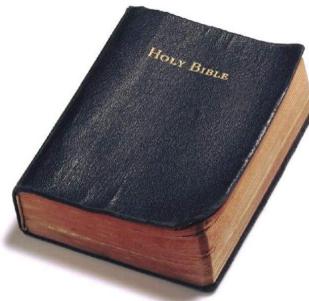


Welcome to the church of Christ at Alisal

Sermon for the Lord's Day "Christ as Our Example"



*Our Lord's Day
Plan...*

Worship today will be via Zoom @ 9:00am

Write and let us know if you would like an invitation.

- Opening Prayer** - Paul
- Hymn** - Kerry
- Bible Class** - Kerry
- Hymn** - Kerry
- Lord's Supper** - Nito
- Morning Lesson** - Paul
- Hymn** - Kerry
- Closing Prayer** - Jordan

.....

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

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We are praying for you!

George Brown, the Flewellen family, Bobby Glover, Rosemarie Johnson, Jordan Johnson, Path Star. all our elderly members, Norma, Beverly, Judy, and Paul, Charles, and all our friends and neighbors.

Pray for the spiritual enlightenment of all people

The wisdom of Solomon...

*Lazy people think they are seven times smarter than the people who really have good sense.
Proverbs 26:16 (ERV))*

The Evil Days

Denny Petrillo

"Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, 'I have no delight in them'" (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

As Solomon wrapped up his sermon, he offered a warning. This warning is especially directed to the youth, although people of all ages can learn from his wisdom. People need to "remember your Creator" when they still have the capability to do so.

Say what? Yes, there is a danger that as one grows older, he will no longer have the capability to think seriously about God, His Word and His will. This is illustrated by Solomon's reference to the "evil days." It is unfortunate that the translators translated the Hebrew as "evil days." Solomon was not talking about days filled with sin and wickedness. Rather, he was talking about hard, difficult and troublesome days. He, then, proceeded to describe those days. They include numerous physical breakdowns. The hearing goes, the eyesight fades and the arms are not as strong as they once were. There are even mental problems, such as various fears.

This section of these "evil" (growing old) days teaches us important lessons. First, all people will endure these days if they live long enough. It is God's plan that there be a physical breakdown over time. This world is not our home. God wants us to long for that better place where we will be given an immortal body (1 Corinthians 15:53; 2 Corinthians 5:1-4).

Second, mental breakdowns will impede one's relationship with God. In this world of dementia and Alzheimer's, we see what happens to the mind of the aged. The clarity of thinking decreases; the ability to make logical or rational decisions is impaired. As a result, Solomon encouraged us to make God a priority while we still have the mental capacity to do so.

Third, physical breakdowns impede one's relationship with God. Even if one's mind is still sharp, if he or she deals with physical pain or a handicap, it can impact one's relationship with God. When we don't feel good, we don't want to do anything. When our bodies hurt—demanding our attention—our attention may be diverted away from God.

Fourth, we don't have forever to figure things out. Perhaps this is the most important point about the "evil days." As we journey through life, we need to have our priorities in the proper order. We need to be "seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). Solomon described the journey into physical and mental breakdowns, with the end result—death. When death occurs, opportunities are gone. If our lives were a mess, it is too late to fix them once we die. While we have life, we have an opportunity to figure out things and put God in the proper place in our lives.

Let's all take time to do a serious self-assessment. Are we where we need to be in our walk with God? If not, let's fix it. Those "evil days" are coming.

Acts 5:1-10

(1) But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. (2) And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. (3) But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? (4) While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." (5) Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. (6) And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him. (7) Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. (8) And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much." (9) Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." (10) Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband.

We can perceive a mixed bag of Ananias and Sapphira's sins involved in this tragedy. Acts 4:36-37 informs us of Barnabas' sacrificial gift for the well-being of the newly formed church. Pride and desire for acclaim motivated the couple to give a gift but without the honesty or sacrifice exhibited by Barnabas and others.

"Why has Satan filled your heart" (verse 3) is the equivalent of "Why have you dared?" They were free to give whatever percentage they set, for Peter says that the entire property sale price was under their control. Their sin lay in deceitfully alleging that the amount they gave was the whole of the sale price, when it was actually only a part. They deviously exaggerated their offering.

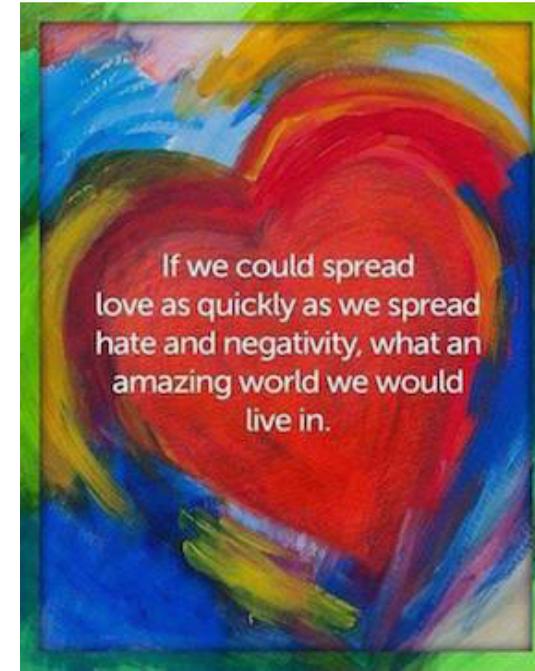
Some think this judgment was harsh, but Peter did not. He spoke of the sin as inspired of Satan, and the passage makes clear that both Ananias and Sapphira were fully aware of what they were doing (verses 2, 9). Conscious deceit is spiritually disastrous because trust is completely violated. They should have known better.

God interpreted their action as tempting Him, seeing how much they could get away with. Their way of reaching their goals is so opposed to the gospel that God could not allow it to go unchallenged; it would have set the whole mission of the church off course. Honesty and integrity are the standard of God's way of life. Sin is no light thing with God.

These people were living behind a deceptive façade, one similar to the idea that, if one keeps the front windows clean, it does not matter how dirty the back ones are. They allowed themselves to become tools working to destroy the family relationship of trust within the church. God forcibly reminded them and us that He will not abide that.

We must treat one another with fairness and loving kindness, or we will not be in His Family. Ananias and Sapphira are shocking reminders to us that we will not get away with deceitfully cheating or taking advantage of our brethren. God may not appear to be in the picture, but only the faithless have this blindness. The penalty will be paid—unless repented of, it is only a matter of time. Ananias and Sapphira paid quickly as a lesson to us. — *John W. Ritenbaugh*

August 23, 2020



Meeting Days and Times

Sunday 9:00 am

Wednesday Bible Class, singing & prayer - 6:00 pm

Zoom Times...

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