

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—34
Wednesday—16
Contribution—\$1715

For meditation:
Proverbs 26.20–22
Verses 17–22 is a
classic Biblical
example con-
demning gossip
and meddling. If
you were going
to teach a lesson
based on these
verses, what
points would you
make?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

When the doc has no cure

For most of my life, our secular institutions (government, education, media, etc.) have told children they were born without a reason, are prolonged by chance, and will go to oblivion when they die. And kids have believed it. The daily headlines prove it by reporting *The Lord of the Flies* chaos that results when man replaces God. We've now raised several generations with nothing to believe in or look forward to, who are grabbing for all the gusto they can.

In Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, there's a famous scene where Lady Macbeth obsessively washes her hands. As she scrubs away she says, "Out, damned spot! . . . will these hands ne'er be clean?" Her hands weren't dirty but her conscience was laden with many crimes/murders/etc. she and her husband had committed.

Her husband, Macbeth, asks the doctor to examine his wife: "Cure her of that: / Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd, / Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow, / Raze out the written troubles of the brain, / And with some sweet oblivious antidote / Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff / Which weighs upon the heart?" Doc, isn't there anything you can do for my wife?

"Therein the patient," says the doctor, "must minister to himself." There's nothing I can do to cure her, said the doctor.

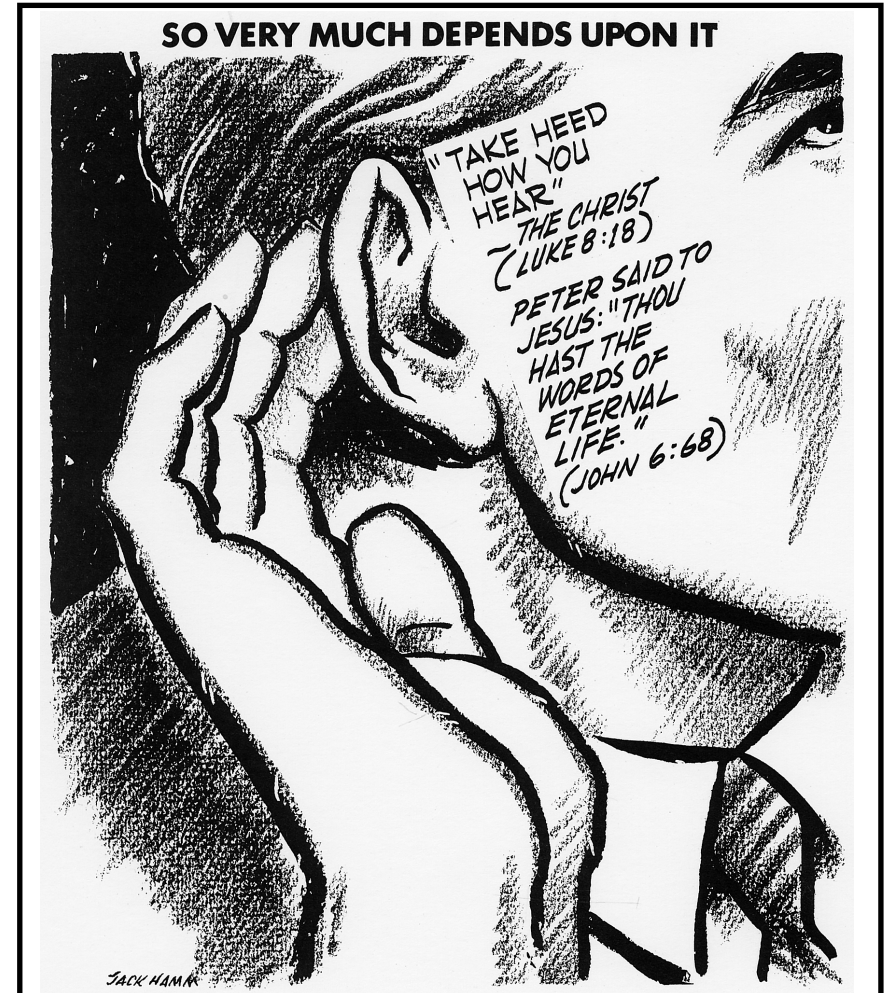
Our secularism, which has caused the problem, has the arrogance to think it—through shrinks, experts, pills, politicians, bureaucrats, etc.—can cure the problem.

