

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—21
Wednesday—
Contribution—\$

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 2.3–6
In the passage for
this week, what
pursuits did Solo-
mon devote him-
self to in an at-
tempt to find
meaning and sig-
nificance in life?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

The shadow and the Shepherd

**Yea, though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death. Psalm 23.4**

The greatness and comfort of Psalm 23 lies in three great revelations: *the secret of life*—“The Lord is my shepherd”; *the secret of death*—“For thou art with me”; and *the secret of eternity*—“I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”



At this time of year, when time is personified as an old man carrying a scythe or an hourglass, and thoughts of death seem more pressing, the comfort Psalm 23.4 provides when thinking of our approaching death is especially precious. Here are two thoughts I'd offer on v 4

concerning the *shadow* and the *Shepherd*.

The valley of the shadow of death. If it's true that life is a mist (Jas. 4.14), it's equally true that death is a *shadow*, which is less substantial than a mist. A shadow has never hurt me. It may have chilled me, but it's never clobbered me. Death only touches our shadowy part (Matt. 10.28). And remember: if you're in shadow, it's because somewhere a light is shining.

For you are with me. Though He may sometimes hard to see in the shadow (Matt. 27.46) our Shepherd is ever with us; He never leaves us, especially at that lonely moment when we put off our mortal tent (2 Pet. 1.14).

What is most needed when the shadow starts to fall across us is to have the utmost belief that our Shepherd is with us.

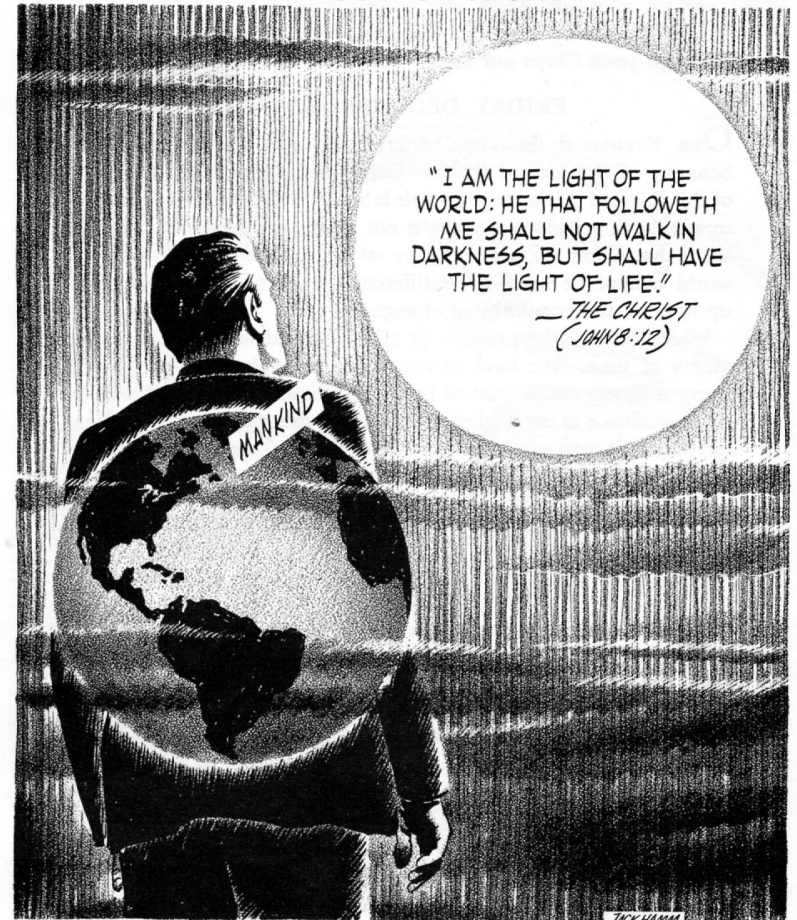
“Trust Me,” He says (Jn. 14.1).

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

WAY OUT OF NIGHT



Sermon: James 2.1–7

Holding the faith of the Lord Jesus

29 December 2024

Henry van Dyke's testimony to the influence of Jesus Christ on those who perished in the sinking of the Titanic, written four days after the disaster, as printed in *The Sinking of the Titanic and Great Sea Disasters* by Logan Marshall, 1912

"The Titanic, greatest of ships, has gone to her ocean grave. What has she left behind her? Think clearly. . . .

There is a great ideal. It is clearly outlined and set before the mind and heart of the modern world, to approve and follow, or to despise and reject.

It is, 'Women and children first!'

Whatever happened on that dreadful April night among the arctic ice, certainly that was the order given by the brave and steadfast captain; certainly that was the law obeyed by the men on the doomed ship. But why? There is no statute or enactment of any nation to enforce such an order. There is no trace of such a rule to be found in the history of ancient civilizations. There is no authority for it among the heathen races today. . . .

Where, then, does this rule which prevailed in the sinking of the Titanic come from? It comes from God, through the faith of Jesus of Nazareth.

It is the ideal of self-sacrifice. It is the rule that 'the strong ought to bear the infirmities of those that are weak.' It is the divine revelation which is summed up in the words, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.'

It needs a tragic catastrophe like the wreck of the Titanic to bring out the absolute contradiction between this ideal and all the counsels of materialism and selfish expediency.

I do not say that the germ of this ideal may not be found in other religions. I do not say that they are against it. I do not ask any man to accept my theology (which grows shorter and simpler as I grow older), unless his heart leads him to it. But this I say: The ideal that the strength of the strong is given them to protect and save the weak, the ideal which animates the rule of 'Women and children first,' is I essential harmony with the spirit of Christ....

Only through the belief that the strong are bound to protect and save the weak because God wills it so, can we hope to keep self-sacrifice, and love, and heroism, and all the things that make us glad to live and not afraid to die."

The "new commandment" in the Gospel of John

The chapter in John's Gospel that opens talking about Christ's uttermost love (13.1), enjoins the following: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (13.34).

Love one another wasn't something the world had never heard before. Leviticus 19.18 said, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (see Matt. 22.39). Seeing that love one another was an ancient maxim, how it a "new commandment"? I think the answer is that it was new in regard to the standard by which love would henceforth be measured: "*As I have loved you . . . have love for one another*" (cf. "Husbands, love your wives, *just as Christ also loved the church,*" Eph. 5.25). Here are four thoughts about love set by the high bar of Christ's love.

ACTION

More than a feeling, love is an action. Christ demonstrated this by getting up from the table and washing the disciples' feet, which was but a prelude to His greatest act of love whereby He would lay down His life for us (1 Jn. 3.16).

MEASURE

Christ loved to the end (13.1); He didn't draw back (Heb. 10.39); He didn't stop short, shirk His duty (Lk. 9.51), or compromise His convictions in order to escape death, but gave His "last full measure."

MANNER

There was nothing noble or heroic in the manner of His death for it embodied all the horror, shame, and humiliation of dying by crucifixion (Jn. 12.32–33). Love doesn't seek the limelight (2 Kgs. 5.13) but allows itself to be treated as garbage (1 Cor. 4.13).

MOTIVE

A passion for a person is the essence of love. The children of light are not so much those who walk in the light as those who love the light (Jn. 21.15–17). Unselfish, unconditional, sacrificial, forgiving love like Christ is the new commandment love.

kenny

News about us

- Betty's funeral is tomorrow, December 30. Visitation will be from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, with the service at 12 p.m. at the Rosenbaum Funeral Home.
- Everyone seems to be sick; pray for all.