

# The Cross Not The Manger

Kent Bailey

In John 18:28-19:6 we read of the trial of Christ before Pilate. It was during this aspect of the trial of Christ that the unbelieving Jews brought unsubstantiated legal charges before the governor, falsely accusing Christ of having attempted an overthrow of Roman authority.

During the course of these proceedings Pilate inquired of Christ if He considered Himself to be a king. We also read of our Lord's response:

*Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing, or did others tell it of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered up unto the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice (John 18:33-37).*

With reference to the governor's earlier question, "Art thou the King of the Jews," Christ responded that he did indeed have kingly claims. He also indicated that his kingdom would not be of this world and therefore was not a threat to the Roman government. There was no reason for concern on the part of the Roman governor that our Lord's work would lead to rebellion against Rome. This statement of Christ had very clear implications: his kingdom was not secular, political, or military to be perpetuated by the sword. The goals of the kingdom of Christ were vastly different than those of Rome. Not being of this world, there would have been no reason for the kingship of Christ to be involved in an overthrow of a worldly political kingdom. Colossians 1:13-14 gives evidence of the design of the kingdom established by Christ on the Pentecost following his resurrection--deliverance from the power of darkness; redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of our sins. This was the design of the incarnation, birth, and earthly ministry of Christ and pointed towards his suffering and death.

While indeed the birth of Christ is an important component of God's scheme of redemption, the culminating aspects of such are the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ resultant in the establishment of his church. We are authorized to remember His death, but not His birth. Such is accomplished in the Lord's supper the first day of every week (1 Corinthians 11:23-29).

**There are specific errors regarding Christmas traditions:** Various errors have been taught for so long that individuals assume that they are true without any evidence. There is the error of the three wise men. While indeed a plurality of wise men did visit Christ and his earthly family, we do not know the exact number (Matthew 2:1-10). Furthermore, when they found Christ he was not in the stable as tradition states (Matthew 2:11).

The time element regarding the shepherds in the fields with their flocks also has been corrupted by tradition (Luke 2:1-20). History records the time element regarding shepherds taking their flocks into the fields. According to the Roman custom of "keeping watch" there were four watches: 6:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 12:00 midnight, and 3:00 am. This activity disproves the tradition that Christ was born in December since during the winter months shepherds in Palestine did not and even yet do not take their herds into the fields. Regardless of the time of the year that our Lord was born, there is no authority to celebrate His birth (Colossians 3:17; 2 John 9-11; Galatians 4:9-10; 1:8-9; Matthew 28:18-20; 15:8-9).

(continued on page 3)

**What we are NOT affirming:** In the basic thrust of our study we are not denying the incarnation and virgin birth of Christ (Matthew 1:18-25). We are not demeaning the birth of Christ (Luke 2:10-20). We are not denigrating prophecy (Micah 5:2; Isaiah 9:6). We are not demoting Mary (Luke 1:26-31, 46-49). We are not formulating unwarranted conclusions (Isaiah 8:20; 1 Corinthians 4:6).

**We are accepting the truth that in the New Testament the emphasis is placed upon the Cross not the Manger.** Christ depicted his death, burial, and resurrection as being the sufficient sign (Matthew 12:38-40). Such was the design of God's plan (Matthew 16:21-23). It was the fulfillment of prophecy and the purpose of his incarnation and birth Luke 24:25-27; 44-46; John 12:27-33).

**The inspired preaching of the apostles and the first century church emphasized the Cross not the Manger.** We find such in the preaching of Peter (Acts 2:22-36; 3:13-15; 4:2). We note such in the preaching of Paul (Acts 13:26-39; 17:2-3; 18:4-6). Note the emphasis of the cross in the epistles (1 Peter 1:3; 18, 19; 2:24). Nowhere in the New Testament do we find the birth of Christ being celebrated (Galatians 6:14).

**What the Cross of Christ demonstrates:** Such demonstrates the awfulness of sin (Hebrews 2:9-12). Such tells us of the love of God (John 3:16; 1 John 4:4-10). The cross informs us of the grace of Christ (2 Corinthians 8:9). That Christ became incarnate and was born (Galatians 4:1-4). Such is a demonstration of our need to obey the conditions regarding the gospel (Romans 6:3-17; Colossians 2:11-13).

With regards to Christ, let our emphasis be upon the Cross not the Manger.

