

SOUNDS OF SALEM

A MONTHLY PRINT AND DIGITAL NEWSLETTER OF SALEM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VENEDOCIA, OHIO

Volume 23 Issue 3

March 2021

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

²⁴ *"No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money (Matthew 6:24 NLT).*

"Who do we truly serve" is an excellent topic to ponder for our devotional time in Lent.

I love to retell a story that in a course on geriatrics in a Bible college, a professor assigned his students a paper titled "**A Biblical Retirement Plan.**" They began throwing out ideas for the term paper. But, before they were dismissed from class, he added, "**Anybody who writes this paper will fail the course!**"

He went on to tell them that although the Bible has a great deal to say about life, aging, and death, it says nothing about retirement from God's work. However, it does have something to say about the idea of refocusing our lives more fully into God's business, and the Bible teaches us that we must keep our commitment to God even in the face of death during our last moments. God wants to be our only Master.

Jesus was offered all the kingdoms of this world by Satan, the ruler of this world. In reply, Luke 4:8 says, "Jesus refused, again backing his refusal with Deuteronomy: 'Worship the Lord your God and only the Lord your God. Serve him with absolute single-heartedness. (MSG)'"

For Lent, ask yourself, "**What holds you back from meditating on the Word of God, praying, listening to the Holy Spirit, and giving God your all until the last day of your life?**" What masters have risen to the ruling throne in your Life? Sadly, most people choose money, leisure, popularity, power, things, or even themselves as masters of their lives.

Always remember that our Father wants to be the loving and fulfilling Master that you desire. Only He can satisfy you in this world and the world beyond.

Pastor Tom Emery



At the Cross

I know a place, a wonderful place
Where accused and condemned
Find mercy and grace
Where the wrongs we have done
And the wrongs done to us
Were nailed there with Him
There on the cross

At the cross (at the cross)
He died for our sin
At the cross (at the cross)
He gave us life again

I know a place, a wonderful place
Where accused and condemned
Find mercy and grace
Where the wrongs we have done
And the wrongs done to us
Were nailed there with You
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[At the Cross](#) - link - by Terry Butler, Vineyard Music Worship

Happy are the Humble

Have you ever noticed how many unhappy people there are in this world? With all the comforts and gadgets of our modern world, we don't seem to have found the key

to happiness. Even among Christians, with all the God-given gifts at their disposal, there seems to be a lack of happiness. Our generation has decided that this time on earth is the only existence we'll have, the only chance at happiness. So, if we search and don't find happiness, we are left only with despair. Many people have pitted their hopes on what this world can provide; and when things start to go bad, they have nothing left to bring them joy and peace.

In Jesus' first words of His greatest sermon known to us as The Beatitudes, Jesus begins to describe a new kingdom. It is not the outward kingdom where most people seek happiness, but the inward kingdom of the heart. When He says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," Jesus isn't talking about material poverty, but about spiritual pride. He is speaking of the inward attitude of the heart. With nowhere else to turn, the desperate may turn to Jesus, the only One who can offer the deliverance they seek. The poor in spirit have the advantage of being able to cry out to God for help.

A person who is poor in spirit goes begging on the inside. His heart is destitute, and he is begging for God to get to the bottom of his problem. When a person comes to this sense of emptiness, he is on the threshold of happiness through the kingdom of God. Psalm 34:18 says, "The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart and saves such as have a contrite spirit." God identifies with those who beg on the inside. We might call this, "hitting rock bottom."

Jesus told the story of the proud Pharisee who, when praying, told God all the wonderful things he had done. Meanwhile, the tax collector beat his breast and muttered, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" The Lord told this story to the crowd of people who thought themselves righteous, and He noted that it was the tax collector who went home justified. Luke 18:14 says, "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humble himself will be exalted." That tax collector had money, but in spite of his outward wealth, he had a sense of the bankruptcy of his heart. In his emptiness, he cried out to God for mercy. He was blessed because He found God.

Those who are poor in spirit will recognize that they are out of step with the world. Our culture has a tendency to think in this way. Happy are the hard-hearted for they never get hurt. Happy are they who complain, for they get their own way. Happy are the knowledgeable for

they know their way around. Happy are the troublemakers for they make people take notice of them. There is a tension between walking Christ's way and walking in the way of the world.

