

Light and Life

Stepping On Toes

The prophecy of Isaiah 2:1-4 regarding the coming church of God is uplifting and happy in its tone (e.g., “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore”). Yet, in the midst of this hopeful rhetoric is a line about God “rebuking many people.” This may seem contrary to the tone of the rest of the prophecy but, if we think about it from a spiritual perspective, we find perfect harmony with the thoughts.

Modern pulpits are full of messages that tell people they are perfect just the way they are. Rather than preaching messages like, “repent of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you” (Ac 8:22), preachers tell people that they have nothing that requires repentance! They say that God is love, and therefore accepts people despite their sin.

Biblically, love and acceptance are not the same thing. In fact, biblical love requires rebuke. “Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful” (Pr. 27:5-6). It is easy to tell those who are our true friends, because they will tell us when we are wrong.

‘Fluffy’ messages that don’t demand change aren’t going to help anyone, but “like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold is a wise rebuker to an obedient ear” (Pr. 25:12). The qualifiers in this proverb are important. When we rebuke someone, we must be wise – hence the proverb: “do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you” (Pr. 9:8). Likewise, when we receive rebuke, we must be humble and obedient.

“Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid” (Pr 12:1). It may sound funny, but the message is clear: the sermons that step on our toes are the ones we should seek the most!

- Sam Bunyard

Just My Thoughts

I am Tired

I am tired today. I was tired yesterday. In fact, I have been tired every day, for a long time. Some days I am more tired than others. Some days I am tired because I didn’t sleep well, some days I am tired after a hard day’s work, some days I am tired after a good workout, and some days I am just plain tired of the world around me. We live in a world that constantly drains us of our energy – physically, emotionally, and spiritually. This constant drain can be difficult for us to manage sometimes. Nobody wants to be tired all the time!

But unfortunately, we live in a sinful and broken world. Being tired is a side effect of our citizenship. We are in a constant fight for survival, and when we get a break from that, we are in a constant fight for our eternal souls. Sometimes we may even find ourselves in a fight for both simultaneously. It can all be exhausting.

But that is precisely what makes the following passage so meaningful to us: “There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from His. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience” (He 4:9-11).

Are you tired? Are you weary, worn out, and exhausted? Well, I have good news. The Lord has prepared a place of rest for you, and for all His people who chase after His Kingdom. Personally, I can’t wait to get there, to finally rest with the Father. I hope to see you there one day, after our toil is over and our race is run.

- Hayden Cathey



ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

RADIO PROGRAM

The Bible Speaks



Sunday 9:00-9:30a.m.
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

P.O. Box 447
201 W. Chestnut Street
Rogers, AR 72757
479-636-3575
www.downtowncoc.net



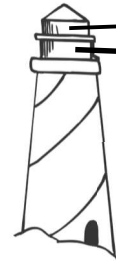
**If you love Jesus, you
won't flirt with the devil.**

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Joel Heiligenthal
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
Randy Shell



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

**PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST
ROGERS, ARKANSAS**

April 23, 2023

Joseph of Cypress

In American culture, names often are chosen because they 'sound good'. In ancient Jewish culture, names were generally chosen based on the significance of their meaning – and were often changed later in life for the same reason.

Joseph of Cypress was such a case. Since the days of the Old Testament hero of the book of Genesis, the name 'Joseph' ('He will add') was common among the Jews (about a dozen men in the Bible bore that name). Like most of the others, Joseph of Cypress would have remained in relative obscurity – except he didn't.

Early in the history, it was Joseph who set the example for generosity among Christians. It was Joseph who stood up for a brother in Christ who was rejected by a local church. When the church began to spread into Gentile lands, it was Joseph who was chosen by the apostles to check it out and report back. And it was Joseph who was chosen by the Holy Spirit to accompany Paul on the first evangelistic journey.

No wonder his name was changed to Barnabas, the 'son of encouragement' (Ac 4:36-37, 9:26-28, 11:20ff, 13:2-3)! May God give us more like him – perhaps **you!** - *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: G&K Fletcher, T Tolbert, J&M Swim, J Marshall, G Walsh, L&T Deen

Shut-ins: Betty Jo Young, Billie Pennington, Shirley Cole, Mary Lou Lewis

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

Q&A – Due to scheduling conflicts, our monthly question and answer lesson will be held one week early – tonight. Thanks to all who have contributed!

SENTENCE SERMON – “By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us – and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 Jn 3:16).