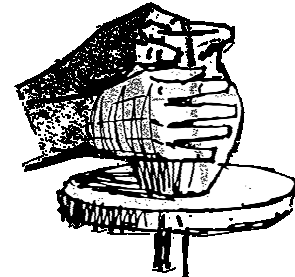


His Workmanship at Westside

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

—Ephesians 2:10



Vol. XXV

April 3, 2016

No. 14

Isaiah 64:8

Christus Victor: the Promise of the Conquering Messiah, part 2, by Shane Scott

The Old Testament ends with Israel back in the promised land, but hardly under promising circumstances. The temple had been rebuilt, but it did not possess the glory of the house built by Solomon, cf. Ezra 3:10-13; Hag 2:1-3. (God's spectacular Presence never entered the rebuilt temple as it had the tabernacle, Ex 40:34; 29:43, and Solomon's temple, 1 Kg 8:10-11; 2 Chr 7:2; there was merely a promise of a future glorious temple, Hag 2:6-9.) The walls of Jerusalem had been rebuilt, but the city of David was not the seat of power it once had been. Instead, foreign overlords in places like Persia and Rome controlled the affairs of the Israeli nation. No devout Israelite could imagine that the great promises of Isaiah or Ezekiel had been fulfilled in the returns led by Jeshua, Zerubbabel, or Nehemiah. When would God return and liberate His people?

By the time of the first century, however, the people believed that God was about to act. Based in part on Daniel's vision of the seventy weeks, Dan 9:24-27, many Jews in the first century possessed a heightened sense of messianic expectation, see Lk 3:15. This is reflected in the questions posed to John the Baptist by the emissaries sent from Jerusalem: "And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who

are you?' He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, 'I am not the Christ.' And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the Prophet?' And he answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?' He said, 'I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord," as the prophet Isaiah said,' " Jn 1:19-23.

John said, "No, I am not the Christ, Elijah (see Mal 4:5), or the Prophet (see Deut 18:15-18). But I am the one preparing the way for the long-anticipated coming of the Lord to save His people, just as Isaiah promised in Is 40:3." This is how John's gospel sets the stage for the appearance of Christ. In very similar fashion, Mark's gospel also cites the promise of Isaiah 40:3 in connection with the ministry of John the Baptist, moving directly into the story of Jesus' baptism, Mk 1:1-11. Matthew's gospel also draws on this same text from Is 40, and prior to that, Matthew highlights the identity of Jesus as the King Who would deliver His people from exile—he points to this by arranging His genealogy in three groups of 14 (the sum of the numerical value of David's Hebrew name) and by framing the genealogy on the birth of David in 1:6 and the deportation to Babylon in 1:11.

But it is especially in the opening of Luke's gospel that the theme of

Christus Victor, the conquering Messiah, is most clearly expressed. When the angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah to tell him that he and Elizabeth would have son, he said that this son would "turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared," Lk 1:16-17. Later, when Gabriel informed Mary that God had chosen her to bear the one who would reign on the throne of David, she magnified the Lord for acting to deliver His people: "He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever," Lk 1:54-55. And when the aged priest's tongue was loosed, Zechariah prophesied: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath that He swore to our father Abraham, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days. And you, child, will be called the

continued on p. 2

Christus Victor, from p. 1

prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace," Lk 1:68-79.

Incidentally, when you compare the songs of Mary and Zechariah to the traditional "Christmas carols" popular in our culture, two things stand out. First, based on the lyrics of many carols, no one would ever know Jesus is Jewish, much less that He was Israel's

King! Second, no one would ever get the impression that Jesus came to deliver His people from their enemies, despite the explicit language of these passages.

But two people who did understand these truths about Jesus were Simeon and Anna.

Both were aged and devout believers, and each was blessed to see the baby Jesus in the temple. Simeon, we are told, was "waiting for the consolation of Israel," Lk 2:25. Holding the holy child in his arms, Simeon blessed God and prayed, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel," Lk 2:29-32. Likewise, Anna rejoiced at the birth of Jesus and spoke of Him "to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem," Lk 2:38.

