

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—29
Wednesday—
Contribution—\$1150

For meditation:
Proverbs 24.26–27
Verse 27 contains
two major
thoughts in re-
gard to human
labor. Look for:
the *forethought*
that should pre-
cede work, and
the rule that *im-
portant work*
should be done
first.

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

Zacchaeus was a wee little man

For a several years, the nineteenth century Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon trained men for the ministry in a small theological school he started called the “Pastor’s College.” As part of the training, he would call students to the front of the room, give them a text, and ask them to preach on it on the spot.

One day, he assigned a student the passage from Luke 19 dealing with Zachaeus. The student said, “I have been asked to speak on Zacchaeus. There are three things I would point out about Zacchaeus. In the first place, he was a very little man, and so am I. I would remark in the second place that he was up a tree, and so am I. I would emphasize in the third place that he made haste and came down, and so will I.”

T. R. Glover, a lecturer in classical history at Cambridge University, used this outline as the basis for a sermon. He began by pointing out that all of us are little men. We may, like Nebuchadnezzar and Nero, think ourself a colossus and put up a statue a hundred feet tall to signify our importance, but in truth, we’re less than a drop in the bucket (Isa. 40.15).

Because we’re little, we need a higher elevation that lifts us above life’s clutter to where we have a clear, unobscured view of Jesus (Col. 3.1–2, Heb. 2.9).

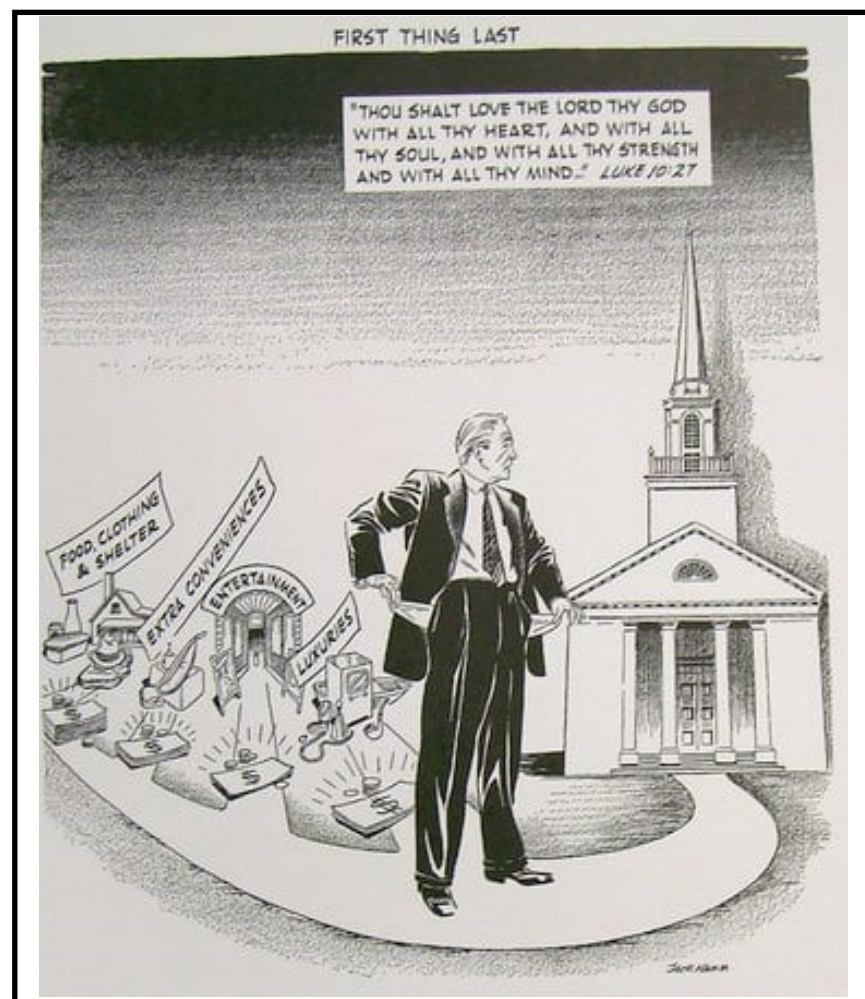
But “there is no cure for our littleness,” said Glover, “if we let Him pass by.” Once we have seen Jesus, we must join ourselves to Him. If we’ll do that, salvation can come to our house this day (Lk. 19.9).

