



# FIRST CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

*WELCOME to First Christian Assembly, an independent church whose mission is articulated by Jesus in Mark 16:15 when he said "...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature". Following this great commission, First Christian Assembly preaches and teaches the gospel of Jesus Christ. In so doing, we trust that God, working through His Holy Spirit will draw souls to salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

## Knowing Jesus

Adoring fans of movie, TV, music, or sports stars buy thousands of dollars' worth of information, photos, and juicy tidbits. After poring over such material, the fans feel as if they really know their heroes. But do they? They may know certain facts about their chosen hero. They may be able to cite birth date, favorite color, and childhood pets, but, does the fan really know them? Jesus sponded to this question in [Matt 7:21-23](#): "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"

There were people in Jesus' day who thought they were friends of His because they knew the Law, and listened to His teaching. They followed Him, applauded the miracles, and liked some of what He said. But Jesus calls them "evildoers" and states, "I never knew you."

Today there are thousands who know *about* Jesus, they know some facts about Him, commit Bible verses to memory, and perhaps attend church regularly. They hold knowledge in their heads without allowing the truth to penetrate their hearts. Jesus explained the problem: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules" ([Matt 15:8-9](#)).

We easily substitute religion for a real relationship with Jesus. We often think that, if we are doing "Christian things," that's all that counts. We can appreciate the facts of Jesus' death and resurrection, but until we have made Him our Lord, the facts do us no good ([John 3:16-18](#); [Acts 10:43](#); [Rom 10:9](#)). There is a difference between intellectual assent and saving faith. Knowing Jesus means we have accepted His sacrifice on our behalf ([2 Cor 5:21](#)). We ask Him to be the Lord of our lives ([John 1:12](#); [Acts 2:21](#)). We identify with Him in His death and consider our old selves to have died with Him ([Col 3:3](#); [Rom 6:2, 5](#); [Gal 6:14; 2:20](#)). We accept His forgiveness and cleansing from sin and seek to know Him in intimate fellowship through His [Holy Spirit](#) ([John 17:3](#); [Phil 3:10](#); [1 John 2:27](#)).

When we repent of our sin and surrender our lives to Him, Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit ([Acts 2:38](#); [John 14:26](#); [16:13](#)). The Holy Spirit comes to live inside us, changing us forever ([1 Cor 6:19](#); [1 John 3:9](#)). Jesus is a Person. To know Him is to enter into a relationship. The Christian life is about continually [seeking Him](#), learning more about Him, and enjoying His fellowship ([Jer 29:13](#); [Phil 3:8](#)).

## Berean Call A Different Jesus?

The Jesus being presented in many churches today is different because He is not the One we find in the [Bible](#). The popular Jesus being presented is the one who fills churches to the rafters with fans and not disciples. People are following a genie in a bottle that will grant them all of their hopes and dreams. He is a Hallmark card version of Jesus who is willing to overlook sin and just be a good friend to pal around with. He never makes us feel bad or consider ourselves less than number one.

Many of our modern churches focus on self-improvement instead of dying to self. This is works based nonsense and basically, the same thing practiced among many pseudo-Christian cults including Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormonism. The logic is if you work hard enough and be good enough, you can earn eternal life.

Instead of lovingly warning people about fleeing the wrath to come, we decide we know a better approach. We attempt to woo people into the Christian life by presenting its features and benefits much like a good salesman. This isn't the biblical model of how to present the gospel and it is certainly not the way to make disciples.

The local church's main purpose isn't to help people improve their financial planning skills, have a better marriage, or to get them connected into activities galore for the whole family. What people desperately need is to hear the gospel to come to the end of themselves and be truly born again. We don't want to present a different Jesus who is a cosmic genie who caters to our felt needs and desires.

Trouble begins when seeker-sensitive hirelings who are not shepherds water down the gospel. They present a different Jesus and this is a deception plaguing many churches today. These preachers may want to improve their image, popularity, or ministry numbers, so they make coming to Jesus about life enhancement, not dying to oneself.

I feel the uneasy tension when [speaking] to people about heaven, hell, eternity, sin, and repentance. The Lord never promised it would be easy to be His disciple but he promised to be with us always and give us the words to say when we testify about Him. It's my deep desire and prayer for each of us to renew our commitment to speak the truth, with love as the motive and do it with boldness as the Holy Spirit directs us.

While many are compromising and presenting a different Jesus, I pray the faithful remnant will continue to make Him known.

**Reprint from The Berean Call 7-21-2018**

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<b>Philadelphia Access Center,</b>	1832 S. 11 <sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19148	215-389-1985

*The Philadelphia Access Center* is a ministry of First Christian Assembly. Our mission is *revealing Christ through compassionate service*. Services available at PAC include social services information and referrals, biblical counseling, support groups, volunteer training, and community outreach. All services are free of charge and available to anyone. To learn more, visit us in person (across the street from FCA) or online at [www.philaccess.org](http://www.philaccess.org) or [www.facebook.com/philaccess](http://www.facebook.com/philaccess).

### **WEEKLY SERVICES /MEETINGS**

	<b>Meets at FCA</b>	<b>Meets at PAC</b>
Sunday	9:45 AM <i>Bible Study – Phila -location</i> 10:00 AM <i>South Jersey Worship Service</i> 11:00 AM <i>Phila Location Worship Service &amp; Children’s Sunday School</i>	
Monday		7:00 PM <i>Stepping Stones</i>
Tuesday	6:30 PM <i>Prayer (Sanctuary)</i> 7:00 PM <i>Discipleship class (Fellowship hall)</i>	
Wednesday		1:00 PM <i>Women at the Well</i> 1:00 PM <i>Coram Deo</i>
Thursday		6:00 PM <i>Prayer Service</i> 7:00 PM <i>Bible Study</i>
Friday		7:00 PM <i>Free Indeed</i>

- *Coram Deo*: A men’s Bible study and Christian fellowship.
- *Free Indeed*; Is a Spirit led Men’s Fellowship that emphasizes godly counsel, leading to spiritual growth, healing and deliverance.
- *Stepping Stones*: A Christ centered support group for men and women impacted by a loved one’s addiction. In a warm and friendly atmosphere, we provide loving support, fellowship, confidential sharing, and intercessory prayer.
- *Women at the Well*: This group is Biblically based and promotes hope, healing, and fellowship for women impacted and struggling with brokenness.

**Youth Group meets tonight – See Jason or Jennifer Kohn for details**

### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Ministries at First Christian (Phila.& NJ) and the Philadelphia Access Center
- Christians around the world being persecuted for their faith
- Our supported missionaries
- For our Pastor and his family
- Paula Grazulis

**Christianity is not a doctrine, not truth as truth, but the knowledge of a Person; it is knowing the Lord Jesus. You cannot be educated into being a Christian.  
T. Austin-Sparks**