

# 24-1124a Transcript

## 24-1124a - *The Christian Standard, Part 1, Jim Lokenbauer*

**Bible Readers:** Stephen Tuck and Roger Raines

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## The Christian Standard, Part 1

Transcript (0:04 - 24:49)

### Scripture Readings

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Reader: Stephen Tuck

(0:04) Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1 through 3. God, after he spoke long ago to the fathers and the prophets in many portions and in many ways, (0:12) in these last days has spoken to us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, (0:19) from whom also he made the world, and he is in the radiance of his glory and the exact (0:25) representation of his nature, and upholds all things by the word of his power. When he made (0:32) purification of sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. Amen.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader: Roger Raines

(0:43) Good morning. The second scripture we're reading is from the book of Romans, (0:47) chapter 1, verse 16. Romans 1, verse 16. I am not ashamed of the gospel, but it is the power of God (0:57) for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jews and also the Greeks. This concludes this reading.

### Transcript

**Preacher:** Jim Lokenbauer

(1:10) Well, good morning again. I like the song you picked right before the sermon.

(1:15) Beautiful words of life, wonderful words. And that's what today's sermon is going to be about, (1:22) the Christian standard, the Bible. So what is the standard? Merriam-Webster's dictionary describes (1:32) a standard this way.

A figure adopted as an emblem by a people. An example of this would be (1:42) the former Soviet Union. They had a standard.

It was the hammer and the sickle. (1:50) And the hammer and sickle represented the working people of communism. (1:57) And communism working so hard to take over the world.

That was their standard. Their standard (2:08) was adopted into their flag, the hammer and sickle. We can all remember the red flag (2:14) with the yellow hammer and sickle symbol on it.

(2:18) And I would actually instill fear in people and hate and resentment, (2:24) because that was a worldview that was anti-God. To us, it's a repulsive standard. (2:37) Although working is good, what it symbolized was not a good symbol.

That's one (2:44) definition of the word, standard. And flag is the second definition of a standard. And as (2:52) I mentioned, they adopted that standard, the hammer and sickle, into their flag.

(2:59) And flags represent an idea or an image that represents a people or a person, like a king. (3:08) And if you think of some of the kings of England, their flags would have, like, (3:13) either a lion on it or a dragon to represent the character of that noble king. (3:21) Some of them were little white lilies.

That's another story for another time. (3:30) The third definition of a standard is something that is set up as a rule (3:36) or some measuring or a model to be followed. And a good example of this definition can be (3:43) seen from ancient history, going back to 1780 BC, where a Mesopotamian king named Hammurabi (3:55) had chiseled into a great stone obelisk code for living, basically.

It was a set of laws (4:06) governing familial laws, civil laws, economic laws. And we know this as Hammurabi's Codex, (4:17) but it was a standard for that society to be measured against. (4:24) And we as Christians have a standard, of course, as well.

And it's the Word of God. (4:33) The Roman Catholic Church has their standard according to Webster's first definition of the (4:41) standard being an object or an emblem, and theirs is the cross. And there's a danger to having an (4:49) icon as your standard, rather than having your standard be the one who died on the cross.

(4:58) When you start getting into images and icons, superstition can creep in. (5:05) And I think back to all my friends going over their houses that were Roman Catholics, (5:10) there would be a cross on the wall. And I knew nothing of religion back then, (5:18) but that was very striking.

And I would ask, you know, what's that? Oh, you don't know about that? (5:26) And they would tell me, you know, that that was where Christ died on the cross, (5:30) and that it was a special thing that represented, you know, the Roman Catholics and the Church. (5:42) So I know that some people were superstitious if they didn't have a cross in their house. (5:50) And superstition can lead to ignorant worship of that idol.

An idol is just a man-made thing. (5:59) And God warns us not to have any such object in our house, in our lives. Is it wrong to (6:06) have a cross in your house? No.

It's what value you put upon that. If you think of (6:17) some of the superstition behind the cross, look at some of our movies. The Catholic priest would (6:23) go into a place where there was an evil spirit, and he'd be waving the cross around as if that (6:29) had the power to drive out the evil thing.

And you'd see Dracula, (6:36) oh, it's a cross. And I'm mocking God. I'm mocking the superstition.

It's silly. (6:50) Evil is real. What do we learn in the Bible on how to deal with that? (6:57) Jesus taught us when he was confronted by the evil one.

Jesus didn't hold the cross he was (7:05) going to die on in front of. He used God's word, standard. That dispels evil.

It's interesting. (7:21) As Moses led the people of God through the wilderness as they left Egypt, (7:27) they started murmuring and complaining to Moses. And God became so upset with his people (7:35) that he sent poisonous serpents among them.

