

Grandma and I were asking Levi about his week at CIY, and he agreed to take us through each day's teaching and activities. When asked about the most significant thing he learned, he took us to the armor of God. And the point that really caught his attention was that the belt of truth was the most important piece of armor, because if it's missing, the rest of the armor just falls off.

That was a new thought to him, and to me, but it's true. If we're not grounded in the truth, we don't have a chance when facing the enemy. Our saving faith, our righteousness, our defensive weapons, and our message are all useless unless they're securely wrapped in the truth. The absolute truth, revealed in the one who is the way, the truth and the life.

Like Pilate, who asked "What is truth?", our society doesn't recognize the truth when it's standing in front of it, and is all around it. In the spiritual world, and in the physical world.

We must admit that it is difficult to see truth in the unseen world. Reason and serious thought about life can lead us in the right direction, but absolute spiritual truth must be revealed. And fortunately, it has been.

Not only did God inspire the Scriptures, the Living Word took on flesh and dwelt among us. And as Jesus told Thomas after being told to put his hand into His side, "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

We may not be able to actually see spiritual truth with physical eyes, but we can see physical truth. If preconceived prejudices against the supernatural are removed, intelligent design can be seen everywhere. And we know the Intelligent Designer, because He revealed Himself.

The sad thing is that we live in a world that has dismissed God. And according to Chesterton, "When men choose not to believe in God, they do not thereafter believe in nothing, they then become capable of believing anything."

When spiritual truth is denigrated even obvious physical truth can be blatantly denied, as is evidenced by the current gender confusion.

God Bless, Rick



THE CHATHAM MESSENGER

VOLUME 55

AUGUST 1, 2026

NUMBER 8



JESUS' OWN OBITUARY

(After hearing of someone who wrote their own obituary, Kirk Polley decided to write one that could have been written by Jesus. He then offered it as a recent communion meditation.)

Do not say that I have died. Rather, say that I laid down My life of My own accord. No one took it from Me. I gave it willingly, that those who believe in Me might have life that never ends.

I was born in humility, wrapped in cloth and laid in a manger, though I am the Word who was with God in the beginning and who is God. I came not to be served, but to serve, and to give My life as a ransom for many.

Many knew Me as Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter's son. Some called Me Rabbi. Others called Me a prophet. My friends called Me Lord. My enemies called Me a blasphemer. Peter declared that I am the Christ, the Son of the living God. Martha confessed that I am the resurrection and the life. Thomas proclaimed, "My Lord and my God."

I walked among the weary, the broken, the forgotten, and the sinful. I touched lepers when others would not. I welcomed children when others dismissed them. I ate with tax collectors and sinners. I wept with those who mourned. I forgave those who had no hope of forgiveness. I proclaimed good news to the poor, freedom to captives, sight to the blind, and the favor of the Lord to all who would receive it.

I healed many, but My greatest work was not restoring failing bodies—it was restoring dead hearts. I did not come merely to make bad people good; I came to make dead people alive.

I chose twelve ordinary men to carry an extraordinary message. They often misunderstood Me, yet I loved them to the end. I taught them that greatness is found in serving, that the first must become last, and that love is the mark by which My followers will always be known.

Some welcomed Me with palm branches. Days later, many cried for My crucifixion. I was betrayed by one I called friend, denied by another who loved Me, abandoned by those who had promised never to leave. Yet even from the cross I prayed, "Father, forgive them."

My hands were pierced so yours could be lifted in worship. My side was opened so your heart could be made whole. My blood was poured out to establish a new covenant, purchased not with silver or gold but with perfect love and perfect obedience.

(Continued inside)

STATISTICS		
	7/5	
Worship		126
Offering		\$10,037.00
	7/12	
Worship		118
Offering		\$4,074.80
	7/19	
Worship		111
Offering		\$5,821.00
	7/26	
Worship		105
Offering		\$3,129.00

JESUS’ OWN OBITUARY
(continued)

Do not linger too long at the tomb. It is empty. On the third day I rose, just as I said I would. Death did not overcome Me; I overcame death. The grave could not keep Me, and because I live, all who trust in Me shall live also.

