

# I Don't Need the Church

A Christian saying, "I don't need the church," would be like a member of the body saying, "I don't need a body" (1 Cor. 12:12-27). Does that sound silly? It is. Yet Christians who say they don't need the church, or who act like they don't need the church because they care not to be a part of group activities, are effectively saying just that (and this isn't just about attending formal assemblies). They are part of the body, yet don't believe they need the body. It betrays a grave misconception of the body of Christ, both locally and universally.

God has composed the body. We are a part of it, not a separate, disconnected piece of something else. We need each other. Yet when we say or act as if we don't need the church, we are saying that

By Doy Moyer

other Christians whom God has set in the body are not so important. We can be the lone part in the body and do just fine. What does such an attitude betray about our own self-importance? What does it say about our own view of serving others? What does it say about our view of God's purposes in establishing "one another" relationships?

Think it through. Without the "one another" part, there is no encouragement, no stimulation to love and good works, and no opportunity to serve. God has better things in store for His people. Cherish the times we have in our "one another" relationships in Christ.



Lisa Carter (Luke's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Virginia Box (Sarah Norman's grandmother)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Jamin Hymel (Chad's son)
Terri Moore (Joey's aunt)	Artina Hunt (Esther's friend's sister)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Ricky Tucker (Tyler's cousin)	Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Bernice Martin (Will Harris' great-grandmother)	Brian Myers (Kimberlee's cousin)	Eva Jean Cavender (Matt's grandmother)
John M. Rhodes and Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's Granddad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	Maria Aragon (Liseth's Mother)

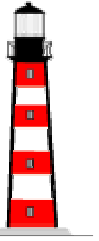
## May Birthdays

- 2-Taylor Bethea
- 2-Emily-Anne Rouse
- 3-Paula Davis
- 4-Anthony Horton
- 10-Ian Norman
- 10-Ryan Hasty
- 11-Caleb George
- 11-Scott Perkins
- 12-Frances Humphrey
- 12-Patrick Davis
- 13-Anna Grace Long
- 13-Jana Hall
- 13-Peyton Vines
- 15-Bryce Daniels
- 18-Ty Randolph
- 22-Sarah Bethea
- 24-Andy Roberts
- 25-Chuck Hahn
- 26-Fallon Hartsell
- 28-Barbara Weeks
- 28-Candy Long
- 28-Julian Reid
- 31-Rachel Tolliver

## News and Notes

- ☒ - Tonight is singing night!
- ☒ - Postcards are available to invite others to VBS, Aug 6-9, on the "Journies of Paul."
- ☒ - Congratulations to Madi Luther as she graduates from High School this week!
- ☒ - Please continue to pray for Ken Sullivan as he recovers from surgery.
- ☒ - Congratulations to Paul and Sarah (Darby) Grubbs who were married on Monday!
- ☒ - Macy Johnson and Daniel Haddock baptized into Christ last week!
- ☒ - Patrick Davis' grandfather, Larry Beich, has a successful heart procedure this week.
- ☒ - Please pray for Katrina Grubbs, a friend of the Hosey's, who was in a car accident.
- ☒ - The summer ladies class will begin on Thursday, May 26th at 7:00 p.m.
- ☒ - All audio is immediately posted on [www.auchurch.com](http://www.auchurch.com). Audio CD's are available in the foyer.

# The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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## What Am I Religiously?

By Hugh Fulford

(Hint: I am NOT "Church of Christ.")

Like others who are of my religious convictions, I have many family members and friends who do not share those convictions, and who, I have reason to believe, do not clearly understand my religious stance or why I take it. It is especially to these family members and friends of various religious (or even non-religious) persuasions, as well as all the loyal readers of these "News & Views," that I wish to kindly and lovingly present these thoughts, intended to explain as simply as possible why I occupy the religious position that I do.

I profess to be only a Christian, a follower (disciple) of Christ. Having done what I understand the New Testament teaches one must do to be saved (forgiven of sins) and enter a right relationship with God, I affirm that I am only a member of the body of Christ, His church, but I do not claim to be a member of any denomination.

