

As His Custom Was



**And he came to Nazareth,
where he had been
brought up: and, as his
custom was, he went into
the synagogue on the
sabbath day...**

—Luke 4:16

As His Custom Was

“So he came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.” Luke 4:16

It was the custom of Jesus to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. We could say that this was one of the good habits instilled in the Lord when he was brought up in Nazareth. We read this about Jesus in Luke 2:51-52, “Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

... this was one of the good habits instilled in the Lord...

It is amazing to think that the Lord of creation went to Nazareth and was subject to his parents, Joseph and Mary. And then

again, it is exactly what we should expect the Lord to do. He was obedient to his parents. He set the example for us. The word that the NKJV renders “custom” in Luke 4:16 is the Greek word *etho* (Strong’s #1486). Thayer’s definition is: “1 – to be accustomed, used, wont; 2 – that which is wont; 3 – usage, custom.” It is the thing we are used to doing; it has become our habit.

Burton Coffman in his commentary on Luke 4:16 states: “The regular habit of attending formal, public worship was a vital element in the character of the Son of God; and it is simply impossible for any man to ‘follow in his steps’ without doing likewise. The old virtue of church attendance has been maligned and slandered; but the equivalent of it marked the life of Christ. Let all of his servants exhibit the same virtue.” It was Jesus’ habit to worship on the day set aside for that; we should do the same. ...lsg



Volume 38 - Number 5 - Sept/Oct 2019
BC is published every other month. Send all inquiries, address changes and subscriptions to the editor: L Scott Gage, PO Box 3425, Fayetteville, AR 72702-3425 Voice 479-521-6809 Email: Lsgage129@cs.com

www.basicchristianity.net

perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel” (Hebrews 12:22-24). Furthermore, there is an earnest, a thrilling and beautiful token of that heavenly homecoming in every assembly of the Lord’s believers when they have come to worship even now.

Are you glad when it is time to go to the Lord’s house? An old joke comes to mind about two ways to greet the morning. One man says, “Good morning, Lord!” Another man says, “Good Lord, it’s morning!” The first man expresses some enthusiasm for the day ahead, while the other reluctantly heads out the door. Do you look forward to the assemblies of the church or do you just drag yourself along because you feel like you have to go? Do you enjoy the fellowship of the saints or are you in a hurry to get away and back to things that you really enjoy?

*“Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing.”
Psalm 100:1-2*

L S Gage

Vitamin E(ncouragement)

July 31, 2014

Less Than 20 Percent of Americans Regularly Attend Church

Initially prompted to discover how church plants in America were really doing, Olson, director of church planting for the Evangelical Covenant Church (covchurch.org), began collecting data in the late '80s, gradually expanding his research to encompass overall attendance trends in the church. In his study, he tracked the annual church attendance of more than 200,000 individual Orthodox Christian churches (the accepted U.S. church universe is 330,000). To determine church attendance at the remaining 100,000-plus Orthodox Christian churches, he used statistical models, which included multiplying a church’s membership number by the denomination’s membership-to-attendance ratio.

His findings reveal that the actual rate of church attendance from head counts is less than half of the 40 percent the pollsters report.

If you or someone you know would like to receive BC, send the name and mailing address to:

Basic Christianity

PO Box 3425

Fayetteville, AR 72702-3425

Or

Lsgage129@cs.com

I Was Glad

"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.' Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!" Psalm 122:1

What excites you? And I am not talking about that car in front of you that is doing 20 mph in a 45-mph zone! That is not excitement...that is aggravation! No, what really excites you? What revs up your engine and makes you want to get up and go? What really brings out the enthusiasm in you?

The passage cited above could very aptly depict a worshiper who has traveled some distance for one of the three annual feasts in Jerusalem. We know that these were festive occasions when large crowds would assemble in the Holy City. Many of those traveling to Jerusalem may have been in a company of family and friends. When Jesus was twelve years old his family went up to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. When the rest of the family started home, Jesus remained behind. Joseph and Mary didn't realize he was missing until they had traveled for a day toward home. They had to go back to Jerusalem and search for him (Luke 2). We can understand how this can happen...I have even heard of parents leaving their kids asleep on a bench

at church. In all the festivities Joseph and Mary just supposed he was somewhere in the company of travelers.

