

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—26  
Wednesday—14  
Contribution—\$

**For meditation:**  
**Proverbs 31.30–31**  
“‘Tis woman’s to  
nourish affection’s  
tree / And its fruit  
domestic bliss  
shall be: / ‘Tis  
hers to cultivate  
with patient toil /  
Each heaven-born  
plant in heart’s  
deep soil.”

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

## *The Assyrian juggernaut*

Possibly no nation epitomized cold-blooded tyranny and cruelty more than Assyria. “The notorious brutality of the Assyrians was such as to make the surrounding peoples shudder with a sickly terror of ever falling prey to them. Without a doubt, the Assyrians were the German Nazis of those days. . . . There was unsparing slaughter . . . The kings seem to gloat in their inscriptions over the spectacle presented by the field of battle. They describe how it was covered with the corpses of the vanquished . . . The leading men [vanquished foes] were led forth, seized by the executioners, and subjected to various punishments, all of them filled to the brim with horror” (Baxter, *Explore the Book*, IV, 160).

But despite unprecedented determination and might and an industrial-military complex that was continually devising new ways to wage war (by improving body armor, chariot design, assault engine design, the use of specialized troops for special purposes, etc.), between 614 and 610 BC, the greatest military power ever known was destroyed—not just the army, but the Assyrian state and people. The destruction was so total, that when Xenophon and the Ten Thousand marched through Assyria two hundred years later on their way to the sea, they “were struck with astonishment, not so much at the massiveness of the fortifications and the extent of the area they embraced, as at the spectacle of such vast works of man lying uninhabited” (Toynbee, *A Study of History*, 390). So complete was the devastation that the Greeks could not even detect the names of the derelict fortress-cities through which they passed.

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**Next: God judges Assyria**

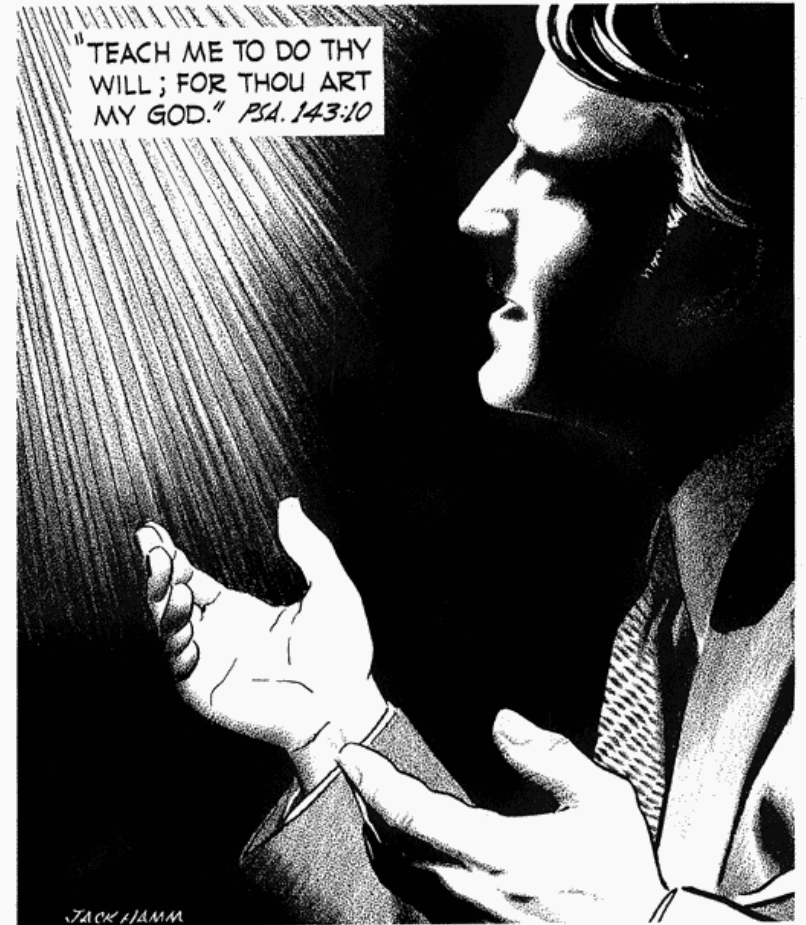
(My thanks to Ralph Walker for putting me onto Toynbee’s *History* several years ago.)

# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

**“Yield Yourselves Unto God”—Rom. 6:13**

“TEACH ME TO DO THY  
WILL ; FOR THOU ART  
MY GOD.” *PSA. 143:10*



Sermon: Philippians 4.21–23

**Revelation—Revolution**

10 November 2024

## *The Gospel and character*

There's a profound difference between the system Moses revealed and the system Christ revealed that's obvious to anyone who reads Moses and Christ.

**Moses' system was based on law.** Law-based systems are full of "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not"; "Do this, do that, a rule for this, a rule for that; a little here, a little there" (Isa. 28.10, NIV)—everything spelled out in detail (which requires a lot of books, which is why lawyers' offices are filled with thick legal tomes that take up entire walls in their office).

**Christ's system is based on love.** "Love God . . . love your neighbor . . . love your enemies." Love is what Christ was talking about when He told His disciples, "Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5.20). In the gospel, anything done because the law says, "Do it," rather than because love dictates it is worthless (1 Cor. 13.1–3). When love is the foundation of a relationship, a long list of shalt and shalt not isn't needed because love has its own list of behavior. Love doesn't have to be told, "Don't lie to or steal from" another; love's moral code that is more strict and stringent than any municipal code ever voted on at a town hall. When you follow the golden rule, you don't need a college course on business ethics. Love's moral code doesn't give up or throw in the towel, isn't "me first," doesn't covet what it doesn't have, isn't pompous, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep score of others' sins, doesn't make others cry "uncle," delights in truth, puts up with anything, trusts God always, looks for the best in others, never looks back, keeps going to the end. *Speaking/professing/confessing* the truth is not the best indicator of who we are . . . *living* the truth is the acid test. According to Christ, talk is cheap—"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven"; according to Christ, actions speak louder than words—"by their fruits you will know them . . . he who does the will of My Father."

In His emphasis on character, Christ introduces an element of religion not found outside Christianity. Faith in Jesus is the process, but Christ-like character is the product; and without the product, the process is useless (Jas. 2.14–17).

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## *The greatest sin in the Gospel of John*

**"They do not believe in Me" John 16.9**

One of the truest assessments found in the Gospels came from a father who pled, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief" (Mk. 9.24). Like this man, somewhere between unbelief and certainty is the street where I live.

It's just like vision: we can have weak faith just like we can have short sight; we're not blind, but we're not 20/20. Just as poor vision hampers us, so does weak faith and there are times we, too, Christ to give him cause for stronger faith.

Faith isn't an add-on to our personality, it is an instinct. Life is so structured that we cannot live without faith. Only when we're in mathematics or deductive logic do we function by certainty. Faith isn't limited to religion; crossing a road, getting on an airplane, voting for a politician, believing our own identity, etc. are done by faith. If we don't believe in God Almighty God, we'll believe in a lesser god(s). If we won't believe in the true God, we'll find a false god/idol to replace Him for faith is an inescapable facet of our humanity.

John's Gospel is an answer to the father's cry for help with his unbelief. In his book, John presents seven signs meant to help us believe that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (20.31). "'What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?' 'This is the work of God?' . . . 'believe in Him whom He sent'" (Jn. 6.28–29). The *unbelief* cited in John 16.9 is not the fallible, moral weakness, uncertainty, and doubt that sometimes plagues us all, but persistent, obstinate, deliberate unbelief in the face of overwhelming evidence; the refusal to believe that  $2 + 2 = 4$ . The *sin* of which the Holy Spirit will convict men is "Jesus Derangement Syndrome"—hatred for Supreme Goodness and Love, the evil that murders God when God puts Himself in man's power.

Nothing is more worthy of believing than the proposition that Jesus is Lord (20.28); nothing is more worthy of condemning than the refusal to believe this.

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### *News about us*

- The funeral for Dale McPherson is Tuesday, with visitation beginning at 10 am at the Rosenbaum Funeral Home.
- Jerry and Carolyn and Nancy are in special need of our prayers.