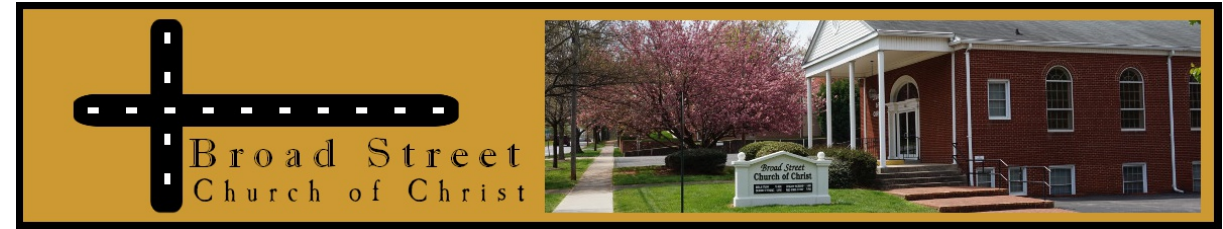


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April 03, 2016

COMPETITIVE CHRISTIANITY?!?

As this article is being authored, the NCAA season of college basketball and it's "March Madness" is coming to a close with the 2016 champions to be crowned within the next few days; the NBA & NHL's regular season games are down to single digits for most teams, with the impending play-offs imminent; "America's favorite pastime" is about to burst onto the scene as Major League Baseball is ready to begin with everyone's' favorite team tied for first place; and local spring sports are springing forth on fields and in sports complexes everywhere. The heartbeat of the American sports scene is alive, abuzz, and absolutely thriving... and unfortunately it seems, still spilling into the church of our Lord in places on a level it should never be allowed to.

And no, this is not an article on the atrocity of church leaders being reminded not to schedule gospel meetings or other activities on evenings when major sporting events are occurring because Christ and Christianity cannot apparently compete anymore with such "things of the world" (1 Jn. 2:15-17) as currently capture the hearts, minds, souls, and attentions of men – even way too many men in the church of our Lord – although it certainly could be. But no, this is instead an article on the insidious seepage of the sports and competition mindset, into the one body and church of Christ. Please let me explain...

We, as the Lord's church, all preach, and teach, and claim to believe that we are all one in Christ Jesus just as Jesus and nearly every book of the New Testament states in one form or another (Jn. 17:20-23; Acts 5:32-35; Ro. 12:1-18; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; 2 Cor. 13:11-14; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 2:13-22, 4:1-6; Phil. 1:27-2:8; Col. 3:12-17; 1 Thess. 5:9-28; 2 Thess. 1:3-10; Titus 3:1-11; Hebs. 2:10-13; Jms. 4:1-12, 5:13-20; 1 Ptr. 3:8, 4:8-17; 1 Jn. 3 and 4; 2 Jn. 1:5; plus many more...). We are all on the same "team," so to speak. After all, we all wear the same 'uniform,' and team "Logos," having "put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27; Acts 4:12, 11:26; Ro. 16:16).

In other words, there is really no such thing as "Competitive Christianity" – or at least there shouldn't be (SEE: Matt. 23:1-12; Lk. 18:9-14!!!). A faithful eldership or evangelist who serves

What must I do to be saved?

Hear the Gospel (Acts 15:7); Believe the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16); Repent of Sins (Acts 17:30); Confess Christ (Romans 10:9-10); Be Baptized (Acts 2:38)

Scripture Reading:	Joe Burriss
Song Leader:	Lenny Freeze
Opening Prayer (A.M.):	Scott Phillips
Closing Prayer (A.M.):	Tom May
Opening Prayer (P.M.):	Johnny Smith
Closing Prayer (P.M.):	Guy Byrd
Nursery Attendant:	Amy Brookshire

Worship Times	
Sunday Bible Study	10:00 A.M.
Sunday A.M. Worship	10:55 A.M.
Sunday P.M. Worship	6:00 P.M.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 P.M.
Elders	
John Anderson	704.592.2266
Steve Short	704.872.5440
Tommy Smith	704.872.7966
Bradley Speer	704.876.6986
Preacher	
Dave Wood	704.380.4437

Building Lockup:	Billy Ellenburg
Announcements:	Billy Ellenburg
Door Greeters:	Billy and Debbie E.
Count Contribution:	John Anderson, Harry Frye
Prepare Lord's Table:	Carol Byrd
Lord's Supper (A.M.):	John Anderson, Steven Mozer, Landon Speer, Johnny Smith
Lord's Supper (P.M.):	Tommy Smith

a congregation of 25, is just as worthy of our love, support, and respect, as a faithful eldership or evangelist who serves a congregation of several thousand! Someone who has tried for many years to lead someone to Christ and has been blessed to finally succeed – or even if they haven't yet -, should never be seen or made to feel insignificant or inferior by someone who has baptized a hundred. And this is ultimately true across the entire spectrum of our beloved brotherhood. It relates to everything from our publishing companies, to our young people's bible bowls, to congregational attendance and everything else in between.

