

## Trends

According to Barna 46% of teens (13-17) and 70% of young adults (18-24) report that their friends regularly view pornography. According to experts "studies have shown that seeing a vast amount of pornography long before becoming sexually active can have damaging effects because of the amount of sexual conditioning that occurs in adolescence. Ill-timed exposure to explicit material could cause lifelong problems with relationships and personal sexual health, and create unrealistic beliefs about sex and sexuality."

**Matthew 5:27-28:** "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

**Colossians 3:5-6:** "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,"

## Sentence Sermons

"The two most important days in your life are the day you were born and the day you find out why."

—Mark Twain

## News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Please be sure to pray for all the needy saints. *Be sure to pray for all the members at Westside! Please pray for the Ferrell family in Michigan. In previous Words of Life I informed the brethren about Susan Ferrell and her illness with a brain tumor. This week Shawn, Susan's husband, told me Susan has had a difficult time with the chemo and radiation treatments. Due to a low platelet count she had to have several blood transfusions and discontinue the chemo and radiation treatments. Please continue to pray for Susan, Shawn and their three boys: Samuel, Micah, and Eli.*

*Let us also keep Bill McGinnis in our prayers as he is nearing the end. Also, remember Lana, Trudy, Phil and Virginia in your prayers and see if you can provide any assistance.*

*"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16)*

If you know of any in need of our prayers please let us know so we can include them in the announcements and/or put their name on the bulletin board.

Please continue to remember Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Also, remember all the faithful preachers and brethren laboring in difficult places (e.g., Philippines, India, Zimbabwe). **There are many needy saints! Can you help? Let me know.**

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Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

# Words of Life

Westside  
church of Christ

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"Lord, to whom shall we go? You  
have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



## An Open Letter from Nadab and Abihu

Brethren,

It is with the utmost humility that we inform you of a change of worship practices in your normal sacrificing. Be assured that we are bringing about this change only after much prayer and study. We have recently concluded an in-depth study of the Law as delivered by our brother Moses that covered 400 days. (We might note that is ten times the length of time it took the Lord to impart this Law). We have decided to bring about a change in the type of fire used in worship. We are aware that there is a standing tradition of using only one source of fire, but we, as holy priests, do not feel obligated to blindly follow tradition. Numerous polls of our worshipping clientele indicate the overwhelming opinion that they do not care where we get the fire used for their sacrifices as long as the service is conducted in a respectful and meaningful way. We are in agreement with this growing majority, as we cannot see how a change in fire will affect anything in the least about our sacrifices. The animal is still properly cooked, the incense burned. We are of the mind that were we to secretly substitute a different fire it would be impossible for any of the worshippers to know a change had taken place.

Besides all this, we became aware of the fact that nowhere in the Law does the Lord forbid the use of what some of our detractors have referred to as "strange fire." We feel that the lack of such a restriction was meant to give us freedom. For those who disagree, we would ask you to show us any place in the Law that tells us we cannot do something the Lord has not seen fit to condemn. We are simply asking, "Where does it say we cannot do this?" We also wish to point out that the congregation of Israel is the only religious group in the known world that willingly limits itself to only one kind of fire. We have become the laughingstock of the land of Canaan and have been ridiculed openly by many groups. This "only-one-fire" self-righteous policy has alienated us from everyone else. We believe this change will open up many fellowship opportunities.

Now, to set the minds of some of you at ease, we will continue to offer a traditional service using the old-fashioned fire as well as this progressive ser-

vice with the new fire. As a matter of fact, we may occasionally use the old fire in our progressive service for special feast days. In this way we hope that our older citizens are still comfortable even though they dogmatically insist on a worship style which is declining and we believe to be stunting our growth. Consider the freedom this new practice affords us! We will no longer have the expense of maintaining a constant fire in one location. This will also make it possible to appeal to a younger audience as we discover more entertaining ways to “light the fire” of our assemblies. (We hope you caught the little play on words there!)

