

# Truth

## Magazine

TM

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# PEACE ON EARTH

**“Those who love Your law  
have great peace, and nothing  
causes them to stumble”  
(Ps. 119:165, NASB).**



# Truth Magazine™

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# Peace On Earth

## ■ JESUS: PRINCE OF PEACE

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“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6).

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Before sending His disciples into the world, Jesus warned them what to expect: not a leisurely vacation, but a life-and-death struggle between good and evil, in which they must be equipped with the weapons He alone provides.

# Violence

by Mark Mayberry

Violence involves physical force that is intended to harm or hurt, damage or destroy, frighten or intimidate. Such conduct may be characteristic of this sinful world, but Christians are called to “pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14).

## Introduction

The twentieth century was dominated by humanistic philosophies that sought to dethrone God and deify man, or at least exalt human perfectibility as an attainable goal. Their failure resulted in untold heartache, hardships, and horrors. Both Lenin and Hitler conceived of a new man—not governed by Judeo-Christian ethics or morality; yet, utopia never materialized.

We live in an increasingly violent world. Fascism and Communism left a legacy of misery and murder. Over the course of the twentieth century, millions died in the ovens of Auschwitz, the gulags of Siberia, and the killing fields of Cambodia. In addition to state-sponsored mass murder, in recent decades the world has witnessed the rise of a virulent strain of Islamic fundamentalism. Lone wolf gunmen commit murder and mayhem with depressing regularity. On October 1, bullets rained down upon a music festival in Las Vegas, leaving fifty-eight people dead and about 500 others wounded. Houses of worship have repeatedly been invaded. On November 6, a rural Texas church was invaded by a lone gunman, leaving at least twenty-six people dead. There seems to be no end to the bloodshed.

While the talking-heads on television offer their politically charged commentary, believers turn to the Scripture for understanding, seeking a biblical perspective. Violence was

one of the reasons that God brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly: “Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence” (Gen. 6:11-13; 2 Pet. 2:5).

The Hebrew word *chamas*, derived from a root meaning “to treat violently or wrong,” refers to “violence, wrong” (Thomas 2555). Occurring sixty times in fifty-eight verses, it is translated “malicious” (3x), “violence” (48x), “violent” (6x), “wrong” (3x) in the NASB.

Vine says, “Basically *chamas* connotes the disruption of the divinely established order of things. It has a wide range of nuances within this legal sphere” (276). It includes the effect of bearing false witness, violent wrongdoing, etc.

## Characteristic of Fallen Humanity

Violence is characteristic of fallen humanity, i.e., those whose relationship with God is severed because of sin (Isa. 59:1-8, esp. v. 6). It stains their hands (Ps. 58:1-2) and their garments (Ps. 73:6).

Violence is rooted in a spirit of hatred. The psalmist David called upon God to “Look upon my enemies, for they are many, and they hate me with violent hatred” (Ps. 25:16-22, esp. v. 19). Reminding us that defilement comes from within, Jesus said, “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders” (Matt. 15:19).

Violence is rooted in distorted desire, either passionate, possessive, or prideful. Solomon says, “the desire of the treacherous is violence” (Prov. 13:2). The word rendered “desire” (*nephesh*) is often translated “soul” or “life,” but here it refers to one’s “desire, passion, or appetite.” As James explores the source of quarrels and conflicts, he affirms the same: “You lust and do not have; so you commit murder” (James 4:1-2).

Violence is rooted in an ignorance of God’s purpose, plans, and precepts. Pronouncing all the tribes guilty, Amos calls upon the neighboring nations to observe God’s judgment of Israel: “But they do not know how to do what is right,” declares the Lord, “these who hoard up violence and devastation in their citadels” (Amos 3:9-10).

## The Appeal of Violence

Violence is intoxicating. Evil men “eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence” (Prov. 4:14-19, esp. v. 17). Violence is enticing: “A man of violence entices his neighbor and leads him in a way that is not good” (Prov. 16:28-29; cf. 1:10-19).

## Examples of Violence

Simeon and Levi stood accursed because they exacted fierce anger and cruel wrath upon the city of Hamor the Hivite (Gen. 49:5-7; cf. Gen 34). Abimelech, who attained power by fratricide—slaying the seventy sons of Jerubbaal (Gideon)—



came to a similarly violent end (Judg. 9:22-24; 2 Sam. 11:21)

Babylon was employed by God to execute divine punishment upon the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem; yet, that fierce and impetuous people would subsequently be judged for having loved violence and bloodshed (Jer. 51:34-40, esp. v. 35; Hab. 2:8). The city of Nineveh faced similar condemnation (Jonah 3:5-9, esp. v. 8) as did Tyre (Ezek. 28:16).

The nation of Edom repeatedly betrayed their kinsmen, the sons of Judah and Israel (Joel 3:19). God said, "Because of violence to your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame, and you will be cut off forever" (Obad. 10-14). Sadly, the nation of Israel (Ezek. 45:9), the tribe of Judah (Ezek. 8:17), and the city of Jerusalem (Ezek. 12:19) were all guilty of the same offense.

Corrupt religions often evidence violent tendencies, including human sacrifice (Zeph. 1:9). Despite divine warnings, God's wayward people practiced the same, causing their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech, an act so abhorrent that God said, "nor had it entered My mind that they should do this abomination" (Deut. 18:10; Jer. 32:35).

Abusive marriages frequently evidence violent tendencies. Rebuking the practice of divorce, God said, "you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with groaning." "For I hate divorce," says the Lord, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong (*chamas*)" (Mal. 2:13-16, esp. v. 16).

### Exceptions

Defending his innocence, Job affirmed, "There is no violence (*chamas*) in my hands" (Job 16:15-17). David said the same regarding his dealings with the sons of Benjamin, the tribe from which King Saul descended: "there is no wrong (*chamas*) in my hands" (1 Chron. 12:16-18).

Isaiah foreshadowed that the Messiah, God's Suffering Servant, would face death even though He had done no violence (Isa. 53:9). His peaceable nature is reflected in the following statement: "A bruised reed He will not break and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish" (Isa. 42:3). His kingdom would be one of peace and security (Isa. 11:6-9; 60:18).

### Conclusion

Jesus Christ alone holds the answer to the alienation, enmity, and violence that plagues humanity. If

He could reconcile Jew and Gentile in one body, application of the gospel message can also yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness in our day (Eph. 2:11-22, esp. v. 17).

This issue of *Truth Magazine* focuses upon the theme of "Peace on Earth." Through obedience to the gospel, we can find peace with God and self. Additionally, we should also pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord (Heb. 12:14-17). 📖

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# Manuscripts of the Greek New Testament

by Kyle Pope

Manuscript discoveries within the past few centuries have dramatically influenced readings in English New Testaments. What are these discoveries and what questions arise as a result of their discovery?

In our last study, we learned about the *Textus Receptus* (TR) edition of the Greek NT. Produced by Erasmus (1516), then refined in later editions by Estienne (1550), Elziver (1624), and Scrivener (1894), the TR served as the textual basis for English translations like the King James Version (KJV) for over 400 years. In the nineteenth century, discoveries would dramatically change this.

When Erasmus made his first edition, he viewed only a few relatively young manuscripts, but the text he produced reflected what is known as the *Byzantine* text-type (named for Byzantium, the former capital of the Eastern empire). This text-type is found in most of the 5800 surviving manuscripts and was accepted throughout the Greek-speaking world for centuries. Erasmus' work sparked further study of ancient manuscripts to determine the original text. This field of study, known as *Textual Criticism*, is used in the study of all historical literature. Its name doesn't mean one is *criticizing* the text. It is the use of *critical* examination of manuscript evidence to determine the most likely form of the original text.

Greek, like all languages, changed over time. One of the most important ways it changed was how it was written. Think of it this way, if you looked at a note written by a person when he was four, forty, and ninety-four, the way he wrote at each age would show which notes were older

or younger. The study of changes in writing is called *paleography*. In its earliest forms, Greek used block letters that were all capitals (known as *majuscules* or *uncials*). There were no spaces between letters and no accent or breathing marks. This continued through about AD 900, but around AD 800 Greek began to use mostly lowercase letters (known as *minuscules*). It was a more cursive style with space between letters along with accent and breathing marks. None of this changed the meaning, but it allows scholars to determine a manuscript's age based on how it was written. Generally, majuscule manuscripts are the oldest, minuscule are younger. After Erasmus, several majuscule manuscripts came to light that became important to the study of the Greek NT. Here are some of the most important along with the symbol used to identify them in footnotes in Greek Bibles:

**Codex Alexandrinus (A).** Sixteen years after the KJV Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople gave Charles I a near-complete manuscript of the Greek Bible copied in Alexandria around AD 400. It is in the British Museum.

**Codex Vaticanus (B).** Since at least 1475 the earliest catalog of the Vatican library records a near-complete manuscript of the Greek Bible believed to date to about AD 300.

**Codex Bezae (D).** Theodore Beza was a friend of John Calvin. In 1581, Beza gave Cambridge a

manuscript of the Gospels and Acts from a monastery in Lyons made in the fifth or sixth century.

The story of one of the most significant discoveries revolves around the life of a man named Constantin Tischendorf (1815-1874). Daniel B. Wallace believes the fictional character Indiana Jones was based in part on Tischendorf's life. At nineteen he was already skilled in Greek and Latin. At twenty-five, he taught at a university. At twenty-six, he deciphered the *palimpsest* (a manuscript "scraped twice" with one text written over another) known as **Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus (C)**, which turned out to be a near-complete manuscript of the NT from around AD 400.

At twenty-seven Tischendorf published his first edition of the Greek NT. Two years later, in 1844 at the age of twenty-nine, he discovered the oldest complete NT manuscript ever found. At St. Catherine's monastery in the Sinai, he rescued this ancient manuscript from a pile of parchments about to be burned for firewood. It is known as...

**Codex Sinaiticus (E).** Dated to around AD 300, it is a parchment elegantly written in four columns. It contains all the NT and much of the Greek OT. It is in the British Museum and can be digitally viewed at [www.codexsinaiticus.org](http://www.codexsinaiticus.org).

How did these discoveries compare to the TR? For the most part, there

was agreement, affirming the Lord's promise, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Matt. 24:35). But there were differences. Sinaiticus differs from the TR in 12,000 instances. Most of these are minor spelling differences, but in some cases, the differences are more significant. For example, in Romans 8:1, mentioned in our last study, most manuscripts have the longer reading ending with the words, "who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" (NKJV). Sinaiticus ends the verse with the words, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Does that mean the original text had the shorter reading or was Sinaiticus miscopied in this instance? Throughout Sinaiticus, there are notes where scribes (at some point) added corrections that often match the Byzantine text. In Romans 8:1 there is a break in the line after the words "Christ Jesus" with an arrow pointing back to these words. At the top of the page, there is another arrow with the words of the longer reading supplied. Which reading should be accepted? How scholars answer this affects decisions made in Bible translation for the next centuries.

Sinaiticus became the basis for Tischendorf's future editions of the Greek New Testament. He published eight from 1841-1869 but included notes that identified variants in other manuscripts. In the years that followed a theory developed that the Byzantine text had been changed over time to include *conflated readings* (i.e., readings bringing together different variants into one reading). In 1881 B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort (WH), proponents of this theory, published a text of the Greek NT advocating the view that older manuscripts are the most trustworthy witnesses to the text. Using the majuscule manuscripts as their basis, their edition omitted words or phrases that had long been in the TR. These were listed in the back as

"rejected readings." It had no footnotes showing evidence for variant readings.

Shortly after this, a revision of the KJV was made relying on this approach. In England, it was called the Revised Version, but in 1901 an American version of it was published called the American Standard Version (ASV). Although it did not omit all readings WH rejected, for the first time a textual basis other than the TR was used.

Since WH the view that the Byzantine text-type is a secondary text has become the accepted view among most scholars. Critical (or Eclectic) editions based on readings scholars pieced together from their best judgment of the original reading are produced leaning primarily on the age of a manuscript as a basis for its authority. The two most popular editions are the Nestle-Aland and the United Bible Society Greek texts (abbreviated NU). Unlike WH, both include footnotes allowing readers to evaluate manuscript evidence. Updated editions try to include the most recent manuscript discoveries. NU has been used as the textual basis for almost all English translations since the ASV. Only the New King James Version (and a few other updates of the KJV) continue to use the TR as their textual basis.

While the theory was quickly accepted that the Byzantine text-type was a corrupted text, some scholars question its assumptions. Does the age of a manuscript guarantee its accuracy? Does a well-preserved manuscript guarantee it is accurate, or does it show it fell into disuse? There were times when major collections of NT manuscripts were destroyed. Did these contain manuscripts as old as these majuscules that read as the Byzantine text does? Should accepted readings be rejected based on the witness of only a few manuscripts?

In 1982 Zane Hodges and Arthur Farstad introduced a new approach to textual criticism considering the

weight of evidence for various readings. Their edition is called "The Majority Text" (MT). In 2005 Maurice Robinson and William Pierpont published *The New Testament in the Original Greek: Byzantine Textform*. Their approach focuses on the Byzantine text-type.

Since WH, while no complete NT manuscripts have been found, many fragmentary papyri have been discovered that predate Sinaiticus. These have been published in *The Complete Text of the Earliest New Testament Manuscripts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1999). Some include...

**The Rylands Papyrus (P52)**, a fragment acquired by B.P. Grenfell in Egypt in 1920 and published in 1934. It is in the Rylands Library and was copied around AD 150. It is the oldest undisputed fragment of a NT book with a portion of John 18:31-33.

**The Chester Beatty Papyri (P46)**, discovered in Egypt and sold to Chester Beatty and the University of Michigan in the 1930s. This manuscript has almost all of Paul's epistles. When first found it was dated to AD 200, but some modern scholars place it into the first century based upon paleography.

For several years Daniel B. Wallace has been announcing the upcoming publication of a manuscript of Mark he believes should be dated into the first century. He posts listings of new discoveries at *The Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts*: [www.csntm.org](http://www.csntm.org). In some cases, readings found in papyri discoveries support readings found in the Byzantine text. NU has occasionally restored readings they once rejected. What will new discoveries reveal? **!**



Kyle Pope

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# Lessons from the Wash Tub

by Deborah Towles

Perhaps we live in the most clean-conscious age in history; yet, our need for cleansing goes far beyond personal hygiene.

What woman reading this has not occasionally been overwhelmed in the unending battle against dirt? It is the cast-off, decaying refuse of physical living, a breeding ground for disease and further death. Because dirt is so common, we may either weary in the fight against it or grow too comfortable with its presence. Complacency toward its dangers can put our families at risk. It is also possible to become obsessive in our concern for physical cleanliness and lose sight of other pressing needs. This constant, tedious labor against dirt/germs provides an opportunity to understand and teach the greater necessity and blessings of spiritual cleanliness to our children.