Many people got bit by these snakes, and they died. (7:45) That's how poisonous these were. So God had Moses take a bronze image (7:53) of the serpent and attached it to a pole and lifted it high with the command that if anybody (8:02) got bitten by one of these poisonous serpents were to look upon this serpent on the pole lifted up, (8:12) and they would be healed by God.

This is amazing imagery. That's typology. (8:21) It's to get people, give the people the idea there'll be one coming that's going to be lifted (8:29) up on a pole on high.

They were to pray to God, and God would heal them of the poison of sin. (8:40) So the typology between Moses' bronze serpent and Jesus is striking. But the children of Israel, (8:49) rather than knowing that the power of healing came from God, they started believing that it was the (8:58) bronze serpent.

And over the years, they actually started worshiping the image, the icon, (9:07) the created thing, rather than the creator. So centuries later, we can read in 2 Kings 18.4, (9:23) we read of the good king Hezekiah that says, he removed the high places and broke the sacred (9:31) pillars, cut down the wooden images, and broke in pieces the bronze serpents that Moses had made. (9:39) For until those days, the children of Israel burned incense to it and called it Nehushtan.

(9:48) And Nehushtan means a copper serpent of the desert. So they ended up worshiping (9:59) an image, a false idol, something that was intended for good. They turned into evil (10:08) and disobeyed God's commands not to have idols.

(10:13) They worshiped the created rather than the creator. And there are some examples in the Bible (10:20) of Webster's second definition of the word standard. We can find that, and I've taught (10:27) about this in the past, in Exodus 17.15, where Moses built an altar to God after having a victory (10:36) over the Amalekites and named the altar, the Lord is my banner.

Also in the Song of Solomon 2.4, (10:48) Solomon writes, his banner over me is love. So a banner is a flag, and a flag, of course, (10:56) is a standard. And these standards in the Old Testament focus our minds on God and on his love.

(11:04) So that's what we're supposed to be focusing on, not on a false notion. And the standard (11:14) I want us to focus on today is from Webster's third definition, of course. That standard is (11:21) how we measure ourselves spiritually, and we can find godly examples in the Bible to pattern (11:29) ourselves after.

Of course, God's word is our standard. Some of the versions of Bibles available (11:38) for us today even have the word standard in them. We have the American Standard, the Revised (11:47)

Standard, the English Standard Bible, and the Christian Standard Bible, which is a newer version, (11:54) very much like the NIV.

The Bible is the revealed will of God for mankind delivered to us by Holy (12:03) Spirit through God-fearing men. From Genesis to Revelation, you can see that God's word is (12:11) consistently appears to be written as if it was written by the same person, the same mind. Of (12:22) course, it wasn't written by the same human.

It was written by God, Holy Spirit, who controlled (12:30) faithful men. You might even say possessed holy men. Peter emphasizes this point in 2 Peter 1, (12:40) 20 and 21, where he says, above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture (12:47) came about by the prophet's own interpretation.

Prophecy never came about by the will of men, (12:57) but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit carried them. He (13:06) was in control.

And that's why Paul could say in 2 Timothy 3, 16, all Scripture is God-breathed and (13:15) is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. So the Holy Bible, (13:24) from cover to cover, is God-breathed. Eionustos in Greek, God-spoke.

Not just some of it, all of it. (13:38) So it is reliable, it's trustworthy, and it's protected and preserved by the will and power (13:47) of God. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, some of the scholars who studied them (13:53) were surprised to find that these 2,000-year-old documents were nearly verbatim, word-for-word (14:05) accurate with what we have today.

Preserved by God's holy providence, the power of God (14:16) keeps that word from morphing into something it never was meant to be. Homer's Iliad, (14:26) very popular Greek work, they have different copies of it through the centuries, (14:33) and where it started out at the beginning is nothing like what it ended up being (14:41) centuries later. It had changed.

An important document like Homer's Iliad was a different (14:52) story. Not so with God's Word, because it isn't a work of man. It's God's work.

(15:02) Peter also revealed to us that the men that the Holy Spirit moved or carried to write prophecies (15:10) and the books of the Bible, which is our history, at times didn't even understand (15:18) what they were writing, which kind of proves the Holy Spirit was carrying them. We see examples of (15:25) Peter in the early chapters of the book of Acts receiving a vision and being completely (15:32) clueless of what it meant until nearly a chapter later was like, oh, now I get it. (15:40) They don't even know what they're writing sometimes, which proves it's Holy Spirit (15:46) that's moving them along.

