

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church of God Big Sandy

ChurchofGodBigSandy.com

Dec. 26, 2020 • 1:00 p.m. • Sunset 5:17

Bible study and classes

Interactive study (1:00) John Dickerson
Bible study (2:00) Blake Silverstein

Order of service—3:00 p.m.

Song leader Reg Killingley
Pianist Dixon Cartwright
Scripture reading Psalm 75:1–10
Sermon Blake Silverstein

Quick takes

1. Welcome to guest speaker—The congregation welcomes Blake Silverstein, who is the general manager at Christian Educational Ministries in Whitehouse (which was founded in 1995 by Ronald and Allie Dart). Mr. Silverstein (who is an elder serving in our sister congregation in the Houston area) is scheduled to give the 2:00 Bible study and the sermon at the 3:00 church service today.
2. Interrelating with other congregations—On Thursday, Dave Havir gave two seminars at a Winter Family Weekend at the Tanglewood Resort in Pottsville. (The organizers of this event planned for approximately 140 on Thursday and Friday, while anticipating additional people on Saturday.)
3. Interrelating with other congregations—Today, Mr. Havir is giving two messages at a winter campout at Leisure Resort in Fentress. (The organizers of this event planned for approximately 50 people on Thursday and Friday, while anticipating additional people on Saturday.)
4. Reminders for attending—Here are some reminders for people who choose to attend the church service in the building.
 - We do not provide masks or gloves. If these are important to you, please bring your own.
 - We expect attendees to make good use of our spacious hall by spreading out.
5. Edifying the Body—This week's article is "Black Activists Praise Trump's Policies: Outpacing the Obama Years" by Michael W. Chapman.

6. Among Friends—This week's article is "Amos 8:11-12" by Dave Havir.
7. Eye on the World—This week's "Eye on the World" is 40 pages.

Prayer updates

Please remember to pray for the following people who live at home but are not able to regularly attend our church service—**Eli Benedict, Sonny Rosenberger, Laura Moran, Annette Payne, Ronnie Shirley** and **Timberly Dunnam**.

Please remember to pray for the following people who are rehabbing at Legend Oaks Nursing Home in Gladewater—**Ron Feaker** and **Elaine Holloway**.

In last week's bulletin, we mentioned that **Mike Kennebeck** of a local Church of God congregation was scheduled for double-bypass surgery on last Tuesday. Because he was diagnosed with covid, the surgery was postponed.

New prayer requests

On Sunday, **David Bonilla** was hospitalized and diagnosed with having had another stroke. On Tuesday, **Becky** reported: "Neurologist said Dave had a lacunar stroke due to elevated blood pressure. Therapy should help him gain use of his right arm and to have better speech. It was one of the smaller arteries that showed up only on an MRI." Mr. and Mrs. Bonilla appreciate your prayers.

Mel and **Sharon Edelbach** of Elgin, Minn. (parents of **Jeanine Case**), have recently dealt with covid. She was diagnosed with it, but he had inflammation in his lungs. Although the Edelbachs are doing much better, please pray for continued improvement.

Mark Thompson of Ohio (brother of **Jerry Thompson**), who previously had bypass surgery, had a stent inserted into one of the arteries.

Eye on the World

■ An article by Kyle Olson "Members of Congress Bristle Over Being Given 6 Hours to Read 5,593-Page Spending Bill [Which Is Exaggerated As a Covid-Relief Bill]" was posted at breitbart.com on Dec. 21, 2020.

■ An article by Andrea Widburg titled "Republicans and Democrats Come Together to Rob American Taxpayers" was posted at americanthinker.com on Dec. 22, 2020. (The bill spends \$2.3 trillion that does not exist. The bill spends \$1.4 trillion or 61 percent on funding the government through September 2021. The bill spends \$900 billion or 39 percent on covid relief.)

■ An article by Kyle Olson titled "Billions Going to Foreign Aid in Spending Bill: 'Gender Programs' in Pakistan, Sri Lankan Ship Refurbishments" was posted at breitbart.com on Dec. 21, 2020.

■ An article by Ebony Bowden titled "Rand Paul Blasts Congress for Adding to U.S. Debt With Covid Relief [and Government-Funding] Bill" was posted at nypost.com on Dec. 22, 2020.

“Amos 8:11–12”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website, churchofgodbig sandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of Dec. 26, 2020.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—On Nov. 14, I began a series of articles about the book of Amos. The first article was titled “Overview of the Book of Amos.”

Since that time, I chose to write about various verses from the book of Amos. This article will discuss Amos 8:11-12.

Reason for choosing

Someone could ask: Why did you choose to write about Amos 8:11-12?

My answer: I wanted to remind friends about the concept called by many “the famine of the Word.”

What does it say?

Let’s notice exactly what Amos 8:11-12 says.

Amos 8:11-12—“ ‘Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD, but shall not find it.’ ”

■ Amos 8:11 says that the words of the Lord cannot be found.

■ Amos 8:12 says that people search diligently for the words of the Lord.

Question: Why would people have trouble hearing the words of the Lord?

My answer includes two possibilities.

■ Will preaching be shut down?

■ Although preaching may continue, will the preaching avoid the words of the Lord?

Preaching shut down

Someone could ask: How could the preaching through modern technology be shut down? There is the Internet with websites, YouTube, Zoom, Facetime, Facebook, Twitter, podcasts and much more.

My answer: Although I believe that this scenario of shutting down preaching seems

unlikely, let’s see how it could be possible.

■ Genesis 11:1-9—God previously separated the contact among people at the tower of Babel. Although separating people today would be harder than separating people at that time, nothing is impossible with God.

■ An electromagnetic pulse (called an EMP) could disrupt preaching on the Internet and could disrupt electricity that allows preaching on mobile devices playing DVDs, CDs or cassette tapes.

■ Censorship by atheistic countries (like Russia and China) is already restricting the person-to-person preaching of Christianity. Christians in these countries have already been secretly meeting to discuss the gospel of the Bible.

■ Censorship by non-Christian countries that promote other religions (Muslim, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.) is already restricting the person-to-person preaching of Christianity. Christians in these countries have already been secretly meeting to discuss the gospel of the Bible.

■ Censorship by professing-Christian countries (including the United States) is beginning to restrict the person-to-person preaching of Christianity. As secularism grows in professing-Christian nations, censorship of Christian ideas is increasing.

Even as the preaching of Christianity is being restricted, I don’t believe that this is the main lesson of Amos 8:11-12.

Not preaching the Word

What if preaching is occurring, but the words of the Lord are not being preached? I believe that this is a more likely scenario.

People may still be talking about Bible lessons, but they are not preaching truth. Consider the following verses.

Isaiah 5:20—“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”

Isaiah 5:21—“Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!”

Jeremiah 23:1-2—“‘Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!’ says the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD, God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: ‘You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,’ says the LORD.”

Jeremiah 23:16—“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; they speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the LORD.’”

Jeremiah 23:21—“I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.”

Ezekiel 34:1-6—“And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.’”

Romans 16:18—“For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.”

1 Corinthians 1:12-13—“Now I say this, that each of you says, ‘I am of Paul,’ or ‘I am of Apollos,’ or ‘I am of Cephas,’ or ‘I am of Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?”

1 Corinthians 3:1-5—“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people

but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, ‘I am of Paul,’ and another, ‘I am of Apollos,’ are you not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?”

Ephesians 4:14-15—“That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ.”

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11—“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie.”

Titus 1:10-11—“For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.”

Hearing and doing

Let me leave you with some verses that mention the importance of finding good preaching and the importance of accepting the true Words of God.

Matthew 7:24-27—“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”