

pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here Paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the gates of Hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good the design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgment, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.

Do you own a Bible? Chances are you do. Don't allow dust to gather on it. Pick it up, read it, and submit yourself to its teachings. It's the Word of God, a God who loves you. It will give you direction so that you can have an abundant life here and now and throughout eternity.

Quotable

In Germany, they first came for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist; then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Trade Unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me – and by that time no one was left to speak up.

– Martin Niemoller

News:

Ken and Tatyana are in Phoenix today. They plan to worship with the Eastside Congregation where a brother from Eastern European Missions will be presenting an update on on-going efforts to provide Bibles and study materials for schools in Ukraine and Russia. Please pray for a safe and informative trip
Please continue to pray for Tatyana's daughter Olga who is undergoing treatments for cancer.

Prayer List:

Healing: *Jerry Robinson's daughter Christie, Jerry Robinson's mother Norma. Mike Cavasos, Sandy Cavasos, Ben Atchley, Faye Atchley, Nicolas and Annie Self, Douglas and Jonda Gardner, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.*
Travels: *Brian and Billy Martin*

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Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

5 May 2013

Sermon Topics

**A.M.: The Value of Being a Christian:
How Does the World see Christ in Us?**

P.M.: Pollution

Isaiah 24

Pulpit Evangelist
Ken Knowlton: 428-5974

Elders
Ben Atchley: 428-2246
Greg Briggs: 428-8756
John Cunningham: 428-0895

Services

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

Be Gracious to Me

Miles Custis, Bible Study Magazine, March/April 2013
on Psalm 6

Psalm 6 is an individual lament psalm. These types of psalms display raw honesty as the psalmists often complain to God. These complaints rise out of suffering due to external forces (like enemies or oppressors) or internal forces (like sickness or physical suffering).

Here, the psalmist pleads with God to deliver him. He first begs that God not discipline him in anger. In the Bible, God's discipline is usually portrayed as a positive means of receiving instruction (see Prov 3:11-12). Have you ever felt like God was disciplining you? Why does the psalmist ask God not to rebuke or discipline him here? (Compare Jer 10:24.)

The psalmist describes his weakened state (Psa 6:2-7). His desperation is apparent in his cries for God to be gracious to him. Have you experienced physical or emotional desperation? How did you respond? Were you able to see God's hand in the situation and call to Him from your pain?

What does the psalmist appeal to when he asks God to save him (6:4)? How would saving the psalmist benefit God's "steadfast love?" What are some features of God's steadfast love that explain why the psalmist appeals to it? (Compare Psa 130:7-8 and Neh 1:5.) How have you seen God's steadfast love in your life?

The psalmist ends by acknowledging God has heard him (Psa 6:9). Lament psalms often end with notes of praise that demonstrate the lamenters' confidence that God will rescue them. When you struggle, are you confident in God's help? How can the psalmist's example encourage you when your confidence wanes?

For other individual lament psalms, read Psalms 10, 13, 38 and 142. How do the writers of these psalms address God? How can these psalms be an encouragement to you during difficult times?

The Purpose of the Bible

Steve Higginbotham, Think Magazine, March 2013

It was in the fall of 1980, and I was about to leave home for the first time to go off to college. With the help of my mother, I packed my belongings and headed to Tennessee. Upon arrival, I began unpacking my suitcases, and there it was, carefully packed on top of my neatly folded shirts. My mom had packed it for me. She didn't want me to leave home without it. She thought that the instruction, advice, and directions it would give me would be needed, and was she ever right! Just a week later, there I was, in a bind. I didn't know what to do. I needed help. I needed direction. So I searched in the bottom of one of my drawers and found the "washing instructions" my mother wrote out for me and did my laundry for the first time.

If you were thinking that the above paragraph was about a Bible my mother packed for me when I went off to college, I can understand. It fits. The purpose of the "washing instructions" as they pertained to the laundry is the same purpose of the Bible as it pertains to salvation. Both were written to instruct and give directions. Both were written to avoid mishaps. And both were written from a concerned, loving author.

The ultimate purpose of the Bible is to restore the fellowship that once existed between God and man, which was broken by man's sin. Not only does God take great interest in mankind because after all, we are His creation, but His interest in us rises to the level of sacrificial love (John 3:16). Consequently, God is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Through nature, God has revealed Himself to mankind. The apostle Paul said, "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20). However, while through nature one may know there is a God, he cannot know what to do in order to please that God and have a relationship with Him. This can only be fulfilled through a special revelation: the Bible.

God's desired end for mankind is accomplished through the Bible. The Bible teaches that mankind is sinful. Apart from the Bible, how would one be able to identify that he was a sinner? How would he ever be able to know that he was accountable for his actions to a holy God? The purpose of the Bible is to teach man how to please God.

Another purpose of the Bible is to teach us how to have an abundant life (John 10:10). Life holds many natural calamities that bring pain and heartbreak to our lives (e.g. accidents, illnesses, death, etc.). But consider how many calamities we bring upon ourselves because of sin. The Bible teaches us how to live in such a way that we avoid many of the actions that bring pain and sorrow to our lives. John said that God's commandments are not burdensome (1 John 5:3). In other words, they are given for our good.

Several years ago, we had a dog name Whitney. She was loved by everyone in our family. She was petted, played with, fed well, and had a large fenced-in back yard in which she could run chase squirrels to her heart's content. However, one day, she escaped the confines of the fence, ran into the street, and was killed by a truck. The fence was not designed to withhold good things from our dog; rather its design was to protect her from the many dangers outside the fence.

Likewise, the commandments contained in the Bible are not designed to keep us from enjoyment, but rather to protect us from countless things that can hurt us. Think of the pain and heartache men bring upon themselves when they escape the confines of God's "fence" and engage in activities forbidden by the Bible.

When I was a pre-teen, an elder in the congregation where my dad preached taught my Bible class to recite the following poem. This poem is entitled "The Bible," and its authorship is uncertain. It sums up the purpose of the Bible better than I've heard anyone express it. The poem says:

The Bible contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the