When the Pastors College student finished, Spurgeon paid him this compliment, “Young fellow, you’ll get along.”

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: 2 Corinthians 4.8–9, 14, 16–18

My hope is built on nothing less

12 February 2023

A weed that resembles wheat

Mark 2.23–28

Christ offended the Jews by His disregard for their fasting practice (Mk. 2.18–22), but He really upset them by disregarding their legalities involving the Sabbath (Jn. 5.16). *The Cambridge Greek Testament* says there were “six great occasions” when Jesus and the Jews clashed over the Sabbath; five times, Jesus was the offender, but in the Mark 2.23–28 passage, the Jews tried to get at Christ by way of His disciples.

This story, I think, is a good passage to illustrate the difference between *conscientiousness* and *scrupulosity*. Whereas conscientiousness is conscientious in regard to what God asks of us (Ps. 116.12), scrupulosity often concerns itself with going beyond what God asks of us and then expecting others to do what we do. While conscientiousness is diligent to serve God and bless man, scrupulosity can be “faultily faultless, icily regular, and splendidly null.” The Pharisees were full of scruples but failed in the weightier matters of the law (Matt. 23.23). Scrupulosity is a spiritual weed that can resemble wheat (Matt. 13.24–30).

Pharisaic scruples condemned Christ’s disciples of violating the Sabbath in three areas (Mk. 2.23–24). First, they plucked—*reaped*—the heads of grain; second, they rubbed—*threshed*—the heads in their hands to separate the grain from the chaff; and third, by reaping and threshing, they were *preparing food*, a chore/work the Jews strictly forbade on the Sabbath.

The Law said the Jews were to “do no work” on the Sabbath (Ex. 20.10). From this single command, Jewish rabbis derived thirty-nine prohibitions to ensure no Jew ever violated the Sabbath’s work restrictions. These thirty-nine were known as the *abhôth* or “fathers” (i.e., chief) rules. But the rabbis didn’t stop there. From these thirty-nine prohibitions, they further inferred a multitude of derivative rules they called *toldôth* or “descendants” rules. In the hands of the Jews, one commandment became thirty-nine rules, which then became who knows how many rules based on their thirty-nine rules! When the Pharisees tried to hold Christ accountable to their scruples, however, they soon learned they had picked on the wrong person (2.24).

On this matter of scrupulosity, let me offer three thoughts.

First, scrupulosity is almost always worthless. Far from

enhancing worship, attempts to be more religious than God (Lk. 18.12) are an exercise in futility. We can dress up our scruples to look humble and pious, and they sound impressive if said in a deep voice, but they’re of no effect at all, Paul declared, in the fight against sin and become just another way of showing off.

Second, far from being spiritually useless, scruples can be counterproductive, producing the opposite of what God desires. Pharisaic scruples about the Sabbath resulted in them condemning the guiltless (Matt. 12.7), promoting unscriptural practices (Mk. 2.27, 7.13), and denying the primacy of mercy (Hos. 6.6, Matt. 23.23).

Third, while scruples may be harmless in themselves, they are not to be bound on others; they are not the rule for determining a man’s relationship with God. Daniel’s custom was to kneel and pray toward Jerusalem three times each day (Dan. 6.10), but Daniel never made his frequency, his posture, or the direction of his praying the standard for acceptable prayer.

Scrupulosity is a dangerous weed that can, in the guise of pure and undefiled religion, destroy real religion. If you study this subject further, I’d suggest you include Zechariah 7.1–7.

kenny

“Collateral beauty”

This past week, I heard a dear friend, Dana Marrs Carrozza, use the expression “collateral beauty” to describe the Godly fallout that results when mercy is shown to children via adoption. Churchill said, “pay attention to euphony,” and *collateral beauty* is a term that sings.

You’ve heard the expression *collateral damage* used to describe the unintended harm that can be inflicted by bombardments and artillery barrages during war, but when I heard Dana say “collateral beauty,” my first thought was that it was the perfect descriptive for grace. If *love* is the bomb, *grace* is the beautiful consequences that result when love is detonated. Love is the cause, grace (gifts, mercies) are the effect. Whatever the collateral byproducts of love, they are beautiful indeed.

kenny

News about us

- Please continue in prayer for Mike and his upcoming surgery, Jerry, and others with more common ailments and on-going health issues.
- Barry is in Texas today for training.