

**New Caney
Church of Christ**

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Assembly Times

Sundays
Bible Class 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Wednesdays
Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

***Retaining The Standard
Of Sound Doctrine***

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Know Your Bible: Answers

1. Harps (Revelation 14:2-3)
2. David's harp playing (1 Samuel 16:23)
3. Trumpets (2 Chron. 5:11-14)
4. Elisha (2 Kings 3:15-16)

This Week's Assignments & Events

Sunday Worship

Greeter: Gary Tuttle
Announcements: John Van Baale
Encouragement Talk: Sandon Spyker
Opening Prayer: Kyle Crain
Scripture Reading: Eddie Bowen
Luke 5:1-11
Song Leader: Kevin Buckner
Table Talk: Arturo Orozco
Contribution: Billy Lovell
Helper: Corwin Richardson
Fruit of Vine: John Franks
Helper: Lester MAbry
Helper: Verlin Wilson
Closing Prayer: Ronnie Ramsey

Sunday Afternoons

Dec 8 3PM Encouragement (cards & calls)
Dec 15 Nothing
Dec. 22 Nothing
Dee 29 Nothing

Wednesday Evening

Song Leader: Corwin Richardson
Speaker: John Franks



Standing Firm

“Take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm”
Ephesians 6:13

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A Conditional Response

We would be appalled at the thought of someone responding to the Lord's invitation by citing their own conditions or exceptions. We often hear this type of reasoning when people are in serious trouble: the man stranded on the desert island saying, “If you will rescue me I will do this for you”. The one who obeys the gospel with the thought, “I will obey you, but you need to provide me with wealth in this life”. We can easily understand in both examples that man is not in a position to bargain with God. It is not our place to put conditions on His gifts.

As Christians we sometimes use this same erroneous reasoning in regard to obeying the clear commands of God. Jesus said, “*Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*” (Matt. 5:44). We try to implement this command, but we often want to tag onto it, “...if they stop persecuting me”. The attitude or response of the other person has nothing to do with our obedience to God's command. God told Jonah to go preach to Nineveh and his obedience had nothing to do with the repentance or rejection of the word of God by the Ninevites.

“If therefore you are presenting your offering before the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering” (Matt. 5:23-24). I loath how many times I've heard individuals say they didn't do this because “it won't do any good”. What does that have to do with obeying the command? If you are seeking to be reconciled, will God be pleased with you? If the brother who has something against you refuses to seek reconciliation, are you then held responsible? Similarly, Matthew 18:15-17 teaches us the proper way to approach a brother or sister who refuses to repent. Because we do not think their attitude is good is no reason for us to ignore the clear teaching of God. “*You who teach another, do you not teach yourself?*” (Rom. 2:21).

When Colossians 4:6 says, “*Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt*”, and Colossians 3:8 says, “*put aside anger, wrath, malice, slander and abusive speech*”, and yet we still speak to other Christians with no regard for their feelings, no concern for how disrespectful, how cruel, how harsh we might sound, how is this obeying the command? By the way some behave, they have placed a condition on the commands that says, “if this person is nice to me”, but the Bible doesn't say that! Christian conduct is not contingent upon the

actions of others. Putting on the mind of Christ is an individual action with the desire to be conformed to the image of His Son. It has nothing to do with anyone else! Why then do we continue to “bite and devour one another” in opposition to such clear teaching?

Application of Scripture is personal. It is not contingent upon what others think. We have no right or ability to add stipulations to God’s commands. Be careful friends, we can easily deceive ourselves into thinking we are righteous when we are not. *“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; Examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you – unless indeed you fail the test?”* (2 Cor. 13:5).
By Charles Willis

Pessimism

by W. R. Jones

Pessimism is defined by Webster as: “the doctrine or opinion that reality is essentially evil. The doctrine that the evils of life overbalance the happiness that it affords. An inclination to put the least favorable construction upon actions and happenings.

