



*For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth... in every place.  
(1 Thessalonians 1:8)*

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## Schedule of Services

### Sunday

Worship 9:30 AM  
Bible Study 10:30 AM  
Worship 6:00 PM

### Wednesday

Bible Study 1:30 PM  
Bible Study 7:00 PM

### Bible Call

(618) 667-9603

[www.collinsvillecoc.org](http://www.collinsvillecoc.org)

# DO NOT BE DECEIVED!

**A** call was received at the office from a yellow pages website company. They had reviewed our listing with them. They asked if there were any changes or updates that should be made. They indicated we could go into the website at any time and make changes for free. Then came the clincher. The cost would be the same as last year, \$479. Then I was asked how they should bill us. I wonder how many unsuspecting people are suckered into paying a fee for a product they were not using and did not want. I informed the person on the phone that we were not presently paying for the service and would not do so for the coming year either. Many use deceptive methods to get your money. Satan uses many deceptive methods to get your soul.

He tries to convince the young that they are only young once. They might as well sow their "wild oats" while they can. There is ample time for seeking God, doing good, and leading productive lives. Youth is the time for having fun, for letting your hair down and enjoying the pleasures of life while you can. Yet, Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia that each will reap what he sows (Galatians 6:7-8). God made us and called us to be set apart from the world, to be holy. He is not to be mocked and ridiculed by the lives we live. Even the young should realize that now, today, is the time to serve God lest one grow hardened and turn away from God (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

Satan uses a liberal society to convince people that sin is not really sin. Young and older alike have been duped into the idea that a one night stand here and there will not hurt. What real harm is it? He has used our liberal society to pass off the idea that living together is natural. The divorce rate continues to decrease because the number of couples living together without marriage continues to increase. In addition, many continue to swallow the argument that same sex unions are acceptable. The numbers approving of such continue to increase. Society has, also, been convinced that affairs are not so bad. There are even counselors that encourage such for the benefit of their marriage. Yet, Paul wrote to the church in the corrupt city of Corinth that fornication, adultery, and homosexuality is sin, and those who participated in such sins would not inherit the kingdom of God.

Look around you and it is obvious in our country that people have been overcome with materialism and

covetousness. People continue to have more and want more. They will sell their families and their souls to have more toys. John warned that one should not love the world or the things of this world (1 John 2:15-17). Paul warned that the covetous cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Society has been convinced that drinking alcoholic beverages is acceptable as long as one drinks responsibly. Yet, one drink is the beginning of the process of drunkenness. Paul condemned such (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Younger and older alike will have as their friends those who will lead them astray. They think they are exempt. Being around those who live unholy lives and speak with unholy speech will lead them down the path to destruction. Some even go so far as to marry those who they know are living lives that are corrupt with sin. They think they will change them. But Paul warned that evil companions will corrupt the Christian (1 Corinthians 15:33).

Satan continues to deceive in ways that draw people in unawares. He even uses those who appear to be religious. Yet, they are people who are deceiving and being deceived, evil men and impostors (2 Timothy 3:13). Since Satan can fashion himself as an angel of light, it is no wonder that he will use his ministers to deceive the religious and spiritual (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). They beguile the hearts of the innocent (Romans 16:18).

Friend. If you want to guard against being drawn in by Satan's deceptive practices, you must be strong in the Lord. You must put on the whole armor of God so as to be enabled to stand against the wiles of the devil (Ephesians 6:10-11). You must spend time in study, meditation and prayer so that you grow in knowledge and conviction of His will. Assemble with the saints for encouragement and strength. Do not be suckered in by the wiles of the devil. Do not be deceived. Let God's will rule in your life.

TLM

## The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

**I**t has been often said that a parable is an earthly story, with a heavenly meaning. This is a true statement. The Lord used common every day occurrences to teach people about the kingdom, prayer, stewardship, and many other things. As we study the parables, keep in mind, that there is a central theme to each one. With these things in mind, let us examine the parable of the Hidden Treasure. *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field* (Matthew 13:44).

This would have been a understandable, if not common event in the first century. People of this time did not have banks or vaults to keep their money, but like squirrels would create a cash of their wealth. The man in the account finds one such "treasure" and sells all to buy the field. In this region, possession was 9/10 of the law. Owning the field would make this treasure his. So it is with joy that he sacrifices to gain his property and the riches that went with it.

In this parable of the Kingdom, the treasure is the kingdom, and the man is a lost soul. The man finds the treasure quite by accident, when he wasn't looking for it. The New Testament is filled with examples of those who found the kingdom without seeking it. Take Saul of Tarsus for one such example. On the road to Damascus, with papers in hand authorizing the persecution of Christians, the Lord appears to him. Three days later he is baptized into Christ and began to preach the Gospel, a task he would sacrifice power, prestige and ultimately life for (Acts 9-26). Yet he counted it joy to suffer for Christ sake (Philippians 1:20-21). Not what Saul thought would happen when he left Jerusalem! Notice the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:23-34. This Gentile was asleep in the prison, when an earthquake struck opening all of the cell doors. He was about to commit suicide (in place of facing the harsh discipline of his masters), until Paul stopped him. The jailer then asked what he needed to do to be saved. What a great question! Paul preached to him and all his house, and that same hour they were baptized into Christ. That afternoon when Paul and Silas were cast into his prison for being Christians and teaching Christ; I would wager that becoming a Christian was the last thing on his mind. However, that night he stumbled upon the kingdom, and with joy sacrificed to receive it. (It was a sacrifice in the first century for a Gentile to convert).

Both of these men were like the man in the parable. They blindly stumbled into a great treasure, and gladly sacrificed to obtain it. We all need to be like these men, when we find the truth of the kingdom; it is worth whatever the cost to obtain that eternal home in heaven that is the reward of all those faithful servants of the kingdom!!!

- Josh Robinson -  
Arnold church of Christ  
*The Sower*, January 24, 2010

### Mabery's Minutes



A huge "Thanks" goes out to the men who planned and organized the Men's Retreat last Saturday. There were thirty-two men present, and it was obvious that all appreciated and enjoyed the morning. The fellowship was wonderful and the edification was uplifting and strengthening. Those who chose not to be there made the wrong choice. Those who could not be there should have made other arrangements.

Let us continue to press on to the goal of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14).

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