

The Better Way

Volume XXXIX, Issue 6

February 4, 2024

SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST

Physical Address:
1327 Spring Cypress Rd.
Spring, TX 77373

Mailing Address:
25403 Lancewood Dr.
Spring, TX 77373

Office: 281-353-2707

springcoc@gmail.com
www.churchesofchrist.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:00 a.m.
Worship.....10:00 a.m.
Afternoon Worship.....1:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:30 p.m.
(via Zoom Meetings)

ELDERS

David P. Brown
Ken Cohn
John West

DEACONS

Bret Bailey
J. D. Gunter
Eric Paluka

EVANGELIST

David P. Brown

SECRETARY

Sonya West

TO CONDEMN OR NOT TO CONDEMN

W. L. Totty

Frequently, we hear of someone who contends that we as Christians have no right to condemn anyone for any false idea that he may believe or teach concerning salvation from sin. However, the apostle Paul charged Timothy to **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”** (2 Tim. 4:2). *Reprove* and *rebuke* are English words which Webster defines as to reject; to chide or criticize severely as blameworthy; to censure; to reprimand, as to rebuke a person for a fault. To *condemn* is to censure; to pronounce to be wrong; to make manifest the fault of; to convict of guilt. Webster refers to *censure* as a synonym for the word condemn, which is defined as to find fault with or condemn as wrong; to form or express a judgment in regard to; to blame.

How, then, does one reprove and rebuke a person if one does not tell him wherein he is wrong? And if we tell him he is wrong, we are condemning him. We are commanded to do it; yet, we have it said by John Hollis, preacher for the church at Richmond, Indiana: “I will teach immersion for baptism in my teaching. I will not, however, condemn any one for not being immersed!” We believe he must have a very distorted opinion of what the word *condemn* means.

Not only does Paul command reproof for and condemnation of error, but the apostle John said, **“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: for many false prophets are gone out into the world”** (1 John 4:1). What would be the purpose of trying the preacher if he were not to be condemned when he is proved to be false?

We have the example of the apostle Paul’s condemnation of some in the church at Corinth because they were divided over different names. He said, **“I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name”** (1 Cor. 1:14-15). And again he told the Corinthians he could not speak unto them as unto **“spiritual, but as unto carnal”** (1 Cor. 3:1). He was condemning them for their false teaching and practice. But someone might say: “Well, he was an apostle and was inspired to do so.” That is true, but he also said to “be ye followers of me” (1 Cor. 4:6).

The same apostle wrote to the churches of Galatia and condemned them for perverting the gospel of Christ, saying, **“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that what we have preached unto you, let him be accursed”** (Gal. 1:8). What does letting one be accursed mean? It means one is bad enough to be cursed, anathematized, doomed, or damned. Now, who is going to do the letting? It was, of course, those brethren there in the church. They would have to condemn him in order to curse him. That is the gospel Paul preached; and if we change it, we will be accursed!

We are further told, “The Bible is silent when it comes to the condemnation of those who are not immersed for baptism.” We wonder how

one who believes such would interpret John 3:5. There Jesus said, **“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”** Will he take the Baptist position that **“born of water”** means our physical birth? Or will he take it as Christ intended? Being baptized is something one has to do to get into the kingdom of heaven. Without it, Jesus said we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, I am justified in warning that one must be baptized into Christ or be lost, else I will be condemned at the judgment seat of Christ when He comes again. If we fail to warn people today of false doctrine, their blood will be upon our hands when Jesus comes.

Moreover, of the necessity of baptism, the apostle Peter said, **“...wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us...”** (1 Pet. 3:20-21). Is that the truth? Of course, it is. It is not a matter of personal preference. It is the word of God. The conclusion is, therefore, that we will be lost if we are not baptized.

I would suggest that the proponent of this fallacious idea consider Paul’s statement to Timothy: **“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”** (2 Tim. 2:15).

In the great commission Jesus said, **“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”** Faith and baptism are connected with a coordinate conjunction. One element is just as important as the other to our salvation. But, someone might say, Jesus concluded by saying only that he that **“believeth not”** shall be damned and mentioned nothing about the failure to be baptized. There was no need, however, to say that one who is not baptized shall be damned, for if one does not believe, he naturally will not be baptized under most circumstances. And even if one were to be baptized without faith, it would be to no avail, for we are told that **“without faith it is impossible to please him”** (Heb. 11:6). All of our works are to be based upon faith; but that does not mean everything but faith is unimportant. Baptism is a part of the gospel, and we must obey it or be lost. If we fail to keep His commandments in one point, we are guilty of all (Jam. 2:10). It is not true that “The Bible is silent when it comes to the condemnation of those who are not immersed for baptism.” (Just in passing, what does he mean by “immersed for baptism”? Doesn’t he know that immersion and baptism are the same? *Immersion* is the English word; *baptism* is a Greek word, meaning exactly the same thing). Jesus said:

The men of Nineveh will rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here (Mat. 12:41).

They are going to condemn them, of course, by having lived in accordance with Jonah’s preaching. We also are going to condemn the wicked by teaching the word of God in pointing out the sins of the people as Jonah did in Nineveh.

