

The Prattmont Church of Christ is just what the name suggests, a church that belongs to Christ. We are not a denomination; we are simply a group of Christians trying very hard to practice the teachings of our Head, Jesus Christ. The New Testament offers a complete pattern for what each local church should be like—its organization, its worship, its work, etc. We are committed to following that pattern. We cordially invite you to attend our services. We would also welcome any comments or questions about this bulletin.

**TIMES OF SERVICES:**

*Sunday*  
 Bible Classes.....9 A.M.  
 Worship ..... 10:00 A.M.  
 Worship/Bible Study..5 P.M.

*Wednesday:*  
 Bible Study ..... 7:00 P.M.



*Weekly Bulletin*  
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**Contact Information**

	<b>Mailing Address</b>	P.O. Box 680872 Prattville, AL 36067
	<b>Phone Numbers</b>	(334) 365-5887 (334) 868-0801
	<b>E-Mail Address</b> <b>Web Address</b>	prattmont@gmail.com prattmontchurchofchrist.org

**How Should We Use the Bible?**

*by Tadd Corder*

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 22:36-40).

How should we use the Bible? If we want to go into all the world, if we want to shine as lights for God, if we want to fight the good fight, if we want to finish the race, if we want to keep the faith, how should we use the Bible? There will always be an abundance of confusion and disagreement in our world, but the two greatest commandments should tell us everything that we need to know about how to use the Bible.



First, we start by always reading with the intention of finding out who God is and deepening our understanding of His character. If the greatest commandment is to love God with all our hearts, then our greatest responsibility in reading the Bible is to discover God's character and grow in our appreciation of Him. We strive to see His love. We strive to see His judgment. We acknowledge that He has all authority over our lives because He made us. Loving God is a commandment, not a suggestion. We can't have a legitimate discussion about loving God if we do not acknowledge His authority, and no other being could possibly understand the reason for our existence better than God.

The second commandment teaches us that we have a relational responsibility to others. God expects us to love others and the standard for measuring that love is how we would want to be treated. There is truth and there is error. We can be dishonest about our beliefs and our practices, and we are commanded by God to oppose darkness and expose it. However, to be effective in our efforts and to be pleasing to God, we must begin with ourselves. We must admit our own failings. We must be open to correction ourselves, and we must address others in the same way that we would want to be addressed. When we are tempted to ask, "Who is my neighbor?" we must see ourselves in the ditch and admit that we wouldn't want to be left there by anyone for any reason.

The second commandment is amplified further when we realize that we are actually called to something even higher than the best possible human response. We are called to imitate Christ and the Father. "A new commandment I give to you,

that you love one another, even as I have loved you..." (John 13:34). "That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You..." (John 17:20). "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has also forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32). If we do not take this divine calling seriously, we will struggle to be effective for the Lord's cause: "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

We use the Bible to discover who God is and how He wants us to live, particularly how He wants us to treat others and relate to them. We should not be trying to use the Bible to trick people into saying something that we can use against them. This is polarizing and self-seeking. We should not even be trying to use the Bible to condemn people or to prove how bad they are necessarily. If we show them who God is, they will realize their need for repentance. The judgment of God is real, but the message of the gospel is that we can escape the destruction of judgment by putting our faith in Jesus Christ, turning away from our sins, and living for Him. If we show the world judgment without hope, we have not shown them the God of the Bible.

If we are honest, the execution of such an approach to using the Bible will be difficult, but we do not have any other choice. Jesus has identified the two greatest commandments. These two commandments encompass all that we can know about God and what He wants for us. Whenever we feel compelled to engage others in any kind of discussion, remember what our primary goals should be as the children of God. We want to see who God is in relation to the question at hand, and we want to understand how He would want us to respond.