So all four gospels, and especially Luke, portray the coming of Jesus in unmistakable terms. He is the Lord's Messiah, the One who comes to defeat Israel's enemies and redeem the nation from its exile. But who is Israel's true enemy? And how can that enemy be destroyed? Only if we answer that question correctly can we begin to understand the victory Christ came to win. Next week: *The Empire Strikes Back.*



Willing, by Cecil Douthitt

1. Some people are willing to serve evil. David knew that King Saul plotted evil against him, 1 Sam 23:9. This was also true of the priests and one of our Lord's apostles. "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?' And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him," Mt 26:14-16. I don't think Judas started out to betray his Master, but evil grows in the heart. Judas had been a thief before this for some time, Jn 12:6. Let us guard our hearts carefully.

2. Christians must be willing to follow the spirit and not the flesh. "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," Mt 26:41. There is a spiritual conflict or battle in each of us. "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you want," Gal 5:16-17. It is not always easy to do right, but we must fight within ourselves to make right choices. "If you walk contrary to Me, and are not willing to obey Me, I will bring on you seven times more plagues, according to your sins," Lev 26:21. Are you willing to be holy? "Who then is willing to consecrate himself this day to the LORD?" 1 Chr 29:5; cf. Mt 8:2-3.

3. We must be willing to share. "Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share," 1 Tim 6:18. This was written to the rich of the age, v. 17. We qualify. We cannot be selfish—to be selfish is to be covetous. A covetous person will not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor 6:10. The Macedonians were "freely willing" to share, first giving themselves to the Lord, then sharing their resources with other Christians, 2 Cor 8:3-5, 12; cf. Ex 35:5, 21-22, 29; 2 Chr 29:31. A willing heart is a generous heart.

4. We must have a heart willing to yield to God. "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy," Jas 3:17. We must yield, give up self and

yield to (trust) the wisdom of God as we learn it from our Bibles. This yielding to God must be from the heart and not hypocrisy. Jesus said that some were "not willing to come to Him that they might have life," Jn 5:35-40; cf. Mt 22:3; 23:37. Are you willing to come to Jesus each day? Know God and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind, 1 Chr 28:9. "If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land," Is 1:19.

5. God is not willing that any perish. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance," 2 Pet 3:9. Does this say all will be saved? No, but it says God wants all people to come to Him and serve Him. We must live holy and godly lives, v. 11.

We have stubborn wills. If surrendered daily, however, they can accomplish good for God, others, and ourselves. Surely those who say "I will, I will" and don't are not as close to the heart of God as those who say "I will not," but do, Mt 21:28-31. Am I willing to serve God? To do God's will today, in however small a way, I must let go of my own will.

"In the Beginning God..."

When we consider the enormous events of Genesis 1-3 and how they affect every single human being, we must conclude that our God is great—powerful, magnificent, and large—and yet that He is concerned with every individual person. Everything He created was "good," and "very good," reflecting His own goodness. He even made man in His own image. God looked at His creation and said that it was very good, Gen 1:31. The world which He created, the trees and plants, animals and insects, and even humans were all "very good." As Christians we try to bring the human part of creation back to the "very good." We tell people about Jesus with the hope that they will put their trust in Him and enter into the relationship with God that Adam and Eve had before the fall. What does it mean to you to be made in God's image, according to His likeness? How will you reflect His image today?



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

Pair Fined as Christians, from p. 4 use his property, his business, and his labor in the service of an immoral activity. Facilitating a ceremony that solemnizes and celebrates a behavior that God abhors would violate Walder's religious convictions, and compelling him to facilitate such an activity violates his First Amendment protections.

Attorney Betty Tsamis, who represented the Wathens, came dangerously close to inadvertently acknowledging the truth: "It would have been shameful to reverse this history simply because some business owners object to the legal protections afforded same-sex relationships." She veered off-message by focusing on "same-sex relationships" rather than persons. Her slip suggests the truth that homo-erotic behavior is a volitional (willful) activity and that ceremonies which solemnize and celebrate the activity of "same-sex" are what many people of faith, including Orthodox Jews, Muslims, and Christians, cannot in good conscience serve.

