

Vancleave Church of Christ

Sermon Title: Responding to the Gospel

Scripture: Romans 12:1-3

Prayer Requests and Announcements

October 8, 2023

Jack Hudson: He has improved and is now at home with the rest of his family.

Samantha Byrd: She died in a one car auto accident Wednesday. Please pray for her family.

Nic Wages: He currently suffers with some physical pain; let's earnestly pray for his health.

Maci Perry: She is to have surgery on November 1st 2023. Please pray for a successful surgery.

Pamela Maxwell: Her back surgery went well and she has returned home and is recovering.

Linda Kenney: She had a recent short stay in the hospital, but is recovering now at home.

Ongoing Prayer Requests

Please be sure to give an update on these at: vcocministry@vancleavechurch.org

Kathy Cooper	Terry Kiekhafer	Sheryly Owensby	Jerry Mobley
Charles McDaniel	Mariah Lambes	Nic Wages	Frank Sentelle
Mary Stipler	Jeff Jellum	Susan Flurry	Rick Bedwell
Becky Tarvin	Earl Kenney	Linda Kenney	Tommy Webb
Terry Thornton	Larry Ishee	Cheryl Solla	Timmy Barton
Bonnie Halcome	Grady Weston	Judy Stutts	Pete Hankins
Berkley Smith	Scott Mcollough	Lanette Girod	Wayne Girod

An Encouraging Word for the Week Ahead

Life is Short – *Pray Hard*

“Pray without ceasing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

Announcements / Other:

- We plan to host a **Gospel Meeting, October 15th – 17th** Brother David Looney will speak. Please pray for this event, spread the word and, if possible be in attendance! This year's theme: “Security in The Storms of Life.” See the flier on the foyer table for more details!
- **First Sunday Fellowship Meal** is moved to next week October 15th (this will be the first day of our Gospel Meeting). We will return for evening services at 6 PM on that day.
- Please continue to pray for and support our mission works in Guyana, India, and Guam as well as the good works at Gulf Coast Bible Camp.
- Food Pantry items needed: **Instant Grits, Instant Oatmeal, Pancake Mix, Pancake Syrup.**

Our Local Mailing Address:

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A Real Tragedy

By Duane Patton

According to Reference.com, a Shakespearean tragedy is a play that “tells the story of a seemingly heroic figure whose major character flaw causes the story to end with his tragic downfall.” Some have noted seven essential characteristics that define a Shakespearean Tragedy; of those seven, one is called “Catharsis.” This is where the play evokes pity, fear, and other such emotions in the audience and where the audience feels sympathy for the character and empathize with his/her sufferings. If the play has the capacity to move the audience by its plot, people who are reading the play or watching it in the theater can identify with the characters and feel that they have similar experiences in their life.

There is much to be said about the literary works of William Shakespeare and of the several tragedies written for stage performance and future reading, but there is a real tragedy preserved in Scripture that should involve “Catharsis” among all humans, yet how much it “evokes pity, fear and other such emotions” among its readers may be less than the author intended.

The Bible relates to us the real story of God having created a perfect world – one in which humans could live and thrive together in harmony with the Creator (seemingly forever, cf., **Genesis 3:22**). However, and apparently not too long after the creation, sin and death entered the world when the first human pair rejected God’s will for them, violating God’s commandment; they decided to become the arbiters of their own destiny by assuming their own will above that of God (**Genesis 3**). This single act of human rebellion introduced what would become thousands of years of indescribable pain and destruction affecting both man and beast (**Romans 3:10; 5:12; 6:23; 8:22**). However, God sent His sinless Son, indeed, God in human flesh (**John 1:1-3, 14**) at just the right time to deliver humans from sin’s consequences and provide for a future infinitely superior to the life once enjoyed prior to sin entering the world (**Galatians 4:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 8:9**; cf., **John 6:51; 10:28**). In deep irony, the one who created mankind was destroyed by mankind so that by His single sacrifice all could again have the opportunity to live with God forever (Read Romans Chapter 6).

The tragedy, you see, is not that Jesus, the Son of God, was killed by His own creation, Tragic though that was, Jesus possessed not a single character flaw. The tragedy is this: in spite of His sacrificial love in dying for the sinful world, most people still refuse to embrace Him as Lord even though He was physically resurrected from the grave – the greater weight of historical, literary and all reasonable evidence pointing to that event. This is why the real tragedy on the life’s temporary “stage” is for anyone to fail to identify with the death of Jesus and to remain characteristically unmoved by the love of God whose pity for all is on full display because Jesus died on the cross.

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”

Romans 5:8, KJV