



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.

True Worship

The apostle Paul described true worship - [Rom 12:1-2](#): "*I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable, or well pleasing and perfect.*"

This passage contains all the elements of true worship. First, there is the motivation to worship: "*the mercies of God.*" God's mercies are everything He has given us that we don't deserve: eternal love, eternal grace, the Holy Spirit, peace, joy, saving faith, comfort, strength, wisdom, hope, patience, righteousness, eternal life, forgiveness, reconciliation, freedom, and much more. The knowledge and understanding of these incredible gifts motivate us to pour forth praise and thanksgiving—worship! Also in the passage is a description of the manner of our worship: "*present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.*" The reference to our bodies here means all our human faculties, our hearts, minds, hands, thoughts, attitudes—are to be presented to God. In other words, we are to give up control of these things and turn them over to Him, just as a literal sacrifice was given totally to God on the altar. But how? Again, the passage is clear: "*by the renewing of your mind.*" We renew our minds daily by cleansing them of the world's "wisdom" and replacing it with true wisdom that comes from God. We worship Him with our renewed and cleansed minds, not with our emotions.

There is only one way to renew our minds, and that is by the Word of God. It is the truth, the knowledge of the Word of God. To know the truth, to believe the truth, to hold convictions about the truth, and to love the truth will naturally result in true spiritual worship.

True worship is God-centered worship. People tend to get caught up in where they should worship, what music they should sing in worship, and how their worship looks to other people. Focusing on these things misses the point. Jesus tells us that true worshippers will worship God in spirit and in truth ([John 4:24](#)). This means we worship from the heart and the way God has designed. Worship can include praying, reading God's Word, singing, participating in communion, and serving others. It is not limited to one act, but is done properly when the heart and attitude of the person are in the right place. True worship is not confined to what we do in church or open praise (although these things are both good, and we are told in the Bible to do them). True worship is the acknowledgment of God and all His power and glory in everything we do. The highest form of praise and worship is obedience to Him and His Word.

Today's Update

Two separate sources recently questioned the historicity of Jesus. But let us set the record straight.

First, on a comedy show on TBS, "The Guestbook," just before Christmastime, one of the characters likened belief in Jesus to belief in Santa. The episode is called, "Tonight you become a man"---where a character supposedly becomes an adult by realizing Santa and Jesus are just myths. Second, the Muslim prime minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, claimed that there is "no mention of Jesus in history." Khan's view that Jesus is not a historical figure puts him out of step with Mohammed, who believed that "Prophet Jesus" (as he would have called him) was historical.

But what about this matter of Jesus and history? Is Jesus Christ a verifiable historical figure, using the criteria that historians use, or not? Will Durant, the great non-Christian historian who wrote the series, *The Story of Civilization*, noted in his third volume, *Caesar and Christ*, that if the criteria by which some philosophers claim Jesus didn't really exist as a historical person were used consistently, then we'd have to throw out noteworthy historical figures, such as Hammurabi or King David by that same criteria. Durant, a respected historian, had no such doubts as to Jesus' real existence as a person. Of course, there are many Christian sources that testify to Jesus' existence, such as His apostles like Peter, John, Matthew, and Andrew. There was also the implacable enemy of the Christian Church, Saul of Tarsus, who once dedicated his life to uprooting the fledgling faith. He became converted after having met the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus. He was transformed into the Apostle Paul, an implacable promoter of faith in Christ Jesus, that is, Messiah Jesus.

Most of these historical sources not only testified that Jesus was real; they were martyred because they refused to deny Him. This was Someone they saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears. Of course, these Christian historical sources are biased. But that doesn't mean they are to be discounted as historical sources. Nonetheless, other sources from the first and second centuries that speak of Jesus of Nazareth abound. I once interviewed Dr. John Dominic Crossan, a skeptic of Jesus, who was a key leader of the Jesus Seminar, a group of liberal theologians which sat in judgment on many of the sayings of Jesus as found in the Gospels. Crossan is certainly a skeptic of core Christian teachings about Jesus, but even he affirms that Jesus was a historical figure. He told me: "We do know that Jesus existed from both Tacitus, at the beginning of the second century, a pagan historian, and Josephus at the end of the first century." This is all the more noteworthy, he added, in that Jesus was not a part of the "aristocratic ruling class" and would, therefore, generally, not be mentioned in the history books.

Philadelphia, PA 19148

215-389-6721

First Christian So Jersey, 1960 Delsea Drive, Sewell, NJ 08080

Philadelphia Access Center, 1832 S. 11th 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 or www.facebook.com/philaccess.

WEEKLY SERVICES /MEETINGS

	Meets at FCA	Meets at PAC
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 & 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.

Important Dates;

- **Evangelism class continues on Tuesday, 7:00 PM**
- **Sunday morning Bible Study begins a new series in Genesis**

**"Worship is simply glorifying God; this means there is nothing required of us that cannot be done as an act of worship."
John MacArthur**