

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—25  
Wednesday—7  
Contribution—\$

**For meditation:**  
Ecclesiastes 2.12–14  
Can a new president enact a policy no one has ever tried? If he can't, does it really matter if he's a wise ruler or a foolish one? Why is wisdom better than foolishness, considering both the wise and the fools die?

Radio program:  
WGCY FM, 106.3  
Sundays at 8 AM

## *Something to crow about*

Here's how I outline James 2.12–13.

### **A CAUTION ABOUT JUDGMENT**

“So speak and so do as those who will be judged.” James 2.12–13 conclude a paragraph on being prejudiced: judging others (note the threefold reference to judgment in these two verses) on the basis of superficial, irrelevant criteria. The little adverb *so*, twice repeated, looms large for it reminds us that in what we say and how we treat others, we should always keep in mind that judges will be judged, critics will be criticized, and hunters will be hunted. The yardstick we use to measure others will be used to measure us (Matt. 7.1–5). The merciful will be shown mercy (Matt. 5.7), but the unforgiving will be unforgiven (Matt. 6.14–15). So fundamental is this rule that Christ devoted an entire parable to it (Matt. 18.23–35). Knowing our judgments will be judged should always temper how we think about, talk about, and do to others.

### **A CRITERIA FOR JUDGMENT**

“Judged by the law of liberty.” To talk about a *law of liberty* seems a contradiction for laws tend to reduce liberty, not enlarge it. But the gospel is a “law of liberty” for its purpose is not to enslave us but to preserve the liberty Christ gave us. Left to ourselves, we'll quickly return to slavery in Egypt (Rom. 6.13). In justification God freed us; in sanctification, He keeps us free, and sanctification occurs as we obey God's laws.

### **A COMFORT CONCERNING JUDGMENT**

“Mercy triumphs—“crows”— over judgment. I'm really glad to read this because I deserve justice, which demands I get my due, but my plea is for mercy/forgiveness. Thank God, it's mercy that wins out. It's mercy that the gospel crows about.

kenny

# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

## *The church—the body of Christ*

The church, which is His body. Ephesians 1.22–23

To call the church of Jesus Christ the *body* of Christ has significant implications.

*It implies the church has the **life** of Christ.* A body is animated by life (Gen. 2.7), and the church is animated by the life of Christ. To be in Christ's church is to be alive, but no one is in Christ's church until they are in Christ, which occurs at baptism. (Gal. 2.20, 3.27).

*It implies the church submits to the **will** of Christ.* Ephesians 5.23 says Christ is the head of the church. Just as a body submits to the dictates of the head, so will one who is part of the body of Christ submit to the will of Christ.

*It implies that in submitting to the will of Christ, the church reflects the **mind** of Christ.* My mind finds its expression through my hands, feet, and lips, and in the same way, Christ “has no hands but our hands, to do His work today” (Flint).

Whatever is in the mind of Christ is the will of Christ, which is to be expressed in the life of His body, the church.

kenny

Sermon: James 2.14–26

## Four tests of saving faith

19 January 2025

## On the reading of books, part 1

“One of the great presuppositions of the Bible is that God’s people will read. The existence of Scripture is in itself an argument for the necessity of reading. That God inspired a book indicates His desire that His servants should be readers” (Dinsdale T. Young).

On possibly the last inspired page he ever wrote, Paul told Timothy to, “Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments” (2 Tim. 4.13). The word translated “books”—*biblion*—is common in the NT. From it we get *bibliography* (the science of books) and *Bible* (the Book); *Biblion* is the first word in the Gr. manuscripts of the NT: “The *book* of the generation of Jesus Christ.” According to *Strong’s*, the form of the word Paul uses means “a small book, or scroll.” The word translated *parchments* occurs nowhere else in the NT. It is the Gr. word *membranas* (membrane) and refers to a dressed animal skin used as writing material. For his body, Paul wanted his cloak, for companionship he had Luke and wanted Mark and Timothy (4.11), but for his mind and heart, he wanted books.

We’ve no idea about the contents of the materials Paul wanted, but I’ve found no better statement about the remarkable nature of his request than this from Charles Spurgeon.

*Even an apostle must read.* . . . He is inspired, and yet he wants books! He has been preaching at least for thirty years, and yet he wants books! He had seen the Lord, and yet he wants books! He had had a wider experience than most men, and yet he wants books! He had been caught up into the third heaven, and had heard things which it was unlawful for a man to utter, yet he wants books! He had written the major part of the New Testament, and yet he wants books! The apostle says to Timothy and so he says to every preacher, “Give thyself unto reading.” The man who never reads will never be read; he who never quotes will never be quoted. He who will not use the thoughts of other men’s brains, proves that he has no brains of his own. (11/29/1863)

For some time I’ve thought about writing some articles about the books that have meant so much to me in my work as a preacher. Two days ago, a friend, who didn’t know I’d been thinking this, called and ask me to write about books young preachers need to read. That call nudged me, and I’ll begin naming names—of books and authors—in the next article.

kenny

## A primer on Satan

**If you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And his desire is for you, but you should rule over it. Genesis 4.7**

In Genesis 3 Satan is a serpent; in Genesis 4, he is a principle, *sin*.

After rejecting Cain’s will-worship (Col. 2.23, man-made, “self-made religion,” ESV), God gives him three important facts to remember about Satan.

### SATAN ALWAYS LOOKS FOR AN OPENING

“Sin lies at the door.” Christ stands at our door and knocks (Rev. 3.20), but Satan lies at our door, looking for an opportunity to get his foot in the door—or as Lewis puts it, looking “for a train of thought in our mind to go the wrong way” (*The Screwtape Letters*). We don’t have to be in Las Vegas for this to happen; it can happen in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26.40); it can even happen when we’re declaring our devotion and loyalty to the Lord’s (Matt. 16.21–23).

### SATAN ALWAYS INTENDS ON DEVOURING

“His desire is for you” should be read as, “Satan wants to eat you.” He prowls because we are his prey (1 Pet. 5.8). “To us,” said senior devil Screwtape, “a human is primarily food.” So ravenous is Screwtape that he even threatens his nephew Wormwood, an apprentice devil, by saying, “Bring us back food, or be food yourself.”

### SATAN IS NEVER OVERPOWERING

“You should rule over him.” If we are an immovable object, the devil cannot be an irresistible force (Jas. 4.7). God has endowed us with volition—will power—that can cause our enemy to leave the field (Matt. 4.8–11). In his last letter to Wormwood, Screwtape excoriates him for allowing his asset to turn become a committed believer. “You have let a soul slip through your fingers . . . It makes me mad to think of it . . . [You] defeated, out-manuevered fool! . . . You useless tempter!” Satan hates losing.

In evil days, let us gather the weapons God has issued, and stand (Eph. 6.13). If we’ll do this, the devil will turn on his own.

kenny

## News about us

- As we move through the harsh days of January, I’d ask us all to especially remember those of this family who are dealing with the crud that is sweeping the country, and please pray for Andrei, Lena, and Orel.