And God looks at it all "and breaks out laughing" (Ps. 2.4, Peterson). The only hope for our society is a return to God. May He be patient with us until that happens.

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: 1 Peter 2.9

The aretē of God

6 August 2023

Human opinion and God's will, 2

I had planned to finish my comments on Mark 7.1–13 in this instalment of the bulletin, but there's been a change in plans.

Mark 7.1–13 contrasts God's word with human opinion. Now there's nothing wrong with having opinions. *Opinion* translates the Lat. *opinārī*, which means "to think." God made us to think; there's nothing wrong with thinking. What's wrong is when we elevate our thinking over God's thinking. This is what Christ discusses in our current passage.

The other day I received an e-mail from a dear friend with two humorous, real-life examples of what happens when human opinion is held sacrosanct. Since one illustration is worth a thousand explanations, I am going to pass along what my friend sent, for they help us see what happens when our thinking is not shaped and restrained by God's.

FIRST ILLUSTRATION

"An anecdote from friends in Calgary, Alberta: At least 40 years ago 'conservative' Christians there were counseled against using playing cards but were told it's ok to go mixed swimming, [if] the girls [wore] one-piece suits. When several Calgary young folks went to Alabama, however, they were told that playing cards was OK but mixed, swimming regardless of the 'modest' suits, was ungodly. There was controversy but it was concluded that the Alabama youth would play cards just by themselves and the Calgary youth would go mixed swimming just by themselves. Interesting solution."

SECOND ILLUSTRATION

"An anecdote from [an older preacher, whose name I'm omitting to protect the innocent]. The older preacher was talking to a young preacher who insisted that ALL dancing is sinful. Period. The older preacher, always the clever guy, asked if it would be sinful for a husband to dance with his wife in public. Oh, yes! said the young preacher. Then the older preacher asked if it would be sinful for a husband to dance with his wife in private. Oh, yes! Said the young preacher. When asked why, the young preacher said, because of what it could lead to!"

Next week I'll write what I meant to write this week. In the meantime, I want to thank my friend for supplying two classic illustrations of the dangers Christ has in mind when our thinking supersedes God's word.

kenny

Impressions of Israel, 11

To understand Caesarea (Maritima, not Philippi), situated on a blue sweep of the Mediterranean, some background is in order.

In 31 BC at the Battle of Actium, naval forces under Marc Antony were defeated by naval forces commanded by Octavius—Augustus Caesar. Consequently, Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide and Herod, king of the Jews, was terrified.

Herod—thirty-five, handsome, courageous, cultivated, a man of the world—had gambler's luck: he consistently backed the wrong horse but won anyway. Initially, he backed Pompey but deserted him for Julius Caesar. When Caesar fell, he backed Brutus. When Brutus fell, he backed Antony. When Antony fell, he decided on a bold course: he would meet Augustus face to face and either die or return to Judaea with greater power than ever.

Augustus was at Rhodes, resting after his victory. Herod sailed there to meet him and plead for his life. When he walked in, he spoke to Caesar as an equal, not a groveling supplicant. He didn't apologize for backing Antony but instead stressed his loyalty to Antony. He claimed that he begged Antony to get rid of Cleopatra but that Antony was bent on self-destruction. Herod then promised he would serve Augustus as faithfully as he had served Antony. And he won again—Octavius reaffirmed his title as king of the Jews. (Before sailing for Rhodes, Herod left orders that if he didn't return, his beautiful wife Mariamne was to be killed; she must never belong to any man but himself.)



Herod the Great

As proof of his new loyalty to Augustus, between 22–10 BC Herod rebuilt and enlarged an ancient Phoenician site known as Strabo's Tower and renamed it Caesarea in honor of his patron.

Today, Caesarea is among the more spectacular ruins left in Israel from New Testament times. *More next week.*

kenny

News about us

- Continue praying for all of our number, and those of whom we are aware elsewhere, who are dealing with serious health issues. God bless them all.