The need to remove dirt is not new. Familiar biblical instances of bathing include Pharaoh's daughter (Exod. 2:5), Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:2), and Joseph facing his brothers (Gen. 43:31). Infants were washed at their birth (Ezek. 16:4), bodies were washed in preparation for burial (Acts 9:37), and guests' feet were cleansed before meals (Gen. 18:4). Though other cultures may have practiced some level of cleanliness, for the Hebrews it was common.

God meant for His people to value cleanliness. Ceremonial cleansings allowed a people stained with sin to come before a Holy God (Exod. 19:10-14; 40:10-13). These outward requirements should have prepared God's people to understand the far greater need for inner cleansing that removes the putrid stains of death from the hearts of sinful men (James 1:13-15; Ps. 51:1-12). In the days of Jeremiah, His people washed with lye (a strong cleansing agent), but the stain of their iniquity was not removed. Their hearts needed to be washed from evil to be truly clean (Jer. 2:22; 4:14). Pharisees of Jesus' day were severely rebuked because they were more concerned with outward cleanliness than inner corruption (Matt. 15:2; 23:25-28).

We live in the most clean-conscious age in history, understanding that clean habits promote and protect physical health. Yet, our need for spiritual cleansing goes far beyond personal hygiene. No human effort can purify guilt-stained hearts. Only one agent can wash

away the filthy contamination of evil, the blood of the sinless Son of God (Isa. 1:18; Rev. 1:5) applied during and after our baptism (Acts 22:16; 1 John 1:9). What joyful exhilaration belongs to the one so cleansed (Acts 8:39)!

Clean, unstained, white clothing is symbolic of joy and purity (the freedom from contamination of sin). Those prepared to enter the presence of God are thus clothed (Mal. 3:2-4; Ps. 29:1-2). At His transfiguration, Jesus' "garments became radiant and exceedingly white as no launderer on earth can whiten them" (Mark 9:3). Was this a demonstration of the glory of clean clothing or of the glorious purity of the One who wore them (Heb. 7:26-28)? Christ's glory will be evident in us as we are clothed with Him (Gal. 3:27), and as our pure hearts become His dwelling place (Eph. 3:17-19). The joy of such cleanness should not be hidden or undervalued.

We must avoid the pharisaic obsession with externals, washing the outside of the cup, while leaving the inside filthy (Matt. 23:25-26). We should also resist relegating the task of cleanliness to a hopeless battle, long lost. For in it opportunities arise to teach, by example and word, the diligence and attention necessary to "cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and spirit" (2 Cor. 7:1). True joy belongs to those who, through God's mercy, walk in purity of heart, as if in white garments, unsoiled and kept until the time of Jesus' coming and beyond (Rev. 3:4-5; 7:12-16)!

If asked, children may say it is more fun getting dirty than clean. But if you have ever seen a child escape from the drying process to run through the house in the sheer joyful exhilaration of cleanliness, then you may doubt that claim! God bless you in your efforts to teach the value of and constant joy belonging to those truly clean. **!**



Deborah Towles

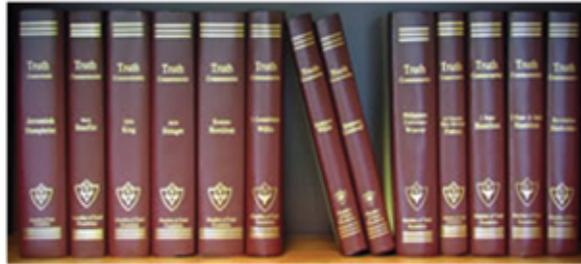
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# Reward vs. Punishment: Historical Controversies

by Daniel H. King, Sr.

Heaven and hell are the ultimate spiritual realities, representing the reward promised to those who are faithful, and the punishment allotted to unrepentant sinners. Down through history, men have departed from the biblical depiction of both realms, exalting human speculation in the place of divine revelation.

The language of the New Testament is straightforward in its revelation of those truths regarding God's intention to reward his faithful saints and punish the wicked. The descriptive terminology has elicited considerable interest and some intensity of discussion since the NT documents were completed. However, it cannot be argued that there is much uncertainty or lack of clarity regarding what has been promised or warned about in that body of documents. From the beginning, the notion of eternal punishment has been the topic which has excited the most angst for the minds of certain readers and Bible students and has therefore evoked the most creative responses. In other words, eternal heaven has rarely ever been viewed as a major obstacle except with outright atheists. Rather, it is the notion that God might punish unbelievers and sinners eternally in a place of fire and torment. This has even given some who call themselves "Christians" pause for reflection and has led some to reject the idea altogether.

However, since Jesus Himself is the one who speaks most often and most frankly about the horrors of hell in the NT, it has proven difficult for detractors to criticize the doctrine while at the same time holding to Jesus as Lord and Savior. Of course, for modern theological liberals that does not offer a considerable challenge, since they view the Christ whom they hold out to the world to be a mere man.

In their way of thinking Jesus was a great man, but nothing more than this. He was not God or even the Son of God in the way that the Bible sets him forth. So, anything that He said or taught is thought by them to be no more holy or true than that which any other mere mortal human being would be capable of saying. Thus, His words are susceptible, like yours or mine, to correction or refinement as the need may arise, or as the philosophical demands of the moment may call. We shall return to theological liberalism momentarily, but for now, let us discuss the earlier history of departures from the biblical depiction of "orthodox" divine reward and punishment.

## Jewish Orthodoxy

Before we proceed to address the topic of departures from orthodoxy on these matters, let it first be noted that the NT view of these matters is quite consistent with the ideas believed commonly among the Jews. At the time and held to be perfectly in line with OT teaching as well. This quote from 2 Esdras, an apocalypse composed by an unknown Jew near the end of the first century AD, illustrates that point, being perfectly in line with the Lord's description of the rich man (sometimes called Dives) and Lazarus in Luke 15:

Then the pit of torment shall appear, and opposite it shall be the place of rest; and the furnace of hell shall be disclosed, and opposite it the paradise of delight. Then the Most

High will say to the nations that have been raised from the dead, "Look now, and understand whom you have denied, whom you have not served, whose commandments you have despised! Look on this side and on that; here are delight and rest, and there are fire and torments!" Thus he will speak to them on the day of judgment (7:36-38, RSV).

It will be noted that in this text the places of bliss and of torment are visible the one from the other, and the other coincides as well. Moreover, this is not the only passage from that literature which illustrates this important point:

And you will look from on high and see your enemies in Gehenna, and you will recognize them and rejoice, and you will give thanks and confess your Creator (*Assumption of Moses* 10:10).

This was also consistent with the teaching of the Pharisees, whose doctrinal stance on this matter both Jesus and Paul embraced, and which stood in contrast with what was taught by the priestly sect of the Jews in NT times, the Sadducees. This is evident from the NT literature itself, as well as from the following quotation in the first century Jewish writer Josephus:

They also believe that souls have an immortal vigor in them, and under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the

former shall have power to revive and live again. (*Antiquities of the Jews* 18.1.3; and in the *Wars of the Jews* 2.8.14, he says that the Pharisees taught that “the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment”).

Similar passages are found in the *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*:

Chapters 10:1 says, “And those two men led me up onto the Northern side, and showed me there a very terrible place, and there were all manner of tortures in that place: cruel darkness and unilluminated gloom, and there is no light there, but murky fire constantly flaming aloft, and there is a fiery river coming forth, and that whole place is everywhere fire, and everywhere there is frost and ice, thirst and shivering, while the bonds are very cruel, and the angels fearful and merciless, bearing angry weapons, merciless torture...”

See also 40:10-11; 41:1-3, and especially 42:1, which says, “I saw the key-holders and guards of the gates of hell standing like great serpents, and their faces like extinguishing lamps, and their eyes of fire, their sharp teeth, and I saw all the Lord’s works, how they are right, while the works of man are some (good), and others bad...”

## Early Christian and Heretical Documents

Later still, in early Christian literature outside the NT, the so-called *Apocalypse of Peter*. This second century document confirms the basic teaching of the biblical corpus, having the following description of the place of eternal punishment, along with a remarkably vivid depiction of the tortures of Gehenna:

And I saw another place over against that, very dark; and it was the place of punishment. And those who were punished there and the punishing angels had a dark raiment like the air of the place. And some were there hanging by the tongue: these

were those who blasphemed the way of righteousness, and under them was fire burning and punishing them. And there was a great lake, full of flaming mire, in which were certain men who had perverted righteousness, and tormenting angels afflicted them (20; cf. also 21-33 for the most striking imagery).

The *Testament of Abraham* (often said to be from the second century AD but may be of somewhat earlier provenance) heralds from a Jewish source somewhere in Egypt. Some have argued it is a piece of Christian apocrypha, but without good evidence for their hypothesis. It is a document which takes on some elements of Egyptian theology, especially regarding the “weighing of souls.” Otherwise, it is thoroughly Jewish. The weighing of souls is an idea that is frequently pictured on ancient Egyptian pagan monuments. The trial of souls here is threefold, once before Abel, later by the twelve tribes of Israel, and finally by the Lord Himself. Abraham is permitted to witness the procedure of judgment, and he finds two angels seated at a table. The one on the right hand records the good deeds, and the one on the left the evil deeds of the soul to be tested. In front of the table stands an angel with a balance on which the souls are tried. Paganism had clearly influenced this Jewish writer in his view of the afterlife.

A Valentinian Gnostic document, discovered in 1773 and known as *Pistis Sophia*, shows a much more radical departure from orthodoxy, especially regarding the place of punishment. Gnostics were heretics who claimed celestial knowledge and boasted themselves superior to their fellow Christian brethren. This work was likely written in Egypt in the period between the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. It is contained in a solitary Coptic manuscript in the British Museum. It purports to record instructions given by Jesus to certain disciples at the end of a twelve-year sojourn upon the

earth after the resurrection. Described as “outer darkness,” in this unusual document hell is presented in the form of a huge dragon with its tail in its mouth, the circle thus formed engirdling the whole earth. Within the monster are the regions of punishment, for “in it are twelve dungeons of horrible torment.” Each dungeon is governed by a monster-like ruler, and in these are punished the worst of sinners. To express the awfulness of the torture, it is said that the fire of the underworld is nine times hotter than that of earthly furnaces; the fire of the great chaos is nine times hotter than the underworld; the fire of the “rulers” is nine times hotter than that of the great chaos; but the fire of the dragon is seventy times more intense than that of the “rulers.”

Interestingly, in 3 Baruch (4 and 5) there is also mention of a great dragon in close connection with Hades, and in the latter of the two chapters, Hades is said to be his belly. It is supposed by many scholars that this notion of a dragon, such as is described in these documents, may be derived from an ancient Semitic myth and that such a myth existed is not a matter of dispute, but in terms of context it is not necessary to go beyond the embellishment of John’s description of Satan as “the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan” (Rev. 20:2; cf. Martin, 546).

## Manichaeism, Reincarnation, and Annihilation

A pretender to prophetic gifts named Mani was born into a Jewish Christian community in Persia around AD 216 and lived until about 276. His doctrinal system came to be called Manichaeism. It spread widely in the Roman Empire and into Asia. This sect survived in eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang) until the 13th century. Rejecting Christian orthodoxy, he preached a new religion which he regarded as the only true Christianity. It incorporated

many beliefs of general paganism, Zoroastrianism, and Buddhism.

Mani taught that there were two deities (dualism): the God of Light and Satan. His advocates said that by avoiding sensual and sexual activity, and by following the teachings of Mani, the elect (called *perfecti*) could gather sufficient spiritual credits so that they would eventually ascend directly to the Kingdom of Light at death. The rest of mankind would be reincarnated; they would be forced to live through several lives until they could become part of the elect. Unrepentant sinners, however, would be consumed by the flames which would burn for 1,468 years after the return of Jesus. Thus, few aspects of orthodox religion were retained in their view of the afterlife.

### **Roman Catholic Purgatory and Limbo**

The word “purgatory” (Latin *purgatorium*) did not enter the lexicon of Christian doctrinal discussion until AD 1160-1180. In other words, for the first one thousand years of Christian history, the idea did not exist in the form that it eventually took in the Middle Ages. The First Council of Lyon in 1245 became the first of several church councils to mention the doctrine.

According to Roman Catholic teaching, purgatory is defined as the place or state of temporal punishment, where those who have died in the grace of God expiate their unforgiven venial sins and undergo such punishment as is still due to forgiven sins, before being admitted to the Beatific Vision (Cross, 114). Catholic theologians make a case for this idea from a single passage in an apocryphal work, 2 Maccabees 12:39-45. They also support the argument with passages like Matthew 12:31ff and 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 where they allege that a state beyond the grave exists in which expiation is still possible. Early churchmen are also quoted as authority for this notion, such as Clement of

Alexandria, Origin, Cyril of Jerusalem, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine.

Likewise, in Latin theology there is the notion of Limbo (*limbus patrum* and *limbus infantium*), in which the saints of the Old Covenant remained until Christ’s coming, and the everlasting state of those who die unregenerate, e.g. unbaptized infants, and hence in original sin, but innocent of personal guilt (Cross, 823-824). The Roman church has never made a formal declaration of this doctrine, but suggestive statements by Augustine and Thomas Aquinas are cited as authority on the matter.

### **Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Soul-extinction**

The modern Seventh-day Adventist churches derive from the “second advent movement” which swept the US in the 1840’s. William Miller, an apostate Baptist minister from New York in 1818 had confidently taught that Christ would return in 1843. After that failure, he moved the date to 1844 with the same result. This became known as “The Great Disappointment” in Adventist theology. The Seventh-day Adventist church formally achieved denominational stature in 1860 at a conference held in Battle Creek, Michigan. Observance of the seventh day Sabbath was a key component of their religious ritual.

Among the signal doctrines of this organization is the idea of “soul-extinction” and of the annihilation of the wicked. In their view there is no soul which survives after the body dies; at death, a person becomes completely nonexistent. Although they do teach that all men will be raised from the dead, the condition of man between death and the resurrection is, for them, not one of consciousness but nonexistence. Hence their view, in distinction from the view usually called “soul-sleep” can better be characterized

as “soul-extinction” (Hoekema, 345; W. Martin, 131). Adventists also proclaim the final annihilation of the wicked, denying that there is a place of eternal torment called hell. Before annihilation, however, the wicked will be subjected to gradations of suffering, depending on the guilt of the persons or demons involved. Satan himself is to suffer the longest and will, therefore, be the final one to perish in the flames of extinction. At the end of this period of suffering, though, all those who have rebelled against God will be wiped out of existence.