Every saint has a place and a service to perform in the body of Christ, having been put there by God Himself (1 Cor. 12:18). Every member is vital, important, essential, and special (1 Cor. 12:20-27), having been purchased by no less than the pure and spotless, sinless blood of Christ Himself (1 Ptr. 1:17-23). There is absolutely no room for pride, politics, or personal positioning for power that pits one brother against another, or that puts or portrays any of the rest of one's brethren in Christ at a distinct disadvantage or lesser level of importance in anyone's eyes in the Lord's Kingdom. James and John already tried that; Jesus derailed and sought to re-direct it (Matt. 20:20-28; Mk. 10:35-45). John must've learned something from that encounter by the way he later dealt with the pridefully disobedient Diotrephes (3 Jn. 9-10). Solomon had sought to show us repeatedly how desperately God hates such prideful, arrogant, and competitive attitudes in the Book of Proverbs. The Apostle Paul had to address it at length with one of the most pride infested congregations of self-promoters that probably ever existed when writing his epistles to the Corinthians – read through them again!

Look brethren, we're all co-workers and co-heirs in the same kingdom. All of us got into the Lord's church and onto the Savior's "team" by virtue of the same blood, and will only make it to heaven by the same great grace of God – and none of us are good enough to get there otherwise. God bought us, and blessed us, and assembled us to work together to expand His kingdom. This is not a competition, nor is it a game. Ours is a blood-bought privilege to work side by side with other blood-bought brethren; to be of like mind, faith, and doctrine, as we all work together as one, for the One. Our battle is not against one another but "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12)! That is a battle we can only win standing side by side, shoulder to shoulder, and completely united against a common foe (Phil. 1:27-2:7). And there is no room for prideful, sinful, personal self-promotion at the cost of others, or feelings of superiority over any of our brethren in any of us. See: Matt. 18:4, 23:12; Lk. 14:11, 18:14; Jms. 3:13-4:10; and 1 Ptr. 5:6! And then may God impress upon us, how Competitive Christianity, is actually not Christianity at all! By: Doug Dingley

Welcome to Broad Street Church of Christ

A special welcome is extended to all of our guests. Please let us know if we can assist you. Please fill out a visitor's card which is located on the back of the pew in front of you. Deposit the card in the collection plate when it is passed. If you are looking for a place to worship regularly, we would love to have you here at Broad Street. Please come back and visit with us again.

SHUT-INS:

Ruby Gibson, Christine Cartner and Frances Elam.

PRAYERS:

Johnny Smith Jr., Phyllis Rumble, Stanley Sharpe, Helen Lyerly, Doris Ellenburg, Stacey Jordan, Will Winchester, Betty Smith, Jo Anne Leake, Nealie Kilpatrick and Roy Baldwin.

- Congratulations to Jonathon and Casandra Bills! Jonathon Scott Bills Jr. was born on April 1st and was 7 lbs 1 oz. and 19 inches long.

- Please keep Frank Shepherd in your prayers.

Upcoming Events:

Apr. 09: Ladies' breakfast at the Rx at 8:30 A.M.

Apr. 10: Men's training class will meet at 5:15 P.M.

Apr. 11: Ladies' class will meet at 6:30 P.M.

Apr. 14: Book of the Month Fellowship will meet at 6:30 P.M. We will cover chapter 2.

Apr. 24: Men's training class will meet at 5:15 P.M.

Apr. 24: Fourth Sunday evening singing. There will be a fellowship meal following evening services!

Apr. 28: Book of the Month Fellowship will meet at 6:30 P.M.

Sermons:

A.M. - What Do We Owe Our Elders? (Heb. 13:17);

P.M. - Studies in Samuel Part Three (1 Sam. 15:19, 20)