While the Left continues to add conditions (all sexual in nature and behaviorally constituted) to anti-discrimination policies and laws, they are bit by bit removing religion. The right to practice our faith as we see fit (as long as we aren't infringing on the rights of others) is the cornerstone of our nation's stability and health. Along with that, the right to choose who we do business with and when we do business is the very foundation of free market capitalism. Our nation is becoming more restrictive (some say fascist) when one segment of society can force another segment to do whatever it wills. When one person forces another into servitude against his

Discipleship Here At Home

will, that is slavery. This is not how the free market works. The free market (or capitalism) is predicated on the idea that everyone involved is participating of his own volition (freely). The seller wants to sell and the buyer wants to buy. If Chick-fil-A tried to sue a gay protester for boycotting its fast food chain, would the Human Rights Commission force the protester to pay damages to Chick-fil-A? Of course not! We can choose to spend our money where we want to spend it; so, too, should a businessman be able to accept or turn down a customer's money when he wants to. This is the essence of the free market and of freedom itself. The moment we allow the government (or some fascist group of rabid socialists) to force us to act against our religious beliefs, or force us to work as indentured servants at the beck and call of others—that is the moment that we have lost our nation. You can read more about the assault on religious liberty at these links: <http://eaglerising.com/1592/oregon-attacks-christian-business/> (several states hostile to business owners who are Christians and refused services to celebrate homosexual unions); <http://eaglerising.com/30947/oklahoma-democrats-want-christian-business-owners-to-wear-a-scarlet-letter>

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

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

Rejoice Expecting babies: **Shreves**, their first, a girl, this month; **Addys** their third, a boy, in May; **Witheringtons** their first child in October. **Mekiah Fink** is suffering persecution at school for her faith; nominated for Mayors' and Commissioners' Award, Clear Creek **Directory Update Jennifer Clayton** has moved back and will work and worship with us: 1475 N. Downing St, Denver 80218 303-332-6010

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

- **Delmer Hice**—in St. Anthony's hospital for breathing difficulty
- **Janelle Hall**—breast cancer; deciding treatment
- **Mike Menard**, Virginia's son—pancreatic cancer; home, antibiotics to fight infection before he starts treatment—some improvement; **Virginia** pain walking from wrenched leg.
- sick, resting at home: **Judy Sartin**, **Sandra Perry**
- 10-year-old **Benjamin Hymel**, of Longmont church—brain cancer; Monday's surgery removed all but a sliver of the tumor, so **Jamin** will start a year's radiation and chemo cycles at end of April
- the **Boyd's** extended families are undergoing hardships: **Wendy's** father, **Dan Gutierrez**, back in care center with cognitive problems either from stroke or brain bleeding; pray for **Eileen** and **Dan**; **Kenny's** sister and brother-in-law—divorce, cult activity, **Kevin** buried his father recently; pray for **Jennifer**, **Kevin**, **Chloe**, & **Elijah Whitemore**
- **Gary Boyd**—injured in T-bone car accident recently; neck, shoulder pain
- **Samantha Harrod**—benign cyst removed from her back recently; recovery 6 more weeks
- **Linda Szymanski**—broken arm & wrist
- the **Addys** ask our prayers for **Levi's** former boss in Odessa—**MacDonald** family: 17-year-old son murdered parents; 19-year-old sister survives
- **Sarah McMurray's** mentee **Lakeisha Griffin**—age 12; moved to Sarah's house recently
- **Judy Strand**—finished with chemo for liver transplant; testing in prep for transplant in April or May
- **Sheryle McNeill**—pinched nerve
- **Berney Charo's** brother **Eliud**—prostate cancer
- **Ernesto Gonzalez's** father **Fidencio**—stage IV lymphoma; to rehab center to gain strength
- **Ian Anderson**, **Mina Gonzalez's** nephew—rehab
- **Letha Fink's** brother **Kenneth Morrison** of GA—liver disease, diagnosed with neuro-muscular disease
- **Bill Dennis**—improving; recurrent cold
- **Brittany Tope's** mother **Gayle**—biopsy of spot on liver shows breast cancer has spread; **Brittany's** grandmother—on dialysis
- **Sylvia Chapman**, **Brett's** grandmother—third stage pancreatic cancer; **Brett's** grandmother **Sue**, and Aunt **Connie Doss**—cancer returned
- **River** and **Forest Cox's** great grandmother **Martha Rowe**—in rehab for knee strengthening
- **Judy Sartin's** friend **George Vernon**—stage 4 esophageal cancer
- **Kim Howell's** coworker **Rachel Daniels**—new baby **Titus** has genetic disease
- **Andrea Songer Greer**, daughter of **Bill** and **Debbie S.**—chemo for stage I breast cancer
- **Kay Ransom**, former member—mother in hospital weekly with terminal COPD; father aging
- **Bereaved Brandon Williams**, the father of **Adriana Williams**, **Ava Kosik's** school friend, passed away unexpectedly last Sunday. Pray for **Adriana**, her mother **Savana**, and the family.



