

Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

3 May 2015

Topics

A.M. Bible Class:

Jesus prays for all believers (John 17:20-26)

A.M. Lesson:

The wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:18f)

P.M. Lesson:

Do not worry (Matthew 6:29-34)

Wednesday:

Singing

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	11:00 A.M.

*I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!" Psalm 122:2
Please silence your cell phones and other electronic devices.*

Jesus cut the Gordian Knot

a Lord's Supper meditation

Jack Cottrell, <http://jackcottrell.com>

The other day I was reading Romans 8:1-3 – “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh” (NASB).

When I read “Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death,” I thought of the GORDIAN KNOT legend (of which there are many versions). Here is one version:

In the 5th or 4th century B.C., an Asian kingdom—Phrygia—needed a new king. A prophet declared: the next person coming into town riding an oxcart will be the king. A peasant farmer, a fellow named Gordias, came riding in thus; and so he became the new king.

Later, near the end of his reign, he tied his oxcart (in the legend now a chariot) to a pole in the capital city (now Gordium) with a very intricate knot. It was declared that whoever could untie the knot would be the next king.

Many tried but failed. Then, around 333 B.C., a young warrior named Alexander (23 years old) arrived with his army. He tried very hard to find the ends of the knot and unravel it, but could not. So he just whipped out his sword and gave the Gordian knot a mighty whack – and sliced it apart, thus freeing the chariot from the pole. In this way he became the next king of Asia and is known to students of history as Alexander the Great.

Based on this legend the idea of a “Gordian Knot” has been used as a metaphor for any puzzle that seems unsolvable, or any problem that can be solved only by bold action. “Cutting the Gordian Knot” is a metaphor for that kind of action.

In the Romans text, when I saw the phrase, “the law of sin and of death,” I thought of the Gordian Knot. Ever since the Garden of Eden, sin and death have been united like two cords so intertwined as to be inseparable:

Genesis 2:17 – “the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

Ezekiel 18:9 – “The soul who sins will die.”

Romans 6:16, 23 – “sin resulting in death . . . the wages of sin is death.”

Thus Romans 8:2 refers to the LAW of sin and death – the rule that sin and death are so inseparably bound together, like the two strands of the Gordian Knot, that whoever SINS is condemned to DIE – physically, spiritually, eternally!

But here is Paul's point in this Scripture: like Alexander the Great, Jesus confronts that Gordian Knot of sin and death, and takes up the mighty sword of the CROSS, and splits that knot apart! Sin and death are no longer inevitably tied together! Sin no longer HAS to be followed by death! The person who sins—every one of us—no longer has to suffer the second death in the lake of fire that burns forever and ever!

Yes, we are sinners. Yes, we were under the penalty and condemnation of death—condemned to spend eternity in hell. But because of Christ and his offering for sin on the cross, "He condemned sin in the flesh"! He "set us free from the law of sin and of death"! He took the curse upon himself; he died in our place! WE are the SINNERS, but HE took the DEATH we deserve! With the sword of his cross he cut the knot that tied us sinners to the curse of death!

This is why Paul can say in Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation—no death, no hell—for those who are in Christ Jesus."

This is what you can thank God for as you are taking the Lord's Supper today.

Christian forgiveness of ISIS goes viral

Christianity Today, May 2015

More than 1 million people watched on Arabic television as 10-year-old Myriam, an Iraqi Christian forced to flee Mosul, Iraq, as ISIS advanced last year, forgave her persecutors. "I will only ask God to forgive them. Why should they be killed?" she told SAT-7 in its most-watched interview ever. The Christian broadcaster also hosted Bashir Estephanos, the brother of 2 of the 21 Christians beheaded in Libya, who prayed for the killers on air. "[Their] calls are a form of resistance—through forgiveness," said Farid Samir, SAT-7's Egypt director. The statements drew praise from the region's secular Arabic press, and the dean of Islamic studies at Cairo's al-Azhar University later read Matthew 5's "love your enemies" at a seminar.

A personal observation: We recently attended a worship service in another town. There were two ladies seated two rows in front of our pew. They

talked with each other during the entire worship service. It was quite a distraction. During the Lord's Supper, one of the ladies told the other about her daughter who was offered a new job and who is in the process of moving. When the communion trays went by, they both took of the emblems and then went on with their conversation.

In countries hostile to Christianity, children are making adult professions of faith and they are losing their lives for those confessions. There are adults in our own public assemblies who are too busy or self-distracted to worship in song, prayer or communion.

Hillary Clinton said in a speech at the sixth annual Women in The World Summit on April 23, 2015, "Laws have to be backed up with resources and political will And deep-seated cultural codes, religious beliefs and structural biases have to be changed."

When religious persecution comes to my front door or into our worship assemblies, will I be able to confess Jesus before men? My behavior in worship might be telling me something. -Neil Short

News:

Megan Short will graduate from Junior High School on Friday, May 15, 7 P.M. at the First Baptist Church.

Greg Briggs had cataract surgery on Thursday.

Prayer List:

Joy Gibson—cancer treatments

Tatyana Knowlton—macular degeneration

Ken Cocke—back and shoulder pains

Janet Radar—nursing home

H.L. Boling—general health and complications from leukemia, grief comfort

Mike Cavasos—constant pain, foot surgeries

Sandy Cavasos—degenerative disk disease

Nic and Ani Self—health and personal needs

Neil Short, editor. neshort@yahoo.com.
<http://saffordchurchofchrist.org>

