

The Messenger

COLDWATER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dec. 8, 2013



Christian Morality

In July of last year, a popular atheist blogger named Leah Libresco shocked the atheist and theist community by announcing she was renouncing atheism and converting to theism. What caused this woman who was reared in a secularly-focused household and went by the alias “the Raving Atheist” to change her mind about the existence of God? It seems that she could not arrive at a sufficient explanation of the source of morality without God being in the picture. NBC news reports, “After a back-and-forth where her friend asked her to make an argument about where moral law comes from, she couldn't think of any. She then realized that it had to come from something like a person or being.”

We have all heard expressions like, “be good for goodness sake,” “just follow your heart,” “just do what feels right” as guidance for making moral decisions. While these might be pleasant platitudes, they all point toward a human-centered view of morality. They are dependent on human opinion and judgment and therefore are to be classified as subjective. This means that morality is dictated by human opinion. In effect, man becomes his own god. If this is true, then one person’s morality is as good as another. For instance, what does it mean to “be good for goodness ...

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you... (1 John 1:5).

**VISITORS,
WELCOME!**

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Class

10:30 a.m. WORSHIP

1:00 p.m. WORSHIP

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Class

We have Bible classes for
all ages & Pew Packers
each Sunday at 12:30

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ELDERS

Billy Bland

Seth Daniel

Jim Jackson

W. Timothy Wilkes, Sr.

DEACONS

Jason Bayless Jared Brown

Jerry Davis Jeffrey Ferrell

Ron Johnson Andy Ratliff

PREACHER

Clifton Angel

... sake?” Who decides what is “good”? Do we all define “good” in the same way? Is “good” something that is dependent on our social context or does it apply universally? Such is the ultimate question of morality: “What is good?” This is the question that philosophers have debated over the centuries. I submit to you that any subjective explanation of morality ultimately fails. Under subjective systems, morality is ultimately reduced to “what is right for me is right for me, and what is right for you is right for you.” This obviously results in contradictions and does not provide a sound basis for human behavior.

By contrast, the Bible upholds that morality exists as a universal law akin to laws of science (e.g. gravity). It is not dependent on human opinion, but independent of such. The following are a few principles of Christian morality:

(1) The Christian worldview teaches that morality is rooted in the very nature of God. Christians are called to be like God and therefore are called to be moral (Lev. 11:44; 1 Pet. 1:16). Christians are to be holy because God is holy. Therefore, morality is objective (i.e. existing outside of human opinion). It remains true regardless of whether humans believe and follow it or not. This is contrary to and incompatible with the offerings of morality set forth by secular humanists, which are subjective (i.e. based on human opinion).

(2) The driving principle behind all of God’s laws is love: Love for God and for human beings. The Bible states, “God is love” (1 John 4:8). Since morality is rooted in God’s nature then it stands to reason that love is the heart of biblical morality. When asked what the greatest law was, Jesus answered: “‘You shall love the LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matt 22:37– 40). “Love” is not just shown in kindness, consideration and compassion. It includes those things, but it is something much deeper. True love is present in a mind that...

...genuinely and self-sacrificially operates in the best interest of the object of love. It is modeled after what Christ did for us on the cross. The ultimate manifestation of our love toward God is to deny self and live by His commandments (Jn. 14:15).

(3) Human response to the gospel, properly understood, is not some sort of selfish striving to earn salvation or merely avoiding torment by “being good”. It is not a moral checklist that somehow merits salvation. Such is an oversimplified perversion of Biblical Christianity. It is realizing that by sin, we have separated ourselves from God and earned death (Isa. 59:1-2; Rom. 6:23). But it is also realizing that God loved mankind so much that He sent His only begotten son to die for the forgiveness of our sins (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:10). Deciding to turn from sin (which is focused on selfishly serving oneself) and toward God is an act of penitence and gratitude in response to God’s goodness (Rom. 2:4). A truly converted person will gladly and willingly keep His commandments set forth in His word.

To simplify, the heart of Biblical morality is self-sacrificial love for God and mankind, which is rooted in God’s nature and is in response to His goodness.

—Torrey Clark

www.declarehim.blogspot.com

Teachers Needed!

