

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Bible Class 9:45am
Morning Assembly 10:35am
Evening Assembly 6:00pm

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00pm

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



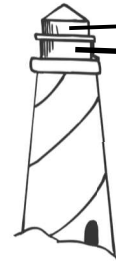
**For peace of mind,
resign as general
manager of the universe.**

CLASS SCHEDULE

Today
All Classes
Ac 1

Next Sunday
All Classes
Ac 2

**This info is provided
to help everyone stay
in synch during our
three-year study thru
the Bible (Sunday AM).**



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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

January 5, 2020

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

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

Sick: Mary Lou Lewis, Kathy Fletcher, Marsha Swim, Nellie Shell, June Self,

Diane Willis, Shirley Cole, & Etta Frazelle

Military: Logan Dickey

Shut-ins: BettyJo Young, Helen Weiser, Margaret Abel, Erton Usrey, BPennington

MARRIAGE CLASS Mondays at 7 at the King's (for the next six weeks).

WELCOME to Virgil and Doris Carter! Let's make them feel welcome!

OUR SYMPATHIES to the Betty Alley family & the Paul Bader family.

Christians and Lethal Force

Much has been said in recent days about the 'church shooting' in Texas last Sunday — the right and wrong of it. The initial shooter was clearly wrong. He was evil incarnate, whose history of bad choices ended in a final bad choice to take innocent human life. God's judicial standard played out in textbook fashion: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in His own image" (Ge 9:6).

Which raises the question, "Is lethal force ever justified?" We are not ad-

ressing the war question or whether a Christian can be a cop. Most Christians, I assume, would not object to such, based on Romans 13 and the role of civil government. But what about individual Christians? Is it ever right for a Christian to take the life of another human being?

If killing is motivated by personal hatred, anger, jealousy, or revenge, the answer is clearly 'no' for those passions are themselves sinful, and any behavior flowing from them would be sinful as well (Mt 15:18-19, Ga 5: 19-21, etc). >

Faith in Context

Is it a stretch to say that service is the purpose of your life — the very purpose of it? I don't believe it is.

It is true that, as God's created people, there are many Biblical ways to answer what our purpose is; but I find that our service to one another is the most suitable answer.

In truth, it is the physical representation of our Spiritual reality (damned or saved).

God reflects His character through His sacrifices, sufferings, and service to us for our sake and not His own, and we can reflect that here on earth. We can reflect service and its love (selflessly, not asking what is in it for ourselves). It will correspond to the reality of Spiritual good, and of God's ways.

“This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.” (1 Jn 3:10)

Likewise, we can reflect in a physical way sin, which corresponds to the reality of spiritual evil and Satan's ways. “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires.” (Jn 8:44) And what else is Satan except the selfish antithesis of our Lord's selflessness?

In which wise do you serve — that which reflects God as your Father, or Satan as your father?

- *WHSmith*



But note carefully God's reason for justifying the use of deadly force in Genesis 9: “for God made man in His own image”. The reason a murderer deserved to die was **not** because his life had no value, but because the life of his innocent victim **did**.

That principle carried forward to the Mosaic age. Though the sixth command said, “Thou shalt not kill” (Ex 20:13), other laws justified the use of lethal force, both judicially (21:14) and individually (22:2). The unspoken reason for such provisions was clear: the life of the innocent victim, created in the image of God, had value.

The same principle is true today. We, too, are created in the image of God with great worth. No wonder that God, in the NT age, retained capital punishment as a just response to evil (Ro 13:4, Ac 25:11).

But what about Christians? Although Jesus condemned the use of armed force to further the kingdom (Mt 26:51-54, Jn 18:36), He

actually **commanded** the apostles to arm themselves (Lu 22:35-39). Those swords were **not** used to defend against persecution (Ac 12:1-3). So, what purpose did they serve? They would have certainly deterred evil threats against their lives in their numerous evangelistic journeys.

Some push back, “Turn the other cheek” (Mt 5:39). But this was spoken concerning vengeance (vs 38); and protecting innocent life is **not** taking vengeance. Others say, “Love your neighbor” (Mt 22:39). To which we reply, “Exactly!”. Is it ‘loving’ for a man to allow an intruder to kill his neighbor, rape his wife and sell his daughter into slavery? Pity the poor family whose head interprets love this way. First Timothy 5:8 is not just about food.

Lethal force does not negate trust in God. David trusted God even as he picked up the stones for his sling. The Psalmist wrote, “Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked” (Ps 82:4). So, let's do that! - *WKing*