

## Rewriting What God Has Written

A university professor and scientist in Southern China, He Jianku, announced that a pair of twin girls were born that he had genetically altered. He made them resistant to HIV because the father is HIV positive. He did this by editing their genetic code. Many in the scientific community are concerned about the ethical and legal concerns this raises. Not only for the safety of the two girls but for the rest of the world. Because their DNA was altered it will be passed on to future generations, and there is no way of knowing what the long-term effects will be. Jianku said that he intended this to open the door to future research in this area. His work is still being verified. If it turns out to be true, this has very far reaching implications. How far will science go in rewriting man's DNA? If this continues, super soldiers and designer babies will be next.

I don't want to go all Orson Welles on you, but as frightening as this is, it has already been going on for thousands of years. How long have men taken what God has written and changed it or altered it, just a little, to get their own desired outcome? We see it in Genesis chapter 3, "God didn't really mean that you would die for reals" (paraphrased). Peter mentions it toward the end of the first century A.D., talking about people changing Paul's letters. "In which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:16). He was talking about people who wrest, break up into its individual parts, the Bible. What they were seeking to do for gain ended up being their destruction. We can clearly see the similarities to one scientist changing the codes that God has written and others changing His commandments that govern our lives. One could lead to a physical death and a contamination of what God has made. The other leads to the contamination of something that was part of God's eternal purpose, that He paid so dearly for with the blood of His Son.

The warning from the book of Revelation is very clear, "...if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues... if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part" (22:18-19). Should man go so far in his pride that he would rewrite the code of our physical bodies to "improve" what God had originally made? Likewise, should man be so arrogant that they would change anything of what has been written as though it needed changed or updated? I understand that they are not the same things. Both have huge implications, only one has eternal consequences. "You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness" (2 Pet. 3:17) ~Josh Blackmer

### Kennewick Church of Christ

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#### Meeting Times:

Sunday Bible Study 9:30 am

Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00 pm

Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 am

Sunday Night Worship 6:00 pm

#### Elders:

Clarence Botts: 509-521-3344; [ccbotts@hotmail.com](mailto:ccbotts@hotmail.com)

LaVern Engelke: 509-783-6479; [Vern.engelke@gmail.com](mailto:Vern.engelke@gmail.com)

#### Minister:

Attendance 08/01: 38 | Budget \$2484.00 | Contribution: 08/01: \$2433.00

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KENNEWICK CHURCH OF CHRIST



### Keep God's Priorities in Place

If we look closely at the Law of Moses, we will discover it was filled with concern for the widows, orphans and other poor people. There were countless laws governing how these people, on society's fringe, were to receive assistance in order to survive. Many of the "rules" that made up the Law were designed to ensure that the most unfortunate members of Jewish and Gentile populations were cared for and assisted with food, housing, and so on.

When Jesus reached out to touch the leper, He was honoring God's priorities. This was not a new, ground-breaking action. An accurate understanding of the Law would have every Jew behaving in this loving, kind, affirming manner.

Sadly, the Jews of the first century had substituted keeping the "rules" of the Law of Moses, instead of honoring its priorities. They kept the Sabbath. They circumcised their baby boys on the eighth day. They never ate pork. The Pharisees strictly kept the law by tithing a tenth of even the smallest spices and grains. Yet, they failed to keep God's priorities. All the laws Moses laid out, were intended to keep people in line with God's main desires. God wanted people to honor Him with these rules, but many were designed to assist the poor in their times of need. To obey like Jesus did is to keep His priorities.

A man after God's heart would always keep the Sabbath, practice circumcision and so on. But, He would look beyond the rules to see the need for them. For Jesus it was never a matter of obeying God because that obedience would lead to a better life for him and for all those around Him. So, He stopped to help the leper, while the "devout" Jews around him kept their distance.

That is what Jesus means about our righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees. The Law of Moses was never intended to be a set of rules. It was designed to reveal the heart of God, His values and priorities. Keeping rules today will not make us any better than the Pharisees of the time of Jesus. We must look beyond the rules and see the people behind them. Then, we too will stop to help those in need, if they are lepers, the outcasts of society.

We keep God's laws, not because we understand all they are intended to do, but because it is right. Don't dissect them, parse them looking for loopholes. God's gospel is not an IRS form that has to be filled out in a particular way. Obey it, even if it doesn't make sense. Why does God command baptism? Don't argue about it, just obey it. Why does God tell us to love our hard-to-love neighbor? Don't avoid it, just obey it.