Those who are poor in spirit will realize their emptiness apart from God. The person who is poor in spirit doesn't boast of his talents or attainments because he knows he has nothing except from God. If he is gifted, it's because God gave him much. In his soul are the sins that put Christ on the cross. We do not control our own destiny. If we build our dreams on the material world, at any moment they can be dashed.

In Luke 12:16-20, the Lord Jesus told the story of a man with mistaken ideas of poverty and riches. In his self-centeredness, the man says, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink and be merry." Then God says, "Fool! This night your soul will be required of you." If we lay up treasure in the outward kingdom, and never give attention to the inward kingdom, we will never find happiness. The tragedy isn't that a person will be without what he needs. The tragedy is that a person will never recognize what he truly needs.



Those who are poor in spirit will reach out to others with a spirit of love and compassion. The spirit of the world tells us to develop a thick skin. But in the New Testament you find Jesus saying the exact opposite. Jesus wept, He had compassion on the crowds, He invested Himself in close relationships. A self-centered person is unable to reach out to others, for he loves only himself. A person who is poor in spirit will reach out to others in love.

Those who are poor in spirit will reach their highest joy in serving. Everyone wanted to lift Jesus up as king, but He simply said, "I did not come to be ministered to, but to minister." Some people have discovered that true happiness is found not in getting what you want, but in giving to others what they need.

Don't search for happiness in the outward kingdom, you won't find it. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The person who is poor in spirit will experience a joy found only in heaven. He will understand what true happiness is – an inward happiness that God gives to those who call on Him.

Adapted from: "Happy Are the Humble" in [How to Be Happy According to Jesus: The Study of the Beatitudes](#) by Dr. David Jeremiah (used in the Salem Women's Bible Study).

**Where Your Treasure Is,
There Your Heart Is Also**

Heaven is the safest place to store our treasures. Our treasures are safe there, and we are safer when we put them there ([Matthew 6:21](#)). If we place our treasure in heaven, our hearts will follow and be as safe as the treasure.

We lay up treasures in heaven by investing in God's causes and God's people. The effects of such investments last forever. We store treasures in heaven by worshiping God, growing in knowledge and grace, and growing in love for God and neighbor. The Greek roots of the word "philanthropy"— meaning "love" and "mankind." By giving, we demonstrate our love for humanity.

The value of stocks and real estate rolls up and down. The only genuinely safe investment is in the kingdom and the people of God. People live forever. If we put our effort into accumulating this world's treasures, the heart probably will not be satisfied.

It is unusual to earn twice as much money as one could dream possible, but it is not unusual to confess, "It still isn't enough." Solomon said, "I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure.... Yet when I surveyed all that ... I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless" ([Ecclesiastes 2:10-11](#)).

Cooks like to say that hunger is the best seasoning. If so, then a simple hamburger tastes better to a hungry man than a gourmet meal tastes to a well-fed man. As Solomon says, "Whoever loves money never has money enough" ([Ecclesiastes 5:10](#)). But if wealth never satisfies us, how can it become a god?

Jesus gives us a choice. God and **mammon (greedy wealth)** offer alternative ways of life — they battle for our loyalty. Will we store up treasures on earth or in heaven? Will our eyes be generous or envious? Will we serve God or mammon?

We know whom the Lord wants us to serve. He has told us where the lasting treasure lies. But, for the moment, he presents a choice, not a command: You can store

up treasures on earth or in heaven, but not both. You can serve God or mammon, but not both.

Certain traits identify those who live for mammon. Some save and save, for they feel secure only when they have a hoard of wealth. Others spend and spend because they believe money, well spent, can gain them "the good life," a life of peace and pleasure. They give away very little—perhaps one to four percent of their income — just enough to avoid feeling guilty about their greed.

Another set of traits marks those who live for God. They like to give money away and like it better if no one notices. They are generous with their skills, giving them away (as volunteers) when appropriate instead of charging for everything. They give the basic tithe and more, if possible.

Not many, even among the noblest disciples, can entirely avoid the love of money. What shall we say when we detect service to mammon in ourselves? The same self-examination that reveals a disciple's sin also reveals deeper truths. Every believer knows and is known, loves, and is loved by God.

