

When we forget that God still loves us, that Jesus' sacrifice still cleanses us, that Jesus still intercedes for us in heaven, then despair will inevitably overwhelm. Complacency will settle in, and eventually, worship becomes an empty ritual. We will never lose God, nor our fervor, until we forget His love which compels us to love Him, thank Him, and serve Him.

God loves us! He still loves us! What good news! And let us love one another just as God freely loves us.

Rickie Jenkins (Campbell Road church of Christ Facebook Page)



God's Order

Genesis chapters one through three, the opening of the Biblical text, could be considered three of the most important chapters in the entire Bible. Why? Because these chapters establish God's order. The creation account details how the all-power God of the universe spoke the world into existence and placed everything in it exactly how He saw fit. Not only that, God gave the instructions for how mankind was to live.

In Genesis 1.2 after God created the heaven and the earth it says, "The earth was without form and void" (ESV) or "the earth was waste and void" (ASV). One definition of "waste" is a "a broad and empty expanse" (Merriam-Webster's). In other words, the world was in disarray. As God continues the creation, He brings the world into order shaping it exactly how He wants it. In verse 3 God creates light, then in verse 4 separates the light into day and night. In verse 7 God separates the waters under the expanse from those above the expanse. God organized the light and waters how he wanted them. Then in verse 9 and 10, He organized the waters even more, and then produced dry land. As the account goes on, God produced vegetation and gave them their proper place, and created animals and mankind, and placed them in their proper habitat. The whole of the creation account points to God setting forth order.

Yet despite the beautiful creation it did not take long for disorder to enter the world. In Genesis 3 mankind succumbed to the temptation of the devil and brought sin into the world. The rest as they say is history.

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Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.
Jacksonville, FL 32220

Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Study / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

www.mariettacoc.com

Disorder or chaos ensues when God's word is disregarded or dismissed, and mankind substitutes their own desires instead. It is as true today as it ever has been. One of the reasons the world is in its current state is because God's will has in large part been disregarded. Romans 1.25 says, "who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." Many have rejected God's word as the source of truth. It's not as if God has hidden His way from mankind and we are left to figure it out on our own. God has made everything clear (Romans 1.20); people have instead chosen to openly reject Him instead (Romans 1.21). And the punishment that comes from rejecting God's way man brings upon himself.

Instead of walking looking to God, many are walking looking to themselves. A person who walks not looking where they are going is sure to fall. The same is true of a person who looks unto himself for guidance in the walk of life, instead of looking to God. Proverbs 14.12 says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." Also, Jeremiah 10.23 says, "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps."

A life best lived is one that puts God at its center and accepts His order. God created us; therefore, He knows what is best for us. Isaiah 55.9 says "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." God has given through His word a glimpse into the His mind and has given us what is necessary for us to know. How much better would the world be if people accepted and submitted to God's way instead of following their own or the popular opinion of the day. People often forget that God designed us, and the world, if he did that then of course He knows what is best for His creation. When we live by the order God has set forth, we will live the best life here, and it will lead to the best life in eternity. We need to test ourselves daily, to ensure that we are walking on the proper path. "Prove me, O Lord, and try me; test my heart and my mind" (Psalm 26.2 ESV).

Written by: Derek Steen

Even While Enemies

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.... For, if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. 5:8-10).

Love is easy if it's convenient, if it's to our benefit, and if it brings delight. But what about when none of those things are present? Remember these hard words: "...love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you" (Mt. 5:44). Well, that is exactly how God loves! That is how He expects us to love also. Jesus died for us even when "we were still sinners," even while we were his "enemies." Great is the love of God that sends His Son to save "sinners" and "enemies," including the ones who killed Him!

Furthermore, Jesus did not quit loving when He ascended to heaven. Even now, God loves sinners and His enemies.

Men come before God, scared. They have glimpsed the gates of hell, heard the screams of the damned, and felt the despair of the banished. Fear of judgment and punishment compels them. They dread "the terror of the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:11). Repentance is sparked by seeing what eternity holds for the lost. But not all who repent, do so out of fear. Others may view the cross and see a dying Savior placed there because of their sin: A sacrificial offering because God's love is too great to abandon them to hell. Such love compels men. Not all, but many repent and turn to God, responding to His manifest love. They don't "despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering," but are living proof that "the goodness of God leads ... to repentance" (Rom. 2:4).

Already a Christian? Already knelt at the foot of Jesus' cross? Well, God is not finished loving yet! Jesus' sacrifice continues for Christians! His love reaches and forgives even Christians who are bumbling, weak, ignorant and character flawed. They are His sons! They are committed to doing right and can often fail. On occasion, they fall on their face, and rise weeping — shamed by their sin. God still loves them. He still forgives His struggling and faltering sons. (Continued on back...)