

**SERMONS THIS SUNDAY:**

AM: T.J. Bolen—The defeat of sin

PM: T.J. Bolen—Ecclesiastes 6

JOIN US IN  
PRACTICING  
NEW TESTAMENT  
CHRISTIANITY  
TODAY,  
COME SEE!

“I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it:  
for thou hast a little strength,  
and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.” - Revelation 3:8

**Wake up! Strengthen the things that remain!**

*A Warm Welcome awaits you at all our services. Come see!*

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# WEST COLUMBIA CHURCH OF CHRIST

“every disciple that is perfect shall be as his master.” Luke 6:40b

## PREPARE FOR SIN

It seems impossible to prepare for every possible disaster anyone can think of. Many items and methods of natural disaster preparation are the same regardless of the type of disaster. Both, a hurricane and a tornado can damage the water supply and shut down power for a period of time. Despite the differences in the two the preparation for both would be very similar. At the very least you would want a nice reserve of food where storage and cooking do not require electricity, and you'll want to have plenty of water either stored up or perhaps have a purification system. But would being well prepared for a storm necessarily mean you would be well prepared for complete societal anarchy? The food and water would certainly be useful, but you'll probably need a few more items crucial for survival.

Even though it is not possible to prepare for every single potential problem and disaster in life some preparation is always better than no preparation leaving you only with the ability to react. Reacting to dangerous situations usually seems to be the preference for most people. However reacting to a problem often amounts to coming up with a preventative measure after the consequences of said problem are already wreaking havoc. Prevention is of course useless in that case as it is impossible to prevent the past.

Many in the church seem to live as if God has done nothing to prepare people for the problems of sin. Instead of putting forth the effort to keep sin away, more time is spent trying to clean up its mess. Knowing we will fall victim to sin at times does not alleviate the need to guard against sin. If preparation was not vital the U.S. military would consist only of the National Guard to be called upon in crisis mode, no protective forces would be needed. In athletics defense would never be necessary in competition because “the other team is going to score anyhow.” The apostles Paul and Peter emphasized the importance of guarding against sin: “Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith (1 Cor. 16:13a); “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour (1 Pet 5:8). Once you have been eaten its rather difficult to walk around alertly. Thus, we look beforehand for the danger of sin. Prepare for sin, don't merely react to it.

- T.J. Bolen, Gospel preacher, West Columbia South Carolina

**Wake up! Strengthen the things that remain!**

## **“PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER” - James 5:16**

**REMEMBER IN PRAYER:** *Jan Kelleher, Margaret Herring, Stephanie Rigney, Dorothy Gray and family, Pat Joyner, Gwen Pittman, Anna Porter, also Richard Ramkinson. Burton.*

- **Margaret Herring** has started radiation treatments and continues chemotherapy.
- Remember: **Janet Boyd** tending her mother, **Eileen Lester**; **Gwen Pittman** not feeling well but is in her old room **104** and **Anna Porter** who is very weak.
- The **Gambles** request prayer for **Grady Windham** recovering from a stroke and the **Parks** request prayers for the **Silber** family whose son is in ICU
- **Pray for these**, send them a card, show them you love them.
- **Be thankful that God hears our prayers and answers!** (1 John 5:15)

**"For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow."** - Phillipians 2:27

## **“AND THEY CONTINUED STEADFASTLY” - Acts 2:42**

- **First Sunday Luncheon**, All are invited to share a meal. Men's meeting following.
- **Bible study, Saturdays, 3pm, informal, bring friends and your Bible questions.**
- The **BULLETIN** format has changed a little to conform to postal regulations for mailing. We had to add sealing tabs on the ends. They're a nuisance, but required.

**“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.”** - Revelation 3:4

## **When Does God Mean What He Says?**

From what we are hearing in some circles, the answer would be: "Whenever the subject of grace enters the picture."