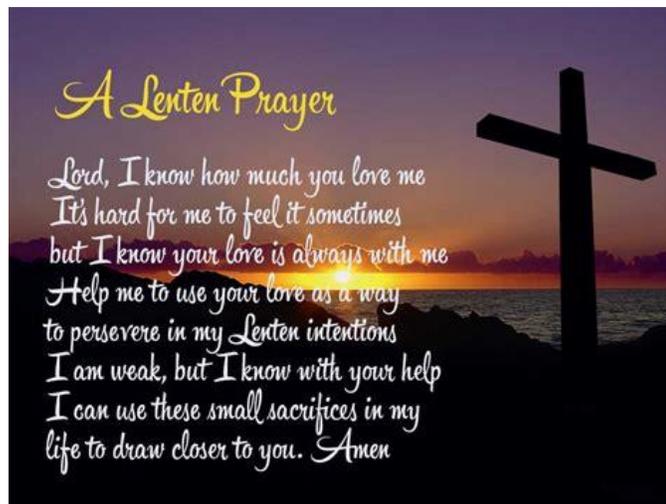
Money also seeks our love. It attempts to bind us to itself with promises of wealth. But wealth is an elusive lover; the

object of affection slips just out of reach.

As Hosea says, "She will chase after her lovers but not catch them; she will look for them but not find them." Devotees of mammon forget that God provides our grain, wine, and oil ([Hosea 2:7-8](#)). The prosperity gospel does us no favors in our battle with mammon. But even the apparently innocuous interest in stewardship can be problematic.

The concept of stewardship is sound, but it can lead us to think of ourselves as "the one to whom God (wisely) entrusted his wealth," and the ones entrusted to administer it. To love God rather than wealth, we must trust Him, rather than worrying. We must not hoard and must instead give freely to the church and the poor. By giving, we show that our heart is fixed on the Lord, not on a corruptible hoard here on earth ([Luke 12:33](#)).

Consider the heart issue this way: If an agent dragged you into court and accused you of loving Jesus, could your checkbook and credit cards be summoned as



evidence against you? If auditors examined your finances, would they find proof of your love of God? If our vacation and restaurant bills exceed our giving, what might that signify?

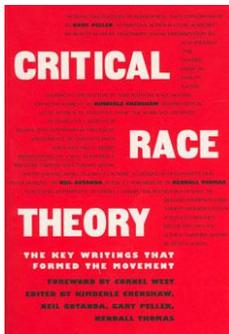
If we love God rather than mammon, it will show in each sphere of life — in our heart, mind, and strength.

Adapted from “What Does it Mean ‘Where Your Treasure Is There Your Heart Is Also?’” by Dave Jenkins. Christianity.com

Critical Race Theory, and How Should a Christian View It?"

14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting (Ephesians 4:14 NLT).

Not that long ago, conversations involving Critical Race Theory were largely relegated to academic papers, classroom discussions, and scholarly journal articles. Today, teachings about CRT can be found across social media, in corporate boardrooms, the media, public schools, and even in our denomination.



Unlike Critical Race Theory, the Biblical response is that our identity is found in our relationship to God: By nature, as His creatures. By sin, as rebels against Him. By grace, as His children.

It is a modern radical leftist approach to social change, developed from the broader critical theory, which developed out of Marxism. **Critical race theory (CRT)** approaches issues such as justice, racism, and inequality, with a specific intent of reforming or reshaping society. Critical race theory is grounded in several key assumptions. Among these are the following:

- American government, law, culture, and society are inherently and inescapably racist rather than Biblically influenced with Christian values. Christianity is called the opiate of the people. See [1619 Project](#)
- Everyone, even those without racist views, perpetuates racism by supporting those structures.
- The personal perception of the oppressed—their “narrative”—outweighs the actions or intents of others.
- Oppressed groups will never overcome disadvantages until the racist structures are replaced.
- Oppressor race or class groups never change out of altruism; they only change for self-benefit.
- Application of laws and fundamental rights should be different based on the race or class group of the individual(s) involved. See [Link](#)

In short, critical race theory presupposes that everything about American society is thoroughly racist, and minority groups will never be equal until American society is entirely reformed. This position is extremely controversial, even in secular circles. Critical race theory is often posed as a solution to white supremacy or white nationalism. Yet, in practice, it essentially does nothing other than inverting the oppressed and oppressor groups.

From a political standpoint, critical race theory closely aligns with concepts such as communism, Marxism, nationalism, progressivism, [intersectionality](#), and the modern version of social justice. Strictly speaking, the

Bible neither commands nor forbids Christians regarding specific political parties or philosophies. However, believers are obligated to reject any aspect of a philosophy that conflicts with biblical ideals. Critical race theory is **deeply rooted in worldviews that are entirely incompatible with the Bible.**

Spiritually, some have attempted to apply critical race theory principles to Christianity.

