



The Sword

*“And take... the sword of the Spirit,
which is the word of God.”* Ephesians 6:17

“The Sword” is published weekly by the OAK GROVE CHURCH OF CHRIST, as a teaching and information tool for the congregation. Articles are intended to encourage the study of God’s Word every day! — Jack W. McNiel, editor

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“Gospel of Common Sense” by Carl B. Garner

A book need not be two hundred pages long for it to be a valuable possession. The book of James is one of the General Epistles, written by a man named James. We are not sure of the identity of this man James, but the prevailing view is that he was the man named in Mark 6:3, one of Jesus’ brothers (Gal. 1:19). The book itself is still a remarkably practical book for Christians, even twenty centuries after it was written.

Johnny Ramsey, in his introduction to this book, wrote:

Could there ever be a more down-to-earth piece of literature than the book of James? The favorite book of the Bible for many practical Christians is the five-chapter epistle written by the half-brother of Jesus. Nearly every theme pertinent to living the life of a child of God is covered in this memorable section of Holy Scripture. One cannot read and study this section of the Bible without pangs of conscience and promises of ‘I’ll live a better

life for Christ.’ It is rich and demanding, like the Sermon on the Mount, and yet comforting and devotional, like the Psalms.

To summarize a book in a brief way is often almost impossible, but this book, in a chapter-by-chapter look, can be described as a thesis on “what Christians do, and what Christians don’t do.”

Christians Do: Thank God for strength gained in life’s trials. In chapter 1:2 we read: “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.” God’s people may not enjoy the challenges and trials of life, but they realize their value and gain strength by overcoming those challenges. The result is “patience,” that is, steadfastness, perseverance. Yes, instead of being defeated by Satan’s trials, we become just that much stronger by resisting him (James 4:7).

Christians Do: Ask God for wisdom, thanking God for the privilege. Chapter 1:5 says, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God...and it shall be given him.” While wisdom does not automatically come with the passing of years, the challenges we face as the years pass give us the opportunity to obtain wisdom, to become wise in our dealings with others, our choices of life, and our “hope of eternal life.”

Christians Do: Look for ways to give aid to those genuinely in need of assistance. Chapter 2:14 says, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?” A picture comes to our mind of someone comfortably sitting in their warm home when a knock on the door is heard. Someone stands there in the rain and cold asking for help. Verse 16 suggests that the response to the person in need is, “..be ye warmed and filled,” but no help is given. It is in this context that we read in verse 17, “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead.” A Christian’s faith results in help for the needy.

Christians Do: Learn to control their tongue. Foul language, cutting, ugly remarks are not found in a Christian’s speech, but instead, words of truth, hope and encouragement come forth from their tongue. Chapter 3:6 says, “...the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!” Once spoken, words cannot be recalled, and this should be remembered by all.

Christians Do: Make full use of life’s brief moments. Chapter 4:14 says, “What is your life? It is even a vapor, that ap-

peareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” Young and old alike are prone to think that an extended life is promised for all, but some die “before their time.” Others are aware that life is a gift, but forget that life is brief, temporary, shortened often by health problems or tragedy. Psalm 90:10-12 says:

The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away...So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

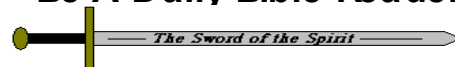
I know “threescore years and ten” may seem a long time, but take it from one who has seen them; they speed by “like a freight train.” Ben Franklin is quoted as saying: “Don’t waste time; it is the stuff life is made of.” Maybe he had read Psalm 90. Christians want to make every moment count for Christ and His kingdom.

Christians Do: Make prayer a major part of their life, thereby drawing encouragement and strength. The prayer of Elijah is mentioned in 5:17-18, preceded by “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

So great is the privilege of prayer-to speak to our Father and our Creator-that Christians should take prayer seriously, knowing our loving Father hears and answers our prayers.

Keep Your Sword Sharpened

– Be A Daily Bible Reader!



