

Ministers:  
the congregation

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

Wednesday:  
7:00 PM: Bible Study

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

**This Past Week:**  
Worship—30  
Wednesday—14  
Contribution—\$1680

**For meditation:**  
Proverbs 24.28–29  
Didn't the Law  
of Moses teach  
"an eye for an  
eye"? How, then,  
are we to under-  
stand v 29 which  
says we are not to  
respond in kind  
to what has been  
done to us?

**Radio program:**  
WGCY FM, 106.3  
Sundays at 8 AM

## *How Edom lost, but won*

**Amaziah . . . did what was right . . . but not  
with a loyal heart. 2 Chronicles 25.1,2**

When Edom posed a threat to Judah, King Amaziah did what a king should do: he raised an army to meet the threat, which included 100,000 mercenaries from the northern kingdom of Israel. When a prophet brought word from God that the northerners were not to go with Judah to the fight—who needs Israel when God is on your side (25.7–8)?!—Amaziah sent the Israelites home. Leading only his Judeans, Amaziah won a great victory over the Edomites in the Valley of Salt (somewhere in the vicinity of Petra).

But then we read, "Now it was so, after Amaziah came from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the people of Seir, set them up to be his gods, and bowed down before them and burned incense to them" (25.14). On the opponent's home turf (the Valley of Salt, Petra) and against all odds, Judah won the game going away. Then they hire Edom's coach. Does it get more insane than that?

The Chinese have a saying that in war, enemies tend to swap vices. And it's true: in fighting an evil we can easily become evil. Amaziah crushed Edom's army but adopted Edom's gods. And the reason they did is revealed in the second verse: Amaziah did right, but his heart wasn't in it, and eventually, what was in his heart came out. It doesn't matter if we've conquered paganism on the battlefield if paganism has penetrated has conquered our heart.

God enabling, I want to go to Obadiah next week and talk about the Edomites' sin that led to their crushing defeat.

kenny

# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: 2 Peter 3.1–9

## When God is nowhere to be found

19 February 2023

## *The Deliverer is mightier than the demon*

Generally, I haven't much use for *experts*. I don't trust them; they're often wrong. In 1899, Charles H. Duell, U.S. commissioner of patents, said, "Everything that can be invented has been invented." In 1903, the president of the Michigan Savings Bank advised Henry Ford's lawyer not to invest in Ford Motor Co., adding, "The horse is here to stay." Sir Isaac Newton was probably the greatest scientist of all time, despite the fact he spent a lot of time on alchemy, trying to turn lead into gold. After his death, Britain's Royal Society deemed his notes on alchemy "not fit to be printed." Etc., etc., *ad infinitum*.

If anyone should have recognized Jesus as the Christ, it was the scribes—the religious *experts*. But their malice and evil blinded them to what everyone else saw. According to Matthew 12.22, a blind and dumb demon-possessed man was brought to Christ, "and He healed them." It was a striking miracle—three miracles in one—and the excited multitude began asking, "Could this be the Son of David?"

But then the experts stepped in and attempted to quell the excitement by uttering a terrible blasphemy, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons" (3.22). "He controls demons through demonic power!" If you need proof there is no bottom to evil, here it is; Satan will resort to any accusation and engage in any act to stop goodness.

The insult was heinous, but Jesus didn't respond in kind (1 Pet. 2.23). Instead, He said, "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isa. 1.18) and then offered two thoughts.

First, *Christ showed the absurdity of the scribes' argument* (3.24–26). Obviously, Christ was destroying the work of the devil; everybody could see that. But if He did so by Satanic power, why would Satan get rid of Satan? Why would you send a devil to take out a devil? Division and disunity in any situation—a family, athletic team, church, business, etc.—ends in the destruction of the group. The scribes' explanation for Christ was ridiculous in claiming the devil was destroying himself. Not even the devil is stupid enough to commit suicide.

Second, *Christ showed the true explanation of His power* (3.27). If the exorcism of demons was not a voluntary act by the devil, what was it? There was only one logical answer; namely, Jesus had the upper hand on Satan, was it? Christ was stronger

than the strong man! "Do you think it's possible in broad daylight to enter the house of an awake, able-bodied man, and walk off with his possessions unless you tie him up first? Tie him up, though, and you can clean him out" (Peterson). No one can set free Satan's slaves unless he can overpower Satan. The healing of the blind, dumb, demon-possessed man was proof positive that Satan had met his match. Christ comanded demons as their conqueror, not as their prince!

"When all the battle of human history is fought out, it will be found that the Saviour has no weakness and suffers no defeat, but is in all things conqueror. . . . Fear not your adversary, He that is with thee is more than all those that be against thee" (Glover).

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## *Trivial pursuits*

In Jonathan Swift's classic satire, *Gulliver's Travels*, there's an account of a war that broke out between the empires of Lilliput (the little people) and Blefuscu. Thousands were killed; in the fighting "one emperor lost his life and another his crown."

And what was the cause? What precipitated the carnage? It was a disagreement over whether hard-boiled eggs should be cracked open on the big end or the little end.

In ancient Rome, a man built an inn at a place where three roads (*tri via*) met. In this pub, men would gather to drink and talk the kind of nonsense men talk when under the influence of alcohol. Such talk eventually became known as *trivia/trivial*: conversation that's inconsequential, of little account.

I've sat in men's business meetings where time has been spent in the trivial pursuit of matters as irrelevant as cracking open hard-boiled eggs. God's kingdom is not a matter of paving the parking lot or picking the color of carpet we decide to walk on (Rom. 14.17)!

I'll guarantee you Jonathan Swift sat business meetings like I've been in.

kenny

## *News about us*

- Mark had a spot taken off his ear this week. Keep him in your prayers.
- At the time I'm typing this, Leroy is still in the hospital, very much in need of prayers. As are Nancy, Jerry, et al.