

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—23
Wednesday—10
Contribution—\$1205

For meditation:
Proverbs 31.28–29
When a woman is
rich in virtue and
love, how do others
think of her?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

Two texts for “coping”

For several decades the psychiatric community in America was quick to ascribe depression, anxiety, and similar emotions to “chemical imbalances.” But that’s changed. The Harvard Health website now says: “Research suggests that depression doesn’t spring from simply having too much or too little of certain brain chemicals. Rather, there are many possible causes of depression, including . . . stressful life events.”

No one denies that physiological conditions can present as emotional instability, but the inability to face life’s storms in a Christian way must also be recognized as a possible cause of depression, anxiety, etc.

Here are two texts I believe are of critical importance in determining how we cope with the slings and arrows that come our way.

PHILIPPIANS 4.6

Nothing and *everything* are the key words. *No* situation in life is to trigger anxiety, for *every* situation in life, rightly considered, is a gift from God for which we should thank Him. Nothing can touch us except what an all-wise, all-sovereign, all-loving Father allows (Job 1–2). If we knew about us everything God knows about us, we would have ordered for ourselves the same scenarios of life that we have experienced. “The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

1 PETER 5.6

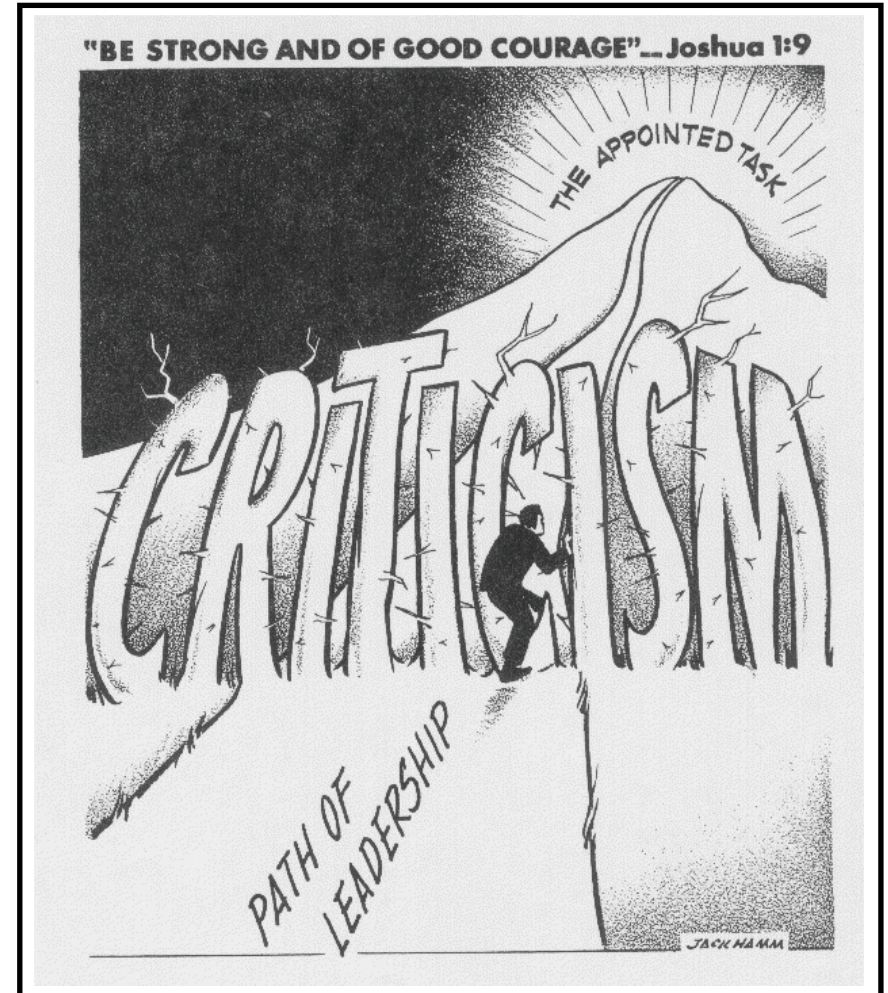
The question isn’t whether our life is what God’s mighty hand allows, the real question is whether we will humbly accept what God allows. All of which is to say that nothing is more destructive to our peace of mind or more conducive to “mental illness” than pride.