I ascended to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God. Yet I have not left you alone. I have sent My Spirit to comfort, teach, strengthen, and guide all who belong to Me.

If you wish to honor My life, love one another as I have loved you. Feed the hungry. Care for the poor. Forgive those who wrong you. Welcome the stranger. Take up your cross and follow Me. Let your light shine before others so they may glorify your Father in heaven.

Bring your burdens to Me, and I will give you rest. Bring your sins to Me, and I will give you forgiveness. Bring your earthly life to Me, and I will give you eternal life.

I leave behind no earthly estate, yet My inheritance is beyond measure. I leave behind a kingdom that cannot be shaken, a peace the world cannot give, and a promise that will never fail.

To those who have believed, I call you brothers and sisters. To those who have wandered, I still call you to come home. To those who mourn, take heart. This is not the end of the story.

2 Surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Until we meet face to face. Jesus



A year ago, the church in Haut de Henne faced a serious challenge: there was no proper bridge to reach the church. Vehicles could not pass, the visitors were forced to carry their luggage by hand just to get across, when someone died or became ill, residents used to transport them themselves because trucks couldn't access the area. This situation made access difficult, especially during rain, and often prevented members and guests from attending services and activities.

Thanks to a generous gift from Chatham Christian Church in Chatham, IL, a bridge has been built, completely transforming the situation. This new bridge now allows easy and safe access for vehicles and pedestrians alike. The importance of this bridge for the church is significant. It has improved mobility and made transportation much easier for members, visitors, and pastors. Church services and events can now take place without interruption caused by weather or difficult terrain. It also strengthens community connection, encourages more participation, and opens the door for growth in ministry and outreach. In short, this bridge is more than just a structure, it is a symbol of progress, unity, and new opportunities for the church and the entire community. We extend a sincere Thank You to Chatham Christian Church for seeing a need highlighted in our newsletter and providing the funds to complete the bridge.



Schar Zimmerman will be retiring from her teaching roles at the end of the summer and we are planning to honor her with a reception on Sunday, August 30th, during the Sunday School hour.

Schar wrote all of our preschool-5th grade curriculum over 25 years ago, and we would love to shower her with cards and notes of appreciation. If you were impacted by her dedication please bring one to the reception, or send it to the church.



High School Students

We had a Courtside before CIY/MOVE, now let's have one after so we can review key takeaways from the our discussions during our week together. Should we try a Friday night instead of a Sunday? Let's discuss, but I am open to either having it on Friday the 14th or Sunday the 16th.

Like last time, we will have some food around 5:30 to eat then I thought in honor of CIY, we would spend some time playing board games for awhile. You know which one in particular I am thinking about! We'll break out some other games before concluding with free time in the gym to play the sport of your choosing. Invite your friends to come eat, play games and have fun with us!



Junior/Senior High School

This year's Christian music lineup at the Illinois State Fair is pretty decent! Dove award winner Jordan Feliz will be the headliner after Sean Rodriguez and the Ignescence Band. It's always fun to spend some time at the fair.

The cost to enter the Fair that day is \$5.00, but the concert is free. We will be leaving the church parking lot at 4:00pm and returning around 9:30pm. This is a great opportunity to invite a friend to a fun event before youth groups begin. Looking forward to a fun time with everyone.



CIY/MOVE is a break from the normal routine. It offers a different place, a different time schedule than everyday life to focus on spiritual things when so much of our life is focused on earthly things. Please be praying for our kids as our group embraces some of these challenges from CIY.

- Organize a toy drive for Inner City Mission.
- Volunteer at the local food pantry.
- Put together food bags for the homeless.
- Write encouragement cards to those around us.
- Pray for students in your classes and extend invitations to our youth group.