NEWS AND NOTES:

OUR PRAYER LIST:

Congregation:

- Please remember in your prayers all who have been sick, bereaved or in the hospital recently: Marjorie Alley, Freda Bentley, Lloyd Cooper, Irene Jennings, Jim O'Connor, Wendell Osborne, Alberta Petering, Opal Reed

Friends & Family:

- Shauna Heck continues to battle cancer.

ITEMS OF INTEREST:

Oak Grove:

- Men's Business meeting after the PM worship service.

"A merry heart doeth good..."

—Proverbs 17:22

A little boy opened the big and old family Bible with fascination, and looked at the old pages as he turned them. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible, and he picked it up and looked at it closely. It was an old leaf from a tree that had been pressed in between the pages.

"Momma, look what I found," the boy called out.

"What have you got there, dear?" his mother asked.

With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered: "I think it's Adam's suit!"

SERVING ONE ANOTHER:

LEADING IN WORSHIP: *January 17*

Announcements: Claude Andrews
Usher: Melvin Lunn
Lord's Table: Dean Evatt
West: Lowell Smith – Roy Smith
East: Roger Stephenson – Darrell Andrews

Sunday AM

Song Leader: David Wiesemann
Opening Prayer: Jim O'Connor
Second Prayer: Richard Petering
Scripture Reader: Tim Smith
Sermon: *Matthew 5:3-12*
"The Beatitudes of the Kingdom"
Closing Prayer: Tom Newberry

Sunday PM

Song Leader: Sean McLaughlin
Opening Prayer: Tyler Jenkins
Sermon: *1 Timothy 6:12*
"The Christian's Jihad"
Closing Prayer: Hershel Hunt

Wednesday Night:

Song Leader: Brayden Shelley

January 13

Devotional: Sean McLaughlin
Closing Prayer: Richard Petering

January 20

Devotional: Jack McNiel
Closing Prayer: David Wiesemann

OUR CURRENT RECORDS:

Wednesday: *January 6*

Bible Class 11

Sunday: *January 10*

Bible Class 75

AM Worship 85

PM Worship 59

Contribution \$1,717

Budget \$2,061

*The King James Version is requested for
pulpit, classrooms, & scripture reading.*

Work Program 2008-2009

Team	Leader/s	Next Assignment
1	Jack McNeil	Feb. 7
2	Roger Stephenson	Feb. 14
3	Walter Hutcherson	Feb. 21
4	Vernon Logan	Feb. 28
5	<i>Dustin Hall</i>	<i>Jan 17</i>
6	Roy Smith Tim Smith	Jan 24
7	Justin Liljegren Dixon Liljegren	Jan. 31

WHO WE ARE:

The Oak Grove Church of Christ is independent of any denominational organization. We are not associated with any national or world headquarters. Yet, we cooperate voluntarily with our sister congregations in the Lord's work and fellowship.

The church of Christ is noted for its emphasis upon returning to New Testament Christianity and for its desire to *"be perfectly joined together in the same mind and ... judgment..."* (1 Cor. 1:10). We try to follow the basic, innocent faith that was proclaimed on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

If you are earnest about learning more by means of studying the Holy Bible and obeying what it says, you will truly find a home here at Oak Grove Church of Christ.

Oak Grove Church of Christ

104 SW 6th Street,
Oak Grove, MO 64075 (816) 690-4599
www.ogchurchofchrist.org

Head of the Church:

Christ (Eph 1:22; 5:23; Col 1:18)

Elders: (1 Tim 3:1-7)

Claude Andrews
Walter Hutcherson
Richard Petering
Lowell Smith

Deacons: (1 Tim 3:8-13)

Darrell Andrews
Dean Evatt
Vint Hall
Hershel Hunt
Leland Reed
Tim Smith
David Wiesemann

Preacher: (2 Tim 4:1-5)

Jack W. McNeil
Office: (816) 690-4599
Cell: (816) 522-2584
ogchurchofchrist@embarqmail.com

– Schedule of Services –

Sunday:

Bible Study – 9:30 a.m.
Worship – A.M. 10:20; P.M. 6:00

Wednesday: Bible Study – 7:00

Bi-Monthly: "House to House / Heart to Heart"