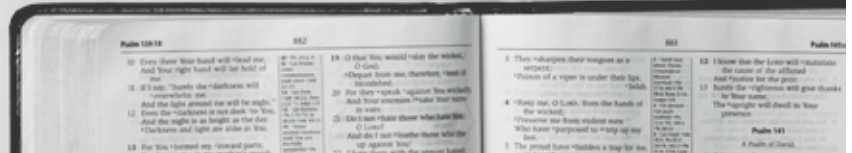


# Words of Truth

## The Blessing of Preaching



### Featured Authors

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**Kirk Brothers-** Kirk is the president of Heritage Christian University in Florence, AL. He has many years of ministry experience serving churches in Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky. He has been involved with training preachers for many years both stateside and abroad. He and his wife, Cindy, live in the Shoals area.

**Jeff Jenkins-** Jeff has preached the gospel for more than 40 years. He recently retired from full time preaching work alongside his brother, Dale with the Jenkins Institute which seeks to build up churches and preachers.

### The Blessing of Biblical Preaching

Travis Harmon, Florence, AL

One of the most interesting to me has always been the last chapter of the Gospel of Luke. In Luke 24:13ff, there is a strange narrative we usually refer to as the "Road to Emmaus." In that story, two of the disciples are walking seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus, and as they walk, they are discussing the crucifixion and how Jesus' body was no longer in the tomb. They talk about how they thought He was the One who was going to redeem Israel, yet The leaders of Israel killed him.

They are making this long, despondent slog back to Emmaus when Jesus, of all people, starts walking along with them. They do not recognize Him, so they walk the seven miles with the very man they were discussing. They are so sad and upset and ask Him if He's the only person in Jerusalem, "Who does not know what has happened here in the last few days?" (24:18). The irony can indeed escape no one. Yes, He was there.

I absolutely love that Jesus teaches them about Himself from the Bible. "He began with Moses and the prophets and explained to them all the scriptures about Himself" (24:27). Oh, how I would have loved to walk alongside them and hear this conversation! To hear ALL the scriptures about Him explained by HIM!

After a walk and a meal, they finally recognize who He is. At that very instant, however, He disappears. They ask each other, "Weren't our hearts burning within us when He opened the Scriptures to us?" (24:32). My heart burns to hear and know how Jesus had presented Himself from the Scriptures on that walk! After that, they are so excited that they rise and go seven miles back to Jerusalem to tell others what happened.

Jesus Christ shows people who the Messiah is. The Messiah, which is Hebrew for "the anointed one," shows He was the Christ from the Hebrew Scriptures. When Jesus revealed who He was through the Scriptures, they recognized Him.

Like many others, I yearn daily for Jesus's tangible presence in my life! My heart burns within me to feel his comforting embrace, arm around me, or hand resting on my shoulder. This is what biblical preaching can do. Preaching Christ from the Bible makes Him more tangible to us today. When we have "the Scriptures opened to us concerning him," we see Him and discern Him, and He is made more real in our lives.

Do you know how real Jesus wants to be to us? Have you ever noticed in Luke 24 that when those two disciples return to Jerusalem, Jesus appears to them all immediately? They're startled, and they think that he's a ghost. He tells them, "Do not doubt; look at my hands and feet" (24:39). Why does he want them to look at his feet and hands? Because they have scars. He healed the blind, healed the sick, restored withered arms, and made the lame walk, but you're telling me that He can't resurrect Himself from the dead so that He doesn't have scars? He could have. Why, then, have the scars? The scars are there for them to see. So they know he is real. The scars are there for us. The scars were there to build faith. Biblical preaching makes Jesus so much more real. And, seeing and believing in Jesus makes us much more spiritual. My heart burns within me for the blessing of biblical preaching. Doesn't yours?

## Paths to More Effective Preaching

Dale Jenkins, Spring Hill, TN

For a lifetime, while keeping the Word of God and what it teaches as my northern star, I have gobbled up everything I can about preaching and how to do that task with increasing excellence. I've spent my life not only preaching but trying to encourage others who preach to grow in their skills for the Glory of God and the Mission of the Commission.

I would suggest that no human list would be complete, and no human could in a lifetime compile the entire riches God's Word offers to aid those who attempt to perform the profession His Son perfected to complete excellence. But here are a few items that one tried to be effective in his preaching would do well to consider the following things.

