

4th & Stewart church of Christ

"...upon this rock I will build my church;
and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
~ Matthew 16:18



April 16, 2017

Contact Us:

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Brownwood, TX 76801
325-646-7102
www.4thstreetcoc.org
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Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study9:45 AM
Worship10:40 AM
Care, Inc. Service 2:30 PM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class.10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... Don Smith

James Thomas

Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children
Gospel Broadcast Network
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)
House to House, Heart to Heart
Mission Printing
Rohan Jones, Africa
The Truth in Love
World Bible School

Let us know if you want to study
the Bible to know more about
Christ and His Church.

Ezekiel's Response to the Culture War of His Day

Ezekiel 16 is a treasure house of nuggets of truth that Americans need to heed, ten of which will be addressed in this article. **First**, only divine revelation can enable a man to "know" his sin (vs. 2). Only by knowing God can a man know his sin. The Bible commences with God: "In the beginning God" (Genesis 1:1). It ends with God: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (Revelation 22:21). In between these book-ends of divine truth is a library of sixty-six books that paint portraits of the nature of God, from whom all spiritual truths flow. Three words sum up the book of Isaiah and the whole of God's revelation to man: "Behold your God" (Isaiah 40:9). When Isaiah beheld God in all of His glory, majesty and holiness, he saw the scope of his sin as never before (Isaiah 6:1-5).

Adam and Eve lost sight of the God they both saw and knew and plunged themselves and the world into darkness. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). The power of fleshly lust blinded the spiritual eyes of the righteous descendants of Seth to the beauty of God's holiness as they gazed with delight upon the carnal daughters of Cain's descendants and "they took them wives of all which they chose" (Genesis 6:2), acts of sin that produced a world of people void of a single righteous thought and opened the door to the global Flood. The first generation from Egypt never saw the God that Isaiah saw, and their lives testified to their spiritual sightlessness. God informed Samuel that from Egypt onward "they have forsaken me, and served other gods" (1 Samuel 8:8). They wanted a God of power that could liberate them from Egypt but not a God of holiness, justice, and wrath Whose very nature demanded, "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16), and condemned and punished sin.

The idols that Israel brought out of Egypt were added to and multiplied, and they plagued the nation for most of its national life. Solomon allowed his love for God to be supplanted by his love for "many strange women" (1 Kings 11:1), and "his wives turned away his heart after other gods" (1 Kings 11:4). The northern kingdom inaugurated its national existence with roots in idolatry as Jeroboam "made two calves of gold, and said unto them, 'It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt'" (1 Kings 12:28). Israel became so enamored with lifeless pieces of wood and stone that God said, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone" (Hosea 4:17), because His mercy upon them was gone (Hosea 1:6), He was no longer their God (Hosea 1:9), and He would "cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel" (Hosea 1:4). Except for a minute remnant, they lived their national life sightless of the God that Isaiah saw. They were powerless to know their sin because they rejected God's revelation of Himself through the material Universe, the law, the prophets, and confirming miracles. God destroyed them in Assyrian captivity (2 Kings 17:21-23).

Under Rehoboam's rule, the nation of Judah initiated their national life with idolatry as they "built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree" (1 Kings 14:23). With a few exceptions, they followed king after king who led them in idol worship and all of its confederate sins. God told Isaiah that except for a "very small remnant" (Isaiah 1:9), Judah would never be able to see their sin because they refused to see Him (Isaiah 6:5-12). This very chapter is permeated with God's condemnation

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"Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? ... Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" **Matt. 15:3-9**



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of Judah's idols and their affiliated sins. Ezekiel's audience in Babylon was led by leaders with "idols in their heart" (14:3), who could not see and know their sin because they could not see the "glory of the Lord" that Ezekiel saw (1:28).

Second, covetousness is idolatry. Paul affirmed this truth in Colossians 3:5. Verse 3 of Ezekiel 16 illustrates it. Why does God point to Canaan as the place of Israel's national birth? Not because they were actually born there, but because Israel coveted the gods of Canaan and the sins of the flesh that idol worship allowed. This covetous spirit inhered in Israel's request for a king so they could "be like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:20). God said, "they have rejected Me that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7). This rebellious spirit was not something new in the hearts of Israel. It was Samuel's appointment of his wicked sons as judges that opened the door for Israel to request a more formal system of government that would remove every vestige of their national distinctiveness and allow them total kinship with the heathen nations of the world.

Israel had already been living like pagans for over three centuries. When Joshua and those who served him died, "there arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord" (Judges 2:10). They did not know the Lord because they did not want to know the Lord. They were like the people of Judah, "for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 9:3). Israel lived among the heathens in Canaan, intermarried with them, and adopted their gods as their own (Judges 3:5-7). They coveted the heathenish lifestyle that idolatry licensed. They loved their idols because they loved the "pleasures of sin" (Hebrews 11:25) that they vouchsafed to them. They "ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way" and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 2:19; 21:25).

