

THE BEACON

Harrisburg Christian Church
201 E Sexton St. PO Box 36



MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

June, 2026

Greetings HCC,

One of the most important questions from our 'You asked for it' series is this: "Different churches use the same Bible but have different interpretations and beliefs from the same book. How do we know if our interpretation is correct? What if we are wrong?"

Great question! The way I would like to answer this question is to point out the interpretive method that we are using at HCC. Let's use a passage of scripture like Matthew 5:38-42 focussing on verse 41 and walk through this process. The passage reads:

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you."

Step 1 is to ask the question: "What was the author intending to communicate?" The more we know about the context of the passage, the better our interpretation will be. (FYI, a good Study Bible and numerous online resources can help with this.) Jesus was speaking in this passage to a primarily Jewish audience. The land of Israel at that time was ruled by Rome. Roman law allowed soldiers to force non-Roman civilians to carry their armor for up to one mile. To aid the Roman soldier would have been humiliating and insulting to a Jewish person but they would face serious consequences if they would resist or retaliate. Jesus proposes a different response, to respond by treating the soldier as a person of value. To "go the extra mile" in this case would have been a way of responding to an insult by showing value and honor to the offender instead.

CONTINUE...

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Step 2 in the interpretive process is to seek to discover timeless truths from the passages we study. In this passage, each example Jesus gives is a situation where someone may be tempted to retaliate or devalue someone else and in each case, Jesus proposes a solution that involves treating the offender as though they have value. So “to treat all people, even those who insult you, as valuable,” would be an example of a timeless truth. An important step in testing a timeless truth is to compare it with the rest of Scripture. Is this truth consistent throughout the rest of the Bible? Is it timeless?

In the Old Testament, Proverbs 12:16 states “A Fool is quick-tempered, but a wise person stays calm when insulted.” and in the New Testament, Peter wrote “Don’t repay evil for evil. Don’t retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing.” (1 Peter 3:9). Similar passages like this reinforce our understanding of the ‘timeless truths’ of the Bible which leads us to an important next step.

Step 3 is to take the timeless truths and apply them to our current lives and context. Have you considered offering a generous tip to a rude waitress? Would you be willing to let someone merge in traffic who cut you off earlier? Would you believe the best in your spouse after they have misjudged your motives and offended you? How about fixing your child’s favorite meal the same week they have been giving you a rude attitude? If another athlete taunts and disrespects you on the court, would you resist responding in kind and congratulate him/her on a nice play?

Step 4 is to interpret and apply the scriptures in community. Discuss the scriptures with other Spirit-led believers and ask them to help you discern your thoughts and assumptions. For example, I would argue that this passage does NOT call a spouse to allow themselves to be abused by another spouse, nor does it imply that we should refrain from having someone who steals from us arrested. Conversations with other believers can help us appropriately apply the scriptures to our current context.

These steps outline the way we are seeking to interpret the Bible at HCC. If a better way is discovered we will seek to implement it and continue to interpret and apply the scriptures the best we can. If you encounter someone who has different beliefs than you do about certain things in the Bible, ask them what their process is of interpreting and applying Scripture. How does it compare to what I have listed above?

May it be well with your soul,
John Gillman

JOIN US ON SUNDAY
MORNINGS AT
9AM OR 10:30AM

JOHN'S TIDBITS

1. Congratulations to Rebecca Bennett on your baptism!
2. The summer program 2.0 is beginning this month! Keep an eye out for the following students and tell them thank you for serving at HCC this summer. These students will be serving on Sunday mornings, Monday afternoons, and during VBS.
3. I like how The Chosen has illustrated "the extra mile" passage. If you are interested, watch this video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnpcrpfvKR8>

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SUMMER HELP

**Berkley Sublett
Andrew Head
Charlotte Long
Audrey Washburn
Amanda Kreitner
Dravyn Head
Kinsley Mahurin
Hayden Hunziker
Logan Woods
Kelson Langdon
Ella Long
Reid Smith
Hattie Yount
Ashlan Edwards
Naomi Demuth
Aiden Washburn
Katie Jo Winn
Reagan Wisswell**



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UPCOMING EVENTS

You can be a part of it!

Find an event and get connected!

June 1

01

Summer Staff Begins
Monday meetings 12-5pm

**Operation Christmas
Child**

02

See the last page for
items we are collecting
in June.

Senior Luncheon 6/9

03

11-12pm in the Fellowship
Hall

**Elders & Deacon
Meeting**

04

6/23 from 6:30-7:30

VBS Help

05

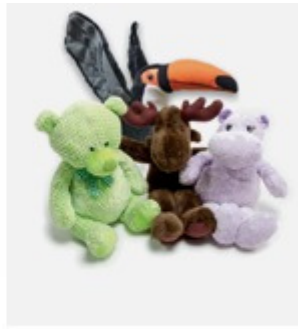
We will be seeking lots of youth
and adult help for our summer
VBS program. Stay tuned for
more info.

Year-round shopping for Harrisburg Christian Church – Operation Christmas Child

FEBRUARY



"Wow" Items



Stuffed Animals

MARCH



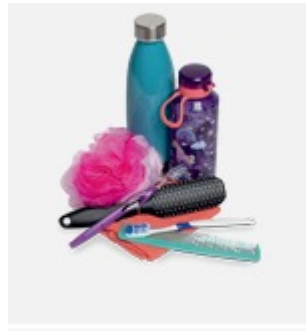
Fashion Accessories

APRIL



Hats, Gloves, and Scarves

MAY



Personal Care Items

JUNE

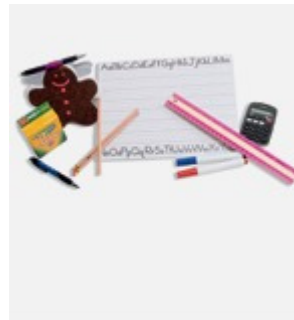


Toys

JULY

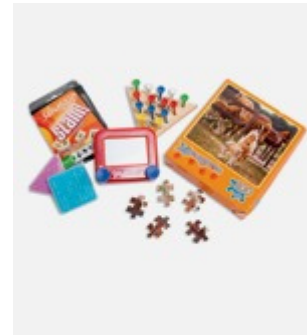
*Christmas in July!
SpecialEvent*

AUGUST



School Supplies

SEPTEMBER



Games

