

# Northside Church of Christ

“God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”  
John 4:24



## We Can't Run On Pop-Tarts!

By Mike Riley

When this writer gets up every weekday morning at 5:00 a.m., preparing myself to go to the workplace, I immediately start to fix myself a healthy breakfast consisting of fruit, eggs, turkey bacon (without any fat), whole wheat toast and orange juice. Research tells us that a healthy breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

Unfortunately, for many families living in our fast-paced society, pop-tarts play a large part in their breakfast cuisine. Pop-tarts have virtually no nutritional value, but are mostly made up of starches and sugars (and we wonder why adults and kids are hyper and obese!).

The same holds true in the spiritual realm. The spiritual part of us cannot long exist on the non-nutritional humanist, “I’m ok, you’re ok” philosophy, or the “all roads lead to heaven” denominational teaching.

Dear reader, we have to ingest the pure “milk of the word” (1 Corinthians 3:2; 1 Peter 2:1-2) as well as the “meat” that God’s word has to offer (Hebrews 5:12-14 ASV; cf. 1 Corinthians 2:1-6 ASV; 1 Corinthians 14:20 ASV), so that the spiritual part of our being remains healthy at all times.

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### SUNDAY MORNING

Triple E  
Edify, Exhort,  
Evangelize  
4 Square  
8:30 AM

### SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Hebrews  
9:30 AM

### SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship Service  
10:30 AM

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Romans  
7:00 PM



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“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15

Northside Church of Christ  
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Place Stamp Here

## The Content Of Our Character

By Mike Riley

In one of his most famous speeches, Dr. Martin Luther King longed for his children to grow up in a world where they would be judged “not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

It’s indeed a sad commentary on today’s society, that over four decades after these infamous words were spoken, we still do not yet live in such a world, although we have made considerable progress. Dr. King’s death should cause us to reflect upon the way that we as human beings regard one another, as opposed to the way God regards us. It’s unfortunate, but as frail human beings, we are prone to assess one another on the basis of any outward characteristic we can see — not just in terms of skin color.

For example, psychological studies have shown that when we look at a person we find physically attractive, we “presume” him or her to be intelligent and capable. We look at a person of less striking appearance and presume that individual to be less bright and intelligent. We view the person who wears eyeglasses is a “brain” or a “nerd.” The overweight person is somehow labeled as being “jolly.” A person with a physical handicap is often thought to be mentally deficient, even though his handicap has nothing at all to do with the clarity of his mind.

Most of us are not unlike Samuel, sent to the home of Jesse to anoint one of the sons of the family as king. As Jesse’s eldest son, Eliab walked into the room, Samuel was immediately impressed. Although we are not told what Eliab looked like, the context suggests that he was a tall and handsome man like Israel’s first king, Saul (1 Samuel 9:2).

Samuel took one glance at Eliab and said, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is before Him” (1 Samuel 16:6). But God told Samuel:

“Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

Thus, we see that appearances (or first impressions) can easily deceive. David’s son Absalom was more handsome than any man in Israel, perfect in face and physique from head to foot (2 Samuel 14:25). Yet Absalom was a treacherous, murderous, and arrogant son who sought to kill his father and steal his kingdom. Many were persuaded to follow Absalom because of his compelling appearance, but ultimately he was defeated and slain (2 Samuel 18).

In contrast, let’s consider Gideon, a man from an insignificant family in one of the smallest Israelite tribes, and by his own admission the least of the men in his own family (Judges 6:15). Still, God saw in Gideon a leader capable of defeating an innumerable army with only 300 men (Judges 7).

Like Gideon, Saul of Tarsus [Paul] was a man some might have easily disregarded because of his outward person. He once wrote concerning himself:

“His letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible” (2 Corinthians 10:10).

Yet God chose this individual who made such a poor outward impression as one of the chief deliverers of His inspired word. Why?

“For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds” (Psalm 7:9).

In our modern culture, people spend millions of dollars every day trying to beautify their outside being, while their inside or spiritual being goes lacking. The Scripture instructs us:

“Do not let your adornment be merely outward — arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel — rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God” (1 Peter 3:3-4).

Brethren and friends, God cares nothing for those things that distinguish us in the flesh (Galatians 3:28; cf. Acts 17:24-26) — His concern is for our eternal souls:

“I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings” (Jeremiah 17:10).

In the presence of our heavenly Father, we will all be judged, not by the color of our skin or any other surface characteristic, but by the content of our character.

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Just as a healthy body has a healthy immune system to help fight off dangerous viruses and various diseases, so our spiritual man has to have a healthy immune system, in order to successfully fight off the carnal evils of this world (2 Corinthians 10:1-6; Ephesians 6:10-18; cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11).

Brethren and friends, we can’t spiritually run on pop-tarts! We have to run on “every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4; cf. Deuteronomy 8:3; Psalm 19:7-11). This spiritually nutritious food will allow us to successfully run the Christian race, “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith” (Hebrews 12:1-2 NASB).

Only then can we say along with the faithful apostle Paul at the end of our earthly journey, “For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:6-8 ASV).

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### Announcements

- Holiday Meal at Annex Building Dec. 20 @ 6pm

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### Prayer Requests This Week

- Pray for all those with ongoing health ailments

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### Communion Preparation

- December - Rowell
- 2023 Sign up sheet is in foyer

### December Birthdays & Anniversary’s

- Connie Montgomery - 3rd • Crimson Rowell - 31st
- Rick Carlberg - 7th
- Dwight & Sandra Callens - 23rd

### Sermon Notes



### Men to Serve

- Announcements/Opening Prayer - Don Potts
- Scripture Reading - John 15:1 - 8
- Lead Singing - Chuck Rowell
- Head of Lord’s Table - Larry Montgomery
- Assist on Lord’s Table - David Cradic
- Scripture Reading - Matthew 27:24 - 31
- Closing Prayer - James Johnson

### Every Sunday Morning

@ 8:00 AM

on WTOK-TV



- Comcast Cable 6
- Comcast Cable 431
- Comcast Cable 1011
- DirecTV 11
- DirecTV 396
- Dish Network 11
- Over-the-air 11.3