

## EXCUSES

Michael Pickford

We often try to make excuses for ourselves. We don't want to do something, or we made a mistake, or we're late for an appointment. Excuses, excuses, excuses!

Sadly, many try to make excuses to God. "I just didn't have time to read the Bible today, or pray, or share my faith." "After all, I have a busy life, I have a lot of responsibilities, a lot of people depend on me."

When God wanted to send Moses to deliver the people of Israel from Egyptian bondage, Moses tried to make excuses.

It's always sad when someone

leans on an excuse to keep from obeying the Gospel. In Acts 24:22-25, we read of just such a man. When he heard Paul speak about the faith in Christ, he reasoned about righteousness, self control and the judgment to come. He even trembled! But then he offered an excuse to not obey. His excuse was that it was not a convenient time for him. Hell is filled with countless souls who made this same excuse.

Obedience to the Gospel is essential if one hopes to go to heaven (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Promptness is stressed (Acts 16:33). 

Welcome to our services and thank you for visiting. If you have any questions about our beliefs or practices, please don't hesitate to ask.

God has not only commanded us to worship Him, but has also told us how, in His word. **The elements of our services, as prescribed by God's word, are as follows:**

- **SINGING:** Ephesians 5:18,19; Colossians 3:16
- **PREACHING/TEACHING:** Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:11,12
- **PRAYING:** Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5
- **LORD'S SUPPER:** 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7
- **GIVING:** 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7



## COME WORSHIP WITH US!

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY...9:00  
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP.....10:00  
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP.....6:00  
WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES....7:00

**EVERYONE WELCOME!**

- [www.defendthegospel.com](http://www.defendthegospel.com)
- Weekly Article: Rutherford Reader
- 60 Second daily Radio Spot, "Moment of Truth." WGNS 100.5 FM, 101.9 FM, 1450 AM
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Singing Practice: 5 pm
- 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Singing Night: 6 pm
- Children's Class, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays, 5:30 pm
- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Men's Training Class, 3:30 pm, Prayer Service, 6 pm



## SOUTHSIDE SEARCHER

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"They...searched the scriptures daily..." -Acts 17:11

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## HEAVENLY CITIZENS ON EARTH

Michael Pickford

Philippians 3:17-21 teaches us that the Christian's true citizenship is not on this earth, not in this world, but in heaven. We are simply sojourners in this world, just passing through on our way to our real home in heaven (Hebrews 11:13). On this pilgrimage, we will encounter...

Godly Trails. As individuals, we are not alone in this pilgrimage to heaven. There are many that have lived before us who have made this same sojourn. And there are many, still living among us, who are making this great pilgrimage to heaven. These folks are leaving for us a trail to follow. If we can follow the trail of other godly men and women, it will make our sojourn more bearable, and help us to be successful. Paul said, "Brethren, Join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern" (Philippians 3:17).

Godless Teachers. Paul continued, "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their Shame -- who set their mind on

earthly things" (Philippians 4:18-19). God's word makes it very clear that there are some religious teachers who are teaching false doctrines which will condemn their souls and the souls of those who believe and practice the error (Galatians 1:6-9; 2 Peter 2:1-3). While making our pilgrimage, our responsibility is not to simply pass off false teachers saying that they're going to heaven, just by a different route than we are. Our duty is to identify false teachers, expose them for what they are, and avoid them (Romans 16:17-18).

Glorious Transformation. Paul continued, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself" (Philippians 3:20-21). As we make our pilgrimage on this earth, we must live in bodies that are subject to disease, age, and temptations to sin. But the time is coming when we will be transformed into glorious bodies in which we will live forever in eternity without fear of disease, temptation or death (1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54). Heaven awaits! 

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# ARE GHOSTS REAL?

Michael Pickford

From the hit movie “Ghost Busters,” and popular TV programs such as “My Ghost Story,” “Ghost Adventures,” “The Ghost Whisperer,” and Sci-fi’s “Ghost Hunters,” etc. it is evident that many Americans have an obsession with ghosts. In an expansive study on American piety released in September, researchers at Baylor University found 37 percent of those surveyed believed places can be haunted. 90% percent of those surveyed claimed an affiliation with a congregation, denomination, or other religious group.

But the big question is, are ghosts real? From scripture, let’s consider the two possible options as to the source of ghosts.

First, after humans die, can their spirits remain on earth to haunt particular places and people? When one dies, his spirit separates from his body (James 2:26). After this, the spirit returns to God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7). There are two views as to what God does with these spirits until judgment day arrives. Some believe the spirit goes into the Hadean world, either to paradise or torments (Luke 16:19-31; Luke 23:43; John 20:17). Others maintain that at some point, perhaps at Jesus’ ascension, paradise was moved to heaven, as Paul spoke of death as a time when one goes to be with the Lord (Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:6-8). In either case, the soul does

not remain upon the earth. After death, a person no longer interacts with those on earth. Ghosts are often portrayed and described as exhibiting characteristics such as love, hatred, or envy. But Ecclesiastes 9:5-6 says of those who have died, “Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; nevermore will they have a share in anything done under the sun.” “Under the sun” means on the earth, and once dead, one’s spirit has no share of anything on earth.

Second, could ghosts be spirits other than those of deceased humans, such as demons or fallen angels? Many believe the demons of the Bible are fallen angels. Scripture seems to support this concept. There was a time when these demons were allowed to possess humans on earth (and even animals on occasion). This time was during Jesus’ life on earth, seemingly so that Jesus could show His power over them by casting them out so easily. But they are no longer allowed to inhabit the earth (Zechariah 13:2). Rather than being allowed to roam the earth as ghosts, fallen angels are being held in chains in darkness until judgment (2 Peter 2:4-5; Jude 6).

Instead of concerning themselves with ghosts, Christians should concern themselves with overcoming the evil influences of Satan to sin; because through these, Satan is walking about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). 🔍

**Check Out The New Sermon Log & Request Form in the Foyer!**

## SERMON NOTES

Search the scriptures daily to see if these things are so.

### Christian Lane (2)

**STUDY DAILY!**  
Acts 17:11

Introduction:

I. \_\_\_\_\_

II. \_\_\_\_\_

III. \_\_\_\_\_

#### DUTY LIST...

##### SUNDAY MORNING

- Announcements.....Tony Jenkins
- Bible Reading by.....Tony Jenkins  
Reading: Proverbs 4:14-19
- Song Leader.....Kenny Todd
- Lord’s Table:  
Lead.....John Nelson  
Serve.....Chris Meade  
Serve.....Ben Green

##### SUNDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Michael Pickford
- Invitation..... Michael Pickford
- Lord’s Table.....Kenny Todd

##### Wednesday Evening

- Song Leader.....
- Invitation.....

#### GOD’S PLAN OF SALVATION

There is only one true saving plan of Salvation outlined in Scripture. No substitutes will do. Have you really been saved? Get out your Bible and study the plan below.

- Hear The Gospel: Romans 10:17
- Believe: Mark 16:16; John 8:24
- Repent of Sin: Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30
- Confess Faith: Romans 10:9, 10
- Be Baptized: Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21
- Remain Faithful: Rev. 2:10

**Obey Today!**

**Home Bible Studies Available Upon Request!**