

# St. Thomas

## Men of Faith Ministries

Volume 13 Issue 8

AUG 2010

THY WORD WAS UNTO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MINE HEART – JEREMIAH 15:16

### Men's Bible Studies:

Monday AM – after Double Portion

Tuesday AM - YMCA, Neenah/Menasha

Tuesday AM – Holiday Inn, Neenah

Tuesday PM - St. Thomas, Menasha

Thursday AM – Holiday Inn, Neenah

Thursday AM – IHOP, Oshkosh



John's safely home from Afghanistan - PTL

### Mark Your Calendars

1. **Discipleship Essentials – Men's Bible Study**  
Tuesday evening @ 7 PM – you are invited!
2. **St. Thomas camping in Door County**  
August 20-22
3. **Fellowship Camp – Sept 10-12**
4. **House Church / Growth Group –**  
Informational gatherings coming soon

### WISDOM

If we wish to pray with confidence and gladness, then the Words of Holy Scripture will have to be the solid basis of our prayer. For here we know that Jesus Christ, the Word of God, teaches us to pray. The words which come from God become, then, the steps on which we find our way to God – Dietrich Bonhoeffer

### Promises of Jesus' Steadfast Presence

1. **When obeying the Commission Jesus is with us** – "... & teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:20
2. **Jesus Joins Those Gathered in His Name** – "For where two or three come together in My name, there I am with them." Matthew 18:20
3. **Jesus Comes to Us, We are not Orphans** – "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." John 14:18
4. **Jesus, Our Father & the Believer are Unified** – "One that day you will realize that I am in my Father, & you are in Me, & I am in you." John 14:20
5. **Jesus Goes Away & Will Return to us** – "You heard Me say, 'I am going away & I am coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would be glad that I am going away to the Father, for the Father is greater than I." John 14:28
6. **Jesus Reveals Himself to the Obedient** – "Whoever has My commands & obeys them, he is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, & I too will love him & show Myself to him." John 14:21
7. **Jesus And Our Father Make Their Home With The Obedient** – "Jesus replied, 'If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching. My Father will love him, & We will come to him & make Our home with him.'" John 14:23

### WISDOM

If we are struggling in prayer it is because the wiles of the enemy are getting the upper hand, & we must look into the cause of it in the lack of discipline in ourselves – Oswald Chambers

Proverbs 20:7 "The righteous man walks in his integrity, his children are blessed after him."

### Father, Son & Holy Scriptures?

"Jesus answered: Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time?" (John 14:9).

The disciples had been with Jesus for three years. They'd seen miracles - dead men came back to life, the sick were healed, & water was turned to wine. These were but a few of the hundreds of miracles they saw Jesus perform. However, even after these experiences, they lacked one important thing - intimacy with Jesus. They didn't really know Jesus.

This must have been a great disappointment to Jesus. He'd invested so much into developing a close and intimate relationship with the twelve. Consider that they spent three years with their Master. They learned about Him during those years. However, they had knowledge without intimacy. They experienced God's power individually and He even performed miracles through their own lives. Sometimes it is easier to do the work of God without the intimacy with God.

A friend once commented about the current condition of much of the mainline churches today: "You'd think the trinity was the Father, Son and Holy Scriptures versus the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There's never been a better description of the Church today. But, alas, this is a challenge to my own walk with God. It is easy for me to fall into this trap of working so hard for Jesus that I forget to work with Jesus. Jesus desires intimacy more than works. He tells us in John 15:5: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned." Whatever works we do must be a fruit of our intimacy with Him.

Lord, help us not to just know about you. We desire to know you. By Os Hillman

Jer. 15:16 – Thy Word was unto me the joy & rejoicing of mine heart



George Whitefield – Revival Preacher

### Point Beyond Revolution

**Return to the true faith:** When you look around at all the teaching in the modern church, how much true faith can you find? Before we tackle being born again, we must go further back to get clear on what was the reason for Christ going to the Cross, which, I might add, is missing from most modern teaching. Why did Christ have to die on the Cross? The most common answer I get when I ask people is to "save us." That brings about the question - What is He saving us from? When this question is asked most people reply from hell or the devil, which is not true at all! Jesus came to save us from the wrath of God!! But wait a minute, isn't God loving and kind and full of grace and mercy? Yes, that is why He sent Jesus to take the full cup of Gods' wrath for man's sin. Without His blood covering you, God's wrath will pour out on you!

It's simply not popular. We must hold out for truth. One day we will stand before God and give an account for our life and being popular will mean nothing on that day. I believe that the reason most do not share their faith is that they are not sure what their faith is! If all you know is to tell people to ask Jesus into your heart and you will be saved, then you don't have the true faith and can't share true salvation. There is nowhere in the Bible that says to invite Christ into your heart and you will be "saved." This is a man-made doctrine that will not stand the test of Biblical scrutiny.

