

# Neighborly News

*Brought to you by your friends at the Mt. Hebron Church of Christ.*

## A plea for New Testament Christianity

There are two rival conceptions of the church held by many today. One holds that the church is a conglomerate of sorts, being composed of all Christ-believing individuals, regardless of the “church” to which they belong. The other view maintains that while the church is composed of every saved individual on earth, only those who have done just what the Bible requires are in fact saved. Which view is correct?

***“I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one.”***

**- Christ (John 17:22)**

It cannot be denied that Christ desired unity among His followers. In the shadow of the cross, the Savior prayed that His disciples might be “one,” so “that the world may believe” that He was sent from the Father (cf. John 17:20–21). The early church was a model of this prayer for

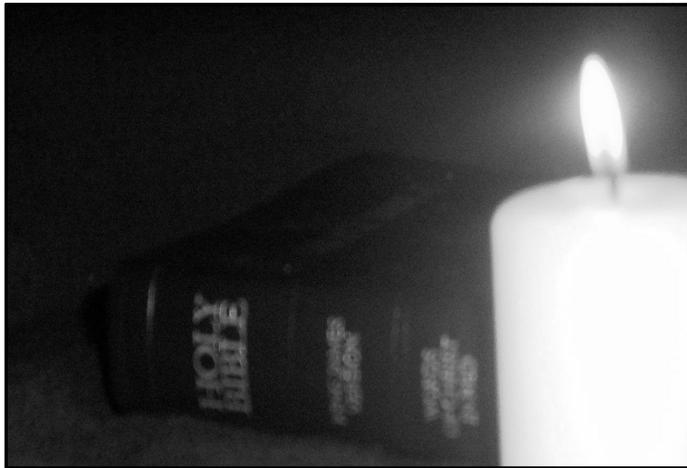


Photo by KELLY DIX

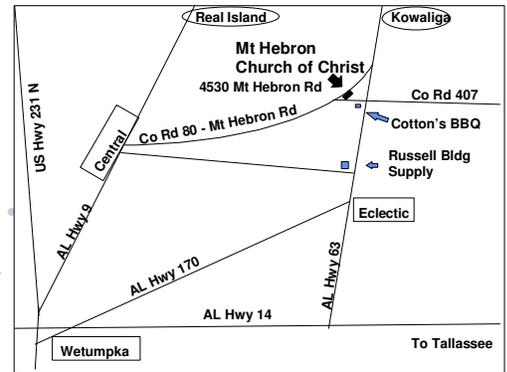
unity. “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul” (Acts 4:32).

Sadly, the religious world today is anything but united. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of competing religious bodies, each vying for our attention and subsequent allegiance. Most, if not all, teach conflicting doctrines and practice varying rituals. From a rational vantage point, it seems the only unity that can rightly be claimed for all such endeavors is superficial at best.

In stark contrast to the present state of affairs, there is a beautiful simplicity to Christianity. When the apostle Paul delineated the heart

of the gospel, he did so in this fashion: Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day. When the same apostle wrote to the Romans, he indicated that we submit to a “form” of this teaching (cf. Romans 6:17) when we die to the unrestrained practice of sin, are buried with Christ in baptism, and then raised to walk in “newness of life” (cf. Romans 6:2–4; Colossians 2:12). All who have done so are members of the body of Christ, the church (cf. Ephesians 1:22–23; Colossians 1:18, 24). The name God would have them wear is “Christian”—nothing more, nothing less.

—Brandon Renfroe



### Mt. Hebron Church of Christ

**P.O. Box 240159  
4530 Mt. Hebron Rd.  
Eclectic, Ala. 36024**

**Come and visit us**

**Sunday  
Bible Classes 10:00 AM  
Worship Services  
11:00 AM & 6:00 PM  
Wednesday  
Bible Classes 7:00 PM**

### JUST FOR LAUGHS

During an attack of laryngitis I lost my voice completely for two days. To help me communicate with him, my husband devised a system of taps.

One tap meant, “Give me a kiss,” two taps meant “Yes,” seven taps meant “No,” and 95 taps meant “Take out the garbage.”

*Proverbs 15:15 “He that is of a merry heart bath a continual feast.”*



“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.”- The Gospel of John 15:15

## A deadly wound Our advocate, intercessor and mediator

Have you heard the story about Satan's attack upon a certain Christian? First, he shot a poisonous dart at his heel, but the Christian was unharmed because he had his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Satan's next attempt was at his loins, but the Christian repelled this because he had his loins girt about with the truth. Unsuccessfully the devil tried a shot at his breast, the breastplate of righteousness. The Christian knocked away another arrow.

But the devil, still not discouraged, slipped around behind the Christian and shot him in the pocketbook, and killed him dead as a hammer.



It comforts Christians to know that Jesus is ready to make intercession for us when we sin. First John 1:9 reads, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." For the Christian, Jesus is the "Voice" for the good of mankind. He serves in three roles to Christians: He is 1) an advocate; 2) an intercessor; and 3) a mediator.

Imagine a general practitioner—maybe your family doctor. He has educated himself in the general practice of medicine. However, he is not in a position to perform major surgical procedures or to diagnose some major illnesses without a specialist's guidance. For example, if you have a severe heart problem, he would refer you to a cardiologist. He would speak on

your behalf to the specialist, pleading the symptoms of your problems, and serve as an impartial "go between" to see that your heart-care is fully provided. Therefore, he would act as an advocate of your problem, an intercessor for your symptoms, and a mediator for your care.

Jesus serves in exactly the same ways.

**First, He is our advocate.** He advocates to our Father our sinful condition and chooses to help us commit our change before God. First John 2:1 reads, "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

**Second, He is our intercessor.** He intercedes on our behalf, to plead our cause to God whom we have offended. Our symptoms are laid on the

table before God, and mercy is pleaded on the condition of repentance. Romans 8:34 says, "It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Hebrews 7:25 reads: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

**Third, Jesus is our mediator.** He is actually our only mediator. He is the "go between" that attempts to bring reconciliation to the relationship between and God and men. First Timothy 2:5 says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

If you will let Him, He will be your advocate, intercessor, and mediator. He wants you to come out of your sins and be with Him forever. —Jason Hart



*"People are unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered. Love them anyway. If you do good, people may accuse you of selfish motives. Do good anyway. If you are successful, you may win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway. The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway. Honesty and transparency make you vulnerable. Be honest and transparent anyway. What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway. People who really want help may attack you if you help them. Help them anyway. Give the world the best you have and you may get hurt. Give the world your best anyway."*

- Mother Teresa

## Faithful marriage statistics

According to *The Data Almanac 2006* (Qstat USA), regular church attendance has a positive impact on marriage health. The recent National Survey of Family Growth revealed that the divorce rate of church attendees is almost half (56 percent) the rate of non-attendees. Of the 7,643 women taking part in the survey, 32.9% who never attended religious services were divorced, compared to 18.5% of those who attend more than once a week. Surprising? Not to the Almanac's

editor, Dr. Philip Truscott: "The women in the survey include only those aged 15–44. If we were able to include women in all age groups, the differences between the various groups would be far larger."



**"Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy." — Psalm 33:18**