

Ministers:  
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley  
217.493.8905

Sunday:  
8:00 AM: WGCY  
9:00 AM: Worship

Wednesday:  
7:00 PM: Bible Study

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Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofChrist.com)

**This Past Week:**  
Worship—  
Wednesday—  
Contribution—\$

**For meditation:**  
**Ecclesiastes 3.14–15**  
Is there anything  
new under the sun?  
If not, how should  
that truth affect our  
living?

**Radio program:**  
WGCY FM, 106.3  
Sundays at 8 AM

## ***When there is no God, human life is cheap***

Recently, a lawmaker who supports abortion, advocated for murdering babies based on cost-benefit analysis.

Julie McCluskie, a Colorado legislator, has cosponsored a bill requiring abortion care services to be covered by Medicaid and a Child Health Plan Plus program.

In arguing for her legislation, McCluskie focused on how much money the state could save if women chose to have abortions rather than give birth. Pregnancy and life come with a price tag, and imagine the savings if there were fewer pregnancies and lives to deal with! McCluskie described to her colleagues how the state government would benefit financially from the passage of her bill. “A birth is more expensive than an abortion, so the savings comes in Medicaid births that will not occur,” she added.

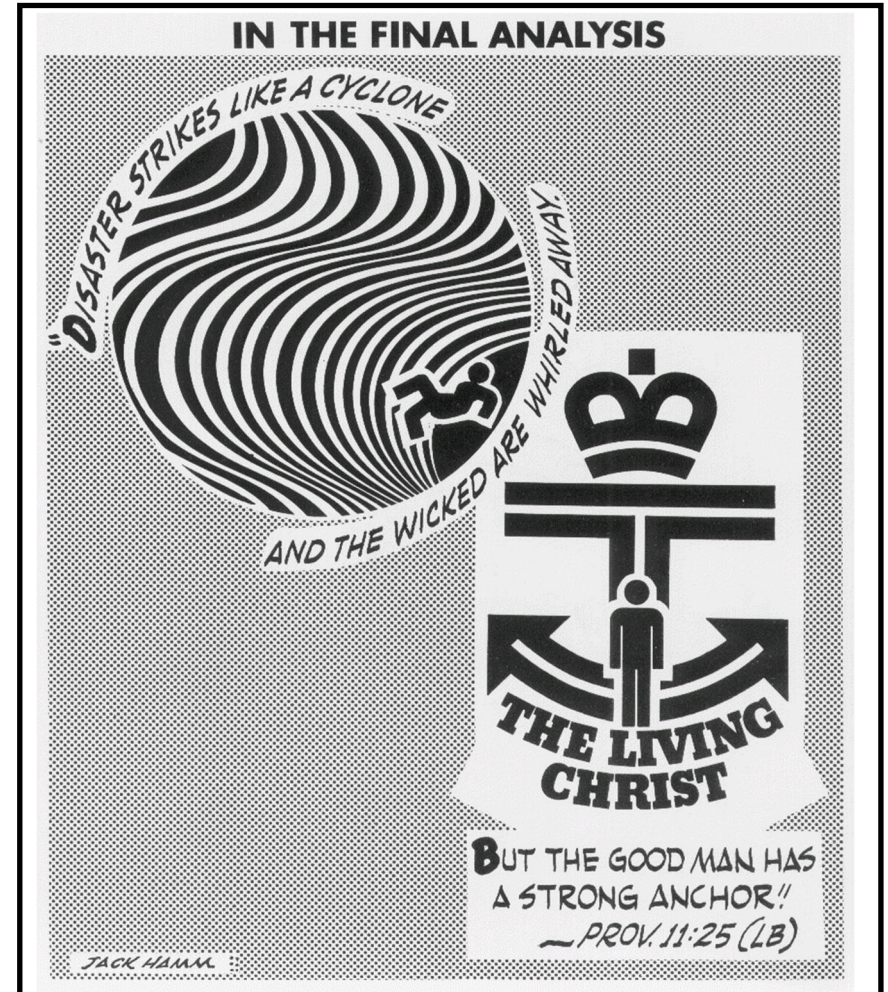
Beginning with Cain and throughout Scripture, when God is replaced by man, men die, sometimes in unimaginable numbers. The devil is a hater and murderer (1 Jn. 3.12), the leader of a death cult. Those who follow him stop thinking of man as a special creature made in the image of God; apart from God, man is nothing but an animal who can be eliminated and exterminated when they become too much of a bother. Murder, fratricide, genocide, even deicide become accepted practice. If you doubt this, read Judges 17–21.