Growing out of the identical “second advent movement” of the middle of the nineteenth century, C. T. Russell urged upon his followers virtually the same views of death, resurrection, “soul-extinction” and annihilation of the wicked. Therefore, to the present day, Jehovah’s Witnesses mostly teach the identical doctrines. JW’s do depart from the Adventists on a couple of minor points: whereas Adventists affirm that all those who have died will be raised again, Witnesses assert that certain individuals will not be raised but will remain in the nonexistence into which they were plunged when they died. Too, in distinction from Seventh-day Adventists, JW’s do not teach a gradation of suffering before the annihilation of the wicked.

### **Liberal Theology and After Death Reward and Punishment**

Those who have come to believe the liberal line on Scripture have little trust in the basic teachings of the NT, viewing the Bible as the words of fallible men rather than as the Word of the Infallible God who inspired their writing. Since they do not trust the teachings of Scripture, they do not believe in hell or the concept of eternal punishment. Some may not even believe in heaven, the eternal reward of the righteous. As a result, most of those who hold to this theological perspective are universalists: they believe everyone will ultimately be saved and enjoy heaven,

or else they are agnostic about either reward or punishment. In no biblical sense of the word could liberals of this variety be described as “believers.” With them, the trust factor is lost entirely—they simply do not trust the Bible.

Evangelicals, on the other hand, are supposedly believers in the text of Scripture. Therefore, we expect that they will be trusting when it comes to the biblical narratives and the teachings that derive from them. Eternal punishment, the historic view of the church and the very clear teaching of the Bible, holds that hell is a place of eternal, conscious, and final punishment, banishment, and death. But in our time a person’s perspective on hell is more often the corollary to other more central doctrines for him: the love of God, the justice of God, the holiness of deity, the nature of God’s victory at the cross, the guilt, and corruption in Adam and all humanity.

At any rate, the contemporary culture also plays a major role in this issue. It should not, but it does. The historic doctrine of hell stands for everything the present day culture rejects: that God’s love is not sentimental but interconnected to His holiness and justice, that humans are universally guilty and pervasively corrupt, that Jesus is the one and only

substitute and sacrifice for human sin, that obedient faith in Christ is the only means to receive the benefits of His saving work, and that God’s ultimate victory does not mean only the elimination of all sin from the universe, but also the appropriate, and final punishment of it. None of these concepts are comfortably at home in the present environment in the Western world. This is the source of the contemporary problem.

In their book, *Erasing Hell*, Preston Sprinkle and Francis Chan predict: “... even within conservative evangelical circles, the annihilation view of hell will be the dominant view in 10 or 15 years. I base that on how many well-known pastors secretly hold that view...” The problem is that our culture is strongly against the idea of eternal punishment. Many important philosophers and theologians, even of the so-called “conservative” or “evangelical” sort, oppose the idea. In advertising the work, *Hell Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents Eternal Punishment*, edited by C. W. Morgan and R. A. Peterson, it is noted that: “Of all the teachings of Christianity, the doctrine of hell is easily the most troubling, so much so that in recent years the church has been quietly tucking it away. Rarely mentioned anymore in the

pulpit, it has faded through disuse among evangelicals and has been attacked by liberal theologians.” So, the future does not look bright for the biblical doctrine of hell, even among professed religious conservatives. ❏

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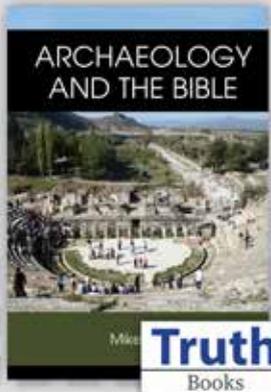
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# Family Fun & Entertainment

by Phillip E. Stuckey

When we choose to have fun and be entertained with God's principles in mind as a family, we not only build better and stronger families but also show others that God's ways are better.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven (Eccl. 3:1, ESV).

The family is an important part of God's plan for humanity. God designed the family to provide not only companionship for a husband and wife, but also a relationship where children are to be conceived, born, and then brought up to love and serve the Lord (Gen. 2:18-24; Eph. 6:1-4). When we follow God's plan for our family, then it will be one of the most joyful and rewarding relationships we will have in this life (Ps. 127:3-5). Part of family life is having fun and enjoying entertainment and good times together. Solomon's words in Ecclesiastes remind us that this is so (Eccl. 3:1-8). The Bible is filled with examples of people enjoying fun and entertainment: some of it is good, harmless, and even wholesome and some of it is not (Zech. 8:5; Exod. 32:6). Let us consider how we can enjoy time together with our families that is not only pleasing to God but beneficial.

There are a few principles we should always keep in mind. Whenever we choose to do something together as a family, we must first consider if it is lawful in God's sight. The Bible says, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17), and "whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). If something is not pleasing to the Lord, then we should not do it, nor should we take pleasure in it.

Also, we should consider that even if it is lawful, is it wise? The Bible says, "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16). Our society is obsessed with leisure and entertainment. However, we need to make sure that we are using godly wisdom in our choices and not letting our family fun take over our lives, causing us to neglect other beneficial and essential pursuits.

Another principle to think about concerning our choices is whether they are beneficial to our own families and others. We must not be selfish, but as Paul said, "Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor" (1 Cor. 10:24). We must be careful not to engage in anything that would encourage others to sin or would bring reproach on the Lord or His church (1 Cor. 10:31-33). Our choices of fun and entertainment are opportunities for us to be salt and light and to help lead others to Christ (Matt. 5:13-17).

When I consider this subject, I recall a session I attended at an educational technology conference about content filtering some years ago. The presenter lamented the fact that the vast majority of the efforts in content filtering were about blocking inappropriate content instead of identifying appropriate content. He said he was "tired of enumerating badness" and wanted instead to "enumerate goodness." Some wisdom is here found for

parents as we guide our families. Our society is saturated with filthy movies, television shows, music, and other entertainment and media. We cannot allow ourselves or our children to consume ungodly content, or participate in ungodly pursuits.

We do not want just to teach our children to avoid sinful and harmful pursuits; we must train them to engage in lawful and godly activities. The gospel teaches us to put off the old man of sin and to put on the new man who is being renewed in the image of Christ (Col. 3:1-14). Scripture teaches us to "renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age" (Titus 2:11-12). This must be our constant aim in training our children to discern not only good and evil but also what is wise and expedient. We should make the best use of our time together so that when our children are grown, they will be equipped to choose appropriate, beneficial, and godly entertainment for themselves and their families.

So, what are some things we can do together as families that are wholesome, enjoyable, and godly? Worshipping as a family and with other saints should be enjoyable and something we love to do. Like David, we should be glad when we have the chance to worship (Ps. 122:1). One of the best things you can do as a parent as your children grow up is instilling in them a joy and love for serving God.

They should see that in our priorities. We make time to do what we love. Many people let their kids stay out late to go to the “big game,” or a concert, or some school event, but some of these same people will not drive an hour or stay up late to encourage other brethren at a gospel meeting or singing or in spending time with their brethren. Make sure your children learn to enjoy worshipping and serving God.

While worshipping God is not entertainment and should not be merely entertaining, serving God should be something that we enjoy doing, and that brings us joy. Such activities should be pleasant and even fun in many ways. Serving and helping others provides good quality family time. Remember, Jesus came “not to be served, but to serve” and He said it is “more blessed to give than to receive” (Matt. 20:28; Acts 20:35). Opening our homes to others should be fun and enjoyable. As the Scripture says, “Show hospitality to one another without grumbling” (1 Pet. 4:9).

When our children are small, entertainment choices are easy, basic, and simple. Playing together, reading together, and simply being together throughout the day during those early years is just bliss. As the

kids get older, entertainment choices and opportunities expand. There are always movies, TV, board games, and, of course, video games that we can watch or play together. Athletics, arts, and music are generally good and wholesome pursuits provided we maintain godliness in our conduct, speech, behavior, and dress.

Our family likes to spend time together learning about history and the world, so we like to visit libraries and museums. Getting outside and enjoying God’s creation, whether that is in your backyard or visiting a state or national park, is a great way to enjoy time together. There you can walk, hike, hunt, fish, camp, and experience a host of other activities. These provide opportunities for us to encourage our children to develop their talents and to build and strengthen relationships with God and with others. However, we must always maintain our commitments to God and the church and not let recreational activities become idols that consume all our time (1 John 5:21).

No doubt, many of these things that we have discussed are obvious. But some areas are often overlooked when we think about enjoyable things to do together as a family. One is just working together. As parents, we must

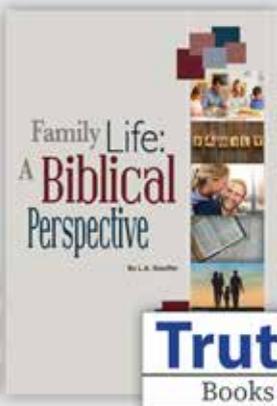
realize that not every opportunity or experience we provide for our children will be thought of (at the moment) as “fun.” Cleaning house, doing laundry, washing the car, working in the yard, canning beans, or freezing corn might not seem entertaining today, but these times offer some of the most pleasant memories of childhood. When chores must be done, engage the family, and do your best to make the work entertaining. Singing, telling family stories, or even staging competition can make the work go faster.

Living the Christian life is costly and often challenging (2 Tim. 3:12), but that does not mean it is a joyless drudgery. Family life is a blessing from God; it should be fun and enjoyable. When we choose to have fun and be entertained with God’s principles in mind, we will not only build better and stronger families, but we will also show others that God’s ways are better. May God help us to make godly and wise choices in how we enjoy fun and entertainment as a family. **11**



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## QUESTION:

If a person from a distant town decides he wants to place membership with a local congregation, how far do you go in checking out this person? If you know that the person has been withdrawn from in a different congregation, but don't know the reason why, do you go to the other congregation's men and speak with them? Mind you, neither of the congregations has elders, so it is just the men who will make decisions.

## Answer:

We need to understand that each local church has the right to examine those seeking to be part of that church; such is within the self-government of the congregation and the supervision of its local overseers, whose task it is to see that what is done is done properly (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). In the absence of elders (overseers), the right of congregational self-government does not change, though it does alter the exact means employed to tend to such matters, especially the efficiency and effectiveness of the process.

Not only is it wise for each local group to examine those applying for partnership (fellowship), but it is mandatory for maintaining a scriptural arrangement in the local church. This is what Jerusalem did when the newly converted Saul desired to be part of them, only to be rejected and later accepted when Barnabas interceded for him (Acts 9:26-28). It is regrettable that a Diotrophes often seeks control in such situations (3 John 9-11), hindering the church's work and progress. In that instance, Diotrophes abused the church's right to receive one recommended by John. Because the

church can receive, it also can refuse to receive, based on its findings about a potential teacher or member.

When the congregation, whether led by elders or not, accepts or rejects one according to New Testament principles, it does what the Lord approves. When the congregation does not accept or refuse according to God's will, it displeases the Lord (Rev. 2:15, 20; 3 John 9-10). Yes, the congregation should examine such a person as a means of controlling potential problem situations that might develop. It also should determine whether and when individuals should be excluded for the same reason. **11**

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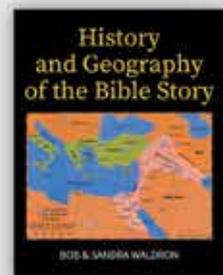
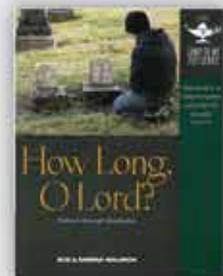
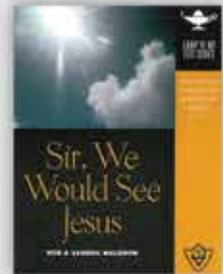
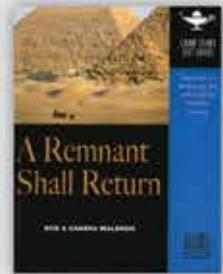
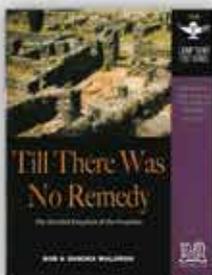
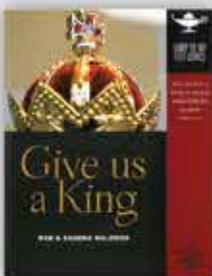
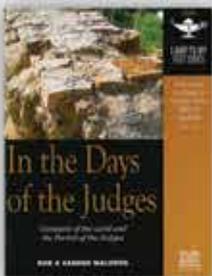
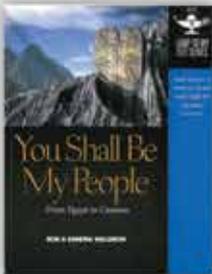
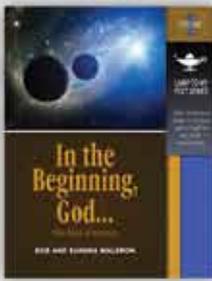
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# Beersheba

by Trent and Rebekah Dutton

Beersheba (well of the seven or well of the oath) was situated on the southern border of the Promised Land. Frequently mentioned in Genesis, a study of this ancient site helps us to understand the Biblical text and its actors.

It only seems fitting, with our last article being a profile of the ancient site of Dan, to also profile the ancient site of Beersheba. The archaeological background and investigation milieu concerning Beersheba is slightly different from that of Tel Dan, but we still have plenty of material with which to work. The first difference between these two sites is that, at Beersheba, we are potentially dealing with more than one site. The two possible locations for this Biblical site are Tel es-Seba' and Bir es-Seba' (modern Arabic names). Before diving into the details of these sites, the general comments from the Dan profile still hold true—you can read details of landscapes and views, seeing the locations just as the ancient writer did. You can read and

understand the text without being there, but being there does give a depth of perspective otherwise not possible.

These potential locations of Beersheba are just a few miles apart in the southern-central portion of modern-day (and ancient) Israel. It is the area designated “from Dan to Beersheba” in the Old Testament that defined the northern and southern extents of Israel for many centuries. This location lies at a key point of travel and trade connecting the Mediterranean coast to the desert inland routes, as well as north to south travel routes. It provided a stopover point and administrative center for ruling governments to control travel and trade throughout the region (think taxes and military control). The ancient

site of Arad (Judg. 1:16), also in this vicinity, served a similar purpose.

