

Ministers:
the congregation

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

Wednesday:
6:30 PM: Bible Study

[gibsoncitychurchof
Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofchrist.com)

This Past Week:
Worship—28
Wednesday—

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 10.20
The walls have ears. If
there's something
you'd never want an-
other person to know,
keep it to yourself.

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

The secret of patience

An aim of James in his fifth chapter is to stop us from doing wrong in response to wrong done to us. Thus, against the backdrop of mistreatment—fraud, cruelty, oppression, criminality—perpetrated on the poor by the rich, James says our response to mistreatment should be governed by *patience* and *the coming of the Lord*, not outrage and revenge.

“YE HAVE HEARD OF THE PATIENCE OF JOB”
Not everything Job said was well said, but when he said, “The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (1.21), he stated the foundational truth for enduring the slings and arrows of life.

Job believed it was impossible for God to do wrong. Everything that happened to him happened within the limits of eternal righteousness. He didn't understand anything that happened. He saw neither justice nor love in it his sufferings. But despite this, **he never wavered in his belief that God is right.** Heaven and earth may perish, and he with them, but as long as God is just, nothing had really been lost. “Though he slay me, yet will I trust Him” (13.15).

Whenever the foundations are being destroyed, the foundation of patience is the belief that whatever happens to us, our woes and wrongs are within God's righteous law. This is our comfort and strength; this is what fortifies our soul.

UNTIL THE COMING OF THE LORD

Be careful about criticizing the Lord in the middle of the process. Only when we see the final resolution of our trials and ordeals—“the end intended by the Lord” (v 11)—are we positioned to come to a balanced view of what we've endured and see that “the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.”

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

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found in my reading . . .

There hadn't been a war in Europe since Waterloo in 1815, but in 1898, Robert Cecil, Marquis of Salisbury and prime minister of Great Britain, warned that any *danger to Europe would arise from dying nations*. Most Europeans didn't think of England, Germany, Austria, and France as dying nations, but with the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, it became evident to all how dead the nations of Western Europe—the former Holy Roman Empire, the “Christianized” nations—really were. They were as dead as godless Darwinism, Marxism, fascism, democracy, etc. can render a people.

For decades America has been preparing its downfall. The hatred, incivility, murder, violence, obscenities, moral perversion, and crime that is spewed is everywhere. But just because America is dying doesn't mean the church is dying with it. It has always been in times of societal decay that the church—“the pillar and ground of the truth”—has flourished.

“There is much to do, there's work on every hand.”
May God give us the strength to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world in this dark and decaying hour.

kenny

Sermon: Matthew 5.23–26

Exceeding righteousness

31 May 2026

A great text from Zephaniah

For I am searching Jerusalem with a lamp, to punish careless men, living at ease, who think the Eternal never does anything.

Zephaniah 1.12, MOFFATT

The Greeks told a story about Diogenes, who was seen walking around the streets of Athens in broad daylight carrying a lantern. When asked what he was doing, he replied, “I am searching for an honest man.” Zephaniah uses a similar figure to declare that God had set his sights on men who “think the Eternal never does anything.”

Zephaniah has been called “the fiercest of the prophets.” His opening words set the tone: “‘I will utterly consume everything from the face of the land,’ says the Lord” (1.2). Zephaniah is also said to be the first of the apocalyptists—the first prophet to use the strange, symbolic language employed by other prophets (e.g., 1.15) and especially by John in the book of Revelation.

Our founding fathers—men like Paine, Franklin, Jefferson, et al.—were men like Zephaniah described; men who essentially believed God never did anything. They didn’t believe God had intervened in human history to give man a special revelation through Scripture and His Son. They believed “the light of nature” was enough to reveal the permanent standards of morality.

While many have never heard of deism, they share the cynicism that thinks God never does anything. “Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Eccl. 8.11). Shooting up with the narcotic of false comfort, men live in the mistaken belief that they will never be held accountable for their inactivity, indifference, or inattention. James rails against those of his time who expected no ultimate accounting for their sins by telling them, “the coming of the Lord is at hand . . . Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!” (5.9,10). Judgment day is coming.

God is actively involved in the moral governance of His world. In endowing man with free will, He gave us the gift that makes us man, but which also makes it possible for us to become the devil. He takes note of all crimes, failures, oppression, and sin. “The cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.” God will render to every man according to his works. Our sins will find us out. There’s a sad day coming when the saints and the sinners shall be parted right and left.

On that day, all will know that God does something.

kenny

Luke the historian

The Gospel of Luke, said the French writer Renan, was “the most beautiful book ever written.” To this I would add that the second volume of Luke’s church history, the Book of Acts, may be the most valuable book ever written, because it is our only trustworthy account of the establishment and growth of Christianity following the ascension of Christ.

An historian’s trustworthiness only extends only as far as our ability to check the accuracy of their claims against historical fact. A historian who has George Washington crossing the Rubicon instead of the Delaware isn’t going to be taken seriously. “History” that disagrees with known facts is dismissed as fiction.

If Luke wrote fiction, he supplied ample opportunities for such to be determined. In his books he sets forth a detailed presentation of the features of the Roman Empire. He refers to many persons in the Empire, giving their titles and offices and delineating their jurisdictions. He describes Jewish high priests, Hebrew rabbis, Roman centurions, Greek officials, and imperial governors, and without fail, the information he provides has been proven to be in accord with verifiable historical fact. Anyone who takes the time offer a list of people like Luke does will be amazed at how many names are on the list, along with details about their circles of activity, work, ambitions, hopes, and fears.

Luke’s carefulness applies to places as well as people. Whether he is on the uplands of Lycaonia, or in the bigger, more cultured city of Antioch of Pisidia, or on the streets of Ephesus, or confronting the philosophers on Mars’ Hill, or the moral debauchery of Corinth, his writing is unimpeachable.

The same applies to his knowledge of Roman social order and communal life, whether he is speaking about trade and commerce, the various industries, the modes of travel, the treatment of prisoners, or the pagan religions. The very best of our modern critics—men like Sir William Ramsay, Adolph von Harnack, and Gustav Deissmann—contend, based on their own research of the Mediterranean world, that Luke had an exact and perfect understanding of the world of which he wrote.

Based on this, we can believe what He says when he writes about the little companies of Christians who gathered weekly to listen to the gospel and break bread in remembrance of their Lord.

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