday morning is a good start, but it doesn't fulfill our responsibility to be diligent in supplying the needs of the poor. Remember that Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Matthew 25:40).

Study, Do, Teach

Ezra must have been an exceptional person because he was chosen by Artaxerxes, King of Persia, to lead a group of exiles home from Babylon to Jerusalem. He was also to lead a spiritual return to the laws of God. This is the charge he was given: "And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God which is in your hand, appoint magistrates and judges who may judge all the people ... all such as know the laws of your God, and those who do not know them, you shall teach. Whoever will not obey the law of your God, let judgment be strictly executed upon him" (Ezra 6:25, 26).

The really interesting point is the way Ezra set about doing his work. He wasn't just a preacher who proclaimed the law of God, nor just a scholar who studied it endless hours. He was a practitioner of the law – a doer! I've often been asked, "What's the formula for teaching my non-believing friends about God?" The formula is given in Ezra 6:10, "For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel." Do you see the key? It's the relationship – the order of these words – STUDY the Word, DO it, and then TEACH it! If you just preach, no one will listen. If you just study, no one will understand except you, but if you do the will of God, your "teaching formula" is complete. "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves ... he who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer that forgets but a doer that acts, he shall be blessed in his doing" James 1:22, 25).

"There are more men ennobled by study than by nature." – Cicero

Who Is My Neighbor!

When Fred Rogers received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, he wore a sweater and tie, just as he had for thirty years as host of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. Instead of focusing on his career in public television, he talked to reporters about why we are on this earth – not to amass fortunes or win competitions or make great names for ourselves. The important things, he said, are the small, daily acts that make our world a better place. Is that what we consider important today? Do we consider the small things important enough to interrupt our plans, rearrange our schedules, tap into our bank accounts?

In Jesus parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37), a man who was considered racially, socially, and theologically inferior showed mercy to someone who was injured. Jesus commended this Samaritan outcast and said that he was a "neighbor" to the man in need. According to our Lord and Savior, the world is our neighborhood, and every person in it is our neighbor whom we should love as ourselves. Today, we will undoubtedly have an opportunity to show God's love, mercy, and kindness to someone in need. Let's do it, and make it a beautiful day for a neighbor.

Words, Words, Words

Words have power. A word can incite anger or calm tempers. Words produce both laughter and tears. They instruct, guide, encourage, the list goes on and on. The often repeated statement, "The pen is mightier than the sword," is not about the writing instrument but the words written.

Yes, words have power, but if this is true of the words of men, how much more so the word of God. James in chapter one of his epistle emphasizes the word and its power. He tells us that God "begat us with the word of truth" (James 1:18). Just as the starting point of one's physical life is when he is begotten, so also of spiritual life. It is God's word of truth that starts each of us on our spiritual life. James also tells us that the word "is able to save your souls." Yes, God's word has power.

But James is quick to point out that we have a responsibility. He says such thing as: "Receive with meekness the engrafted word" and "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" James 1:21-22).

God's word has power. Let's read it, study it, meditate upon it, and live by it, for so doing, its power will work effectively in our lives.