

THE CONNECTION

January 4, 2012

Why the change? As we move forward, as a congregation and individuals, we have to have a plan in place as to how we are going to more effectively serve God. This isn't peculiar to Cordova, every congregation and Christian has to have a plan if they are going to be successful! In putting together the plan the elders have approved, we began by changing the name of the bulletin. We did this because we wanted it to fit in with our vision of what we want the future of Cordova to look like. Our desire is to become more connected with each other, the community, and with Christ.

We want to strengthen the connection we have with our fellow **Christians** and especially the ones we are united with here at Cordova. One of the greatest benefits we can have as Christians, aside from salvation, is the fellowship that is enjoyed by those of "like precious faith." That is the thought that was in the heart of Peter as he began his second letter to the brethren, "Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and *the Saviour Jesus Christ*" (2 Pet. 1:1). As Christians, we must have a strong love for one another if we are going to be pleasing to God. The apostle John knew this to be the case and instructed the brethren to this end. Though he was fighting the Gnostics he still found time for this important subject when he said, "For this is the message which ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another" (1 Jn. 3:11). He would also say, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God" (1 Jn. 4:7). We know that the apostle of love, John, did not come to this realization on his own, he learned from the Master Teacher. Christ taught, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn. 13:24-35).

We want to improve our connection with other **Christians**, but we must also improve our connection with the **Community**. The wise man Solomon came to this conclusion, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man" (Ecc. 12:13). If the whole of man is to keep the commandments of God, we cannot ignore the great commandment with which Christ entrusted us, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you *always, even unto the end of the world. Amen*" (Mt. 28:18-20). As we make a greater connection with each other, we will be able to make a greater connection with the community; and the elders have put into place a plan that will allow both these great objectives to be met just as God desires.

In our making a better connection with fellow **Christians** and our **Community**, we will also strengthen our connection with **Christ**. Our connection to Christ will become greater because we will be able to more efficiently carry out the duties that He has given us to accomplish. Christ said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (Jn. 14:15). When we strengthen our faith in Christ, through obedience, our relationship with Him becomes stronger and stronger. As our love for Christ grows, our burdens in life become easier to bear because we more clearly understand the great joy that will be ours in eternity!

Paul admonished the Ephesian brethren, “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:15-16). If we are going to be able to fulfill the desire we hold as a congregation, of becoming better connected, it will take the effort of every single member to make sure we realize that end. This is just how Paul instructed those in Ephesus, and the same instruction will lead us to the same victory! Let each of us make the decision to dedicate ourselves to the work of the Lord and support our new works here at Cordova as we move forward into a future that will hold many blessings for us all! We begin with something as small as the name of the bulletin.