

**PRAYERS**

**Butch and Chris** – Chris had her surgery on Thursday. Butch and Chris will be staying with her mother while they both recuperate.

**Chanice** – She will have a port installed to do aid in her dialysis.

**Linda McBrayer** – Has a sinus infection.

**Mason McBrayer** – He has mono and influenza B.

**Carmen** – Traveling to Tennessee

**Congregation News**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** Most accidents happen accidentally.

**Those Privileged to Serve**

**Sunday Morning Service:**

**3/25/18**

**4/1/18**

Bible Class	Colby Crawford	Paul Darling
Announcements	Colby Crawford	Tom Bright
Song Leader	Tom Bright	Paul Darling
Opening Prayer	Colby Crawford	Colby Crawford
Lord's Supper	Tom Bright	Colby Crawford
Scripture Reading	Paul Darling	Tom Bright
Sermon	Paul Darling	Tom Bright

**Bible Classes**

**Sunday Morning**

**Wednesday Evening**

Adult	Colby Crawford	Tom Bright
Children	Colby Crawford	Linda McBrayer
Toddlers	Cindy Bright	
Babies	Anissa Crawford	

**Birthdays & Anniversaries**

**Building Cleanup**

McBrayer - March  
Crawford - April

**Aberdeen church of Christ**

**1801 S. Lincoln St.**

**Aberdeen, SD 57401**

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**Bulletin Submissions**

If you would like anything added to the bulletin such as prayer requests, news, or events, please make submissions by Friday night to: [tlbj@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tlbj@sbcglobal.net)

# Aberdeen church of Christ

March 25, 2018

## Are the Religions of Man as Good as what God has to offer?

In answering this question we must not look to the “thinking” or “feelings” of man (Prov.14:12). I realize that everyone has an opinion, but when it comes to spiritual matters there is only one place we must turn to and that is to God’s Word for the answer (2 Tim.3:15-17).

No matter what man comes up with it is going to fall short of what God has to offer. No one or any group of men can improve upon God’s plan. Manmade religions are not endorsed or encouraged by God. Manmade religions are not as good as what God has created. There is One Lord, He is in “charge” and it is “He” that decides what is acceptable to “Him.” He has not left that up to man to decide what they desire to do to receive his acceptance (Jeremiah 10:23).

It is not enough just to be “religious” or to practice a “religion” of some sort. When looking at some of the conversions in the book of Acts, the people on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2); the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8); Paul (Acts 22) for example, they were religious but had to give up **their** religion for the religion of Christ. They were religious but religiously wrong.

If man’s religions are all acceptable to God, and it does not matter what or which religion one practices, then how can there be any FALSE religions, doctrines and preachers? Yet, the Bible abounds with warnings about false doctrines and teachers (Matthew 7:15, 21-23; Romans 16:17-18; Colossians 2:8; 2 Peter 2:1-2; 1 John 4:1). Since God warns us about such, then it is evident God demands a following of a certain pattern or plan. That plan is His way and can be known and followed as presented in His Word (John 14:6; Romans 1:16-17; Ephesians 4:1-6). For man to change His way or to tamper with it in any form is to end up with a distorted, perverted plan that will not save or provide eternal life (Galatians 1:6-8; Rev. 22:18-19; 2 Pet. 3:16).

Are the religions of man as good as what God offers? Of course not. Since that is true, then what are we doing being a part of them, promoting them and participating with them in that which God does not approve? Why not just be a New Testament Christian, being a member of the New Testament Church, rejecting any and all manmade religions. You can be. Let’s go back to the Bible and follow God’s plan so that one day Heaven can be our home (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 5:8; Rom. 1:16-17; Matt. 7:21-23; John 14:6; John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Rom. 10:9-10; Mark 16:16; Rev. 2:10).