**Prayer:** Where else would we start? Yet, often, the need for time to prepare adequately and do everything else the life of ministry calls for. I've had fellow humble servants confess that time for prayer can be pushed too far down their list. At the seminal moments of His life, we often find the Lord in all-night prayer. To effectively preach God's Word, we must seek God's Will. Pray.

**Passion for the Message of God:** We are not reading a recipe. We are telling the redeeming message of the matchless love of God shown in His majestic sacrifice. We are pleading on behalf of God for our listeners to be reconciled to Him. We are striving to snatch them from great peril and an eternity in hell. This better be a message of passion!

**Planning:** Most of us have our favorite subjects and areas we enjoy studying: history, involvement, service, worship, first principles, etc. We also have our favorite verses. We need serious planning to avoid falling into a pattern with each of these. Planning makes us more rounded and helps us to "preach the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Planning also decreases the pressure of determining what is next and frees the mind to think more about content than the concept.

**Preparation:** The effective preacher will prepare his heart to seek God's Will, prepare his materials to be presented well, and prepare himself to do his best. "Preach the word." The Word. The Word trumps all we do and say. We must speak only those words that are true to The Word (Revelation 22:18-19). The Word is the source of faith (Romans 10:17). The Word builds people up in the Holy Faith (Acts 20:32). We are known, have been known, and should be known as men of the Word and as people of the Word.

**Practice:** I spent some time recently with a young preacher. He has been in his first work for less than two

years. He planned to be a minister to young people but ended up preaching. When he began, he felt his skills were very weak but humbly shared, "I think I may be getting better." As I talked with members where he preaches, they all talked about how he is constantly improving. This is unsurprising as few things will make a man a better preacher than preaching and striving to improve.

**People:** Great ministry leads to more effective preaching. Outside of a commitment to Truth, nothing will make a preacher's words more impactful than his involvement in the lives of those he preaches to each week. When you have walked through a significant event with a family, they will hear you differently. So, as my dad and brother often say: "Preach the Word and love the people."

**Presentation:** "Preach the word." The Word. The Word trumps all we do and say. Substance trumps style every time. Substance over the show! If the argument is between substance and style and someone chooses style, they will soon be adrift without a compass. Yet, that does not mean we neglect style. This need not be an either/or scenario. The preacher's mission is simple: "Communicate Truth to people." We miss our mission if we ever forget that we market in definable, absolute, non-subjective truth. If we ever forget we preach to people who are subject to sin, who are striving to do right, who sometimes are confused, who often have been hurt, and who want and need direction, then we miss our mission. But just as true, if we ever forget that we are to communicate, we miss our mark. I implore you as a preacher to take time crafting the skill of communicating (not to the detriment or neglect of The Word). Try to find the creative, engaging, enlightening, attention-keeping words, illustrations, appropriate humor, and style that keep people wanting to hear more of the Truths from God's Word you are bringing. "The Preacher sought to find words of delight, and uprightly he wrote words of truth: (Ecclesiastes 12:10 ESV). Substance over style, yes. But style, give it some of your time and attention.

**Pursue Perfection** (Matthew 5:48): You'll never be perfect this side of heaven, but that does not mean we should settle and not improve. Keep growing as a preacher. What we do demands that. Keep moving forward. You can do this.

Thank you for what you do in the Lord's Kingdom. We need more effective preachers.

# The Blessing of Expository Preaching

Ted Burleson, Henderson, TN

Please do not be confused by the phrase “expository preaching.” In this article, we will use the term “Biblical preaching” to avoid sounding like we are teaching some new doctrine or method of preaching. We see an early example of this preaching in the Old Testament. “For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the Lord, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel” (Ezra 7:14, ESV). Note Ezra’s steps to preaching. First, he set his heart to study God’s Word. Second, he obeyed what God’s Word instructed. He did not ask others to do what he was unwilling to practice. Finally, Ezra taught God’s Word to his listeners.

