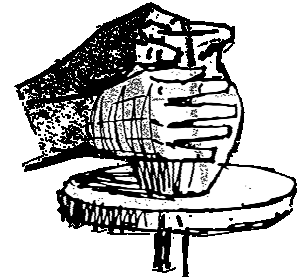


His Workmanship at Westside

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

—Ephesians 2:10



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Isaiah 64:8

"Good" or "Christian"? by Ryan Goodwin

What do you want for your kids? A happy life? A "nice" car, house, job, family? Certainly, you want them to be good people, living honestly and uprightly, right? Don't worry, I feel the same way. I want my kids to grow up to be good people, too, but I wonder if I'm bringing them up to become Christians. Phil Vischer, the creator of the popular children's franchise Veggie Tales, reflected on a decade of work and highlighted this distinction: "I looked back at the previous ten years and realized I had spent ten years trying to convince kids to behave Christianly without actually teaching them Christianity [sic; he means "without actually teaching them Christ"]. And that was a pretty serious conviction. You can say, 'Hey kids, be more forgiving because the Bible says so,' or 'Hey kids, be more kind because the Bible says so!' But that isn't Christianity [sic], it's morality... And that was such a huge shift for me from the American Christian [sic] ideal. We're drinking a cocktail that's a mix of the Protestant work ethic, the American dream, and the gospel. And we've intertwined them so completely that we can't tell them apart anymore. Our gospel has become a gospel of following your dreams and being good so God will make all your dreams come true. It's the Oprah god... It's the American Dream plus Jesus. And it produces good, moral pagans," How To Raise A Pagan Kid In A Christian [sic] Home, Barrett

Johnson, infoforfamilies.com

Of course, I am not minimizing the many benefits of Bible-centered children's entertainment. It is not that Veggie Tales is a bad thing for our kids or culture. But it does leave us wondering what our own objectives are in teaching our kids. Is the goal to help them be "good people" only? Is it to help them fit in, be happy, have a nice career, and fit the mold of the stereotypical moral American? Or are we trying to teach them how to be Christians—citizens of a heaven-bound spiritual kingdom of



"aliens and strangers," 1 Pet 2:11, who put Christ's will first in all things? I fear that the gospel is often a secondary force in the lives of families, well behind career, academic, athletic, or even marriage goals. We make pragmatic, worldly decisions first and then see where we can fit Christ in.

The First Priority. "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in

him," 1 Jn 2:15-17. Furthermore, Jesus said, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life shall lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake shall find it," Mt 10:37-39. Take a minute to consider seriously what your objectives are for your kids or the young people over which you have some influence in your local church. What would need to happen for you to deem yourself a successful parent or mentor? If your goals are entirely focused on your kids' behavior, their happiness, or their accomplishments, but do not include a sincere dependence on Christ and a submission to His will, then it is time to make some major adjustments. After all, the world has enough pagans! The world has enough relatively, comparatively "good people" going through the motions of outward religion while allowing their hearts to be consumed by a job, a house, a degree, or, as Jesus strikingly points out, a family.

"Good" Is Not Necessarily "Saved." We must keep in mind that "good" and "saved" are not always synonymous. Consider the example of Cornelius in Acts 10:1-2, 22. He had plenty going for him: he was successful in his job,
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“You are my Lord; my goodness is nothing apart from You,” Psalm 16:2. **“Good” or “Christian?”** from p. 1

had a large family, was a prominent citizen and participant in civic and religious institutions, and had a long list of good deeds to his credit. Everybody spoke highly of him, yet he was not saved. Reflecting on the events, Peter clearly states that Cornelius needed to hear “words by which you would be saved,” Ax 11:13-15. He was not yet saved until Peter explained the gospel to him and he was baptized.

Without the substance of the gospel there is nobody who is truly “good” by God’s definition, Mt 19:17. All the good works in the world amount to nothing if a person has not been humbled by the weight of his sin and submitted to Christ. We are not saved by our works, but by grace; we are “created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them,” Eph 2:8-10. Until we are created anew in Christ Jesus, we can never be as “good” as we can be. God defines goodness. That way, nobody can boast, Rm 4:1-4.