One man looks at a beautiful rose bush, and is thrilled by the beauty of God’s creation, and yet, he remains fully aware that the thorns below will do him injury. This man refuses to allow his knowledge of the thorns to blot out the obvious beauty. His balanced attitude will reward him with happiness.

Another man looks at the same beautiful rose bush, and sees nothing but ugly thorns. He refuses to bask in the glory of God’s creation. Fragrance and beauty mean nothing to him for he thinks only of the thorns. This poor fellow is a pessimist, and like can hold nothing but gloom, and despair for him.

It is not at all uncommon to find those who call themselves Christians, totally given to pessimism. It is my observation that their talents are wasted, their energies squandered, they destroy nearly everything they touch, and they are some of the most miserable people on the face of God’s earth. Some feel that a dark and gloomy attitude of pessimism has no effect upon our relationship with the Father. They argue that God pays no attention to such small and insignificant things. I beg to differ! I am convinced that a man’s attitude can cause him to be lost, and I affirm that a pessimistic attitude is out of harmony with the will of God.

Know Your Bible

Instruments

1. What stringed instruments did John hear in his vision of heaven?
2. What caused King Saul’s “evil spirit” to leave him?
3. At the dedication of the Temple (built by Solomon) what instruments were played by 120 priests?
4. Which prophet prophesied while accompanied by a minstrel?

Answers On Back

Sunday Sermon

Point your phone camera at the square below, then click on the link to hear the sermon. Recordings will change mid-week.



Pessimism is wrong because it produces needless anxiety. This anxiety is contrary to the teachings of Jesus. The Master said, *“Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment”* (Matt. 6:25). The word “thought” as used in this passage does not have reference to proper concern about making a living but to “anxiety.” Thought concerning the future is right, but anxiety, solicitude, and trouble is wrong. Jesus taught, *“...sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”* The pessimist not only sees today in the worst light, but he borrows all the imagined evil from tomorrow that he possibly can. How foolish, to long for the troubles of another day. Yesterday is gone and will never return; tomorrow is not here, and in fact may never come; today, this present time, is all we have. Let us make it the best possible.

Pessimism is wrong because it destroys the value of the word of God in our hearts. Pessimism, needless anxiety, and worry are all summed up in the expression, “the care of this world.” When Christ taught the parable of the sower He said, *“He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful”* (Matt. 13:22). The “care of this world” does not simply have reference to those who “run after material things,” but also to those who become so absorbed with the discouraging things of life they forget that God is in heaven and Christ is on His throne. I have observed many active and productive Christians become unfruitful, not because they gave in to the propensities of the flesh, but because of the pessimistic attitude. Pessimism will not allow us to be fruitful servants of God.

Pessimism is wrong because it leads one to deny that God is living and is mindful of man. The pessimistic Christian will rarely admit it, but his trouble stems from a lack of faith which says “God is dead or has fled heaven, Christ has abdicated His throne, the Holy Spirit has become insensitive, every thing has gone sour, and I am left upon this earth absolutely nobody who cares”. No wonder such people despair of living. They do not believe the Scripture which says *“casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you”* (1 Peter 5:7). What we need is more Christians who really believe “this is my Father’s world!” That He is still in charge and holds the balance of power in His hand, and that “one man, plus God, makes a majority.” Oh yes, we talk about it, and we sing, “take it to the Lord in prayer.” But we don’t truly believe it. Pessimism is simply a lack of faith.

Pessimism is wrong because it destroys health and happiness and causes us the loss of friends. A doctor, who is a Christian, once told me that about fifty percent of the people who frequent his office are not really sick. They are miserable and wretched people because of the miserable and wretched attitudes. Then there is the matter of influence. A Christian must be concerned about the influence he has upon others. A pessimistic attitude drives people from you instead of drawing people to you. This, of course, hinders the Word of God which we must teach to others. Christians must not be pessimistic!