

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—29
Wednesday—12
Contribution—\$785

For meditation:
Proverbs 25.6–7
These verses talk
about ambition
gone bad. Identify
two characteristics
of arrogant
ambition.

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

The People v. Ah Fat **48 Cal. 61 (1874)**

During the days of the Chinatown Tong Wars, Ah Fat, a cowardly fellow who ran with a murderous gang. When a fight broke out, Ah Fat would hide. Finally, his friends told him that unless he joined the fray, they'd take a meat cleaver to his head. During the next fight, Ah Fat waited until one of his friends dealt a mortal blow to one of their enemies, and then, with a whoop and a holler, cut off the dying man's head.

Ah Fat was arrested and charged with homicide. His lawyer argued Ah Fat didn't commit homicide, for the victim would have died anyway; Ah Fat merely "accelerated the inevitable." The judge rejected this argument, noting that accelerating the inevitable "is what homicide always does."

Euthanasia, the *mercy* killing of the elderly when they become economically, socially, or emotionally *inconvenient*—is commonplace in American hospitals and nursing facilities. The elderly are killed by the passive denial of life-sustaining medicines, food, life support or by the active injection of certain drugs until the individual dies of an overdose. More often than not, the Ah Fat defense is the justification for euthanasia—*they will die anyway*. Note that this argument could be used against the advocates of euthanasia: "They're going to die anyway, so let's euthanize them before they kill someone else." Voluntary suicide and euthanasia are ungodly, being a denial of the Biblical principle that only "the Lord taketh away" (Job 1.21).

[I and Dick Modin, an elder and a retired lawyer, are preparing a booklet on moral issues at the beginning and end of life. We hope to have it ready soon.]

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

Our "earnest expectation" ***Romans 8.19***



and the beacons of Gondor

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Sermon: Romans 8.1–19

The Weight of Glory

19 March 2023

The seed

The seed is the word of God. Luke 8.11

There are two significant analogies between a seed and a word.

In the first place, both contain tremendous power. A seed is one of the greatest mysteries of life. Nothing so little contains so much. A seed is not a dead thing; it is concentrated vitality, a storehouse of life. A single seed is capable of bringing forth much fruit (Jn. 12.24; mighty oaks from little acorns grow).

The only thing more mysterious than a seed is a word, for it is by a word that ideas/thoughts are transmitted. Before there was a seed, there was a word: “In the beginning was the Word” (Jn. 1.1). Before there was a seed giving life, there was a Word giving life. “Let the earth bring forth grass . . . whose seed is in itself” (Gen. 1.11). “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matt. 4.4).

Both seeds and words bring forth after their kind. I’ve read that in some of the pharaonic tombs, 3,000 year-old grain has been found. When planted, it brought forth the same kind of crop (wheat, barley, etc.) it would have produced when harvested 3,000 years ago. And so it is with the word of God. We don’t need apostolic or church succession in order to have a church of God today. So long as we have the gospel, we have all we need to have Christians today.

In the second place, both seed and word need a congenial reception for the life within them to reveal itself. Seed is made for the soil and the soil for the seed. Similarly, the heart is made for God’s truth and God’s truth for the heart. Seed and soil/the word and the heart need each other. Seed in the crib shows no sign of life. One of the yearly chores on our farm was “shelling corn.” Our neighbor, Milt During would bring his sheller to our farm. It would take a half hour or so to set up, and then we’d spend several hours raking corn from the crib into the sheller. Corn that had been drying in the cribs, surrounded by corn, was never more than corn on the cob. But let some of the kernels fall on the ground around the crib and we’d have volunteer corn coming up everywhere. In the same way, a word has to fall on a heart to be productive. The productivity of a seed and a word depend on the ground on which they fall. And we’ll take that up next article.

kenny

“the earnest expectation”

“A light kindled in the sky, a blaze of yellow fire . . . ‘The beacons of Gondor are alight, calling for aid. War is kindled . . . See, there is the fire on Amon Dîn, and flame on Eilenach; and there they go speeding west.’” Tolkien, *The Return of the King*, “Minas Tirith”

A great scene in *The Lord of the Rings* was the lighting of the beacons of Gondor. In antiquity, messages would be sent by a bonfire lit atop mountain, which would be seen by watchers on the next mountain who would light a fire, which would be seen on the next mountain, and so on. The fire (just like a smoke signal) sent a message.

Tolkien’s inspiration for this scene undoubtedly came from the Greeks, who sent messages by means of beacon fires. One of the most famous references to this is in the first scene of Aeschylus’s play *Agamemnon*. The play opens with a bored watchman on the roof of Agamemnon’s palace in Argos telling us, “A year long I have watched here . . . And what I watch for is a beacon fire, a flash of flame to bring the word from Troy, word that the town has fallen.” The Greeks had arranged for a long line of beacon fires and watchmen to carry the news that Troy had fallen.

And what does this have to do with the Bible? A beacon fire is the image behind the expression “earnest expectation” in Romans 8. “For the *earnest expectation* for the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God” (v 19). “Earnest expectation” translates a compound word made up of three words: *apo*/from, away from; *kara*/the head; *dokeō*/watching; the single word means “to wait with the head raised, and the eye fixed on that point of the horizon from which the expected object is to come” (Godet; J. B. Phillips famously translated it, “The whole creation is on tiptoe”). Christian hope, inspired by the promises of God, sees heaven on the horizon. And based on what we see coming, we patiently endure the sufferings that are happening (8.18).

A better day is coming; you can see it in the gospel. Hold on.
kenny

News about us

- Mike’s surgery went well, for which we thank God.
- Lisa continues her recovery. Leroy is to have a procedure tomorrow that, hopefully, will ease the pain he’s experiencing from the compression fractures in his spine.