No doubt these feasts were times much like our Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. There would be feasting and family gatherings, and, in addition, the religious ceremonies connected with the feast. It was a time of enjoyment and also a time of dedication to the Lord and his services. It was exciting and the people anticipated the trip with great enthusiasm. In particular the Psalmist says he was glad when they said, "Let us go into the house of the Lord."

How do you feel about the house of the Lord? In his commentary on Psalm 122 Burton Coffman writes:

Moreover, there is a sequel to this. The Christian also is making a long and tedious journey to "Jerusalem." Not the earthly city as did they, "But we are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made

Gus Missed Church Last Week

I have been preaching "full-time" for twenty-one years. Before that I preached every Sunday at three different churches for eight years. Before that I preached at "home" for two years. Every place (allow me to call your attention to this—"every place") I have preached has had those folks who deliberately missed some services altogether. I am not talking about those brethren who are weak or lacking in knowledge. I am not talking about those brethren who are "providentially hindered" by circumstances beyond their control. I am talking about brethren who deliberately (deliberately meaning with full presence of mind, pre-determined) do not attend some services altogether. This addresses those who never come on Sunday night or Wednesday night. It includes those who never attend a VBS or a Gospel Meeting. As for Sunday morning, they attend occasionally, provided something else doesn't draw them away. That's who I mean in this article.

Here is an example (all the names are fictitious). Gus was a member "on the books" at the Bat Hollow Church of Christ over near Lost River. Gus attended only on Sunday morning—well, he usually attended on Sunday morning—no, he occasionally attended on Sunday

morning. That was it for Gus and yet he considered himself faithful. He did not see anything wrong with his frequency of attendance. Gus woke last Sunday morning about 7 AM. Gus remained under the covers for a while and glanced at the bedroom clock. "The brethren meet for worship at 10:30 this morning" thought Gus. Of course, the brethren had been meeting at 10:30 AM for about fifty or sixty years. Gus noticed how the Sun was shining so brightly outside promising a real nice day. Winter was officially gone now. Gus thought about this for a while and how it cheered him up now that winter was over and nice warm weather was here. He traipsed off to the kitchen and fixed a cup of coffee and looked out the window. "It sure is nice out." Gus' gaze fell on his four-wheeler under the tarp next to the shed. "I think I'll see if I can get it started." Gus hurried up and began working on the four-wheeler. Soon he had it running just fine. It was about 9 AM now. Gus made a decision. "I think I will take her for a spin. I can always go to church next Sunday. It's so nice today and maybe it will be raining next week, and I'll go then." Gus climbed on the four-wheeler and off he went. About 10:40 AM Gus wheeled past the Bat Hollow building. "Doesn't look like there are too many there today"

he thought as he blistered on down the road.

Do you see the point here? Let me ask you to focus your attention on Gus' attitude, not on the four-wheeler. The four-wheeler isn't the problem here. The type of attitude that is exhibited by the fictitious Gus is what I am addressing. This isn't a case of weakness or lack of understanding. Gus missing church services to ride his four-wheeler was a deliberate, pre-meditated act. He knew what he should do and did not do it. What would that be, according to the Scriptures?

It has been my experience that folks like Gus can hear Hebrews 10:25 read, preached and explained and it will be like so much of the proverbial water off a duck's back. This verse is either ignored or it is believed (erroneously) that it is being obeyed. Anyway, I have too often found my efforts in using this good verse to be frustrated. That doesn't mean that Hebrews 10:25 is a bad verse or it shouldn't be used. I don't mean that at all. I simply mean that experience has shown me that when it is used the hearers turn off the receivers (become dull of hearing, Heb. 5:11) and pay no attention. Somehow, they just do not think it applies to them. Occasionally folks like Gus will make a defense of their actions. They will say that Hebrews 10:25 only requires attendance one time per week and that

would be during the service on Sunday morning where the Lord's Supper is served. I just wish that those folks like Gus who make this argument would at least do that much! Unfortunately, they make such an argument and then don't even comply with their own argument. Gus sure wasn't keeping his doctrine when he zipped past the Bat Hollow building on his four-wheeler.

