

Light and Life

Truth and Reason

“Having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come—that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles” (Ac. 26:22-23).

This was Paul’s bold conclusion as he preached the gospel to Festus, Agrippa, and Bernice. Paul’s preaching was amusing to Festus, who yelled out, “Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad” (Ac. 26:24)! The preaching may have been entertainment for Festus, but for Paul it was no joking matter. He turned his focus to Agrippa, who would have had knowledge of the Old Testament.

Paul replied, “I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason. For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe” (Ac. 26:25-27).

Paul was not arguing from blind faith. His preaching was based in truth and reason, founded on the word of God. A logical analysis of the Old Testament lined up perfectly with Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus (Ac. 9). It was perfectly reasonable to conclude that Jesus had fulfilled the law and the prophets – an incredible claim! It was by logical reasoning that Paul was convinced of the gospel, and he used logical argument to persuade others.

Agrippa responded to Paul’s appeal, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian” (Ac. 26:28). The gospel is reasonable. If we study it honestly it will convict us – if we present it logically we will persuade others!

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Fighting the Good Fight

Victory, overcoming the world, is through faith in the One who has already won the battle (1 Jn 5:1-4). The blood has already been shed, and it was His own blood, dripping from His garments (Re 19:13). It is this blood that offers victory to all nations and by which He ultimately conquers.

This helps us answer, “What, then, shall we do [in persecution]?” Here’s what we find brings victory: “And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death” (Re 12:11). Reflect on the importance of these three points. We overcome by 1) the blood of the Lamb, 2) the word of the testimony, and 3) the commitment even to death.

Indeed, Babylon is encroaching and will continue to do so. The dragon of old is angry and will come after God’s people and try to force us to worship the beast. It has long been so. We may even be called on to give our lives. But we have the power of the blood of the Lamb, the power of the Word, and the power of commitment — and if engaged properly, we cannot lose. God promises deliverance, whether by life or by death. The irony is that Christians will always appear to be losing. The reality is the opposite, for God takes what appears to be weak and makes it strong. It’s not the way people would do it, but God’s ways are not ours. Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.

Don’t put your trust in worldly, carnal methods and earthly weapons. Don’t trust worldly princes to fight the spiritual battles. Fight the good fight of faith and lay hold of eternal life. “Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.” We don’t seek to be persecuted, but we need to know what to do if and when it comes.

- Doy Moyer (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.
Thursday 11:30a.m.–noon
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

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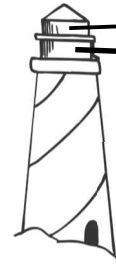
May God hold you in
the hollow of His hand
in the coming year.

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

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



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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New Year Resolutions

You knew you would be hearing (or reading) a lesson on some useful New Year resolutions – being the last day of the year and all. So as not to disappoint, here it is.

Resolve to draw closer to God in 2024. This should be at the top of any list of New Year resolutions. It should be an ongoing, ever-present resolve. Get close to Him. Read His Word. Don't offer Him formalized prayers – pour your heart out to Him. Strive to understand why He matters in your life. Think of all He has done for you – and tell Him thanks. Let every decision you make be weighed against this measure: will

it bring me closer to Him – or lead me away from Him? Nothing in your life should override this New Year resolution (Mt 22:37-38)!

And you have probably anticipated the second resolution (vss 39-40): in 2024, love your neighbor as yourself. Make life about more than just you, your family, your friends. Be alert to opportunities to help others. Write that card, make that phone call, mow that yard, take that meal, set up that Bible study. Make a difference in the life of someone who can do nothing for you in return.

And have a **fruitful** 2024!

- *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

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

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

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

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

2024 EVENTS – Mar 10-13 (Don Truex mtg); Apr 19 (Stevens & Shepard singing); Jul 21-25 (PJ Anderson VBS); Aug 2-4 (Ben Hall Youth Lectures)

Q & A – Tonight is our end-of-the-month question and answer lesson. Thanks to all who have contributed questions to keep this tradition going!