

## SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Song Leader

Lord's Supper

Prayers

## SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Scripture Reading

Song Leader

Lord's Supper

Prayers

## WEDNESDAY

Announcements

Song Leader

Prayers

Invitation

## ABOUT US

### Elders

Jack Calvert     Rodney Ellis

### Deacons

Jon Barry     Bill Brittenham  
Mike Davis     Clay Morris

### Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

## SERVICE TIMES

### Sunday

Bible Study ..... 9:30 A.M.  
Worship ..... 10:15 A.M.  
Worship ..... 6:00 P.M.

### Wednesday

Bible Study ..... 7:00 P.M.

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## GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

**Hear** the word of truth ..... Romans 10:13-17

**Believe** the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

**Repent** from all sins .... Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

**Confess** the name of Christ ... Matthew10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

**Be Baptized** in His name ..... Mark 16:16;  
1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

**Walk** in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death ..... Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

# Think On These Things

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### Noise

Russ Bowman

As I am moving into the "older age" stage of life, I've noticed that the junk mail I receive seems to be focused on three things: AARP membership; life insurance; hearing aids. Now I could care less about the AARP, and I have enough life insurance that I'm already suspicious when my wife cooks something "special." But the hearing aids...? I probably ought to look into those.

I've suffered from poor hearing throughout most of my adult life. I know why – too much time working around loud machinery on construction jobs; too many concerts where I got as close to the stage as possible (thanks Charlie Daniels); too much gunplay. Trust me when I say a .44 magnum will ring your ears like nothing else. So here I am, slogging through my late fifties with a frequent, "Huh?" And it's even worse when there is any kind of ambient noise. Put me in a crowd or in a vehicle or anywhere that background noise is present and I can't hear it thunder. Tracy

says it's selective hearing (I think that's what she says – I can't hear her most of the time.)

Noise can be bothersome in any environment, whether literal auditory din or whether figurative overload of information. Such is certainly the case in the religious world right now. There is an abundance of information, and misinformation, being blasted in every form of publication imaginable. Occasionally someone will bemoan the difficulty we seem to face when it comes to "evangelism" as if somehow we are not trying hard enough or not using the most effective procedure. What we fail to appreciate is the noise that spiritually inclined people must process. We might proclaim the truth from the housetop, but when every housetop around us is screaming something different (and often something less challenging) at the top of their lungs, it makes the task more challenging. And what a confusion for those who are trying to sort through the

## FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Bonnie Allgor, Maxine Burnham, Ann Thomas and Francine Davis.** Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

**Kava, Nancy Rowe's** granddaughter got her cast last week for her broken elbow. Also, please remember **Nancy's** brother, **Sammie Walker**, and her sister, **Ida Walker**.

**Vera** continues to heal slowly. Check on her when you can. She has a progress report with the doctor on Monday.

**Mike** and **Debbie Davis** are doing much better. However, **Mike** is still having some breathing problems.

Here is the current schedule of services:

**Bible Study:** 9:30 AM

**Services:** 10:15 AM

**Kids Only:** 5:00 PM

**Wednesday:** 7:00 PM

Additionally, we are having studies on:

**Tuesday:** 7:00 PM

**Friday:** 7:00 PM

**Ladies Bible Class:** Suspended until further notice.

noise so that they are listening to the Lord and not to some charlatan.

If you are searching for the truth, or if you are trying to help someone else in their search for the truth, can I offer a consideration or two?

In Luke 20.1-7, Jesus is in the temple just days before His arrest, trial, death, and resurrection. He is preaching the good news to the people gathered there, and it is clear from the context that they are listening to Him enthusiastically. After all, they had only days previously paraded Him into the city as the Messiah of prophecy (Lk.19.37f). Concerned about His influence and their own estimation in the eyes of the multitudes, the religious authorities confront Jesus. "*Tell us, by what authority are you doing these things? Or who is he who gave you this authority?*" (v.2). Jesus replies by questioning their own integrity, while at the same time, answering their question (though in an indirect way). "*The baptism of John – was it from heaven or from men?*" John had consistently born witness to Jesus as the Savior, and while many of the Jews had hailed John as a prophet, the religious leaders were obviously suspicious of him and did not accept him as a true spokesman from God. In a veiled way, Jesus is answering the question, as if to say, "My authority is the same as John's. His baptism was from heaven. My authority is from heaven." Yet the religious leaders do not consider the question from the perspective of truth. Instead, they consider what will be the impact if they answer one way or the other. "*If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us...*" Their conclusion is to merely avoid the question by claiming ignorance. Jesus, given their refusal to consider the truth, refuses to directly answer their question.

There are a couple of principles revealed in this passage that prove truly valuable in this age where there is so much noise out there. First, we must be willing to ask good questions of those who are promoting their

message. The problem in this encounter is not that the religious leaders are questioning Jesus. It is **always** appropriate to seek the authority behind someone's teaching. Just because someone has a doctorate in divinity or theology or philosophy does not make him/her right in their teaching. Moreover, years and years of experience do not equate to accuracy. Just because I've been preaching for 35 years doesn't mean I've got all of the answers. Or any of the answers for that matter. Human beings have been espousing inaccurate doctrine about God for thousands of years. God warned His people under the Old Law about false teachers (Deu.18.8-22; 13.1f), and He did the same for those of us who are under the Law of Christ (Mt.7.13f; 2

Pet.2.1f). If you're trying to decide what to believe about God and Jesus and right and wrong, then go to the Bible. That's where we are told about Jesus in the first place. It makes no sense to learn about Jesus from the Bible but then dismiss the Bible when we want to find out how to serve Him. Don't be afraid to question the messenger about authority. And if the answer is not offered clearly from the Bible, then dismiss that messenger.

Second, we must be honest with the authority, evidence, and answers we find. Jesus knew the religious leaders of His day. They knew of His authority. They were familiar with His miracles and His teaching. They were not asking their question to seek truth, but to find a way to discredit Him. So, His question about John the Baptist made them face their integrity. And they balk at the answer. It is often the case, when we want to know what the Bible says about forgiveness or worship or marriage or character or any other aspect of serving God, that we don't particularly like the

answer. God's word challenges us to be honest. Perhaps the truth will demand that we fulfill conditions of forgiveness that others dismiss as unnecessary, things such as repentance or baptism. I may have to confront decisions I've made previously that will require huge changes in my life because I find those decisions to be opposed to God's will – my marital status; my language; my sexual activities; my ego; my greed. It is possible that I find the Bible in disagreement with long-held family beliefs and traditions. Faith and obedience may demand that I break from the religious practices of my parents and grandparents, or my old friends, or my "church". It is imperative that, if we are to please God, we learn to examine His word, consider His answers/will/directives, and be honest with our response to such. If we reason from consequences ("If I accept this teaching, then this will happen") and allow such to determine our response, then we are doomed. We cannot expect to appreciate God's word and faithfully please Him, if we are dishonest.

It's hard for me to understand someone when there's too much background noise. My hearing has deteriorated to the point that their words are often inaudible – they are lost in the din. Such is the case, I'm convinced, with the sincere gospel of Christ in our modern world. There's just so much noise. It is imperative that we learn to deal with it. We must work hard to make sure the message is right. We cannot place our soul in the hands of those with the loudest message or the one that is most entertaining. We must look to the authority. And we must be honest when we find it.

–Russ Bowman

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