Tel es-Seba' is commonly and most traditionally identified as the Biblical site of Beersheba. This site lies a few miles east of the modern-day city and is the popular site visited by tourist groups. It is a 3-acre raised mound, nicely excavated to reveal a well-planned and organized Iron Age city (Divided Kingdom). If you perform a Google image search or look up the Wikipedia entry for this site, Tel es-Seba' is the one you will see. The Wiki entry for Beersheba that describes the modern history and status of the city does not mention there are two possible locations for the ancient site. This is somewhat interesting, as



*Tel es-Seba' reconstructed Iron Age remains*



*Tel es-Seba' looking south over the Negev*



Camel herd from Tel es-Seba'

the other possible site for Beersheba is actually in the modern-day city.

The other possible site, Bir es-Seba' encounters a problem of the old world intersecting with the new. If you dig anywhere in Israel, you are likely to hit ancient ruins. This is often trouble for modern development, as construction must be stopped, and an evaluation made to document and remove the ancient material or to plan the construction around the ancient material. This site was overrun by modern construction, so salvage excavations make up most of what we know about the site. The salvage excavations show an Iron Age city much like Tel es-Seba', but this site is much larger, at 25 acres.

What is known about both sites is that there was early occupation in and around them during the Chalcolithic era (~4,000 BC), and they were more or less abandoned until the Iron Age (~1,200 BC). As your Biblical narrative and historical dating wheels begin to turn, you will eventually hit the question: "What about Abraham? He gave Beersheba its name and resided there, and my lesson book

tells me he lived at 2,000 BC. So, do we have an Abraham problem?"

Yes, we do have an Abraham problem, but the problem is not with dates and occupational times. The problem is in how Abraham lived, or rather, our perception of how he lived. We are given plenty of descriptions of Abraham's living style and his movements, which tell us he did not dwell in cities. He did, however, start a few. But even with that, we may not fully consider that Abraham was a pastoral nomad—a seasonal wanderer with herds and flocks and tents and people, more like the modern-day Bedouin. His era, even though we do not know "exactly" when it would have been, very much fits his roaming lifestyle, when pastoral nomads wielded political and social clout, even becoming kings of city-states. Was he moving around via God's direction at times? Sure, but this does not preclude him from being a pastoral nomad that was chosen to fulfill God's plan. In fact, if God needed a roaming individual to make His narrative happen, Abraham seems to have been a good choice.

"Dan to Beersheba" is a range of geographic space that encapsulates so much of the Biblical text, and Beersheba serves as a key location from the Patriarchs to the Divided Kingdom. Locations like Tel es-Seba' provide a visual platform where you can see vistas in the distance, such as the Negev, the Judean Hill Country, and the edge of the Jordan Valley and Wilderness of Zin, where many episodes of God's people play out on the land. **TI**

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Trent & Rebekah Dutton

Trent and Rebekah Dutton both hold Master's degrees in Biblical Archaeology from Wheaton College in the Chicago, IL area. They have participated in four full excavation seasons with the Leon Levy Expedition to Ashkelon, Israel, and two seasons at Tel Shimron in the Jezreel Valley. They can be reached at trentdutton@gmail.com.

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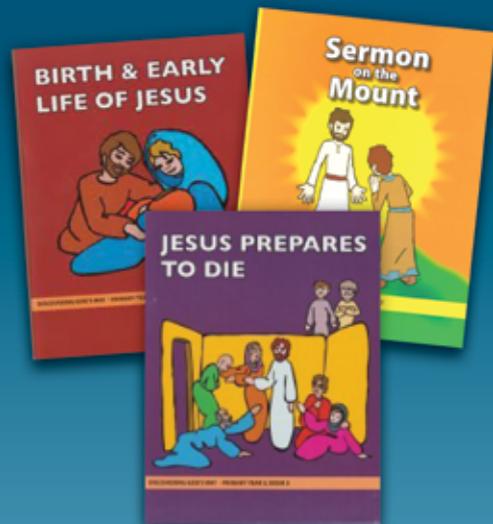
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## Discovering



# Jesus: Prince of Peace

by Ryan Mayberry

“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6).

## Earthly or Heavenly Peace?

Centuries before Jesus walked on this earth, it was prophesied that He would be the “Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6). This is echoed in Luke 2:13-14, which says, “And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.’”

Christ’s coming signified the coming of peace to this world. What is the peace that is described in these verses? Are we to view it as an earthly peace or a heavenly peace? The answer is clearly the latter. Otherwise, how would we ever accept that Christ is the “Prince of Peace” when He Himself said, “I did not come to bring peace, but a sword” (Matt. 10:34)? The peace that Christ brought to us is a heavenly peace. Whenever Jesus came to this world, wars did not magically cease. Swords were not sheathed and put away. Armies did not disband and disappear. Rather, mankind was given a chance to be with Christ in a place where every tear is wiped away—a place with no death, mourning, crying, or pain (Rev. 21:4). We were given a chance for *eternal* peace. This is a peace between man and God. John 16:33 states, “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” We will not necessarily have a life of peace on this earth; there will be toils

and tribulations that we must face. With Christ, however, we can overcome this world and live forever in peace with Him. The world views the peace of Christ as something that unites sinners and saints and makes it to where they can all work together in harmony.

## Peace for All?

Is everyone guaranteed this perfect peace? No, they are not. It requires us to work to obtain it. Everyone who seeks after God will have this peace. We see a qualifier in the New American Standard version of Luke 12:14, which reads, “Peace among men *with whom He is pleased*.” The New International Version states, “Peace to those *on whom his favor rests*.” In all of these renditions, it is clear that action is required. We see in Romans 5:1 that we must render obedience by faith to Jesus before we can access this peace that He has promised. “Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Whenever there is sin in our lives, there is an absence of peace. There is a gulf fixed between us and God if we choose to allow sin to remain in our lives. “Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God” (Isa. 59:2). The world views the peace of Christ as something that is automatically bestowed on all, regardless of their actions. Such is not the case. We see from the Holy Scriptures that it is dependent on the way we live our lives.

## Other Misconceptions

So, we’ve looked at some of the misconceptions regarding Jesus being the Prince of Peace, but what about the multitude of errors concerning His birth? Many different misconceptions exist regarding the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let’s look at a few of them.

The world celebrates the birth of Christ on December 25th, but as Albert Barnes states, “It is very unlikely that Jesus was born on December 25, or even during the winter season, for, ‘There were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night’ (Luke 2:8). During the winter months, it is cold, and especially in the high and mountainous regions about Bethlehem. Shepherds were not in the habit of spending the night in the open at this time of year” (*Barnes Notes on Luke 2:8*). In fact, it was not until centuries after Christ’s death that it was affirmed that December 25th was the day of his birth. “December 25th was first declared to be the birthday of Christ by Liberius, bishop of Rome in AD 354” (*World Book Encyclopedia*, 3:1425).

This is just one of the misconceptions regarding Christ’s birth. Another mistaken idea is the idea that three wise men visited Christ on the night of His birth. First, how many wise men were there? Was it three? We don’t actually know. There is no mention of the number of wise men. We do know one fact, though. It is very

likely that the wise men came to visit several weeks, if not months, after the birth of Jesus. Matthew tells us that, when they found Jesus, they went “into the house” (Matt. 2:1-11). There is no mention of the manger. “They came to Jerusalem after Jesus had been presented in the temple, and taken back to Bethlehem, and, therefore, when the infant Jesus was more than forty days old. They must have come at least forty days before the death of Herod, for he spent the last forty days of his life at Jericho and the baths of Callirrhoe; the wise men found him still at Jerusalem. Jesus must, therefore, have been at least 80 days old when Herod died” (McGarvey 27-28).

### The Proper Focus

So with all of these misconceptions, on what should we truly focus? The significance of Christ’s birth is given relevance through His sacrificial death. The birth of Christ is not the source of our salvation; it is not what truly brings peace into this world; rather, the death of Christ is what gives us a chance to go to heaven (Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 2:9). We have an opportunity for eternal peace with God our Father, thanks to the death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Only in Heaven will we dwell with our Eternal Father and the Prince of Peace. **T**

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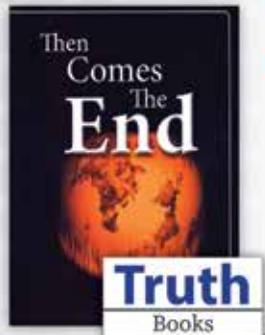
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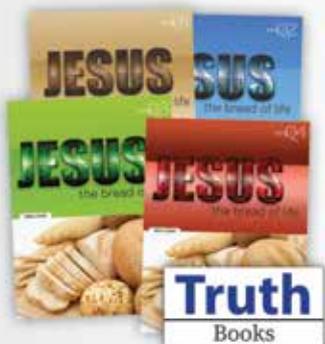
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# Peace with God

by Allen Dvorak

Through the terms revealed in the gospel, God graciously reconciles sinful men to Himself, thus fulfilling a spiritual need that could never otherwise be satisfied.

When Isaiah saw the Lord on His throne, he said, “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!” (Isa. 6:5, ESV). Isaiah’s response was similar to others in the Scriptures who found themselves in the presence of a holy God (Ezek. 1:28; Judg. 13:22; Luke 5:8; Rev. 1:17).

The holiness of God is the most important trait of deity for understanding the dynamics of the relationship between God and man. The Scriptures are replete with affirmations of God’s holiness (Ps. 11:7; 116:5; 119:137; 145:17). The seraphim that Isaiah saw proclaimed the holiness of the Lord: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory” (6:3), as did the four living creatures that John saw (Rev. 4:8). Describing the righteousness of God in terms of light and darkness, the apostle John wrote, “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth” (1 John 1:5b-6).

Peter quoted from Psalm 34 to describe the implication of God’s holiness for His relationship with man: “For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous... but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil” (1 Pet. 3:12). Isaiah explained to the nation of Judah that their troubles were not because God was powerless to help them, but “your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your

sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear” (Isa. 59:1-2).

An individual’s sin causes a separation between him and God; it fractures an amicable spiritual relationship. Paul described such individuals as “alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds,” and “ungodly,” essentially causing enmity between them and God (Col. 1:21; Rom. 5:10). When we sin, we become enemies of God by our own actions! To emphasize the seriousness of this separation, the Scriptures describe it as a “death” (Eph. 2:1-2, 5).

What sinful man needs is to be reconciled with God. In human relationships, it is typically the one responsible for the rift in the relationship who must make amends in order for reconciliation to be possible. On one occasion, I bought candy and flowers for my wife. The store clerk, learning that the purchases were for my wife, asked in a joking manner, “What in the world did you *do*, that you have to buy these gifts?” The assumption is that the transgressor should be responsible for initiating the reconciliation.

But there’s the difficulty. Man, by his sin, caused the separation from his Creator, but he is unable to offer what is necessary to mend the relationship. Until man’s sin is removed, the relationship between man and God cannot be restored. As Paul rhetorically asked, “What fellowship has light with darkness?” (2 Cor. 6:14b).

The Hebrews writer stated an important principle with regard to the removal of sin: “...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins” (Heb. 9:22b). The Law of Moses illustrated this truth by means of its sacrificial system. Atonement under the Law required the offering by the sinner of a physically unblemished animal, its blood being presented as representative of its life (Lev. 4; 17:11). No three-legged or blind-in-one-eye offering would have been acceptable—it had to be a perfect animal! The Hebrews writer also revealed that the blood of bulls and goats (a reference to the Day of Atonement ritual [Lev. 16]) was actually insufficient, in and of itself, for the removal of spiritual blemishes (10:4). So what can man offer for his sin so that his relationship with a holy God can be restored? No animal suffices and he cannot even offer himself, since he is blemished by sin!

To enjoy peace with sinful man, God did an amazing thing! He provided the perfect sacrifice necessary for the forgiveness (i.e., removal) of sins, thus permitting reconciliation. Speaking of Christ, Paul wrote:

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him (Col. 1:19-22, ESV).

A sinless man, Jesus—God in the flesh, died on the cross, thereby offering Himself as the ultimate sacrifice for sin and “making peace by the blood of His cross.” Sinful men can be “reconciled to God by the death of his Son” (Rom. 5:10). Speaking of Jews and Gentiles, Paul wrote that both could be reconciled to God “in one body through the cross” (Eph. 2:16b).

It wasn’t sinful man providing a sacrifice to restore his relationship with a holy God; it was a holy God graciously providing the sin offering that could bring peace to the relationship (Isa. 53:5, 10). As Paul wrote, God “through Christ reconciled us to Himself” (2 Cor. 5:18). The story of the cross is the message of reconciliation, a message of grace and love, that appeals to sinful men to accept the reconciliation that God offers to all (2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; Eph. 2:17-18).

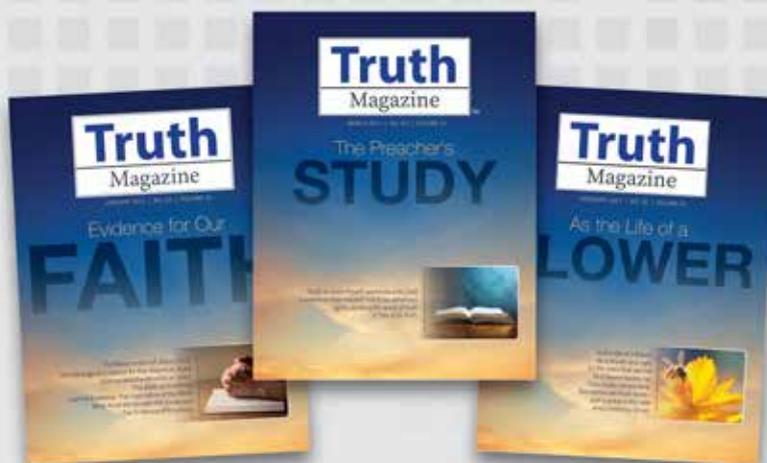
This righteousness provided by God is received through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:21-25). Believers are “baptized into His death” that they may receive the purifying benefit of His blood shed in that death (Romans 6:3). That’s how peace is made by the blood of His cross! Having been justified by faith (an obedient faith), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and we rejoice in God because of the reconciliation He has provided (Rom. 5:1, 11). If separation from God because of sin is spiritual death, then reconciliation through Christ is life and peace! **T**



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# Peace with Self

by Jerry King

While the world offers ineffective solutions that mask the misery that sin brings, Jesus offers the only effective solution—the peace of a restored relationship with God through the forgiveness of sin.

When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah (Ps. 32:3-4, NKJV).

The Maschil of David in Psalm 32, of which the above is part, is an ode to the war with self that is waged when one gives in to the desires of the flesh. David sinned, and the guilt of his sin was emotionally and physically tearing him apart. That is what sin does—to everyone! Why are so many people so miserable? Sin's guilt is gnawing away at them. Whether we like it or not, whether we admit it or not, humanity is hard-wired by God to feel guilt for sin. Why are so many people at war with one another, both individually and nationally? The misery of sin that gnaws away at the inside is typically manifested by warfare of some sort on the outside.

