

Ministers:
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley
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Sunday:
8:00 AM: WGCY
9:00 AM: Worship

Wednesday:
6:30 PM: Bible Study

[gibsoncitychurchof
Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofchrist.com)

This Past Week:
Worship—33
Wednesday—10

For meditation:
Psalm 1

What characterizes a
happy man? An un-
happy man?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

The gospel of wild flowers

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.
Matthew 6.28

Flowers teach us that **God is not the God of the perfect but of the growing**. Full-grown maturity may have characterized the flowers in Genesis 1, but ever since flowers only achieve their splendor when a seed is planted that grows and matures in response to sunshine, rain, cold, etc. “For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head” (Mk. 4.28).

This fact is a blow to the perfectionism that believes God only accepts the morally and spiritually perfect. Growth is what God is looking for in all areas of life. He not only intends for us to grow, He intends for us to never stop growing, even in eternity.

- We are never too old to learn.
- We should never be too static to change.
- We can always grow kinder, more just, more forgiving.
- We can learn to apologize.
- We can grow to where we’re brave enough to admit we were wrong.
- We can always be open to increasing light and newly learned truth.
- We can press on and never be content to stay where we are.
- We can ever be a disciple and a penitent, which are among the greatest traits in the world. Blessed are they who mourn.
- Our heart can be smitten by sins we once wallowed in.
- Each day our vision can sharpen, our sense of what is right reinforced, and our determination to do right strengthened.

Spiritual growth can involve stops and starts, be fitful, and all over the map. The critical thing for all of us is that we never stop growing.

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

My election prediction is this . . .

No matter who’s elected this week—blue wave, red wave, tidal wave—**the nation will be worse off in 2028 than it is right now**. I say this because history repeats itself, and here’s the history I have in mind:

Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered [Israel] out of the hand of them that spoiled them. . . . And it came to pass when the judge was dead, that [Israel] returned and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their stubborn way” (Judg. 2.16,19).

The Lord handpicked the judges and the judges delivered as promised. But as soon as the judge was out of office, Israel turned back to nature worship, polytheism, countless abominations copied from surrounding countries, and was worse off than ever. If this is how it went for Israel, what chance do we have?

Maybe if we had a king—a politician—who’s head and shoulders above everyone else, things would turn out differently.. Yeah, a king! That’s the ticket!

Listen, short of a REVIVAL, things are only going to get worse. And I refuse to give to any politician or political party the faith and consecration that the Lord Jesus Christ claims for Himself. Do I hear an Amen?

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Sermon: Matthew 7.7–12

The golden rule

1 November 2026

The active ingredients in the Beatitudes

Early in his Gospel, Matthew (5–7) preserves a public, formal, and official statement from Christ about His kingdom that is known as the Sermon on the Mount. In it, He defined the nature, rules, and subjects of His Kingdom. Christ's *kingdom* is the state in which man enjoys favor and fellowship with God, where those who seek the will of God (6.10) enjoy the blessings of God.

Concerning His subjects, Christ speaks on four areas: their character (5.3–12), influence (5.13–16), conduct (5.17–7.12), and destiny (7.13–27). The Lord's comments about the character of His people are in the opening section known as the Beatitudes.

Eight beatitudes are listed. Of these, I see three as being the *active ingredients* of Christian character. In a tube of toothpaste, the amount of active ingredients that actually clean the teeth and fight tooth decay is very small. If I had to pick out the beatitudes with the most essential active ingredients, it would be these:

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (5.3). "Poor" in this statement refers to the poorest of the poor, a state of absolute destitution, a beggar without the power to improve his condition. And yet, if a man is willing to admit his utter impoverishment, he is in a position to accept the free gift of God that is inclusion in the kingdom of heaven. To be granted membership in the Kingdom of Heaven when you can't pay the price of admission is due to **one thing: grace.**

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy (5.7). Mercy is the prerogative of a king; a king has the right to not give a man what the man deserves (Matt. 18.23–35). In the Coliseum, mercy was when Caesar gave a "thumb's up" to a fallen gladiator, allow him to live when he deserved to die. **Mercy** is not moral indifference to sin, or sentimentalism, but the righteous decision not to give a man what he deserves. Mercy is what righteousness (v 6) does. "He doesn't treat us as our sins deserve, nor pay us back in full for our wrongs" (Ps. 103.10, PETERSON).

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God (5.10). The story of the Bible is the story of God making peace, removing the enmity between Himself and man and between man and man. He did this—made peace—through the blood of the cross (Col. 1.20).

The Christian virtues Paul prayed for Timothy—grace, mercy, and peace, 2 Timothy 1.2—are thus the primary virtues that make up the character of a citizen of the kingdom of heaven.

kenny

You are your own authority

I once heard that two hours of sleep before midnight is worth four hours of sleep after. When I googled this, the internet (which is never wrong) said this wise old saying is nothing but an old wives' tale having no basis in reality.

When the experts disagree, when beliefs you've long held are called in question, when there's no consensus, who's to decide who's right? Every Bible student has had to answer this question. Here are my thoughts on it.

Is conscience our final authority? To paraphrase Epictetus, no one is born knowing music or geometry, but everyone is born knowing right from wrong. I think there's some truth to this, but it's far from the whole truth. For the whole truth is that conscience is a variable thing. The conscience of a civilized man is not necessarily the conscience of a savage. Up-bringing can alter our conscience. We can silence, stifle, and blunt our conscience to where it ceases to operate as it once did; to where we can do without a qualm or pang that which once would have troubled us a great deal. I don't think conscience is the final authority.

Is the church our authority? Roman Catholicism says it is. But the Roman Catholic Church authorized the Crusades, and the Spanish Inquisition, made a fortune from the sale of indulgences, was on good terms with Hitler and Mussolini, created a climate where child molestation by priests was pandemic, and recently has been more concerned with political wokeism than Biblical holiness. Any church—Roman Catholic or another—is far too human to have the label of infallibility attached to it.

Is the Bible our authority? Well, of course it is. But this begs the question. There are things in the Bible hard to understand (2 Pet. 3.16), and when our favorite preachers differ, and the commentators are all over the map, and no direct revelation comes from God, whom do we trust for the right explanation?

The final authority is you. God intends that each man be his own, final authority. Using his own mind, heart, and reasoning, every Christian should want to know what Jesus says about any given subject. He'll try to look at the Lord's word through the Lord's eyes, and then, using the brain God gave him, will reach a conclusion that he's willing to answer for in judgment.

"Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" (Lk. 10.25).

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