There is a group that ministers alongside us every Saturday that always tells the people in the street to ask Jesus into their heart and they will be saved, and every Saturday the same people raise their hand and invite Jesus into their heart. Minutes later they are right back on the streets doing the same thing they were a few minutes earlier, no change and worse off than they were. Why? Because they are being misled by a false doctrine that requires nothing other than raising their hand to invite Jesus in to their heart.

On the other hand, we preach that Jesus came to take their punishment and to withstand the wrath of God for mans' sins and that to be saved you must be born again. We spend a great deal of time showing them that

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God loves them, but never compromise the true Gospel. Which is easier for them to believe, that you must believe, repent, confess and be baptized; or to raise your hand and invite Jesus into your heart? Which is easier, teaching that you must die to yourself to live for Christ, or that Jesus wants to give you all your heart's desires?

So many become hardened after inviting Jesus into their heart over & over and seeing no results that they kindle anger & disbelief against God. This is what false teaching does; it turns hearts cold to the truth. We must return to the Gospel and not water it down to make it more appealing to the flesh. The preaching of the Cross is the Power of God and releases the supernatural in peoples' lives!

When you preach the Gospel, you see true salvation and healing, not man-made shows. It's the power of God unto Salvation. This world doesn't need to feel better about itself, it needs to see the state it's truly in before the Holy God of the Universe - and repent and bow down to the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. We must teach the true faith of loving God & loving your neighbor which brings about Kingdom change in this earth!

True Faith isn't going to a religious service a couple times a week and singing a few songs and hearing a little preaching. True faith is about being light in this fallen world. Light that shows men Christ, the only hope of redemption. You won't find that in a meeting that is all about having your best life now. Live for Christ and not yourself.

Most churches today are by design self-serving instead of God-serving, that's why they have no power. Where the Gospel is absent, so is the power of God! Jesus not only preached the Gospel but lived it as an example for us to follow. We must live the Gospel as well. A selfless relationship is always looking to lift up the Lord and blessing others. Instead, most relationships today are selfish and only look for how serving can benefit them. Do not fooled brothers, God will judge this shallow faith.

The narcissistic gospel, which is no gospel at all, will be judged and will be found guilty as well as all those who partake in it.

We must warn people of the wrath that is upon us for we have all been guilty.

This is why returning to the true Faith is so important. So what must we do? 2 Corinthians 13:5 - *"Examine yourself to see if you are in the faith: test yourself."*

The first thing we should do is examine ourselves, test ourselves to see if Christ is in us. Do I know the true Gospel? Have I been born again? Can I see Christ in my life? Do I really Love God? Do I really love my neighbor? All of these are valid starting

points to begin this journey. If you ask God to show you, I promise that HE will.

I want to go on a little further, even though I will not be able to get through this point with one email. This point is, am I willing to forsake myself and follow Him? Luke 9:57-62 - please read this very closely - it's just one place where Jesus tells us to forsake and follow. Jesus said if anyone comes after me, he must lay down his life and pick up his cross and follow me. Have you laid down your life or are you holding onto it trying to follow Jesus? Is Christ evident in your life as a present reality or just a religious theory you kick around from time to time? Does self consume your life or Christ? Is love your lifestyle or pride? All these and much more must be opened up to truly examine ourselves to see if we are truly in the faith. I pray you will take this test with me and we will draw closer to God.

### 10 Objections to Christianity

By Frank Harber (RBC Ministries) - based on his/our study of Apologetics. What is your worldview? A Christian Worldview presupposes that the Word of God and Christ Jesus are the basis for Truth – He is Truth!

Are you prepared to answer the spiritual seekers in your world? Are you wondering if Christianity's really true? Here' is 3# on the list.

#### 3. Christianity is a crutch.

Karl Marx, author of The Communist Manifesto, said, "Religion is the opiate of the masses." Critics such as Marx have charged that religion is an invention designed for people incapable of coping with life's pressures. Some critics respond that they don't need this type of emotional comfort, as though that fact falsifies Christianity. Such individuals often claim to be "stronger" because they're brave enough to face life without a "crutch." To imply non-religious people don't need a crutch is misleading. Dependence on drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, money, power, other people, and material possessions demonstrates some people's need for a crutch. Atheism—the belief that there is no God—can become a crutch for those addicted to a lifestyle contrary to God's standards of morality.

Rather than being weak, Christians are strong—not because they depend on themselves, but because they depend on Jesus. Everyone needs assistance. The question is; what will you lean on? Christianity provides what atheism or other religions never can: spiritual fulfillment, peace, and forgiveness.