

**Crossville Church
of Christ**
P.O. Box 211
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COMPASS

**Using God's Word to Chart The Course
Of A Congregation**

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Mike Isaacson
David Kerley
Doug Loveday
Greg Maxwell
Don Napier
Tom Parham
Mark Roberts
Roger Smith
Jason Wyatt
Jerry Wood

Ministers:

Barry Kennedy
Ken Mears

Missionaries: (India)

Don Iverson
Jim Waldron

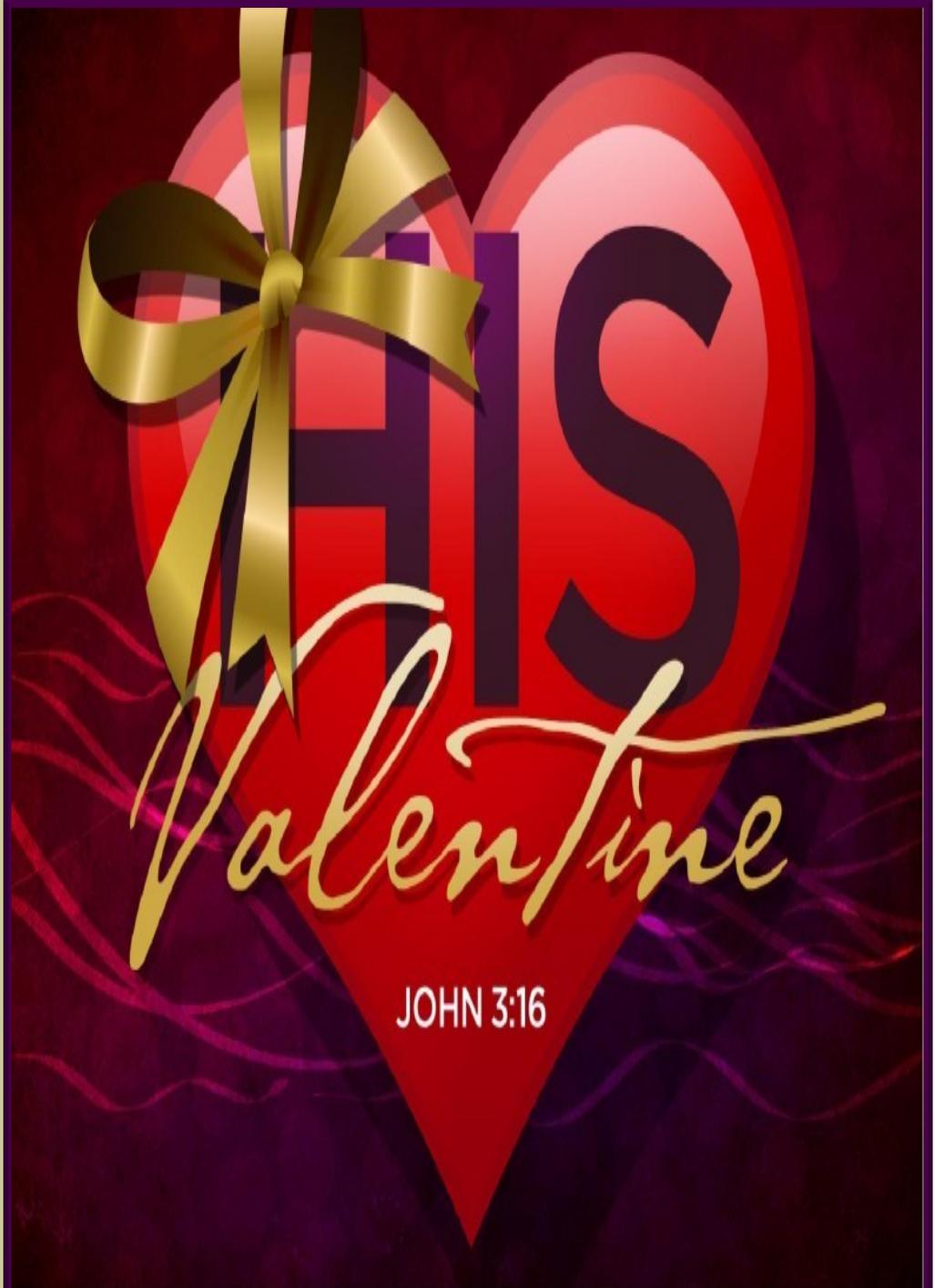
Service Times

Sunday Bible Study	9 AM
Sunday Worship	10 AM
	6 PM
Wednesday	6 PM

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Ladies Bible Class	
Tuesdays	11AM
Prayer Meeting	
Tuesdays	10 AM
Joyful Generation (Youth Devotional & fellowship)	
1st Sunday	7:00 PM

February 12, 2017



OUR FIRST LOVE

Barry Kennedy

This time of year finds many people focusing on the subject of love. Many stores are decorated with red balloons, hearts, and roses. The card companies, chocolate shops, and jewelry stores are in full force, awaiting the rush of those “last minute” shoppers (i.e. men). With all this “love-stuff” on people’s minds, how many have the ability to recall their “first love?” Right now you are probably thinking back to some young girl or boy to whom you probably passed a note saying, “Do you love me check yes or no.” Some of those “relationships” went on to become strong marriages, but statistically most were simply forgotten. There is a “FIRST LOVE” that all of mankind should experience and never forget. That is one’s love for God. Jesus had a message for the church at Ephesus, “. . . I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast **left thy first love**” (Revelation 2:4). What lessons should one learn from what the Lord had to say to the church in Ephesus?

