

Pleasant Valley  
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon  
Wichita KS 67204  
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www.letjesusleadus.org

## Schedule of Services

### Sunday

Classes . . . . . 9:30 am  
Worship . . . . . 10:30 am  
Evening . . . . . 6:00 pm

### Wednesday

Classes . . . . . 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

# Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

September 16, 2007

## The religion of peace

by David King

"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father" (Eph. 2:14-18).

To really appreciate the significance of what Paul is saying here, we need to understand the identity of the two groups who he describes as being reconciled. The Jews and Gentiles were as far apart from each other as two groups could be. By religion, by culture, by morality, even by diet, they had almost nothing in common. Jews despised Gentiles as beneath contempt, and Gentiles hated Jews as arrogant troublemakers. The chasm between these two parties was simply too vast to bridge.

That is, until Jesus came. Jesus and His teaching accomplished the impossible, creating a platform that both Jews and Gentiles could unite upon. Of course, this required some uncomfortable changes on the part of both sides. But the changes made better people of everyone, and the peace that grew out of this new relationship — between God and men, and between warring factions — was a true marvel.

This new unity was not limited to ethnic groups. The religion of Jesus also broke down

barriers between masters and servants (paving the way for the eventual demise of slavery), between genders (by elevating the status of women), and among social/economic cliques (by redefining the role of status and wealth). In Christ, people found a unifying principle that allowed them to overcome their differences and develop a real appreciation for each other.

Christianity accomplished what no other religion or philosophy had ever accomplished before or since: It brought peace to a world hopelessly mired in conflict. It proved that it is possible for people to overcome their differences and live together in peace, in a climate that benefits everyone.

This description of what Christ accomplished provides three lessons for us today.

First, this unity is not a hollow glossing over of differences. It is a real and workable plan for bringing people together. Remember that Jesus **"preached" peace** — that is, it was the result of people responding to a call for change in attitudes and behaviors.

Second, it is a stinging indictment of the current condition of Christianity, with its sectarian divisions and barriers. Modern Christianity is a sham of the original, making a mockery of the practical unity that Jesus created.

Finally, on a personal level, this heritage should force me to examine my attitudes and conduct daily, to determine how well or how poorly I am living up to the expectations of my Master. In my family, among my co-workers, with my brethren — am I truly representing the religion of peace for which Jesus died?