

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—30  
Wednesday—6  
Contribution—\$1780

**For meditation:**  
**Ecclesiastes 1.3-9**  
What's the point of life? After opening with a jarring note about life's *absurdity* ("vanity of vanities"), the Preacher continues by talking about life's *futility*—no matter what we do in life, we have nothing to show for it at the end. What is it, then, that makes life worth living?

Radio program:  
WGCY FM, 106.3  
Sundays at 8 AM

## *A four-word prayer*

*Grace, mercy, and peace*

1 Timothy 1.2

Christ said the value of a prayer isn't determined by its length (Matt. 6.7), and in the his first letter to Timothy, Paul proves this by using just four words to pray a wonderful prayer for his "son in the faith": grace, mercy, peace.

### **GRACE**

*Grace* can refer to different things depending on the context, but in this case, I think Paul is referring to God's *sufficient* grace. The work given Timothy wouldn't be easy; there would be times when he might feel like giving up. Paul knew what it was like to be at the end of your rope (2 Cor. 1.9), but he also knew God can tie a knot at the end for us to hang onto (2 Cor. 12.9). God can be trusted to give us all the resources we need to get through each day (Matt. 6.33)—His grace is sufficient.

### **MERCY**

Not only must we deal with the problems without, we must also face our failures within. We need merciful patience, long-suffering, and forgiveness. When our sense of failure brings us to the brink of despair, we need mercy from the God who delights in mercy (Mic. 7.18).

### **PEACE**

Grace for pressures, mercy for failures, and peace that leads us beside still waters and makes us lie down in green pastures. Peace that enables us to sleep in the storm (Matt. 8.24). The peace of blessed assurance that gives us the innocence of a four-year old. The peace of knowing we're no longer at war with God (Rom. 5.1, 1 Pet. 3.21).

Whenever you remember another you should pray for, but you haven't the time to close your eyes and bow your head, "grace, mercy, and peace" is a prayer you can pray.

kenny

# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



**Jerry**

1937–2024

*Away from the body but present with the Lord*

Sermon: James 1.5–8

What do we do about what we lack?

24 November 2024

## *The Gospel and the cross*

When the theologians have their last say about the “mystery of the cross,” it will still be a mystery to me. The work Christ did at Calvary to justify sinners “lay more between Christ and God than between Christ and man” (Robert McCheyne Edgar, *The Philosophy of the Cross*, 68-69), and I’m happy to leave it there. Whatever the Father and Son worked out between themselves in order to save me is fine with me.

Of greater concern is the fact that when Christ spoke about the implications of His cross, He put more stress on sanctification than justification. He had the audacity to suggest—and this was underscored by the apostles—that every man ought to be a replica of God. The prophets said, “Be holy for I am holy”; Christ said, “be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” I realize that in the context being “perfect like the Father” means to love our enemies, but I don’t think it wrong to believe “be perfect” encompasses all of the Father’s other moral attributes. A son is to be like his father.

Here’s an example of what I’m talking about. “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Matt. 16.24). To “take up the cross” involves *dying* and *denying*. (1) Dying—the cross was an instrument of execution, like a hangman’s noose or electric chair. Figuratively, to take up one’s cross is to *die* to sin. “For we are well aware that the person we were in our pre-Christian days has been crucified with [Christ], so that our sin-dominated personalities might be destroyed and we might be released from our slavery to sin” (Rom. 6.6, BARCLAY). “Those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal. 5.24). To take up the cross, quite simply, is a commitment to get out of the sinning business.

But taking up the cross also involves *denial*, self-denial. The cross is the symbol of self-renunciation and self-sacrifice. We all recognize a duality within us—a lower part that is proud and self-willed, and a higher part that is humble and modest. When we repress the lower, the higher lives; when we cater to the lower, the higher dies. More than just a deliverance from sin, the cross—with its self-discipline, denial, and sacrifice—is how we follow Jesus and enter into the life of God. All that God is, is symbolized by the cross; which is at the very heart of God.

The way of the cross leads home.

kenny

## *Christ’s humanity in the Gospel of John*

**“In these simulations, you’ve taken all the humanity out of the cockpit.” Captain Chelsey “Sully” Sullenberger**

On January 15, 2009, US Airways Flight 1592, piloted by Capt. Sully Sullenberger, landed on the Hudson River after both engines were knocked out by bird strikes. All 156 souls on board were saved, and Sully was honored as a hero.

But at the National Transportation and Safety Board (NTSB) hearing, the government impugned Sully’s actions by saying that pilots in simulators—programmed to replicate the situation faced by Sully when his engines went dead—had been able to safely return to LaGuardia Airport and land the plane.

In his defense, Sully pointed out that the pilots in the simulators knew what was coming and practiced for it. The NTSB had eliminated the human factor from the equation. “You’ve taken all the humanity out of the cockpit,” said Sully.

What a relief it is to read our Bibles and learn that humanity has not been taken out of the gospel.

In Philippians 4.6, Paul says, “be *anxious* for nothing,” but in Philippians 2.28 he admits to being *anxious* over Epaphroditus—“that I may be less anxious” (ESV). We understand it when Peter stumbles over Christ after saying he’d never do so (Matt. 26.33).

But then Jesus does the same! In John 14.1 He tells His disciples to not be troubled, but John 11.33 and 13.21 say He was troubled. In 12.27, Christ admits, “Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour? But for this purpose I came to this hour.’” Then, just a few days later, the Lord asks for the very thing He said He wouldn’t ask for: to be saved from the hour of His death (Mk. 14.35).

The Son of man knows what it is to be a man. In His estimation of us, He never takes humanity out of the cockpit.

kenny

### *News about us*

- Jerry passed last Sunday evening. Keep Carolyn and the children in your prayers.
- Everyone enjoy your time with family and friends on Thanksgiving. I’m sure that’s what God wants us to do.