**BIBLE TALK Radio Broadcast**

**On KTTR (99.7 FM) Every Sunday at 8:30 a.m.**

**Rolla, Missouri**

**9/19/2021**

**Things We Want You To Know About Us**

This Bible Talk radio program is brought to you each week at this time by the St. James church of Christ in St. James. At the end of our programs each week we invite you to come and visit us in our services, and we will do that again today, and we genuinely would love for you to come and visit with us. But you may be asking “what is this church all about?” and “If I did come and visit what should I expect?” This is what I want to talk about today on our program. I want to talk about some things we want you to know about us that would help you to know what to expect if you came to visit with us in our services

First, we want you to know that if you come to visit with us you will hear the Bible preached. We invite you to bring your Bible because you will be able to use it. Sadly, in some churches today you will hear very little Bible. Bible teaching in some religious groups is gradually disappearing as the primary focus. In some churches you may get a professional musical performance from expert musicians and singers, you then may hear a short devotional talk on some topic such as how to be nice to your neighbor, or to your spouse, or how to be nice to the environment and then you are sent home. If the Bible is referenced at all it is alluded to in some passing way, but it is not a necessary part of their church service. But that is not the case if you visit the St. James church of Christ. You will hear the Bible preached. Now, we do not say this as some marketing gimmick to get people to come, but this gets to the very core of what we believe. I am talking about some things we want you to know about us. We are a people who believe that the Bible is the verbally inspired word of God, that it is complete and sufficient to guide us in all that pertains to life and godliness. Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”* The Bible is inspired of God. It is not some book of human wisdom, it is not some philosophy manual of some philosopher way back when. It is in fact the word of God. And it is a book that gives us God’s wisdom. It is God’s instructions to man in how we are to live our lives, how we can be in right relationship with God, our Maker, and how we can bring glory to Him and live with Him for all eternity in heaven. And the Bible is sufficient in accomplishing all of this. Notice that the apostle Paul said that the scriptures are “*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”* The Bible is the complete and sufficient word of God.

And we believe that each of us are accountable to the words of this book, the Bible. These words will be the standard by which each of us will be judged in the judgment. Jesus said in John 12:48, *“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him -- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”* In Matthew 7:21, Jesus said, *“Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”* Who will enter the kingdom of heaven? Jesus says, those who do the will of the Father in heaven. But how can we know the will of the Father? We know by reading and studying His words, the Bible. That makes the Bible extremely important. And so when the St. James church of Christ comes together we look to the words of God, found in the Bible. If you come visit with us expect the Bible to be preached.

Secondly, we want you to know that if you visit with us God will be worshipped. You may be thinking, “Isn’t that obvious. If you go to worship, you go to worship God, right?” However, this is not so obvious in our religious world today. When it comes to worship, in some places today, the services are a lot more about entertaining the crowd than it is worshiping God. Yes, there are expressions of praise to God in these services, but what I am saying is that the focal point of these worship services is giving what the worshipers want more than what God wants. Back years ago one of the mega churches who had thousands of members explained how they grew to such great numbers. What they did is they went out in to the neighborhoods door to door looking for people who did not go to church anymore. And they asked them “Why?” And they compiled all the reasons given of why people did not like going to church, and they used that statistical data to revise their worship service. They formed their worship to God by talking to people who don’t worship God. Now, think about that. They came up with a worship service that was designed to please the consumer. They designed a service that fit the people that didn’t like going. What did that mean? It meant short sermons, no longer than 15 minutes; professional singing performances; someone to watch my children while I am there; no one to ask me for money. They designed a service that would please the masses, and the people came. And other churches have followed a similar formula for their worship service. I suggest that these worship services are more about pleasing and entertaining the crowd than it is in pleasing and worshiping God. Worship has become the entertainment hour, not the worship hour.

