

Ministers:
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley
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Sunday:
8:00 AM: WGCY
9:00 AM: Worship

Wednesday:
7:00 PM: Bible Study

[gibsoncitychurchof
Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofChrist.com)

This Past Week:
Worship—34
Wednesday—13
Contribution—\$755

For meditation:
Proverbs 27.21–22
Pounding wheat
with a mortal and
pestle is a time-
honored way of
separating the
grain from the
chaff. But some
men are impervi-
ous to pounding,
i.e., correction;
they are incorri-
gible. What do
you do with a
fool who refuses
to give up his
folly?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

“A clean power”

Iain Murray, in his biography of the famous Westminster Chapel preacher D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, tells of a spiritist—a medium—who lived down the street from the church where Lloyd-Jones preached, who would hold seances at the same time as the church services.

One Sunday evening, she didn't feel like opening for business and sat watching men, women, and children walk past her house to the church. On a whim, she decided to attend the service herself, and there she heard the little Welshman speak. Convicted by the sermon, the lady went home and closed her profitable business that very night. When asked why she did it, she said, “When I went there [i.e., to the church], I felt a power similar to what I know in my seances, *but it was a clean power.*”

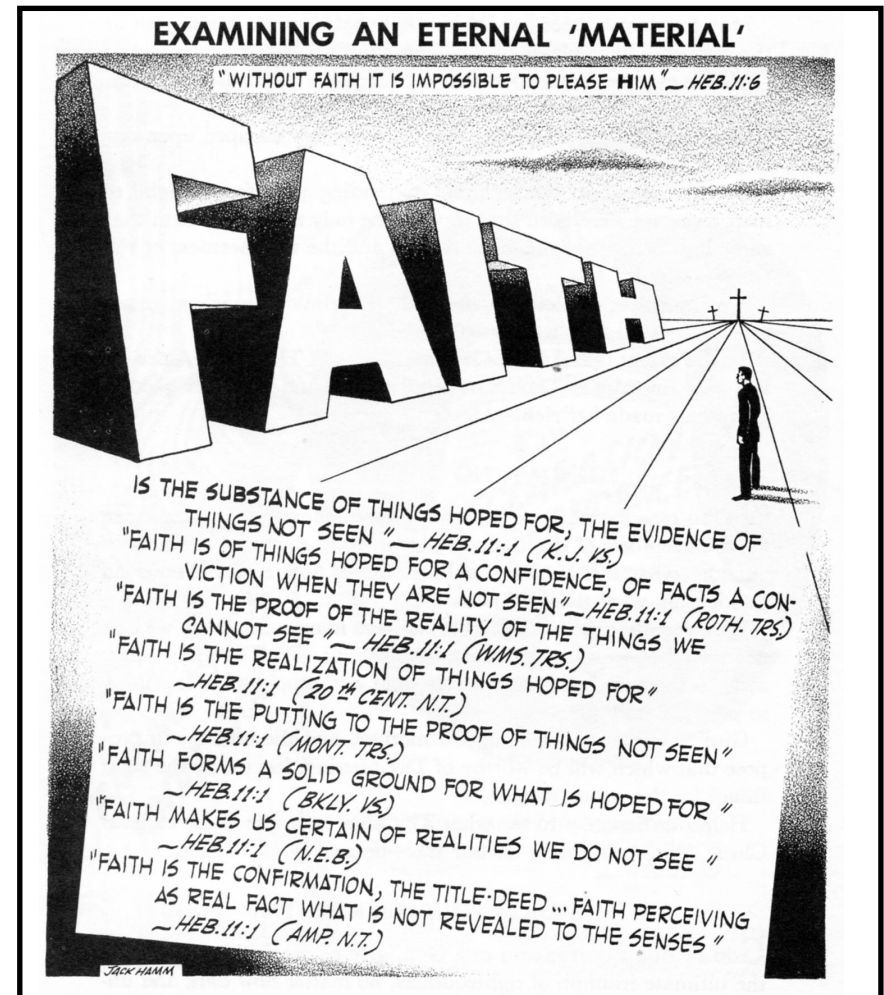
When she was doing her parlor tricks to try to convince someone she was contacting the dead, she could get emotionally caught up in her performance and deception. And she was emotionally caught up listening to Lloyd-Jones, but there was a difference. She knew the emotions she felt while listening to Lloyd-Jones were based on the truth of God and not on her magic tricks. While listening to the word, it was a “clean power” she felt.

