



The Ubiquity of New Testament Teaching

Recently someone asked, more or less, the following question: "How do we know that the things that were done in one church in the first century were done in the other churches as well?" That's a good question because if we can't know that the things practiced, say, in Corinth, were also practiced in Rome, then we can't really know that we ought to practice the same things that they practiced in religion today. Ultimately, this would mean that we could do whatever we wanted to do in "worship" to God, which many people in the denominational world are doing in our day and age. And that there basically would be no identifying marks of the New Testament church, since the instruction from one congregation wouldn't necessarily apply to another.

The word "ubiquitous" isn't a common word, but it is a current word. It is defined by the American Heritage Dictionary as meaning, "Being or seeming to be everywhere at the same time." The idea of the word is that if something is ubiquitous, then it is common to all places. That's the idea that we are examining in relationship to New Testament teaching. Was it common in all churches? Was it something that was taught not merely to one congregation, but to all of them? Let's see if we can find a scriptural answer.

First, we must understand that Jesus intended the message of the gospel to be ubiquitous. In Matthew 28:19, Luke 24:47, and Mark 16:15, Jesus made it clear that he wanted the message of the gospel preached to all nations. This included the message related to the kingdom of God (the church, Matthew 16:18,19) because the teaching and preaching regarding the kingdom was part of the gospel message (see Matthew 4:23, 9:35). In fact, Jesus expected this teaching to go to all nations prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. He said in Matthew 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations...." Jesus certainly expected the teaching and preaching of the gospel to be ubiquitous.

Secondly, we must note that Paul said that his message was ubiquitous. In 1 Corinthians 4:17, Paul wrote, "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church." Paul told the church at Corinth that he was sending Timothy to them so that Timothy could teach them the same things that Paul had taught in every other church in which he had preached. It should be clear from this that the message that Paul took to each congregation

was the same message. That means that when he instructed the church at Corinth to take up a collection upon the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1,2) he also instructed all of the other congregations to do the same. This means that Paul's observance of the Lord's Supper at Troas upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) was also observed by every other congregation at which he had preached upon the first day of the week as well. Paul certainly believed that his preaching and teaching was ubiquitous.

Finally, we must apply this same message ubiquitously today. Paul told the elders at Ephesus in Acts 20:27, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Paul didn't refuse to preach the entire message of the gospel and neither should we. We cannot afford to hold back part of the gospel message. We must be willing to teach all of it. That means we learn lessons from all of the churches in the New Testament and we can apply those lessons to our congregations today just as they were originally applied to the churches in the first century. Paul told Timothy, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the

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What About Church Growth?



Almost every religious journal carries an article about church growth. Seminars are conducted about it. Experts on church growth have become as numerous as fleas on a dog. There are many misconceptions about church growth as well as mistakes as to what real growth is. Many err in regard to what it takes for a congregation to grow.

“Most members say they want the church to grow. But church growth is a lot like the weather - everybody talks about it, but no one does much about it.”

The Amount Of Contribution

The general consensus seems to be that if the contribution is above average or exceeding the budget, it is an indication of church growth. While it is true that if a church is to grow properly each member must give liberally and cheerfully (2 Corinthians 8:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7), a big contribution is not the determining factor in church growth. Some "big givers" in the church are such because the preacher doesn't "step on their toes". Should he begin to "crack down" on their sins, they cut down on their contribution. A church is not growing much if an above

average contribution depends on sanctioning sin.

The Incorrect Assessment Of Numbers

Another false measurement of church growth is an incorrect assessment of numbers. A mere shift of members from one place to another is no growth at all. The Lord's instruction is "Go make disciples" (Matthew 28:18 - ESV) rather than

"compete for what you already have". New carpet, air conditioning, comfortable pews, or size and beauty of a building do not determine growth. Millions of dollars have been spent on the concept that such are indications of church growth.

Indications Of Real Growth

What then are indications of real growth? Let's ask ourselves, how God conscious are the members? Do they put Him first in their lives? (Matthew 6:33). Are they seeking to present His image in daily conduct? (2 Corinthians 3:18; James 1:23). How do the members treat one another? Do they "rejoice with them that do rejoice

and weep with them that weep"? (Romans 12:15). What about indications of concern for the needy? (James 2:14-18; 1 John 3:17-18). Is there an earnest desire that the lost hear the gospel? If members are faithful in true evangelism and real benevolence as they should be, church growth will take care of itself, all the church growth seminars being conducted not withstanding.

Conclusion

Most members say they want the church to grow. But church growth is a lot like the weather - everybody talks about it, but no one does much about it. Ask yourself, how long has it been since I invited a non-Christian to attend a service and hear the gospel preached? It might be surprising how many people in your city or community have never been personally invited to attend the services of the Lord's church. What are you (and I) doing to help the church grow?

