

## THE RAT RACE

Michael Pickford

I once heard someone say, “Even if you win the rat race, you’re still a rat.” Interesting; humorous. What is not humorous, however, is the fact that so many of God’s children have gotten themselves caught up in the rat race of this world.

Some live their lives as if John never said “*Do not love the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him*” (1 John 2:15). Listen, if you can lay your eyes on it, kiss it goodbye. John went on to say that “*The world is passing away*” (1 John 2:17).

Have we become so enamored with the shiny things of this life that we have

forgotten the far more urgent things of Christ? Have we forgotten the exhortation of Paul when he urges Christians to “*redeem the time for the days are evil?*” (Ephesians 5:16). Has our training for competition in the rat race become so intense that we have laid aside those ever important matters of daily Bible study, prayers, and sharing the Gospel with our neighbors? (Acts 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Acts 8:4).

In your endeavors in life, don’t disqualify yourself from the race of faith in order for a chance to win the rat race (2 Timothy 4:7). You won’t like the prize. 🔍

Welcome to our services and thank you for visiting. If you have any questions about our beliefs or practices, please don’t hesitate to ask.

God has not only commanded us to worship Him, but has also told us how, in His word. **The elements of our services, as prescribed by God’s word, are as follows:**

- **SINGING:** Ephesians 5:18,19; Colossians 3:16
- **PREACHING/TEACHING:** Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:11,12
- **PRAYING:** Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5
- **LORD’S SUPPER:** 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7
- **GIVING:** 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7



- [www.defendthegospel.com](http://www.defendthegospel.com)
- Weekly Article: Rutherford Reader
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Singing Practice: 5 pm
- 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Singing Night: 6 pm
- Radio program on wgns. 15 minute sermon every Sunday morning from 10:45 - 11:00.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Men’s Training Class, 3:30 pm. Prayer Service, 6 pm
- Men’s Business Meeting. 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday evenings following services.



## SOUTHSIDE SEARCHER

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“They...searched the scriptures daily...” –Acts 17:11

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## REMAINING FAITHFUL

Michael Pickford

The statement of our Lord in Revelation 2:10 no doubt brought great encouragement to a faithful church about to undergo severe persecution. He said “*Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*” In this statement we see the...

**Command.** The command is to be faithful until death. The idea is to be faithful in serving the Lord until we die. To stop short is to lose the crown of life. Yes, one can fall from grace (Galatians 6:4) in spite of what many in the religious world teach today. After one becomes a child of God, he can so sin as to lose his salvation; otherwise, why would Paul warn folks against falling away (1 Corinthians 10:12)? “*Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away*” (Hebrews 2:1)...

**Continuity.** Until death! This is how long we must faithfully serve the Lord. Stopping short will disqualify us from the crown. God has blessed us with many spiritual blessings in Christ that serve to help keep us remain faithful (Ephesians 1:3). He has given us the avenue of prayer by which we can ask for strength and wisdom (Philippians 4:6-7). He has given us

His word by which we learn His will so as to know how to serve Him faithfully. He has blessed us with the church with which we can worship in order to gain the continued encouragement we need to endure (Hebrews 10:24-25). We have our brethren there for us, not just during the assemblies, but throughout each day. “*Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*” (Hebrews 3:12-13).

**Crown.** The crown of life! It stands for eternal life in the glories of heaven. It is God’s ultimate response to our unwavering righteousness. Paul calls it the “Crown of righteousness,” Peter calls it the “Crown of glory,” and James calls it the “Crown of life” (2 Timothy 4:8; 1 Peter 5:4; James 1:12). This is an “imperishable crown,” but if we don’t remain faithful, we will become disqualified from receiving it (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). “*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*” (1 Corinthians 15:58). 🔍

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[www.defendthegospel.com](http://www.defendthegospel.com)

**COME WORSHIP  
WITH US!**

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY...9:00  
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP.....10:00  
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP.....6:00  
WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES....7:00

**EVERYONE WELCOME!**

# TEAR DOWN! BUILD UP!

Michael Pickford

It is a never ending process, this matter of tearing down and building up. Any nation, any town, any city, if they want continual growth, must continue to engage in both tearing down and building up. Land is torn down and leveled in order to build up businesses, houses, neighborhoods and communities. But the buildings become worn and dilapidated, requiring them to be torn down and built up again. The elementary school I attended for six years once served as the High School. It has long since been torn down and new elementary schools and high schools have been built. In the place of the old school stand other buildings, businesses, restaurants, etc. My small town has grown significantly over the last 20 years.

“See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant” (Jeremiah 1:10). With so much religious error and division running rampant in our society, we could literally spend all of our time tearing down and exposing false error; tearing down the thoughts of men; their innovations, their traditions, their false systems of doctrine. And we would be right in engaging in this endeavor, for the Lord has told us to expose the unfruitful works of darkness (Ephesians 5:11). When error made its way to

Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas attacked it with great fervor (Acts 15:1-2). Jude exhorted brethren to “contend earnestly for the faith...” (Jude 3).

We also spend time rooting out wickedness in the Lord’s church. It is sad when brethren get themselves caught up in sin, then refuse to repent. God is clear that we must deliver such a one to Satan (1 Corinthians 5). “Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition” (Titus 3:10).

There is a sense in which some building up is getting done inherently in exposing error and disciplining the unfaithful. However, while we busy ourselves with these endeavors, it is ever important that we also focus just as diligently upon the building and the planting. If a large city only tears down and roots out, without then building and planting, it would not remain a large city for long. It would destroy itself. We too, as a church, need to be building and planting. There are many lost souls in our own community, neighborhoods, and city, and God has laid squarely upon the church the responsibility of sounding forth the Gospel (1 Thessalonians 1:8).

May the Lord bless us always with the courage to soundly refute, expose and defeat error. But may He also fill us with zeal and fervor to win the souls of those who are lost. ☞

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“Man is formed by God, deformed by sin, informed by schools, reformed by institutions, but transformed only by the precious blood of Christ.” Have you contacted His blood?  
(Revelation 1:5; Ephesians 1:7; Acts 22:16; Acts 2:38)

## SERMON NOTES

Search the scriptures daily to see if these things are so.

STUDY  
DAILY!  
Acts  
17:11

Introduction: \_\_\_\_\_

### DUTY LIST...

#### SUNDAY MORNING

- Announcements.....Jason Hubbard
- Bible Reading by.....Frank Anderson  
Reading: John 11:38-44
- Song Leader.....Ben Reagh
- Opening Prayer.....Kenny Johnson
- Lord’s Table:  
Lead.....Ben Green  
Serve.....Kenny Todd  
Serve.....Chris Meade
- Closing Prayer.....Robert Johnson

#### SUNDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Ben Green
- Lord’s Table.....Ben Green

#### WEDNESDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Robert Johnson
- Invitation.....Ben Green

*Home Bible Studies  
Available Upon Request!*

### GOD’S PLAN OF SALVATION

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.

- Hear The Gospel: Romans 10:17
- Believe: Mark 16:16; John 8:24
- Repent of Sin: Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30
- Confess Faith: Romans 10:9, 10
- Be Baptized: Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21
- Remain Faithful: Rev. 2:10

**Obey Today!**