

CAN YOU HELP?

Northpoint has supported **Joshua Aidoo** in Ghana for 6 years. His evangelistic work is greatly hampered because of transportation difficulties—he has no vehicle. When he goes into new areas with the Gospel he takes a team of men with him. Having either to hire a driver with a van or rent a van is expensive and at times unreliable. He also needs this vehicle for use by his family (5 children). The vehicle (used) he needs will cost a minimum of \$16,000.00, to which Northpoint has contributed \$2,000.00 to get this fund started. The elders of the Bellview Church (which also supports Joshua) are handling these funds. We ask brethren to help us help this good man by sending your check to **Northpoint** or to:

Bellview Church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32526.

[Thanks to the generosity of various ones, the fund now totals \$9,000.00. DM]

THAT YOU MAY KNOW...

Let us pray for...

- Jerry Douglas**—fighting bone and lymph cancer (Danny Douglas’s twin brother)
- Alice Haddon**—fighting cancer (Sheri’s friend)
- Vicki Hightower**—malignant lung tumor (Terry has preached here several times)
- Judy Reid**—sister in NJ, planning to move here
- Brian Ritter**—fighting rare autoimmune disease (son of Rick Ritter, Gospel preacher)
- Jeff Simmons**—“our boy” in the US Navy (Saratoga Springs, New York)
- Don Smith**—faithful brother in Ohio prison, ordered to cease teaching fellow inmates
- Stephanie Tigner**—who has been restored to Christ (Kourtney’s sister)
- Joshua Aidoo**—Gospel preacher in Ghana we support
- Samuel Bagsangi**—Gospel preacher in Philippines we support
- Danny Douglas**—Gospel preacher in US we support

Records you helped make last week...

Bible Classes	17
Sunday AM Worship	17
Sunday PM Worship	17
Wednesday PM Bible Class/Worship	15
Contribution	\$1,625.00
Contribution average (2017)	\$2,933.60

Internet and YouTube Sermon broadcasts...

- Both sermons each Sunday are broadcast, beginning at approximately 10:45–10:50 a.m. and 1:12–1:15 p.m., via Internet through our Website, www.northpointcoc.com.
- Our **YouTube** channel at *Northpoint Church of Christ* has a growing collection of Northpoint sermons available for viewing.

Preacher
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Phil Smith
Dub McClish

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Sunday
Bible Class 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 1:00 PM
Wednesday
B.C./Worship 7:00 PM



The Northpoint Lighthouse

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“Relationship, Not Religion”

Buzzword, entered the vernacular a few years ago to describe a term that attains wide use, often as a slogan (e.g., *gravitas*, *holistic*, *infrastructure*, *stagflation*, *Google*, et al.—even *buzzword* itself).

Hard on the heels of *buzzword* has come *buzz phrase* (e.g., *in the tank*, *think outside the box*, *brick-and-mortar*, *political capital*, *hope and change*, et al.). The field of religion is not without such words and phrases. *Relationship*, for example, emerged as a religion buzzword a few years ago.

I once saw a denominational advertisement that touted its aim as “relationship, not religion.” When I read it, I thought, “At last, truth in advertising!” Actually, most of the religious groups that claim to be “Christian” have been placing “relationship” ahead of “religion” all along, but seldom do they advertise it. Some of them may not even recognize that they are doing so.

What does their buzzword mean? I infer that it means that their principal aim is to encourage good human-human relations, which means that good human-Divine relations are secondary. The slogan implies that the church members are free to believe and practice whatever pleases them in religion and to behave about any way they choose in their daily lives—as long as they maintain good human “relationships.” A further implication is that they will not be “burdened” with “religion” (i.e., any dogma, doctrine, or requisite practices, especially if that old outmoded and restrictive book, the Bible, teaches them).

Relationship, not religion is one of the many sorry ends of the old mantra, “It makes no difference what you believe, as long as you’re sincere.” If “relationship” supersedes religion, one may keep his third wife who has had four husbands as long as the two presently have a “good relationship.”

In this creed it matters little what one believes about the Creation, baptism, the way God has directed men to worship Him, or the verbal inspiration of the Bible. Such are irrelevant as long as one knows how to “get along” with others. The community/mega church phenomenon is a graphic demonstration of the *relationship-not-religion* buzz phrase. It is little more than “Humanism-Lite.”

The greater tragedy is that some congregations that wear the name, *Church of Christ*, emphasize human relationships far more than they do Divine-human relationships. Some of these groups now boast of being havens for those involved in adulterous marriages. If these churches were honest, they would no longer use *Church of Christ* on their signs or buildings. We are beginning to see some integrity in this regard. Max Lucado renamed his Oak Hills Church of Christ in San Antonio, *Oak Hills Church*, in 2003. We have seen other church signs that evinced embarrassment at the designation, *Church of Christ*, reading “The Family of God” or “The Christian Fellowship” in very large letters, with a subscript in very small letters, “a Church of Christ.”

