

# THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

Volume 67, Number 4

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Publisher ~ Doug Twaddell

April, 2025

## To Be a Man

Louis Garbi

When I was a child, I wanted to be a “grown-up.” During adolescence, the idea of being mature came to my attention. Accompanying this was the notion of being able to take care of myself. Later, I wanted to live in a responsible, productive way. I wanted to be a man and not a child. It took time and self-examination. To this day, absolute achievement of maturity has not been attained. Self-examination, correction, and action are ever-present companions for being a man in this world.

This sense of being a man is outside of biological status, as it encompasses the gender of male and female.

*Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So, God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Genesis 1:26-27).*

In verse twenty-six, “man” is the antecedent of “them,” as in “let them.” In verse twenty-seven, the pronoun for man is “him,” subdivided into “male and female.” Thus, “He created them,” man.

“Man” was made in the image and likeness of God, two characteristics. These are almost synonymous. It is like the difference between a shadow and its shape. In the twenty-seventh verse, it is stated twice that man was created in God’s image. Four times in these two verses, our similarity to God is stated. It is as if God wants us to know how much we are like Him and how much we mean to Him. In **Psalms**, it is written, “I said, ‘You are gods (elohim), And all of you are children of the Most High’” (82:6).

Being in the likeness of God is shown in **Genesis 1:26**. Man was given the responsibility of dominion over the earth and all

things created in the earth. **Genesis 2:15** chronicled how he was put in a garden eastward in Eden to tend and keep. The gift of personal choice was evident. God commanded that all things in the garden were available to eat except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Included was the warning of death if they disobeyed. Here is a threefold manifestation of similarities with God: the gift of rule (having dominion), the ability to appreciate the truth (understanding God’s commands), and to act (obedience or disobedience).

“Have you considered My servant, Job?” the LORD asked

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*By Job’s example, we can see the telling points of manhood. Instead of retreating into excuses or lamenting further about his condition, he took the LORD’s words to heart.*

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Satan (**Job 1:8**). Here was a man. Job was upright before God. This was the important thing. Also, he was blessed with material success. We would say he had everything going for him. When his children, prosperity, and health were taken from him, he held fast to God. However, when his personal integrity was attacked by his friends, his pride got the better of him. The Lord rebuked Job. This was after a lengthy conversation between Job, his three friends, and Elihu’s observations.

*Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, “Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. Where were you when I laid the foundations of*

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*the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding" (Job 38:1-4).*

He reproved Job by calling on this quality of manhood —  
"Prepare yourself like a man."

Then the LORD laid into Job with humbling questions which Job could not answer. Job admitted, "*Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further" (Job 40:4-5).* But the LORD didn't stop there. "*Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me: Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?" (Job 40:7-8).* Again, the LORD called on Job to be a man.

By Job's example, we can see the telling points of manhood. Instead of retreating into excuses or lamenting further about his condition, he took the LORD's words to heart. Even after admitting he was wrong the first time, the LORD took him to task even further. Job held fast. Thus, we come to the point of Job accepting the truth and acting on it. Then Job answered the LORD and said:

*"I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, 'I will question you, and you shall answer Me.' I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:1-6).*

This was not just a matter of accepting he was wrong; he abhorred himself and threw himself on the LORD's mercy.

The LORD commended Job as His servant. Unlike Job, his friends had not spoken what was right about God. They were commanded to go to Job with burnt offerings. It seems Job acted as a priest for them. They brought the offerings, and Job prayed for them. Job went from arguing with his friends and justifying himself to acknowledging sin and repenting. So, he gained a measure of dominion over his own life. Then he did something productive – he made intercession for his friends.

Even though we are on the other side of Adam's fall, the gift of being men hasn't changed. Now that we are on the other side of Calvary, the path to success is clear. The first field of action is responsibility for our own life – to assess the truth, repent, and obey God. *For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17).*

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## Fulfill the Law of Christ

Steve Wright

The sons of Zebedee, along with their father, owned a fishing business that employed other fishermen (**Matthew 4:18–22**). Thomas, Nathaniel, and Philip seem to also have worked as fishermen, for they were among those out in the boats when Jesus appeared on the shore after his resurrection (**John 21:2–8**).

Perhaps, to become proficient in the fishing industry would not have required a great deal of formal education. However, as young Jewish boys in their time, they would have been instructed to become literate and competent in the Holy Scriptures. Their other skills, strength, and mental acuity for their work as fishermen would have been developed by apprenticing to their fathers or other leaders in the profession.

Matthew (who is also called "Levi" by Luke) was a tax collector. Most likely, he would have required more specific education than those named above, as well as having to build a reputation for his job. Perhaps more than the others, Matthew would have been well-off financially because tax collectors earned their living by taking a portion of what they collected as their wages. The Roman oppressors employed them, and they profited from that, which tended to make these tax collectors very unpopular among their fellow Jews. This disdain for the "Tax Man" was, of course, enhanced by the fact that many tax collectors were unscrupulous in their work. Not all were. It was possible to be an honest, trustworthy, compassionate, and godly man while still being a tax collector. The information we have about Zacchaeus tells us that. Maybe Matthew was of that sort, also?

We know that Simon (not Peter) was a Canaanite and Zealot. Neither of these designations is a profession, strictly speaking, but it is of interest to note some points about the latter. Zealots were the “super patriots” of their day, the “religious nationalists.” Their “stock and trade” was politics and anarchy, the stuff of political revolution. They held a burning desire to overthrow the Roman government. Such would have been the “hero status” available for such as Simon. When he joined with Jesus, he remained zealous, but his allegiance changed. He became devoted to the Messiah rather than the cause of political revolution.