Mike Riley
El Paso, TX



Bible Studies for the week of July 3rd, 2005

- AM Sermon.....Does God Exist?
- Scripture Reading.....Romans 1:16-21
- PM Sermon..... The Book of Job
- Scripture Reading..... NA
- Sunday ClassThe Book of Matthew
- Wednesday Class..... TBA

Kevin's Korner—The Culture Wars

Some of you, no doubt, have seen in the news last week the resignation of Sandra Day O'Connor from the U.S. Supreme Court. This is making big news around the country not only because of the surprise of the resignation, but also because of the recent political battles that have been ongoing over the appointment of U.S. justices. No doubt this is going to be a big battle as well. Please let your senators know that you expect them to confirm someone who is going to respect the constitution, not reinterpret it to be politically correct.

The U.S. Supreme Court also handed down a mixed ruling the past week regarding the presentation of the Ten Commandments on public property. In essence, the ruling stated that if the Ten Commandments were displayed out of a purely secular purpose then they could be so used in

public places. However, they said if it was religiously motivated, they could not. Unfortunately, the opinions in the two rulings were more or less conflicting with each other and a clear message from the court wasn't established, meaning, that this issue is going to come up again in the future.

In more local news, the parent of a Fayetteville child has identified some 503 books in the school libraries there that have to do with the topic of sex. Interestingly, 53 out of those books were listed under the topic of homosexuality. How many were listed under abstinence? Only three. It's shameful that our society has so organized itself that homosexuality and other deviant sexual behavior has more "right" to be in our school libraries than books that discuss the benefits of abstinence. Someone ought to do something to correct that problem.

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man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The scriptures certainly present the message within them as being ubiquitous.

Because the message of the gospel is ubiquitous, we have everything today that we need to be the kind of person that God wants us to be. We have all of the information we need to be the kind of church that God wants us to be. Let's apply all of it appropriately (2 Timothy 2:15) and remember the counsel of the Psalmist in Psalm 119:160 "The sum of thy word is truth..." and the counsel of Jesus in Matthew 4:4, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The teaching of the New Testament is ubiquitous in its application!

Kevin Cauley



"Because the message of the gospel is ubiquitous, we have everything today that we need to be the kind of person that God wants us to be."

Records for the week of June 26th, 2005

Sunday Bible Class	39
Sunday AM Worship.....	55
Sunday PM Worship.....	51
Wednesday Night Study.....	61
Contribution	\$1566.74
Budget.....	\$1662.00



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Praises, Prayers, and Proclamations

Announcements

- We are thankful to God for this new Lord's Day. It is the day we honor His Son and the Love that He has shown us through Him. Let us worship in spirit and in truth!
- Please remember the following in prayer: Marie Adams, Kathryn Davis, Brian Guess, Hughetta Hand, Raymond Kimmes, Vera Midriff, Gail Rorex, Glenn Quigley.
- The elders and deacons meeting will be held tonight after services.
- The children's home truck will be here next Monday, the 11th. If you have any items to donate please get them to the building this week.
- We have a fifth Sunday singing at the nursing home this month. Please put that on your schedule.
- Our weekly Bible study at the nursing home continues this Thursday afternoon at 2:00 with Mark 10.
- This coming Saturday morning we will have our men's breakfast. All are invited to attend.
- If you haven't turned in your outreach sheets, please do so as soon as possible.
- Please remember to get your outreach cards and make the appropriate notations on the wall chart.
- Next Sunday evening after services we will mail out house to house and heart to heart.
- Please remember the check the bulletin board for new monthly assignments.
- Our pantry item is: Fabric Softener.

Welcome!

Visit our web site: <http://www.the-churchofchrist.com>

Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship:	10:20 AM
Sunday Evening Worship:	6:00 PM
Ladies Bible Class:	10:30 AM
Wed. Evening Bible Class:	7:00 PM

Serving Each Other

	July 3rd, 2005	July 10th, 2005
Sunday Morning		
Songs:	Ken Smith	Bill Fort
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Dan Hand	Bob Moore
Scripture Reading:	Brandon Foster	Leon Duncan
Lord's Table	John Gass	Bruce Foster
	Jerry Roller	Dan Hand
(assist)	Jack Gentry	Perry Foster
	Brent Moore	Ray Duncan
Closing Prayer	Leon Duncan	George Eddings
Sunday Evening		
Songs:	Clay Bozarth	Glenn Williams
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Ken Smith	Dale Pinkley
Scripture Reading:	John Gass	Dan Hand
Lord's Table	Glenn Williams	John Gass
	Ray Duncan	Brandon Foster
Closing Prayer	Dale Pinkley	Bob Moore
Wednesday		
Songs:	Kevin Cauley	Glenn Quigley
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Bob Moore
Invitation:	Dan Hand	Rusty Windle
Closing Prayer:	George Eddings	Leon Duncan

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