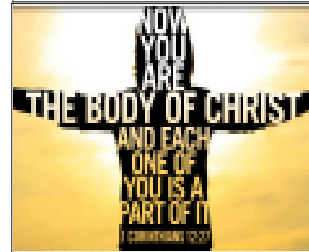
The Bible teaches that when one comes to faith in Christ as God's Son, acknowledges that faith with an open confession of such, repents of all sins, and is baptized for the remission of sins, that person is saved and added to the church. (The following scriptures regarding the human response to God's saving grace need to be carefully studied: **Ephesians 2:1-10; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 5:8-9; Acts 2:36-47; Ro-**

**mans 6:1-6; 2 Corinthians 5:17**, as well as such corollary passages as **Matthew 7:21-23; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 17:30-31; Romans 10:10; Acts 8:26-40; et al**).

I have done what is enjoined in the above passages. The Lord has added me to His body, the church (**Acts 2:47; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18**). I am a member of a local church composed of other people who have done what I did. We are an independent, autonomous (self-governing) congregation under the rule of Christ, the only head of the church. There are many of these congregations scattered around the world, and among them there is much love, fellowship, and mutual respect, but there is no organic connection between them. They have not organized themselves into synods, conferences, or dioceses, with a religious official over them. They do not constitute a denomination with various layers of overseers who issue declarations regarding what these congregations must believe and practice. Each church is independent of the other, free to read, study, and practice the teaching of Christ and His apostles as set forth in the New Testament without the interference and intervention of any religious hierarchy. These congregations have no creed book, church manual, or catechism.

These congregations strive to be simple churches of Christ such as we read of in

(Continued on page 2)



## Thoughts to Ponder

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free -- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

(1 Cor. 12:13)

## Elders

Walker Davis  
(334) 703-0050

Larry Rouse  
(334) 734-2133



## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

## Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

## E-Mail:

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the New Testament (**Romans 16:16**), but they do not seek to be affiliated with any denomination or to achieve denominational status for themselves. Rather, they strive to maintain their own independence and autonomy under the oversight of Christ the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (**1 Peter 2:25; 5:4**).

Therefore, when I say that I am a member of the church of Christ, I am not saying that I am a member of a denomination that has taken "Church of Christ" as its official name. I am only saying that I am a member of the spiritual body of Christ. The church spoken of in the New Testament was not a denomination, and it had no one, official, restrictive, patented "name." It is significant that in no English translation of the New Testament is the word "church" ever capitalized as if it were a proper name. Thus, when I speak of the church of Christ I understand the phrase to be descriptive of the church, not the "name" of the church. I endeavor never to speak of the church of Christ as though I am referring to a religious group that is less than all the spiritual body of Christ. Biblically, the church of Christ and the body of Christ are the same, and to use the expression "church of Christ" in a limiting, denominational sense is to be guilty of a misuse of the descriptive term.

The church as described in the New Testament is the manifestation of the manifold (multifaceted) wisdom of God (**Ephesians 3:8-12**). As such it is God's church or the church of God (**1 Timothy 3:14-15**), and congregations may properly be designated as churches of God (**1 Corinthians 11:16**). The apostle Paul wrote two letters to "the church of God which is at Corinth" (**1 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:1**), but the Corinthians Christians were not members of any denomination.

The church is the expression of the rule of God and Christ in the lives of redeemed people, and for this reason the church is frequently referred to as the kingdom of God, the kingdom Christ, and the kingdom of heaven. When one is delivered from the power of darkness (freed from the guilt and bondage of sin through obedience to the gospel of Christ), he is "translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins" (**Colossians 1:13-14**). To be translated into the kingdom of Christ is the same thing as being added to the church (**Acts 2:47**).