This even includes suggestions that the Christian church must adopt the critical race theory approach to society, or else it is not really preaching the gospel. In applying

critical race theory to faith, some have gone even further, suggesting that “whiteness,” defined in a unique sense, is a type of sin and incompatible with salvation. In other words, critical race theory implies that those in certain ethnic/social economic groups must “repent” of such status, above and beyond other sins, in order to be truly Christian. Less inflammatory uses of critical race theory echo older claims that biblical faith is often presented as a “white man’s religion,” or that Christianity ought to follow a radical progressive theology, especially with respect to gender and sexuality. This ignores that the church is growing the fastest in Africa and in Asia.

Let me speak plainly. **So far as it applies to faith, Christianity, or spirituality, there is no truth whatsoever to critical race theory.** This is not to say that self-labelled Christians have never perpetrated racism. Nor does it mean every Christian in America is innocent of overlooking suffering people. It certainly does not mean that believers in the United States have no need to self-examine or seek change.

Critical race theory entirely violates a Biblical worldview, however, by suggesting that people are essentially defined by their race or class, rather than by their individual acts and attitudes ([Jeremiah 31:31–34](#); [Revelation 20:11–13](#)). Critical race theory incorrectly emphasizes [intersectional](#) categories such as gender, race, sexual preference, and economic status above and beyond a person’s own choices and responsibilities ([Galatians 3:28](#)). Critical race theory also conflicts with a biblical approach to objective, absolute truth. In no small part, this includes suggesting that an “oppressed” person’s feelings matter more than what the “oppressor” has actually done or intended ([1 Corinthians 4:4](#); [10:29](#)).

As applied to spiritual matters, critical race theory effectively replaces an individual, personal relationship with God with a tribalistic, ethnocentric, collectivistic system. It also greatly overemphasizes material and social concepts to the detriment—or even the exclusion—of the true gospel.

The Bible warns about being “tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men.” When and where prejudices are found in the church, they should be addressed according to sound doctrine, not according to an inherently unbiblical approach such as critical race theory.

Adapted from "What is the critical race theory, and how should a Christian view it?" © Copyright 2002-2021 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. www.GotQuestions.org

Salem Website, Facebook, FM Radio and Zoom

Our website is SalemChurch.cc. Our Facebook pages are: “**Salem Presbyterian Church Venedocia**” for our Facebook Live unedited service recorded using just a cell phone. Our Group Page is “**Salem United Presbyterian Church**” for private spiritual church wide discussions. Our two-mile short-range FM station is **FM 87.9** for the Venedocia-area during service times. The links for upcoming dates using Zoom are on the church website of www.salemchurch.cc.

Church Financial Update

Prayerfully consider making a donation. Salem Church offerings should be mailed to the church at:

**Salem United Presbyterian Church
PO Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894**

Needed to Date: \$18,975.44
Received to Date: \$20,981.60

The Sights of Salem



2021-02-13 Peter and Morgan McCollow welcome Audrey Lynn McCollow. Weighing in at 6# 13 ounces. Their address is 13776 Morgan Road, Delphos, Ohio 45833.



2021-02-16 Sub-zero wind chill temperatures and a foot and a half deep snow drift covered parking lot caused the Women’s Bible Study and the Ash Wednesday Service to be canceled.



2021-02-21 Communion tray handed to elders.

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

Remember our elderly members, soldiers, and college students with cards and visits.

Bartie Jones

Paul & Doris Price
407 Stony Ridge Dr.
Sandusky, OH 44870-5468

Marjorie Rhoades
Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Dr.
Van Wert, OH 45891

Marjorie Eutsler
15044 Main Street
Venedocia, OH 45894

John & Mary Ellen Lloyd
20155 Venedocia-Eastern Rd
Venedocia, OH 45894

Bartie Jones
18890 Bebb St
Venedocia, OH 45894

Marian Morris
Hearth & Home
1118 Westwood Dr
Van Wert, OH 45891

Ione Owens
16398 State Rd
Van Wert, OH 45891

Serving our Country

Cory McCollow
(U.S. Coast Guard)
7225 Altura Place
Oakland, CA 94605

SPC Eutsler, Phoebe
(Army)
CMR 405 Box 3825
APO, AE 09034

Dillon Ellerbrock (Marines)
Grandson of Gloria Leiter

Sgt. Linger, Micah
(U.S. Marine Corps)
2nd MEF G4
PCS Box 20085
Camp Lejeune, NC 28542

