


Madison Heights Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

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MADISON HEIGHTS MESSENGER

No. 15

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The Lord's Church

The Christian church is the Lord's church. We are called out from the midst of the world to live as followers of Jesus. We are in the world but not of the world. However, the church often resembles our own opinions and desires more than God's will and the teaching of Jesus. Some organizations have their own interpretations and their way of doing things and expect other people to accept their conclusions as final. As for us, we have the ethical responsibility and duty to make sure that we stay true to the Lord's doctrine.

The Christian church is formed from doctrine grounded in the preaching, teaching, and action of Christ. The divergence between the Lord's doctrine and what is commonly practiced and preached in contemporary society grows as the message spreads throughout time. The influence of people throughout history pervades the message and dilutes the theology of Jesus with human preferences. Instead of shaping our lives to live by the gospel, people adopt their own version of doctrine and use it to shape their lives and the lives of others. We do not have the authority to tell any congregation or any believer what they have to do. It is only a matter of accepting Jesus as your savior and living our lives following his teachings.

A consequence of splintering of the Christian church into multiple denominations, each with their own set of beliefs and practices, is failure to unite in the one thing that can unite us all, the preaching and teaching of Jesus. As Jesus stated "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:20-21). Jesus preaches unity. Jesus clearly states that the people will believe in him when they see us as one. If people do not see the unity, it will prevent others from believing as conflicting messages alienates the world. The way to get through the fog of confusing doctrine is to emphasize doctrine that is centered on the preaching and teaching of Jesus instead of doctrine that frequently takes the scriptures out of context in order to satisfy human preferences.

Tension is released through judgmentalism and rejecting others that do not fit into their own skewed model of doctrine. Therefore, we end up in a world of organized religion that rejects people instead of following the teachings of Jesus. When Jesus taught that we may all be one, he was very serious and gave us a divine example. We are to be one with Jesus as he is one with God. Therefore, we are to be like Jesus. In other words, we are to be as close to Jesus as he is close to God. When we are not like Jesus and the world sees a lack of unity in religion, then the world does not believe. We also have the ethical responsibility and duty to let the world see that we stay true to the Lord's doctrine. As others are lost due to the lack of love in the world, we show them the love of God and the love of Jesus. We are the Lord's church.

Thank you,
George