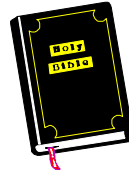


WEST COLUMBIA CHURCH OF CHRIST



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

GIVE ME A CHANCE

Have you ever asked the Lord to open a door for you? To give you a chance to serve him? It's a good thing to pray for. In Matthew 7:7 the Lord promised us "**Knock, and it shall be opened unto you**".

How many of us, though, **believe** that promise? How many of us **keep** asking, and asking, and asking, but we never seem to get the chance we're **looking** for? Maybe that's the problem—we're not **seeing** the chances or opportunities to do good the Lord is giving us. Maybe we're being too picky or choosy: "Not that one Lord, I want a **really** good work to do!"

Let's remember that it is the **Lord's work** we're about, not ours. It's He who gives us the opportunities we have. It's He that gives the increase (1 Cor 3:6, 2 Tim 2:25). Let's trust Him, that He'll give us what we need, because He **has**—His Word, the gospel! Let's take advantage then of the opportunities we have, no matter how small they might seem to us. Let's open our eyes and hearts to them:

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." - Luke 16:10

Maybe when we want to do some great thing, what we're **really** wanting is to say: "Look what **I** did." **We** want the recognition for the deed; from people instead of from God. But the real power and strength we have can only come from God:

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"—Philp 4:13

He wants us to know this and **act** like we know it. He'll be pleased with us if we do—if we trust in His power and strength, just as He was pleased with the church in Philadelphia. Look at what the Lord praised about them:

"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

They didn't **deny** the name of Christ by seeking to please themselves and trusting in their own power or wisdom. They humbly **did** what the Lord put in front of them, trusting in Him and His word - looking to please God and not themselves. Let's do the same, so our Lord will say the same—of **us**.

- **Ed Kelleher**, West Columbia church of Christ, South Carolina

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THE BULLETIN—VOLUME 39, NUMBER 47 December 1, 2013

SERMONS THIS SUNDAY:

AM: T J BOLEN—Using Scripture as Intended.

PM: T J BOLEN—1 Thess. 2:1-12

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable,
always abounding in the work of the Lord,
forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” - 1 Corinthians 15:58

KEEP YOUR HEART CLEAN IN 2013

A Warm Welcome awaits you at all our services. Come see!
www.WestColumbiaChurchOfChrist.org

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“PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER” - James 5:16

REMEMBER IN PRAYER: Anna Porter, Judy Walker, Miles Johnson, Richard Ramkinson, Wilson Burton.

- We rejoice with the **Gamble** family, as **Jones’** sister, **Margaret** received a donor kidney last week and is doing well after surgery. Pray it works well for her.
- We rejoice also that **Daniel Beasley** wants to be identified with the congregation here at West Columbia. He is a college friend of TJ’s and is working in Lexington. His wife and 3 children plan on moving here at the end of the school year.
- Remember those traveling, including **Katie Kennedy** in Toronto. **Betty Mathis** is out of the hospital after a long stay. Remember to thank God on their safe return.
- Remember our many sick who want to be with us, but are physically hindered: **Gwen Pittman, Anna Porter, Judy Walker.** And **Margaret Herring** who fell last week, got some scrapes and banged up her bad knee. Pray for all these.

“I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” - 1 Timothy 2:8

“AND THEY CONTINUED STEADFASTLY” - Acts 2:42

- **First Sunday**, all invited to stay for luncheon provided by church members; men’s meeting afterwards.
- **Ladies** of the Young Adult class will be encouraging the younger ones by helping them make some crafts for our shut-ins. All are invited to participate at the building Sat Dec 14.
- **YOUNG ADULT** class Sundays, 10am in the upstairs classroom.
- Check bulletin board for those to whom it would be **especially** good to **send cards!**
- Get your **Bible questions answered** Saturdays at 3pm at the building.
- Sermons are available on CD and soon **DVD!** See **Jones Gamble** or **Ken Parks.**
- **Bible Bowl** Feb 22, 2014—Book is 2 Samuel, the New King James version.

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” - Philippians 1:6

Sunday AM Sermon Outline—TJ Bolen

It's always incumbent upon the church to use the scriptures as the scriptures are intended. This lesson looks at some common examples of misapplying the scriptures even when what we intend to apply is a correct thought. But a misapplication is a misapplication, and we must always respect the text. When we do, we will apply it as God intended.

1. Complete removal from context, Matthew 18:20.
2. Not getting the whole picture, Ephesians 5:19 & Colossians 3:16.
3. Reading ideas into the text, Luke 18:10.
4. Well intended but still off, Philippians 4:13.
5. Applying the general before applying the specific, James 4:17.

THANK GOD

How do you thank someone for doing something for you? Hopefully you do; no one likes those who are ungrateful. But how do we sincerely thank someone? You might shake their hand, or give them a kiss as you tell them so, or you might write them a note. But the best way is to show them you’re thankful for what you’ve received, by using what they’ve given you. “Thanks for those slippers, I wear them all the time!” Thank a cook by eating their food with gusto. Thank someone who’s given you a break by taking advantage of it. Actions speak louder than words.

God hasn’t left us hanging in regards to this either. In **1 Peter 1:3** God said He would give us **“all things that pertain unto life and godliness”**. He has done so. And He has given us a way we can show Him we are thankful for the precious gift of hope, peace and life He has given us through His Son:

“And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” - 1 Peter 4:8-10

The gifts (manifold grace) we have received, God wants us to use by giving them to others. As good stewards He doesn’t want us to lock up and guard what we’ve received, instead He wants us to minister (give) the same to others. He tells us this is what He wants: **“freely ye have received, freely give” - Matthew 10:8**

God gave us His word, to keep us from sin, so we might live and be with Him. Are we thankful for that? Well then show Him—study it, use it! Tell others. This little snippet of scripture tells us **what** we should do (walk, even as He walked) and a good reason **why** (he is the propitiation).

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” - 1 John 2:1-6

God has called out to us through the Gospel whereby we can be His children! Are we thankful for this? If so, we’ll be showing him by using and growing in those spiritual qualities he wants of us: Charity, meekness, obedience, mercy, zeal, justice, long-suffering, purity, etc.

This is what He has provided the church for, and he’s given us the yardstick against which we’ll all be measured. Thank God by using what He has given to grow to that complete man God wants us to be. The rest will follow.

“unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:” - Ephesians 4:13

- Ed Kelleher, West Columbia church of Christ, South Carolina