



TRUE LIGHT

Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. ~ Psalm 119:105

August 16, 2020

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Worship:
9 a.m. (masked)
10:30 a.m. (masks optional)

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:00PM

MINISTER

Stan Dauck
573-293-5620

ELDERS

David Burleson
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DEACONS

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"This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Psalms 118:24

**We Welcome You
To All Of Our
Services**

PUTTING MY LIFE WHERE MY MOUTH IS!

The air was sizzling with tension. Three and a half years of work had come down to this moment of intense conflict. Hatred and jealousy hung like ripe fruit waiting to drop and spew out their venom and violence. Yet far from backing down, Jesus had provoked this moment. He would incite the crowd more. They were forced to decide. He allowed them no middle ground. They had to choose: Is Jesus the Savior or a charlatan, the Messiah or a maniac, the Lord or just another religious liar.

Jesus had just angered everyone in religious and political power. He had caused a riot in the Temple as people were getting ready for the big national celebration of Passover. Jesus' turning over tables, scattering money, and setting caged animals free was irresponsible, anywhere. To do it in the Temple was incendiary, bordering on revolutionary. Such actions were dangerous.

What was Jesus thinking?

What would happen to the Temple-based economy of Jerusalem if they let this would-be Messiah from Nazareth get away with cleansing the Temple?

What would the Romans think about this disruption right on the edge of a crowded city and a powder key of radical forces already at play in Jerusalem?

The religious and political leaders had repeatedly tried to discredit Jesus and trap Him in legal questions and technicalities. Instead, Jesus had embarrassed them with his answers and his mocking questions in reply. He had the audacity to call them out, claiming that they were shallow and selfish hypocrites, moneygrubbers, show-offs, abusive religious frauds, and snakes.

Jesus' words to the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees during His last trip to Jerusalem were strong enough to peel the bark of a hardwood tree (Matthew 23: 1-39). I have looked at Jesus' blast of righteous anger aimed at the heart of the religious leaders from several angles to wring truth for me out of his scathing attack on the religious leaders of his day:

* I've had folks take these critical statements of Jesus and reverse them to show how the opposite of what these hypocritical behaviors look in Jesus' redemptive life. Those anti-Pharisaical qualities make for good leadership principles. * I've separated the key statements and tied them to other passages in Scripture to show how these problems that Jesus confronts are often the haunts for demons that inhabit most religious structures and systems. * I've talked about the Pharisees and their noble desire to honor God with holy lives, yet reminded people how easily we all can sink into legalistic institutionalism and self-justifying tribalism that suffocates grace while abusing people and those in power to lose their souls to their own corruption.

Today, however, I want to focus on just one of the statements that Jesus made in Matthew 23, his open and harsh criticism of the Pharisees and their type of religiosity:

[Jesus said] *[The Pharisees] tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them (Matthew 23:4).*

Jesus' words haunt me. They sound remarkably similar to the charges often made today by critics of the organized church:

1. They don't practice what they preach! They're hypocrites!
2. They weigh people down with burdens and unnecessary rules that have little to do with living life!
3. They don't do anything to help people with their real-life problems! They are little more than irrelevant inhabitants of a stained glass ghetto.

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CELEBRATING THIS WEEK

BIRTHDAYS

August 19 - DeeDee Burch

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY:

August 22 - Alan & Jeanie Robinson
*belated anniversary wishes to Rodney and Lisa Britt, who celebrated August 5.



CHILDREN'S HOMES NEEDS

Olives * BBQ Sauce * Bleach *
Country Gravy Mix * Tortilla Chips *
Brown Gravy Mix

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

Canned spaghetti sauce * crackers
* pasta * canned fruits & tomatoes

**CASH DONATIONS
GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED**

Attendance for August 9: 83

Contribution for August 9: \$5105

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

"...I was sick and you visited me..." Matthew 25:36

Remember: Sonny Ingle is doing well following surgery for a cancerous polyp. He remains in the hospital * **Pam Claeys** has been diagnosed with a severe UTI and will also see a hematologist this week * **Bob Garner** (Ron's dad) is improving following hip and elbow surgery * **Louella Akers** recently fell and injured her shoulder and elbow * **Sonja Mays** has been released from the hospital and is currently at Winchester Place, with plans to return home * **Matt Jones** family (Linda Jones son) recovering from COVID * **Sharlette Watson** will have her final treatment this week * **Helen McGowan** as she continues with dialysis treatment

