



Sermon Topic

NOTES

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KEY POINTS

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KEY VERSES

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For the Love of Swine

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record a tragic event from Jesus' life that occurred on His visit to a certain region where after He never returned as far as we know, all because the people there apparently preferred the presence of their swine, to the presence of the Savior (Please see/study: Matt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-17; & Lk. 8:26-37).

We are all probably at least somewhat familiar with the story, and how Jesus arrived in the Gadarene (or Gergasene) region and drove many demons from a couple of men, out into a nearby herd of swine which then rushed down a steep hillside to their deaths as they drowned in the depths of the sea. Shortly thereafter, the herdsman, townsfolk, and inhabitants of that region begged Jesus to leave their area – which He did, never to return as far as we know. What a terrible, tragic, and soul-destroying, salvation-rejecting decision! But apparently they preferred the putrid presence of their pigs, to the perfecting presence of the Prince of Peace.

Why would I say such a thing? Consider... While they begged Jesus to leave their area, they were apparently quite comfortable with the presence of their pigs, as they had obviously, previously chosen to keep their pigs around for a while. And although these folks were likely of Jewish descent and knew that pigs were unclean to them as God's holy and chosen people (Lev. 11:7, Deut. 14:8), apparently God's commands didn't matter all that much to them. After all, Matthew tells us there were "many swine" (vs. 30); while Mark tells us it was a "large herd," (vs. 11), "about two thousand" (vs. 13). And such numbers would surely mean full coffers and large financial surpluses for those who kept the pigs close. Hence, the pigs had been wanted, coddled, protected and cherished... while the Savior wasn't – and was therefore sent packing... quite likely never to return.

What has this got to do with congregations of the Lord's church today? Much indeed. The simple fact of the matter is – whether some of the more sensitive amongst us might find it abrasive or offensive – that several times in the Scriptures themselves, certain types of people are undeniably aligned with, alluded to, and/or illustrated as... "pigs"... or "swine" that is. For example, in Proverbs 11:22 we would note that "As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, so is a lovely woman who lacks discretion." In Isaiah 65:1-5 we see those people who willfully rebel against God and His word, closely associated with swine and assorted other abominations; those who walk in accordance with their own thoughts and desires instead of His and therefore continually anger and irritate God. Those words of God are closely echoed once again – with severe judgments additionally pronounced – in Isaiah 66:1-5 and 15-17.

In the New Testament we would note that both Jesus Christ our Lord as well as the Apostle Peter referred to certain people as akin to swine. In both of these cases (Matt. 7:6; 2 Peter 2:22), we see that these are those people who simply will not humble themselves and accept, obey, and submit to God's precious word. Those verses are NOT referring to those who occasionally fall short, make mistakes, and when they do, are sincerely willing to repent because they truly want to get and stay right with God no matter the personal cost or sacrifice. But these texts are referring specifically to those who have willfully, knowingly, and stubbornly chosen to reject and rebel against God's word on certain matters, in order to do what they want no matter what, despite what God said. We would note from 2nd Peter 2 in particular, that these are those who, in their lust for greed (or power?) are willing to wantonly and knowingly support and promote false doctrine (vss. 1-3); who will speak evil of any spiritual edicts or subjects they don't want to take the time to honestly and scripturally understand and/or obey (vs. 12); deceiving children of God who know, but resist God's truth; who have willfully and knowingly forsaken the right way of God; and who stubbornly and persistently refuse to repent! This, while they deceptively seek to sneak back in to feast with the flock – not to repent, but for the purpose of dragging those still living faithfully to the word back out into the world with them (vss. 13-22)!

