

****Bumper Video –** Upchurch Home invasion

Greeting

What kind of Church is this?

This is a complicated question... ..how we worship vs who we worship...

We introduced you to the following terms

Orthodoxy means correct belief

Orthopraxy means correct action

It's not complete to have an orthodoxy without an orthopraxy

Nor is it complete to have an orthopraxy without an orthodoxy

We need an Orthodoxy & an Orthopraxy

Our Orthodoxy is the Word of God and the person of Jesus. A proper orthodoxy will transform your life... Your orthopraxy will be transformed by what you believe.

We answered this question last week..

How do you know if you have correct Orthopraxy?

In Acts 2 to birth of the Church took place and some wild Orthopraxy followed. Their actions were a little crazy... Passion, excitement, zeal, and speaking in tongues...

Their actions led to criticism – People in the crowd said “These people are drunk”

How did they handle the criticism? Peter stood up and declared “THIS IS THAT spoken by the prophet Joel.” This ORTHOPRAXY is That Orthodoxy. We know we have the correct orthopraxy by looking in the word of God.

If you see a strange Orthopraxy happening in the Church... don't run away from it and don't blindly follow it either... Look to the Orthodoxy – The Word of God.

Take Note

When you came in today, there was a notecard and a pen on your chair. I want you to take that right now. If you don't have a card or pen please raise your hand and our ushers will get you one.

I'm going to ask 3 questions. I want you to answer on a scale of 1 to 10. 1 being the least and 10 being the greatest. Please record your answers.

#1 How important is it for Christians to read and understand the Bible? Scale of 1 to 10

#2 How important is it for Christians to pray and have a personal relationship with God?

#3 How important is it for Christians to share their faith with others?

Now add up your answers and write the total in the bottom right corner. How did you do? Are you close to 30?

It's clear when we look in the Bible that these 3 things are important. Reading the Bible, Prayer, and sharing our faith... these are important! If you're your belief is based on the Bible you should have a score close to 30...

Turn your card over... I've got 3 more questions.

#1 How much in the last month have you made reading & understanding the Bible a priority? Scale 1 to 10

#2 How much in the last month have you made prayer a priority?

#3 How much in the last month have you shared your faith? Has it been a high priority?

Add up your total and put it in the bottom right hand corner...

So how did we do? How do both sides of your card compare.

One side of your card is based on Your Belief... You believe that Christians should read the Bible, Pray, and Witness. The other side of your card is based on your action.

Our beliefs and our actions don't always match up...

Psychology has a term for this... **Cognitive Dissonance** There is a dissonance between our thoughts and our actions.

How do you feel right now? Convicted? Me too?

We believe God's Word, but we don't follow God's Word

This is not a beat down. You aren't the only one in the room that feels like you do. In fact... what if I told you the Apostle Paul feels like you do right now?

Romans 7:15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.(NIV)

Romans 7:18 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.(NIV)

What!?! Let's try to figure out what he said...

V 15 – The things he wants to do... He doesn't do... The things he doesn't want to do... He does...

Sounds like cognitive dissonance right? The apostle Paul would tell us that he too had issues with his orthodoxy and orthopraxy lining up... just like we have trouble with both sides of our cards adding up...

What does Paul attribute this problem to? V 18 His sinful nature. **Your other nature**

As a Spirit filled believer you have 2 natures at work within you. The Spirit and sin. You decide who will win.

The Spirit is drawing you to Prayer... Your sin nature fights against it. You decide who wins.

The Holy Spirit is drawing you towards the Word of God... Your sin nature is standing in the way. Who wins?

The Spirit in you is busting to reach out to others... It is the nature of sin to do anything to stop this from happening.

Although you are dealing with a spiritual warfare to do good or evil... it is YOU that decides who wins.

Christian atheist

What is the difference between an atheist who doesn't believe the Bible and doesn't do what it says and a Christian who believes the Bible but doesn't do what it says?

They are both inactive. The atheist has a right to be... the Christian has no right to be inactive.

Does this describe you today? All Belief and no action?

An apology to atheists

My atheist friends. I hope you will let me call you friends. I do want to be your friend.

