



Cape Coral Church of Christ

1010 S.W. 20th Avenue

Cape Coral, Florida 33991

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<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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Scriptural Baptism

A lady, who was a member of one of the local denominations in town, was attending a gospel meeting at her local congregation of the church of Christ. That night she heard a powerful sermon on the subject of baptism. She sought out her minister to question him on this vital subject of baptism. He assured her that sprinkling was scriptural. She was fairly convinced, except for the story of Philip and the Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40).

"There it says they both went down into the water," she insisted.

"But you must remember, Sister," said the preacher, "that the scripture furthermore says it was a desert place. There could not have been enough water for immersion. It is likely that this happened: the Eunuch, having prepared well for the journey through the desert, had a large jug of water under the chariot seat. When he was convinced that he should be baptized, he simply brought forth the jug, and holding it up to Philip, said, 'See, here is water, what doeth hinder me to be baptized?'"

"Oh, I see!" exclaimed the woman, "and they both went down into the jug!"

The true mode of baptism has been and continues to be debated by some. The first known case of sprinkling was administered to Novatian in A.D. 251. It developed as an emergency action for the sick (J. W. Shepherd, *The Church the Falling Away and the Restoration*, p. 60). As the years passed by, it became more accepted by various religious groups. However, as with any practice, it must be weighed in the balances of God's word.

Biblical baptism is an immersion in water. The original word "baptize" is defined as to "dip" or submerge" (Thayer, p. 94). Sprinkling cannot qualify as baptism because it is not an immersion. The New Testament is very pointed on the mode of baptism. "Buried with him in baptism..." (Colossians 2:12). "Know ye not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3,4). In sprinkling there is not a burial, neither is there a resurrection. Clearly baptism is a burial in water.

Several years ago, Jacob Ditzler and J. S. Sweeney debated the scriptural mode of baptism. During the course of the debate, Ditzler showed that a secondary meaning of the word "baptize" was "to wash or sprinkle." He thus reasoned that sprinkling was a scriptural practice. Not to be outdone, Sweeney countered by showing that a secondary meaning of "saved" was "to be pickled," and a secondary meaning of believe was "to hold an opinion." This resulted in the following translation of Mark 16:16: "He that hath an opinion and is sprinkled shall be pickled."

Sweeney then asked, "Is it our aim to see what we can make out of the Scriptures, or is it to find out what God has said?" Have you been immersed (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:28)?

The World without the Bible

It would be difficult to picture the world without the Bible. In a recent trip to Canada, we traveled through great cities, a fruitful isthmus, lazy streams cutting through valleys, foothills with swift running streams and clear lakes. As we enjoyed the early sunrise and late sunset, the wild life, both animals and plants, always gave us something new to talk about. We often ask who could not believe in

God? Psalm 119:89 came into mind often, "For ever, O Jehovah, thy word is settled in heaven." God's Word is settled forever. Nothing can shake it. Its truth can never be discounted. It is sure and solid.

Have you ever given thought, that if we did not have the Bible, the world would be without: (1) Psalm 23 with its green pastures and still waters; (2) Genesis 3:15 with its promise of the Savior; (3) Isaiah 53 with its glorious revelation of Jesus as our substitute on the cross and our intercessor before God; (4) Matthew 5 - 7 which gives us the *Magna Charta* of Christianity with its lofty spiritual principles and promises for happiness in this life; (5) Luke 15 with its great lesson on the Prodigal Son and Loving Father; (6) John 17 which is our Lord's Prayer for unity; (7) Acts 2 which gives the first gospel sermon and the establishment of the church and kingdom; (8) 1 Corinthians 15 and its promise of the coming resurrection and (9) Revelation 20 - 22 of the coming judgment, vindication of the saints, and our eternal home.

Truly, "Thy word is settled in heaven." Let us read the Bible, obey it to enjoy its precious promises, and love it if we are to be well-pleasing to God.

Restoring the Fallen

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). I know of no passage in all of God's Book that is used less than this one. Brother, did you ever use it? Oh, yes, I know you have often read it and talked about it, but did you ever use it? We read lots of verses that we never use. It seems like a lot of folks have no real use for a lot of plain passages of Scripture.

The church would be infinitely better off if, when a man is overtaken in a fault, we would restore him. Oftentimes, when a man is overtaken in a fault, we do most everything else but try to restore him. We magnify his faults and then tell others, and thus by our ungodly attitude drive him further into sin. It would help us mightily to keep in memory that one soul in the sight of God is just as precious as another.

So many times when we try to "restore" someone, we forget that we are to do it "in the spirit of meekness." I tell you, brethren, the

spirit of meekness is too conspicuous by its absence among us. It is one of the most potent influences in the world. It is fraught with great possibilities. When a brother comes to you in the spirit of meekness, that is evidence that he is interested in your soul. We cannot hope to win by a spirit of self-righteousness, braggadocio, arrogance, and haughtiness.

O, Lord, give unto thy servants a spirit of meekness for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Let Your Light Shine"

Sometimes people say, "I would be a Christian but I can't find a church anywhere that practices what it professes." Others say, "I would like to find a group that are Christians seven days a week rather than just on Sundays."

The above statements sound good. But they are just an excuse if the person who makes them claims to be searching for an organization, physical or spiritual, that is perfect. As long as an organization is comprised of fallible men and women, that organization is fallible.

However, we must agree there is validity in good measure by those who would condemn churches for their hypocritical actions. Hypocrisy is prevalent all across the religious world today, and even the Lord's church is not insulated from it. It is not enough to say we believe something and then do nothing or do the opposite. James tells us, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). Jesus prayed for the great need for the church to be united and working together, "... that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:21).

Congregations should strive every day to live exactly the way we profess to believe. If we act as we believe, then we will be as Christ desired us to be, "... the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14-16).

Are you letting your light shine? Today many are shining their light, pretending to be something they are not. They are seeking to bring glory upon themselves and not the Father. Let us as citizens in the kingdom of God guard our actions, realizing God sees all, and others are watching too.