

Ministers:
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley
217.493.8905

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—31
Wednesday—
Contribution—\$1650

For meditation:
Proverbs 29.5–7
Why is flattery
called a “net.”
What sort of peo-
ple can be trapped
by flattery. I once
heard Bob Owen
say “Praise is like
perfume, it is to be
sniffed, not swal-
lowed.”

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

Where the devil turns up, 2

**The devil . . . set Him on
the pinnacle of the Temple.**

**The temple temptation teaches the devil will
tempt us in public.**

For a thousand years “the church” (I use the term historically, not Biblically) dominated Europe. The “church” ruled nations, set up kings according to her fancy, and dethroned them when they offended her. Yet, there have been few occasions when the devil was more successful than in this period of history. The centuries when the church called the shots were barren, stagnant, and barbaric (e.g., the Crusades). Progress in numerous areas nearly ground to a halt. The “Temple” (if I may use the term as an analogy) stood large in temporal, economic, and political circles, but spiritually, where it was meant to be a beacon, men were darkened by its shadow. Historians came to refer to these times as “the dark ages.”

Has the devil ever used publicity to encourage individual believers to act hypocritically? “Do not do your charitable deeds before men to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven” (Matt. 6.1). “No wonder you can’t believe! For you gladly honor each other, but you don’t care about the honor that comes from the only God!” (Jn. 5.44, LB).

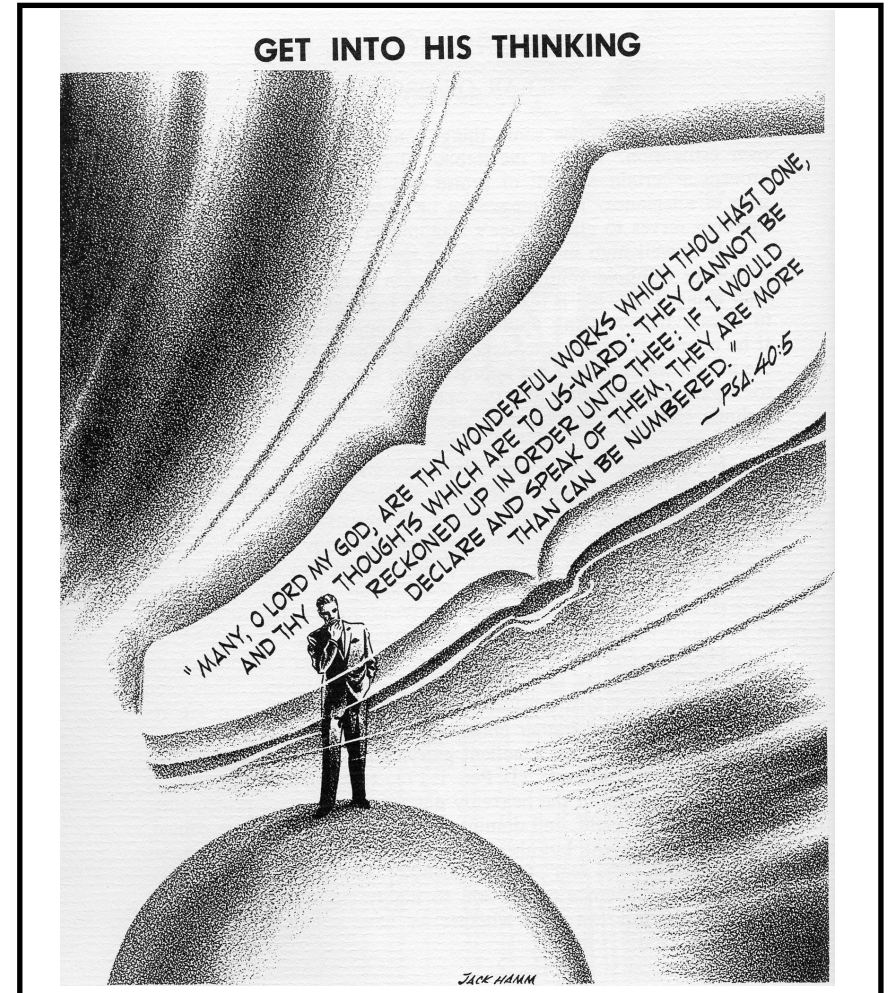
Or what about when public worship is allowed to substitute for private devotion and we act by rote, go through the motions, and do as everybody else does—does the devil tempt us in this way?