Judas Iscariot, the man “hired” by Jesus to be the treasurer for his group, was a “thief!” Although we are told nothing about what he was before, his character regarding his propensity for

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thievery and embezzlement is made clear in the text (see **John 12:4-6**). Yet, he, like those we have mentioned, was appointed by Christ to be one of his apostles! All of the gospel accounts identify Judas as the one who betrayed Jesus to the authorities. Matthew’s account notes that Judas suffered remorse for his actions and hanged himself after his attempt to return the “blood money” to the high priest was rejected. His ironic legacy was that the thirty pieces of silver were used to buy a burial place for the poor.

As for the rest of the apostles, the Bible provides no information regarding their professions.

Saul of Tarsus became an apostle after the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. This man was a Pharisee. He may have,

therefore, taught religion or held some political office among the Jews. We know from the scripture that he was a skilled tradesman, a “tent maker,” and that he employed this skill when it was necessary or important to do so (see **Acts 18:1-3**).

While it is interesting, perhaps even helpful, to contemplate the occupations and skills of these men, it might be even more significant to consider their personalities. We are given very little in this regard, but supposition can be made based on what is indicated, slight as it may be.

- Andrew – open-minded
- Bartholomew – composed
- James – fanatical
- Peter – impulsive
- Simon the Zealot – strong-willed
- James, the son of Alphaeus – quiet
- John – passionate
- Judas Iscariot – traitor
- Philip – inquisitive
- Thomas – pessimistic

As subjective and speculative as the summations of these men may be, they are still instructive. Remember also that Jesus spent a whole night in prayer with his Father prior to selecting his 12 apostles (even Judas Iscariot) because of who and what they were (see **Luke 6:12-16**).

What skills do you bring to the Kingdom of Christ? What strengths? What weaknesses? What handicaps? What struggles? What “burdens?”

I have formed the title for this article from the text of **Galatians 6:2**, “*Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.*” A “burden” is a heavy load. In this text, the word represents particular difficulties or problems people have trouble dealing with. To “bear” connotes carrying something with endurance. “The law of Christ” is the law of love which fulfills the entire law of God.

All of us are “odd” and/or present our various challenges to others. But by “bearing each other’s burdens,” we can allow Christ to shine in his kingdom when we “fulfill” his law. Take a lesson from the apostle Paul by taking a look at yourself in light of **Galatians 6:2**. Include, as well, the context of the reference, namely **verses 1-10**.



*Please check your expiration date!*

## *Blessed Are the Dead*

David Wilford Landes was born to **Wilford and Mary Landes** on January 24, 1949, in Linton, IN. He finished his trials of this life on February 16, 2025. David graduated from Raytown High School in 1967 and began serving in the Marine Corps on January 31, 1968. He served in Vietnam and on board the USS Hornet. While on board, they retrieved the Apollo 11 astronauts on July 24, 1969. One of his tasks was guard duty for the astronauts and President Richard Nixon. He served our country as a Marine for 20 years and was stationed worldwide. He married **Barbara Ann Waterworth** on August 22, 1969. David obeyed the Gospel in baptism as a teenager. He was active in the church all his life. He could always locate a Church of Christ everywhere except in Egypt. In Egypt, their family was the church, and they tried to reach out to others. Upon retirement in 1989, he and Barbara moved to Lee's Summit, MO. David served for many years as a deacon for the **Gregory Blvd Church of Christ in Raytown, MO**. Because of all the time he was away, family was very important to David. He enjoyed reunions, holidays, and any time the family got together. He and Barbara loved to travel in retirement. They went to Germany, Austria, and France. They also thoroughly enjoyed going on cruises. Their favorite place was Alaska, which they visited several times. David was preceded in death by his wife, Barbara, and his grandson, **Brady Landes**. He is survived by his daughter, **Carrie Brigham**; son, **Rob (Maggie) Landes**; six grandchildren; his sister, **Ladeanna Twaddell**; his brother, **Chad (Pam) Landes**; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

## *Here and There*

New officers were ordained on March 2 at the **Prince Road Church of Christ, Alton, IL**, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and with the assistance of **Rick Sparks**. **Eric Owens** and **Jason Range** were appointed as elders. **Drew Hartman** and **Chris Schiber** were appointed as deacons. May God bless these men with wisdom as they fulfill their ministries!

## *Special Meetings*

### **2025 Special Meetings**

- April 26-27.....Weekend Meeting, Summersville, MO  
May 24-25.....Memorial Day Meeting,  
hosted by the **Murray Road COC, Lee's Summit, MO**  
May 24-25.....Memorial Day Meeting,  
hosted by the **South Fairfax COC, Bakersfield, CA**  
June 14-15.....Weekend Meeting, Vandalia IA  
June 30-July 4.....Midwest Bible Campout, Eminence, MO  
hosted by the **Prince Road COC, Alton, IL**

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**THE GOSPEL MESSAGE** (USPS:576-040) (ISSN:1054-7991) is published monthly for \$10 per year by **THE GOSPEL MESSAGE**, 1700 S. Ann Ct., Independence, MO 64057. Periodicals Postage Paid at Independence, MO. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **THE GOSPEL MESSAGE**, 1700 S. Ann Ct., Independence, MO 64057