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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This Past Week:
Worship–28
Wednesday–15

For meditation:
Psalm 2
How does God view and react to man's pitiful attempts at rebellion?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

Repent!

Last week, I wrote about my pessimistic view of politicians and the inability of *humanistic* policies—that exclude God—to set our nation right. I stand by that statement. The only way to stop the vices that threaten our civilization is not by politics but by repentance!

The first word in John's and Christ's preaching —"Repent!" (Matt. 3.2, 4.17) —says it all. To repent is to change course from worldliness in all its manifestations and by have a passionate commitment to the righteousness of God. The grim determination that welcomes hatred and destruction is not going to evolve into something better; it isn't going to improve spontaneously. Only a genuine rebirth of religious commitment can save us. To put hope in anything else is to have no hope at all.

At least one politician in recent history understood this. In 1936, Franklin Roosevelt said, "No greater thing could come to our land today than a revival of the spirit of religion that would sweep through the homes of the nation and strengthen the hearts of men and women . . . to a reassertion of a belief in God, and their dedication to His will for themselves and for the world. I doubt if there is any problem, social, political, or economic, that would not melt away, for the force of such a spiritual awakening."

If there is any politician reading this, do I hear an Amen?

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

Don't forget the broken-hearted

A church service is a time for being roused (Heb. 13.22); sometimes, it's a time for being rebuked (2 Tim. 4.2). But almost always a church service is a time for being comforted, for it's the rare gathering at which there's not someone present who's suffering from a broken heart. For this reason, comfort should be provided in every assembly of the saints.

The Bible is ever mindful of the broken-hearted. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God" (Isa. 40.1). "I, even I, am he that comforteth you" (Isa. 51.12). "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" (Isa. 66.13).

What does it mean to *comfort* someone? The Gr. word, *parakalein,* means to encourage; more specifically, to encourage another by standing by him. The word is used of soldiers encouraging each other as they go into battle.

And it helps to remember that the Eng. word *comfort* derives from the Latin root *fortis,* which means *brave*. Christian comfort is no meager, shallow pep talk. Christian comfort points to truths that put courage into a man when life conspires to take his courage away.

Job, said Eliphaz, "Your words have kept men on their feet" (Job 4.4, MOFFATT). When we gather together, believers need to hear that which will keep them on their feet when life tries to knock them down.

kenny

Sermon: Matthew 7.13–23

The four vital choices

8 November 2026

God's good gift of laughter

A famous, oft-quoted criticism of Christianity by her opponents comes from a play by Henrik Ibsen, the Norwegian playwright and author who encouraged everyone to "do their own thing." The play is *Emperor and Galilean,* and the quote comes from the Emperor Julian—known in history as Julian the Apostate.

> **Julian: Have you looked closely at these Christians? Hollow-eyed, pale-cheeked, flat-breasted, all; they are like the linen-weavers of Byssus; they brood their lives away unspurred by ambition; the sun shines for them, and they do not see it; the earth offers them its fulness, and they desire it not;—all their desire is to renounce and suffer, that they may come to die.**

Maybe there are Christians who resemble this caricature in part or whole. The Englishman John Rusk wrote, "We continually hear of the trials, sometimes of the victories of faith, but scarcely ever of its pleasures." It doesn't seem Ruskin did a very good job of picking his friends.

My Christian friends have been anything but pale, hollow-eyed, apathetic, gloomy, negative pessimists. My Christian friends have had no problem understanding the account in Matthew 9 when some disciples of John the Baptist came and asked, "Why aren't you and your disciples fasting like us and the Pharisees? What's with all this feasting?" (Matt. 9.14). Christ proceeded to explain the rationale for feasting on the part of H is disciples. My Christian friends have found the joy expressed in the words, "Rejoice . . . again I say to you rejoice!" (Phil. 4.4). They've not looked at the world with dreariness. They've heard the good news of Jesus Christ, know of his resurrection from the dead, and through times of sadness, setbacks, and sorrows have been sustained by Christ's message of joy and hope.

I can relate to W. H. Auden who said, "Among those whom I like, I can find no common denominator; but among those whom I love, I can—all of them make me laugh." Nothing feels as good as laughing incredibly hard. Blessed is the man whose friends can make him laugh until his stomach muscles ache.

There are few gifts God has given that I enjoy more than laughter. Solomon knew what he was talking about when he said cheerfulness is good for your health (Prov. 17.22).

kenny

In the beginning was the Word

A common characterization of the Gospels sees Matthew as the Gospel to the Jews, Mark as the Gospel to the Romans, Luke as the Gospel to the Gentiles, and John as the Gospel to the world.

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. 1.1) spoke the language of the Jew. Israel had a 1500 year history of hearing that the Christ—the Messiah—would descend from Abraham through David. But the Gentiles had no such legacy. Had you spoken to a Gentile about the "Son of God," he would have thought in terms of an Olympian god, who possibly had come to earth and seduced a human maiden. And so, a new way of speaking to Gentiles about Jesus had to be found, and this was accomplished by John and His use of the term "Word."

"In the beginning was the Word, and the word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn. 1.1). To refer to Jesus as the *Word* spoke with equal effectiveness to both the Jews and Greeks.

To the Jews, the *Word* would have recalled the creative word of God in creation, who not only said things but did things (note the reference to the light shining in darkness, v 5). To the Greeks, the word *logos* doesn't only mean "word," it als means mind, reason, rationality. The *logos* was the logic on which the whole order of the universe depends.

The opening verses of John declare that Jesus was:

1. Eternal. Christ wasn't just "from the beginning" (1 Jn. 1.1) but "in the beginning." As explained by Paul, Christ was "before all things" (Col. 1.17).
2. In fellowship with God. "The Word was with God," implying He was personally distinct from God and not merely an attribute of God.
3. Truly God. "The Word was God." In Gr. and English, *God* is not preceded by the definite article: Jesus was not *the* God, He was *God.* Jesus was not identically and personally the same as the God with whom He was in fellowship, but He was equally God, equally deity, not a subordinated or created being. Jesus, the Word, possessed all the identity and essential attributes of a divine being.
4. Just as *word* is often used to indicate communication, so Christ was the fullest revelation God made of Himself. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son . . . Hath declared Him" (1.18).

kenny