

## Light and Life

## The Results of Vain Worship

The book of Joel was written during a time of intense famine. Joel identified this famine as the judgment of God and warned of a greater judgment to follow if the people of God didn't get their act together. The famine was total, and was caused by locusts, droughts and fires.

As a result of the nation's sin, God took away their opportunity for sinful pleasure by sending the locusts to eat all the grapes – but, in doing so, also took away the ability for people to make drink and grain offerings. “The grain offering and the drink offering have been cut off from the house of the Lord; the priests mourn, who minister to the Lord. The field is wasted, the land mourns; for the grain is ruined, the new wine is dried up, the oil fails” (Joel 1:9-10). When God's people forsake Him, He not only allows them to leave the path of righteousness – but he removes the relationship! While worship is supposed to bring us closer to God, vain worship has the opposite effect.

When worship is insincere and the lives of worshippers are not reflecting righteousness, God does not desire their half-hearted worship. “‘Who is there even among you who would shut the doors [of the temple], so that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain? I have no pleasure in you,’ says the Lord of hosts, nor will I accept an offering from your hands” (Mal. 1:10-11).

Throughout the history of Israel, God's nation continued to struggle with their sincerity of worship from time to time. God was not interested in their ‘check-the-box’ worship. Worship, to many, became a physical thing. But Jesus said, “True worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him” (Jn 4:23).

Let's worship with good hearts today!

- Sam Bunyard

## Another Perspective

Excerpts from: Tyler O'Neil, "Johns Hopkins Research: No Evidence People Are Born Gay or Transgender", PJ Media, 23 Aug 2016, and Dr. Lawrence S. Mayer & Dr. Paul R. McHugh, "Sexuality and Gender," The New Atlantis, No. 50, Fall 2016.

"The understanding of sexual orientation as an innate, biologically fixed property of human beings — the idea that people are ‘born that way’ — is not supported by scientific evidence."

"The study breaks down in three parts: First, Mayer and McHugh examined whether homosexuality is an inherited trait, and concluded that people are not simply ‘born that way.’ Second, they looked at the causes of the poor mental health associated with gay and transgender people, concluding that social stress does not explain all of it. Finally, they studied transgenderism, concluding that it is not innate and that transgender ‘treatments’ are associated with negative outcomes."

"One environmental factor that appears to be correlated with non-heterosexuality is child sexual abuse victimization, which may also contribute to the higher rates."

"Compared to heterosexuals, non-heterosexuals are about two to three times as likely to have experienced childhood sexual abuse."

"The hypothesis that gender identity is an innate, fixed property of human beings that is independent of biological sex — that a person might be ‘a man trapped in a woman's body’ or ‘a woman trapped in a man's body’ — is not supported by scientific evidence."

"In one sense, the evidence that we are born with a given gender seems well supported by direct observation: males overwhelmingly identify as men and females as women. The fact that children are (with a few exceptions of intersex individuals) born either biologically male or female is beyond debate. The biological sexes play complementary roles in reproduction."

*Never thought we would need to teach on something so basic. -wk*

## 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

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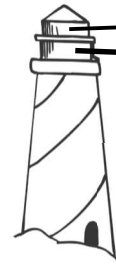
**G-O-D**  
Man's True Best Friend

## ELDERS:

Otis Hardin  
Perry Johnson  
Ken Parker  
Alan Revier  
GW Walsh

## DEACONS:

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Scott Hale  
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Brock McKeel  
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# DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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

June 25, 2023

## Wandering Among the Lilies

*“Where has your beloved gone, O fairest among women? Where has your beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with you?” “My beloved has gone to his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed his flock in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine; but he feeds his flock among the lilies.”*

- Song of Solomon 6:1-3

Thus the inspired poet described the anguish of a wife whose husband had gone elsewhere to find sexual satisfaction. Even in an age when polygamy was widely practiced (vs 8), the cruelty of being spurned by one's spouse was keenly felt.

Jesus took the matter of marital faithfulness so seriously that He made the violation of it the sole grounds for divorce and remarriage (Mt 19:9). It's His reminder to husbands and wives to remain faithful to one another – to not wander “among the lilies”, either in the office, the market, or on the internet.

Our society is obsessed with sex. Even marriage is no barrier to those with an adulterous agenda. But we would be wise to remember some other words of Solomon: “Drink water from your own cistern... and rejoice with the wife of your youth” (Pr 5:15-18). True wisdom.

- WKing

## FAMILY NEWS

**PRAYER LIST** – (this bulletin printed on June 12 due to scheduling conflicts)

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

*Sick:* G&K Fletcher, J&M Swim, J Marshall, S Shell, L&T Deen

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

*Military:* Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

**DATES TO REMEMBER** – Our Vacation Bible School will be July 16-20 with Bret Hogland, and Youth Lectures are August 4-5 with David Banning.

**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS** – Tonight is our monthly Q&A lesson. Thanks to all who have contributed questions! And keep them coming!