

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

October 28

2018

## The Need To Be Sincere

Sincerity is “the quality of being free from deceit (i.e. the action or practice of deceiving someone by concealing or misrepresenting the truth) or the quality of being free from hypocrisy (i.e. the practice of claiming to have moral standards or beliefs to which one’s own behavior does not conform). Now, did you know that the Bible has a lot to say about sincerity? You see, the Scriptures do emphasize the importance of sincerity, and Christians need to be sincere in their...

### 1) Love For The Lord.

In Matthew 22:37, Jesus said, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” Folks, to be simply put Jesus says you need to love the Lord thy God with thy all, and not only shall we whole-heartedly love the Lord, but we likewise need to do so without hypocrisy (Matthew 15:7-8). Therefore, be sincere in your love for the Lord, and hold onto these words of the apostle Paul, “*Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen*” (Ephesians 6:24).

### 2) Service To The Lord.

Not only do we need to be sincere in our love for the Lord, but we also need to be sincere in our service to the Lord. In Joshua 24:14, Joshua commanded the children of Israel to “fear the Lord, serve Him in sincerity and in truth.” Ladies and gentlemen, just as Joshua instructed God’s people of old to serve the Lord in sincerity and in truth we likewise need to be a people who do the very same today (John 4:24). Therefore, let’s be sincere in our service to the Lord, and

let’s serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear (Hebrews 12:28).

### 3) Love For One Another.

We also need to be a people who sincerely express our love for one another. In John 13:34, Jesus speaking to his chosen disciples said, “*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.*” In verse 35, He goes on to tell them why that is important when He says, “*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*” Friends, having love for one another, so to speak, is a “badge of discipleship.” Therefore, let’s fervently and sincerely express our love for one another (1 Peter 1:22, 4:8), and remember, if someone says, “I love God” and hates his brother he is a liar (1 John 4:20).

### 4) Faith.

Paul informed, in 2 Timothy 1:5, that Timothy possessed a genuine (i.e. sincere) faith, and just as Timothy had a sincere faith, we likewise need to be sincere in our faith. So, knowing that, let’s be one who draws near to God with a true heart in full assurance of faith (i.e. a faith in God that leaves no room for doubt) (Hebrews 10:22). For, as John informs, “*whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world-our faith*” (1 John 5:4).

### 5) Entire Conduct.

My friends, the fact of the matter is, we need to be sincere in our entire conduct. You see, just as Paul and Timothy sincerely conducted themselves (2 Corinthians 1:12) we likewise need to do the same, and in Philippians 1:9-10, Paul’s prayer for the saints in Philippi was for them to be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ. Therefore, let us all lay aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking (1 Peter 2:1), and let’s be a people who sincerely conduct ourselves.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is a crying need for sincerity. Therefore, let’s all strive to live a life that is characterized by sincerity.

✍ Brad Phillips

**Editor's Note:** For 20 years Robert Turner edited "Plain Talk." He published many articles during that time setting forth the truth about the church we read about in the New Testament. The following was in the very last issue at the request of a reader. I commend it to you. Robert was a dear friend and tremendous influence on me and many others. (JH)



## The Church

What "went forth" from Jerusalem? Well, Isaiah prophesied the "ways — paths — law — and word" of the Lord would "go forth" (2:3). Fulfillment, as recorded in Acts 2: vindicates the prediction. One searches in vain for Peter's emphasis upon some institution that would save, or stand between God and man. Oh yes, the Lord's "church" was established — for when people "gladly received" the word (that had "gone forth") they became a part of that called-out body that belonged to Christ. But it is CHRIST who saves, via His ways, paths, etc.

Now, how does Christ's church grow? An excellent example is found in Acts 11. Gospel teachers came to Antioch and preached "the Lord Jesus" (v.20). Preached the "church"? No, preached that which had gone forth from Jerusalem — the "ways, paths, law, and word" of the Lord. Verse 21 says, "a great number believed, and turned unto..." the "church"? No; "to the Lord." Oh yes, in coming to the Lord they became a part of the Lord's people, His "church;" but the record says, they "turned unto the Lord."

Barnabas exhorted them to "cleave" (be faithful) "unto the Lord" (v.23). Why didn't he tell them to be faithful to the church? I don't know — it doesn't say. But I do know what it says. And in the growth and development of this effort we are told, "much people were added unto the LORD." (rt) We have discussed, to this point, the prophecy, coming into existence, and propagation of — what? Salvation in Christ! The product of this manifestation of grace — the called out people of God (1 Peter 2:9) — are God's FLOCK, or

BODY, FAMILY, KINGDOM, etc. These are figurative designations, each emphasizing some special characteristic of these people. "CHURCH" is a collective noun (like "flock") that is applied to these people — as a whole (Matthew 16:18), with geographic restrictions (Acts 9:31, AS), and as local organized groups (Philippians 1:1; 4:15).

But individuals may be cut off from the body of Christ (Romans 11:20-22; 2 Peter 2:2), and local churches may be no longer recognized — their "candlestick" removed (Revelation 2:1-5). This too, is determined on the basis of that which "went forth from Jerusalem." Diotrefes could change the roster of men, but God's roll counts for eternity (3 John 9-10; 2 Timothy 2:16-19). Heeding "perverse things" (Acts 20:29-f), and "leaving thy first love" (Christ) is what removes individuals and local groups from God's favor.

Emphasis upon the institutional aspect of "the church" was one of the earliest steps to apostasy. The whole or universal body of people was seen as a corporate "society" which took precedence over the word of God. The "church" was soon regarded as authority for the word — "mother" of that which brought it into existence. The "infallible" church is an outgrowth of this earlier error. We quickly repudiate that fruit, but may plant its seed, if we forget that the WORD, not the "church," will judge us eternally.

*Robert F. Turner*

### Belleville church of Christ

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[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

#### Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study . . . . . 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday Morning Worship . . . . . 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Evening Worship . . . . . 5:00 p.m.  
Wednesday Bible Study . . . . . 7:00 p.m.

#### Evangelist

James Hahn . . . . . (317) 443-1938