You probably thought that you have to be baptized in order to be saved, since that is what the Son of God said, along with the inspired writers who wrote the Bible (**Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21**). But now we are being told that to teach the essentiality of baptism for salvation is to be legalistic even though the Bible teaches it.

You also probably thought that repentance is necessary for salvation, since that is what Christ taught (**Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31**). But supposedly only self-righteous people now teach that, because grace covers all our mistakes.

Perhaps you also thought that faith is absolutely demanded of mankind in order to be saved (**John 8:24; Heb. 11:6**), but even faith is a work (**John 6:29**), and that would bring us back to the legalistic charge being hurled once again! However, since the works that God demands of us are not the meritorious works of men, then we are still obligated to work the works of God.

No, we cannot earn our salvation, but doing what God says is not earning salvation. It is loving the Lord (**John 14:16; Luke 6:46**). Since Paul taught that we are not to **"continue in sin, that grace may abound?"** (**Rom. 6:1-2**), we better just keep on trying to obey God, truly relying upon the grace of God, instead of accepting man's perverted version of a cheap grace that makes no demands (**Titus 2:11-12**). Cheap grace ultimately leads to universalism!

- **Wayne Price**, Evangelist, McCloud Church of Christ, Oklahoma

## **BIBLE FAITH**

**"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen."** (**Heb. 11:1**). Faith is belief, confidence, or trust in some person, fact, or thing. Jesus used the words "faith" and "belief" interchangeably — **"Be ye not faithless, but believing"** (**John 20:27**). All faith is based upon testimony of evidence — no evidence, no faith.

Because of His great love wherewith He loved us, God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that **"whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life"** (**John 3:16**). Jesus Himself emphatically says, **"Except ye believe that I am he ( i.e., the Christ, OH) ye shall die in your sins"** (**John 8:24**). But God has not required that men believe that Jesus is the Christ without ample evidence to convince them. John says the things recorded in the gospel **"are written that ye might believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing ye might have life in his name"** (**John 20:30-31**).

Today, faith in Christ comes by the evidence recorded in the New Testament — **"So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God"** (**Rom. 10:17**.) Since God has provided ample evidence to produce faith, men are required to believe that Jesus is the Christ and submit to His will, and will be condemned if they do not. **"He that believeth not shall be damned"** (**Mk. 16:16**). For this reason, the gospel is to be **"made known in every nation for the obedience of faith"** (**Rom. 16:25-26**). Jesus said, **"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"** (**Mk. 16:15-16**).

Not only is faith dependent upon evidence for its existence, but also for its essence, character, and content. Faith is conditioned by its evidence and partakes of the essence of that testimony. If the evidence is fantastic, grotesque, or false, so will be the faith it produces. If the evidence is true, so will be the faith it produces. Untrue testimony, baseless faith; human testimony, human faith; divine testimony, divine faith. Like evidence, like faith.

Men speak of kinds of faith, but such a distinction is not found in the Bible, and science knows of no separate and distinct kinds of faith. The Bible speaks of degrees of faith — "great faith," "weak faith," "dead faith," etc., but kinds of faith like "historic faith," "saving faith," etc are not spoken of.

It is the thing believed that determines whether we shall be saved. Faith in a lie will not save a man. Faith in some man-made doctrine will not save, though that faith may as firm as any man's belief in the truth. **"If Christ be not raised, then your faith is vain,"** (**1Cor. 15:17**) Paul says. Hence it is essential that the truth be preached. For this cause, Paul warns against false teachers, pronouncing a curse upon anyone, man or angel, who preaches **"any gospel other than that which we [Apostles, OH] preached"** (**Gal. 1:8-9**). It is not faith in just any sort of gospel that will save, but faith in the true and unadulterated gospel of Christ. It makes all the difference in the world what men believe.

Salvation is not dependent upon a faith, but upon the faith. For that reason, Jude exhorts Christians to **"earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints"** (**Jude 3**).

- **Olan Hicks**, 1907 - 1963, Gospel preacher, teacher