The church is Christ’s bride, purchased with His blood, but the devil will lay his filthy hands on it and turn it, and us, into everything except what we’re meant to be.

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: 2 Peter 1.1–4

The two chief blessings

11 February 2024

“I’ll go with Him through the garden”?

“And He took Peter, James, and John with Him” (Mk. 14.33). Three times Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him apart from the other apostles. They seem to have been the Lord’s inner circle. They certainly talked a good game. “‘If I have to die with You,’” said Peter, “‘I will not deny You!’ And they all said likewise” (v 31). But despite their brave words, the three proved unreliable.

Dealing with an emotional cataclysm, all Christ asked of the three was to “Stay here and watch” (v 34). The couldn’t fully understand His suffering, nor bear His burden—Christ trod the wine-press of His suffering alone (Isa. 63.3). But as v 37 shows, they couldn’t even meet the minimal request Christ made.

The question was pointed. “Simon . . . could *you* not watch one hour? The question was addressed to the braggart, the one who claimed he could be trusted when all others failed (Matt. 26.33). Peter had been given enormous privileges and saw things few have ever seen, but all his privileges couldn’t keep him awake at a critical time.

The request was modest. Christ could have asked for much more, but He didn’t. He didn’t ask the three to share His humiliation, arrest, scourging, suffering, or crucifixion. To my shame, I’ll admit there have been times when people asked me to pray for them . . . and I forgot to do so. (Now, when someone asks me to pray for them, I do so immediately.) It’s hard to think of a situation wherein we can’t send a prayer to God if we really wanted to (see Neh. 2.4).

The timespan was brief. “Could you not watch *one hour*?” There have been times when an hour seemed like a day, but when I’m engaged in something I delight in, time flies. I can easily spend an hour watching TV, or reading a book, or visiting with family and friends. Matthew adds two words to what Mark writes, “Could you not watch *with Me* one hour?” (26.40). I wonder how pointed Christ will be with us? Will He ask why we couldn’t give Him a few hours one day each week to worship?

The song, “Where He Leads Me I Will Follow,” has the line, “I’ll go with Him through the garden.” If Peter, James, and John failed in the garden, as stumbling and bumbling as I am, I’m hesitant to sing these words, for at times I’ve slept when He needed my companionship and cooperation.

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Herodian Masada, 13

“Let us destroy all our possessions and burn the fortress,” said the Zealot leader Eleazar Ben Yair. Thus the Romans, failing to take us prisoner, will have nothing to loot, either. But let us leave our food behind. It will show them that we were not starving—that we simply chose to die, rather than to live as slaves.”

So the Jews atop Masada piled all their belongings together and set them on fire. Then, drawing lots, they chose ten men to do the killing.

These ten, swords in hand, went quickly about their business. When they finished, hundreds were dead. The ten then gathered together and again drew lots to choose the one who would have the task of killing the other nine and then killing himself.

The lots were drawn. The last man standing killed the others. He set fire to the palace, and then drove his sword through his body and died.

Nine hundred and sixty Jews lay huddled together in death atop Masada. Just the two old women and five children escaped by hiding in the water cistern. The rest decided it was better to die than to fall into the hands of the Romans.

At the northernmost tip of the rock of Masada, amid blackened debris and ashes of the hanging palace, archaeologists found what might possibly be the remains of the last Zealot. What they discovered was the skeleton of a man estimated to be around the age of twenty. Beside the skeleton was a potsherd (a broken piece of ceramic material) inscribed with Hebrew letters. There were fragments of a prayer shawl, arrows, and bits of silvered armor, indicating the man had perhaps been a Zealot commander. Close by was the skeleton of a young woman. Her braided, dark hair was preserved, as well as her leather sandals. Plaster near her head looked like it had been stained with blood. A third skeleton, that of a child, lay nearby.

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FINAL INSTALLMENT NEXT WEEK: WHAT THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS FOUND.

News about us

- Jerry’s latest tests indicate some further treatments are needed. Pray for him. Larry and little Sadie are doing better. And keep Jenny’s mother, with her difficult trial, in your prayers.