

Ministers:
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley
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Sunday:
8:00 AM: WGCY
9:00 AM: Worship

Wednesday:
6:30 PM: Bible Study

[gibsoncitychurchof
Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofchrist.com)

This Past Week:
Worship-26
Wednesday-11

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 11.9-10
Life can be tough early
on and at the end of
our days. How does
remembering youth
and old age are
“vanity” help us live?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

The problem with Matthew 6.8

“For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.”

These words have left some confused. If God is a loving father, why hasn't He provided a cure for cancer? And if He already knows what we need, why do we have to ask?

If God loves us, why isn't there a cure for cancer? I don't know. But neither do I know why God allowed Pilate to kill some Galileans who were at church, or why He allowed the Siloam Tower to collapse and kill eighteen people (Lk. 13.1,4). But just because we don't know the answer doesn't mean there isn't an answer. “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter” (Prov. 25.2). Research and study of God's revelation, whether in His word or work, are noble pursuits. Rather than pretend like we know what we don't, “searching out a matter” for the improvement of man is a duty and a dignity that positively impacts the character of the searcher.

If God knows what we need, why do we need to ask? Because to receive some things we must want them. A parent can give a child food and clothing without the child asking, but see what happens when a parent tries to give the same child advice it doesn't want. The same is true of trying to give a child a good education; if the kid doesn't want it, there's going to be frustration.

We may not understand, but God has good reason for making some things contingent or hard to come by. But ask, and you will receive (Matt. 7.7-8), even if it takes while.

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

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A clear conscience

When we're baptized, writes Peter, we are appealing to God “for a good conscience”; or, as some versions read, a “clear” conscience (1 Pet. 3.21).

Many a mental health professional will tell you they could shut their doors due to lack of clients if they could just convince troubled people they were loved and could have their innocence back. This, of course, is the very thing that makes the gospel “good news.”

There was a day when four men lowered a paralytic friend through the roof of a home where Jesus was teaching, Christ knows what's in men (Jn. 2.25), and when He saw the man, the first thing He said was, “Son, your sins are forgiven you” (Mk. 2.5). It seems Jesus sensed the man had a bigger problem than paralysis. Looking past the physical debility into the man's heart, Christ saw guilt and unrest, and that's what He addressed first.

There's a pain worse than physical disability, and that's the pain of shame. People need to hear there's a fountain free for sin and uncleanness (Zech. 13.1). People need to hear that though their sins are as scarlet, they can be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson, they can be as wool (Isa. 1.18).

People need to know they can be declared not guilty.
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Sermon: Matthew 6.5-8

Four points on prayer

19 July 2026

Children are to repay their parents

1 Timothy 5.4

Teach the Ephesian saints, Paul wrote Timothy, that “children are to repay their parents” (1 Tim. 5.4).

When I was a kid it was customary for aged parents to move in with one of their children. Sometimes the family had a “granny apartment”; more often grandparents were mainstreamed into the family.

It was never seamless and it required adjustments, but it was a disruption accepted by many families as the norm. Part of this was because nursing and assisted-living homes hadn’t yet proliferated like they have today, but I think a lot of it was due to the fact families believed this is how love treats elderly family members. This is not a criticism of anyone who has arranged for their parents/grandparents to be placed in institutional care. But it’s a fact that caregiving institutions exist to make money, and to do so they cut every corner they can. When I googled how prevalent abuse and neglect are in nursing homes, the first sentence that popped up read: “Abuse and neglect in nursing homes are highly prevalent but notoriously underreported.” Does that sound like a place you want to be stuck when you can no longer care for yourself?

God’s rule for care within a family is this: **parents care for their child in the child’s infancy, children care for their parents in the parents’ infirmity.** Real religion, says James, sees to the loving care of the vulnerable (Jas. 1.27). We need to be reminded of this.

We’re born into a society we didn’t create. Someone else built the hospital, discovered the medicine, and provided for the transportation, clothing, housing, and Gerber mashed food that enabled us to survive. Someone else brought us into the world, then paid for our health care, entertainment, Little League, to college, etc. Someone else worked themselves to the bone for us, then cried when our immaturity, impudence, and selfishness broke their hearts.

Every child has a debt they owe and are to repay by honoring their parents. And *honoring* implies caring for/paying for (1 Tim. 5.17–18). God’s rule for families is the golden rule (Matt. 7.12). Let selfless, serving, sacrificial love always be the deciding factor when our loved ones can no longer care for themselves.

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Taking a name out of the family Bible

In his wonderful tales of the mythical Scottish village of Drumtochy, Ian Maclaren draws a picture of Lachlan Campbell, the sternest and strictest of the elders in the Drumtochy church.

After his wife died, Lachlan raised his daughter, Flora, in the strait and narrow, but when she came of age, she rebelled, left home, and moved to London. Shortly after, at the conclusion of a church service, Lachlan had a letter read that he received from Flora explaining her whereabouts and why she’d left. The church was stunned. Several tried to comfort Lachlan, telling him not to despair because Flora was not a bad girl, and that even though she’d acted rashly, she had a good heart and wouldn’t stay gone forever. Lachlan’s reply was, “I have blotted out her name from my Bible . . . I have no daughter.”

There are Christians who believe God is like Lachlan Campbell, in that every time we sin, He takes our name out of the “family Bible”—the Book of Life (Rev. 20.12–15)—and only puts us back in when we’ve “prayed to Him if perhaps the thought of our heart might be forgiven us” (Acts 8.22).

This is not my understanding of the heavenly Father.

First, there’s never a time when we’re sinless, spiritually and morally perfect. There’s never a moment when we’re not sinning—somehow or other missing the mark. The father I read about in the Bible is not the God of the perfect but of the growing. In His love, He gives us time to grow up, develop, mature.

What this implies, of course, is that sin and saintliness exist in a child of God simultaneously, which is what the Bible explicitly teaches (Jn. 13.10, 1 Jn. 1.7,8,10). There is no father who has a perfect angel for a child, but only a devil for a father would take a child’s name out of the family Bible just because the child isn’t perfect (Matt. 7.11).

Second, we *will* have our name taken out of the family Bible for unbelief. Apostasy is possible (Heb. 4.1–2, 6.4–6; 2 Pet. 2.20–22). Only God can judge when a person ceases being a believer and becomes an unbeliever, but I’m confident that there’s more to unbelief than simply being an imperfect human.

When Lacklan’s neighbor, Margot Howe, learns what he’s done, she shames him to no end, and her rebuke brings Lachlan to his senses. When Flora comes to her senses and returns home, she’s met by a father who welcomes her with a love she never expected, and who joyfully reenters her name in the family Bible.

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