The first-century congregation of the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16) in Corinth had to learn this same lesson exactly (1 Cor. 5:1-13). Such abhorrent, willful, sinful and pig-style rebellion and behavior has never been acceptable to God nor will it ever be. The Corinthians had to make a choice just like the Gadarenes: swine... or Savior? One must go, and one must stay – for willful self-chosen sin, and the Savior of mankind, simply cannot long co-exist. This is the same choice that so many congregations of the Lord's church must also face and make today; for not to face it, is still to make it. If or when any congregation's main focus, preference, and priority, becomes ONLY the numbers and the financial landfall such numbers can bring no matter how much willful sin, rejection, rebellion, and worldly false doctrine such folks defiantly engage in as they trample the pearls of God's truth beneath their dirty hooves before turning on the few still faithful, then, in reality... isn't Jesus still being asked to leave?

by Doug Dingley
December 8, 2019

Sermon Summaries

AM Sermon – “Don’t Toss Your Pearls Before Swine”– Matthew 7:1-6

It is so easy to look on the surface of things, make a judgment, and miss what is below the surface. You know there is more to you than what is on the surface, and others deserve the same consideration. Seek to understand me. But when it comes to evil, be decisive. .

PM Sermon – “To Take Your Stand: Prayer” – Ephesians 6:18-20

I like to think that this section on Prayer describes the Bonding Agent that holds the Armor of God together. Prayer holds everything together because in this prayer, the request is that God would make Paul bold and powerful, in spite of the circumstances. We can be bold because we know we are equipped and protected.

Schedule of Services

Pioneer Home Service	8:30 am
Bible Class	9:30 am
Morning Worship	10:30 am
Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wed. Ladies Class	11:00 am
(at church building)	
Wed. Evening Study	7:00 pm

Minister Dennis Baker

Shepherds

Gordon Gower Morris Guest
Larry Miller

Deacons

Don Dillahunty Rick Pinney
Spencer Guest Troy Trammell

mountvernonchurch.org
scripturessay.com
mtvernonchurch@cableone.net

(928)445-5190

OFFICE HOURS: M-Th 8am to noon

ATTENDANCE

Bible Class	65
Worship Assembly	96
Pioneer Home	12

FINANCES

Weekly Budget	\$4480
Weekly Contribution	\$4878

Pioneer Home Schedule

Date	Lesson	Song Leader
Dec 15th	Troy Trammell	Larry Miller

December Greeters

Amy & Abby Parra

December Auditorium Cleanup

Karin & Anna Nowak

December Communion Preparation

Heidi Guest and LTC kids

Identifying what's Important

We place a higher importance on some things than on others. Aside from simply asking, how can people know what's really important to us? Here are four ways:

Talk. We talk about the weather. We talk about our family. We talk about sports. Why? Because these things are important to us. They aren't bad things, and its fine to talk about them. But how much do we talk about God? About the Bible? About the church? “My tongue shall speak of Your word, for all of Your commandments are righteousness” (Psalm 119:172).

Time. Each of us has exactly the same amount of time each day. It's up to us how we use it. It takes time to sleep, work, and eat. Most of us have at least several hours of discretionary time each day. Perhaps we watch some television or read a book. Would that book happen to be the Bible? Do we spend time in prayer and actual study (not just reading) of God's word? What about church attendance? Compare the time spent meeting with fellow-Christians to what you devote to recreation. Rest and relaxation are important, but so are spiritual matters.

Treasure. Paying attention to the way we spend our money requires diligent discipline. We might be shocked at how much we fritter away on arbitrary things. I challenge you to compare what you spend on recreation and vacations with what you contribute to the work of the Lord. Your estimation of the importance of His work will certainly be reflected by your material support of it.

Talent. Your talents are not the same as the next person's, but each one has abilities. We use our talents to earn a living, maintain a home, enjoy a hobby, etc. All of those are good things. What about serving God by helping other people and working on projects for the church? Here again, your use of your talents demonstrates your estimation of the importance of the cause of Christ. What is really important to you?

By Joe Slater, minister of the Church of Christ in Justin, TX



Things to Know

POTLUCK & GIFT EXCHANGE DUE TO THE BUILDING PROJECT AND LACK OF ACCOMIDATION THIS YEARS POTLUCK AND GIFT EXCHANGE HAS BEEN CANCELLED.

Elders, Deacons & Preacher Meeting

Dec 10th 7pm

Breakfast at Cracker Barrel

Dec 11th 8am

Men's Monthly Breakfast

Sat. Dec 14th 8am at the Southwest church of Christ 8720 W Indian School Rd. Please make plans to attend. Teens and young men are always welcome! Flyers on back table.

Area-Wide Sing

Sat. Dec 14th 6:30pm at the Tonto Street Church of Christ. Flyers are on the back table.

