

Ministers:
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley
217.493.8905

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—24
Wednesday—
Contribution—\$

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 3.9–12
How is life to be
lived?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

The temptation at the top

If the temptation in the wilderness involved *deprivation* (isolation, hunger), and if the temptation atop the temple involved the perks of *elevation* (privilege), I think it fair to say that the temptation atop a mountain highlighted the danger of *deception*.

“Go and search diligently for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship him also” (Matt. 2.8). It is said that the Devil deceives the whole world (Rev. 12.9). We’re not tempted to sin by sin appearing as sin. Sin doesn’t show itself as it really is. It’s power lies in its disguise. When it knocks at our door, it doesn’t say, “Sin calling” but identifies itself as a virtue.

The other night I watched *Ordinary Men*, a documentary about Hamburg Police Battalion 101, made up of a group of ordinary, middle-aged Germans who murdered more Jews than any other Nazi unit in WW II. There were two observations by the historians who have studied this group in detail that have stuck with me. First, the members of the unit convinced themselves that the killing they did was morally justified. Second, many convinced themselves that what they endured in carrying out the killings was a greater burden than what their victims endured. They were the true victims. Virtue and victimhood is how genocide dressed itself. (These traits first appear in Gen. 4.)

Satan offered Christ a shortcut, an end (all the kingdoms of the world and their glory) worth Him falling down and worshipping the devil. But Christ saw through the deception, ordered the devil to leave, and headed toward the long way to the cross.

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Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

What does eternal hope imply about heaven?

Growing up, I heard that in heaven “faith will be swallowed up in sight” and “hope will fade in fulfilment.”

But Paul said, “now abide faith, hope, love,” (1 Cor. 13.13). We all accept that love is an eternal quality that never fails (13.8), but faith and hope are to be as eternal as love.

So what does *eternal* hope imply about heaven? If hope means there’s a future to look forward to with excitement and anticipation (Rom. 8.19), shouldn’t we expect there to always be something to anticipate and look forward to in heaven? Maybe some new place to visit? some new thing to see? some new person or angel to meet? Isn’t an infinite God capable of creating an infinite number of splendors and wonders for us to enjoy (Eph. 2.7).

Samuel Rutherford, the great Scottish preacher, wrote:

Every day we see some new beauty in Christ. His love hath neither brim nor bottom. If there were ten thousand thousand million worlds, and as many heavens full of men and angels, Christ would not be pinched to supply all our wants, and to fill us all. (*The Letters of Samuel Rutherford, CCXXVI.—To the LADY KILCONQUHAR*)

What a thought to think that in the place that will never grow stale, we will never grow old.

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Sermon: James 4.5–10

Sins against humility

23 March 2025

Books worth reading, part 8

AUTHORS, 2

Wilbur M. Smith

Wilbur Smith was an American religious professor and theologian who was undoubtedly the premier Biblical bibliographer of the twentieth century. His personal library numbered 25,000 volumes, and it seems he had read every one. His writings have done more to broaden my knowledge of authors and books than any other single influence.

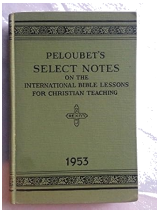
I read these titles about fifty years ago and have revisited them numerous times since: *Chats from a Minister's Library*, *The Minister in His Study*, *Profitable Bible Study*, *The Minister and His Greek New Testament*, *A Treasury of Books for Bible Study*, *The Supernaturalness of Christ* (a truly excellent work on apologetics), and his autobiography, *Before I Forget*. His 500-page study of Acts 17, *Therefore Stand*, is a classic.

But far and away, the work Smith did for forty years on *Peloubet's Select Notes* has made the biggest impact on my study and writing. Started in 1908 by Francis Peloubet, *Peloubet's Notes* were a Sunday School series of exegetical commentary, thoughts, notes, bibliography, etc. to assist Bible class teachers in preparing their lessons. Each book had fifty-two lessons divided into quarters. The quarterly topics for 1953, for example, were: Matthew—Gospel of Christian Life, Paul and some of his letters, Letters to Churches and Pastors, and Bible Teachings for a Better World. For years, my morning devotional has been to read a lesson from a Peloubet's edited by Smith. From these studies I've gleaned commentary notes, historical information, quotes, and most importantly, references to remarkable nineteenth and twentieth-century authors hardly anyone has ever heard of (it was from Smith that I learned about Samuel Rutherford, front page).

If I were putting together a preacher training course, I would require that the young Timothy get a part-time job as a waiter at a local restaurant (you learn to serve by serving, not by studying about service in a preacher's study) and spend time each day in a Smith-edited *Peloubet's*.

If you're , Individual volumes are available on Amazon, and many volumes can be found for free on Internet Archives.

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The Protracted Meeting

From around the middle of the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth, “protracted meetings,” lasting two or three weeks, were a staple of frontier religion in America. In *Vessel of Wrath, The Life and Times of Carrie Nation*, Robert Taylor tells that Carrie Nation, the Women’s Christian Temperance Union champion, was not only exposed to “Cambellite” beliefs and baptism, he also describes a protracted meeting she attended while a teenager.

“The unsung catalyst was one of a thousand brothers who . . . would exhort their way across the backwoods American scene, shouting and pleading from platforms under canvas . . . whipping up feelings, grinding out excitement, staving off boredom . . .

“What the Encyclopedia Britannica has called ‘one of the most remarkable revivals of modern times’ became known as ‘The Great Revival of the West or the Kentucky Revival.’ Meetings were held in the woods and were attended by great emotional excitement.

“As a general thing, evangelists were booked in during dull times, or after an unusual number of communicants had backslid for one reason or other. Summer was the best season for a successful all-out meeting. . . . [Attendees would “donate”] a dollar for adult males, fifty cents each for women and children, and a nickel for idiots” . . . [The evangelist] shouted, threatened, begged, cried, foamed, raved, groaned, gnashed his teeth, got down on his knees, and went into trance-like states. . . .

Evangelists came into the community for a fixed fee, which included lodging with parishioners, and took a bonus only if the meeting’s crop had been spectacularly fine.

“A reiterated query from the pulpit was, ‘*Won’t* you come to Jesus?’ . . . anybody who took the step was thereupon said to be ‘converted,’ or ‘saved,’ and could resume his old ways with a comparatively free mind.”

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News about us

- Karen is still in Chicago with her kids, recovering from her recent foot surgery.
- Colby continues to heal from his recent foot surgery.
- Donna asked me to report that she did not have foot surgery.