All of this is summed up perfectly in Romans 3:9-27. After quoting Psalms 14 and 53 (and other passages), “‘There is none righteous, no, not one,...there is none who seeks after God.’ ‘They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one.’ ‘Their throat is an open tomb; with their tongues they have practiced deceit’; ‘The poison of asps is under their lips’ ‘whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.’” Paul goes on to explain that each one of us has sinned and fallen short of God’s glory. By God’s patience and forbearance He passed over sin and graciously offered the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ, so that we could be justified. God gave it as a free gift! Where is boasting in all of this? When do we get to stand up and say how “good” or “moral” we are? The answer, of course, is “Never.” “Never!” Our own self-derived morality is excluded from consideration. “We are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like

filthy rags,” Is 64:6. The gospel, therefore, does not take “good” people and make them better; it takes sinful people and makes them holy. It takes “dead”



people and makes them “alive.” It takes dirty people and makes them clean, see Rm 7:5-13. It does for us what we could never, ever do on our own.

Teach Transformation To Your Kids. God won’t help those who already feel confident in their own goodness, Mt 9:10-13; Heb 2:14-17. Rather, He sent His Son to mend those who have embraced just how broken they are. In all of this, of course, I am not advocating a walk with Christ that downplays goodness. When rooted in the One who is truly good, our faith will transform us into Christ-defined good people. “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect,” Rm 12:2. We arrive at true goodness through transformation. True goodness is the product, the destination, not the starting point. Perhaps the message to our kids should not be “Be good so that you can prove what kind of Christian you are,” but “Be transformed so that God can prove what is truly good through you.” Start with God, and then the desire for goodness will be a natural result. Any life that starts with one’s own sense of goodness is doomed to fail—a failure, by the way, that can be avoided if we stop teaching our kids to be merely good instead of Christ-like! “Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who trust in You in the presence of the sons of men!” Ps 31:19.

2 Questions to Guide Study, by J. Case Cortez

Maybe you want to study your Bible but you don’t know how. Where do you start? What do you do? How do you make sense of this collection of sixty-six books written by forty authors, none of whom ever had an iPhone or WiFi or access to digital media of any kind?

It can feel hard to relate to these authors, and digging into the Bible can be overwhelming. So here are two questions you can use to get right to the good stuff when you open God’s Word. Through Scripture, the Holy Spirit tells us **Who Christ is and what we should do!** These questions are borrowed from the apostle Paul. He told a crowd his conversion story in Acts 22. When he was on his way to Damascus to find and arrest Christians, Jesus stopped him in his tracks—literally. Paul (called Saul at the time) thought he was doing a great service to God by trying to kill Christians. He thought Christians should be arrested, even executed. “Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth,” Ax 26:9. He thought he was on a mission for God, but he had things upside down and inside out.

Thankfully, God is really good at straightening out mixed-up people. A great light appeared to Paul; he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” Paul answered with a question of his own: “Who are you, Lord?” “I AM Jesus of Nazareth, Whom you are persecuting,” the voice replied. Paul responded with another question: “What shall I do, Lord?”

You know what? Jesus told him what to do! He didn’t leave Paul to figure it out alone. We don’t hear Jesus speaking to us out loud today—but He does speak to us through His Word. Through Scripture, the Holy Spirit tells us Who Christ is and what we should do! When
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Psalm 133:1

God's harvest we'll glean in 2016 "Please let me go to the field and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." —Ruth 2:2

2 Questions to Guide Study, from p. 2 you open your Bible, try using Paul's questions to understand the text better:

1. Who are You, Lord?
2. What should I do, Lord?



Remember to keep the questions in that

order. "Who Jesus is" is the underlying foundation for "What do I do?" I must always start with Him, never with me!

Sometimes when I'm reading the Bible, I like to take a piece of paper and fold it lengthwise into two columns. On the left I write the heading, "Who are You, Lord?" and on the right, "What should I do, Lord?" I'm almost always surprised by what I find. There's usually a whole lot more about God in a text than there is about the people following Him. This is a huge comfort! He's the refuge; I'm under His wing. He's faithful when I'm not!

