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John the Baptizer knew that his role was to be a messenger for Christ. When people came to hear John preach and to be baptized by him, many wondered if he was the promised Messiah. John told them, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose..." (Luke 3:16). At another time, as John's disciples were concerned that Jesus was baptizing many people, John replied, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). John knew his place. The focus was not on himself but on Christ.

Through our words and actions, the focus is not on us but on Jesus Christ. It is not the messenger that is important but the message!

— Shane Williams

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P.O. Box 270  
Lilbourn, MO 63862

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**Times of Assembly:**

**Sunday:**

Bible Class	9:45am
Morning Worship	10:45am
Evening Worship	5:30pm

**Wednesday:**

Bible Class	7:30pm
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# The Lilbourn Light



*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" -Psalm 119:105*



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## The Messenger or The Message?

Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy's restaurants, appeared in more than 800 television commercials. Viewers saw him as both believable and caring. Thomas always told those that knew him that he was "the messenger, not the message."

Those are good words to remember as we consider our lives as Christians. While our actions should always be consistent with what we say, our goal is to point others to Jesus and not to ourselves. The apostle Paul said, "We do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bond servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Corin-

thians 4:5). Paul was not out promoting himself; rather he was focused on preaching the gospel of Christ.

Peter and John, after healing the lame man, preached the 2<sup>nd</sup> gospel sermon. The purpose of this miracle was not to impress the crowds, raise money, or to make a name for themselves. As Peter began speaking, he said (Acts 3:12), "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?" He used the opportunity to show that this miracle was possible through Jesus Christ (vs.16).

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## Good Intentions?

Have you ever done something wrong when you were only trying to help? Maybe you offered to help but you became more of a hindrance. Or perhaps disaster struck as you were attempting to do something kind.

In Judges 8, it appears that Gideon tried to do a good thing but the result was tragic. Impressed by the conquest of the Midianites, the men of Israel asked Gideon to be their king. Fortunately, he refused (Judges 8:22-23).

**Judges 8:23**, *"But Gideon said to them, 'I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you.'"*

But then he asked them to donate gold earrings (from their conquests), which he made into an "ephod" (v.27).

This was a sacred garment originally worn by the high priest. The Breastplate was connected to it, which contained the Urim & the Thummim. These were gems or stones of some type that were used to determine God's Will in matters. It seems that Gideon wanted God to rule over the people. He was not going to rule and was trying to provide some spiritual leadership for the people. While his motivation may have been good, God certainly hadn't told him

to do this. Gideon did not ask the Lord what was best for Israel.

When Gideon set up the ephod in Ophrah (his city), it drew the people's attention away from worship of the Lord and led them into idolatry (v.27). *"All Israel played the harlot with it there, so that it became a snare to Gideon and his household."* As soon as Gideon died, the people had no trouble going back to worshiping the Baals (v.33).

**Judges 8:33**, *"Then it came about, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the sons of Israel again played the harlot with the Baals, and made Baal-berith their god."*

Gideon may have had good intentions, but he made the mistake of acting without consulting the Lord.

Let us be careful not to allow anything to take our eyes off of God. It will lead us and others astray. Good intentions are no substitute for obedience.

**Judges 8:34-35**, *"Thus the children of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side; 35 nor did they show kindness to the house of Jerubbaal (Gideon) in accordance with the good he had done for Israel."*

— Shane Williams

**Good intentions are no substitute for obedience.**

## Our Inheritance & Refuge

What would you like to leave your children when you pass from this life? Sometimes you hear of conflicts that take place among family members after a parent has died. Squabbles occur not just over money but simple things: dishes, blankets or even Christmas ornaments. Yet, the true inheritance is not about physical things left behind but about the way they lived and the memories you embrace.

Wouldn't you rather be known as the Dad who helped your children learn what was really important? Or as the Mother who was a godly influence in the family? Parents should be striving to teach their children the importance of faith and relying on the Lord.

Three times in Psalm 46, the writer refers to God as "our refuge." He is our stronghold, our shelter, & our protection from danger (**Vss. 1, 7, & 11**). Blessed are those who take refuge in Him (**Psalm 2:12; 34:8**)! After God delivered David from the hand of Saul, he said, *"The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; 3 My God, my rock, in whom I*

*take refuge ; My shield and the horn of my salvation , my stronghold and my refuge..." II Samuel 22:2-3*

If I can learn to find shelter and strength in the Lord today, then my children will have an example to follow and know where to turn. What a blessing it will be if someday they can look at that example and rejoice that they have taken refuge in the Lord. A life of following the Lord is the best thing you could possibly leave your children.

— Shane Williams

**Parents should be striving to teach their children the importance of faith and relying on the Lord.**

## God's Plan for Saving Man

- ⇒ **Hear** the Gospel (Romans 10:17)
- ⇒ **Believe** the Gospel (Hebrews 11:6; John 20:31)
- ⇒ **Repent** of Past Sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30)
- ⇒ **Confess Faith** in Christ (Romans 10:10; Matthew 10:32)
- ⇒ **Be Baptized** in water (Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:16; Gal. 3:27; I Pet. 3:21)
- ⇒ **Be Faithful** until/ unto Death (Rev. 2:10)