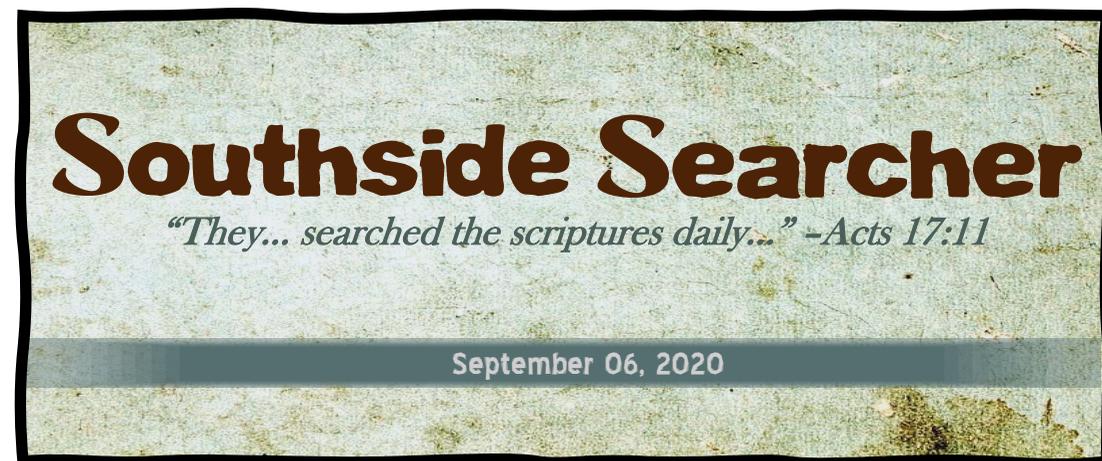


<p><b>DUTY LIST...</b></p> <p><b>SUNDAY MORNING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Announcements.....Michael Pickford</li> <li>➤ Scripture Reading...Eli Todd Reading: Acts 26:24-32</li> <li>➤ Song Leader.....Michael Pickford</li> <li>➤ Opening Prayer.....Kenny Johnson</li> <li>➤ Lord's Table: Lead.....Michael Pickford Serve.....Eli Todd Serve.....</li> <li>➤ Closing Prayer.....Lynn Buttrey</li> </ul> <p><b>SUNDAY EVENING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Song Leader.....Kenny Todd</li> <li>➤ Lord's Supper.....Mike P. / Eli T.</li> </ul> <p><b>WEDNESDAY EVENING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Song Leader.....</li> <li>➤ Invitation.....</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>God's Plan of Salvation</b></p> <p>There is only one true saving plan of Salvation outlined in Scripture. No substitutes will do. Have you really been saved? Get out your Bible and study the plan below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Hear the Gospel:</u> Romans 10:17</li> <li>➤ <u>Believe:</u> Mark 16:16; John 8:24</li> <li>➤ <u>Repent of Sin:</u> Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30</li> <li>➤ <u>Confess Faith:</u> Romans 10:9, 10</li> <li>➤ <u>Be Baptized:</u> Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21</li> <li>➤ <u>Remain Faithful:</u> Rev. 2:10</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Obey Today!</b></p>
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## “Except For These Chains”

PAUL ONCE STOOD BEFORE King Agrippa to give his defense (Acts 26). As Paul was wrapping up Agrippa said famously, “*You almost persuade me to become a Christian*” (Acts 26:28). Paul’s response is rich with spiritual lessons, but one powerful lesson stands out—God wants religious freedom for His people.

Yes, in the book of Acts the church grew when it was persecuted. Yes, persecution can have a strengthening effect on the Lord’s people. And yes, Christians can get too comfortable (and even lazy) in this sinful world when things are too easy. But the church can grow during peaceful times too. The Lord’s people can strengthen during times of calm. Christians can be busy and productive when they are not being persecuted by their own government. And God wants Christians to have that peace!

Paul responded to Agrippa with, “*I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains*” (Acts 26:29). Paul wanted everyone to become a Christian like he was. But what about that last part - “*Except for these chains?*” What did Paul mean? He meant that he wanted Christians to be free—To be able to live peaceably while serving the Lord faithfully and spreading the gospel. Paul often prayed for this very thing (Ephesians 6:18-20; Colossians 4:2-4). Christians are commanded to pray for their rulers to govern in a way that provides the ability for saints to lead “*quiet and peaceable lives*” as Christians. Such freedom would be “*good and acceptable in the sight of God.*” (1 Timothy 2:1-3). Are you praying for our own freedom and for the freedom of saints world-wide? Please do!

-Michael Pickford  
Mpickford3@comcast.net

We would love to have you visit with us. Our meeting times are:

SUNDAYS: 9 & 10 AM & 6 PM / WEDNESDAYS: 7 PM

We have capable Bible teachers who would be delighted to study with you at your request and convenience.