Sin is the world's disease, self-loathing and the resulting conflict are the world's symptoms. The world tries to deal with self-loathing and conflict by prescribing painkillers. Narcotics (literal painkillers) might mask the inner misery of sin at some level, but they can never eliminate the disease itself, and so the misery will keep coming back and even grow worse. Self-esteem programs, racism and sexual abuse shamings, removal of statues, daily additions to the already overwhelming number of laws against antisocial conduct, and cease-fire initiatives between nations

(figurative painkillers) might mask the symptoms of sin for a season, but they can never take away the disease.

As noted throughout this month's magazine, Jesus came to bring peace on earth. Jesus told His apostles on the eve of His death, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you" (John 14:27). Jesus wanted His disciples to know that the peace He offered them was not the faux peace that they were accustomed to hearing the world offer—from false spiritual leaders who cried out, "Peace, peace," when there was no peace (Jer. 6:14)—but rather the true and lasting peace that comes through the removal of sin (Luke 7:48-50). Jesus offers peace with God, which is the only way to find true peace with self.

In the mid-1950s there was a song written for and sung by the *International Children's Choir* entitled "Let There Be Peace on Earth." The first two lines of that song are, "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me." In one sense, that is an impossibility; peace on earth must begin with Jesus. Yet, in another sense (the sense that I believe the authors intended), it is correct; if I am going to find any peace on earth, it must begin with finding peace within myself and letting that inner peace flow out of me and influence my little portion of the world. My world can never be peaceful unless I first find peace in my inner

man through Jesus Christ. That is the whole point of John 14:27, is it not?

Paul begins every single one of his epistles with a reminder to Christians that true and lasting peace comes from God, being the result of His grace. As the old saying goes, "No God, no peace; know God, know peace." It is this peace of the inner man that Paul describes as "the peace of God, which passes understanding, which will guard our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ" in Philippians 4:7. How is it attained? In verses 4-6 Paul attaches that peace to an understanding of and appreciation for what Jesus has done for us (what he calls "rejoicing in the Lord"), to a good attitude about our fellow man (what he calls "letting our gentleness be known to all men"), to a reminder of what life is all about (what he calls remembering that "the Lord is at hand"), and to trust in the power of prayer (what he calls "in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, letting our requests be made known to God"). Do those four things, and Paul's promise is that the God of peace will give you peace.

However, like David, we sin. Like David, when we sin the inner peace that guards our hearts and minds is shattered. Also like David, as long as our sin is before us, we feel the heavy hand of God upon us, our vitality is turned into a drought, and our heart groans within us. What are we to do about that? Well, what did David do?

## Confession

First, David acknowledged his sin to God. In Psalm 32:5, he wrote, “I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,’ and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.” Will that work for us? John said it will: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). If you have ever lived with hidden sin, you know what internal warfare is. If you have finally confessed that sin, you know the joy of renewed inner peace.

## Commitment

Second, David recommitted himself to godliness. In Psalm 32:6, he notes that it is only those who are committed to godliness who will find forgiveness when they pray for it. In Psalm 51, a psalm written after Nathan condemned him for his sins in the Bathsheba debacle, David not only pleaded for deliverance from the guilt of his sin (vv. 8, 14), but also pleaded that God

would create in him a clean heart and renew in him a steadfast spirit (v. 10). If you have ever just confessed sin without a strong determination to live henceforth in godliness, you know the inner emptiness of such a confession. If you have confessed sin with a strong determination to leave that sinful conduct once and for all, you know the joy of renewed inner peace.

## Cleansing

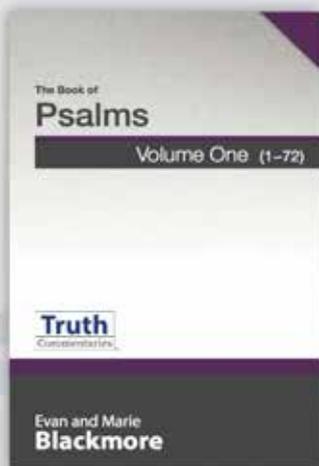
Thirdly, David put his sin behind him. In Psalm 32:10, he affirms His trust in His merciful Lord, and in v. 11 he invites those who likewise trust in the Lord to join him in shouts of gladness and joy. In Psalm 51:7, he expresses great confidence in the cleansing power of God’s mercy: “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” And then, in the verses that follow, he writes of an overwhelming peace and joy that is possible only to those who possess that great confidence.

The point is this: When David trusted in the Lord’s forgiveness, he found it possible to forgive himself. Inner peace comes only to those who are able to do the same. If you have ever prayed for forgiveness only to find that you could not forgive yourself, you know the inner frustration of lack of trust in God. If you have put your sin behind you, you know the joy of renewed inner peace. Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with peace in me—peace that comes only through obedience to and trust in Jesus Christ. **T**



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# Peace with Others

by Bruce Reeves

To graciously act in a way that preserves or produces peace in moments of conflict is to exemplify the very character of God.

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus vividly portrays the character of kingdom citizens (Matt. 4:23-5:12). He highlights the purpose of the work of His disciples in bringing about peace, both vertically and horizontally, in the preaching of the gospel (Matt. 5:9). What does it mean to be a peacemaker? How can we live in peace with others in a world of such alienation, hostility, and conflict? The Lord not only encourages us to *preserve* peace, but also to *produce* peace where conflict has existed. The term was used in classical texts to describe Greek and Roman rulers who established peace in their domain. Christ, however, is not talking about political diplomats, but of those who make peace with God, encourage others to make peace with Him, and who seek to live in peace with all men. To produce peace in moments of conflict is to exemplify the character of God (Matt. 5:43-44). As those who have been transformed by the gospel of Christ, we are to pursue the spiritual fruit of peace as much as lies within our ability (Rom. 12:18; Heb. 12:14; James 3:17-18). Whether we are speaking of our interaction with unbelievers, our marriages and families, or fellowship with brethren in Christ, our commitment to being a peacemaker glorifies God. Let us, therefore, consider the real meaning of peace and how we may truly be peacemakers.

## How Should I Respond to Conflict in My Life?

To be a peacemaker in circumstances filled with hostility and enmity, we must respond to conflict in a healthy manner. People tend to respond to conflict in ways that are not only destructive to their own well being, but also make peace impossible.

One way we are tempted to escape conflict is through *denial*. We may be tempted to pretend that the conflict does not exist, but this brings only temporary relief and frequently makes things much worse. While it may feel that there is less conflict, neither will there be true restoration, healing, and reconciliation. Another approach some may take to conflict is what might be described as *flight*, i.e. we seek to escape the situation by running away. This may seem to be a legitimate response in some circumstances, but it can lead to the postponement of truly addressing the challenge so that we might actually produce peace (Gen. 16:6-8). Thirdly, for some there is the inclination to respond to conflict not by denial or flight, but by attacking or assaulting others. This seems to be characteristic of those who are more interested in winning a conflict than in preserving what is right. Some people try to overcome an opponent by using various forms of force or intimidation, especially through slanderous verbal attacks (3 John 9-11). It is crucial that we have the biblical view of conflict and recognize that it as an

opportunity to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31), serve brethren (Gal. 5:13-15), and live at peace with others and our own conscience (1 John 3:21-24).

## Peacemakers Must Practice Self-Examination

Self-examination can help us guard against hypercritical judgment so that we might remove obstacles to the process of resolving conflict. In Jesus' emphasis on righteous judgment, He condemns hypocritical and hypercritical judgments (Matt. 7:1-5; John 7:24). This context does not preclude any conclusion being drawn about conduct, but it does correct the tendency to be inconsistent in our judgments of others. We are to make many judgments such as what it means to judge hypocritically, the difference between a speck and log, the distinction between that which is holy and unholy, and the nature of the fruits of one's life (Matt. 7:1-5, 20).

The "spiritual" brother is to strive to restore an erring brother with humility and gentleness (Gal. 6:1-2). While we generally have no difficulty spotting another's shortcomings, we sometimes appallingly lack insight into our own. Even specks should be removed, but we must give priority to removing our own logs.

## Peacemakers Must Place a Premium on Truth

Solomon wrote, "Do not be a witness against your neighbor without



cause, and do not deceive with your lips” (Prov. 24:28). He again writes, “A perverse man spreads strife and a slanderer separates intimate friends” (Prov. 16:28). Falsehood is a kind of speech that incites and aggravates conflict. It can involve more than outright lies; it can also include misrepresentation. Peace is not made by distorting reality, but by placing value on the truth. Peace comes through our surrender to the message of the Spirit, whereas division is the result of a fleshly and carnal mind (1 Cor. 3:1-3). I have seen faithful brethren, devoted elders, and sound gospel preachers slandered by those who were intent on living worldly lives and who simply did not want constructive correction.

### **Peacemakers Must Be Devoted to Loving and Honest Communication**

In a context in which we read of the need for humility, forgiveness, and concern for others, Christ teaches His disciples how they are to address

personal sin between one another. We find that loving communication in times of conflict is a process that must be carried out in love, transparency, and openness. This text is dealing with one who feels a brother has sinned against him personally. First, we are to go and show our brother his fault privately and by doing so confidentially (one on one) we shield public exposure in the hope that we will “gain our brother.” In Matthew 5:23-24, the offender is told to go to the offended, while here in Matthew 18:15-17, the offended is told to go to the offender—Jesus’ point is that it does not matter who is innocent or guilty, either party should be proactive in reconciling the issue and establishing peace among brethren. Personal confrontation is often the last stage rather than the first in conflicts among brethren! When alienated believers lovingly and honestly talk about their differences with the Scriptures as their standard, the God of heaven smiles upon their endeavor. If this does not lead to a reconciliation, we are to take one or two more (Matt.18:16). This will

increase impartiality and intensity of efforts to arrive at a biblical resolution. If there is still no repentance, we are to tell it to the church (Matt. 18:17).

### **Peacemakers Must Keep Their Eyes on the Goal**

We must remain focused on what the real goal is: glorifying God and helping one another to grow closer to the Lord. When we are walking worthy of our calling we will be “diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:1-3). This spirit will lead us to speak wisely, lovingly, and tenderly as we bring honor and adoration to Christ. The apostle Paul well spoke, “if possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men” (Rom. 12:18). **1**



**Bruce Reeves**

Bruce has been working with the Highway 65 church of Christ in Conway, AR for seventeen years. He and his wife, Rachel, have one child, Connor Andrew. The church website is [hwy65churchofchrist.org](http://hwy65churchofchrist.org). He can be reached at [brochuck1@aol.com](mailto:brochuck1@aol.com).

# Peace, Peace, Where There Is No Peace

by Doug Roush

Many seek a peace with God that is founded upon their feelings, rather than pursuing a peaceful and harmonious relationship with Him as stipulated in His written word.

God summarized the spiritual condition of Jerusalem in the days of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “From the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even to the priest, everyone deals falsely. They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace!’ when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; nor did they know how to blush...” (Jer. 6:13-15, NKJV). Further insight into their spiritual condition is given in chapter eight: “Why has this people slidden back, Jerusalem, in a perpetual backsliding? They hold fast to deceit, they refuse to return” (v. 5). The words of chapter six, verses thirteen through fifteen, are repeated in chapter eight, verses ten through twelve. These sinful people could not be called from their sin and alienation from God to repentance and genuine peace with God while their spiritual leaders were giving them a false assurance of peace with God.

The spiritual condition of Jerusalem in the days of the prophet Jeremiah was not unique to that generation. No doubt, while Noah preached righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5), his contemporaries ridiculed and dismissed his warnings while assuring each other that they were just fine. Ahab, the king of Israel, surrounded

himself with prophets who told him what he wanted to hear and refused to act on the council of truth (1 Kings 22). Through Peter, God warns, “... there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words...” (2 Pet. 2:1-3). He continues, “While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption...” (v. 19).

Did you notice the role covetousness plays in seeking and assuring a false sense of peace? People are “given to covetousness” (Jer. 6:13). People want to be at peace, spiritually; but on their own terms, not God’s terms. They covet their way rather than God’s revealed way to find peace with Him. Even the atheist wants to be at peace with their unbelief. Many “spiritually minded” people who want to be at peace with God often seek such peace based on their own feelings rather than on God’s revelation of peace, harmony, and fellowship with Him, as stipulated in His written word. They want to feel they are acceptable to God and they want their feelings reassured by others, rather than verified by God’s word. So, rather than seeking to know the law

of the Lord, they seek teachers who will speak unto them “smooth things” (Isa. 30:10). False teachers, coveting popularity, are eager to tell people what they want to hear, seemingly with little regard for what God tells us in His word. They often deceive, while they, themselves, are deceived (2 Tim. 3:13). Instead of searching the Scriptures (Acts 17:11) and rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15), they trust in ways that seem right to themselves (Prov. 14:12; 16:25). They may be sincerely wrong, but they are still wrong and separated from God. Although they have convinced themselves that they are “spiritually minded,” because they believe in God, they covet their own will rather than God’s will, as it is revealed in His word, the Bible.

Jesus said, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace...” (John 16:33). The peace that is in Jesus comes through trusting and obeying His word. Since the beginning, ultimate peace comes from trusting and obeying God. Adam and Eve were at peace with God as long as they obeyed God, but when they sinned against God, they realized they were no longer at peace with Him.

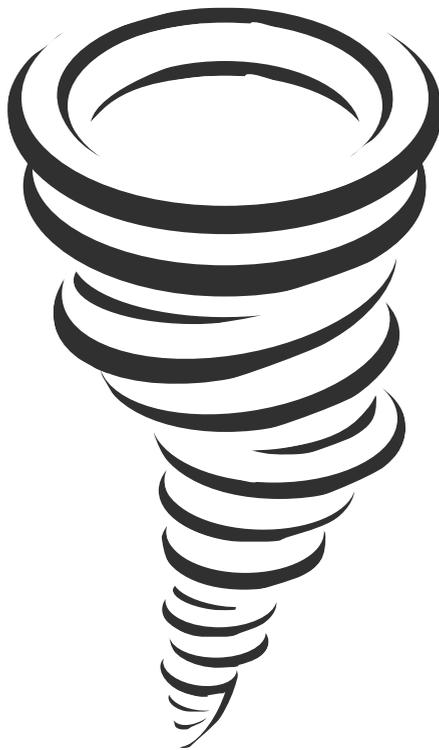
Being a “tiller of the ground” perhaps Cain was sincere and seeking peace with God when he offered his sacrifice of “the fruit of the ground.” Yet, unlike Abel’s sacrifice, Cain’s sacrifice was not “of faith” (Heb. 11:4)—

not being in agreement with what he had heard from God (Rom. 10:17). Although God continued to speak to Cain, encouraging him to repent and do the right thing, Cain continued to covet his own opinion as to what God should accept in worship. Cain did not hear from God what he wanted to hear, so he went to his brother. Apparently, Abel told Cain the same thing God had told him, and encouraged him to be at peace with God by humbly doing what God had said. Cain had been angry with God for not accepting his sacrifice; afterward, he became angry with his brother, and killed him.

