

Trends

"Abortion is the greatest deception that has plagued the black church since Lucifer himself. Pro-Choice? This carefully devised phrase was contrived to provoke our inward zeal for freedom and the civil right to make choices freely. I am all for freedom of choice, except when it comes at the expense of innocent lives. Women who have been deceived into wrong choices and children who were never given any choice at all are victims of pro-choice America.

—via Clenard H. Childress, Jr; BlackGenocide.org

2 Kings 24:3-4: "3 Surely at the commandment of the LORD this came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, 4 and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon."

Sentence Sermons

"We cannot diminish the value of one category of human life - the unborn - without diminishing the value of all human life."

—Ronald Reagan

News & Notes

Please pray for the Wallace family. They continue to miss our services (Heb. 10:24-25). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16)

Please keep sister Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. She's an encouragement to all!

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to encourage them!

Pray for the African appeal for funds to buy Bibles, songbooks and support faithful preachers' travel expense. Donate if you're able! 1 Jn. 3:17

Please pray for Marcia Wilson, Wilma's daughter. She recently had gall bladder surgery. Also, please pray for Lana May. She is struggling with kidney stones.

Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?!

Anyone need prayers? Let us know so we can announce it and post it.

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Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

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

John 6:68



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"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble"

Don Bunting

James raises a question in chapter 4: Where do all of your troubles come from? While my typical response is to blame everything and everybody around me, James offers the real answer: "Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures" (James 4:3-4). Most of our troubles are the result of self-centered choices in a never-ending effort to satisfy our personal desires. I think that if I can get what I want, do what I want, be what I want and enjoy what I want, then I will be happy, satisfied, content and at peace with the world. NOT TRUE! Ironically, to seek God and His will is most satisfying. Yielding to God's will offers peace and contentment. If you have tried doing things your way, what has that brought to your life? Maybe it's time to try doing things God's way. "But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'" (James 4:6).

Psalm 108

Craig Thomas

In this psalm, David praises God for giving him the assurance of victory over his enemies. He begins by pledging that his "heart is steadfast" (v. 1) as he sings praises to God for His "mercy" (v. 4), "truth" (v. 4), and deliverance/salvation (v. 6). David rejoices as he recognizes that only God can give him the victory because "the help of man is useless" (vv. 10-13).

This is such an important lesson for us to learn as we daily battle Satan and sin. We can only gain the victory over sin through Jesus Christ. The apostle John makes this keen observation in 1 John 5:4-5:

"4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

The problem arises in that our faith is not always what it should be. It is reminiscent of the children of Israel when they left Egypt. As they approached the Red

Sea, they were positive, if not downright gung-ho. They were giddy with excitement at the promise of freedom. The text says, *“the children of Israel went out with boldness”* (Ex. 14:8). However, when they turned and saw the Egyptians pursuing them, they sang a totally different tune! (Ex. 14:10):

“¹⁰ And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD.”

Then they turned on Moses and accused him (and by extension, the LORD!) of taking them *“away to die in the wilderness”* (Ex. 14:11). They moaned and groaned about how good life was in Egypt (Ex. 14:12), when nothing could have been further from the truth!

We often do the same thing. Living the Christian life requires us to *“put to death the deeds of the body”* (Rom. 8:13). Paul even goes so far as to describe this as a crucifixion (Gal. 5:24). Why? It is extremely painful to leave our old life behind. It is the most painful thing we will ever do! When Christ calls on us to live for Him it is easy to long for the “good ole days” when we lived for self. That’s what the Israelites were doing as the Egyptians bore down upon them. They forgot the former hardship of Egypt; they forgot the Egyptians *“made their lives bitter with hard bondage”* (Ex. 1:14; KJV). We forget the same truth about our own lives and bad habits before we became a Christian. To return there is not the answer! We view it with delight and longing when, in fact, it is a return to bitterness and *“hard bondage.”*

When temptations press in upon us, we must resist going back to our own personal Egypt. The response of the LORD to the Israelites on the shore of the Red Sea is very instructive. Moses tried to reassure them in Exodus 14:13-14:

“¹³ And Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.”

That sounds like good advice to me. However, quite amazingly, the LORD didn’t think so! Instead *“the LORD said to Moses, ‘Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward!’”* Don’t stand there wringing your hands and talking about it. It’s time to act! It’s time to press forward! It’s time to be positive! It’s time to do the right thing!

There is an old saying that goes, “There’s a time to fish and a there’s a time to cut bait.” At the Red Sea, the time for cutting bait was past! Similarly, when we are tempted to go back to our old lives of sin, sorrow, bondage, and misery we shouldn’t look back on it with fondness. We need to recognize and remember how miserable it was. Instead we must act! We must *“go forward”*! We must not look back on our own personal Egypt with longing eyes, but *“press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus”* (Phil. 3:14). Going back to Egypt should never be an option!

“But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.” (Rom. 13:14)

Psalm 62

Craig Thomas

In this Psalm David repeats a common thread of God being his “rock” (v. 2), “defense” (v. 2), and “strength” (v. 7). God is the only one on which we can place our total trust for He alone is completely reliable.

David also criticizes his enemies and notice the serious charge he makes against them (v. 4):

*“⁴ They delight in lies;
They bless with their mouth,
But they curse inwardly.”*

As I have said on more than one occasion, I hate politics. However, I am a lover of truth. The TV and internet are filled with politicians and celebrities that pour forth lie after lie. Ever since President Trump was elected a large segment of our society; the media, political left, Democrat Party, RINOs, etc., have been on a mission to drive him from office. I believe the President is a “big boy” and more than capable of defending himself. However, I hate the lies of so many of his detractors. I particularly remember the Speaker of the House of Representatives claiming she was “praying for the President” as she oversaw the impeachment fiasco. Indeed, *“They delight in lies; They bless with their mouth, But they curse inwardly.”* People of her ilk claim great religiosity while they spew forth venom, support and promote the shedding of innocent blood (i.e., abortion), and hate their political enemies to the point they want them totally defeated and destroyed. David so aptly describes such people (v. 9):

*“⁹ Surely men of low degree are a vapor,
Men of high degree are a lie;
If they are weighed on the scales,
They are altogether lighter than vapor.”*

I was thinking just yesterday of all the fantastic things our nation could accomplish if folks would just cooperate with one another. If we would put aside political, racial and class differences and had egos not bent on a “power trip” and the total vanquishing of the “other side of the aisle.” Then I realized that such a day will come; it just won’t be here in this life (2 Pet. 3:13):

“¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (KJV)

Oh, how I long for that day! Don’t you? To get there let us (v. 8):

*“⁸ Trust in Him at all times, you people;
Pour out your heart before Him;
God is a refuge for us.”*