## Steps to Bible Preaching

Biblical sermons draw out the meaning of a Bible passage using several steps. First, the preacher investigates the Biblical passage he plans to preach. He studies keywords, noting how the author of the passage uses the word. His goal is to grasp the complete sense of what the text says and means. As he studies the preaching text, he keeps in the back of his mind how to apply the Biblical text. His ultimate goal is to apply the Biblical passage to indicate what the passage means today. He tries to single out the big idea of the passage and then sets out to prove it and apply it to our times. The preacher will note how the text may have been misapplied by those who have misunderstood the Bible.

## The Importance of Applying the Sermon

A sermon is not Biblical if it does not apply God’s Word to the hearers’ lives. Explaining a Bible passage requires understanding the text’s original meaning. What did the passage mean to the original readers? Remember, a Bible passage cannot teach something the original readers would not have understood when they read it. It is essential to note themes the Biblical writer wants his readers to understand. The sermon must come from the Bible. Without the Bible, a preacher makes a speech, not a sermon. Bible preaching means explaining and applying Scripture. Without explaining the Bible, it is not Biblical preaching. Without application, the sermon is incomplete. The meat of the sermon is the application of the Bible’s teaching.

## The Ultimate Goal of Bible Preaching

The ultimate goal of Bible teaching and preaching is understanding, practicing, and applying the Bible. Preachers must practice what they teach or become pure hypocrites. What must be preached? Any point worth developing is a point worth applying. It is not enough to tell the Bible story. Preachers must clarify its significance for our day. Biblical preaching communicates the Bible. We allow the Bible to teach us the meaning of the passage. Preachers must grasp

the meaning before they can expound it to the congregation. Like the spies Moses sent into Canaan, preachers go to the text as wilderness guides to bring good news for those who will hear our report.

## Let the Bible Guide You

Let the Bible guide you in preaching sermons that defend God to skeptics and believers. Teach lessons from the Bible that teach hearers how to make wise decisions. Do not steal other people’s thoughts about the Bible. Study the Bible for yourself before seeking the commentaries. It is best not to consult a commentary until after the theme, context, main points, and cross-references are checked. A Bible student needs to discern his or her thoughts about a text before getting someone else’s interpretation. Following this sermon preparation method will prevent preachers from shrinking from the Word of God. We must declare the whole counsel of God.

## Biblical Preaching Requires Much Study

Writing a sermon is hard work. You have taken fifty hours of valuable time when you preach a thirty-minute sermon to one hundred people. Make sure your sermons are worthy of that time investment from congregation members. Sermon preparation requires much research. Making the sermon enjoyable means being creative while remaining faithful to God and His Word.

## Biblical Preaching Addresses Controversial Subjects

Preaching Bible-based sermons allows the preacher to discuss touchy subjects. Rather than the preacher addressing a hot topic, let the Bible discuss it. Let God speak instead of using human wisdom. However, the preacher must boldly apply God’s truth in controversial issues. We cannot ignore the Bible because it discusses a topic that is uncomfortable to discuss. If preachers teach a passage without applying it, it is not Bible preaching. Biblical preaching is best for a preacher to keep his preaching Scriptural and balanced. Preaching Bible sermons can faithfully preach God’s Word whenever he preaches.

## Conclusion

The preacher must remain faithful to God’s Word. He does not come up with an idea and then goes to Scripture to find a proof-text that will prove his idea. Instead, he goes to the Bible to discover its teachings. He then applies that truth to his life and the lives of his listeners. The Bible determines the message of the sermon. If the preacher remains faithful to the Biblical teachings, he can speak with divine authority as long as he remains faithful to God’s Word. The original setting of the Biblical material determines the message to be preached.



# The Blessing of Preaching from the Old Testament

Bill Watkins, Nashville, TN

I love preaching from the Old Testament! It is nevertheless full of value to the one who will take the time to read it. According to Psalm 1, there is a great blessing in it

Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper (Psalm 1:1-3)

*I love preaching from the Old Testament because it gives me hope.*

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope (Romans 15:4).

During the darkest days of God's people, He had never forsaken them. His answers rarely came on their timetable - they came on His. There was never a time that God didn't notice or care for His people, even though there were long periods of suffering for people and apparent silence from Him. This gives me hope for my time when I yearn for God's intervention in our situations. As Habakkuk learned, God has never forsaken us, regardless of our circumstances. I find patience and encouragement in the stories of the Old Testament.