Sometimes reaching out to touch society's lepers can be hard. Sometimes, loving as God does, feeling as God does about people does not come easy. Simply, one by one, hunger to do the right thing and keep the will of God. That might take time out of your day. It might take money out of your pocket. It might compel you to help a "leper" (as defined by modern standards). Be obedient like Jesus, and help when you see the need. ~David Thurman

**Keep These Dates in Mind**

August 1 – Fellowship Meal after Sunday morning worship

Please let Lynette Jones know about upcoming events, prayer requests or birthdays she hasn't included so she can include them in the bulletin.

**August Birthdays and Anniversaries**

Debbie Bolt 8/8  
 Danny Mendoza 8/13  
 Clarence & Melinda Botts 8/13  
 Ron & Ila Stephens 8/13  
 Maddison Reeser 8/18  
 Merry Bunker 8/22  
 Harvey & Lynette Jones 8/25

Harvey & Lynette Jones 8/25  
 Eddie Petross 8/28  
 Bonnie Johnson 8/28

**Bible Studies****Adult Bible Classes**

Sunday a – 1 Samuel  
 Wed p – Jonah

**Young Adults class-  
 Teen Room** (led by  
 Danny Mendoza)

**Ladies Class**  
 (Contact Sandi  
 Gray for  
 information)

**Ongoing Health issues:** Pansy Caywood, Shirley Childers, Sandi Gray, Linda Lafferty, Pat Lindsay, Karen McBurney, Lupe Mendoza, Tami Pennington, Eunice Petros, Helen Pierce, Jim Preston

**Al Lindsay** saw the doctor concerning his eye. They agreed it needed surgery and scheduled it for September 1<sup>st</sup>.



**I KNOW THE BIBLE SAYS THAT WE  
 NEED TO CONTROL OUR TONGUES,  
 BUT SERIOUSLY, MINE IS IN DANGER OF  
 DEVELOPING PERMANENT TEETH  
 MARKS.**

Konedy Korner

**Our Ministries****Mountain States Children's Home**

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. (James 1:27)

**Peru Ministry** – Oscar and Anna Maria in Peru

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the son and of the Holy Spirit

**Food Pantry** - If you are in need of food assistance, please contact one of the men of the congregation and they will be able to help you with this need.

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.” (Proverbs 19:17)

**I Will Carry You**

*“Listen to Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been upheld by Me from birth, who have been carried from the womb: Even to your old age, I am He, and even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you” (Isaiah 46:3-4).*

Following the pronouncement of God’s judgment against them and the surrounding nations (Isaiah chapters 1-39), God has Isaiah comfort His people (Isaiah 40:1). Isaiah will comfort God’s people by speaking to them about the Messiah to come. He also consoles them by reminding them of God’s redemption of them. Furthermore, as the opening verses above show, in comforting God’s people, Isaiah reminds them of God’s care for them and how He had “carried” them (Isaiah 46:3-4).

It is ironic how God describes the foolishness of His people who had engaged in idol worship. They had worshipped idols which they had to “carry”. Instead of the idol god helping them or “carrying” them through challenges they faced in life, God’s people had to literally “carry” their idols which were completely helpless to assist them: “To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal and compare Me, that we should be alike? They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith, and he makes it a god; they prostrate themselves, yes, they worship. They bear it on the shoulder, they carry it and set it in its place, and it stands; from its place it shall not move. Though one cries out to it, yet it cannot answer nor save him out of his trouble” (Isaiah 46:5-8).

Before we too quickly judge Israel for their foolishness in carrying their gods, each of us should ask ourselves, “Do I try to carry God?” In other words, do I rely on my strength or on God’s strength? Do I rely on my good works and my ability to do everything perfectly right or do I place my faith in God, trusting in His power to pick me up when I repent after falling into sin, and obey His Will out of a whole-hearted expression of my love to Him (John 14:15)? Let’s not be guilty of trying to “carry” God.

When my children were little, I used to carry them on my shoulders or on my back as they rode on me like a horse. It was relatively easy to bear their light weight at that age. However, it would be very difficult to bear a full-grown adult. Yet, in the opening passage above, God says He had carried Israel from the “womb” even to “old age” and the times of “gray hairs” (Isaiah 46:3-4). God carries us through our whole lives from the day we exit the womb of our mothers to the day we enter the grave.

Many of us remember the song made popular by The Hollies: “He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother”. It is a beautiful song about carrying a friend or brother through hard times. As I think about these verses in Isaiah about God’s carrying us, that song comes to my mind. God carries us through times in our lives when the load is too heavy for us to bear alone, when we have been weakened through trials and need help to shoulder the load, and even when, because of our own foolishness, we have gotten ourselves into a lot of trouble and are now burdened by our own weight of sin which we created. God carries us during such times. He does not find us to be a burden. He carries us because He loves us. He says to us, “You Ain’t Heavy, Your My Child!”

~Daily Devo, Susquehanna Valley Church of Christ

**I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. (1 John 5:13-15)**