I think there is something else that fits folks like Gus. Maybe this will stir up a little thinking on the subject. I notice this in James 4:17, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." So, Gus knew where he was supposed to be—at Bat Hollow. However, he chose to ride his four-wheeler instead. So, what is that? James here says it is sin. That's right, and when other things are chosen and you do not do what you should do—that is, meet with the brethren—then that is sin. Remember we are not talking about the weak or those with lack of knowledge. We are talking about those who know better and deliberately, with pre-meditation, choose to miss. Folks, that is sin. ~Terry Sanders~

Thanks to my friend Dave Hart

From FaceBook
August 28,2019

Eph. 4:20-24 When we are taught by Jesus, we learn to put on the New Man

Right Action: "keep the covenants of the Lord and His statutes"
Eph. 5:18-21 When we are filled with God's spirit, we will learn to submit to one another, and this leads us to right action

Conclusion: Essential Oils for Revival: Many people are sold on essential oils for physical revival.

What are the Best Essential Oils? Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*), Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*), Lemon (*Citrus limon*), Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*), Tea Tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*)
Promised Results from Revive Essential Oils: REVIVE Essential Oils & Blends actually work. Our effective and potent Oils and Blends will help you sleep, aid digestion, reduce anxiety, achieve serenity, relieve headaches and pain, reduce inflammation, keep your home clean, and much more. All naturally, without harmful chemicals.

We need to be sure to implement these essentials for Spiritual Revival: Right Attitude, Right Direction, Right Affection, Right Behavior and Right Action.

...lsg

52 MILLION PEOPLE
WORSHIP EACH WEEK IN 2005.
(NOT 132 MILLION ACCORDING TO GALLUP POLLS)

ONLY 23-25%
OF AMERICANS
SHOWS UP TO CHURCH
AT LEAST 3 OUT OF EVERY 8 SUNDAYS.

Revive Us Again
Deuteronomy 10:12-13

Intro: In the previous chapter Moses reminds the people of the rebellious spirit that resulted in 40 years in the wilderness. The only two men of that generation 20 and above who will finally enter the promised land are Joshua and Caleb: 1 Cor. 10:1-13 gives us a brief summary of Israel's failures.

It is because of the faithfulness of God that they are about to enter the land. Moses instructs them to remember it is because of the wickedness of the inhabitants of the land that they are being driven out: Deut. 9:5

Therefore, Moses encourages the people to learn from the past and to consider what the Lord requires of them if they are to live securely in the promised land: Deut. 10:12-13

What the people need is a return to the fear of God that will lead them to right thinking and right action.

There is good instruction in this passage for what we can do when we need of spiritual revival.

Right Attitude: "fear the Lord your God"

This is not a cowering fear but rather a fear of respect and honor:

Prov. 9:10 fear of the Lord beginning of wisdom; Job 28:28

Prov. 8:13 fear of the Lord teaches us to hate evil

Prov. 14:26-27 fear of the Lord produces strong confidence and fountain of life

Psa. 19:9 fear of the Lord is cleansing and produces eternal consequences

Right Direction: "walk in all his ways"

Prov. 3:3-5 when we trust the Lord's word instead of our own understanding, He will direct us

Right Affection: "love him"

Love is not just a feeling but a motivation to right action: Lk. 10:25-37 (Good Samaritan)

Right Behavior: "serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul"

A (Golf) Match Made in Heaven?

Interest in religion has been on a sharp decline in England for the past several decades. One survey shows that only about 10% of those who identify as being Christians of any kind attend services at least once per month (it's about 43% in the U.S.). Such findings have not gone unnoticed by officials of the Church of England.

