

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—  
Wednesday—  
Contribution—\$860

**For meditation:**  
**Proverbs 25.18–19**  
Sticks and stones  
may break our  
bones, but our  
words can brutal-  
ize our neighbor.  
How? What hap-  
pens when we  
put our eggs in  
the basket of an  
untrustworthy  
person?

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

## ***“No condemnation,” part 3***

Justification (Rom. 8.1–3) means that ***fellowship with God and the presence of sin in one’s life exist concurrently in a believer.*** This doesn’t sound right to those whose faith is in their obedience rather than in the obedience of faith (Rom. 1.5, 16.26), but it is nevertheless true.

Fellowship with God can never rest on our moral/spiritual sinlessness because at any given moment, there is some way in which we are missing the mark (i.e., guilty of sin). To illustrate: do you have perfect knowledge? Do you know everything you should/could know at this point in your life (Heb. 5.12–14)? Does 2 Peter 3.18 not apply to you (“grow in the . . . knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”)? Is the knowledge you have 100 percent accurate? Do you have the infallibly correct view on every nuance of the marriage-divorce-remarriage issue? The covering? The interpretation of Revelation? And a thousand other things? If you can’t claim perfect knowledge, your fellowship with God must be based on something other than your perfection—given your imperfection.

What about sins of omission? Have you studied the Bible today as much as you should have? Have you prayed today as much as you should? Have you seized every opportunity today to teach the lost? Can one be in fellowship with God if he hasn’t done the good he knows to do (Jas. 4.17)?

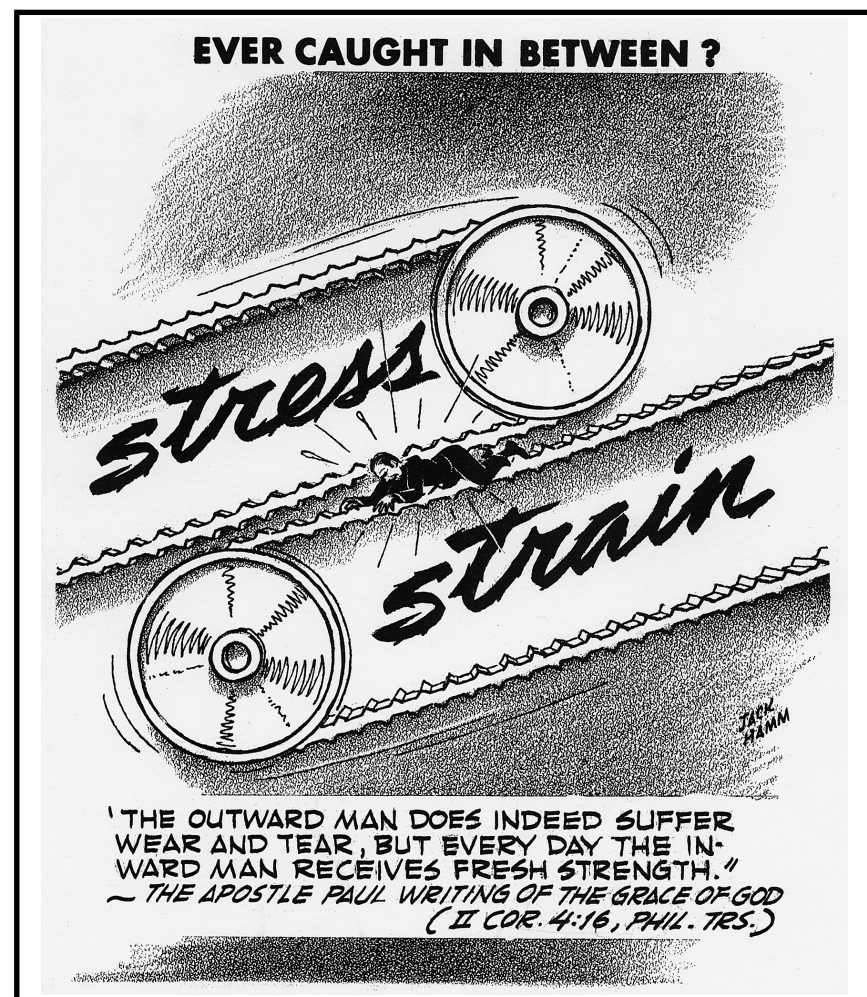
“So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘*We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do*’” (Lk. 17.10).

