

## Trends

In Pew Research Center polling in 2001, Americans opposed same-sex marriage by a margin of 57% to 35%. Since then, support for same-sex marriage has steadily grown. Based on polling in 2016, a majority of Americans (55%) support same-sex marriage, compared with 37% who oppose it. Roughly 58% of Catholics and 64% of white mainline Protestants support same-sex marriage.

via Pew Research Center

**Matthew 19:4-5:** "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?'"

## Sentence Sermons

"The irrationality of disgust suggests it is unreliable as a source of moral insight. There may be good arguments against gay marriage, partial-birth abortions and human cloning, but the fact that some people find such acts to be disgusting should carry no weight."

~Paul Bloom

**Isaiah 5:20:** "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;"

## News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Pray for all the members at Westside! Please pray for Susan Ferrell and her family as she continues to recover from brain tumor surgery. Also, please pray for her husband Shawn and their three boys: Samuel, Micah, and Eli.

Please pray for the Edward's family. Johnie Paul and Melba's daughter (John Isaac's sister) Adria was tragically killed in a traffic accident in Cozumel, Mexico. Her sister, Rebekah, was seriously injured. Adria's funeral will be at the Chandler Funeral Home in Ellettsville. Visitation is Tuesday, September 6th from 2-8 PM and one hour before the funeral service on Wednesday, September 7th at 11 AM.

Please pray for my daughter Dawne. She returned to school on Monday, 8/29. She still has trouble speaking as her mouth remains restricted by rubber bands.

Pray for the college students as they are now on summer break. Jonathan will be attending IUPUI law school this fall and Rachel plans to return to IU.

Please keep sister Wilma in your prayers! She gives all of us so much encouragement! God bless her and Virginia! Remember both of them in your prayers.

**Words of Life** is published by the **Westside Church of Christ** meeting at 1301 N. Enterprise, Bloomington, IN 47404

**Times of Service:** Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

**Editor:** Craig Thomas (812-320-9569); [craigthomas82000@gmail.com](mailto:craigthomas82000@gmail.com)

Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

# Words of Life

Westside  
church of Christ

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You  
have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



Sept. 4,  
2016

Vol. 8,  
No. 31

## It's Back To School Time!

John Isaac Edwards

Headed back to school? School days can present great opportunities and possibilities as well as considerable challenges and difficulties. Here are some spiritual things to think about as you go to school.

1) **Remember Who You Are.** Don't forget that you are a Christian — a learner and follower of Christ. "...the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26). You wear the name of Christ and represent Him in all that you say and do. You are a member of His body (1 Cor. 12:27), a child of God (Gal. 3:26), one bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20) — "purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

2) **Yield Not To Temptation.** There will be allurements and enticements to sin. There may be pressures to drink, chew, smoke, use drugs, engage in pre-marital sex, use bad language, cut yourself, tattoo and pierce your body, dance, gamble, lie, cheat, steal, vandalize, fight, and do other things that are contrary to the will of God. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (Prov. 1:10). Have the courage to say, "No!" Dare to be a Daniel — purpose in your heart that you will not defile yourself (Dan. 1:8). Remember Joseph who "...fled, and got him out" (Gen. 39:12). "...keep thyself pure" (1 Tim. 5:22).

3) **Watch Your Associations.** There is such a thing as 'guilt by association.' Before you go somewhere with others, you might want to find out who is going to be there and what is going to be taking place. The Wisdom book teaches, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:20). Paul wrote the Christians in Corinth, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15:33). Don't allow your good to become corrupted by evil.

4) **Keep Your Priorities In Order.** With all kinds of extracurricular activities, it can be easy to so fill your schedule that you don't have time

left for God. Remember Matthew 6:33: *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness..."* And the admonition of the Hebrew writer: *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together..."* (Heb. 10:25). In your learning, don't neglect the greatest book in the world — the Bible — the only book that is *"...able to make thee wise unto salvation..."* (2 Tim. 3:15).

5) **Dress Modestly.** 1 Timothy 2:9-10 says, *"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."* Which does your dress profess: godliness or worldliness? Don't conform to the world in your dress (Rom. 12:1-2).

6) **Be Respectful.** In a time when many have little to no respect for anyone, including themselves, remember to *"Honour all men..."* (1 Pet. 2:17). Respect your parents, your teachers, and your fellow students. Practice the Golden Rule: *"...all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them..."* (Mt. 7:12).

7) **Set A Good Example.** Be the salt of the earth (Mt. 5:13). Let your light shine (Mt. 5:14-16). *"...be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity"* (1 Tim. 4:12). Many simply have not been taught how to act or behave. You can set the example of proper conduct.

Have a good school year!

### Official Interpreters

Larry Ray Hafley

Through the years, Catholics and Calvinists have taught that the Bible is too difficult for the common man to understand. It is, some have said, "spiritually discerned." By this they mean that they are "spiritual" and that you cannot understand it without their help. Occasionally, they cite 2 Peter 1:20, 21, as proof that the Bible is of *"no private interpretation."* But, why cite that text? Do they expect you and me to understand that it says that the "clergy" is to interpret the Bible for us? If so, down goes their argument, for they provide a passage which, they say, we can understand and interpret! If we are expected to read the text and understand that it teaches that the Bible is of *"no private interpretation,"* they have just ruined their argument, for they show us a passage and expect us to interpret and understand it correctly!

However, let us simply turn to some passages which refute the clergy claim and also show that their understanding and discernment of 2 Peter 1:20, 21, is false.

*"How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word .... Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin*

*against You"* (Psa. 119:9, 11). Why encourage a "young man" to turn and take heed to the word of God if he cannot "discern" it?

*"These were more fair minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men"* (Acts 17:11, 12). In this text, unbelievers *"searched the Scriptures"* and were able to learn and believe the truth. They had no special help of the clergy, or of a priest. Thus, they do greatly err who misuse 2 Peter 1:20, 21, for if their interpretation and understanding of that passage were correct, Acts 17:11, 12, would not be possible.

*"But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"* (2 Tim. 3:14, 15). Timothy evidently had been taught by his mother and grandmother (2 Tim. 1:5). Thus, *"from childhood"* he had *"known the Holy Scriptures."* How is that possible if a special priestly class is the only way we can know and believe the truth?

*"(W)hen you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ"* (Eph. 3:4). Obviously, Paul did not think the Ephesians needed men in clerical robes to interpret his writings for them. He said they could *"read"* and *"understand."* Did he tell the truth?

Yes, there will be things *"hard to be understood"* (2 Pet. 3:16). Note, though, that it was an apostle himself who said there are some things *"hard to be understood!"* The very one (the apostle Peter) whom some exalt as the ultimate "official interpreter" said there were things even he had difficulty understanding (cf. Peter's failure to understand the full import of his own words in Acts 2:21, 39; 10:14-29)!

Since those priests and pastors who allegedly are "in the know" have not understood that the Bible teaches that we can read and understand the truth, why should we trust their "interpretations" of other matters? Why not, like the Bereans, simply read and study the Bible for ourselves (Acts 17:11)?

***"But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"***

***1 John 3:17***