The Rochester Cathedral in southern England, which dates back to 604 AD, has found a way to dramatically increase their attendance. In the nave of their cathedral they have installed a 9-hole miniature golf course. One of the officials there commented: "The cathedral is full of people playing adventure golf - it's absolutely wonderful," said Rachel Phillips. She noted that attendance is up 80% over the previous year.

...some churches resort to unorthodox practices in order to attract crowds.

It's obvious many churches throughout the world have made adjustments to their offerings in the last couple of decades. England is not the only nation to be growing more secular, and some churches resort to unorthodox practices in order to attract

crowds. Some succeed in drawing big numbers of people. But have they succeeded?

Jesus saw a scene somewhat akin to a modern flea market when He came to the temple in Jerusalem. Animals to be offered as sacrifices were sold (at inflated prices), and foreign currency could be exchanged for acceptable coinage (for a fee). As Jesus began to drive out these profiteers He declared, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of thieves" (Luke 19:46). The temple was a place for worship and prayer, not a place to extort profits, He said.

In another place Jesus spoke about the kind of worship His Father desires: "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:23,24).

The focus of worship, Jesus said, is God. It's not about what pleases us or what will draw big crowds. Worship must seek to please and honor God. And the only way we know what will please God is to hear what He says in His word.

So what do we do when numbers begin dropping off? Here's what the apostle Paul wrote: "I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the

So what do we do when numbers begin dropping off?

dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort,

Why Kids Are Leaving the Church

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth. And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." Ephesians 6:1-4

I recently read an insightful article in the ***El Dorado News-Times*** (Sunday, July 31, 2016) by a man named Jim Davidson. Davidson was commenting on hearing a man from Israel who came to the USA to preach the

with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Timothy 4:1,2). In other words, preach when it's popular and when it isn't.

We serve a timeless God who has made His will known. He doesn't need us to advise Him on how to "do church". Our task is to submit to His will and do what He directs.

LightGrams

August 29, 2019

Volume 23, Number 28

gospel. The man's name is Anthony Simon, and he was born in Manchester, England, to Jewish parents and at age 18 traveled to Israel to work in a Kibbutz; Simon later was converted to Christianity. He came to the states to preach and not to raise money for his ministry. Here is a short excerpt from Davidson's article:

One of the things near and dear to my heart is when he spoke about our nation's young people and why so many are leaving the church. While it is something that some people may not want to hear, Tony spoke the truth. He said, "Our churches do not need more programs, praise

bands, and different ways of entertaining them. What they need to hear is Jesus, and more Jesus and how much He loves them."

It has been my personal conviction for a long time that a young person will not leave church if he or she understands that they are a sinner, that Jesus dies for their sins, and then they accept Him, are baptized and follow Him as their Lord and Savior. Rather they will see themselves as part of the Body of Christ, and have a life-time commitment to His church.

Here is what is at stake. Former Russian Premier Vladimir Lenin said, "Give me just one generation of your youth and I will change the whole world." As it has always been, parents hold the key to our nation's future. When they know and love the Bible and teach it to their children, we will see positive changes on every hand. The mass shootings will stop, crime will go down and the American people will feel good about the heritage we are leaving for our precious children.

I am not saying that this is easy; far from it. I do believe that the family is the key to solving our most pressing problems. When we look around today, we find the family in disarray; we find it difficult to even define marriage and the home. The reason we have lost our definition of family and marriage is the fact that we have abandoned the Bible. We kicked the Bible out of school and along with it discipline flew out the window. We don't want to hear the Bible in our government and institutions and the results are corruption and moral decay. The Bible as the center of the family altar has been replaced by television and video games, and once again the results are not positive. No political party or political platform will ever solve our problems. There is only one remedy for the sickness that is gripping our society. We need the Bible back in the center of family life; we need it in our schools and in our government and institutions. "Through your precepts I get understanding..." (Psalm 119:104).

"So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel." Luke 1:80

L S Gage

Vitamin E(ncouragement)

August 5, 2016