

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—20
Wednesday—13
Contribution—\$428

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 7.16-18
Being a goody two-shoes is a manifestation of self-righteous pride. Pursuing wickedness is the height of foolishness. The life to live is one that fears God. Is the fear of God evident in your life?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

The death of Christ

There are subjects beyond our power to comprehend. Among these, at least for me, is the death of Christ. Try as I might, I can't wrap my head around the nuts and bolts of the cross. Maybe you can, but I can't; it's deeper than I can fathom. All I can do in the presence of Calvary is to worship and adore. Though the cross is inexplicable, there are, nevertheless, things which ought to be said about it.

The cross is the center of it all. It occupies the pivotal place in the revelation of God. If you doubt this, look how much space each Gospel writer devotes to the last week of Christ's life. Look how often it's mentioned in the apostolic preaching in the book of Acts. And note the numerous references to it in the Epistles. "For I delivered to you first of all"—of first rank, his primary and central message—was "that Christ died for our sins." The Cross is not only first of all, it's last of all as well, the sum and substance of God's redemptive plan, the Alpha and Omega of apostolic preaching.

And it's the same with Peter, John, and the other apostles and prophets who wrote; the Cross was the center for all of them. "So we preached, so we believed (1 Cor. 15.11).

The cross was the full and final revelation of God's love for us. Don't ever tell me God isn't inclined to forgive me, when the Bible shouts that there's nothing He enjoys more! He *delights* in mercy (Mic. 7.18)! God loves us with a deep, strong, free, and infinite love, and the Cross is the ultimate proof (Rom. 5.8)—He commends his love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Kenny

—to be continued next week—

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

"Dominus Illuminatio Mea" (**"Lord My Illumination"**)

In the hour of death, after this life's whim,
When the heart beats low, and the eyes grow dim,
And pain has exhausted every limb—
The lover of the Lord shall trust in Him.

When the will has forgotten the lifelong aim,
And the mind can only disgrace its fame,
And a man is uncertain of his own name—
The power of the Lord shall fill this frame.

When the last sigh is heaved, and the last tear shed,
And the coffin is waiting beside the bed,
And the widow and child forsake the dead—
The angel of the Lord shall lift this head.

For even the purest delight may pall,
And power must fail, and the pride must fall,
And the love of the dearest friends grow small—
But the glory of the Lord is all in all.

Richard Doddridge Blackmore

Sermon: Hebrews 11.24-25

The great renunciation

16 November 2025

Jesus saw Himself as the Resurrection and the Life

I am the resurrection and the life. John 11.25

I've never been very good at saying the right thing to the bereaved. I start out with the best of intentions, meaning to be tender and encouraging, but I often end up being conventional and clumsy. May God's angels be near those I try to comfort and succeed where I failed.

When Jews came to comfort Martha and Mary over the death of Lazarus (Jn. 11.19), I'm sure the sisters heard many canned clichés. But then Jesus arrived, the visitor welcomed above all others, and His words were, "Your brother will rise again" (11.23). Apparently, what He said sounded trite to Martha for her response was, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection in the last day" (11.24). She seemed disappointed. Theoretically she agreed with what her Lord, but the resurrection seemed so far away that thinking about it did little to warm her soul.

And then Christ lowered His glasses, leaned in, and said. "Martha, *I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE*. If you'll believe this, you can live after you die. In fact, anyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die." In saying this, Christ placed before His friend a decision—Martha must decide which was the greater reality: her brothers' death or her Lord's claim. If for us death is the all-surpassing, dominant fact, facing death will be rough. But if we believe Jesus is who He says He is, hope will soften our tears and assure us concerning the last great darkness.

Christ didn't leave the matter at the level of theory but moved from words to deeds, proving beyond all doubt at the grave of Lazarus that *He* is greater than death (11.44).

Of the many thoughts I could offer, I've chose these three.

1. On the strength of His power, Jesus baptized death in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and called it "sleep" (v 11).
2. Whereas the resurrection is future (Jn. 5.28), life is always a present possibility for the believer. The dead are not unconscious; death is an experience, not a state; an act, not a condition. When the righteous die, they live more richly, gloriously, consciously, and everlastingly than they ever lived before.
3. The reality that Christ is the resurrection and the life is what created the church. To lose sight of this is to lose sight of all.

"Do you believe this, Martha?" Christ asked. Do we?

If not, Lord, increase our faith.

kenny

The strange case of Isaac

The contrast between Abraham and Isaac is stark. Abraham was active; Isaac, passive. Abraham overwhelmed his opponents; Isaac shrank from conflict, etc. Father and son were alike, however, in that while both had great failures, both had saving faith.

Hebrews 11.20 says, "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come." Taken by itself, there's nothing unusual about this verse; it's the kind of thing you'd expect to read in a chapter on faith. But when you go back to Genesis and read the historical record of Isaac blessing his sons, it leaves you scratching your head.

In Genesis 25, God revealed to Isaac's wife Rebekah that she was carrying twins and that the younger would be blessed over the older. I can't imagine Rebekah not sharing this news with her husband, given that he, as the patriarch of the family, would be the one bestowing the blessing. Genesis 27.33, I think, makes it clear that Isaac knew what God wanted.

Given this, how are we to explain what happened? In Genesis 27.2–4, Isaac tells Esau to kill some game, cook it up, and serve him his favorite dinner, after which he would pronounce the primary blessing on Esau. Rebekah overheard this and was shocked. Rather than waiting on God to stop her husband, she immediately hatched a plan to trick Isaac into giving the younger son, Jacob, the blessing. Her ruse was clumsy, and I don't think Isaac was fooled. First, the period of time he expected it would take for Esau to bag some game, dress it, and prepare it didn't fit (27.20). Second, Jacob's voice wasn't Esau's (27.22). And third, it's hard to believe goat skins felt like Esau's arms or neck (27.16,23). But Isaac suppressed his suspicions, allowed himself to be deceived, ate the meal, and pronounced the blessing—so he thought—on Esau (27.28,29). When the real Esau returned, it was Isaac who went into shock. Genesis 27.33 says he "trembled"; the KJV margin says: "Heb. trembled with a great trembling greatly." He was shaken to his core, because he knew he had done wrong, and he knew God had caught him with hand in the cookie jar, so to speak.

How could this great patriarch of Israel go against the express will of God and set aside common sense in order in an attempt to bless his favorite son? It's because he was following the desires of his belly rather than the dictates of the God (Phil. 3.19).

Put simply, Isaac chose the flesh over the spirit.

kenny

—more next week—