So often we of the Christian belief have accused and attacked you. I'm sorry for this and want to lay all my cards on the table...

We have attacked you with silly accusations like this... "Atheists have no morals." I apologize for this. I think if we stopped to listen to you we see that is not the case.

And if we stopped to think... in some ways our atheist friends are more moral than some of us Christians. Because we Christians have professed this belief (orthodoxy) in a God of morality, but far too often not practiced (orthopraxy) this belief.

If that is the case... then we have no moral high ground. So I'm sorry about that.

Furthermore, for a Christian to be a militant, loud, non-listening, stone throwing, judgmental, accuser... is to deny the orthodoxy and orthopraxy of Jesus. We have taken the odd stance of proclaiming our beliefs in a way that dishonors our belief... For that I apologize.

If an atheist were to take our Bible and preach to us today... I think they would take their text from James 1:22

James 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.(NIV)

James 1:23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror(NIV)

James 1:24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.(NIV)

James 1:25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.(NIV)

James 1:26 If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.(NIV)

James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.(NIV)

We Christians, like atheists, don't apologize for our beliefs... but we should & do apologize for our actions. Like James 1 warned... we have looked in the Word of God and walked away forgetting what our savior looks like. For this, we at Redemption Church apologize. We will attempt to change our action to truly match our belief in a loving God. What better way than by saying we are sorry?

Your other nature

Redemption Church! Let's get real... Let's LIVE WHAT WE BELIEVE.

We have two natures fighting over us. Sin and the Spirit...

You know you need to pray... but there is this voice that says... oh you don't know what to say... it feels weird to pray... WHAT IS THIS VOICE? Is it just your logic? Or could it be the nature of sin at war against the Spirit?

You know you need to read the Word... but there is this voice... It's getting late... you really don't have time... There is that thing you need to do. Is it really about your schedule... or could it be...

You know you need to share Christ with those around you... You know it could save them from Hell... You know that they need the love, hope, peace, freedom that is ONLY found in Jesus... but there is this voice... I'm shy. I'm just not good at talking to people. That's not my gift... Is this really about your inability or is it the enemy at war against the good inside you.

Who Wins?

Are you ready to let the Spirit win?

We are really talking about more than just changing the way we live. We are talking about letting the Spirit win in our lives, thoughts, and actions.

We aren't just diagnosing our cognitive dissonance as an action thought problem.

- It is a SIN problem
 - If you resist what you should be doing... it is sin.

James 4:17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.(NIV)

We know the good we ought to do...

- It's not about new habits, but a new Creation.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!(NIV)
 - Not turning over a new leaf... BUT A NEW PERSON! A NEW DNA!! A NEW NATURE!

If you've been looking in the mirror and asking what is wrong with me... You need to become a new creature in Christ. You can try out all the new years resolutions and read all the latest self help books... but what you really need is for Him to place His nature inside of you!

This is what happened in the New Testament Church in Acts 2!

This is what needs to happen to us today!

It's not enough to point at the Bible and say I believe it and then not do what it says...

But it's also not enough to be struggling with the burden of carrying out the command of Scripture... Constantly wrestling with our sinful nature and trying to keep it in Check... God has more for us than that.

What Paul said in Romans 7 backs this up. He told himself I will do this... I won't do this... Just like you have had those conversations.... Looking in a mirror... Beating ourselves up over our action and inaction...

Paul alerts us that there is something deeper... It's our nature.

If you are confronted with your actions today, Paul would tell us....

We need a change of Nature! We need the Holy Spirit! Just like the Day of Pentecost.

Do you believe He can fill you with His Spirit today? I believe it.

Do you believe you can find change today? I believe it.

Musician

Think back to how you felt when the front of your card didn't match the back of your card?

Are there other areas of your life that don't match up?

Does what the Bible say about forgiveness match with how you've been forgiving others?

Does what the Bible say about love...

Does what the Bible say about Worship, prayer, and witnessing to others...

Do you want to do something that matches what the Bible says right now? We are about to open these altars.

The Bible says 1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.(NIV)