No amount of good can make up for a heart that is not right with God. Jesus made this abundantly clear in this letter to the church at Ephesus. Jesus said that He knew their “**WORKS**” (v. 2). The church in Ephesus was diligently laboring to make sure no “false apostles” were allowed to spread their lies among the brethren. Jesus made mention of how they “*tried them*” proving them to be liars. This principle was also taught by the apostle Paul. “*Prove (test or try) all things; hold fast that which is good.*” (1Thessalonians 5:21). John also warned, “*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try (prove or test) the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world*” (1John 4:1). One should always make sure that the doctrine that he follows is, without a doubt, the word of God. Consider Paul’s rebuke to the church in Galatia,

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto an other gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Galatians 1:6-9).

In spite of all the good works the Ephesian brethren were carrying out, specifically rebuking the false teachers of the day, Jesus said, “I have somewhat against thee” (Revelation 2:4). That “somewhat” was no small matter to the Lord. He said that they had left their first love, meaning thier hearts were not in their works. One cannot be a rigid legalist and expect God to be pleased. How sad it will be for those who, for all their lives, made sure to “dot every I and cross every T” only to find out, in judgment, that God never knew them. Why would this ever happen? Jesus said, “*This people honoreth me with their lips, but their **heart** is far from me*” (Matthew 7:6). Of course God demands obedience, but that obedience must be from the heart. “*If you **LOVE** Me, keep My commandments*” (John 14:15). What other lesson can one learn from the church in Ephesus?

God wants to forgive and restore all estranged relationships. Jesus made sure that the church in Ephesus (Christians today as well) understood the fact that He was willing to forgive their sins, as well as, restore their place in His Kingdom. “*Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works;*” (Revelation 2:5a). He knows that his children have the ability to overcome their temptations and as a blessing for those who do overcome, He offers the “tree of life.” “*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God*” (Revelation 2:7). It all starts with one’s willingness to “hear” what God’s Word has to say. After all, “*Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*” (Romans 10:17). Hearing the “good news” of God’s

love for man should build within the heart of man a strong love for God and a desire to serve Him faithfully. "We love him, because he first loved us" (1John 4:19).

The cross of Christ is an undeniable proof of God's love for man. In fact He has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Hebrews 13:5). There is no denying where God stands. The task at hand is to make sure that God never has a reason to say to us that we have left our first love.

SPIRITUAL CPR

Derrick Coble

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation is the medical term for what we simply call, "CPR." Anyone who has watched a movie or a medical television program has seen this performed on individuals who are near death to restore normal breathing and keep the blood flowing throughout the body. It may even be that you or someone you know is trained to perform this special technique. But, have you ever heard about spiritual CPR? This life saving technique is administered when a person is dying but not on the outside, on the inside. His spirit is in need of the life that only Jesus Christ can give. Specially trained servants of God (Christians) are able to help those suffering toward spiritual death and administer the life saving technique known as, "Critical Preaching for Repentance."

The symptoms of those needing spiritual CPR are very easy to see. First, there is a lack of blood flowing over the body. Of course, "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11) and such is the case with Jesus' blood as well. When a person is not covered in the blood of Christ through the waters of baptism (Revelation 5:8; John 19:34; Galatians 3:27; Acts 22:16) he has a lack of blood covering his sins. Therefore, he will die in his sins (John 8:24) if the blood is not applied over the whole body. If God had not seen the blood on the posts of the door of the Israelites during the last plague upon Egypt death would have entered their houses (Exodus 12:13). In like manner, God must see that our earthly house (2 Cor. 5:1) is covered in blood so spiritual death does not pass upon us in the judgment day.

The second symptom is a weak heart. In this situation, the blood may be flowing over the body but the heart is simply not strong enough. There is a lack of love for God even though we are commanded to love him with all our heart (Matthew 22:37-40), there is a lack of joy because an evil heart has entered the body (Hebrews 3:12), and their heart is not right in the sight of God (Acts 8:21). Spiritual CPR will help the weak in heart to gain hope again causing the Lord to strengthen the heart (Psalm 31:24).

The final symptom is a lack of spiritual life, zeal, or energy. Life and everything associated with it is completely opposite to death. This may sound like an elementary statement, but so many people think death is a way of life. Critical Preaching for Repentance is a way to give spiritual life. How? Jesus said, "the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life" (John 6:63). Thus, following His words will give life and not death. Following His words will give zeal according to knowledge unlike the nation of Israel who was zealous without knowledge (Rom. 10:1,2).

So, do you need CPR? If you have any of the above symptoms, the answer is, "yes." Time is of the essence. Hearing God's word preached will show the need to repent since it is God's power (1 Corinthians 1:18) and it will allow you to see "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 5:21).