Our evangelist, Michael Pickford is the editor of this publication.

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Southside Searcher, Volume 16, Number 25

# September Duty List

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## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 06 AM

- Announcements: Mike Pickford
- Scripture Reading: Eli Todd
- Lead Singing: Michael Pickford
- 1st Prayer: Jeff Isbell
- Lord's Table: Mike P. & Eli Todd
- Closing Prayer: Kenny Todd

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 06 PM

- Announcements: Mike Pickford
- Lead Singing: Kenny Todd
- 1st Prayer: Michael Pickford
- Bible Class: Michael Pickford
- Invitation: Michael Pickford
- Lord's Table: Mike Pickford/Eli
- Closing Prayer: Eli Todd

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## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 AM

- Announcements: Mike Pickford
- Scripture Reading: Jeff Isbell
- Lead Singing: Eli Todd
- 1st Prayer: Lynn Buttrey
- Lord's Table: Mike P. & Eli Todd
- Closing Prayer: Kenny Johnson

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 PM

- Announcements: Mike Pickford
- Lead Singing: Kenny Johnson
- 1st Prayer: Eli Todd
- Bible Class: Michael Pickford
- Invitation: Kenny Todd
- Lord's Table: Mike Pickford/Eli
- Closing Prayer: Michael Pickford

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## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 AM

- Announcements: Mike Pickford
- Scripture Reading: Mike Pickford
- Lead Singing: Kenny Todd
- 1st Prayer: Kenny Johnson
- Lord's Table: Mike P. & Eli Todd
- Closing Prayer: Eli Todd

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 PM

- Announcements: Mike Pickford
- Lead Singing: Eli Todd
- 1st Prayer: Mike Pickford
- Bible Class: Michael Pickford
- Invitation: Kenny Johnson
- Lord's Table: Mike Pickford/Eli
- Closing Prayer: Kenny Todd

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## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 AM

- Announcements: Mike Pickford
- Scripture Reading: Kenny Todd
- Lead Singing: Lynn Buttrey
- 1st Prayer: Eli Todd
- Lord's Table: Mike P. & Eli Todd
- Closing Prayer: Kenny Johnson

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 PM

- Announcements: Mike Pickford
- Lead Singing: Jeff Isbell
- 1st Prayer: Kenny Todd
- Bible Class: Kenny Johnson
- Invitation: Eli Todd
- Lord's Table: Mike Pickford/Eli
- Closing Prayer: Lynn Buttrey

# Religious Profanity

Profanity is more than only the bad language one may hear. Whatever profanes the truth may be considered religious profanity. Religious profanity is uttered when it is said:

**“THE CHURCH IS NONESSENTIAL.”** If the church of Christ is not essential, then the blood of Jesus is not necessary! The church was purchased with the Savior's blood (Acts 20:28). To degrade the church of our Lord is to defame His blood! The Bible teaches, “...the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47). Christ “...is the saviour of the church” (Eph. 5:23).

**“THERE'S NOTHING IN A NAME.”** If you think there is nothing in a name, have your employer put my name on your paycheck rather than your name! Spirit-filled Peter said, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). That is, “...the name of Jesus Christ...” (v. 11). To say there's nothing in a name is to speak religious profanity!

**“ONE CHURCH IS AS GOOD AS ANOTHER.”** This is contrary to the truth. The Ephesian letter points out: “There is one body...” (4:4) and “the church...is his body” (1:22-23). It is also revealed: “One Lord” and “One God” (4:5-6). If one church is as good as another, is another god as good as “God our Father” or another lord as good as “the Lord Jesus Christ” (1:2)?

**“IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT ONE BELIEVES.”** Does the one who so states so believe? If so, why should we care if it makes no difference? Tell the young prophet of 1 Kings 13, who was slain by a lion, that it makes no difference what one believes! Jesus must have thought it makes a difference. He taught: “...that whosoever believeth in him should not perish...” (Jn. 3:16) and “...if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (Jn. 8:24). Ephesians 4:5 says, “...one faith...”. It is written, “That they all might be damned who believed not the truth...” (2 Th. 2:12).

**“WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND ALIKE.”** The Ephesians were instructed: “Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ” (Eph. 3:4). “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:17). Where do you read of the Ephesians understanding differently? If they understood, they understood alike! There is no such thing as understanding the truth differently! Either we understand it or we do not. Either it is the truth or it is not. It takes “the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4), “belief of the truth” (2 Th. 2:13), “the love of the truth” (2 Th. 2:10), and “obeying the truth” (1 Pet. 1:22) for us to be saved. When you and I do that, we will be together! Religious profanity would come to a halt, if every man would simply “speak as the oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4:11).

-John Edwards

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