For those who still oppose the use of new fire, we ask you not to be judgmental of new ideas. We also hope you will not use this change as an excuse to divide our people or stir up trouble within the congregation. We remind you that this has been well thought out and the majority of elders have signed on with us. It is true, we have not included our father Aaron in this deliberation; but we were well aware of his tradition-bound views and still plan to leave him in charge of doing the traditional service anyway. We also have not consulted Moses, but his humility is well known and we are confident he will want to uphold the majority decision in this effort to improve our worship.

We are very much looking forward to our first new fire service. We hope you will make a special effort to be present to witness a new age of enlightenment in the church of Israel. We know God will be watching and we anticipate that His joy over seeing his people take a great step toward throwing off the burden of binding tradition will be an electrifying experience. See you there. Bring some extra barbecue sauce, for we think this new practice is going to spread like wildfire!

For freedom's sake!

Nadab & Abihu, DDLP (Doctors of Divine Law and Progress)

P.S. After the successful changeover in this part of our worship, future plans include the ordination of women priests, inter-idol fellowship activities with the various pagan groups nearby, and a special service called, “It doesn't have to be Passover to celebrate Passover anymore.”

Anonymous

### Attitude Towards the Weak

Bill Hall

The Messiah's attitude toward the spiritually weak is pictured by Isaiah in the following words— “A bruised reed will He not break, and a dimly burning wick will He not quench” (Isaiah 42:3). In our zeal for purity and strength in the church, we may be guilty of doing the very thing that our Lord does not want done. We create a mental image of what the ideal church ought to be, and then go about to establish one. Every member is going to attend every service. Every member will be “sound” in his convictions. Worldliness will not be tolerated. This church is not going to have the weaknesses that characterize other churches we know of. This is going to be a strong church, a model church. A new convert is made,

and immediately he is indoctrinated in what this church is, and the contribution he is expected to make to the maintaining of this ideal. Each newcomer is viewed as a potential threat. If he's not going to “line up,” we don't want him. Weaker members are handled with a “shape up or ship out” attitude. People soon recognize that there is far more concern for the image of the church as an organization than for them as struggling and weak children of God. While the Messiah is tenderly and delicately nursing the “bruised reeds” back to health, we may be there crushing them. While He cups His hand around these fluttering, dimly burning flames to protect what fire is left, we may be there quenching them. We are not suggesting that unrepentant false teachers and immoral members ought to be tolerated. They must be warned, marked, and withdrawn from. Nor are we suggesting that the weak ought to be left alone in their weakness. They must be taught, encouraged, reproved, rebuked, and exhorted, but with all longsuffering, and with a view toward strengthening them. “Admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all” (1 Thessalonians 5:14). Ask not what they can do for the church but what the church can do for them. As long as there is a little life in that “bruised reed,” there is hope. Don't crush it! As long as there is a little fire left, it might be fanned to burn more brightly. Don't extinguish it!

### Needs

There remain many brethren in need of your help. For example, faithful gospel preachers in the U.S. and foreign lands are in dire need of financial support. They and their families faithfully labor in the gospel and suffer from material deprivations due to their stand for the truth, concern for the soul's of men and love for the Lord and His Christ. Other brethren are in acute need of the basics of life (food, clothing, shelter, medical attention). On the other hand many members of the Lord's church enjoy all the economic advantages offered by America: a lavish lifestyle with large, well-furnished, well-heated/cooled and comfortable homes; vacations; recreational vehicles; widescreen HD/satellite TV; the latest iPads/iPods/PDA's/smartphones, a trendy wardrobe, and a new, shiny SUV in the driveway. Meanwhile these brethren make sacrifices many of us cannot even imagine. Judgment is coming! 2 Corinthians 5:10: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” Please don't sit idly by and not help these dedicated brethren as they seek to save the lost! If we ignore them, how will we answer the Lord on that Great Day? If you would like to help please send me an e-mail (craigthomas82000@gmail.com) and I'll put you in contact with a needy brother. Remember 1 John 3:16-17!

**“But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?”**

**1 John 3:17**