



A Publication From
Columbia Church of Christ
14832 County Road 1-50 Edon, Ohio 43518 419-459-4846

Come to Know.....
Come to Love.....
Come to Serve.....

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Junk-It Day Coming

The Out Reach Team has set May 18th as their pick-up Day this year. Mark it on your calendars and come to help. There will be lunch served for all those who help. They will be picking up junk from 9:00 to noon on this day. If you have something that needs picked up contact one of the team or call the office before this day.

Out Reach Meeting

The next out reach meeting is scheduled for May 5th at 2:00 p.m. anyone and everyone is invited to attend. They meet in the church office. If you have some ideas to reach others, please attend.

WCS Meeting

Our next WCS meeting will be May 9th at the church at 7 p.m. All ladies are invited to join us. Hostess for this meeting is Sharlie Stomm & Annette Chapin the Devotions will be presented by Kay Hickman. Our project for this month will be the Father/Son Banquet. All ladies are invited to attend.

Summer Camp at Lake James Christian Camp

Now is the time to get your children registered for a week of summer camp. See Randy Allomong or Josh Dowdy to get your camp cards to fill out. Our church pays for one week of camp for the kids that attend our church, so there is no expense to the families for the camp fee.

VBS Teachers and Workers

This year Vacation Bible School is going to be June 10th through to the 15th. We will be having the Kick-off on June 9th and the closing program on June 16th. Connie Allomong or Josh Dowdy will have the VBS Cards to fill out to register your children. If you would like to help with VBS this year see Connie Allomong.

Do We Really Understand

- Jeremy S. Jones

We just celebrated Easter. We met together in the darkness to remember a moment where we all have been. A moment when we, like Peter, denied Jesus. We rose early on the first day, tired and worn out from the weekend and wondered why we are up so early. Then with the rising sun we remember that "God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son that whosoever believes on Him will not die, but have everlasting life" and find hope, forgiveness. But, do we ever stop to reflect on what the empty tomb really means. Jesus told the Pharisees that the only sign they would receive is the sign of Jonah. Let's take a moment and explore that in light of the empty of the tomb.

As we know, Jonah was a prophet of God. Besides having a book written about him, the only other information we have is found in 2 Kings 14:25

"He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which He spoke through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, who was of Gath-hepher."

According to the Bible, in the book of Jonah, he was given a message to go and tell the Ninevite people that they had sinned against God and if they did not repent and turn from their evil ways God was going to destroy them. As the account reads Jonah did not want to give this message so he decided to try and run away from God instead. A task that is impossible, for God sent a storm to stop Jonah and then a BIG fish to swallow Jonah and return to the task he was given. It is inside this fish that Jonah is dead, for the world outside the fish thinks Jonah gone forever. It wasn't until the fish had reached its destination that God commands the fish to vomit Jonah back onto the shore where he returns to the assignment God had given him. It is upon being thrown up onto the shore that Jonah is alive again.

We like the Jewish people know this story well. In fact, most of us have been taught it when we were very young. This story, while true, also is an illustration that points to what was going to happen to the Messiah. We know this to be true, because Jesus states in Matthew 12:39 - 41

"But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; 40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here."

And we know, that is exactly what happened to Jesus. So, again, we come back to the empty tomb. While we can see that the tomb, like the belly of the fish, holds death. It was sin that lead to that death. Jonah's sin in refusing to obey God and the sin of humanity that put Jesus in the tomb. But new life came from the fish and the tomb as well. While in the belly of the fish Jonah prayed to God. He gives God the respect and praise He deserves. And as we know God heard Jonah's prayer and caused the fish to vomit him onto shore. New life, new hope, new purpose was given to Jonah.

While Jesus is in the tomb, he is praying. But, not like Jonah, Jesus gives God (the Father) the praise and respect that is His, and He is praying for us. He is making intercession, asking God that now the payment has been made (His blood for our sins) that He receive us as sons and daughters. God hears and honors His Sons prayer and as 2 Corinthians 5:17 - 19 states

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. 18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation."

So, we see the empty tomb means life. Our sin has been buried with Christ and sealed in that tomb. Unlike Jonah, "the old is gone" and we no longer have to walk in it. Jonah after he had given the message to the Ninevite people he returned to his "old ways." The book of Jonah ends with him sitting on a hill above the city complaining because God did not destroy the city. Let us not be like Jonah. Let us walk in the newness of life that Christ freely offers us when He died as a curse on that tree, taking the full warthog God upon Himself, ding a sinner's death and three days later walking out of that tomb. We celebrate Easter because of the sacrifice Christ made. Let us live as people who have been made live again.

*** I encourage you to go back and read the Book of Jonah and ask God to show where else does it reflect Jesus. ***