It's His will being revealed, not the will of man. It's interesting (15:56) that even holy angels aren't privy to what God reveals. These revelations are a mystery to them (16:10) as well.

They're not all-knowing beings, even though they're spiritual beings right up there (16:17) with God. First Peter, chapter 1, verses 10 and 12, it says, concerning this salvation, (16:26) the prophets who spoke of the grace that was to come to you searched intently with the greatest (16:32) care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing (16:40) when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them (16:48) that they were not serving themselves but you.

They spoke of the things that have now been told (16:55) to you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. (17:02) Even angels long to look into these things. Angels aren't all-knowing.

Angels are very (17:14) much like us. They were created in the image of God. But they have spiritual bodies, not flesh (17:23) and blood.

But they're not all-knowing. They are like what we will become in body. They too are (17:32) God's children and have a curious intellect and desire to understand what God's will is.

(17:42) They have a vested interest of knowing what's going on as to what God reveals to man. (17:50) Because God gave them a job of helping the saints. Without angels, we're told in Hebrews 1.14, (18:01) aren't they all serving spirits sent out to do service for the sake of those who will inherit (18:07) salvation? So the more angels know about God's plan of salvation for man found in the Bible, (18:16) the better they can serve God and mankind.

They too try to know the Word of God. (18:23) So the Bible is an accumulation of holy writings from over the millennia written by many men. (18:32) And it is all the history, laws, and teaching we need to follow that will keep us in favor with (18:38) God.

And concerning the writings in the Bible, Paul tells us in Romans 15.4, (18:46) for everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, (18:50) so that through endurance and the encouragement of the scriptures, we might have hope. (18:57) When he was referring to Israel's experience in the desert, he tells us in 1 Corinthians 10.6 (19:05) and 11, these things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us (19:14) on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. Verse 11, now these things occurred as examples (19:21) to us to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

So we're supposed to learn (19:31) from both the victories and the mistakes our forefathers went through in the Bible, (19:40) or to learn the history in it, the moral lessons, the laws. As parents are responsible for teaching (19:49) their children, God teaches us. That's why he has the Bible for us.

So we've got a blueprint (19:59) for life. We've got a standard to live by. We've got a map to get us to heaven.

(20:10) God teaches us in Matthew 23.10, for one is your teacher, the Messiah. God is a teacher, (20:22) and he teaches his children. The Bible is our standard, our benchmark, our certified godly (20:32) unit of measurement.

With it, we can measure and see ourselves through God's eyes, (20:40) as we'll see mentioned in Hebrews 4.12 later. When we read or hear it, we can judge or discern (20:49) our true thoughts and attitudes. James tells us in James 1.23-25, he likens the word of God as a (21:00) mirror, a perfect law that gives liberty in which we can look in it and see the true image of (21:08) ourselves, whether good or bad.

The goal being is to eventually see Christ looking back at us (21:18) out of the mirror. So the holy word of God should be in the heart of every human being. (21:25) Jesus said to the Jews, man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes (21:32) from the mouth of God.

So as bread is important to us to sustain physical life, (21:41) so the word of God sustains us spiritually. Jesus used the food allegory to illustrate (21:49) that only he can nourish us spiritually. He said in John 6.35, I am the bread of life.

(22:03) He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. (22:12) Moses revealed to Israel about the importance of the word of God. (22:17) He wrote in Deuteronomy 32.45-47, Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel.

He said (22:27) to them, take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you (22:34) may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle (22:42) words for you, they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing (22:50) the Jordan to possess.

So mankind knowing and obeying God's word has been job one from the (22:59) beginning, from the garden right up until now. It is the only way we can hope to go to heaven one (23:07) day. That's why Jesus said his words issue forth out of them like a fountain, as rivers of living (23:15) water that lead to eternal life.

So don't reject Jesus as he stands at the door to your heart and (23:23) knocks. By his word we will be judged, whether we believe it or not. John 12.47-48 says, (23:34) as for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him, (23:40) for I did not come to judge the world but to save it.

There is a judge for the one who rejects me (23:47) and does not accept my words. That very word which I spoke will condemn them at the last day. (23:57) Know God's word and live by it.

Jesus will judge mankind, so his word in the Bible should be in (24:07) all of our hearts. He holds life and death in his hand, eternal life that is. Life is offered (24:17) to everyone because he loves everyone and dies for everyone.

All we have to do is have an obedient (24:25) faith to be saved by him. Part two of this lesson this evening, we're going to get deeper into his (24:34) word. So at this time I'm going to extend the invitation that if anybody needs any kind of (24:40) help from the saints, you can make your request known as we stand and sing the song of invitation.