Sadly, the story of Cain is repeated in every generation. People covet their own way rather than the revealed way of God. Rather than humbly keeping His commandments, they become angry with God and His word, and with those who encourage them to repent and obey God.

Jesus is “the Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6). Through His sacrifice, He provided the way to peace with God. It is a way we are expected to emulate. To know peace with God, we must sacrifice our sinful desires and practices so that we may nurture our desire for the knowledge of righteousness and be active in the practice of it. To know peace and unity with God, we must be sanctified through knowing and practicing God’s word of truth (John 17:17, 21).

1 John 3:4 states, “sin is lawlessness” (NKJV). In other words, whatever is outside the “law of God” is sin. Some of these acts of lawlessness are identified specifically; others are stated in principle. There is one common denominator to sin: sin is self-serving. Consider James 1:14-16, which says, “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, brings



forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.” When we allow “the majority” or “some authority” to “change the labels” so that our sin will be made more palatable to our conscience, we are allowing ourselves to be deceived. Isaiah 5:20 warns, “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” There can be no peace with God if we are committed to practicing that which is outside the law of God.

2 John 9-11 says it this way: “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.” As in the days of Jeremiah, there continues to be those who give false assurance of fellowship and peace with God while

transgressing the doctrine of Christ and teaching and practicing the doctrines of men (Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:9).

Like Adam and Eve, the personal absence of peace with God is the result of knowing we have disobeyed God. God’s message of peace reproves our sin, corrects us, and instructs us in righteousness that we may be complete, thoroughly furnished to every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17), and thereby be at peace with God. Only when we make peace with God on His terms, can we truly make peace with ourselves and others. Absence of inward conflict is conducive to being productive in the practice of righteousness.

The way of peace for all areas of life has been revealed by God’s Son. He is the way, the truth, and the life, no one can come to the Father except through Him (John 14:6). As noted earlier, He is the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6). He is the Word of God, made flesh (John 1:14).

The gospel of Christ is the word which God sent... preaching peace by Jesus Christ (Acts 10:36). The word of peace, the gospel of Christ, continues to be preached. It is recorded in the New Testament. It is to be demonstrated in the lives of those who follow the “Prince of Peace.” Those who trust and obey Him are dedicated to living to the praise of His glory. They know they are at peace with God. Even in times of distress and tribulation, they come to know the peace that passes understanding, knowing they are at peace with God and that He will provide those things they need (Phil. 4:7; Matt. 6:33). Do you know that peace? **!**



Doug Roush

Doug and his wife, Debbie, have worked with the Southside church of Christ in Bowling Green, KY for the past twelve years. The church website is [thesouthsidechurchofchrist.com](http://thesouthsidechurchofchrist.com). He can be reached at [dougroush@bellsouth.net](mailto:dougroush@bellsouth.net).

# “I Came Not to Bring Peace, But a Sword”

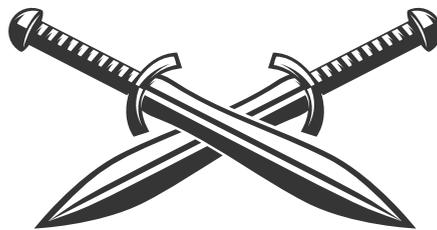
by Brent Paschall

Before sending His disciples into the world, Jesus warned them what to expect: not a leisurely vacation, but a life-and-death struggle between good and evil, in which they must be equipped with the weapons He alone provides.

For life to flourish, what causes death must die. If our doctor tells us we have a deadly blood infection, do we refuse taking antibiotics for fear of causing harm to the bacteria that is killing us? Do we rebuke the surgeon for the harm he causes when cuts open a patient to remove a malignant tumor? Do we consider a father cruel for shooting the bear that is about to maul his daughter?

To cause death, harm or discomfort unnecessarily is cruel and unjust, but in the struggle between life and death, refusing to strike a blow in the defense of the helpless is cruel and unjust. Thankfully, when God saw that humanity was overpowered and overwhelmed with sin, helpless under the attacks of the prince of this world, He acted. That is why Jesus came, to destroy the power of sin and death, and to bring a sword to be used here on earth to overcome the attacks of Satan and the effects of sin.

Jesus told His twelve apostles before He sent them out to proclaim the message of the kingdom to the nation of Israel in Matthew 10:34, “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.”



## Jesus Brings a Sword to the Human Heart

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12).

The cancer of sin is killing us. Jesus, the great Physician recommends a circumcision made without hands for the removal of the body of the sins of the flesh (Col. 2:11-12). Follow-up procedures will also be required to destroy any reappearance of the deadly affliction (Col. 3:5). All these interventions are disruptive and painful.

Nevertheless, if we seek a peaceful, pain-free alternative, sin will metastasize and become more insidiously ingrained into every aspect of our lives. When our case is even more desperate, killing what is killing us will be even more difficult and painful, and we may not even have the will to fight it.

## Jesus Brings a Sword to Human Society

For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be those of his own household (Matt. 10:35-36).

There is a second opinion about sin. Many have the opinion that sin is normal, natural, good and unobjectionable. It is something that they nourish and cherish like they would their own child. They will fight to protect the sin they love from even an ill word being spoken against it. In their view, those who claim that sin is a deadly evil are troublemakers, hateful and ignorant. Wherever both these opinions exist there is strife, even within a family.

However, what is the alternative? Can those who recognize sin's danger hide their concern in the interest of placating those who love sin? Should we, in the interest of peace, affirm and celebrate those who embrace something that is killing them? Jesus told us to expect and be prepared for this conflict.

## Jesus Brings a Sword to Human Priorities

He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter

more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it (Matt. 10:37-39).

Jesus is not only interested in us being free of sin, He wants us to have eternal life in Him. Eternal life is an inexpressible blessing of which physical health and well being is just a faint foreshadowing. We can only enjoy that eternal life with Him if we seek Him above every other thing. That means family ties, personal convenience and well being, and even life itself may have to be sacrificed to attain our highest and best good.

To seek Jesus above every other thing will require fighting a constant battle, not only against sin and the world, but against our self, and the

appeal of some of the greatest goods of "life under the sun." It is a battle we can win. In fact, the only way to lose is to stop fighting. The alternative, to try find a way to be both friends with the world *and* with God, will only make us an enemy of both (James 4:4).

### Peace Will Come When the Battle Is Over

Remember, you are not in heaven yet. Until you get there, you will be engaged in a life-and-death struggle. There is no way you can gain the victory on your own, "for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all,

to stand" (Eph. 6:12-13). That armor includes the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (v. 17).

"If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18), but recognize that there will be conflict between good and evil in our own hearts, in human society, and between the goods we may seek and God's best for us. With that understanding, you will be prepared to "fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses" (1 Tim. 6:12). **TT**

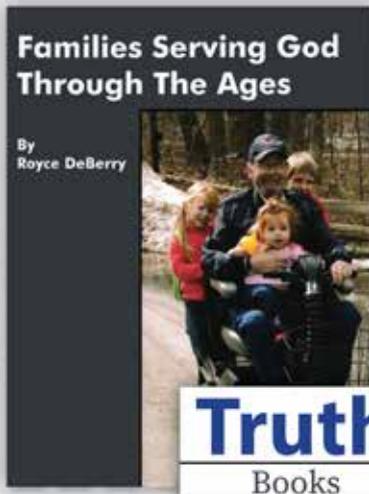


Brent Paschall

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## Families Serving God Through the Ages

by Royce DeBerry **ITEM 1584272090**



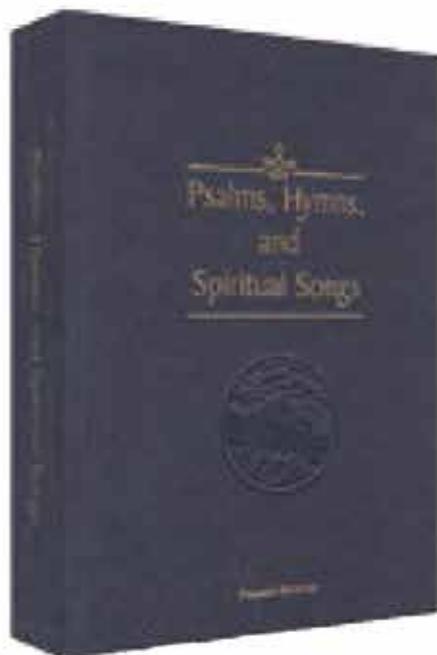
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Evangelist: David Webb (907) 350-8358

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Evangelists: David Banning and Doy Moyer  
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(251) 342-4144 or 342-2041  
Ken Sils - Minister (765) 307-8048

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John Humphries (334) 306-4172

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Contacts: Brian Moore: (334) 279-1077  
Charles Martin: (334) 283-2983

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Worship 10:30 P.M., Wednesday Summer 7 P.M.  
Wednesday Winter 6 P.M.  
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(256) 574-1603 or 575-2664

## ARKANSAS

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[www.conwaychurchofchrist.org](http://www.conwaychurchofchrist.org)

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Study (501) 568-1062

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[www.churchofchristwesternslope.org](http://www.churchofchristwesternslope.org)

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Northside church of Christ  
912 NW 19th St.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(954) 763-1404

### FORT MYERS

church of Christ  
13641 Learning Court  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: David P. Schmidt  
(239) 433-2838 or 482-2158

### FROSTPROOF

Frostproof church of Christ  
40 W. "A" St., Frostproof, FL 33483  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M., (863) 635-2607 or 635-4278

### GENEVA

church of Christ  
Ave. C and 2nd St.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
(407) 349-9998

### KEY LARGO

Key Largo church of Christ  
100695 N. Overseas Hwy.  
33037 m.m. 100.7 on US 1  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: William LeDent (305) 451-1194

### MARY ESTHER

church of Christ  
6 Lane Drive  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Joey Rankin (850) 244-9222

### MIAMI

church of Christ  
Eglise du Christ de Miami  
8343 NE 3rd Court  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Minister: Junot Joseph (305) 244-8295

### MIAMI

Flagler Grove church of Christ  
(Nearest to Airport), 500 N.W. 53rd Ave.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: John Buttrick (305) 634-5924

### MIAMI

church of Christ  
12780 Quail Roost Dr.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Clark Pace  
(305) 233-9590 or (954) 430-1437

## OCALA

Anthony church of Christ  
9778 N.E. Jacksonville Rd., Anthony, FL 32617  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Wednesday 6:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Greg Cruz (352) 629-5505  
[www.anthonycoc.com](http://www.anthonycoc.com)

## ORLANDO

Azalea Park church of Christ  
6800 Lake Underhill Rd.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(407) 277-7931

## ORLANDO

church of Christ at S. Bumby  
3940 S. Bumby Ave.  
Sunday Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.  
Worship w/ communion 10:55 A.M. (No Evening Service), Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Adam Willingham  
Office: (407) 851-8031

## ORLANDO

Pine Hills Church of Christ  
890 Hastings Street  
Sun. Bible Study 10 A.M., Sun. Worship: 11 A.M.  
Sun. Evening Worship: 6 P.M.  
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30 P.M.  
(407) 293-2851 or (407) 290-8650

## PALMETTO

Palmetto church of Christ  
1575 14th Avenue W.  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
[www.palmettochurchofchrist.com](http://www.palmettochurchofchrist.com)  
(941) 722-1307

## PANAMA CITY BEACH

Beach church of Christ  
8910 Front Beach Rd.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(850) 234-2521

## SEFFNER

church of Christ  
621 E. Wheeler Rd.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Bobby Witherington (813) 684-1297  
[www.seffnercoc.org](http://www.seffnercoc.org)

## GEORGIA

### CENTERVILLE

Centerville church of Christ  
250 Collins Ave. (Near Robins AFB)  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: J. Wiley Adams (478) 922-1158

### COLUMBUS

River City Church of Christ  
3900 River Road, Columbus GA 31904  
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelists Jeff McCrary & Bo Couchman  
(205) 451-9028, [rivercitychurchofchrist.com](http://rivercitychurchofchrist.com)  
[backtothebible@rivercitychurchofchrist.com](http://backtothebible@rivercitychurchofchrist.com)

### CONYERS

Rockdale church of Christ  
East Metro Atlanta, 705 Smyrna Road  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Building (770) 929-3973

### PINE MTN. VALLEY

church of Christ  
Route 116 (near Callaway Gardens)  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Tommy W. Thomas  
(706) 628-5117 or 628-5229  
[www.pmvchurch.com](http://www.pmvchurch.com)

### SAVANNAH

Coastal church of Christ  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
(912) 344-1687  
[coastalchurchofchrist@outlook.com](mailto:coastalchurchofchrist@outlook.com)

## VALDOSTA

church of Christ  
4313 North Valdosta Rd.  
(Located 1 mile E. of Exit 22 off I-75)  
Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.  
Communion 11 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(229) 244-8630, [www.northvaldostacoc.com](http://www.northvaldostacoc.com)

## IDAHO

### BLACKFOOT

church of Christ  
370 N. Shilling • P.O. Box 158-83221  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(208) 785-6168 or 681-1552

## IOWA

### DES MOINES

church of Christ  
1310 N.E. 54th Ave.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:40 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M., (515) 262-6799

### GRINNELL

church of Christ  
1402 Third Ave.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(641) 521-6485, (641) 236-3883  
[www.grinnellcoc.com](http://www.grinnellcoc.com)

## ILLINOIS

### CHICAGO

church of Christ  
1514 West 74th Street  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: James E. Scott  
Bldg. (773) 224-9279, (708) 339-6126

### DOWNERS GROVE

church of Christ  
1236 63rd St., (1 and 1/2 mile E. of I355)  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:55 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(630) 968-0760 • [www.dgccc.org](http://www.dgccc.org)

### GLEN ELLYN

Glen Ellyn Church of Christ  
796 Prairie Ave.  
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137  
Sunday Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Sunday Evening 5 P.M.  
Evangelist: Keith E. Brown  
(630) 858-2290, (630) 377-3990

### MATTOON

Southside church of Christ  
1100 S. 17th Street  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(217) 234-3702

### SOUTH HOLLAND

Southeast church of Christ  
16224 S Vincennes Ave.  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 4 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Donald Hawkins, (708) 339-1008  
[www.southeastchurchofchrist.com](http://www.southeastchurchofchrist.com)

