

Light and Life

Study, Do, Teach

"The good hand of Ezra's God was upon him" because he had "prepared his heart to study the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel" (Ezra 7:9-10). Study. Do. Teach.

If we want God to be with us as He was with Ezra, we have a powerful example to follow! If we are to be effective in deepening our relationship with God and serving Him, we must prepare our heart for these things.

The importance of study is generally understood by devoted Christians. For those who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious", it is natural to "desire the pure milk of the word" (I Peter 2:2-3). However, if we do not prepare our hearts to do and teach, what purpose does our study serve?

We must ensure that our study is never a mere intellectual pursuit. This is not a college class we are cramming for! Bible study is not about having all the 'right answers' in a trivia game – it's about living righteously before God! If we prepare to study, but not to do, then we are not "doers of the word but hearers only" and we have deceived ourselves (James 1:21-27).

It seems to be easier for most Christians to prepare their hearts to study and do than to teach. But if we aren't willing to teach the lost what we have come to know about God, can we truthfully say that we are fully making application of the word? After all, evangelism is the duty of every Christian! We may be diligent in our personal studies and be careful to 'be good' regarding personal struggles; but at the end of the day the lost are still lost. And we have 'buried our talent' and become unprofitable servants (Mt. 25:30).

Christians, prepare your hearts! Let it become a personal mantra: Study. Do. Teach.

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Dodgy Theology & the Israel-Hamas War

In a morally-muddled world where good and evil have been turned upside down, one almost welcomes the crystal-clear view of utter evil provided by the barbaric Hamas assault on innocent civilians, with the killing of helpless infants being gleefully celebrated. No Muslim theology can remotely claim this jihad as holy...

Little wonder Israel curries favor with Evangelicals despite not believing a word of their Christian faith or "end times" eschatology. From the halls of Congress to Holy Land tourism, Evangelicals empower America's support of Israel. Given the importance of that support, what better moment to ask the sensitive question: Is "end times" eschatology truly biblical? ...

After endless discussions with some of my closest friends, I'm under no illusion that I could possibly change many minds. From my own study, the notion that the Lord will reign on earth for "a thousand years" before the final consummation 1) contextually misconstrues multi-layered prophecies (sometimes having both immediate and future applications, sometimes not); 2) cherry-picks figurative, apocalyptic language; and 3) directly conflicts with other, unambiguous teaching about "last things." For any millennial scenario to work, one must employ tortuous logic to circumvent what Scripture plainly says about death, Resurrection, and Judgment.

There are legitimate reasons to support Israel, especially in this horrific hour. But spurious "end times" theology is not one of them. It has wreaked much havoc. Spiritually speaking, why should we return to the "weak and beggarly elements" of land, temple, and animal sacrifices? Was Christ's death for nothing? Evangelicals need to do some serious rethinking about their eschatology and its catastrophic political implications. If it's literal interpretations you're after, try John 18:36.

- F LaGard Smith (edited for space)

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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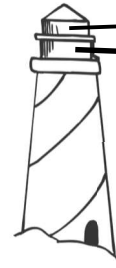
**Dusty Bibles lead
to dirty lives.**

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DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

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

Sick: Fletchers, Swims, JMarshall, RStarr, MiBader, ADosier, ACorder

Shut-ins: Betty Jo Young, Billie Pennington, Shirley Cole, Susan Wiese, V Carter

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

DATES FOR 2024 – It's not too early to mark your calendars: April 19-20 (Singing), July 21-25 (VBS), and August 2-4 (Youth Lectures).

SENTENCE SERMON – No one is so good that they are beyond the need for God's grace.

God's Got This

The world is full of pain and suffering. One only need look around, or on the news, or at a social media platform to see just how broken this broken world is.

And the responses to this brokenness are as disheartening as the pain itself. People lash out at God, and at those who try to offer up Biblical explanations for their suffering (a delicate process, and a theological minefield, as Job's friends learned).

And while the crushing darkness of the world seems far removed from those whose lives have rarely (if ever) been touched by it, time has a way of making it close and personal.

As one who has wrestled spiritually with such issues, to the brink of giving up, I would humbly say:

Do not be angry at God over this. Satan broke His perfect world, and He is fixing it – on His timetable. By His grace, He has made it possible for us to grow stronger from the pain of suffering (witness the wilderness wanderings, De 8:2-5, Paul's thorn, 2 Co 12:7-9, etc.). But we must view suffering from an eternal 'big picture' perspective, and not become mired down in the here-and-now. Heaven will come soon enough. In the meantime, trust Him – He's got this.

- *WKing*