



*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)

## WHAT IS YOUR BUILDING LIKE?

Traveling through the city of Murmansk, Russia, one could not help but notice in the outer perimeter of the city many unfinished buildings sitting idly. Some were mere shells that were built up with anticipation of housing several shops and offices. Others were little more than foundations and a few outer walls. The elements continued to attack those incomplete structures as they fell further into disrepair. Asking about these, one learned that they were structures that were begun at a time when great plans were laid out. Yet, the Russian economy continued to weaken. Funds were not available to complete the structures. Therefore, they had been standing incomplete for years due to a deteriorating economy.

As one reflects upon this, there are many Christians that could be represented by those structures. Many are baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) and added to the Lord's church by God (Acts 2:47), only to remain as those physical structures in Murmansk, Russia— incomplete buildings falling into ruin due to spiritual poverty. At baptism, they have every intention of serving and worshiping God faithfully all their lives. Yet, there is a lack of commitment to spiritual growth. There is little or no Bible study beyond the initial efforts to learn how to become a Christian. There is little or no effort to attend Bible classes that provide valuable instruction. Attendance to worship, where one can learn and grow from the edification provided, is sporadic. Very little learning goes on in the home. Sometimes all this is the fault of the individual. Other times it is the fault of the one who has converted the new Christian, or leaders within the congregation. Regardless of where the fault lies, one becomes as those described by the Hebrew writer (Hebrews 5:12-14). Though they should develop beyond the first principles of God's word and become teachers of others, they are not capable of taking the meat of God's word and must still be fed from the milk. Therefore, they continue as babes who are not exercising their senses to discern good and evil. One of two ways

then begins to develop in their lives. They might develop an indifference toward God and righteous living. They become as those at Laodicia (Revelation 3:14-17). They are neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm Christians. Thinking they are rich spiritually, they become wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked spiritually without recognizing it. A second possible scenario is similar to that described by Jesus (Luke 11:24- 26). They put away the unrighteous ways in their lives. Yet, they do not fill their lives with righteousness. Sooner or later, they allow the unrighteous ways back into their lives along with other wicked ways and their last state is worse than their first. In either case, they remain as incomplete spiritual structures going to ruin and eternal damnation.

Every Christian should grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ (2 Peter 3:18). That, however, takes effort. The young and weak spiritually must be as newborns that yearn to be fed (1 Peter. 2:2). They must yearn for the spiritual milk of God's word, learning the basic principles. As they do so, they develop as the young infant does physically, so that they begin to be nourished with solid food and begin to grow to adulthood. Paul prayed for those at Colosse that they might be filled with the knowledge of His will, walk worthily of the Lord, bear fruit unto every good work, increase in the knowledge of God, and be strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory (Colossians 1:9-11). That should be the prayer of every Christian for himself. However, it should also be the concentrated effort of every Christian to fulfill that prayer in their lives.

Are you a spiritual building in ruin due to spiritual poverty? If so, you must repent and ask for forgiveness (Acts 8:22). Begin to build once again. Attend every Bible class and worship service you can. Complete the structure to the glory of God.

TLM

## How to Truly Approach God

**T**he story of a leper whom Jesus would heal tells us much about the attitude we should possess when we approach God in worship today. The account is found in Matthew 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-45 and Luke 5:12-16. This man suffered from a repulsive and devastating disease - one that also was stigmatizing and incurable. Luke 5:12 says of this particular case, "behold, there was a man covered with leprosy." There was no covering up the fact the man was covered up with leprosy! Notice how this man comes to our Lord.

**HE CAME EARNESTLY.** Now there's an expression not used too much anymore, but it has to do with purpose and determination (cf. Matthew 8:2; Mark 1:40). The leper did not allow the crowd or their words to keep him from Jesus. He was willing to deal with any obstacles or disadvantages to get to Jesus. Getting to Jesus was the most important thing in the world to him, and the leper knew it. Do we?

**HE CAME REVERENTLY.** The leper "bowed down before Him" (Matthew 8:2). He fell "down on his knees before Him" (Mark 1:40), and "fell on his face and implored Him" (Luke 5:12). The leper realized that worship must honor the Lord; *everything* in his approach to God showed the man's desire to honor Jesus. How about us?

**HE CAME FAITHFULLY.** "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean" (Matthew 8:2). In true worship, we honor God, His power and His will. The leper does not doubt Jesus or His power, but speaks with great trust - deferring to the Lord, "if you are willing." In worship we come to God in faith acknowledging that He knows best and will see us through. Is this what we do in our approach to God in worship?

**HE CAME HUMBLY.** When the leper approached Jesus, he did not come in a proud, demanding way. He didn't say Jesus "owed" him anything. He didn't "name it and claim it" like some of the "health and wealth" preachers of today. Nor did he seek to hide his condition or to in any way lessen its condition. There was no pretense whatsoever - only humility in the presence of the Lord. Is our worship of God characterized by a lack of pride and pretense - showing deep humility?

**HE CAME WISELY.** "And a leper came to Jesus, beseeching Him, and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, 'if You are willing, You can make me clean'" (Mark 1:40). There are at least five references to Jesus in just this verse! Jesus was the ONLY One who could help the leper, and the emphasis was ALL UPON HIM. How about us in our worship? Does our heart say, "Lord, it's ALL about You?" Do our actions convey the wisdom that God is the focus of it all? Yes, we really can learn a great deal about how to approach God in worship from this leper. As God's people, let's remember that we have been cleansed from sin by the blood of the precious lamb of God. We are victorious because of Him. May we convey that love and joy to God.

- Mike Vestal -  
The Westside Reminder  
2/19/2010

### Mabery's Minutes



The young adults and the teens really stepped up to the plate over the weekend. They hosted the fifty-five and older set for a special dinner, and special it was. The Collinsville church has had a good history, and the future looks bright, considering the young families and the leadership potential that exists in them. Of course, many of the teens and even some young families may not be here for years to come, but the nucleus is in place for this congregation to continue shining her light for God.