

Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

18 May 2014

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!" Psalm 122:2

Topics

A.M. Bible Class:

To Be Like Jesus (Matthew 10:24-42)

A.M. Lesson:

An Unknown God (Acts 17:16-33)

P.M. Lesson:

Be Strong and Courageous (Joshua 1:1-9)

Wednesday:

The Rise and Fall of the Government of Joash:

Good Counselors

(2 Kings 12; 2 Chronicles 24; 25:16)

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

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.

Leaving the State of Sin through Baptism

N.T. Wright

comments on Romans 6:1-5

Everybody knows Jesus' spectacular story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). The younger son twists his father's arm for his share of the property, goes off and spends it all, and comes home, he thinks, in disgrace. Then, to his astonishment, he finds his father running down the road to meet him,

and throwing a huge party in his honor. He is welcomed back as a son, even though he doesn't deserve it (and even though his older brother grumbles).

Now come forward a year or two, and imagine a thought stealing unbidden into the young man's mind. Life has settled down to a reasonably humdrum existence again. His older brother tolerates having him around, more or less; his father is getting older. He remembers with a happy sigh the day he came up the road and his father came running to greet him... And he thinks, supposing I did it again? Why not help myself to enough things to survive, run away for a few weeks, and then play the penitent and come back again? Maybe I'll get another party!

Absurd? Unthinkable? Don't you believe it. It's exactly what a great many people think. 'God will forgive me; that's his job!' declared a famous philosopher two centuries ago. And a great many people today seem to believe that the *only word* the church should say to anyone is the **message** of forgiveness. We must, as the phrase goes, be 'inclusive'; we must tell people that God accepts them exactly as they are. Sometimes this is backed up with a version of what Paul has just been saying: where sin abounded, grace abounded even more. So—the only thing to say to someone who sins is, 'That's fine. God loves you!'

So what is Paul's answer to the extraordinary suggestion in the first verse? What would he say to someone who declared that since God accepts us as we are, it is better to not change the way we are, since God has affirmed it as good?

His answer is that in becoming a Christian you move from one type of humanity to another, and you should never think of yourself in the original mode again. More particularly, in becoming a Christian, you *die and rise again with the Messiah*.

This means, first and foremost, a change of status. We are no longer located 'in sin'; grace has met us there (Romans 5:8, 20), not in order to tell us

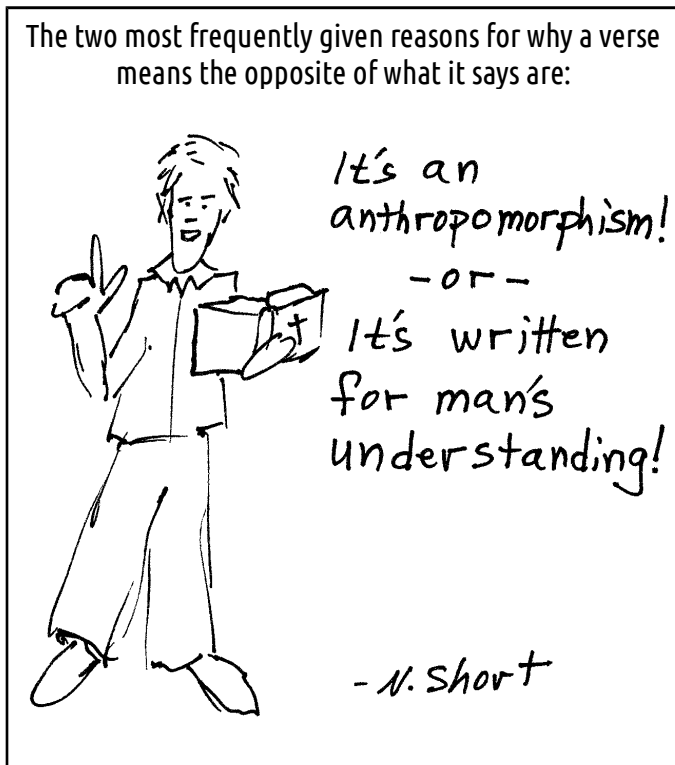
that we were all right as we were, but in order to rescue us and take us somewhere else. Living in accordance with a change of status requires that you recognize it and take steps to bring your actual life into line with the person you have become. When someone gets married, they may well not feel very different, but a change has occurred to which they must now conform. Promises have been made; those promises can be broken, but they can't be unmade.

Once you are baptized, of course, you can try to shirk or shrug off your new responsibilities. You can pretend you don't after all have a new status. Paul addresses that kind of problem in 1 Corinthians 10. But what you can't do is get unbaptized again. Don't even think of trying to go back to Egypt [slavery]. Better think carefully about who you now are, and set off for the promised land.

Pause first, and reflect. If you have been baptized, what does it mean to you? Should you be exploring its significance a bit more? If you haven't been baptized, is it time to think about it?

(Condensed)

Wright, N. T. *Paul for Everyone: Romans: Part 1: Chapters 1-8*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004. 98-102. Print.



Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke on you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find

rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy to bear, and my load is not hard to carry.

New English Translation

Being yoked to Jesus doesn't so much mean that we take on His burdens, but that He, pulling alongside us, takes on ours.

Lawrence O Richards

News

Graduation Reception Invitation

The Kescoli family invites the Safford church of Christ congregation to a graduation party for

Kennedy Kescoli

Thursday, May 22, 2014

2:00 P.M.

Safford Church of Christ

RSVP by May 16

(now late; but I'm sure Verdell will accept)

928-651-1653

Fellowship meal today.

Billy Martin is recovering from a foot and knee injury.

The Shorts plan to be traveling to/from Lubbock May 22-26.

Prayer List:

Hattie Hedrick, Della Phillips, H.L. Boling, Jerry Robinson's mother Norma, Mike and Sandy Cavasos, Faye Atchley, Nicolas and Annie Self, Jonda Gardner, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.

Isaiah 62:6

Jerusalem, on your walls I have posted watchmen,

who day and night

without ceasing will cry:

'You that invoke the

LORD's name,

take no rest...' (REB).