Thus, to all my family and friends, I wish to state as clearly yet as lovingly as possible that I am NOT a member of "the Church of Christ" denomination! I am

NOT "Church of Christ" in my religious persuasion! I am NOT a "Church of Christ-er"! These expressions reflect a denominational concept of Christ's church, and do not accurately reflect my religious convictions. I am no more "Church of Christ" in my religious beliefs than I am "Church of God," or "Body of Christ," or "Kingdom of Heaven" in my religious beliefs. It would be just as appropriate for others to call me a "Church of God-er," a "Body of Christ-er," or a "Kingdom of Heaven-er" as it is for them to call me a "Church of Christ-er"! In reality, I am none of these.

Again, I must point out that in no instance in the New Testament are any of these terms capitalized and used in a denominational sense. To take one of these descriptive terms—church of Christ—and turn it into a restrictive, denominational name is unwarranted by Scripture. To do so is to be guilty of reflecting a misinformed—however unintended—understanding of my religious stance, and a decidedly uninformed understanding of New Testament teaching regarding the church.

Such misunderstanding is based on the notion that "Alexander Campbell started the Church of Christ." In days past, members of the church of Christ were frequently called "Campbellites." I disavow being a Campbellite. I disavow being a member of a church allegedly started by Alexander Campbell. One needs to study the life and work of Campbell to see what he was really about, and to see that he was not concerned with starting "another church (denomination)." His interest—and that of a host of others—was in going back to the New Testament and restoring the church that Christ established (**Matthew 16:18**), using the New Testament alone as the guide and pattern to determine how one is saved and added to the church, how the church is to be organized, how the church is to worship, and how members of the church (Christians) are to live.

The Christians of whom we read in the New Testament were all members of the spiritual body (church) of Christ, but they were not members of any denomination! I strive to occupy that same undenominational position today. I repeat: I am a Christian, a disciple of Christ, a member of Christ's spiritual body/church, a citizen in Christ's kingdom. But I have never joined any denomination! I worship and serve with a local congregation of people who are Christians only. We have no denominational affiliation and strive to be free of all sectarianism and human creeds. I humbly invite all of my family and friends to a better understanding of my religious convictions, and to a sincere consideration of what I humbly believe to be the biblical way of serving the Lord.



## A Humble, Tender-Hearted Man

By Hubert Roach

Who is the man? Well, the one I have in mind at this time is that good king Josiah. Even by confining our thoughts to what is said of him in the 34th chapter of Second Chronicles. I believe we can get a lesson from him that will be worthwhile to us, especially if we would try to apply it.

Of Josiah, it is said that "while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David, his father." "He did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, and walked in the ways of David, his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left."

Though we may say of Josiah that he was good, we cannot say so much for Judah and Jerusalem. Iniquity and idolatry filled the land. Read **Jeremiah 1-12**. And what did Josiah—the humble, tender-hearted man do about all this? It will be of interest to see how such a man will act—what he will say and what he will do under conditions like this.

Here is what he did. "He began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the Asherim, and the graven images and the molten images. And they brake down the altars of the Baalim in his presence; and the sun-images that were on high above them he hewed down; and the Asherim, and the graven images, and the molten images he brake in pieces, and made dust of them, and strewed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and purged Judah and Jerusalem." Who did this? Josiah, a humble, tender-hearted man.

When he had purged the land, he began working to "repair the house of Jehovah his God."

Friends, do you not admire Josiah for his courage and tenacity? I believe that after having studied this character, I can see more of what it means to be a man of God. I believe I have a clearer conception of what a humble, tender-hearted man is.

"And the men did the work faithfully." During this time "Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of Jehovah given by Moses." When Josiah had heard the words of the law, "he rent his clothes;" and said, "Great is the wrath of Jehovah that is poured upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of Jehovah, to do according unto all that is written in this book."

And Jehovah said: "I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the churches that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah. Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore is my wrath poured out upon this place, and it shall not be quenched" But to Josiah he said: "Because thy heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God ... I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof." What a fine obituary this was.

Friends, do you not admire Josiah for his courage and tenacity? I believe that after having studied this character, I can see more of what it means to be a man of God. I believe I have a clearer conception of what a humble, tender-hearted man is. And as "destructive heresies" and "lascivious doings" flood our country. I believe I know more of what I should say and what I should do about such things to be a humble, tenderhearted man of God.