Exposing current trends *religious freedom*

Couple Fined \$80,000 for Being Christians, *by Onan Coca*

Oh, sure. Conservative Christians who fear reprisal from the gay community and their government lackeys are simply being paranoid. The government will never trample upon our God-given right to religious liberty.

The only problem with this logic is that the government most certainly has trampled on our religious freedom (in Colorado, Oregon, Washington, New Mexico, North Carolina, Georgia, etc.), and it will continue to do so as long as we allow it. The latest example comes to us from Illinois, where a couple declined to allow their facilities to be used for a homosexual civil-union ceremony:

An Illinois inn that refused to allow a same-sex couple hold their civil union ceremony on the property was fined more than \$80,000 by the Illinois Human Rights Commission last Tuesday. Administrative law judge Michael R. Robinson ordered TimberCreek Bed & Breakfast to pay \$15,000 each to Todd and Mark Wathen for emotional distress. TimberCreek, located about 100 miles south of Chicago, must also pay \$50,000 in attorneys' fees and \$1,218.35 in costs.

The homosexual couple instead held their ceremony elsewhere, which should be the simple, rational response to anyone turning down your business. But they also decided to sue the Christians. They were likely offended because TimberCreek owner Jim Walder had responded to the Wathens' inquiry with an email that said "*homosexuality is immoral and unnatural,*" according to the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois.

"We are very happy that no other couple will have to experience what we experienced by being turned away and belittled and criticized for who we are," one of the homosexual men said about the ruling.

Even more damaging, the Illinois Human Rights Commission ordered that Walder "[o]ffer the Wathens access to the facility, within one year, for an event celebrating their civil union." This unelected, quasi-governmental commission has mandated that Walder not only to pay a fine for not accepting a request that violated his religious belief, but also to offer to violate his religious beliefs. Such a mandate clearly violates Walder's constitutionally protected religious liberty.

ACLU attorney John Knight erroneously said, "*For the first time, the Human Rights Commission has made clear that owners of businesses serving the public in Illinois cannot pick and choose who [sic] to serve based on their personal religious views.*" But the truth is that Christians in wedding-related businesses are not deciding whom to serve—they are deciding which kinds of products to offer, which events to serve, facilitate, and profit from. Despite what cultural regressives claim in their ignorance, the issue is not about discrimination against persons for some behaviorally neutral trait, like race, sex, or nation of origin, but rather about discriminating among types of activities. Despite what one of the homosexual plaintiffs claims, they were not turned away because of who they are. Walder chose not to

continued on p. 3



meets at
13789 W. 8th Avenue
Golden, Colorado 80401
720-295-4530

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 246-8810
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

info@thechurchingolden.com

Like us: www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

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

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
---------------	---------

Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class**, end study on the attributes of God: "*Show Me Your Glory,*" Jim Reingrover
- **sermon**, *Preaching Through First Corinthians (PTFC): chapter 8, "Attitudes About Personal Liberties,"* Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon

- **new sermon series on GENESIS**, "*Beginnings,*" Chapter 1, Jim Reingrover