*I love preaching from the Old Testament because I learn from the good and the bad examples of those who have gone before.*

Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come (1 Corinthians 10:6-11)

*I love preaching from the Old Testament because the fulfillment of prophecies in Jesus does not mean as much to us if we do not know what the prophecies were and when they were made.*

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself (Luke 24:25-27)

For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory (2 Corinthians 1:20)

*I love preaching from the Old Testament because I see Christ there.*

And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life (John 5:37-40)

The entire book of Hebrews in the New Testament is a tribute to Jesus as He is revealed in the Old Testament. It demands that we study the Old Testament to understand it.

*I love the Psalms because they cover the entire range of emotions, trials, and triumphs of a life lived for God.*

*I love the prophets of the Old Testament because they thunder out the things that God loves and hates.* God has not changed. I understand Him more by spending time in the Old Testament.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Don't miss the blessing of preaching from the Old Testament. Your preaching will be richer and deeper if you spend time in this precious part of the word of God!

# The Blessing of Good Preparation

Kirk Brothers, Florence, AL

Great sermons often die before they are ever born when the preacher takes shortcuts in preparation. We will be held accountable for how we connect God's words to people's lives (cf. James 3:1-2). Let me share with you some things I do when preparing a message.

## Marinate in the Text

I begin by letting the passage marinate in my mental juices. I often read and listen to the passage in multiple translations to get a feel for it. If possible, read/listen through the entire book that your passage is from. I start my focused reading far enough before the passage to understand the circumstances setting the text's stage. I read far enough after the text to get a sense of where the author is going or to see the results of the actions/teaching in the passage.

I break the book and the verses I am focusing on into chunks. Having or creating an outline of the book helps me see how the passage I am investigating fits into the flow. I also find coding helpful, especially in Paul's letters. I read through the book that my passage is in, looking for words/synonyms and phrases that are used at least three times (I ignore "the," "of," "and," etc.). I then "code" these words or phrases using colored highlights, colored fonts, and symbols (underline, brackets, double underline, graphics, etc.). You can use highlighters, colored pencils, or apps like Accordance and Olive Tree Bible, which allow you to highlight and underline in different colors. Once I have completed this "marinating" process, I have a pretty good idea of what the main ideas are in the mind of the author.

## Explore the Backstory

Next, I wrestle with the circumstances that gave rise to the book that contains my passage. I use introduction books, Bible handbooks, study Bibles, and commentaries. I want to discover who wrote the book, to whom he wrote it, and why he wrote it. I then read the verses I am investigating in light of the setting and purpose of the book and consider how they fit together. You need also to consider what type of literature (genre) your passage is. Is it a historical narrative, poem, song, parable, proverb, law code, etc.?

Now, consider the culture, customs, and history behind the passage. Are there key cities related to the passage or book, and what are some features of these cities? Where does this story/text fit in history? Are there key leaders, dates, or events connected with the passage? What customs affect the verse (daily habits, weights/measures, etc.)? Commentaries, Bible encyclopedias, and customs books can help with this part of your study.

It is important to compare the key elements of the passage with the rest of Scripture. The Bible is its own best commentary. How does your text fit into the overall theme of the Bible? Research themes, subjects, principles, and keywords you have identified in the investigation of your passage. Concordances, Nave's Topical Bible, the Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge, and systematic theology books can help you with this.

## Analyze the Language

I also seek to analyze the words and the word structure of the passage in the original language. Be very careful not to claim or use expertise you do not have related to ancient languages. Define any words that you or your audience may not understand. Define terms that are central to the thought of the verse. Focus on "theme words" in the book (cf. "joy" in Philippians). Pay special attention to verbs and participles (cf. the participles in Eph 5:19-21). Consider the tenses of verbs (cf. Rom 5:1-21 and the interaction between past, present, and future tenses). Note petition verbs, like "I beseech" or "I urge," and the words that follow them (cf. Rom 12:1; 15:30). Look at key theological words (grace, mercy, forgiveness, peace, etc.). You can compare multiple translations and use word study books and lexicons to assist with defining terms (Mounce's Expository Dictionary and many computer programs such as Logos have many helpful tools).