Each of you are to be commended for your continual service in the church through teaching our Bible classes that we offer on Sundays and Wednesdays. A new quarter begins January 5, which is rapidly approaching. Please see Jeffrey Ferrell if you are willing to teach a class next quarter. Thank you, again!

Sermon Review

“You’re Better Than That”

(1 Corinthians 6:1–20)

- I. They were Fighting over Small Matters
- II. They were Dividing over Scrupulous Matters
- III. They were Slighting over Sinful Matters

How to Live Godly in an Ungodly World:

In Marital Matters

(1 Corinthians 7:1–40)

- I. Restrain (7:1–9)
- II. Maintain (7:10–24)
- III. Remain (7:7–8, 25–40)

NEWS & NOTES

Please Pray

Tim Wilkes, II and family; **Jared Brown** and family; **Joe Owen**, neck surgery Dec 18; **Inez Neyman**; **Betty Tuggle**, arthritis in eye; **Wiley Tuggle**; **Sue Cobern**; **Helen Bowman**.

Far East Missions Fishers of Men NetCasters

Family & Friends

Eli Williams, his cancer has returned and he will begin treatments again; **Janie Brister**, Ruth's sister-in-law, oral procedure on her jaw, she received a good report at follow-up; **Janet Colvett**, low platelets, had to return to hospital; **Bobby Gayton**; **Marie Sims**, Ashby Johnson's mother, cancer treatment now, surgery January; **James Cooper**, Jan's brother, stomach cancer; **Vicky Davis**, cancer has spread to brain; **Vicki Angel**, Clifton's mom, recovering well; **Ray Maples**; **John & Anita Simpson** & family, John had a successful surgery and is scheduled to have another in January; **Martha Hatfield**, Lynn's grandmother, has stage 4 cancer; **Cindy Jones' family**; **LaJuan Collums'**, receiving treatments for cancer, battles other health problems also; **Virginia Johnson**, wife of gospel preacher Roger Johnson, has stage 4 lung cancer; **Juanita Wooten**; **Joy Angel**, battling various health problems; **JoAnn Prestage**, Sara Norris' sister, cancer; **Tasha Higginbotham**, in need of a kidney transplant; **Linda Perkins**, Tim West's mother-in-law, leukemia; **Mac Owen**; **Bob Spurlin**; **Ally Jo Kelly**, toddler with leukemia; **Brad & Sheri Daniel**, in efforts of adoption of baby Faith; **Carly Wright**, 3 yr. old with liver cancer; **Joe & Josephine Johnston**, and their sons, Charles and Chris; **Frederick Bland**; **Carla Carlson**.

Birthdays

12/17 Kaiden Ferrell
12/22 Dalton Owen
12/23 Jeremy Moore
12/24 Daniel Owen
12/27 Reese Kinney
12/30 Renee Davis

Anniversary

12/13 Jerry & Renee Davis

Get Involved!

Children's Ornament Exchange -- TODAY
Between services; See Anna for details

Holiday Baskets -- TODAY
See Jeffrey between services to help put together
Give money to Jeffrey to help with cost of contents

Providence Place Devo -- TODAY -- 2:30 PM

Singing Night -- Dec 25 -- 7 PM

5th Sunday Devo -- Dec 29 -- 1 PM

No BIBLE BOWL for December
Will Resume January 18; Genesis 25 – 27
At Looxahoma, 10:30 AM

Privileged to Serve

Sunday, December 8

Morning

Prayer Before Class	Billy Bland
Announcements	Jason Bayless
Song Leader	Andy Ratliff
Lord's Supper:	
Preside	Seth Daniel
	Joe Owen
Assist	Daniel Owen
	Dalton Owen
Opening Prayer	Timothy Wilkes, Sr.
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Closing Prayer	Jeremy Moore

Afternoon

Song Leader	Andy Ratliff
Opening Prayer	Jim Jackson
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Lord's Supper	Joe Owen
	Daniel Owen
	Ron Johnson
Closing Prayer	

Wednesday, December 11

Song Leader	Andy Ratliff
Prayer	Jeffrey Ferrell
Invitation	Clifton Angel
Prayer	Jerry Davis