

MADRID CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, 08/20/17

2017 ANNUAL THEME:

PUTTING ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD



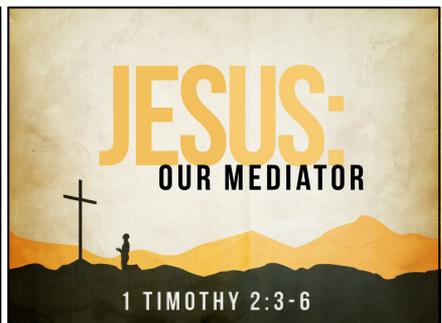
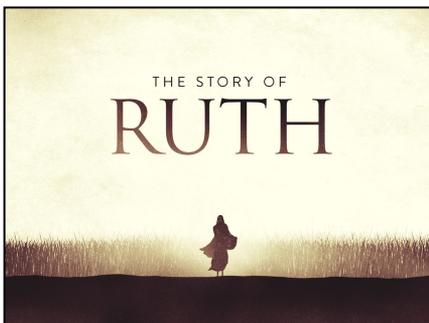
EPHESIANS 6:10-20

"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11).

TODAY'S LESSONS:

9AM

11AM



"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus..." (1 Tim 2:5).

Being “Conservative” in Everything

By Wes McAdams

Personally, I get tired of labels in the church: conservative, liberal, progressive, traditional, etc. It wears me out. These labels are so subjective and are often thrown around in an attempt to be condescending toward our brothers and sisters in Christ. But to me, the worst part is that many of us believe we are biblically “conservative,” but are only fooling ourselves.

As I understand it, the idea of being biblically “conservative” is that we stick with what Scripture says on any given issue. It doesn’t matter what culture says, we are going to stick with the word of God. Those of us who want to be biblically conservative believe the New Testament lays out a pattern for worship, Christian living, organization of the church, etc. And we believe we must – to the best of our ability – follow that pattern. I agree wholeheartedly with that philosophy. The problem is, I haven’t always been “conservative” on every issue. Have you?

Conservative on Worship, but Not on Grace

Many of us take, what we consider, a conservative position on worship. We believe we must follow the New Testament pattern for worship. We believe, because instrumental music was not used by Christians for several hundred years and instrumental music is not authorized by the New Testament, instruments should not be used in worship today. We believe the public worship assembly should consist of the same practices found in Scripture (the Lord’s Supper, singing, etc.). But have we taken a conservative position on grace? Meaning, have we taken a position on grace that comes from the New Testament? Do we preach Ephesians 2:8-9 as loudly as we preach Ephesians 5:19? Scripture does not teach that we save ourselves by following the pattern for New Testament worship. It teaches that Jesus saves us, when we – in repentant faith – clothe ourselves with Him (Galatians 3:26-27). It teaches us that we follow the pattern for worship *because* we are saved, not *in order to be* saved. That is the *conservative* position.

Conservative on Church Organization, but Not on Brotherly Love

Again, we believe the structure and organization of the church should be modeled after the New Testament church. We believe in having a

plurality of elders and that the preacher is an evangelist and minister, but not a “pastor.” We believe in congregational autonomy and we reject the idea of being a “denomination.” But are we as concerned with following the New Testament pattern when it comes to brotherly love? I would say that the New Testament speaks more about Christians loving one another than it does about any other single issue. The doctrine of brotherly love is just as important – if not more important – than the doctrine of congregational autonomy. It is not biblically conservative to insist on the New Testament structure for congregational organization, but to be rude to your brother in Christ. Love is not rude (1 Corinthians 13:4-5). Love is as much a doctrinal matter as any other issue we preach about. A lack of love creates division/“denominations” within a local church. In other words, a lack of love is “denominational.”

Conservative on Purity, but Not on Evangelism

Those of us who consider ourselves “conservative” believe in purity. We believe modesty and sobriety are important issues. We believe there are television programs and movies Christians shouldn’t watch. We believe we must guard against the homosexual agenda to desensitize our culture and silence those of us who believe homosexuality is a sin. These are all conservative positions on issues of purity. But in our efforts to be pure, we often isolate ourselves from the very people we need to reach with the gospel. In our efforts to keep ourselves from sin, we often make ourselves very unlike Jesus. He spent lots of time with the spiritually sick (Mark 2:13-17) and being “conservative” means following His example. It is not an “either/or” proposition. It is not “*either* I keep myself pure *or* I reach out to the lost.” If we want to follow the New Testament pattern, we must do *both*. We must not allow evil company to corrupt our good morals (1 Corinthians 15:33), but we must also spend time with those in sin to teach them the gospel (see Galatians 6:1; Jude 22-23).

Are You Conservative?

I will NOT wear the label “conservative” as a badge of honor. After all, doing so would mean I am not following the New Testament pattern of humility. And besides that, I do not feel I have been consistent and balanced enough to be called truly “conservative.”

I am simply a Christian. Sadly, I am not following Christ – or the example He has left for me – as closely as I ought, but I am washed in His blood and forgiven by His grace. I will continue to strive to follow His example, because I am saved.

In closing, I want to say how much I appreciate my brothers in sisters in Christ who seem to be so consistent – and truly conservative – in their Christian walk. They follow the New Testament pattern on things like worship, church organization, and purity; and they also follow the New Testament pattern on issues like grace, brotherly love, and evangelism. It is these brothers and sisters who give me the greatest hope for the future of the church.

Upcoming Events:

- 09/03 – Song/Prayer Service
- 09/02-09/04 – Labor Day Weekend Outreach
- 09/10-09/13 – Gospel Meeting w/ Matthew Allen
- 09/10 – Shed Potluck After Services
- 10/29 - Next Invite Sunday – *The Best Possible News: Jesus Will Return*

If there is an event you are planning that you want in the bulletin, let Jason know!

Daily Reading:

- 08/21 – 1 Cron 32-34; Psalm 79
- 08/22 – 1 Cron 35-36; Psalm 80
- 08/23 – Matt 1-2; Psalm 81
- 08/24 – Matt 3-4; Psalm 82
- 08/25 – Matt 5-6; Psalm 83
- 08/26 – Matt 7-8; Psalm 84
- 08/27 – Matt 9-10; Psalm 85



“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

-Psalm 119:105