TEEN CHRISTMAS PARTY

Fri Dec 20th at 7pm. We will meet in the fellowship room for games and a gift exchange. Snacks will be provided. There is a \$10 limit on gifts. Questions see Spencer or Heidi Guest

Men's Motivation Day

Dec 21st 9am -1pm at the Tonto church of Christ

Cards for Larremore Family

If you would like to send cards of encouragement to Ellen Larremore (Deanna's mother in law) or Mike Allen (Deanna's father)

Ellen Larremore

7075 W Veda Lane
Kirkland, AZ 86332

Mike Allen

7430 W Veda Lane
Kirkland, AZ 86332

Ladies Bible Class

Wednesday morning class has been canceled until January 8th. Meeting place will be determined.

LTC

We will not meet again until the first Sunday in January at 1pm at Spencer & Heidi Guest's home. This location may change if the building roof project gets completed.

Caretakers NEEDED

Copper Basin Bible Camp is in need of live in caretakers at the camp. If you are interested there is information on copperbasinbiblecamp.org

Christmas Card Basket

In the back there are two baskets with alphabetic markers for you to drop your Christmas cards for members. Instead of mailing all those cards just put them in the basket, and make sure to check the basket for your Christmas cards

Prayer Requests

Katy Cleaveland was in a minor car accident, she is pretty bruised up and still healing.

Larremore family in the passing of Deanna Larremore. She suffered with Hodgkin's disease for a very long time. She recently declined and was in the ICU for 3 weeks, after returning home she passed in her sleep on Sunday Dec 1st.

Viera Vigness (friend of Gowers) 7 years old diagnosed with malignant germ cell brain tumor. Undergoing chemo and radiation.

Pamela Ramsey (Kim Cureton's sister) kidney functions to improve.

Les Turner undergoing tests to find out what is causing his issues. Please pray that answers will be found.

Buck Taylor upcoming back surgery.

Pray for opportunities to share the gospel with someone and to have boldness in growing the kingdom.

Continual Prayers

Health Reasons/Treatment

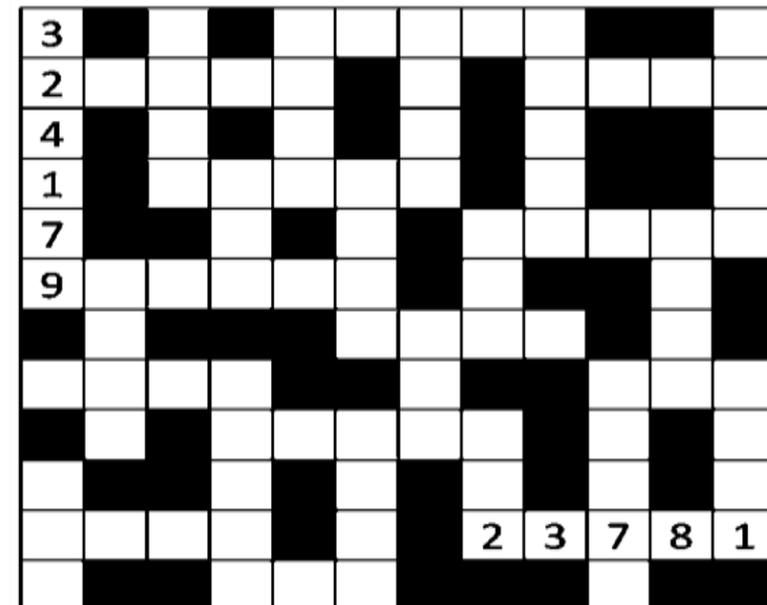
~ **Jennifer Evers (Katherine Stewart's granddaughter)** breast cancer treatment

~ **Darlene Oreleanna** cancer treatment.

~ **Rita Bowden (friend of Sally Guest)** stage 4 cancer.

Our Shut-ins

Marjorie Trammell



3 DIGITS	4 DIGITS	5 DIGITS	6 DIGITS
143	2018	6271	15972 52876
265	2934	7065	23781 53462
368	3165	7931	27054 64217
451	3648	8023	31648 86015
527	4382	9426	32142 93205
584	4629	9487	
702			