## “THE FEAR OF THE LORD” Proverbs

T I B Q Q T S Y Q V W K V V P  
R R G B Y Q E H E B H R E R B  
P D A Z F Q H L I F E X O R K  
H T M P A J C U Z Z E L U N K  
N F O E E L I P Y C O O N O A  
H O R W P D R C N N N C L I L  
X U X P H S B E G O S O V T E  
G N O L Y A D E H T L L A C H  
O T Z L L I T J Z G R W J U X  
U A V R F H L E W X H C G R Q  
R I E N D I P I E R C D X T Z  
U N O A O J S M Q V G R Q S I  
D C Y Q D D E L T T I L T N C  
D S K N O W L E D G E L V I P  
C W T M S I S Q Z X C M N J U

1. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of what?  
Pro. 1:7
2. The fear of the Lord is to do what?  
Pro. 8:13
3. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of what?  
Pro. 9:10
4. The fear of the Lord does what? Pro. 10:27
5. The fear of the Lord is strong what?  
Pro. 14:26
6. The fear of the Lord is the what of life?  
Pro. 14:27
7. Better is what with the fear of the Lord?  
Pro. 15:16
8. The fear of the Lord is the what of wisdom?  
Pro. 15:33
9. By the fear of the Lord men do what from evil?  
Pro. 16:6
10. The fear of the Lord is what, what and what?  
Pro. 22:4
11. We should be in the fear of the Lord when?  
Pro. 23:17

# NEWS AND NOTES

**“I was sick, and ye visited me...” (Matthew 25:36)**

**Remember in Prayer:**

**Mark Brewer** was admitted to St. Bernards, Room 3006, on Saturday with trouble breathing.  
**Gloria Thomas** remains in critical condition, awaiting an ICU bed at last report from her family.  
**Louis & Myra Preston** remain at NEA Baptist in ICU. Louis is showing signs of slow improvement, but Myra is in critical condition.  
**Marshall Lands** is in St. Bernards. He was to be moved to a room Friday, December 25<sup>th</sup>.  
**Susan Pickens** remains at home on oxygen as she recovers.  
**Clydene Nelson** is very sick at home dealing with many health issues.  
**Jim Johnson** continues his recovery at home after his stem cell transplant.  
**Virginia London** is continuing to recover at home and has shown some improvement.  
**Paul Sherman** is at home dealing with Bell’s Palsy.  
**Jane Brewer, Mark’s mother**, is now at home and showing some improvement.

**Please check the bulletin boards for updates on Prayer Request Lists. Please update us if needed. Also please pray for those directly and indirectly affected by Covid-19, and please keep us updated.**

*Marie Wooten, Mark’s mother*  
*Mark, Leah and Carissa Brewer*  
*Paul Sherman*

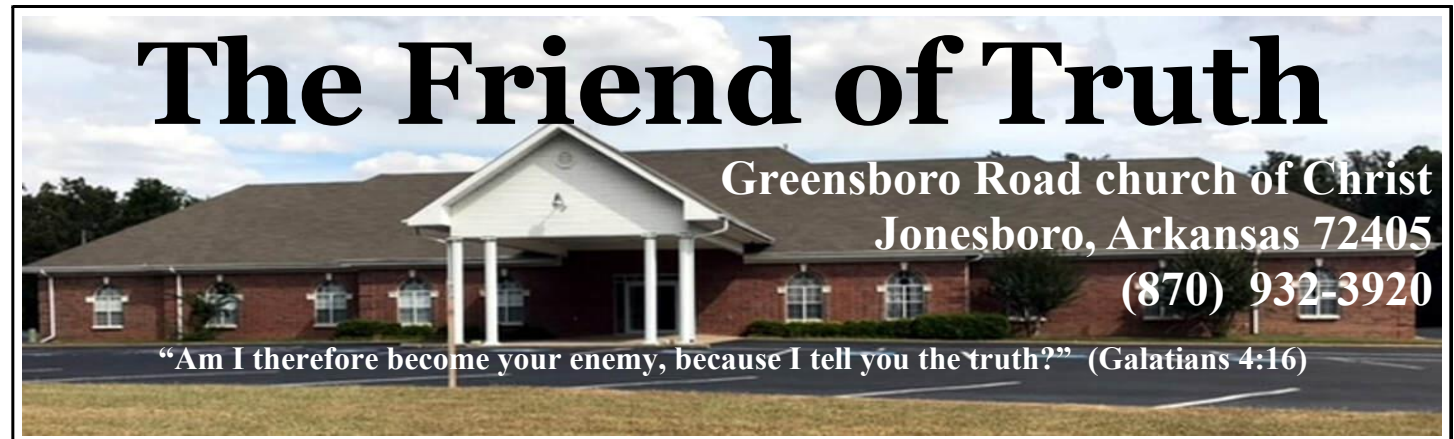
*Jody and Susan Pickens*  
*David & Roxanna Loggins*

**In Other News:**

*Sympathy is extended to Naomi Renck and the family of Jae Renck*, who passed away Friday. We will announce funeral arrangements when we know them.