To follow Him, we must keep our eyes on Him, and we do this by hearing Him speak to us through His Word. So often, we think being a Christian means we're supposed to do a lot of things (or not do a lot of things). Really, being a Christian simply means to follow Jesus. To follow Him, we must keep our eyes on Him, and we do this by hearing Him speak to us through His Word.

I invite you to turn to Psalm 91 and try this experiment today. Get out your pen and paper, and dig in! Who are You, Lord? What would You have me do? What did you discover?

Discipleship Here At Home

Nothing Disappears

A preacher once spoke on eternal destiny. The next day several young people came by his office seeking to trip him up. The first one said, "I believe we have a dispute here, sir, and I'd like to settle it."

"Okay, what is it?" said the preacher. "Well, you say the wicked will go into eternal punishment, and I don't think they will."

"Well, then," said the preacher wisely, "you don't have a dispute with me, for the Bible, in Matthew 25:46, says, 'These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.' Your dispute is with the Lord, and I suggest you go immediately and settle it with Him."

If spiritual evidence is not enough, Dr. Wernher von Braun says there are also "essentially scientific" reasons for believing in life after death. He stated, "Science has found that nothing can disappear without a trace. Nature does not know extinction. If God applies the fundamental principle to the most minute and insignificant parts of the universe, doesn't it make sense to assume that He applies it to the masterpiece of His creation—the human soul? I think it does."

Indeed, God has given everyone eternal life, but He has given to each of us the right to decide where we will spend that life—in the eternal happiness of heaven or in the eternal "lake of fire," Rev 20:15. Where will you spend eternity?

Bereaved Scott McClelland's grandfather recently passed away in Amarillo, TX.

Becky Harlow's father passed away last week. **Becky** was formerly with Westside.

Directory Updates **Levi** and **Samantha Addy** have chosen to join with the Westside church in worship and work. They live at 4817 Eldorado Springs Dr, Boulder 80303, with their preschool children **Jude** and **Jordan**. **Samantha's** cell 432-889-1165 se_agnew@yahoo.com **Levi's** cell 830-358-6666; stantonaddy@gmail.com

Pearl Chapman has moved to the Verandas, 9495 W. 49th Ave, Rm 9 East, Wheat Ridge 80033; house phone: 303-425-6328. Pearl is recovering from broken hip surgery in Dec.

LiLian Kok is here on her annual visit and is conducting home studies for women this week and next. See Pat Campbell for a schedule.

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

- **Kory Tope's** uncle, **Skeeter Schulz**—broke hip three weeks ago; **Kory** left yesterday for AZ to help care for him, and will return 1/22
- **Frances Blackwelder**—in ICU at Grand Junction w/fever and infection
- **Mike Bennett**—home from FL after serious staph infection; port installed to fight infection
- **Brittany Tope's** mother **Gayle**—biopsy of spot on liver shows breast cancer has spread; **Brittany's** grandmother—on dialysis
- the **Savareses' grandchildren, Frankie Kosik, Lorraine and Christian Harrod**—breathing difficulty, using nebulizer, or inhaler and steroids
- **Jordan Corray's** colleague and mentor **Craig Smith**—in ICU with brain injury after fall from roof; friend **Kylie Cabalka**—staph infection complications; out of ICU to rehab and making progress
- **Sarah McMurray's** mentee **Lakesha Griffin**—age 12; safety, stable home place
- **Connor Boyd's** friend **Christian Lyons**, high school freshman—leukemia
- **Berney Charo's** brother **Eliud**—prostate cancer
- **Judy Strand**—preparing for liver transplant by chemo
- **Sheryle McNeill**—pinched nerve
- **Ernesto Gonzalez's** father **Fidencio**—stage IV lymphoma, some improvement after 2nd chemo
- **Mary Ellen White**—recovering at sister's house after hip replacement on Christmas Eve; cards to 5307 E. Yale Ave, #306, Denver 80222-6928
- **Letha Fink's** brother **Kenneth Morrison** of GA—liver disease, diagnosed with neuro-muscular disease
- **Bill Dennis**—sick, unable to make Dr. appointment
- **Noah Hadders's** teacher **Sharolyn Elmore**—chemo for breast cancer
- **Larry Campbell's** FL partner **Terry Hargadine's** wife **Michelle**—recovering from mastectomy Thursday; **Terry**—recovering from knee replacement surgery
- **Kayla Knighten, Christine Adams's** daughter, needs our prayers; **Judy Strand** requests prayer for her son **Joe**; pray **Ed's** son **Rodney Schulz** and **Sheryle's** daughter **Tiffany** receive the gospel;
- **Sylvia Chapman, Brett's** grandmother—third stage pancreatic cancer; **Brett's** grandmother **Sue**, and Aunt **Connie Doss**—cancer returned