Covetousness lusts, longs, yearns, and desires. It is selfishness in its purest form. It is determined to have its way regardless of the consequences. Eve desired self-rule to the ruin of her life in Eden (Genesis 3:5-6). The cities of the plain lusted for sexual sin to their utter destruction (Genesis 19). Achan "coveted" gold, silver, and a garment to the subversion of himself and his family (Joshua 7:21). David yearned for his neighbor's wife to the detriment of his spiritual life, family, and stature in Israel and the world (2 Samuel 11-12). Amnon

longed for his brother's wife and paid for his covetousness with his life (2 Samuel 13). Solomon coveted "strange women" and strange gods (1 Kings 11:1,4-8), to his personal ruin and the ruin of Israel. A thief (John 12:6) and a traitor (John 18:2) were the products of Judas' covetous spirit. Herod's desire for personal acclaim led to his death on a bed of agony (Acts 12:21-23). Demas yearned for worldly pleasure (2 Timothy 4:10), Diotrephes for preeminence (3 John 9), and Israel for the gods of Canaan to the spiritual devastation of each.

Third, Israel misread God's love, grace, and goodness. The nation is depicted as a new born infant, discarded and left to die, floundering in the blood of its birth, and void of human pity (16:4-5). God washed, cleaned, clothed, fed, loved, protected, preserved, and blessed Israel to her national maturity. Israel viewed God's work as merit because they were fleshly descendants of Abraham and special in their own eyes. God denied repetitively their right to specialty and feelings of superiority to all other nations, but they refused to believe it. God affirmed that His spiritual blessings through Abraham embraced "all families of the earth" (Genesis 12:3), but Israel could see only themselves as recipients of God's love and goodness. Three times in three verses (Deuteronomy 9:4-6), God asserted that they did not deserve the land of Canaan, and then reminded them that from Egypt to that moment, "ye have been rebellious against the Lord" (Deuteronomy 9:7). But nothing that God said or did in acts of judgment upon them could shake their feelings of national peerlessness.

It was God's intention to reach Calvary with the seed of woman and Abraham (Genesis 3:15; 12:3). This was a work of pure love, grace, and goodness, and national Israel fought God every step of the way. They loathed the law of God and loved their idols. They thought they could sin with impunity (Jeremiah 7:8-10). The Old Testament closes with Israel's corrupt priests' horrendous accusation of God's delighting in evildoers, robbing God of tithes and offerings, and affirming the vanity of serving God (Malachi 1-3). The New Testament opens with John the Baptist in spiritual combat with Pharisees and Sadducees yet clinging to Abraham as their spiritual savior (Matthew 3:7-9). Having pointed to the truth that makes man free, Jesus encountered this Jewish proclivity as some answered, "We be Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to any man" (John 8:33). It took miraculous intervention

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Television

The Truth In Love (Robert Dodson)

Sunday @ 7:00am on KTAB

In Search of the Lord's Way (Phil Sanders)

Sunday @ 7:30am on KTAB

Life In The Light (Chris McCurley)

Sunday @ 10:30am on KTAB

Radio

Preaching the Word (Michael Light)

Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3

Internet

TheGospelRadioNetwork.org

Gospel Broadcasting Network (Gbnv.org)

God's Plan for Redeeming Man

Hear Learn the saving message of Christ's sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17).

Believe Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24)

Confess Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33)

Repent of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5)

Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being **baptized** for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)

Live faithfully (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)

Bible Reading Schedule

Apr. 16 2 Kings 3-5; Matthew 1-2

Apr. 17 2 Kings 6-8; Matthew 3-4

Apr. 18 2 Kings 9-11; Matthew 5-6

Apr. 19 2 Kings 12-14; Matthew 7-8

Apr. 20 2 Kings 15-17; Matthew 9-10

Apr. 21 2 Kings 18-20; Matthew 11-12

Apr. 22 2 Kings 21-23; Matthew 13-14

Apr. 23 2 Kgs 24-25; 1 Chron 1; Mt 15-16

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."



- ◆ Each Sunday night immediately before the evening worship. Last week **36 contacts** were made.

Announcements

- ◆ The date for our **Ladies' Day** this fall has been set—November 4th. Our own Lasha Dennis will be bringing the lessons.
- ◆ **Audio files from our Gospel Meeting** are available to download from the computer in the copy room. Icon on main screen. Will be available online soon.
- ◆ All of our teachers are encouraged to attend the **Teacher's Workshop** at Oldham Lane **April 29th**. Please let Cindy Proud know if you plan to attend.

Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

- ◆ August 8—Summer Youth Series
- ◆ October 15-18—Fall Gospel Meeting w/ Dave Rogers
- ◆ November 4—Ladies' Day w/ Lasha Dennis

Other Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ April 28-29—Heart of Texas Ladies' Retreat (Brady).
- ◆ April 29—Teacher's Workshop @ Oldham Lane (Abilene).
- ◆ April 29—Ladies' Day @ Comanche w/ Cheryl Ginnings. "God's Special People"
- ◆ April 29—Ladies' Day @ Colleyville w/ Erynn Sprouse & Denise Surlles. "Hope: Anchor of the Soul."
- ◆ April 30-May 3—Gospel Meeting @ Gordon w/ Jessie Dickison.
- ◆ May 6—Cherokee Day Open House & Food Drive
- ◆ May 6-11—Focal Point (San Marcos).
- ◆ May 20—Ladies' Day @ Dublin w/ Evelyn Bonner. "Cooking New Creations"
- ◆ June 4-9—Preacher Training Camp (boys, ages 14-18) @ Oldham Lane (Abilene).
- ◆ June 6—Summer Youth Series begins
- ◆ June 25-29—Junior Camp
- ◆ July 9-13—"Shine" camp (girls, incoming 7th-12th grade) @ Oldham Lane (Abilene).
- ◆ July 16-21—Senior Camp
- ◆ August 18-24—Polishing the Pulpit

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(Acts 10) to convince Peter that what God said in Genesis 12:3, what Jesus said in John 3:16, and what Peter said in Acts 2:39 was the truth. Prior to embracing Christ and the Gospel, Paul considered his Jewishness as "gain" (Philippians 3:7). To this present hour, the love, grace, and goodness of God is sifted in the sieve of human reasoning.

Fourth, misplaced trust leads to spiritual ruin. "But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot" (vs. 15). Improper entities of trust assume many and diverse forms and all lead to spiritual decay. Moses warned Israel about displacing God with fortified walls as objects of their trust (Deuteronomy 28:32). Israel trusted in oppression and perverseness (Isaiah 30:12), military aid from Egypt (Isaiah 31:1), idols (Isaiah 42:17), wickedness (Isaiah 47:10), vanity (Isaiah 59:4), lying words (Jeremiah 7:8), the temple (Jeremiah 7:14), and in their own ways and mighty men (Hosea 10:13). God placed a curse upon "the man that trusted in man" (Jeremiah 17:5) and likened him to a shrub in the desert barely cleaving to life and without hope for betterment (Jeremiah 17:6). Paul warned about trusting in "uncertain riches" (1 Timothy 6:17).

Biblical faith involves trust and obedience. The Word of God is the basis of faith (Romans 10:17), and the faith that saves is the faith that obeys God. Jesus described faith as a work (John 6:28-29), and Paul spoke of the "work of faith" (1 Thessalonians 1:3) and the "obedience of faith" (Romans 16:26), because faith is active in its submission to the will of God. James said, "I will show thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18). The object of faith's trust is God, not the works of righteousness that faith produces. The Pharisee was rejected because he trusted in himself and his own works instead of God (Luke 18:9-14). **Misplaced trust negates Biblical faith.**

(To be continued next week)

Frank Chesser (apologeticspress.org)

Celebrate

"Rejoice with those who rejoice..." (Romans 12:15)

April Birthdays: Lasha Dennis (6), Sarah Rudloff (6), Ginger King (8), Jimmie Claborn (9), Kristi Maninger (9), Becky Smith (9), Darlene Smith (10), Caroline Dennis (30).

April Anniversaries: John & Tina Barnum (8).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Apr. 2, 2017	Apr. 9, 2017
Bible Class	44	40
AM Worship	62	60
PM Worship	44	45
Wednesday PM	40	43
Contribution	\$1,946	\$2,005

Privileged To Serve

"...be ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1)

		This Week: 4/16/17	Next Week: 4/23/17		
Sunday AM:		Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	April 2017 Make Announcements: Ken Maninger Prepare Communion: Maninger Family Clean Building: Mike & Patti Bannister Lisa Greer May 2017 Make Announcements: Gene Bannister Prepare Communion: Tom & Carol Wilcox Clean Building: John Barnum Family	
Greeters	John & Tina Barnum	Tom & Carol Wilcox			
Opening Prayer	James Fuller	Don Smith			
Communion	James Thomas*, Rafe Smith Allen Bland, John Barnum	Joe Dennis*, Caleb Dennis Ken Maninger, Chase Churchwell			
Closing Prayer	Ken Maninger	Allen Griffith			
Attendance Cards	Aaron Smith	Ian Barnum			
Sunday PM:		Song Leader: Joe Dennis	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox		
Opening Prayer	Don Smith	Gene Bannister			
Scripture Reading	Allen Griffith	John Barnum			
Communion	James Thomas	Joe Dennis			
Closing Prayer	Gene Bannister	James Fuller			
Wednesday Devotionals:	April 19 Don Smith	April 26 Joe Dennis	May 3 Prayer Night	May 10 Rafe Smith	

