

Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2023.09.11

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Sermon recordings

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Speaker-AM: Jamie Rinehart

Title: God's Power

Recording:

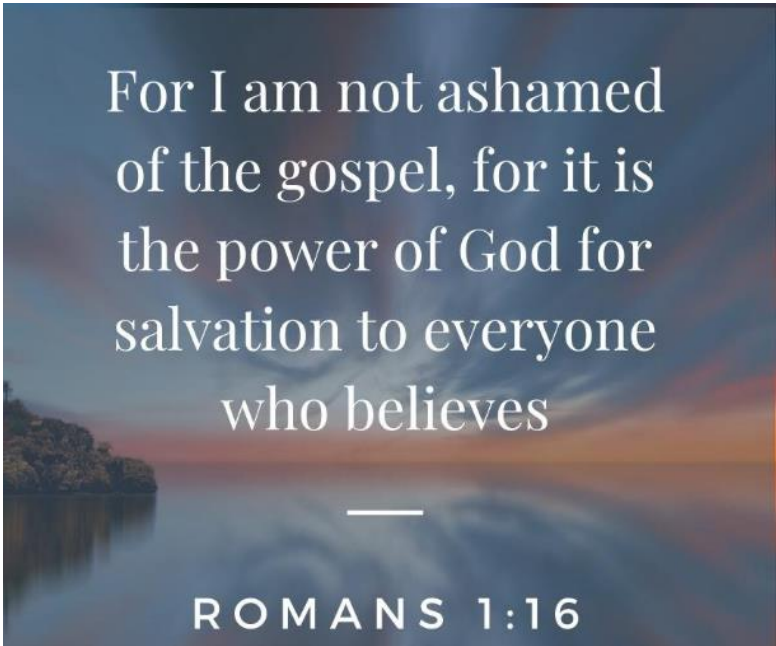
oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/gods-power

Speaker-PM: Steve Helterbrand

Title: 7 Great Things

Recording:

oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/seven-great-things



For I am not ashamed
of the gospel, for it is
the power of God for
salvation to everyone
who believes

ROMANS 1:16

THEREFORE, GET RID OF ALL MORAL
FILTH AND EVERY EXPRESSION OF
EVIL, AND HUMBLY ACCEPT THE
WORD PLANTED IN YOU, WHICH
CAN SAVE YOUR SOULS.

- JAMES 1:21

Unless You Repent, 09/08/2023 By Sam Bunyard

“... unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Lk 13:3).

This was the response of Jesus to tragedies experienced by people of His day. Some came to Him with news of certain Jews who had been killed by Pilate. In other news, a tall tower had fallen in Siloam and killed eighteen people. These unfortunate events were not some sort of divine punishment as many suspected – but Jesus taught that divine punishment would find everyone whose sins were not forgiven (Lk. 13:1-5).

Less and less people are professing a belief in divine punishment. They want to hang their hats on “for God so loved the world... [it] should not perish” without the conditions of “whoever believes in Him” and “he who does the truth” (Jn. 3:16, 21). Others may accept the scriptural reality of divine punishment for the unsaved, but they water down the truth – professing a belief in total annihilation rather than a literal hell.

It is interesting that Jesus taught more about hell than anyone else in the Bible, and yet it is Jesus that people cite as the reason for their disbelief in eternal punishment. Jesus described the nature of judgment for the devil and his angels as “everlasting fire” (Mt. 25:41). This is the same word He used later in the context to describe punishment for wicked men – “everlasting punishment” (Mt. 25:26). Jesus said, “it is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched, where worm does not die and fire is not quenched” (Mk. 9:42-48).

The love of Christ does not mean that eternal punishment does not exist, but His teaching on its reality and His willing sacrifice show that He wants us to be saved from it. We must repent – lest we likewise perish!



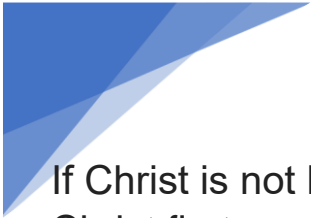
Christ First! Last! and Always! 05/10/2021 by Jefferson David Tant

“I beseech you ... brethren ... to present your bodies a living sacrifice ... And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:1-2). We all know the words. Do we really know what they mean?

“All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.
All to Jesus I surrender,
Humbly at His feet I bow;
Worldly pleasures all forsaken,
Take me Jesus, Take me now.
All to Jesus I surrender,
Lord, I give myself to Thee;
Fill me with Thy love and power,
Let Thy blessing fall on me.
I surrender all ...
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all” (J. W. Van de Venter).

We know the words, but do we sing them from the heart, or just from the lips?

We must all agree that many of God’s people are sorely lacking in real spiritual life. There is no zeal. There is no fire. The salt has lost its savor. The light has grown dim. Perhaps we need to confront ourselves soberly with a tough question: “Do I put Christ first in my life by complete surrender and commitment to Him?” Right now, jot down the things in life that are most important to you. Be perfectly honest — don’t fudge. Be sure to include job, family, personal comfort, social relationships, possessions, Christ, etc.



If Christ is not honestly at the head of the list, ask, “Would I be willing to put Christ first — ahead of my social life?” Sometimes when we might have the opportunity to serve Christ, whether it be attending mid-week Bible study, or visiting the sick, etc., we are excused because “This is my night to bowl,” or “Our company stayed too late...”

Did you take a job knowing you would be unable to participate in worship assemblies and Bible studies regularly? Be really frank with yourself. Is Christ first? Have you put absolute faith and trust in His promise of Matthew 6:33?

Did you miss a gospel meeting in order to see your son play in the baseball game? The excuse: “This creates a bond between me and my son, and will help me lead him in the way of Christ.” But which came first — Christ or family? Can we actually put Christ first — ahead of them? Why should God ask such an outlandish thing? Yet, we recall Jesus saying, “He that loveth father or mother ...son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10:33)

Sure, the problem is difficult. If you don’t believe it, try it yourself. The same test was put to Abraham when he was asked to sacrifice his son, Isaac. Abraham became the “father of the faithful” when he answered the question in God’s favor. The rich young ruler (Matthew 19) “went away sorrowful” because he answered the question in what he thought was his own favor. Like the ruler, we have allowed our material prosperity and our environment to bind, gag, and deliver us to the world, the flesh, and Satan.

What a joy of release when we can finally say, “I surrender all.” Then will we have presented our bodies a “living sacrifice unto God.” Then will we fully realize that we are not our own, “for ye were bought with a price” (I Corinthians 6:19-20). Then the world will take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus (Acts 4:13). Then will the Lord be Alpha and Omega — forever!