## INDIANA

### CLARKSVILLE

Clarksville church of Christ  
407 W. Lewis & Clark Parkway, 47129  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Brian Anderson (812) 944-2305  
or (812) 948-9917  
[www.clarksvillechurchofchrist.org](http://www.clarksvillechurchofchrist.org)

## GREENWOOD

Greenwood church of Christ  
371 W. Main Street  
Sun. Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 4:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelists: Neil Tremblett  
(317) 888-8288  
[www.churchofchristatgreenwood.org](http://www.churchofchristatgreenwood.org)

## HOBART

church of Christ  
300 N. Liberty Street  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jerry Cleek (219) 942-2663

## INDIANAPOLIS

Castleton church of Christ  
7701 East 86th Street, 46256  
Sun. Worship 11 A.M., Sun. Bible Study 10 A.M.  
Wed. Worship 11:15 A.M., Wed. Bible Study 7 P.M.  
(317) 710-1204

## JAMESTOWN

church of Christ  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:25 A.M.  
Evening 4 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: David McPherson  
(765) 676-6404 or (270) 994-4397  
[www.jamestowncoc.com](http://www.jamestowncoc.com)

## OLITIC

church of Christ  
400 Lafayette Ave. • P.O. Box 34  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M. Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(812) 279-4332

## PEKIN

church of Christ  
(First St. & Karnes Ct.)  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jeremy Goen  
(812) 967-3437 or 967-3520  
[www.pekinchurchofchrist.com](http://www.pekinchurchofchrist.com)

## PLAINFIELD

church of Christ West  
2028 Stafford Rd., Ste. C., (Marsh Shopping Cntr.)  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Johnnie Edwards  
(317) 964-9404 or (317) 839-1769  
[www.churchofchristwest.org](http://www.churchofchristwest.org)

## SAINT LEON, IN

Church of Christ  
7140 Hyland Rd., Guildford, IN 47022  
174 exit 164 1 mile south on SR 1  
Bible study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
812-637-1252 or 513-367-7871

## SALEM

Westside church of Christ  
2000 West State Rd. 56  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(812) 883-2033, [www.westsidechurchofchrist.net](http://www.westsidechurchofchrist.net)

## TRAFALGAR

Spearsville Rd. church of Christ, 6244 S. 500W.  
(1.2 mi. S. of Hwy. 135)  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Ed Rangel. (317) 878-5969  
[www.trafalgarchurch.com](http://www.trafalgarchurch.com)

## KANSAS

### TOPEKA

17th Street church of Christ  
5600 SW 17th St.  
Bible Study 9:15 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(785) 235-8687 or 273-7977  
[www.17thstreetchurchofchrist.org](http://www.17thstreetchurchofchrist.org)

## KENTUCKY

### AUSTIN

Peter's Creek church of Christ  
856 Thomerson Park Rd.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M.  
Evangelist: David Cox (270) 579-8074 or  
(270) 646-0498, [www.peterscreekcoc.com](http://www.peterscreekcoc.com)

### BEAVER DAM

church of Christ  
1235 Williams St.  
Worship 10 A.M., Bible Study After Worship  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Mike Thomas  
(270) 274-4451 or 274-4486

### BRANDENBURG

Brandenburg church of Christ  
612 Broadway  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 6:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Charles J. White (270) 422-3878

### CAMPBELLSVILLE

Sunny Hill Dr. church of Christ  
A.M. Worship 9:30 A.M., A.M. Bible Study 10:30 A.M.  
A.M. Worship 11:30 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Steve Lee (270) 789-1651  
[stevelee4510@windstream.net](mailto:stevelee4510@windstream.net)  
[www.sunnyhillcoc.com](http://www.sunnyhillcoc.com)

### CANEYVILLE

Caneyville church of Christ  
103 N. Main St. • P.O. Box 233  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jarrod Jacobs (270) 589-4167 or  
(270) 274-3065

### DANVILLE

church of Christ  
385 E. Lexington Ave.  
Worship 10 A.M., Bible Study 11:15 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Scott Vifquain (859) 236-4204

### FRANKLIN

31-W North church of Christ  
1733 Bowling Green Road  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Steve Monts, (270) 586-3978  
[www.31wchurchofchrist.com](http://www.31wchurchofchrist.com)

### HODGENVILLE

Hodgenville church of Christ  
613 S Lincoln Blvd.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Don Brady (270) 358-6053  
[Dbrady1295@aol.com](mailto:Dbrady1295@aol.com)

### LEITCHFIELD

Mill St. church of Christ  
733 Mill Street, Highway 62 E.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:55 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Michael Hardin  
(270) 259-4968 or (270) 300-3239  
[www.millstreetchurchofchrist.org](http://www.millstreetchurchofchrist.org)

### LOUISVILLE

Valley Station church of Christ  
1803 Dixie Garden Drive  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Dudley Ross Spears (502) 937-2822

## LOUISIANA

### GONZALES

Southside church of Christ  
405 Orice Roth Road, 70737, (Baton Rouge area)  
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: R.J. Evans (225) 622-4587  
[rjevans@eatel.net](http://rjevans@eatel.net)

## MANY

Lakeside church of Christ  
12095 Texas Hwy. (Hwy. 6 W.)  
12 miles west of Many  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(318) 256-9396

## STONEWALL

N. DeSoto church of Christ  
2071 Highway 171 (South of Shreveport)  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(318) 925-2733

## MARYLAND

### SEVERN

Southwest church of Christ  
805 Meadow Rd.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Brandon Trout  
(410) 969-1420 or (410) 551-6549  
[www.swcofchrist.com](http://www.swcofchrist.com)

## MAINE

### PORTLAND

church of Christ • 856 Brighton Ave.  
Leave Maine Turnpike at Exit 48  
(Breakwater School)  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Second service immediately following morning  
worship. Mid-week Bible Study. Please call for  
times & places. (207) 839-3075 or 839-8409

## MICHIGAN

### CEDAR SPRINGS

W. Michigan church of Christ  
Sr. Citizen Center, 44 Park Street  
(Grand Rapids Area)  
Worship 11 A.M., Bible Study 12:30 P.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Joseph Gladwell, (616) 975-2778  
[westmichcof10@yahoo.com](mailto:westmichcof10@yahoo.com)

## MINNESOTA

### DULUTH

church of Christ  
4401 Glenwood St.  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Bible Study 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Taylor Ladd (218) 728-3233

### ST. CHARLES

church of Christ  
939 Whitewater Avenue  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Bible Study 2:15 P.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M., call for location  
FREE Bible correspondence studies  
Evangelist: Robert Lehnertz (507) 534-2905

## MISSISSIPPI

### BOONEVILLE

Oakleigh Dr. church of Christ  
101 Oakleigh Dr.  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 4 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Building: (662) 728-1942

### CLINTON

McRaven Rd. church of Christ  
301 McRaven Rd. (I20, exit 36)  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Leonard White  
(601) 925-9757 or 924-2645

### MERIDIAN

Grandview church of Christ  
2820 Grandview Ave.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Sun. Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 6:30 P.M.  
(601) 482-0543, (601) 479-3394 or (601) 934-3675  
Contacts: Ron Cooper & Jim Young  
[youngins@comcast.net](mailto:youngins@comcast.net)

## MERIDIAN

7th St. church of Christ  
2914 7th Street  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
(601) 483-3101

## SOUTHAVEN

church of Christ  
2110 E State Line Rd. (Exit I-55), (Memphis area)  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: James A. Brown  
(662) 342-1132 – church Building

## MISSOURI

### BLUE SPRINGS

Southside church of Christ  
4000 SW Christiansen  
Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.  
Worship 11 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Brett Hogland (816) 228-9262

### BRONSON

Eagle Rock Road church of Christ  
432 Eagle Rock Road  
Sun. Worship 9:30 A.M., Bible Study 10:30 A.M.  
Sun. Evening Worship 5 P.M., Wednesday 6 P.M.  
Minister: Philip North (417) 239-1036  
Email: [primrosenor@suddenink.net](mailto:primrosenor@suddenink.net)  
[www.eaglerockroadchurchofchrist.org](http://www.eaglerockroadchurchofchrist.org)

### CAPE GIRARDEAU

North Cape church of Christ  
121 S. Broadview St. Suite 2,  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703  
Sunday Bible Study 9:15 A.M. & 10 A.M.,  
Worship 11 A.M., No Evening Service  
Wednesday 6 P.M./CST, 7 P.M./DST  
Evangelist: Jerry Lee Westbrook (573) 334-9673

### DONIPHAN

Southside church of Christ  
Hwy. 142 E. ½ mile (P.O. Box 220)  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(573) 996-3251 or 996-3513

### FAIR GROVE

church of Christ  
217 N. Orchard Blvd.  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.  
Worship 11 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Walter Myers (417) 830-8972 or  
(417) 736-2663

### KENNETT

church of Christ  
703 Harrison St.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(573) 888-6778 or (870) 650-1648  
*Nolan Glover, Preacher*  
[www.westsidechurchofchrist.us](http://www.westsidechurchofchrist.us)

### LILBOURN

church of Christ  
P.O. Box 270 • 211 Benton St.  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Shane Williams, (573) 688-2234  
or 748-5204

### RAYTOWN

Sterling Ave. church of Christ  
5825 Sterling Ave. (Near Sports Complex)  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jerid Gunter  
(816) 356-3096 or (270) 585-4331  
[www.sterlingavechurchofchrist.org](http://www.sterlingavechurchofchrist.org)

### ST. JAMES

church of Christ  
685 Sidney St.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:15 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Lynn Huggins (573) 265-8628

### ST. JOSEPH

County Line church of Christ  
2727 County Line Rd.  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(816) 279-4737  
[www.countylinechurchofchrist.com](http://www.countylinechurchofchrist.com)

## NEBRASKA

### BEATRICE

church of Christ • 7th and Bell  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 6:30 P.M., 233-4102 or 228-3827  
[www.churchofchrist7bell.com](http://www.churchofchrist7bell.com)

## NEW JERSEY

### VAUXHALL

church of Christ  
Milbourn Mall Suite 6., 2933 Vauxhall Rd.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Contact: Harry Persaud  
phone: (908) 964-6356 • cell: (908) 964-8570

## NEW MEXICO

### ALBUQUERQUE

Heights church of Christ  
7801 Zuni Road, S.E.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evanagelist: Darrel Yontz (505) 266-7577  
[www.heightschurchofchrist.com](http://www.heightschurchofchrist.com)

## NEVADA

### RENO

Central church of Christ  
2450 Wrondel Way, Suite A  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(775) 786-2888

## NORTH CAROLINA

### CHARLOTTE

Charlotte church of Christ  
5327 S. Tyron Street  
Sun. Worship 9:30 A.M., Bible Study 10:30 A.M.  
Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(704) 525-5655  
[www.charlottechurchofchrist.org](http://www.charlottechurchofchrist.org)

## OHIO

### BEAVERCREEK

Knollwood Creek church of Christ  
1031 Welford Drive  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.  
Afternoon 3 P.M., Wednesday Afternoon 1 P.M.  
Wednesday Evening 7 P.M.  
(937) 426-1422  
[www.knollwoodchurch.org](http://www.knollwoodchurch.org)

### CINCINNATI

Blue Ash church of Christ  
4667 Cooper Road  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Russell Dunaway, Jr. (513) 891-3174  
[www.blueashchurchofchrist.com](http://www.blueashchurchofchrist.com)

### CLEVELAND

Lorain Ave. church of Christ  
13501 Lorain Ave.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(330) 723-0111 or (330) 590-0227  
or (216) 322-9392  
[www.lorainave-churchofchrist.com](http://www.lorainave-churchofchrist.com)

### COLUMBUS

Laurel Canyon church of Christ  
409 McNaughton Road  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(614) 868-1375, [www.lccoc.net](http://www.lccoc.net)

### DAYTON

West Carrollton  
28 W. Main Street, 45449  
Early Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 9:30 A.M.  
Worship 10:25 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Michael Grushon (937) 866-5162  
or 848-3779, [www.wc-coc.org](http://www.wc-coc.org)

## FRANKLIN

Franklin church of Christ  
6417 Franklin-Lebanon Rd. 45005  
Sun. Bible Study 10 A.M.  
Sun Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Tues. Bible Study 6:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Josh Lee (937) 789-8055  
or (937) 746-1249, [www.franklin-church.org](http://www.franklin-church.org)

## FREMONT

church of Christ  
3361 W. State Street, 1 mi. W. of Fremont  
on U.S. Rt. 20  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(419) 849-3340 or 849-2980  
[www.fremontchurchofchrist.com](http://www.fremontchurchofchrist.com)

## HAMILTON

Westview church of Christ  
1040 Azel Ave.  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:45 A.M.  
Evening 6:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Eugene Ford (513) 856-9288

## HILLIARD

church of Christ  
4840 Cemetery Rd.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(614) 876-4089

## MANSFIELD

New Lebanon church of Christ  
687 Mansfield-Lucas Road  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 5 P.M.  
James Bond: (419) 526-2868  
Leon Bond: (419) 525-3684  
church: (419) 522-8982

## NEW LEBANON

New Lebanon church of Christ  
1973 W Main Street  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.,  
Evening 5 P.M., Wed. Bible Study 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Bruce Hastings (937) 687-7150  
or (937) 478-0367

## MARIETTA-RENO

Marietta-Reno church of Christ  
80 Sandhill Road  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Daniel Ruegg: (740) 222-9160 or  
Steve Foutty: (740) 473-9028

## NORTHWOOD

Frey Road church of Christ  
4110 Frey Rd. (Toledo Area)  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Donald Jarabek  
(419) 893-3566, (567) 694-5062

## UHRICHSVILLE

church of Christ  
638 Parrish Street  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6:30 P.M., Mid-week 6:30 P.M.