When defining Greek words, remember that most words will have more than one meaning. Do not combine all the definitions you find or pick a meaning you prefer. The setting of the verse and how the word is used in the sentence will guide you toward the appropriate meaning. Also, many Greek words are combinations of words. Analyzing the words separately does not necessarily tell you what they mean together. Imagine if a person studying English tried to figure out what the word "butterfly" means by breaking it down into the words "butter" and "fly."

## Conclusion

At this point, I try to summarize the passage's meaning and a few key principles that I see. I then compare these findings to what others have seen in the same passage (commentaries, articles, sermons, etc.). This serves as a "check and balance" for my thoughts. There is no substitute for good preparation. It is essential that you keep good notes throughout this process. These notes will not only become part of the lesson you are about to preach, but they can become the foundation for future lessons. If you dig deep now, you will have pre-dug holes to work in the future.

# The Blessing of Planned Preaching

Jeff A. Jenkins, Flower Mound, TX

It was my junior year at Freed-Hardeman University, and our beloved brother Billy Smith was teaching a class about preaching. He spent a small segment of the course encouraging us to plan a year's worth of preaching in advance. At the time, I was not certain that it was anything that would ever be useful.

Fast forward two years, and I was beginning my first full-time work out of college. At twenty-two years of age, we began preaching two sermons every Sunday, teaching a Bible class Sunday morning and Wednesday night, a ladies' Bible class each week, a daily radio program five days every week, and teaching Bible classes three days a week in a Christian school. As you can imagine, I was running out of sermons quickly. It hit me one day: how long can I prepare thirteen weekly lessons? Brother Billy's class notes to the rescue!

The elders in that first Church family were kind and wise enough to allow their young preacher to take a couple of days to plan for the future. It proved to be a valuable time for a young preacher and the church.

One of the greatest struggles for preachers who have worked with the same church over many years is keeping our preaching fresh and interesting. When it comes to sermons, one of the most challenging aspects is deciding what should be preached. Some preachers don't even plan for this coming Sunday until Friday or Saturday. But what happens when an emergency arises in the life of the church or the preacher's family? This can place added stress on the preacher in what he tries to do.

I suggest planning your preaching a year in advance. If not a year, try half a year, one quarter, or at least one month. Let me share some of the greatest benefits of planning your preaching. Then we'll say something about the process.

## Benefits of Planned Preaching

Planned Preaching emphasizes the importance of preaching. It prioritizes it in our minds and allows others (our elders, church members, etc.) to know how important preaching is to us.

Planned Preaching helps us with balance in our preaching. Our beloved brother Paul reminded the Ephesian elders that he had not shrunk from declaring the "whole counsel of God to them." As we plan our preaching, we need balance in the following areas.

We should preach sermons from the Old Testament and the New Testament. There must be a balance between the Theological and the practical, the doctrinal and the devotional. We should be balanced in studying the different people mentioned in Scripture.

Planned preaching can bring greater depth to our preaching. Knowing what we will be preaching before the year begins will allow us additional time to gather resources. We can glean illustrations, quotes, surveys, and life experiences if we know the topic and text ahead of time.

Planned preaching allows for maximum results. There are some questions we should ask in relation to every sermon we preach.

- Question #1: What do we want people to know? Which part of God's Word do we want to share information from for His people today?
- Question #2: What do we want people to do? We should work hard to make an application and give something practical for everyone present.
- Question #3: What do we want people to feel? We may wish to bring comfort to troubled hearts. We want everyone to feel that there is hope in this world through Jesus. We may want to bring feelings of encouragement, and at times, we would like people to be challenged to live a better life.

Planned preaching will help with church-wide planning or the church calendar. Some churches do extensive planning for special events each year. As we plan our preaching, we can work to preach sermons that will affect those special days and events in a positive way.

Finally, planned preaching lowers the stress level in the preacher's life. It allows us to have fewer concerns throughout the week and the year. We can spend more time with our family and in ministry if we have sermons planned.

## The Process for a Sermon Planning Retreat

Get away from the building. Find a place where you can work uninterrupted. It is easy to be distracted if we are in our offices. For years, we have rented a house an hour or more away to do this work.

Get input from your elders, fellow staff members, and church members. Create a form that can be used for suggested topics, texts, etc.

Set some goals. Decide what you want to accomplish during this time. Some men plan their full year with a topic, text, and thesis statement. Some plan for Sunday morning and Sunday night, while others only plan for Sunday mornings.