We want you to know that when you visit us, the St. James church of Christ, God will be worshiped. We are not there to entertain ourselves, but to worship and honor the God of heaven. Is that not what worship to God is about? Look with me in Psalm 66:1-4, *“Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth! Sing out the honor of His name; Make His praise glorious. Say to God, ‘How awesome are Your works! Through the greatness of Your power Your enemies shall submit themselves to You. All the earth shall worship You*

*And sing praises to You; They shall sing praises to Your name.’”* Notice the focus of worship is on God – “make a joyful shout to God,” “Sing out the honor of His name,” “Make His praise glorious,” “All the earth shall worship You and sing praises to You.”

And does not it make since that if God is the object of our worship, and the objective is to give Him praise, honor and glory, that we would take the time to open His book and to pause and consider how HE wants to be worshiped and honored. One thing we learn from scripture is that we cannot honor God by just doing anything we choose to do in worship. In Genesis 4 we read of Cain and Able both bringing offerings to God. It says that *“the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering.”* They both offered worship to the Lord. But one did what God wanted and the other did not. One was pleasing to the Lord in what he offered and the other was not. Also in Leviticus 10:1-3 we read of two sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu offering incense to the Lord. The text says, *“Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.”* They offered incense to the Lord, but it was not what the Lord commanded. The Lord was not pleased. After these men were struck dead by the Lord, Moses said to Aaron their father, *“This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.'"* By refusing to follow the Lord’s instructions about their offering, these two priests were not glorifying God. It does make a difference what we offer to God. If we are going to offer acceptable worship to God and glorify Him, we must do it His way, and nor our way. We must do what pleases Him and not ourselves. And when we do that, our worship periods may not be as exciting as is found in other places and we may not draw that many people. But, let me tell you, our objective in our worship is not to draw a crowd, but it is to honor and glorify God. We want you to know that when you visit the St. James church of Christ you can expect God to be worshiped in His way .

Thirdly, we want you to know that it is OK to ask questions when you come. Questions are welcomed. We at times, announce in our assembly that if anyone has any questions about what we say or do, please ask after we are dismissed. I understand that in some churches if one begins to question what they do, he is rebuked. I heard of a man visiting the services of a church and afterwards he questioned their preacher about the scripturalness of a certain practice of theirs, and the preacher asked him to leave. That will not happen when you visit the St. James church of Christ. We are not afraid of questions. And the reason is because we have no denominational agenda to defend. Our only agenda is the word of God. If you come and you have a question about some area of teaching or practice where we do not agree with the word of God, we count you as our friend if you can show us the error of our way. All we want to do is the will of God, and if we are wrong in any belief or practice we want to change, because it is only those who do the will of the Father who will enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 7:21). And if we are practicing the truth when questioned, truth has nothing to fear from being tested or questioned. And so if you come and visit with us, it is OK to ask questions.

Fourthly, we also want you to know that when you come and visit with us, we care about you. We are glad you have come and want you to feel welcomed. Have you ever visited a church service and you got that intimidating look that said, “what are you doing here? Who invited you to come?” You feel like an intruder, don’t you? Well, we don’t want anyone to feel that way when they visit the services of the St. James church of Christ. We want you to know that you are welcomed and that we care about you. We care about everyone who comes through the door of our building because every person has a soul that is going to spend eternity somewhere. And the Lord has given us the mission to carry His gospel, the good news of salvation from sin, to every soul. Jesus said to the apostles in Mark 16:15, *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”* The only way anyone will be saved from his sins is if he hears the gospel of Christ and obeys it. Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23) all are in need of the gospel of Christ. It is our mission to help people hear that gospel. If one comes to our services and his soul is not saved, we are glad he is there and we hope that something will be said that will help him to obey the gospel and be saved. If he is already saved, we are glad he is there and hope he will be encouraged and edified by the worship period. We want everyone who comes through our doors to know that you are in a place where people care about you, not because of what you have, or of what you drove, or the clothes you have on, but it is because you are a soul that will live somewhere in eternity, and it is our mission to help you get to heaven as your eternal destiny.

When you visit the St. James church of Christ in St. James we want you to know that you will hear the Bible preached, you are in a place where God will be worshiped, your questions are welcomed, and that we care about you. Come and visit with us.

Now, stay tuned, Robert will give you the times of our services and the location of our building.

Thank you for listening. Join us next week for Bible Talk.