

Ministers:
the congregation

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

Wednesday:
6:30 PM: Bible Study

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Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofChrist.com)

This Past Week:
Worship—29
Wednesday—8
Contribution—\$

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 7.19–20
There is none righteous,
no not one;
there is none that
doeth good.

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

The death of Christ

The Cross transcends our reason, but it doesn't violate our reason. We can't explain it, but we can believe it and see it is the only solution for our sin.

The cross was a divine judgment on sin.

“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8.3).

What could the law not do? Justify the sinner; the law had no power to put a sinner in a state of “no condemnation” (8.1).

Why couldn't the law justify? Because it was “weak through the flesh.” What does that mean? Romans 7.14–20 explains that *flesh* refers to our sinfulness. The law's *weakness/inability* was not itself but us.

“Human weakness robbed [the law] of all potency” (REB). “By [Christ] everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13.39). “By the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight” (Rom. 3.20). “If there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law” (Gal. 3.21).

In its own way the law is very powerful. It has the power to convict us of sin; to reveal to ourselves how sinful we are; to say, “Pay me what you owe!”; and to sentence us to prison when we fail to pay what we owe. The law has the power to condemn us but not save; it is impotent to give life to the one dead in sin.

What, then, is the hope of the sinner?

Jesus Christ who came to condemn sin—not us (Jn. 3.17).

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—continued next week—

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

The following comes from George MacDonald's novel, *The Curate's Awakening*.

Thomas Wingfold, a recent graduate of Oxford, was a young Anglican *curate* (minor clergyman), whose first church was in a sleepy country village in 19th-century England.

An acquaintance of his was George Bascombe, an irreligious young lawyer who one Sunday went to hear Thomas preach. Afterward, George asked him: “Do you really believe what you just preached?” The question caught Wingfold by surprise, and he was unable to offer any answer in return.

Sensing vulnerability, Bascombe pressed the attack. “Have you never noticed how these Christians, who profess to believe that their great man has conquered death, and all that rubbish—have you ever noticed the way they talk about death, or the eternity they say they expect beyond it? They talk about it like they believe it, but the fact is that in their hearts they have no hope, and in their minds they have no courage to face the facts of their existence. Their so-called religion does them no good; they don't really believe what they say they believe. They go to church on Sunday, but they have no faith.”

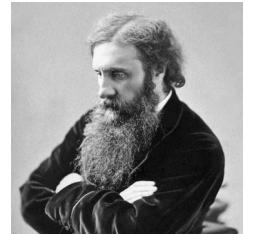
Jesus said to Martha, “Whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (Jn. 11.26).

Do we really believe this? Despite what we say we believe about death and the hereafter, are our hearts devoid of hope?

If so, we'd best face up to “the facts of our existence” and find the hope that's waiting to be found.

A good place to find hope is in John's Gospel (20.30–31).

kenny



George MacDonald

Sermon: Hebrews 11.25–26

Moses: refusal, reproach, reward

23 November 2025

Jesus saw Himself as a man going to a far country

It is like a man going to a far country. Mark 13.34

Christ was speaking of Himself Mark's verse. His impending departure was on His mind (see ch.14), and some things He says in 13.34 have permanent relevance for us.

SO NEAR BUT NOT SO FAR AWAY

Christ compares Himself to a man going on a long trip (JBP, "traveling abroad"). But from one standpoint, His destination wasn't far away. Christ was going to His Father, returning to the glory He enjoyed in eternity before He came to this world (Lk. 24.26, Jn. 17.5), and to reach His Father was just a step away—but it was a step requiring death.

Heaven seems such a long way off; having to die to know "the great secret" seems an unbearable road travel. (*Where lies the land to which the ship would go? / Far, far ahead is all her seamen know*, A. H. Clough). At such times, it's good to remember that our forerunner (Heb. 6.20) has paved the way. And what He said about His going and our going is meant to assure us. "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you" (Jn. 14.2,3); "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13.5.) "Never" means not even when we die.

WE'LL WORK TILL JESUS COMES

He "gave authority to his servants, and to each his work" (Mk. 13.34). Many reasons could be cited for why the master delegated authority to his servants before he left. The one I'll mention is this: maturity is measured by our ability to handle responsibility. I remember the first time dad told me to take our 1949 Ford F1 farm truck and go pick something up. I'd been driving the truck on the farm since I was ten, but I had just gotten my license. It was a big step for me, and a risk for dad, but you can't grow up without getting out on the highway without your dad sitting next to you. The work Jesus left us to do in His absence is meant to help us grow up into His image.

I SHALL RETURN

"Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming" (Mk. 13.35). The house is still the master's, the servants are still his, and He will return to see how faithfully we done the job He gave us to do. He may come in mercy, He may come in judgment, but He will come.

Watch therefore—for we don't know when He will return.

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The strange case of Isaac, part 2

According to Genesis 27, when Isaac was nearing the end, he did something unworthy of a great Hebrew patriarch. Taking his eyes off God's promises (Heb. 11.13) and the better land to which he was going (11.16), Isaac made his belly his god (Phil. 3.18–19).

It's curious that Isaac would ask Esau to provide a meal for him. Esau was "a skillful hunter, a man of the field," but in Genesis 25, he came in from the field so hungry that he swapped his birthright for a bowl of beans (v 34). If Esau couldn't feed himself out in the wild, why did Isaac think he (Esau) could feed him (Isaac)? Genesis 25.28 answers: "And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game." Isaac favored Esau because his older son could cook up a meal just the way he liked it.

Thus, near the end of his life, when you would have thought his spiritual maturity would have precluded such a thing, Isaac put the flesh ahead of the spirit and allowed himself to be deceived, sinning willfully after he had received a knowledge of the truth (Heb. 10.26; see last week's article). But as astounding as was Isaac's sin, even more astounding was God's grace to Isaac.

1. **Isaac repented of his sin.** The moment he realized he hadn't gotten away with his plan to bless his favorite son, Isaac "trembled with a great trembling greatly" (KJV margin); he was shaken to the core. His confession of his deed lay in his subsequent actions more than a verbal formula—he refused to rescind the blessing he unintentionally gave to Jacob (Gen. 33.37, Heb. 12.17). (As an aside: what nonsense to think a Christian can't *repent* of or *confess* a sin until he's gone through the ritual of "going forward" at the invitation!)
2. **The Lord put away his sin.** There's no statement to this effect as in the case of David (2 Sam. 12.13), but there's no doubt the Lord forgave Isaac. The very fact that Isaac is cited in Hebrews 11 is proof of his forgiveness. Having forgiven Isaac, God saw no reason to mention it. "He doesn't deal with us according to our sins . . . as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103.10,12).
3. **There is grace to be had when we're dying.** It's never too late to access God's grace! Death-bed confession? Yes! Grace is open for business at the 11th hour.

If you doubt it, ask a thief who had the good fortune to be crucified next to Christ.

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