Continue praying for these members of our church family: Louella Akers * John David Barnett * David Burtleson * Pam Claeys * Isaiah Collier * Billie Cooper * Scott and Judy Flannery * Sue Flowers * Grant Howard * Jackson Howard * Morris Karnes * Sonja Mays * Darlene McGowan * Helen McGowan * Jeff McGowan * Kevin Mickey * Reba Owens * Ida Roberts * Gayle Rodgers * Waynetta Rodgers * Elwood Rush * Jane Smith * Leon Smith * Kevin Steed * David Terrill * Bettie Thurston * Joy Watson * Marty Watson * Sharlette Watson

Those dealing with cancer (non congregational) :

Kristi Altman * Roxanne Carson * Sherry Chambers * Bill Fitzpatrick * Kim Goins * LeAnn Jacques * Tommy Jacques * Pam Jeralds * Andy Kelley * Connie Lemmons * Annette Lumsden * Phil McKuIn * Ponna Mahan * Paula Mason * Betty Nicholson * Deanna Rogers * Tammy Telker * Bobby Thornton * Paula Walls

Other health issues (non-congregational):

DeeDee Burch * Mary Burke * Dana Jo Jackson *Clyde Jacques * Lola Johnson * Beckie King * Nikki Lawrence * Alvin Miller * Tom Provance * Gene Rowland * Traci Suiter * Paige Tanner *

Our Shut Ins

Lois McKuIn * Marty Watson * Joy Watson * Elwood Rush * Sue Flowers * Travis Cooper * Shirley Johnson * Fern Botsch

In Sympathy:

Our sympathy is extended to LaRhonda Billingsley in the loss of both her father-in-law and his brother within the last few weeks, due to COVID.

Sympathy is also extended to Pauline Allen, in the loss of her niece, Brenda Weeks Billings, who passed away Thursday due to diabetes-related complications. A funeral will be held for her in the Memphis area.

Great and Noble - or Humble?

"I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moving along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker."
Helen Keller

**Our Summer Series
speaker Wednesday will be
Austin Holiman.**

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To put it in cornbread English, most folks view Christians as overly critical, out of touch with real life, unhelpful, quarrelsome, self-righteous, judgmental, and hypocritical.

Followers of Jesus can complain all we want about the misperceptions. We can grow frustrated and cynical ourselves and with those who have betrayed Jesus and the church by their abuses of power. Bottom line, however, as followers of Jesus, we have the ability to do something about how we are perceived no matter who is spreading propaganda against us.

To make these necessary changes, we do not have to surrender our commitment to the moral call of God. Neither do we have to give up our commitment to Scripture or truth or faithfulness. But to make this change, we MUST help folks lift and carry the burdens they face in their everyday lives. We must be about doing good while sharing God's love and grace in practical ways.

As churches, and as followers of Jesus, we are entering a situation unprecedented in most of our lifetimes. Mounting struggles, disorientation, fragmentation, unemployment, retirement concerns, and fear are seeping in around us like a river slowly swelling past its banks. So what will we DO to help?

Jesus tells us what He doesn't want us to be. He says these words knowing that they will incite His enemies and galvanize those determined to kill Him. But He says them anyway to them and us as a warning:

They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them (Matthew 23:4).

Instead of being like those religious leaders, Jesus wants us to be like Him.

Take a look at the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) and see how He was with people. Notice those with whom He associated - it is kind of hard to find someone He wouldn't spend time with if they wanted to be around Him, isn't it? Notice how He lived among the people, heard their cries for help, saw their pain, and lifted their burdens.

Jesus is calling to us, now! As Lord, he asks us to be his Body, his redemptive presence in our broken world!

When we gather around the Lord's table and share the bread, we are not only remembering His body on the cross, but we are also becoming Jesus' bodily presence in the world (1 Cor. 11:16-17). Each time we share that bread and celebrate being Jesus' body, we need to ask: Will we continue to do for others what our Lord did when he was physically present?

Jesus was the opposite of those who gave folks heavy burdens and refused to help them carry those burdens. And now, in times like ours, we have to decide: Will we live to serve those around us as our Lord did? He allows us no middle ground. We have to choose: Is he Savior or charlatan, Messiah or maniac, Lord or liar. If Jesus is Savior, Messiah, and Lord, then we must follow his example and obey his words!

Such a calling is not easy, not in our hostile and confusing world. However, it can be world-changing. And I can't think of a time in my life when our world needed more changing, more grace, and more Jesus.