## An Open and Shut Case

Mystery writers produce plots that, more often than not, revolve around some heinous crime such as murder. Some of the more successful fictional sleuths include such notable characters as Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, Mark Slone, Colombo, and Jessica Fletcher. Real live detectives (and even the fictional ones) enjoy cases that are “open and shut.” That means the evidence is so simple, so obvious and so abundant as to make the case exceptionally easy to solve. I enjoy watching Colombo for the simple reason that when the police first arrive on the scene the murder appears to be an “open and shut case.” Of course Colombo “doth not think so,” and hence, the unfolding of the story as the apparently inept Lieutenant goes about solving the mystery.

We sometimes use the same terminology to express the simplicity of a problem. “It’s an open and shut case!” But I want to use these five words to help us focus on a passage in God’s word that has nothing at all to do with the work of a sleuth. Consider these words of our Lord as recorded in the book of Revelation: “To the church at Philadelphia write: These things saith he...that hath the key of David, he that openeth and none shall shut, and that shutteth and none openeth” (Rev. 3:7). We can only surmise what prompted these words to the Christians living in the city of “brotherly love” – saints who had faithfully kept the word; who did not deny the name of Christ. In the first century, the church endured some of the most severe persecution in the history of Christianity. These Christians may have been tempted to capitulate on the basis that the battle was not going well for the church; that the door of opportunity was not there; that no one would listen. Perhaps the church had ceased to grow as it should, and rather than compromise the truth for the sake of “numbers,” these faithful disciples stayed the course. Jesus reminds them that it is He Who opens the doors of opportunity and it is He Who shuts those doors. This truth was demonstrated with ancient Israel when, upon failing to enter the Promised Land by faith, the door was closed and that disobedient generation could not reopen that door, try as they may.

Whatever the situation in Philadelphia, our Lord reminded them that He has the “key of David.” It is He who has the power to open doors; not Rome; not the synagogue of Satan; not the enemies of the church. When once our Lord opens a door, none can shut; and once He has shut the door, none can open. He opens the door of opportunity for His churches; He opens the heart through the teaching and preaching of the gospel; He opens a door of admission into His church, laying down the terms of entrance and fellowship. He also shuts the door, when He pleases. He shuts the door of opportunity and the door of utterance, and leaves obstinate sinners shut up in the hardness of their hearts. He shuts the door of fellowship against unbelievers and profane persons. He

shuts the door of heaven against the foolish virgins who have slept away their day of grace. He shuts the door against the workers of iniquity, how vain and confident they may be.

There are dark clouds on the horizon! Where the bright light of freedom once shined, the dark clouds of error and sin are now blocking and blinding the eyes of men. Right is now called wrong; sin is glorified and honored. It seems as if the liberal leaders of our land are going about to get their wicked deeds “on the books” and written into law so as to suppress, intimidate, and incarcerate those who would dare speak out against the sins of homosexuality, abortion, euthanasia, fornication, and marriage and divorce. The door into the hearts of men is being shut; the gospel rejected; God’s love required. You and I may be tempted to think that the “unholy trinity” of Congress, the White House, and the judicial branch of government are closing the doors to our liberty; that the wicked leaders of our generation have successfully silenced the gospel. But when I read these words of Jesus to the saints in Philadelphia I am reminded that all the governments of the world *cannot* close the doors unless our God permits it! I know not what is in store for this nation, but I fear that our Lord is closing the doors in our country much as He did in Russia in the last century; as He has in Muslim countries around the world; as He has in China, and other places where men have determined in their own mind that we will not bow to the King of kings. We dare not capitulate in the face of adversity. Stay the course brethren; keep your faith in God. And should our God decide to take these freedoms from us, to bring upon *this* land a famine of the word, to allow our Bibles to be banned, and the truth evil spoken of, let us not forget that our God will accomplish His purpose and He will be glorified. Let come what may. Never forget that it is, as our title suggests, “an open and shut case.”

### Welcome to our Assembly. . .

Whether you are a first time visitor or a long time member of this congregation, we are happy to have you with us this morning. For those visiting, please make yourself comfortable. A good deal of information about this church and its activities can be found on this sheet. We encourage and invite anyone interested to participate in the activities offered throughout the week. If you have any questions about the facilities, our worship service, or want more information about the church, feel free to ask anyone present. Someone will be glad to help you!