Some of us have for years begged the elders of the North Richland Hills (NRH) “Church of Christ” denomination near Fort Worth, Texas, to be as honest as Lucado and Oak Hills has been in this regard. To no one’s surprise, a few years ago NRH legally changed its founding charter and by-laws from explicitly **opposing** the use of instrumental music in its worship to allowing them—and now employs them. Those apostates who are zealous to lead the church into fellowship with the denominations consistently scorn doctrine in favor of an “irenical (i.e., peaceful) spirit” among men.

Undeniably, amiable human relationships are desirable. However, even a neophyte in Bible knowledge cannot miss its primary emphasis on the **right relationship with God**. The correct order is always peace with God, then peace with man (Mat. 10:37; Luke 12:51–53; Acts 5:29; et al.). There is no peace with God without respect for the authority of His Son (Mat. 17:5; Heb. 1:1–2; 5:9; et al.). Only when one has the **right religion** (as defined by the New Testament) will he have the **right relationship** with both God and men. We see in all of this *relationship* fetish the age-old struggle between the pursuit unity and Truth.

—Dub McClish
Denton, TX

Purity

Jesus pronounced a blessing on “the pure in heart (Mat. 5:8).” He said they would see God! *Pure* translates the Greek word *katharos*. It is an adjective meaning “pure, as being cleansed.” The implication is that where a state of uncleanness or filthiness existed, now a process has worked to bring about the opposite state: that of cleanliness, that is, purity. What is the process that God has chosen to create a pure or clean heart in man? This is the most important question we could ever ask. Why? Because **only** “the pure in heart” shall see God!

In answering our question, we must first understand **what** this heart is that has been cleansed or made pure. Originally *kardia*, the Greek word translated *heart*, meant, in most places, the muscle that pumped blood through the human body. It came, however, to symbolize the **inner man** (1 Pet. 3:4): the **intellect** (Mat. 9:4; Isa. 32:4; Pro. 14:10; Mark 2:6), the **emotions** (Mat. 22:37; Neh. 2:2; Dan. 7:15), the **will** (2 Cor. 9:7; Rom. 6:17; Col. 3:15), and the **conscience** (Acts 2:37; 1 John 3:20).

Now we are better able to understand why the translators also rendered *psuche*, meaning the **soul** or **life**, by our English word, *heart*. The heart is representative of the complete mental and moral activity of man. We may conclude that *heart* represents the **real person**. For this present age it is tabernacled in the flesh (2 Cor. 5:1). With this explanation of the heart in mind, we are better able to comprehend what has been made pure.

We may now note the process by which the Lord makes clean or pure the heart (intellect, emotions, will, and conscience). Jesus said that the apostles were made “clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3). In the parable of the soils in Luke 8, the only soil receptive to “the seed” or Word (8:11) was the “honest and good heart.” This “soil” heard and kept the Word and brought “forth fruit with patience” (8:15). May we conclude that not only is this the way the apostles were made clean through the Word, but the way any person’s heart is made clean through the Word?

Without the evidence found only in the Word, there can be no faith or belief created within the heart (Heb. 4:12; Rom. 10:10, 17). And, “without faith it is impossible to well-pleasing to God” (Heb. 11:6).

—David P. Brown
Spring, TX

Law and Lawgiver

David said in the long ago, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork” (Psa. 19:1). The heavens declare the power of God. Think for a moment of the giant planets, suns, and stars riding in space. What holds them there? Why, the “law of gravity,” someone says. But can you talk about the law of gravity and ignore the Lawmaker behind the law? The heavens declare the wisdom of God. When we look at a charted map of the heavens and see the millions of heavenly bodies with their myriads of orbits—some of them so vast that the human brain is staggered in contemplating them—yet there is no clashing of these bodies; every one of them stays on its orbit. We are overwhelmed with the wisdom of it. Only intelligence and wisdom could perform such a feat.

The heavens declare the glory of God in their relationship to law. We think it wonderful that men can work out schedules for vast networks of railroads. When man does it, he errs sometimes and trains have wrecks or are late. But when you consider the heavenly bodies and their far-flung orbits, not a one has had a “wreck,” nor have they been “late.” In fact, we can even tell time by their movements to the barest fraction of a second. Astronomers can also tell to the dot when a planet or a comet will appear, even years in advance. Do you say they are governed by law? There must be a Supreme Lawgiver behind the law.

—Allen E. Johnson
Deceased

