

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—21
Wednesday—
Contribution—\$

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 2.7–9
Did Solomon find
satisfaction and
meaning in life by
accumulating
money, posses-
sions, and become
the richest man
Jerusalem had ev-
er seen?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

A Christian home

“God give us Christian homes,” wrote B. B. McKinney, and in Acts 12.12, Luke left us a picture of what a Christian home can be. The homes of most Christians could probably be put to better use than they are, and “the house of Mary” shows us what’s possible. Mary’s home was:

A place of refuge. Peter has been thrown in jail for preaching Christ but was delivered from jail by an angel. “And when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary.” Why go to Mary’s house? Maybe because he knew he would find there the warmth of Christian love and a wealth of Christian company. Even though it was nighttime (12.6), he believed Mary’s house would welcome him. And of course, it did.

A place of prayer. At the time of Peter’s release, many were gathered [at Mary’s house] to pray.” What follows is a funny, candid camera scene of the early church. The church prayed for Peter’s release, and the Lord answers their prayer. But when Peter showed up at the door, the church refused to believe it was he. Rhoda might be crazy or maybe she saw an angel—they were ready to believe anything except that God had answered their prayer! Have you ever been there, done that?

A base for service. The home “was the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark”—the Mark who wrote the second gospel, and who years later was companion to both Peter and Paul in Rome. It used to be in Catholic families that for a son to become a priest or a daughter a nun was a greater honor than being president. What a blessing would result if Christian homes put more emphasis on loving service than on worldly success.

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

Optimism

- He went into exile not long after He was born.
- His hometown folk tried to kill Him.
- His family thought Him insane.
- The city that saw His mightiest works did not believe.
- The multitudes He helped forsook Him.
- The clergy set themselves against Him and did everything they could to discredit Him, calling Him a “Samaritan” (heretic), a devil, a glutton, an alcoholic, a keeper of disreputable company, a blasphemer, and a deceiver.
- The religious establishment arranged His judicial murder.
- He was betrayed by one disciple, denied by another, forsaken by all.
- The priests of God suborned liars to testify against Him.
- The people He loved clamored for His death.
- The government He respected denied Him justice.
- He died the vilest death imaginable.

And yet His serenity never left Him. He was angry only at sin. He never lost control of Himself nor viewed Himself as a victim or slave of circumstances. His bequest to His disciples and the world was righteousness, peace, and joy.

In this new year, may the optimism of Christ ever lift us to the peace that passes understanding.

kenny

Sermon: James 2.8–11

The Royal Law

5 January 2025

Historian Paul Johnson's narrative of what happened to the Jewish nation after AD 70, from *A History of the Jews*, 140.

“Jerusalem was left a ruin by the siege, its Temple destroyed, the walls nothing but rubble. But the woeful experience of these seven bloody years did not end the Graeco-Jewish clash nor the capacity of religious sentiment to drive pious Jews, young and old, to violent defence of their faith, however hopeless. Anti-Semitic sentiment continued to spread. The fall of Jerusalem was cited as evidence the Jews were hated by God. Philostratus asserted in his *Vita Apollonii* that when Helen of Judah offered Titus a victory wreath after he took the city he refused it on the grounds that there was no merit in vanquishing a people deserted by their own God. This sounds highly unlikely coming from a professional commander who had fought a hard war against a very determined enemy. But it is typical of the anti-Semitic propaganda which now appeared everywhere. Horace and Martial were muted in their criticisms but Tacitus summarized all the Greek smears. From about 100 AD onwards, the Jews were attacked even more fiercely for subverting the lower orders and introducing novel and destructive ideas—a charge which was to echo through the ages. So there were constant troubles in the diaspora cities, especially in 115–17.

The last Jewish risings were precipitated by a wave of government hostility to the Jews under Emperor Hadrian, who was in the East 128–32. . . .

As soon as Hadrian departed [the East, ca. AD 132] the Jews of Judaea struck and, says Dio [Cassius], ‘the Jews in the entire world also rose and joined them and created a great deal of trouble for the Romans, secretly or openly, and even many gentile people came to their aid.’ The revolt lasted four years. Roman losses were heavy. Legions had to be concentrated in Palestine from all over the empire, including Britain and the Danube, so that eventually the Jews were facing no fewer than twelve. The Roman methods were slow but systematic and sure, splitting up and isolating the rebel forces, starving outlying pockets into surrender, then gradually closing in on the remaining centres of resistance. The Jew occupied Jerusalem for a time but it had no walls and was not defensible. They held various fortresses and their tunnelling, as for instance at Herodium, has been excavated. They seem to have made their headquarters in what was then the town of Betar, in the Judean hills south-west of the capital, and this final stronghold fell to the Romans in 135 AD.” [GOOGLE: BAR KOKHBA REVOLT TUNNELS]

Notes on Genesis 4

We don't get far in the Biblical record before we see James 1.14–15's pattern of LUST/SIN/DEATH played out. Lust on the part of man led to an act of rebellion against man's Creator that set off a chain reaction that a few years later resulted in an innocent man's death. Putting the start and finish of the process side-by-side in Genesis 3–4 underscores the connection and drama.

I've recently been reading about Genesis 4, mainly in old commentaries, and would like to pass along some of the things I've come across, beginning with some thoughts on worship.

The first truth in Genesis 4 is that God is to be worshipped as the creator, sustainer, and judge of life. In this, a *place* was involved. Cain and Abel “brought” (4.3,4) items to a certain place where they were offered to God. My guess is this place was near the entrance to the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3.24 says God “placed Cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden.” According to Strong's the word translated “placed” is most commonly translated in the OT as to dwell, abide, or reside, and some commentators suggest Moses is saying that God dwelt between the Cherubim. Given the numerous OT references to “the God who dwells between the cherubim,” this seems plausible. But regardless, there was a place where Cain and Abel went to worship.

There was an appointed *time* to worship. The phrase, “in the process of time,” in 4.4, has the margin note, “Lit. at the end of days” (NKJV). This could simply mean that “time passed,” but many think it points to a specific time, possibly the seventh day/ the end of the week, as a designated time for public worship. At the very least, it seems Cain and Abel showed up in the same place at the same time to worship.

There was also a prescribed *act* of worship: the offering of a sacrifice. I only have to space left to say that there is a right way and a wrong way to worship God. In the next article, we'll go to Hebrews 11.4 to expand on this and learn how Cain illustrated justification by works and Abel righteousness by faith.

kenny

News about us

- The seasonal bugs have hit us hard. Debbie was in the hospital five days but was finally able to come home. Everyone do their best to stay healthy and be safe.