People get emotional over all sorts of things. They see things that aren't there (Col. 2.18), work themselves into a frenzy over the make-believe (1 Kgs. 18), and get roused over nothing (Acts 19.32). The emotions produced by the gospel, however, are clean (see 1 Pet. 1.8); meaning they are true and reasonable, being grounded in the objective word of God rather than artificially-generated excitement.

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Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: 1 Peter 3.13–17

Restoring the center

29 October 2023

Who's in the "In Crowd"?

"Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us." Mark 9.38

Forty-some years ago, I saw an ad in the local newspaper announcing a Bible study to be held in the town library on such-and-such a date. Out of curiosity, I went. About twenty were in attendance. We sang some songs, and a fellow taught a class. I can't remember the topic, but I remember not having any significant disagreements. I asked the teacher some questions and the answers he gave were pretty much the answers I would have given. When I asked what religious group he identified with, he said he was just a Christian. I'd never seen him before; I never saw him again.

In Mark 9.33–37, Christ warned His disciples about personal arrogance, and in vv 38–41, He warns about group arrogance. John tells about a man the disciples came across who was casting out demons. The Twelve tried to stop him because "he wasn't in our group" (PETERSON). In reply, Christ says that those doing His work are not to be stopped, because "no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is on our side."

Christ warns us not to think that loyalty to our group or way of doing things is the same thing as loyalty to Him. Just because someone is outside our circle doesn't mean they are outside of Christ. And if they are in Christ, they are on our side, whether we recognize them or not.

Every decision I make about fellowship (Gal. 2.9)—whether approving or disapproving—is made on the basis of imperfect knowledge of the individual, the situation, and scripture. And there's no way around this, for fallibility characterizes everything fallible people think or do. And this should make us very humble. An omniscient God may see things very differently from us; my decisions about fellowship do not necessarily reflect His decisions.

There are folks I cannot worship with in good conscience, but my hope and prayer is that the God who is greater than I, who knows all things, will unite us in worship in heaven.

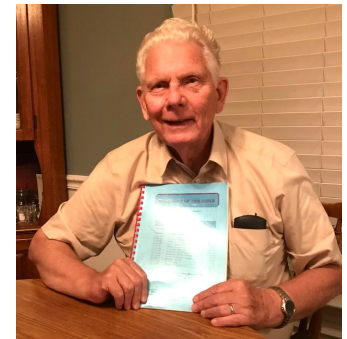
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Ron Roark

[I doubt that anyone in the Gibson City church knew of Ron Roark. But I knew him. It was largely due to Ron that the bit of work I and others have done in Russia was made possible. Ron recently went home, and I'd like you to read this tribute to him by Jerry Falk.]

About two hours ago, I learned that one of my good friends and mentors, Ron Roark, suddenly passed away. He was instrumental in encouraging me to preach the gospel in Spanish. I distinctly remember him asking me one day back in 1987, "Jerry, didn't you say that you wanted to start preaching full-time?" When I told him that I did, he replied vigorously, "Well, when are you going to DO IT?!" I had grown comfortable in my job as a systems operator and Ron seemed to know that I needed an extra word of encouragement to stick to my plan to preach.

Amazingly, I was in his home in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, EXACTLY FOUR YEARS AGO TODAY and took this picture of him. He was showing me some of the Bible workbooks that he had put together.



During that visit, I asked Ron how many times he had traveled to Russia to preach the gospel after the Iron Curtain fell. I thought he had said, "Eight or seven." (I don't hear very well.) When I questioned him again, "Eight or seven?" he replied enthusiastically, "EIGHTY-seven!" Can you imagine flying to a country eighty-seven times?

Several years ago, I remember hearing of Ron fainting while preaching in Mozambique. I also remember learning through his wife, Elaine, that he was having trouble sleeping at night because he couldn't stop thinking of all those people in China who don't know Jesus Christ.

Ron was that kind of a man. He wasn't an eloquent orator (neither am I), but he was a tireless worker for the Lord. He helped people in the United States, Russia, Africa, Latin America, and elsewhere to know God and His word.

Someone once said that "if heaven is a place of rest, I want to be tired when I get there." I'm confident that Ron is finally resting from his labors (Revelation 14:13). He was loved and will be sorely missed!

Jerry Falk