Search the Scriptures

Be like the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

Studies for the week of April 16, 2017

Sunday Class **Romans 5:15ff**
 Wed. Class **After Baptism, Then What?**

The Danger of Traditions – Matthew 15:1-9

- I. **The Meaning of Tradition.**
 - A. **The Word Itself** – *paradosis* – means "giving over" or "handing down."
 - B. **As Understood by The Jews.**
 1. It was often applied to the oral teachings of the elders.
 2. These traditions were often divided into three classes:
 - a. Oral laws supposedly given by Moses in addition to the written laws.
 - b. Decisions of judges which became precedents in judicial matters.
 - c. Interpretations of rabbis held in reverence along with the OT Scripture.
 - C. **As Understood by Roman and Greek Catholics.**
 1. What they consider "tradition" is what they believe to be the teachings:
 - a. Of Jesus or the apostles, persevered orally rather than through writing.
 - b. Of various councils which have left various decrees.
 - c. Of various church leaders considered to be inspired.
 2. One is expected to take their word that these were truly from God.
 - D. **As Found in The Scriptures.**
 1. The word "tradition" as such is not found in the OT.
 2. It is found 13x in the NT.
 - a. 3x it refers to "apostolic teaching."
 - b. 10x it refers to "the tradition of the elders" or "the traditions of men."
 3. Jesus did not feel bound to abide by "the traditions of the elders."
- II. **The Danger of Traditions of Men.**
 - A. **Traditions Can Make Void the Word of God.**
 1. Jesus gave the example of honoring one's parents (15:3-6).
 2. There are traditions of men today with similar affect (sprinkling, etc).
 3. One is actually rejecting the command of God! (Mk. 7:8-9)
 - B. **Traditions Can Lead to Vain Worship.**
 1. When traditions are taught on the same level as the commands of God (9).
 2. Such worship may appear to be impressive – actually "empty, worthless."
 - C. **Traditions Can Lead to Hypocritical Worship.**
 1. Traditions of men tend toward ritualism.
 2. Worship without the heart (mind) of man is hypocritical worship! (7-8)

1st Timothy – Paul's Charge to Timothy (1:1-11)

- I. **Greeting (1-2).**
 - A. Paul introduced himself as "an apostle of Jesus Christ" – providing written authority for Timothy to do the things Paul charged him to do in this epistle.
 - B. Paul referred to Timothy as his, "true son in the faith" ["my true child in faith" – ASV].
 - C. Paul greeted Timothy with a beautiful blessing – "Grace, mercy, and peace".
 - II. **Paul's Past Charge to Timothy (3-4).**
 - A. Paul told Timothy to "remain in Ephesus that you may charge some."
 1. "That they teach no other doctrine."
 2. "Nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies."
 - B. These things caused "disputes" [contention] "rather than godly edification".
 - III. **The Purpose of the Charge (5-7).**
 - A. Paul pointed out that "the purpose of this commandment is love [agape]".
 1. Three sources: "pure heart", "good conscience" and "sincere faith".
 2. Some had "strayed" from these.
 - a. They "turned aside to idle talk".
 - b. They "desir[ed] to be teachers of the law" without "understanding".
 - B. Again, we see the importance of teaching the one true, sound doctrine and not "straying" from that doctrine.
 - IV. **Proper Use of the Law (8-11).**
 - A. Paul said that law was good "if one uses it lawfully" (properly).
 - B. Next, Paul declared "that the Law was not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate", i.e., for disobedient people.
 1. One of the primary purposes of the Law was to define sin.
 2. Thus, one of the major goals of the Law was to reduce crime and sin.
 - a. To reduce sins by disobedient people by placing restraints on them.
 - b. Righteous people exerted efforts to restrain themselves!
 - C. Examples of disobedient people – "ungodly...sinners...unholy...profane...murderers of fathers and mothers...manslayers...fornicators...sodomites...kidnappers...liars...perjurers...any other thing contrary to sound doctrine".
 - D. Paul further identified "sound doctrine" as that which is "according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God".
 - E. God had committed that glorious Gospel to Paul's trust.
- We will do well to take Paul's charge to Timothy as a charge to ourselves as well.