Tools you will need. Bring a church calendar, your family calendar, and a national calendar that contains holidays. Bring illustrative resources, books with sermon ideas, and your computer to record everything you plan.

Focus. Try your best to work on sermons only for the coming year. Try to avoid working on other aspects of ministry or writing.

These are my suggestions. Every preacher should use his ideas, goals, plans, and methods. If you have never done this before, give it a try. You might find it to be a helpful experience. If I can answer any questions, please feel free to contact me. (tji@thejenkinsinstitute.com)



# PREACHING MATTERS. Preach the Word...

Quotes on Great Preaching

"In a world where we are accused of always being angry, it is important that we are not. But that we are a confident people, with a clear voice, and certain message."

— BRUCE MCLARTY

*"It's not that I'm a great preacher, I'm not, but it's that God is a great God."*

— Bill Watkins

*"Preach the Word and love the people"*  
-- Jerry Jenkins

The effectiveness of a sermon is measured by how soon it is before Christ shows up in it.  
- David Shannon

"Preachers! Don't bore people to distraction. Don't neglect doctrine. (Hosea 4:6) The pulpit should sound forth clear teaching on the doctrines of the Bible."

— Chuck Monan

**"If service is beneath you, then leadership is beyond you."**

— Tony Brown

"The minister's spiritual relationship with God is ALWAYS first! You cannot lead your family spiritually where you are not willing to go. (Ephesians. 5:21-23; I Timothy 5-7)"

— RALPH GILMORE

**"Don't block the glory of the cross by your bitterness."**

— Josh Ketchum

*We do not determine the meaning of the text, but rather discover it.*

— Doug Burleson. • • • • •



# The Words of Truth

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## Q & A WITH MARK POSEY

QUESTION: Is Israel still God's chosen people today?

ANSWER: Today, the Church is God's chosen people rather than Israel! Genesis 3:15 is the first statement of good news (i.e., God's provision of a Savior for sin). Mary was the woman through whom God brought His Son into the world (Luke 1:26-38, esp. vs.27; Gal. 4:4). She was a Jew from the nation of Israel (Genesis 12:1-3; Deuteronomy 4:37-38; 7:7-8; 10:15). God chose the Israelites above all the other nations because of His love for their "fathers" (e.g., Abraham, Issac, and Jacob). He intended for Israel to be a distinct nation, pointing others to Him and His promised Redeemer. The ultimate purpose of Israel was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and throughout their history, they were aware of their "chosen" status (cf., Exod. 19:5-6; 1 Kings 3:8; Psalm 105:43; Isaiah 65:9; Amos 3:2). Christ came to "redeem those who were under the law" (Gal. 4:5), and "to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both [Jew and Gentile] to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity" (Eph. 2:15-16). Today, all baptized believers are "one" in Christ's Body (Eph. 1:4, 22-23) and wear the name "Christian" (Acts 11:26). Furthermore, those "baptized in Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27); they are no longer "Jew nor Greek," "slave nor free," "male nor female," but "one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). This glorious fellowship exists because "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for her" (Eph. 5:25). The Church is the "chosen people of God" (1 Peter 2:9-10); chosen, to "proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." Christ came to save sinners (John 1:29; Luke 19:10; 1 Tim. 1:15) and fulfill God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). Today, Christ's Church is the "new creation" (Gal. 6:15), and all that live according to the standard of Christ are blessed with "peace and mercy" (v.16). The Church of Christ is the chosen people of God, not Israel. Therefore, as a "new creation" in Christ, Christians live according to all things that are "new" (2 Cor. 5:17). I.e., New Standard (Phil. 1:21), New Hope (1 Peter 1:3), New Outlook (Heb. 12:2), New Incentive (Phil. 1:23-25), New Purpose (2 Cor. 5:14-15), New Obligation (1 Cor. 4:2), and New Reward (2 Peter 3:13). Thank God for Christ and the Church!

-Mark Nichols Posey  
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The words of *Truth*

### The Words of Truth

*is a bi-monthly publication overseen by the elders of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper, Alabama. It is dedicated to the promotion and defense of New Testament Christianity.*

*Justin Guin, Editor*



### The Words of Truth

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