Lloyd (Butch) Eutsler
(National Guards)
14975 Van Wert-Mercer
Co. Line Road
Venedocia, OH 45894

Gyer Blackmore (Army)
Section BDE. S1. Unit HHC
101st DSB
APO AE 09366

At College

Evan Pugh – University of Northwestern Ohio

Madison Pugh – USCGA | 15 Mohegan Ave.
8785 Chase Hall | New London, CT 06320

Birthdays

2 Marilyn Stickler

11 Todd Morris

14 Elijah Martz

19 Pamela Beamer

20 Brian Owens

23 Josh Hoehn

29 Bianca Richards

8 John Morris

14 Larry Caffro

16 Tom Emery

20 Johnathon Morris

22 Toby Adkins

28 Ron Richards

Condolences

Condolences to the families of Barb Laing and Max Myers

Prayer Concerns

Katie Adams (recovering from surgery)
Barry Coil (stroke)
Kathy Comer
Rosemary Cooper
Asher Eberle
Marjorie Eutsler
Nikki Ford (knee surgery & funds for surgery)
Stephanie Gamble (eye issues)
Suzanne Hadley-Himes (recurrent cancer)
Jerry Holscher
Dale Kiesza (leg operation)
Danny King (cancer)
Nancy Lautzenheiser (colon cancer)
LuAnn (family issues)
John & Mary Ellen Lloyd

Donald Martin
Carol Matthews (Lou Gehrig's disease)
Byron Mohr
David Morris (Zeb)
Marian Morris
Judy Jones Muhn (health issues)
Ione Owens
Steve Peters (surgery & recovery)
Paul & Doris Price
Marjorie Rhodes
Shalia Schomaeker
Derek Sellers (Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy)
Betty Tenant (recovering from stroke)
Harold & Rosa Wollenhaupt
Raymond Young
Area Nursing Homes and residents

March 2021

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 7 pm Women's Bible Study	3	4	5	6
7 9:30 Worship St. David's Day reception to follow service	8	9 7 pm Women's Bible Study	10	11	12	13
14 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 5:00 Trustee meeting	15	16 7 pm Women's Bible Study	17	18	19	20
21 9:30 Worship 10:45 Session Meeting	22	23 7 pm Women's Bible Study	24	25	26	27
28 9:30 Worship Palm Sunday Baptisms and receptions	29	30 7 pm Women's Bible Study	31			

Week of	Nursery	Flowers	Organist
March 7	Bob & Denise Pugh	Mark & Missy Zielke	Becky Reichard
March 14	Jeff & Kelly Lloyd	Mark & Missy Zielke	Becky Reichard
March 21	Bill & Ruth Evans	Mark & Missy Zielke	Seth Baker
March 28	Steve & Lindsay Richards	Gwenda Blackmore	Dave VanTilburg
Ushers	Denise Pugh	Greeter:	Denise Pugh

Salem Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 678
Venedocia, Ohio 45894



Many Americans of Welsh origin annually celebrate the life of Wales' patron saint, St David, on March 1. It is also a time to people to remember the Welsh culture and to appreciate their Welsh origins. The Welsh flag is often seen during celebrations on the day, as well as daffodils or leeks pinned to clothing. Salem will celebrate St. David's Day on Sunday, March 6th.

Sounds of Salem *Newsletter*

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Church Web Pages: www.SalemChurch.cc

Secretary E-Mail: Secretary@SalemChurch.cc

Secretary's cell: 419-303-2032

Rev. Thomas Emery's cell: 419-863-9131

Pastor's Email: PastorTomEmery@live.com

March 2021
REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY
YEAR B

3rd Sunday in Lent – Mar 7

Ex. 10:1-17	Psalm 19
1 Cor. 1:18-25	John 2:13-22

4th Sunday in Lent – Mar 14

Num. 21:4-9	Psalm 107:1-3,17-22
1 Eph. 2:1-10	John 3:14-21

5th Sunday in Lent – Mar 21

Jer. 31:31-34	Psalm 51:1-12
Heb. 5:5-10	John 12:20-33

Palm/Passion Sunday – Mar 28

Mark 11:1-11	Psalm 118:1-2,19-29
Phil. 2:13-25	Mark 4:1-15:47