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

- Christian Harrod; Addison Tope; Rocco Jr. Ann Cox; Logan Corray; Pat Wilkes**—asthma
- Orchid Cox**—chronic blood clot condition
- Jonathan Hadders**—RA
- Autumn Hadders**—epilepsy; celiac disease
- Kirk Johnson**—MS; **Amanda Mailloux**—IBS
- Menards**—**Lloyd** diabetes, Alzheimers; VA help; **Virginia** blindness from macular degeneration
- Sandra Perry**—diabetes complications; oxygen
- Cheryl Reames**—fibromyalgia; diverticulitis
- Judy Sartin**—rotator cuff injury; spinal stenosis
- Judy and Mike Strand**—hepatitis treatment
- Lynda Szymanski**—COPD, lung weakness

Rejoice The **Shreves** are expecting their first baby in April.



Exposing current trends education

DOE Uses Dough to Coerce Schools, by Tony Perkins

Only the Department of Education would try to stop bullies by becoming one! Instead of starting a dialogue about what constitutes sexual harassment, the agency is ordering colleges to adopt its radical new definitions—or lose federal funds. The DOE is throwing its weight around without any accountability or justification in the law. While one of the biggest culprits, Secretary Arne Duncan, is gone, his legacy of intimidation continues. Not surprisingly, the engine driving this politically correct train is the DOE's Office of Civil Rights (OCR), which has long been an enemy of free speech. Although attempting to stop sexual assault and bullying, the DOE would fundamentally trample the First Amendment.

This heavy-handed approach to bullying policies and sex-related incidents is so extreme that even the former president of the ACLU is raking the agency over the coals. For starters, as the former ACLU head said, it would change sexual harassment to mean any "speech with any sexual content that anyone finds offensive." That overly broad definition, warned Nadine Strossen, "actually does more harm than good to gender justice, not to mention free speech." This definition allows any crazy offended person to define the crime. The policies for non-verbal abuse are so broad that even a neck rub or a child's hug could be considered "sexual battery."

Now, thanks to Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and James Lankford (R-OK), she has company. In a scathing letter to Acting Secretary John King, Sen Lankford demanded to know why the department is bypassing the usual rules process and ordering universities to change their sexual misconduct policies or else. Dozens of universities have complained about the agency's meddling, especially since, as Sen Lankford points out, its guidance isn't legally binding. So how is it getting away with it? Well, as we've seen from other Obama agencies, this is where the federal carrot-and-stick comes in. Instead of using the force of law, OCR is threatening to pull the financial rug out from under colleges which don't comply. And while several campuses are too afraid to speak out against this bureaucratic blackmail, two heavyweights—Harvard Law and Penn Law—are. In blistering complaints, they argue that not only are the rules fundamentally flawed (ignoring due process and stacking the deck overwhelmingly in the accusers' favor), but they slipped through without ever being vetted. "Perhaps," Sen Lankford wrote, "OCR sought to avoid notice-and-comment procedures, fearing that education officials and other interested groups would have voiced substantive objections to the letters' policies if given an opportunity." As the universities pointed out, "Sexual assault is indeed an important problem, but the federal government has dictated a set of policies and twisted universities' arms into compromising some of the safeguards that we teach our students are essential to fairness." This is government bent on transforming U.S. "Judge righteously," Lev 19:15; Deut 1:16; 16:18-19; Jn 7:24.



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Pastors

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DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

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Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class**, studies on the attributes of God: "Show Me Your Glory," Jim Reingrover
- **sermon**, "Expository Study of 1 Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 1," Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon

- **questions answered**: "Does Everyone Need to Be Baptized?" Larry Campbell

New Wednesday night study: The Thessalonian Letters