

# The Vincennes Voice

“...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...” (Matt. 3:3)

A teaching bulletin produced and provided by FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Volume 1 ♦ Issue 44 ♦ November 1, 2020

## HODGE-PODGE of ARTICLES

Larry R. Ping II

### “Blessed to Die”

In lists that catalog top fears, the first two are always the same, fear of public speaking and fear of death. Fear of public speaking stems from having “stage fright” while fear of death is borne of anxiety concerning the unknown. No one reading these words has died.

Yet, the Bible makes it clear to the child of God that death is not to be feared. I this is easier said than done. But as believers, we must be willing to take the Bible at its Word.

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Rev. 14:13).

“Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints” (Psa. 116:15).

Do you recall Jesus’ conversation with Martha regarding death? He said, “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall

he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this” (Jn. 11:25-26)?

To the faithful child of God, death is simply a portal leading from a mortal life to an immortal one, it is the gateway leading to an eternal life with God and His family.

On this day, we must strive our very hardest and our very best to live “in the Lord” so that we can die “in the Lord.” Death is not to be loathed. In fact, it is something to which we look forward. Today, really and truly trust in the Bible’s words, like the following.

“A good name is better than precious ointment; and the **day of death than the day of one’s birth**” (Eccl. 7:1). Do we truly have faith in these words?

### “Following Afar Off”

Spiritually speaking, there are many dangerous positions to take. Situations which lend themselves to our being tempted and to our giving into temptation. We

must avoid these positions at all costs, and surely do all we can to not place ourselves into them. Unfortunately, we do from time to time, just as Peter did.

Jesus had finished praying for the “cup” to “pass” from Him and subsequently was betrayed by Judas. This act prompted the disciples to “forsake” Him and flee (Matt. 26:56). But notice the poor positions into which Peter placed himself.

“But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest’s palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end” (Matt. 26:58).

Though his intentions may have been of the best, Peter located himself in two bad places, and often we do the same, though we should strive diligently not to.

First, Peter attempted to follow Jesus “afar off.” The only way to follow Jesus is closely. Too many, like Peter, want to keep Jesus within “eyesight” so to speak, but at the same time be “far enough” away to test and try-out a sinful lifestyle. It should be no

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surprise the result of not being close enough to Jesus is the loss of a relationship with Him. Do not follow “afar off,” follow closely and intimately.

Also, Peter attempted to follow Jesus “by himself” in the middle of a very hostile and anti-Jesus crowd. And as we know, it ended in a very unfortunate way for Peter, denying Christ three times (Matt. 26:69-75). Friends, it does not matter how strong of a child of God we feel we may be, getting off by ourselves in the wrong crowd will ultimately be our downfall (I Cor. 15:33).

On this day, be determined to stay close to the Christ. Be determined to spend your time with those of like faith, especially when entering “unfavorable” territory. Today, put yourself in a position to win, and stay there!

## ***“But He Was A Leper”***

The Bible tells of a Syrian captain who was “great” and “honorable.” He was also “a mighty man of valor.” But there was a problem, “he was a leper” (II

Kings 5:1). This meant he was a scourge of sorts, one to be avoided. This diseased captain, Naaman, even caught the attention of Jesus (Lk. 4:27). If Jesus, our Lord, paid time to this story and this man, we too should give it some serious thought and consideration.

Having been given information to visit God’s prophet Elisha, Naaman took his journey to Israel. After initially being severely disappointed in not meeting Elisha personally, and after originally refusing to do what he had been told, Naaman elected to respect God’s command.

God, through the prophet Elisha, had instructed Naaman to dip in the Jordan River seven times, and upon doing so, would be healed of his leprosy. Thankfully Naaman had a servant who convinced him to obey God.

He dipped in the river six time without anything happening. After the completion of the seventh dip, he rose from the waters with flesh “like unto the flesh of a little child” (II Kings 5:14). What a story! What an effect

this must have had not only upon Naaman, but those watching as well!

On this day, let us each decide to be a Naaman. May we strive to know what God’s will is for us to be rid of our “leprosy,” sin. May we be willing to listen to those who are leading in the ways of truth. And may we be willing to “travel” great lengths to discover God’s ways for us.

On this day, let us each determine to be a “servant of Naaman.” Let us lead others to Christ. Let us be courageous enough to voice the Word of God to our neighbors. Let us be willing to “stick our neck” out for the betterment of others who initially may not listen, but will think better of it later.

Today, be a Naaman, and be cleansed through obedience (Heb. 5:8-9).

Today, be a “servant” to the lost, and become one of Jesus’ blessed peacemakers (Matt. 5:9).

## FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

### MEETING AT HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS

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## MEETING TIMES (EST)

### SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

### WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm