



Weekly Booster

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor

Kelly W. Peavey

pastorkelly@shen.church

Office Manager

Jeff Hiser

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Pianist

Terry Stafford

Choir Director

Sue Jones

Bell Choir Director

Volunteer Needed

Multimedia & Website

Jeff Hiser

Sunday Media Booth

Kris Anderzhon,
Alan Hutchison,
Jeff Hiser

Sunday Facebook Host

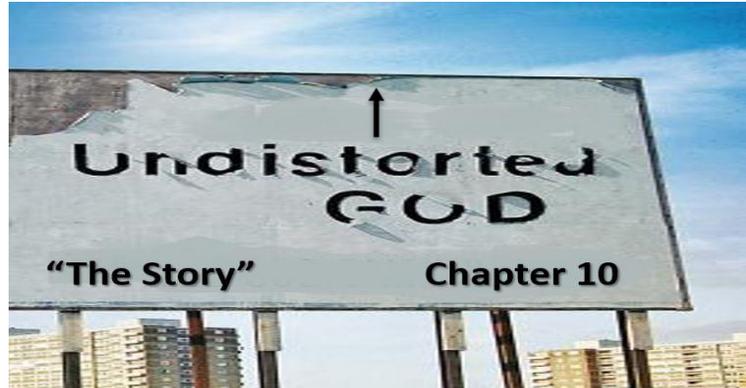
Craig Harris,

Facebook Contributors

Pastor Kelly W. Peavey,
Barb Cunningham,
Craig Harris, Jeff Hiser

Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,
Margaret Brady, Eric Whipple,
Drew Morelock, Deb Finlay,
Robin Hensen, Jeff Hiser,
Jodi Anderzhon



Ever since Peter Stuyvesant visited the Palace of Versailles the world has had a distorted view of itself.

Peter was the governor of New Amsterdam—later to be renamed New York City—beginning in 1647. He was visiting France to discuss colonial land agreements. While at Versailles he was awed by the Hall of Mirrors.

Peter was determined to bring a similarly amazing showcase to his city. In 1651 he founded the Peter Stuyvesant's House of Mirrors. He charged one [Dutch gulden](#) for admission.

This house of mirrors eventually morphed into what we know as a Fun House of Mirrors seen at many carnivals. For a few tickets, the fun begins by walking into a maze of mirrors, both convex and concave. We amuse ourselves by looking at distorted images of our figure.

Today you don't even have to go to the carnival for this experience. A laptop with a webcam and a silly photo feature will allow you to take a picture of yourself that you can manipulate to look odd.

It's all fun. But sometimes distorted pictures can cause trouble. It did in Israel during the time of the prophet Samuel. One of the major distortions was found at the Tabernacle, that portable place of praise for God's people.

It was parked at Shiloh and was meant to be a clear picture of God's holiness and grace. A system of sacrifices had been established that foreshadowed the coming sacrifice of the Messiah. Yet anything but holiness was found there.

Eli the priest had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who dishonored God in their treatment of the sacrifices and also engaged in immoral sexual activity with women at the Tabernacle (1 Samuel 2:16, 22).

Continued page 2

“Make your own Bible. Select & collect all the words & sentences that in all your readings have been to you like the blast of a trumpet.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Reminders

March 20th

Methodist Men's Breakfast
8:00 a.m. Fellowship Hall

March 23rd

Women's Bible Study
11:30 a.m.
Praise Team - 5:00 p.m.
Choir Practice – 6:45 p.m.

March 24th

T.O.P.S.
4:30 p.m.

March 26th

Men's Bible Study 8:00 a.m.

**Worship Assistants needed for
March 27th & April

** Fellowship Volunteers needed
sign-up in Fellowship Hall

**Choir members are needed to join
us on Wednesday nights at 6:45
p.m.

“The Story” Study Groups

Women-Wednesday-11:30 a.m.
All-Wednesday-6:15 p.m.

Books & Study Guides still available.
Contact the office.

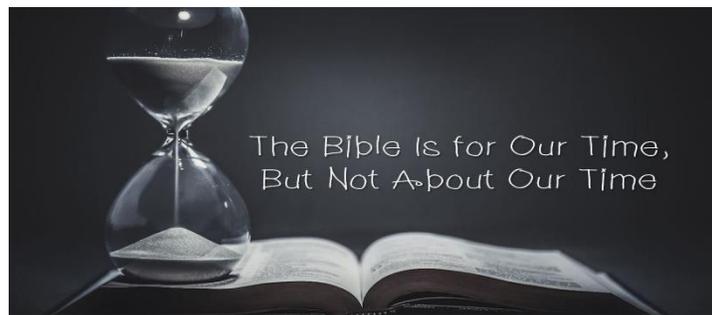
Undistorted – Continued from page 1

Because the picture of God they were giving was distorted, these two were killed in battle against the Philistines. When news of their death reached Eli, he fell over in his chair, broke his neck, and also died.

Once when my son Kris was three years old we were reading a bedtime Bible story. He asked, “Daddy, what does God look like?” Having no idea how to answer I resorted to a good teaching technique. I threw the question back at him.

“You tell me.” He thought for a moment and then said, “He looks like you, Daddy.” Talk about a sobering moment!

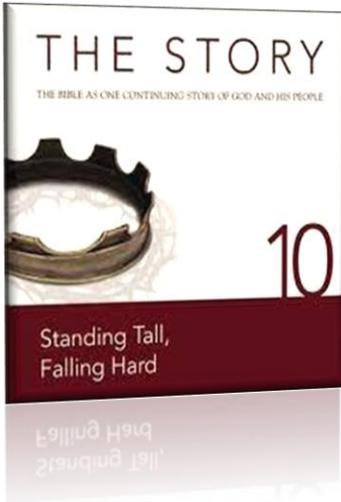
Just like Eli and his sons we are representatives of God. We represent Jesus to others. You may have heard it said that you may be the only Bible those around you will ever ‘read.’ The question is, “Are you giving a clear or distorted picture of the One True God?”



The Bible is *for us*. It is the principal source for how to believe and behave as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Bible exists *for us* to have a God-centered view of creation, to understand God's providence in history, to hear God's promises, to know God's words of warning and encouragement, to have the words of Jesus, to hear the apostles' testimony about Jesus, and to look ahead to the kingdom in all its future fullness. The private and public reading of the Bible is *for us* in the sense that it is for our training, our edification, our transformation, and our encouragement. The Bible is *for us* since the Bible enables God to speak to people across the tide of history, through our manifold cultures and languages, and in a way that truly transcends human differences. Whether you are a second-century Christian in Rome, a fifth-century Arab Christian in the city of Tikrit, or a twenty-first-century believer in Zimbabwe, the Bible is God's word for you, for them, and for us today. The Bible is for us, yesterday, today, and until the end of the age.

However, **even though the Bible is *for us*, it was not written *to us*, nor was it written *about us***. When we read the Bible, we are entering into a historically and culturally distant world and we must “mind the gap” as they say on the London Tube.

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Books and Study Guides are still available. Contact the office.

Book Your Appointment Online



Would you like to chat with Pastor Kelly, maybe over coffee, tea, or soda? Need to get something on the church calendar or need something brought to our attention? You can book an appointment online with Jeff or Pastor Kelly by going to the following link <https://bit.ly/3sm5lyY> (click on the link or copy and paste into your browser). You may also use a QR reader.



Church Office Hours

** Children & Jr.-Sr. High
Sunday School 10:15
Questers (Adults) 10:30

****Bell Choir** – Volunteer needed

****Chancel Choir** –
Wednesdays, 6:45 p.m.
Sunday 8:30 a.m.

The front door to the church will be unlocked during office hours and closed only for errands and lunch.

Monday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Tuesday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Wednesday
CLOSED

Thursday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Friday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Please continue to call in advance if you need in the church to make sure someone is in the office. If you reach the answering machine please leave your name, number, and a brief message and your call will be returned. Calls after 2:00 p.m. may be returned the next business day.



If anyone approaches the holy things dedicated to the Lord while he has his uncleanness, the judgement is?

- a) Banishment
- b) Imprisonment
- c) Death
- d) Slavery

Who did Jesus call the "Comforter" or "Helper"?

- a) A poor widow
- b) Peter
- c) Holy Spirit
- d) Solomon

Check page 4 for a hint, answers in next week's booster, March 20th

On whose forehead did leprosy break out while he was in the house of the Lord?

- a) Hezekiah
- b) Naaman
- c) Uzziah
- d) Gehazi

Birthdays and Anniversaries



Anniversaries and Birthdays

- 20th – Chris DeLong, Elliott Lundgren, Jenna Smith
- 22nd – George Zwickel
- 23rd – Connie Andersen, Susan Foster, Heather Rice
- 26th – Ann O'Hara, Brenda Selby, Ed & Nancy Bonefas

**See a wrong birthday or anniversary, or need one added, please call the office, or send an email to office@shen.church

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We're on the Web!

<https://shen.church>



United Methodist Church,
Shenandoah, IA

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Click on the link below by holding
down the Ctrl button and click on
the link <http://bit.ly/3skF0p9>

*Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: **Terry Stafford**

Call to Worship

Leader: Throughout all our lives God is with us.

People: Praise be to God for God's mercy and love.

L: Even when we are faced with difficult decisions, God's presence is near.

P: When we don't know which way to go, God will guide and lead us.

L: Open your hearts today to God's gentle leading.

P: We open our lives to God, that we may faithfully serve God all our days.

All: Amen.

"Samuel, Saul, and the Call"

Old Testament Scripture: **Isaiah 55:1-9**

New Testament Scripture: **1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

Gospel Reading: **Luke 13:1-9**

Songs

Eye of The Storm (screens)

O Jesus, I Have Promised #396 (Hymnal)

Take My Life, and Let It Be #399 (Hymnal)

It's Me, It's Me, O Lord #352 (Hymnal)

Last Week's Attendance

In-Person Worship – 65

Online Worship – 9

Our Mission:

"Know & Serve God by Sharing Christ's Love."

Our Vision:

"We will grow in holiness, our community will thrive, & we will make a difference in our world."

Answers for March 13th c) 7 b) Jonathan b) Land of Uz
Hints this week - 1) Leviticus 2) John 3) 2 Chronicles



The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you,

This week in my 6:30 am [Good Morning, God Livestream devotionals](#), the theme has been "Listening to What the Spirit is Saying". I've read David's description of the voice of God, Isaiah's encounter with the messenger from God, and the Spirit coming down as a dove on Jesus at his baptism.

God speaks to us through the Holy Spirit in a variety of ways – sometimes bold and sometimes subtle. How do we listen for what the Spirit is saying? Make time and space to listen. Remove the distractions. Go into your closet, turn off your cell phone, whatever it takes. Humble yourself – bow, kneel, prostrate yourself before the Lord. All honor and glory be to God our creator. Act like it. Ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit. We are to earnestly seek after the gifts that the Spirit enables.

Unsure if it's the Holy Spirit, the desires of your own heart, or the media that you're listening to? Check it against God's word. It is our best measure and standard of truth. Don't let yourselves be deceived.

Once you know what the Spirit is saying, you are obligated to follow it. If Jesus is the Lord of your life, you will submit to His commands. "21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" Matthew 7:21-23

In Christ's love,

pk

Link to my YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/EnvoyPv>

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In the rush to make the Bible instantaneously relevant, we can inadvertently misuse it by not recognizing the specific situation of the authors and lazily picking up something that seems handy to us on a first read. In terms of Bible study, this is like browsing Wikipedia rather than spending a few hours in your local library. Reading Scripture for quick practical application, and ignoring the social, historical, and cultural gap, is like looking for instant gratification without the hard labor of study.

The problem is that if we *disrespect* the historical distance, we will potentially *distort* the Bible's proper interpretation. Accordingly, it is essential to ask what [Isaiah 53](#) meant for the Judean exiles in sixth-century Babylon before we ask how it applies to twenty-first-century Baltimore, Brisbane, or Bogotá. I know this is going to sound strange, but to make the Bible meaningful, relevant, and applicable, the Bible first must be defamiliarized and dislocated from our own time.¹ In other words, we have to grasp how strange the biblical world is before we can try to make it familiar to our audiences, or to say that again, we have to realize how different the Bible is from our own time before we can allow it to speak to our contemporary situation. Otherwise, we will end up with a superficial reading of the Bible, or worse, we will end up reading our context and times into the Bible.

There is a real danger that we become overly familiar with the Bible in the sense that we read our own experiences into it. We have to remember that the biblical world was rather unlike our place and time. People who work in biblical translation deal with this problem all the time. I mean, just how much of the Bible can you translate into a culture, and how much do you have to leave untranslated? When Bible translators first came to Papua New Guinea, they had a problem. How do you say that Jesus is the “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world” to people who have never seen a lamb and who have no idea what a lamb looks like or how lambs were used for sacrifices and meat in the Middle East? Now, in Papua New Guinea they do have pigs, which were symbols of prosperity and wealth, and pigs were used in indigenous religious practices. So could you say that “Jesus is the Pig of God who takes away the sins of the world”? Perhaps, but probably not a good idea gave Old Testament prohibitions on consuming pork, which would create confusion. So probably best to leave it as “Lamb,” and then when someone asks, “What is a lamb?” go ahead and explain it to them. But I hope you get the point. Some things need to be left untranslated, kept different, and made foreign to properly understand them.

The problem is that in the psychology of reading we cannot help but associate the familiar with the unfamiliar, in the hope of understanding better. We always associate the words, images, and metaphors in a text with our own experience of those same words, images, and metaphors. While the commonality of human experience is what translates and reading possible, there is the danger of projecting your own experience of something, whether lambs or temples, into the text you are reading. The problem is that things we take for granted, think of as self-evident, or assume, were often quite different from ancient peoples. When Isaiah or Luke mentions X, we might assume that X meant to them the same thing it means to us. But this is frequently not the case. Often words, concepts, and symbols had different meanings in the ancient world than in our modern world. Let me demonstrate that to you by showing how the words “religion,” “gift,” and “hospitality” meant very different things in the ancient world than what they do now.

When Religion Is Not Actually Religious

Those of us living in the modern West tend to think of “religion” as the sphere of the sacred, to do with beliefs about God, with ethical obligations commanded by God, and connected to virtues like charity. Moreover, religion for us is distinct from the secular world with its neutral public places and institutions like government and education.

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However, in the ancient world, “religion” was not about beliefs and ethics; rather, it was about duties to the gods largely in terms of rituals. The ancient world also had no secularism with the separation of church and state; instead, things like religion, government, economics, business, citizenship, ethnicity, and military commands were all bound tightly together. Accordingly, when Paul commends the Athenians for being “religious,” they are not thinking that Paul likes their theology and ethics, which are separate from their politics; no, they are thinking of Paul as affirming the way that they perform their duties to honor the gods in sacrifices, prayers, and other rituals ([Acts 17:22](#)).²

When Gift-Giving Is Not Free

We tend to associate gift-giving with entirely gratuitous generosity with the expectation of nothing in return, yet that was not ordinarily what gift-giving meant in the ancient world. In the ancient world, gifts usually had some reciprocal expectation, strings attached, some indebtedness making it incumbent upon the recipient to return some favor or service to the gift-giver. All gifts had an implicit quid pro quo, even if there was a measure of generosity shown by one side. One thing that is striking about the apostle Paul’s theology of grace is that his notion of the divine gift of salvation is not about reciprocity but incongruity: God bestows his gift of grace in a way that people can never fully pay him back (see [Romans 5:15–17](#); [6:23](#)). Knowing a little bit about ancient gift-giving helps show us how Paul’s theology of grace and divine gifts stands out.³

When Hospitality Is Way Beyond Friends

People today tend to think of hospitality as something they do for friends and relatives—having them over for a meal or taking them out for dinner. But in the ancient world, hospitality is what one did for strangers, people they did not know or did not know if they could fully trust (see [Romans 12:13](#); [1 Timothy 5:10](#); [Hebrews 13:2](#); [3 John 8](#))!⁴

Moving from Familiarity to Strangeness, to Application

So if we think that the ancient world divided religion from politics or thought of religion in terms of beliefs and ethics, then we will misunderstand references to “religion” in places like the book of Acts ([Acts 17:22](#); [25:19](#); [26:5](#)). Or if we read our idea of “gift” back into [Romans 5:15–17](#) and [6:23](#), we will likely miss something or misunderstand the radical nature of Paul’s point about how lavish God’s grace is toward us. Likewise, if we think “hospitality” just means hanging out with our nice middle-class church friends, we will not be obeying the command “Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers” ([Hebrews 13:2](#)). We will not be engaging in biblical hospitality which requires looking after the immigrant, the stranger, and the refugee in our midst.

Therefore, to understand the Bible, you have to “defamiliarize” or “other” the Bible. To be clear, I do not mean treating the Bible as a historical relic with little or no relevance for our day. I am not suggesting we study the historical context of the Bible solely to create a museum of funny old words and strange ideas to be analyzed for curiosity’s sake. Rather, I mean studying the Bible afresh, recognizing its distinctive location and purpose, grasping its situatedness and its back-then-ness. Once the Bible seems strange to us, then we can reread it anew, on its terms, without projecting ourselves or our own culture into it. Thereafter, we are enabled and encouraged to find new, exciting, and challenging ways to make it relevant for us.

Therefore, the aim is to highlight the importance of knowing the historical background, entering the world and culture of antiquity, and the big payoffs you get in understanding and applying the Bible if you labor just a little in historical context.

Citations & Reference page 8

Citations & Reference

1. Religious historian Jonathan Z. Smith (Imagining Religion from Babylon to Jonestown [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982], XIII) noted how beneficial it was in making the familiar seem strange to enhance our perception of the familiar
2. The best study on this is by Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015); for a shorter and more accessible explanation see Michael F. Bird and N. T. Wright, *The New Testament In Its World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 152-158
3. This was recently demonstrated by John Barclay, *Paul, and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015).
4. As shown ably by Joshua W. Jipp, *save by faith and Hospitality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017).

Drawn from *Seven Things I Wish Christians Knew About the Bible* by Michael Bird. *NIV News, HarperCollins Christian Publishing, February 14, 2022.*

501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214



The Methodist Men will hold their monthly breakfast and devotion this coming Sunday, March 20th at 8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. All men are welcome!

On Saturday, March 5th, tornados touched down several times in the southern and eastern portions of the Aldersgate District, Winterset, and Chariton, as well as the rural areas around Corydon and Lamoni. Cities are assessing damages and their needs.

Iowa Annual Conference Disaster Ministries have been in touch with the pastors in the affected areas and they are preparing to make disaster emergency grants. We will know more as the week goes on about work crew needs. Right now, the most important thing we can do is pray and donate financial support to go directly to the affected communities.

If you would like to make a donation to help with disasters, please make your check payable to Iowa Conference United Methodist Church and in the memo write Disaster Ministries Advance #223.

Send to: Iowa United Methodist Church Conference, 2301 Rittenhouse Street, Des Moines, Iowa, 50321.

You can also donate online at <https://bit.ly/374xoSp>



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