If fellowship with God depends on our perfection, we’re in trouble. And if we say we’re perfect, we’re in trouble (1 Jn. 1.8).

kenny

# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: Genesis 1

Earth's first week

30 April 2023

## *The maniac and the demons*

If you want to read about a haunting, read Mark 5.1–20. A man bedeviled by demons lived in a graveyard (5.2), was unrestrainable and uncontrollable (5.3,4), roamed the hills day and night, screaming and cutting himself with sharp stones (5.5). Matthew says there were two demonized men (8.28), but I'll guarantee you they were of no help to each other. It was double trouble, not two are better than one. Luke focuses on just one of them and says he wore no clothes (8.27). Wild, a social misfit, incredibly strong, intimidating, a threat to himself and others, indecent—Gadara had a true nightmare on Elm Street.

It's hard to know if any actions or words before v 15 are attributable to the man who was possessed; I tend to think everything done/said before v 15 was the demons talking. This would include the reference to worship in v 6; if demons can tell the truth about Jesus in Acts 16.17, I suppose they could offer some sort of worship to Christ here (Jas. 2.19).

What I am certain of from this story is that this tortured man was a microcosm of the destruction and devastation that always follows in the devil's wake. Sometimes evil is hidden, lurking behind a façade of respectability (2 Cor. 11.13–14). At other times the mask is ripped off, and it is seen in all its naked horror, wrecked humanity, nightmarish pollution, and obscenity. That's what we're presently seeing in America. Every day in the name of tolerance, equity, opportunity, etc., the worst actions possible are promoted and facilitated, with the result that families, society, and saints are being overrun by evil.

Two aspects of this story deserve comment: concentration and dispersion.

### CONCENTRATION

The man had a legion of demons inside him (a Roman legion numbered between five and six thousand men; based on v 13, it seems there were at least 2,000 demons in the man). That's a lot of evil for one man to carry around. But a heart can hold many angels or a lot of demons. And when demons take over, degraded, defiled, polluted living follows; a life meant to be a temple of God is turned into a haunt of devils. When the devil is in charge, there's no bottom to the depravity of which one is capable. If you doubt this, just leaf through today's newspaper.

### DISPERSION

Evil doesn't stay localized/contained; it metastasizes and affects others. An entire region was terrorized by this one man; two thousand pigs were destroyed. I know some whose evil not only destroyed them, it destroyed their spouse, their children, their church, their neighborhood, the local school, their work environment, and on and on. Sometimes, the destruction continues long after the perpetrator is dead and gone.

If we only knew half of what any one who has sold out to the devil is capable of, it would make our blood run cold.

kenny

## *Preventing madness*

In 1899, Henry Maudslay published a work called *Responsibility in Mental Diseases*. In the last chapter, entitled "The Prevention of Insanity," Maudslay offers some sound advice.

How much madness in society, he asks, could be prevented if people developed self-control? Or if they had some cause to live for that is worthy of their effort and is capable of taking them out of themselves? Or if they had a kindly interest in others? If they abstained from intoxicants? Practiced moral purity? "There can be no doubt that in the capability of self-formation which each one has in greater or less degree there lies a power over himself to prevent insanity" (270).

This is sound advice. And it doesn't matter that modern counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists tell us mental disorders are beyond our power to affect, and that we should leave its treatment to them, the experts. Hogwash. Attach your life to Someone above you (Col. 3.1). Stay away from that which can overpower you (1 Cor. 6.12). Love your neighbor (Rom. 13.8–9). Pursue moral purity (1 Cor. 6.18).

Do these things, and the chances are you'll never have to schedule an appointment with a shrink.

kenny

## *News about us*

- Everybody will be updated on our walking wounded this morning, but Donna especially needs our prayers.
- Steve Schoolcraft will teach and preach next Sunday.