

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-33
Wednesday-12

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 9.1-3
Death is not an accident; it is an appointment that nobody except God can cancel or change. How would you answer someone who said, "Since the good die as well as the wicked, why should I bother to live a good life?"

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

found in my reading . . .

In *The Letters of George Meredith* is one dated June 23, 1881, that Meredith, the English novelist and poet had sent his son Arthur. The two had been alienated for years, but when word came that Arthur was quite ill and in need, Meredith wrote his son. It's a haunting scenario involving a situation many parents know far too well.

"We have been long estranged, my dear boy, and I awake from it with a shock that wrings me. The elder should be the first to break through such divisions, for he knows best the tenure and the nature of life. But our last parting gave me the idea that you did not care for me; and further, I am so driven by work that I do not contend well with misapprehension of me, or with disregard." *Letters of George Meredith*, 319.

Sin is a moral and spiritual contagion that negatively impacts the lives of all involved. It can sever the closest of human relationships. It can cause those who know better to forget or resist the demands of love.

Meredith said it "wringed" him that he had not reached out to Arthur sooner. He should have been wrung. He shouldn't have let the matter slide as long as he did. He should have done anything and everything to maintain contact. Where would we be if God stopped caring everytime we acted like we didn't care for Him?

If you're a parent alienated from a child, have you done all you know to do to repair the breach? If not, confess that fault, seek forgiveness, offer love, wait patiently, and above all pray to God that your distant child will want you back in their life.

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

Dora Greenwell, who wrote what follows, said it was "Suggested! by hearing of a tombstone in a country churchyard in Wales, on which was inscribed the name of a man who had lived to some years above eighty, yet was said to be (alluding to his conversion to Christ) only 'four years old when he died.'" [Excerpted]

"A Good Confession," *Songs of Salvation* (1873)

He's God Himself, come down from Heaven to raise us when we fall;

He's come to heal us when we're sick, to hear us when we call

If He hadn't come to do us good, He wouldn't have come at all.

He didn't come to judge the world, He didn't come to blame,

He didn't only come to seek; it was to save He came;

And when we call Him Saviour, then we call Him by His name.

Sermon: Hebrews 11.32

The faith of judges

15 February 2026

The virgin birth

On the surface, “virgin birth” makes no sense, for the ordinary meaning of *virgin* precludes the possibility of birth. Virgin birth, however, commonly refers to the miracle whereby a virgin named Mary became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1.18), which resulted in the birth of Jesus Christ.

The virgin birth has generated tremendous criticism from those who deny the supernatural nature of the gospel. It was a miracle no one saw, including Mary. But she knew it was true, having been visited by an angel, having visited her cousin Elizabeth, and, most importantly, by her pregnancy. If there is an Almighty God, why should it be thought a thing incredible if He entered the world by means of a virgin birth (Acts 26.8)?

Not only is the virgin birth factual, *it had been prophesied*. Matthew 1.23 says the virgin birth fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 7.14. If God predicted it, you can believe He fulfilled it for He cannot lie (Tit. 1.2). His word cannot be broken (Jn. 10.35, “scripture doesn’t lie,” PETERSON). If Christ *wasn’t* born of a virgin, the credibility and veracity of God is shattered and the entire basis for our faith (Rom. 10.17) and hope is gone.

The virgin birth was a corollary to the incarnation. *Incarnation*, the term we use to describe God becoming man, was the foundational miracle of Christianity and was necessary for two reasons: to reveal God to man and to reconcile man to God.

There are two ways by which we reveal ourselves to another; namely, by what we do and say. God revealed Himself by what He did (Rom. 1.18–20), but He primarily disclosed Himself by what He said. Although He spoke by the prophets (Heb. 1.1,2) and directly from heaven (Matt. 3.17, 17.5, Jn. 12.28), the very best way He revealed Himself was directly, visibly, in person, without any middle man.

But there was a snag. Human generation involves the creation of a new person. At conception, God creates *ex nihilo*—out of nothing—a soul that He gives the newly conceived individual. But Jesus preexisted; He was an eternal spirit; He was a person before He was born. At His conception, God didn’t create a new soul resulting in a dual personality (one divine, one human), instead, God’s eternal spirit joined a human body, resulting in a single personality who was fully divine and fully human. Christ is totally unique in this, but by this, we not only have a divine savior but One who has shared our humanity and understands us.

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“the ones who didn’t come back are the heroes”

It’s not unusual to hear a military honoree, who has been decorated for valor, refuse to be called a hero, insisting that the real heroes were ones who “didn’t come back.”

I thought of this recently while reading Hebrews 11.33–35, which speaks of those who came back and those who didn’t. Some “subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of aliens . . . received their dead raised to life again.”

These all came back from battle, often triumphing over unbeatable odds in the process—Daniel, the three Hebrew children, the judges of v 32, Elijah on Carmel, and Elisha with the Syrians. The widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite woman each lost a child who was raised to life again. We aren’t told the sequel to these resurrections, but we’re certain the ones raised died a second time. In the NT, despite their resurrections, Jairus’s daughter and the widow of Nain’s son died a second time. Lazarus was buried again.

But some didn’t come back. They “were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.” It was so easy for Christians back then to avoid torture. When hauled in by the Romans, to be released all you had to do was curse Christ, or spit on His name, or take a pinch of incense, drop it on the censor, and confess, “Caesar is Lord.” Do this, and you were free to go.

But many turned down the offer; they didn’t accept deliverance. They refused to deny their Lord and they died because of it, often after being hideously tortured.

How did they do it? By faith, By seeing the invisible (11.27). By seeing afar off a better country, a heavenly one, a city prepared for them. Christ promised He had gone to prepare a place for them and they believed it. And because they believed it they endured torture, and at death—unlike those who came back—entered a life where they would never die again. They were real heroes, and God was not ashamed to be called their God (11.13–16). In dying they lost what they could not keep; in believing they gained what they could not lose.

Allow faith to bring the dimension of immortality into your life as you wait for that city whose builder and maker is God.

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