Having the humility to accept the life God has allowed us is the first step in coping.

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: Philippians 4.10–13

Learning to be content

3 November 2024

The Gospel and growth

Anyone who turns to Jesus for instruction in science, the arts, philosophy, etc. will be sadly disappointed. Christ's area of emphasis was spiritual—the forgiveness of sins, the virtues of life, the life to come, etc. These were the topics He discussed, and on these subjects He has the last word. What He said about every subject He addressed, He called *truth*.

One issue Christ discussed was spiritual growth or development. “The seed sprouts and grows—he has no idea how it happens. The earth does it all without his help: first a green stem of grass, then a bud, then the ripened grain. When the grain is fully formed, he reaps” (Mk. 4.28, Peterson). In Greek mythology, Athena, the goddess of wisdom, was born fully grown. But that was fiction; in reality, growth is a process that takes time. Farmers do not plant mature stalks of corn in the spring, they plant seeds that *grow* into stalks. “Notice the progression. ‘First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.’ This is the orderliness of growth. Through all these stages the corn passes, and you must give it its time” (J. D. Jones).

There are similar stages in the development of seed and soul. There are feeble beginnings and increasing strength before there is full maturity. And with maturity comes the understanding that sometimes (many times) growth comes from the implicit teachings of truth rather than explicit.

I remember an incident in a Sunday morning Bible class I was teaching. The subject of slavery came up and I said there was nothing inherently evil about it. I referred to the provisions for slaves in the Old Testament, and I may have thrown in a brilliant observation or two about Philemon. A brother in the class, a good friend, was having none of it. He couldn't believe I would say anything favorable about slavery. Things got heated for a minute, then cooled down, but I'm not sure my brother ever thought of me the same thereafter.

I wish I had that class to do over. I know of no Christian who'd be favorably inclined to slavery by a hundred texts in favor of it. Christ may not have explicitly condemned it, but after what He taught about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, how could anyone support it?

Truth can be taught implicitly as well as explicitly. I wish I had appreciated that fact long before I did.

kenny

The greatest insight in the Gospel of John

“The Father loves the Son.” John 3.35

In the Old Testament, a variety of figures are used to describe God. Sometimes He's pictured as a mother attendant to her children (Isa. 49.15); sometimes as a husband pursuing an unfaithful wife (Hos. 1–3); sometimes as the Shepherd of Israel (Ps. 23.1); sometimes as the Rock of Israel (Ps. 89.26), etc. There was no human emotion the OT prophets didn't assign to God, but only rarely do they refer to God as a “father.”

This all changes in the Gospels. In them, “father” becomes Christ's favorite way of talking about God. God might be King and Judge, but first, last, and foremost He is a father.

- Christian prayer is to be directed to “Our Father in heaven” (Matt. 6.9).
- Jesus talked about God's nature in terms of fatherhood. “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!” (Matt. 7.11).
- Christian perfection is defined in reference to fatherhood. “Be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5.48).
- In answer to the criticism, “If a tax collector is a child of God, what advantage has a Pharisee?”, Christ gave His most complete parable—the parable of the prodigal son—and defined the love of God for wayward children beyond all dispute.
- In one of the few glimpses Christ gave us of the life beyond this life, He referred to the “Father's house.”

John spoke of God as Father more than any other apostle. What a thought it is to think that at the core of all reality is a loving Father rather than a hanging judge. And according to Christ, there is nothing in the Father that is not found in the Son (Jn. 14.9–10) ; He and the Father share a common character. And

The ultimate reality is a Father; what an insight is that!

kenny

News about us

- Jerry is now on hospice; please pray for him and Carolyn.
- Nancy is dealing with numerous bronchial issues and also needs our prayers.
- Stay constant in prayer for Bev and Kellee.