

# On the Same Page

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. “You shall have no other gods before Me.” (Exodus 20:2-3 NAS95)



## Forever-Family Fellowship

**We will teach and practice truth-and-love relationships with brothers-sisters in Christ that must survive/thrive in the present because we believe that these relationships will last forever**

## All-Week-Long Worship

As the local body of believers gathers each Sunday for worship, **we will inspire a worship experience for all age groups that will travel with you all week long.** What we do on Sunday will assist you in your singing, in your praying, in your devotion, and in your witness.

Conversely, it is as you worship all-week-long that you will be prepared to enter into gathered worship on Sunday.

## Day-to-Day Discipleship

As followers of Christ, we are disciples every single day. Respect for and commitment to Scripture is essential. **We will show you how to interact with and respond to God's Word, both as individuals, and in groups.**

## Moment-by-Moment Mission

God, the Architect of the world and of our lives arranges appointments and interruptions. Each of us is called to represent His Son for the glory of His Name. **We will cultivate a mind-set for moment-by-moment mission, whether close to home, or far away.**

## Football is our National Religion

Multitudes of people will go to church this weekend. But the “church” will be a stadium. They will be involved in a worship experience, but the object of their worship will not be God, but a team of exceptional humans. Some might call this a violation of the first commandment: “You shall have no other gods before Me.”

The likenesses (and differences) abound. Surely there will be more people observing from home than in person. This happens in churches, or, out of church buildings, as well. People say they worship from home, but while they may be interested in what happens on the screen, they are free to go grab a yogurt from the refrigerator. I’m not sure when it slips from the level of “worship” to “auditing the class,” but lack of personal presence makes a difference.

Worship attire. It used to be in Christian churches that all the men wore ties and all that goes with it. You could tell they belonged. That day has passed, but not in the stadium. You would be out of place without your team colors, and if you are for the other team, you stick out and are ridiculed. You could put choir robes on the home crowd and they would not look more like a unit than these thousands of fans.

The preachers, however, are wearing suits, mostly men, and they wear far more well-fitting clothes than most of the preachers’ suits I ever saw. They may offer a few prophetic words, but most of their comments are analysis of the present situation. That seems true in Christian churches as well. There seems to be a lot less “thus says the Lord” these days.

I’m not sure if the song team is represented by the half-time show or the cheerleaders. Both seem to be important to the production, but there is a difference, I hope. The football religion uses the sidelines and show to attract people through blunt sensuality. Worship leaders in Christian churches seek to direct attention to Christ rather than themselves, or at least that is how it is supposed to work. But there is another difference. In recent times in our churches, the song time is now called “worship,” and after the “worship” is done, then comes the preacher. I’m not sure what they call his part. In football, the central event continues to be “the game,” not the halftime show.

But what is the point of the “game”? It is to win. That is, I want my team to win and the other team to lose. The home fans want to go home happy, and they want the visiting fans to go home miserable. There is an enmity that is set in motion, and it may be “only a game,”

and off-the-field violence is looked down on, but the word “hatred” is not uncommon. You love your coach and the other coach is a bum, or quarterback, or whatever. In churches, we cannot tell so easily the friends from the foes, and we are to love everyone nonetheless. We should not forget, however, that it is not primarily how one is welcomed to the church building, but what is their eternal destiny that should be of primary concern. If the Gospel message offends those without Christ, then that is an offense that should be risked. But no, we do not hate unbelievers, or, the other team.

There are likenesses and differences between fandom and Christendom. The personal and emotional engagement of the people is interesting. While churches have technological means to “amp up” the experience, I have never seen the level of engagement in church that I saw in the stadium, at least when there are high hopes of winning. And yet, Christians know that they are overcomers because Christ is the Winner. And yet, Christians can sleep their way through a worship service, something that never happens at a football game, the real religion of our land.

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*(thinking about abundance)*

**The Body** by Bill Bryson

...it takes 7 billion billion billion (that’s 7,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, or 7 octillion) atoms to make you. No one can say why those 7 billion billion billion have such an urgent desire to be you.

**Sermons to the Natural Man** by William G. T. (William Greenough Thayer) Shedd

Holiness is an affection of the heart, and an inclination of the will. It is the love and practice of goodness, and not the mere approbation and admiration of it.

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**Notes:**

**Sunday school classes for adults and youth meet each week at 10 a.m.**

**Our American House service is today at 3 p.m.**

**Men of Action breakfast/meeting is Saturday, 8 a.m.**

**Our Daily Bread devotionals for Dec-Feb are available in the church lobby**

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**Weekly Worship @ 11:00 a.m.**

**Last Sunday, November 24**, we will considered a “Thanksgiving” passage that looks at this world and this world's prospects full in the face and then finds our salvation and peace and hope in God: I will call this message **“Gratitude in a Shaken World”** from Hebrews 12:27-29)

[Listen to the message here](#)

**This Sunday, December 1** is our Lord’s Table service at 11 a.m. We have been listening in on **Gospel Conversations** with Jesus in John’s Gospel. This Sunday, we come to John 8:1-11, and we hear Jesus address the religious authorities and the adulterous woman, in a devotion called **“Pointing at the Greater Sin.”**

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