Any doctor, nurse, counselor, family member, preacher, friend, enemy, etc. who recommends killing someone by abortion or euthanasia because it will save money is of the devil and has made him or herself an enemy of God (Jas. 4.4).

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# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



Sermon: James 5.13–18

## The power of prayer

27 April 2025

***Books worth reading, part 10***  
**authors, 4**

**James D. Bales**

My mentor, Almon Williams, introduced me to James D. Bales while I was still at Florida College. Almon had a class or two under Bales at Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas, and was impressed by the careful logic reflected in his teaching and preaching. Bales was a prolific writer. I can't remember the first book by him I acquired, but since then, I've picked up every one of his I've come across, so that I now have nearly fifty of his writings on my shelf. Most of his books are little more than booklets. While they may not take long to read, they are rich in teaching.

Bales is solid on the fundamentals of Christianity and the church. He has done outstanding work on apologetics—proving the existence of God and the deity of Jesus. Every young preacher needs to be acquainted with *The Biblical Doctrine of God, The Biblical Doctrine of Christ, You Believe, and Atheism's Faith and Fruits*. For sound teaching on baptism and conversion, look for *The Hub of the Bible* (a study of Acts 2). To study modern-day miracles and faith healers, there is *Miracles or Mirages. Instrumental Music and New Testament Worship* is unexcelled on the subject. His writings on the Holy Spirit (e.g., *The Holy Spirit and the Christian*) are excellent. I've leaned heavily on Bales in my studies of Old Testament prophecy, and some of the best work on the subject of premillennialism comes from him (e.g., *Prophecy and Premillennialism*). Bales exposed the “modernism” that was infiltrating churches during his time, and *Trojan Horse in the Church* is as relevant as ever. A larger work, *The Scope of the Covenants*, is the most scriptural and logical discussion of the marriage-divorce-remarriage issue that I've read. Bales also wrote on the cults, such as the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Seventh-Day Adventists.

It's essential that a young man who wishes to devote himself to preaching have a solid grounding in the gospel. The best way to acquire such, of course, is by regular Bible study. Supplementing one's personal study can be done by reading those who were careful Bible students themselves, and James D. Bales falls into this category.

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***The practice of prayer***

G. Campbell Morgan wrote that “Any discussion of the doctrine of prayer which does not issue in the practice of prayer is not only not helpful, it is dangerous. At the same time that practice will be greatly helped by an apprehension of the relative Christian doctrine” (*The Practice of Prayer*). What amazes me about Morgan is that not once in his book on prayer does he mention Elijah, who according to James was a preeminent example of a praying man. I mean to write a few articles on James' use of Elijah, not to encourage a discussion on prayer but its practice.

James 5.13–15 takes up some knotty questions: how does prayer relate to sickness? what does it mean for elders to anoint the sick with oil? How is sickness connected to sin? What's involved in confessing our faults to one another? etc. Whereas reaching definitive conclusions on these questions may be challenging, there's no doubt that James teaches ***prayer is the proper response to problems whether they are physical or spiritual***. To encourage prayer, in verse 16b he states a fact about its efficacy, then follows with an illustration of its practice.

**THE FACT**

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective” (NIV).

**Powerful** translates a word that refers to inherent strength, the strength to make an individual or thing sufficient for its task. It speaks of untapped power, potency waiting to be released. The unimpressive flatland of the West Texas plains may look unimpressive, but drilling taps into vast resources of oil and natural gas that are innate power.

**Effective** is a Greek word transliterated as *energy*. Prayer not only has the potential to get things done, *it gets things done!*

**Righteous** doesn't mean effective prayer depends on perfect moral character. James' prime example of prayer, Elijah, could be intimidated to the point of cowardice and wallow in pity. Our righteousness will never be perfect, but we can still pray a powerful prayer. More on this in the next article.

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***News about us***

- I've been away in meetings two of the past three weeks and haven't heard of any new concerns in the congregation. I know we need to continue to pray for everyone in the congregation.