

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—  
Wednesday—12  
Contribution—\$

**For meditation:**  
**Ecclesiastes 7.5–6**  
Why does living a  
better life depend  
on hearing some  
frank truths, while  
ignoring some flat-  
tering and fawning?

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

## *Plato's child-raising advice*

**"Now early life is very impressible, and children ought not to learn what they will have to unlearn when they grow up; we must therefore have a censorship of nursery tales, banishing some and keeping others." Plato**

In *The Republic*, where Plato describes his ideal society, he recommends a lot of things that have historically proven to be harmful to society (like making the state responsible for child-rearing), but every now and then he hits on something truly significant. Here's an example.

***Plato urged that children be raised in an atmosphere of nobility and virtue.***

He argued, rightly I believe, that children do not act based on intellectual reasoning but upon emotional attachments they develop. The more emotionally attached they are to goodness, the better the chance they'll stay committed to goodness when they reach the age of reason and must think for themselves.

Plato also warned that if children do not emotionally attach themselves to a virtue, they almost certainly will attach themselves to vice.

Let me translate: parents, take your children to church! Immerse them in good friends, good stories, and a good example. Teach them to behave. Let them learn the VBS songs and "Jesus Loves Me." They need to hear Jesus talked about in their classes and emphasized in sermons. They should listen to prayers, and see the Lord's supper served.

In all this, they'll form an emotional connection to goodness that will go a long way toward helping them think right as an adult and go to heaven.

kenny

# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

## *Growing old gracefully*

"Never grow old" is advice often handed out. Given how frightening, humiliating, debilitating, and generally unpleasant old age is, the rationale behind it is easy to understand.

But it's impossible advice. We might stop many things in our life and this world, but we won't stop aging. We do all kind of things to keep it at bay, but no one has yet discovered the fountain of youth. We stave off some symptoms of old age, but we never not stop the process.

And "never grow old" can be bad advice. It's embarrassing to see an old person trying to be young by dressing, talking, acting, and speaking as do the young. It's a great ability to be able to accept things as they are, to accept the years without resentment. Wisdom always believes the best age is the age we happen to be.

Here are four things the years should bring.

***A better sense of priority.*** By the time we're old, we ought to have figured out what's important and what isn't.

***Peace and serenity.*** We should realize most everything we worried and fretted about during our life was a total waste of time and energy.

***Greater wisdom.*** Having grown old, we should be more sympathetic, forgiving, and patient with others, knowing that there, but for the grace of God, go I.

***Increasing trust in the grace of God.*** In old age we raise our Ebenezer, because it was only by God's help that we're here.

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Sermon: Hebrews 11.17–19

## Abraham the amazing

5 October 2025

## *Jesus saw Himself as judge*

The Father . . . has given Him authority to execute judgment.

John 5.26,27

Classical mythology told of Rhadamanthus, one of the judges of the dead, and the Egyptian religion spoke of a hall of judgment where the heart of every human being was weighed after death on a judge's scales—superstitions that testify to the fact human beings cannot coexist and society cannot cohere without certain rules to regulate behavior. Not only must there be laws and standards, there must be a judge—a patriarch, a warrior, a monarch, or some other—to enforce the rules impartially, fairly, and justly.

Christ saw Himself as the One coming to “judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth” (Ps. 96.13). He is the judge before whom all will stand (2 Cor. 5.10); He is the one ordained by God to judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17.31). The word He has spoken will judge men at the last day (Jn. 12.48). The basic principle by which He will judge is the law of love (Matt. 25.31–46).

Our judgments often fall far short of the Lord's, for we:

- **Jump to conclusions**, often the wrong ones.
- **Make rash judgments**. We should draw no conclusions at all until we have the facts, because it is a blatant injustice to judge when we don't have all the facts. I think this must be one reason why Jesus (Matt. 7.1–6) and James (4.12) warned us about judging—we often don't have all the facts.

When judging, we must:

- **Think the best of others, not the worst**. We hate having the worst interpretation assigned to our actions, but we can be quick to assume the worst of others. Love thinks no evil.

The reason God made Christ judge is because “He is the Son of Man” (Jn. 5.27). As Man, He has lived our life. He knows what life ought to be. He has shown us what life may be. Because He is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, He knows the frailty of our frame that we are dust (Ps. 103.14). He knows and can be touched with the feeling of our infirmity. He is kind, tender, ready to help, and eager to bless.

When we stand before Him in judgment, we will be standing before the One who proved Himself our best friend. That should be a great comfort, for as our Friend, we can trust Him through all that we'll encounter in the life beyond the grave.

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## *Burn your boats*

When Cortés landed in Mexico, he ordered the destruction of the expedition's ships. The message this sent was “conquer or die”; *nulla vestigia retrorsum*—“never a step backwards.” It worked. Within two years the Spaniards had conquered the Aztec Empire.

Israel left Egypt under the excitement of Moses' leadership and the expectation that in a few days they'd be in the promised land. But in the stark barrenness of the Sinai peninsula, the Israelites, with few exceptions, were easily discouraged and quickly frightened. When they realized they were being pursued by Pharaoh's army, they turned on Moses with the accusation, “It were better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in this wilderness.” Had it not been for God's intervention, the Hebrews wouldn't have gotten very far from their brickmaking and bondage.

There are times when burning your boats is a good idea if that's what it takes to be properly motivated for the task at hand. Here are three situations wherein I'd advise boat burning.

**When you become a Christian.** Freeing oneself from the world's grip isn't easy, but it's made easier when we determine not to go back to where we came from (Heb. 11.15). Counting all things loss (Phil. 3.8) forgetting the things behind (3.13), and pressing ahead, never on the verge of mutiny, is the stuff of success. When God calls you to leave Ur, burn your boats. It's “Canaan or bust.”

**When you get married.** “A man shall leave [abandon, forsake] his father and mother and be joined to his wife” (Gen. 2.24). The marriage relationship takes priority over all other human relationships, including the parent-child connection. But often, when problems arise in a marriage, one or the other run back to mommy and daddy, complicating matters. A good friend once told me that early in his marriage, his wife decided she'd had enough and was returning to her home. When she called to tell her dad, he said, “We don't want you.” What a wise father! She stayed with her husband, and wouldn't you know, a wonderful marriage resulted.

**When you forgive.** To forgive is to commit yourself to never again bring up the forgiven sin to the sinner, others, or yourself. By refusing to dwell on the sin and instead concentrating on the true, noble, just, pure, lovely, worthwhile, and praise worthy (Phi. 4.8), *forgetfulness* ensues. “I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions . . . I will not remember your sins. (Isa. 43.25).

When you need to forgive another, burn your boats.

kenny