

## “ON THE HOLY MOUNTAIN”

Bryan Matthew Dockens, 2021

Jesus ascended a mountain to pray  
With three friends joining Him on the way.  
Peter, James, and John were witness that day  
Of the Lord’s majesty on display.

Disciples were there for observation  
Of the Master’s transfiguration,  
His countenance’s alteration,  
Exceeding the sun in radiation.

His clothes were shining, exceedingly white,  
More effulgent than even the light.  
No washer on earth could make them so bright.  
None other has beheld such a sight.

Two men appeared in glory at His side,  
Speaking with Jesus, soon crucified:  
Elijah, the one who never died,  
And Moses, whose body the Lord did hide.

Peter, afraid, did not know what to say.  
He didn’t think they were going away,  
So he offered three tents for them to stay,  
But they weren’t the ones God said to obey.

An overshadowing cloud came near.  
The disciples were overcome by fear.  
God said: “*My beloved Son*” you will hear.  
Moses and Elijah then disappeared.

– Continued from page 1 –

*unbeliever*” (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 5:8). A Christian should have a serious work ethic, but his ethic itself is faulty if it would put labor over assembling with the saints. Jesus preached, “*Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life*” (John 6:27), which is not an absolute prohibition on real-world employment, but a comparative analysis, emphasizing the greater value of spiritual nourishment over physical sustenance. The Master went to considerable length to persuade His followers that worrying about food and other necessities is contrary to faith in Him, saying, “*Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you*” (Matthew 6:32-33).

**Travel is a common reason given not to assemble.** Paul the apostle was an extremely well-traveled man. He is estimated to have journeyed land and sea over 10,000 miles, visiting what is now Arabia, Israel, Syria, Turkey, Greece, and Italy. Despite his frequent comings and goings, there is no indication in Scripture that he neglected to gather with churches wherever he went. His travel companion and chronicler Luke penned, “*We sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where we stayed seven days. Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight*” (Acts 20:6-7). Later, Luke recorded, “*After one day, the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, where we found brethren, and were invited to stay seven days*” (Acts 28:13-14). Paul and company made a point of locating fellow Christians and spending time with them and brethren today can do likewise. Indeed, it’s simpler to do so in an age of instant communication and rapid transit.

**Emergencies may arise.** On one of many occasions when Pharisees scrutinized Jesus for healing on the Sabbath, He asked, “*Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?*” (Luke 6:5). Unplanned problems occur, the resolution of which will not admit of delay. Floods, fires, car breakdowns, and medical emergencies need to be dealt with urgently. If it cannot be put off, then it cannot be put off. God knows. In a different context, but likely applicable here, Paul wrote, “*If there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have*” (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 8:12). If one is able to attend, he must do so; if one lacks that ability, the Lord is aware.

**"WHAT MUST I DO  
TO BE SAVED?"**

**ACTS 16:30**

**LEARN THE GOSPEL**

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

**BELIEVE IN CHRIST**

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

**CONFESS CHRIST**

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 3:19; 17:30

**BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST**

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF  
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

**HEBREWS 10:24-25**

**SUNDAY**

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

**WEDNESDAY**

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard  
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.  
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN  
ANY TRESPASS...  
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

**GALATIANS 6:1**

**CONFESS TRESPASSES**

James 5:16; 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 8:22

**PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS**

Acts 8:22

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS  
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN  
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

**PROVERBS 25:11**

"God doesn't call holiness  
'legalism;' a backslidden church  
does."

**"WHOLE COUNSEL"**

**ACTS 20:27**

**VOLUME 3, ISSUE 5**

**FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2025**

**EXCUSES FOR NOT ASSEMBLING**

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Having previously established that sickness can be (Leviticus 13:46), but is not in all cases (Mark 2:1-12), a valid cause for absence from church, attention can be given to other reasons one might have for not attending.

Sleep is sometimes cited for missing worship. One might unintentionally oversleep, but others may work very late and decide to sleep in instead of getting to church. Yet, the Proverbs are replete with warnings about sleeping too much. Solomon commanded, "Do not love sleep" (Proverbs 20:13), and he asked, rhetorically, "How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep?" (6:9). Rest is needed (Matthew 8:24) but not so much as to neglect more important matters. Jesus was hurt when He asked His friends to watch with Him, but they kept falling asleep instead (Matthew 26:36-44). He expects disciples now to give a few hours per week to worshipping Him and encouraging one another, but some keep proving that "the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41).

Work is often mentioned to excuse absence from church. The able-bodied must provide for themselves and their family. Paul asserted, "if anyone will not work, neither shall he eat" (2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 3:10). He also stated, "if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an  
- Continued on page 3 -

**RIO GRANDE VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST**

505-864-0282

rgvcoc@gmail.com

Box 989, Belén, NM 87002

www.RGVChurchOfChrist.org

75 Sherrod Boulevard

Facebook.com/RGVChurchOfChrist