## OKLAHOMA

### MCALESTER

North A St. church of Christ  
2120 No. A Street  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Rob Lungstrum, Cell: (918) 931-1362  
Office: (918) 423-3445

### OKLAHOMA CITY

Seminole Pointe church of Christ  
16300 N. May Avenue  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: John M. Duvall (405) 340-3189  
or (405) 513-6691, [www.seminolepointe.church](http://www.seminolepointe.church)

## OREGON

### SWEET HOME

Church of Christ  
3702 E. Long Street, Sweet Home, OR  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 7 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Building: (541) 367-1599

## PENNSYLVANIA

### PHILADELPHIA

church of Christ  
7222 Germantown Ave., 19119  
Bible Study 10:15 A.M., Worship 11:15 A.M.  
Tuesday night 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: James H. Baker, Jr. (215) 248-2026  
[www.mtairychurchofchrist.org](http://www.mtairychurchofchrist.org)

## SOUTH CAROLINA

### COLUMBIA

Lower Richland church of Christ  
3000 Trotter Rd. (Hopkins, SC)  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(803) 730-0452, <http://lowerrichlandchurch.org>

### SUMTER

Woodland church of Christ  
3370 Broad St. Extension  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: A.A. Granke, Jr. (803) 499-6023

### WEST COLUMBIA

Airport church of Christ  
4013 Edmund Hwy. (Hwy. 302)  
**OUR WEB SITE DISPLAYS OUR  
CURRENT ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE.**  
Evangelist: Seth Mauldin, Bldg. (803) 834-6978  
<http://airport-church-of-christ.com>

## TENNESSEE

### COLUMBIA

Mooresville Pike church of Christ  
417 Mooresville Pike  
(.8 mi. N. of Hwy. 50/Jas. Campbell)  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 3:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(931) 388-5828 or (931) 381-7898  
[www.moorevillepikecoc.com](http://www.moorevillepikecoc.com)

### COSBY

Cosby church of Christ  
489 Hooper Hwy., 37722  
(15 mi. E. of Gatlinburg on Hwy. 321)  
Bible Study 10A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday Bible Study 6:00 P.M.  
Evangelist: Olie Williamson  
(423) 487-5540 or (423) 748-0844

### JACKSON

Sunset View church of Christ  
3618 Hwy 70 East  
(Exit 87 off I-40, 7mi. @ Spring Creek)  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Steve Wilkerson (731) 967-0590  
or 968-9851

### JOHNSON CITY

Brookmead church of Christ  
2428 Lakeview Drive  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Kevin Kay (423) 282-6251 or 426-1836

### JONESBOROUGH

11-E church of Christ  
240 Headtown Road  
Bible Study 10:30 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Evangelist: David Wheeler  
(423) 557-9119 or (423) 948-6464  
[www.christianadmonisher.jigsy.com](http://www.christianadmonisher.jigsy.com)

### KINGSTON SPRINGS

Kingston Springs church of Christ  
350 North Main Street  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Steve Walker, [www.kscoc.com](http://www.kscoc.com)

### MT. PLEASANT

Locust St. Church of Christ  
108 Locust Street • Mt. Pleasant, TN 38474  
931-379-3704 or 931-964-3924  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Daniel H. King, Sr.  
[www.lscoc.com](http://www.lscoc.com)

### KINGSPOORT

Kingsport church of Christ  
4938 Fort Henry Dr. • P.O. Box 554  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:00 P.M.  
Evangelist: Tom Kinzel, Bldg.# (423) 239-3979  
or (423) 579-2002 • [www.kptcoc.org](http://www.kptcoc.org)

### MARYVILLE

Smokey Mt. church of Christ  
2206 Montvale Road  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Harold Tabor (865) 977-4230  
Lon Spurgeon (865) 388-8749  
<http://tinyurl.com/smchurch>

### MEMPHIS

Rocky Pt. Road church of Christ  
516 E. Rocky Point Rd., Cordova  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
[rockypointchurch@gmail.com](mailto:rockypointchurch@gmail.com)  
[www.rockypointchurch.org](http://www.rockypointchurch.org)

### MURFREESBORO

Cason Lane church of Christ  
1110 Cason Lane  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(615) 896-0090 (Building)  
[www.casonlanechurch.org](http://www.casonlanechurch.org)

### MURFREESBORO

Northfield Blvd. church of Christ  
2091 Pitts Ln. at Northfield Blvd.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: David Bunting (615) 893-1200

### NASHVILLE

Hillview church of Christ  
7471 Charlotte Pike  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(615) 952-5458 or (615) 356-7318  
Evangelist: Lee Wildman

### NASHVILLE

Perry Heights church of Christ  
423 Donelson Pike  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:55 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Johnny Felker (615) 883-3118  
<http://perryheights.faiithweb.com>

### PIGEON FORGE

King Branch Road church of Christ  
560 King Branch Road  
Worship 10 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Facilities available for Sunday evening services  
upon request.  
Evangelist: Roger Williams (865) 430-5980  
[www.KingBranchRoadchurchOfChrist.org](http://www.KingBranchRoadchurchOfChrist.org)

### SHELBYVILLE

El Bethel church of Christ  
1801 Hwy. 41-A North  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.  
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Donnie V. Rader (931) 607-9099  
[dvrader@live.com](mailto:dvrader@live.com)

### SHELBYVILLE

Shelbyville Mills church of Christ  
1222 W. Jackson St.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jeff Curtis (931) 607-9118  
[djcurtis1963@hotmail.com](mailto:djcurtis1963@hotmail.com)

## TEXAS

### ALLEN

Well Allen church of Christ  
1414 W. Exchange Blvd. (2 miles west of Hwy. 75)  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jerry King (214) 504-0443  
Building phone (972) 727-5355

### ALVARADO

I-35 church of Christ  
E. Service Rd. off I-35, N. of Alvarado  
Bible Study 10:00 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:00 P.M.  
(817) 295-7277 or 790-7253

### ALVIN

Adoue St. church of Christ  
605 E. Adoue St  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Mark Mayberry (346) 216-1707  
[www.ascoc.org](http://www.ascoc.org) & [www.markmayberry.net](http://www.markmayberry.net)

### AUSTIN

Schultz Lane church of Christ  
Faber Rd. & Schultz Ln., Pflugerville, TX 78660  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 2 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Ron Lehde

### BAYTOWN

church of Christ at Pruett & Lobit  
701 North Pruett Street  
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:40 A.M.  
Evening 6:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jesse Flowers (281) 515-8939  
Building: (281) 422-5926, Weldon: (713) 818-1321

### BEAUMONT

Dowlen Rd. church of Christ  
3060 Dowlen Road  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelists: Max Dawson & Benjamin Lee  
(409) 866-1996

### CONROE

Woodland Hills church of Christ  
410 Woodland Hills Dr., 77303  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
phone: (936) 756-9322  
[www.conroechurch.com](http://www.conroechurch.com)

### CLEVELAND

church of Christ  
310 E. Houston Street  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Robert Davis (281) 592-5676  
[www.clevelandchurchofchrist.org](http://www.clevelandchurchofchrist.org)

### CORPUS CHRISTI

Hwy. 9 church of Christ  
Worship 10 A.M., Bible Study 11 A.M.  
Worship 12 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Call for location: Keith Kalies (361) 776-2304  
or Patrick Frazier (361) 235-1990

### DICKINSON

church of Christ  
2919 FM 517 Road E.  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 9:45 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M., (281) 534-4870  
[www.dickinsonchurchofchrist.org](http://www.dickinsonchurchofchrist.org)

### DALLAS

Methodist Street church of Christ  
211 Methodist St. • Red Oak TX, 75154  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: D. LeRoy Klice  
(972) 576-3119 or 363-7672  
[www.methodistsreetchurchofchrist.com](http://www.methodistsreetchurchofchrist.com)

### DUNCANVILLE

Whispering Hills church of Christ  
2126 S. Main (South Dallas)  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(214) 874-5701, [info@whchurchofchrist.net](mailto:info@whchurchofchrist.net)

### EDNA

church of Christ  
301 Robison Street  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(361) 782-5506 or 782-2844  
Elders: J. Mercer & S. Mercer

### EL PASO

Eastringe church of Christ  
3277 Pendleton Road  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(915) 855-1524

### FORT WORTH

West Side church of Christ  
6110 White Settlement Rd. 76114  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(817) 738-7269

### GRANBURY

church of Christ  
4313 Old Granbury Road  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
817-913-4209 or 817-279-3351

### HOUSTON

Fry Rd. church of Christ  
2510 Fry Road (77084)  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Bob Pulliam: (281) 832-4633, [www.fryroad.org](http://www.fryroad.org)

### HOUSTON

Spring Woods church of Christ  
9955 Neuens Rd. at Witte Road  
Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.  
Worship 11 A.M., Evening 6 P.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist (713) 419-1750  
[www.springwoodschurchofchrist.com](http://www.springwoodschurchofchrist.com)

### IRVING

Westside church of Christ  
2320 Imperial Dr. (closest to DFW Airport)  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Mark Roberts (972) 986-9131  
[www.JustChristians.com](http://www.JustChristians.com)

### LANCASTER

Pleasant Run church of Christ  
831 W. Pleasant Run Road  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(972) 227-1708 or 227-2598

### LUBBOCK

Indiana Avenue church of Christ  
6111 Indiana Avenue  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(806) 795-3377  
[www.lubbockchurch.com](http://www.lubbockchurch.com)

### LUFKIN

Timberland Dr. church of Christ  
912 S. Timberland Drive  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7: P.M.  
Evangelists: Harold Hancock & Reagan McClenny  
(936) 634-7110 or 632-7070

### MANSFIELD

Northside church of Christ  
1820 Mansfield-Webb Road  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 5:30 P.M.  
[www.northsidecoc.us](http://www.northsidecoc.us)  
Evangelist: Tom Roberts (817) 466-3160

### NACOGDOCHES

Stallings Dr. church of Christ  
3831 N.E. Stallings Drive  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelists: Randy Harshbarger & Jay Taylor

## PLANO

Spring Creek church of Christ  
2100 W. Spring Creek Pkwy., (North Dallas Suburb)  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(972) 517-5582, [www.planochurch.org](http://www.planochurch.org)

## SAN ANTONIO

Grissom Rd. church of Christ  
5470 Lost Lane at Grissom Rd.  
San Antonio, TX 78238-2700  
Bible Classes 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday (Ladies Class) 10 A.M.,  
Wednesday (Bible Class) 7:30 P.M.  
Terry Starling, Evangelist  
[www.grissomroadcoc.org](http://www.grissomroadcoc.org)

## SAN ANTONIO

Pecan Valley church of Christ  
268 Utopia Avenue, (I-37 S.E. Exit Pecan Valley)  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Clyde W. Carter (210) 337-6143

## SHERMAN

Westwood Village church of Christ  
314 N. Tolbert  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jim Smelser

## TEMPLE

Leon Valley church of Christ  
4404 Twin City Blvd.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jason Garcia  
[yourfriendjgar@gmail.com](mailto:yourfriendjgar@gmail.com)  
[www.biblemoments.org](http://www.biblemoments.org)

## WACO

Sun Valley church of Christ  
340 E. Warren St. (In Hewitt, a suburb of Waco)  
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Marc Smith  
(254) 666-1020 or 420-1484

## THE WOODLANDS

Woodlands church of Christ  
1500 Wellman Road • P.O. Box 7664 (77380)  
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.  
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(281) 367-2099  
[www.woodlandschurchofchrist.org](http://www.woodlandschurchofchrist.org)

## VIRGINIA

### CHESAPEAKE

Tidewater church of Christ  
217 Taxus Street  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Steve Schlosser (757) 436-6900

### CHESTER

Chester church of Christ  
12100 Winfree St., (Central to Richmond,  
Hopewell, Petersburg, & Colonial Heights)  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
church Building: (804) 796-2374, (804) 385-2725  
or (804) 271-0877

### NEWPORT NEWS

Harpersville Rd. church of Christ  
315 Harpersville Road  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Wednesday 7:00 P.M.

### RICHMOND (METRO)

Courthouse church of Christ  
Courthouse Rd. at Double Creek Ct.  
(2.2 miles S of Rt. 288)  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Gene Tope (804) 790-1629  
[www.courthousechurchofchrist.com](http://www.courthousechurchofchrist.com)

### RICHMOND

Forest Hill church of Christ  
1208 W. 41st Street  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:00 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jack Bise, Jr. (804) 233-5959

## RIDGEWAY

church of Christ  
2970 Old Leaksville Road  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(276) 956-6049  
[www.churchofchristatridgeway.com](http://www.churchofchristatridgeway.com)

## ROANOKE

Blue Ridge church of Christ  
929 Indiana Avenue N.E. (5 min. from Roanoke  
Convention Center)  
1st Lesson 9:15 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.  
Worship 11 A.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(540) 344-2755

## VIRGINIA BEACH

Southside church of Christ  
5652 Haden Road  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Robert Mallard (757) 464-4574

## WASHINGTON

### BELLINGHAM

Mt. Baker church of Christ  
1860 Mt. Baker Hwy.  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
Evangelist: Joe Price (360) 752-2692 or 380-2960  
[www.bibleanswer.com/mtbaker](http://www.bibleanswer.com/mtbaker)

### TACOMA

Manitou Park church of Christ  
(meets at Gray Middle School)  
6229 S Tyler Street  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(253) 242-3098  
[tacomachurch@gmail.com](mailto:tacomachurch@gmail.com)  
[www.tacomachurch.com](http://www.tacomachurch.com)

## WEST VIRGINIA

### CHARLESTON

Oakwood Road church of Christ  
873 Oakwood Road  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Jonathan Chaffin (304) 342-5637  
[oakwoodrdcoc@suddenlinkmail.com](mailto:oakwoodrdcoc@suddenlinkmail.com)  
[www.orcoc.org](http://www.orcoc.org)

### CLARKSBURG

Westside church of Christ  
Davisson Run Road  
Sunday Morning 9:30 A.M.  
(304) 622-5433  
[www.westsidechurchofchristwv.net](http://www.westsidechurchofchristwv.net)

### FAIRMONT

Eastside church of Christ  
1929 Morgantown Avenue  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(304) 363-8696 or (304)844-2437

### GLADESVILLE

Gladesville church of Christ  
2906 Gladesville Rd., Independence, WV 26374  
Sunday Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.  
Sunday 7 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.  
(304) 864-3078

### MOUNDSVILLE

Moundsville church of Christ  
210 Cedar Street  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.  
Evening 6:30 P.M., Mid-week 7:30 P.M.  
Evangelist: Tony Huntsman (304) 845-4940

### PARKERSBURG

Marrtown church of Christ  
825 Marrtown Road  
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.  
(304) 422-7458 or 893-5227

## WYOMING

### RANCHESTER

Ranchester church of Christ  
Hwy. 14 West, Ranch Mart Mall  
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 6:30 P.M.  
Contact: Bob Reich (307) 655-2563

## CANADA

### CALGARY, AB

Northside church of Christ  
803 20A Avenue NE  
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.  
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday Bible Study 7 P.M.  
+1 (403) 452-5116  
[www.churchofchristcalgary.com](http://www.churchofchristcalgary.com)

## ADVERTISING RATES

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Schedule  
change

**2018**  
**TRUTH LECTURES**

now re-scheduled for

**JUNE 25<sup>TH</sup> - 28<sup>TH</sup>**

To be held on the campus of the Athens Bible School in  
Athens, Alabama. The theme is "In the Beginning...  
(Studies from Genesis).