Jesus said, **“By their fruit ye shall know them”** (Mat. 7:16). A person who accepts sprinkling instead of baptism is certainly not bringing forth fruit according to the word of God. Preaching the gospel mean more than just stating positive commands; we must also condemn that which is sinful in no uncertain terms.~

Deceased

[Written in 1976]

SPIRITUAL CRIMINALS

W.M. Davis

A man is a criminal because he wants to have his own way. He tramples on the rights of other people to please himself. He does not believe in any restraint of his selfishness. He impoverishes others to enrich himself. He will rob banks and stores, and take life in order to further his own purposes.

It is dangerous for a man to have his own way. When he does, all parties suffer, including himself. If a man had power to run the universe, he would destroy himself and everybody else. All men are too ignorant to choose well. No one knows his own needs, much less the needs of others.

And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan (Gen. 13:10).

Lot thought this was what he needed, but he was badly mistaken. Abraham let him have his own way, and this was the course he pursued. He made a selfish choice. Ultimate good for himself and family had no influence in his determination. He made this choice regardless of the welfare of his soul, the salvation of his family, and the honor of religion. His choice brought destruction to his family. We are all too ignorant to choose well. “For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow” (Ecc. 6:12). No one knows but God. He has revealed in His word what is good for man.~

Deceased

Spring Church Of Christ

Contending For The Faith Lectureship



Lessons On Christian Living

February 24, 2024

9:00 AM: *Teach Us To Pray* – Weldon Blake

10:00 AM: *Exercising Your Christian Influence* – J. D. Gunter

11:00 AM: *Are You Being Fashioned According To This World?* – Jonathan West

LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE SPRING CONGREGATION

1:30 PM: *The Importance of Bible Study* – Bruce Stulting

2:30 PM: *Into Our Hands The Gospel Is Given* – Jack Stephens

3:30 PM: *Examine Yourself* – Jose Gamez


LECTURESHIP DIRECTOR: David P. Brown

ELDERS: David P. Brown, Kenneth D. Cohn, John West

1327 Spring Cypress Road Spring, TX 77373 ~ (281) 353-2707
springcoc@gmail.com

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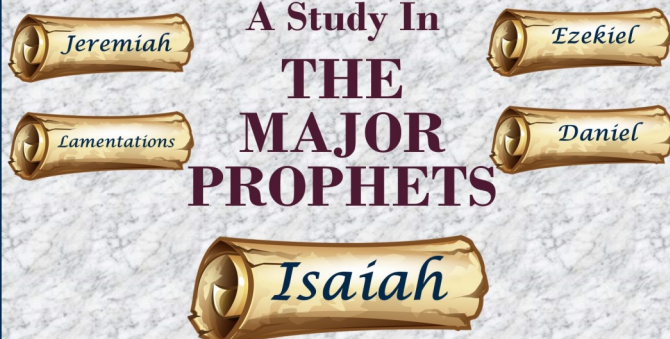
A Study Of
THE GOSPEL OF JOHN



Teacher:
David P. Brown

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT
BIBLE CLASS VIA ZOOM**

A Study In
**THE
MAJOR
PROPHETS**



Sunday Morning Bible Class
David P. Brown

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
www.churchesofchrist.com

- . Live broadcast
- . Debates
- . Sermon videos
- . Bible Study Course
- . Articles
- . Bible Reading Schedule
- . Lectureship videos
- . Links to Faithful works



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- **Saturday, February 24th:** Spring *CFTF* Lectureship.
- **Sunday, February 25th:** Monthly meal
- **Tuesday, March 26th:** Ladies' Bible Class

THOSE TO SERVE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2024

Announcements	Ken Cohn
Scripture Reading	Joshua West Rev. 7:9-17
Song Leader	Bret Bailey
Prayer	Andrew Paluka/J.D. Gunter (A.M.) Joshua West/Gary Blasingame (P.M.)
Speakers	David Brown
Lord's Table (A.M.) (Luke 22:47-53)	
Steven Johnson	Gary Blasingame
Andrew Paluka	Jonathan West
Lord's Table (P.M.)	
Stephen Cohn	Ben Gunter
Audio/Video Monitor	Eric Paluka
Camera/Door Monitor	Gary Blasingame
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2024 (via Zoom Meetings)	
Announcements	Jonathan West
Speaker	J. D. Gunter
Bible Class Teacher	David Brown
FOR FEBRUARY	
Prepare Communion	Mercier
Lock Buildings	Blasingame
Prepare Bulletin Board	TBA

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Zack Nero, Cynthia Jackson, Elnora Oxendine, Edith Young, Bernice Hastings, Charles & Ann Nero, Nathaniel Rimmer, Chuck & Nancy Verkist, Freda Smith, Noah & Glenda Hackworth, Orinda Chumbley, Carmen Hardy, and Roelf & Janice Ruffner.

TEST YOUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

What was wrong with Bartimaeus?

Answer to last week's question:
Judas; Matthew 27:4