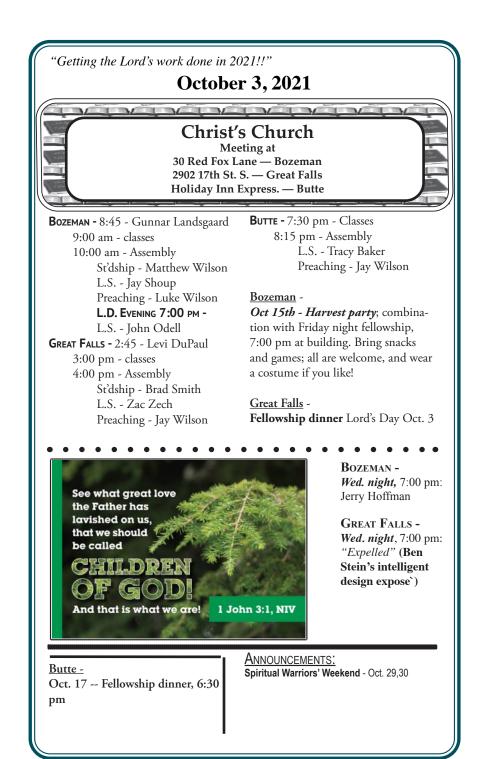
MEN WILL SAY, "SURELY THERE IS A RE-WARD FOR THE RIGHTEOUS; SURELY THERE IS A GOD WHO JUDGES THE EARTH

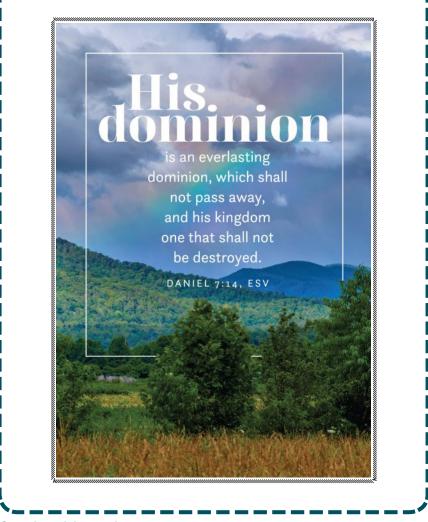


Mattia Tuck and Maverick Kover, both of Bozeman working in the serving line 48th annual Family Camp Christ's Church, Bozeman, MT

Jesus said to the Pharisees, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

John 9:41





Question of the week:

According to the apostle Paul in Ephesians 5, what sort of talk and jesting is to be avoided by the saint?

Last week's question: There is a verse in Isaiah 48 that references the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Which verse is it? Answer: "I was there, and now the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit" (Isaiah 48:16).

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:

Bible School – 87 Morning Assembly – 113 Evening Assembly – 63

Wednesday Night (9/29) – 67 Butte Lord's Day – 10 GF Lord's Day – 62,79, *Wed.* - 45



Acts Alive ...

Farewell to the Ephesian Elders

Paul was hurrying to be in Jerusalem by Pentecost, but he especially wanted to see the elders from Ephesus. These men were those who had undergone the "fiery trials" with him, and Paul knew by the Holy Spirit that he would never again see them on earth. The elders themselves made considerable effort to meet Paul at Miletus, where he explained the situation to them, and mentioned certain other points on his mind:

- In the midst of the persecutions from the Jews in Asia, and the humility and tears which are so necessary in bringing men to Christ and keeping them there, Paul still did not shrink from declaring to them anything profitable.

- He taught them both publicly and from house to house, in all seriousness testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus. The picture here is that both those of Gentile background and those from a Jewish heritage needed instruction on how to "repent toward God." They needed to be open to a "change in their thinking" (repentance toward God) which would be made evident to them in the teachings of the new covenant, and which would show them that they needed more information on how truly to have fellowship with God. "The faith toward the Lord Jesus" would be the system which would justify them, as contrasted to the system of the Law of Moses which did not free anyone from the bondage of sin. This Lord Jesus, then, would be both origin and the object of the new system of faith.
- Constrained by the Holy Spirit, he was on his way to Jerusalem not knowing exactly
 what awaited him there, except that the Holy Spirit was testifying through His new
 covenant prophets that bonds and afflictions awaited him. But Paul was so committed
 to the gospel that nothing was of value to him even his life that he might finish

his course and fulfill his ministry by testifying of the gospel of God's grace. "I know," he said, "that all of you — among whom I went about preaching the kingdom — will see my face no more" (Acts 20:25).

 Drawing from Ezekiel, he said that he was innocent of the blood of all men, because he did not shrink back from declaring the whole purpose of God.

The double use of the word "shrink" indicates the considerable pressure applied against anyone who would preach the complete message of the gospel. The elders were then warned to be on guard for themselves and the flock because even from among themselves wolves would arise and draw the disciples away by speaking perverse things. "Therefore be on the alert," he said, "remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears (Acts 20:31).

- Paul commended these men to God and to His word, which was able to build them up and give them the inheritance among all the saints.
- He reminded them that he coveted no one's silver or gold, that his own hands ministered to his own needs and the men who were with him. His purpose in doing so was to set an example for them to work hard and help the weak, to impress upon them the words of Jesus Himself: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And they began to weep aloud, and embraced Paul, and repeatedly kissed him — grieving especially over the word which he had spoken, that they should see his face no more" (Acts 20:36,37).

Paul went over these things with the elders from Ephesus especially to impress upon them the example they should follow. The Holy Spirit recorded these things especially to impress on us the example we should follow. We need periodically to review these points, and then get busy teaching, "publicly and from house to house."

These elders [bishops, pastors] were told to guard the flock from wolves.

JAY WILSON