

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—31
Wednesday—10

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 12.1
How should young
people spend their
youth? What truth
from this verse are
baby boomers learning
about old age?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

Book recommendation

*Goodreads review of How to Kill a Giant
by Carol Schlorff.*

“He lost his courage. Will meeting a real
superhero help him find it?

An awful summer . . . Thirteen-year-
old Hugo is miserable. His move to a
small Pennsylvania town has brought him
nothing but trouble. Ignored by his new
classmates and a favorite target for the
school bullies, Hugo lets fear rule his life.
It's going to be a long summer.

An unexpected twist . . . Hugo meets
siblings Julia and Stefan, who are just as
unhappy as he is. After finding a mysteri-
ous old Bible, all three are magically
transported to ancient Israel, where they
meet the young shepherd David, who sus-
pects they're spies. The trio is caught up in
a scary world where danger lurks on every
side.

A terrifying adventure . . . As Hugo
and his friends navigate the perils of this
strange and frightening land, Hugo must
face his greatest fear—that he's a coward.
His only hope of survival is to learn the
secret of David's bravery, but will he do so
in time to face his biggest test? Find out in
this thrilling tale of courage, friendship,
and faith.”

Carol Schlorff's book is as good as a
young adult book gets. It updates the story
of David and Goliath to teach the im-
portance of courage. Fear/panic has tor-
ment, and many, including some seasoned
Christians, cower before the giant of fear.
Relying on the Biblical story, the author
pinpoints the Scripture formula for con-
quering fear and tells it in a captivating
way. It is so Biblically based that I intend
to use it in a sermon very soon.

kenny

Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

A preacher and God with a broken marriage

It's been said that in the whole gallery of Old Testament
portraits, none is more remarkable than that of Hosea; re-
markable because to illustrate His own heart and love, God
chose Hosea with his broken marriage.

In many communities and churches, a preacher with a
broken marriage would be an embarrassment and scandal.
Preachers are supposed to have perfect marriages and fami-
lies; if they don't, it's a reproach upon the church.” Who
does that preacher think he is?! Telling us how to fix our
marriage when he can't fix his! Physician, heal thyself.”

But isn't God's marriage often on shaky ground due to
His unfaithful bride? It's said that the lower you go on the
scale of animal life, the higher the threshold of pain—it
takes more to hurt a cockroach than a puppy. If we who are
finite know how much we hurt when one we love breaks our
heart, can we even begin to imagine how much the infinite
God hurts when we break our marriage vows and His heart?

And when we do, does God write us off, forget about us,
and hate us, or does He bear all things, hope all things, and
endure all things with a never failing love, hoping to put the
marriage back together? What God illustrates with Hosea is
what the poet wrote: “love is not love which alters when it
alteration finds. . . . It hath the quality of everlastingness.”

Take time today to read Hosea 1–3, and look into the
heart of the sorrowing and loving God.

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Sermon: Matthew 6.9–15

Six marks of Christian prayer

26 July 2026

Tabitha the blessed

Acts 9.36–43

Here's a great story from *A Labrador Doctor* (1919, p 97) by W. T. Grenfell, a British medical missionary.

A very practical outcome in the mission work [in Labrador] was the organization of the Fisher Lads' Letter-Writing Association. The members accepted names of orphan lads at sea and pledged themselves to write regularly to them. . . . I remember one lady whose whole care in life had been her own health. She had nursed it, and worried over it, and enjoyed ill health so long, that only the constant recourse to the most refined stimulants postponed the end which would have been a merciful relief—to others. The effort of letter-writing remade her. Doctors were forgotten, stimulants were tabooed, the insignia of invalidism banished, and to my intense surprise I ran across her at a fishing port surrounded by a bevy of blue-jerseyed lads, who were some of those whom she was being blessed by helping.

Letter writing remade her! How extraordinary that the simple act of writing a letter did for this lady what no amount of doctors and pills were able to do for her.

Never underestimate medicinal power of loving service.

I thought about Tabitha in Acts 9.36–43. Two things are said of her in v 36: she had a believing heart (she was a disciple) and busy hands (that were full of good works and charitable deeds). When she died, all the widows stood by, weeping and showing the tunics and garments she had made for them (v 39). I bet Tabitha's life was as full and rich as the Labrador lady's came to be, because she was a *servant* who practiced the divine edict, "Love one another as I have loved you."

In Romans, Paul refers to God as "blessed forever." Could that be because He is a loving God, who, because He is a loving God, is a serving God? Isn't it true that blessing and joy in life comes when we forget ourself and becoming a loving helper?

Tabitha died and Peter (maybe remembering what happened in the home of Jairus) raised her back to life. I wonder if Tabitha was miffed by this—recalled from paradise to earth? If she was, I can imagine that the needs and sorrows of Joppa soon recaptured her loving heart, and her joy returned as she busied herself with good works and charitable deeds. May her tribe increase!

kenny

(written in honor of my mother, who was a modern-day Tabitha)

Oh, so close

Religious books of the ancients are often divorced from any true historical setting.

By contrast, the Bible doesn't disassociate itself from historical truth. Numerous historical facts are mentioned. No Biblical writer ever denies what another asserts, and not one book views as fiction what another book presents as fact. The Bible refers to thousands of people, places, countries, customs, and concepts that be corroborated by secular records. There are well-publicized cases of where a Bible skeptic was certain Scripture was wrong about something, but then had to eat crow when more evidence confirmed the Bible. To quote the renown Jewish academic and archaeologist, Nelson Glueck, "As a matter of fact . . . it may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference" (*Rivers in the Negev*, 31).

But this doesn't stop the devil from trying to convince us otherwise. If he could produce just a single contradiction in the Bible, he could relegate Scripture to the feckless level of the Koran, or Book of Mormon, or Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. With just one contradiction or inaccuracy, he could destroy Christianity.

He nearly pulled it off with the prophecy involving the Passover lamb that "you shall not break one of his bones" (Ex. 12.46, Ps. 34.20).

The incident is best told in the Fourth Gospel. Take a few seconds to read John 19.31–36.

To tidy up Jerusalem for the Passover Sabbath, the Jews asked that the legs of the three crucifixion victims hanging outside Jerusalem be broken. This would hasten death, thus allowing their corpses to be removed. The legs of the men on either side were broken, but when they came to the Man in the middle and "saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs" (v 33).

I wonder long Christ had been dead? One minute? Five? Thirty? Had the soldiers received the word a few minutes earlier, would Jesus have been alive and had His legs broken (Jn. 10.35)?

And don't miss vv 34,37: not only did God thwart the devil's sabotage about Christ's bones, but God rubbed the devil's nose in it when Christ's side was pierced to confirm His death. Two prophecies fulfilled—not broken—within minutes of each other.

Sorry Satan, but your miss was as good as a mile.

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