*All Children’s Bible classes have been cancelled until further notice.*

<b>Those Privileged To Serve</b> December 27, 2020		<b>NUMBERS FOR THE WEEK</b> Week Of December 20, 2020
<p><b>SUNDAY MORNING</b></p> <p>Song Leader: Noah Flanrey                  Opening Prayer: Ben Johns                  Closing Prayer: Kevin Roush                  Bible Reading: Jerry Dodson                  Preacher: Terry Joe Kee</p> <p><b>LORD’S TABLE</b>                  Presiding: Mark Wooten                  Mitch Mosley Barry Roush                  David Loggins Reginald Read                  Stacy Eddleman Ryan Manley</p> <p><b>ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>                  Dan Nichols</p>	<p><b>SUNDAY EVENING</b></p> <p>Song Leader: Scottie Blanchard                  Opening Prayer: Jason Garland                  Closing Prayer: James Johnson                  Preacher: J. L. May</p> <p><b>WEDNESDAY NIGHT</b>                  December 30, 2020                  Song Leader: Randy Oden                  Opening Prayer: Barry Roush                  Closing Prayer: Mitch Mosley</p> <p><b>DEVOTIONAL SPEAKER</b>                  December 30, 2020                  Scottie Blanchard</p>	<p>Sunday Bible Study 71                  Sunday AM Worship 94                  Sunday PM Worship 66                  Wednesday Bible Study 67                  Contribution \$9331</p> <p><b>“He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.”</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Proverbs 20:19</b></p>



Vol. XXVIII, No. 52

December 27, 2020

## KeeNotes

It was so good to be present and in the assembly of the saints this past Sunday. This “virtual worship” I hear about and had to practice while quarantined just does not compare to being present with brothers and sisters worshipping. Our fellowship is so precious and the time we spend together is such a joy. Pray for all who cannot be with us now and are missing this.

One of our missionaries has been in the hospital recently. Brother Arnold Kelley has just recently gotten out of the hospital. He has been suffering with low iron levels. This has caused him to need infusions from time to time. They have done tests, but still cannot find why his iron is dropping. On January 4, his good helpmeet, Susan, will be having heart valve replacement surgery. Remember these two servants of the Lord who are facing health issues.

We rejoice recently with those who have been restored and those who have been baptized into Christ. Kevin Roush recently asked for the prayers of the church and was restored to Christ. Kevin confessed he had not always used his talents to the glory of God and wanted to be forgiven and intends to do better. Kadie Garland was baptized into Christ Thursday night, December 17<sup>th</sup> by her father, Jason. We welcome Kadie into our fellowship and keep her in our prayers as she grows in Christ. That same night Lori Garland asked for the prayers of the saints that she would be forgiven of her past failings and that she would be the best example to Kadie that she can be. Remember all these brethren in their daily walks. Pray for each one daily.

**Every one, invite one, in twenty-one.**

**SHEPHERDS**  
*Dan Nichols*  
*Randy Oden*  
*Jody Pickens*  
**DEACONS**  
*Scottie Blanchard*  
*Jerry Dodson*  
*Mike Felts*  
*Jason Garland*  
*Marshall Lands*  
*Mark Wooten*  
**EVANGELIST**  
*Terry Joe Kee*  
**MISSIONARIES**  
*Michael Hughes*  
*Samrit Kammanee*  
*Arnold Kelley*  
*Micah Robertson, Montana*  
*Guyana, South America*  
*Warren, PA*  
**SERVICES**  
**SUNDAY**  
*Classes 9:00 a.m.*  
*Worship 10:00 a.m.*  
*5:00 p.m.*  
**WEDNESDAY**  
*Bible Study 7:00 p.m.*

**What Must I Do To Be Saved?**  
*Hear the Word of God*  
*Romans 10:17*  
*Believe the Word of God*  
*John 8:24*  
*Repent of your sins*  
*Luke 13:3*  
*Confess your faith in Jesus*  
*as the Son of God*  
*Romans 10:9,10*  
*Be Baptized for the*  
*remission of your sins*  
*Acts 2:38*  
*Live faithfully*  
*Revelation 2:10*

*“Where there is no vision, the people perish....”*  
*Proverbs 29:18*

*God Give Us 2020 Vision in 2020*