

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—34  
Wednesday—12  
Contribution—\$2145

**For meditation:**  
Ecclesiastes 5.8–9  
According to Solomon, why is there so much injustice in human governments?

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

## ***“I can’t do anything until you get to Zoar”***

Driving from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea you enter a land that’s a freak of nature. The Dead Sea is the basement of the world. It doesn’t take a geologist to see that the half-mile-deep scar in the Jordan Valley was formed by some mighty convulsion. The most likely cause for the depression comes from Genesis 19.24, “Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens.”

One of the residents of Sodom was Abraham’s nephew Lot. Unlike his uncle who walked by faith, Lot walked by sight (Gen. 13.10) and consequently lost his moral compass (19.8), his moral influence (19.14), his will power (19.16), his family and possession. I’m not sure any of our congregations would have given Lot the right hand of fellowship, but Peter says Lot was a righteous man (2 Pet. 2.7). This information seems to explain the statement by the angel in Genesis 19.22 that rebellious Sodom could not be destroyed until righteous Lot was safely out.

I think a lot of Christians believe their eternal salvation will be “by the hair of their chinny-chin-chin” (based on a complete misreading of 1 Pet. 4.18; cf. 2 Pet. 1.11). I further think God’s dealings with Lot reflects the tenacious grip the Lord has on His people. Christ said that He gives His sheep eternal life, that they shall never perish, and that no one will snatch them from His hand. And He makes this last point not once, but twice (Jn. 10.28,29).

It’s part of our blessed assurance to know the Lord is working hard, sometimes without our cooperation, to make sure we don’t end up lost (Rom. 5.10).

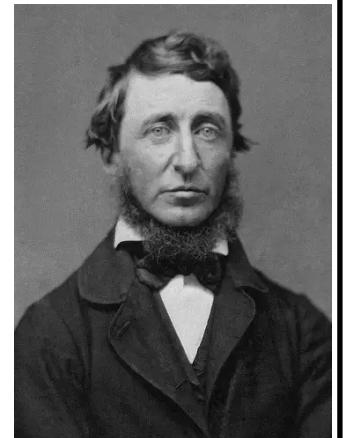
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# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

Henry David Thoreau was once asked if he was at peace with God. He reply was, “I was not aware we had quarreled.” But he had! And until he was reconciled to God, he was God’s enemy, no matter how peaceful his life was at Walden Pond (Rom. 8.7).

The first word of the gospel is not “Rejoice!” but “Repent!” (Matt. 3.2, 4.17; Acts 2.38). Sinners are not automatically reconciled to God. The gospel of Jesus Christ is not a palliative but a possibility. Only by belief, baptism, and a life-changing response to God’s grace can we have peace with God.



Sermon: Hebrews 11.4

## Abel the Astounding

13 July 2025

## ***“You have need of endurance”***

Hebrews 11.32,36

In 1922, the book, *The Worst Journey in the World*, was published. It told of a 1915 shipwreck that, at the time, was as famous as the Titanic's. In 2022, the ship in the book—the *Endurance*—was found 9,000 feet deep at the bottom of the sea.

The *Endurance* was captained by Ernest Shackleton, a chronic failure, having failed at almost everything he tried. Three times he attempted to reach the South Pole, but failed. Then, he tried to cross the continent of Antarctica, but before he even reached land, the *Endurance* got stuck in the ice. Before the ice could melt and free the ship, the movement of the ice crushed the ship. Shackleton and the twenty-seven crewmen saved the *Endurance's* three lifeboats and finally decided to sail to nearby Elephant Island. Having reached Elephant, the men decided they couldn't survive there. Shackleton and five of his crew then undertook to sail 830 miles north across open water to South Georgia Island, where there was a whaling port. It was a harrowing journey, their lives were in constant danger, but they reached South Georgia and took a large ship back to Elephant to rescue the rest of the crew.

About the only thing Shackleton was really good at was enduring. He constantly assured the crew they would be rescued; he refused to allow them to wallow in self-pity or pessimism. He inspired his men to hope against hope. His grit, determination, and unconquerable optimism led to the rescue of his entire crew—not a man was lost.

What the original readers of the letter to the Hebrews needed more than anything, the writer wrote, was endurance—“You have need of endurance” (Heb. 10.36). To encourage them they were told to look to Jesus Christ, “who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross” (12.2).

Between the start of our Christian life (Heb. 10.32) and the finish (1 Pet. 1.9), we need backbone, a toughness that outlasts bad times. Like the title of Bob—Crystal Cathedral—Schuller's book says: *Tough Times Don't Last, But Tough People Do.*”

To endure, look to Christ and remember that they who endure the unendurable will have glory that is uncomparable (Rom. 8.17).

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## ***Notes on the burial of Christ, John 18–19***

**19.38:** Two secret disciples—Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus—step forward to arrange Christ's burial. Indifferent to what his Sanhedrin colleagues would think, Joseph personally went to Pilate and asked for Christ's body. Mark 15.45 says Pilate “granted”—gifted, bestowed—Christ's body to Joseph. I'd like to think that this act of Pilate's, without expecting a bribe (Acts 24.26), was evidence of his admiration for Christ's demeanor during the trial of Christ that morning.

**19.39:** Nicodemus appears for the third time in the Gospel (chs. 3 and 7). We're never told if he became a true believer, but he was certainly a true sympathizer, evidenced by the fact he brought a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes—were aromatic, plant-based resins—for the burial.

**19.40:** Jesus was buried “as the custom of the Jews is to bury,” and the *Talmud's* sections on burial confirm this. Burial generally followed as soon as possible after death (Acts 5.6,10; 8.2). The burial dress consisted of inexpensive linen—called “wrappings,” or “travelling-dress”—that was wrapped around the body “mummy style,” the myrrh and aloes being folded into the windings. The head of Christ was wrapped with a piece of cloth separate from the linen used to wrap His body.

**19.41:** The first Adam came to life in a garden; the last Adam was buried in a garden. According to John, the burial site was “in the place”—“at the place,” NIV; “near the place,” EEB—of the crucifixion. If the locations of Calvary and the tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre are correct—and Finnegan in his exceptionally fine *The Archaeology of the New Testament* says the accuracy of these locations is “highly probable”—then Calvary and the tomb were literally just a stone's throw from each other.

Wiersbe, in his books on the Gospels, believes Joseph of Arimathea, who would have been privy to all the private meetings and planning the Sanhedrin was doing to kill Christ, had concluded Jesus would indeed be put to death, had consulted the Messianic prophecies that predicted His burial in connection with the wicked and the rich (Isa. 53.9), and had a new tomb, “in which no one had yet been laid,” dug near the place of execution. I'm not sure I grant all of Wiersbe's assumptions, but it is strange that a rich man would have had a family tomb prepared near a grisly site of execution. Christ, born of a virgin womb and was buried in Joseph's virgin tomb.

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