

Thank you...Bruce Evans  
Speaker for today

*“And without faith it is impossible to please Him,  
for the one who comes to God must believe that  
He exists, and that He is a rewarder of those  
who diligently seek Him.”*  
Hebrews 11:6

**DIRECTORY CORRECTION**

Sal Contino’s phone number is  
(214) 304-9111

**December Birthdays**

17 Bill Brown    18 Alexis Brown  
22 Elizabeth Medina    31 Bob Pescador

**January Anniversaries**

8 Bob & Debbie Pescador

**Regular Meeting Times**

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.  
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Website:  
[indiochurchofchrist.com](http://indiochurchofchrist.com)

**Preacher: Vacant**

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# Indio Informer

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*“Trust in the Lord with all  
your heart and do not lean on  
your own understanding.”*  
Proverb 3:5

- *“Fight the good fight”*
- *“Keep the faith”*
- *“Finish the course”*

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## Premature Persuasion and His Divine Plan

By Dan Jenkins

The Lord’s plan for the salvation of the world when fully understood will lead to the salvation of the lost. It is so vital that those of us who are Christians fully understand this plan, or we will sometimes hinder the conversion of the lost soul we are trying to win. Let me urge every member of the church to think soberly of His Divine plan.

That plan involves the proclamation of the gospel to one who is lost. Look at how Paul sums up the heart of the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:2-4. Keep this in the context as you read it. *“Brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, and in which you stand, and by which you are saved...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again, the third day according to the Scriptures...”* We are to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15), but preaching the gospel involves this message about Jesus.

Sometimes we miss it. We think because of the essentiality of baptism that we begin by encouraging them to be baptized. We so easily say, “Why don’t you get baptized.

What are you waiting on?" There is a time when this should be said, but it rarely should be the opening remarks we have with others who visit our services. We mean well, but it is premature.

Look at Acts chapter two. The words of this sermon were spoken as the Holy Spirit gave this message using the apostles' mouths (Acts 2:4). These Jews already knew a lot about baptism for the remission of sins because of the preaching of John the Baptist (Mark 1:4). Yet the Lord did not begin with words encouraging them to be baptized. Read it carefully. It began with the proclamation of His death, burial and resurrection. The subject of baptism was not the starting place, yet too often this is where we begin.

In Acts 8, Philip preached about Christ, about His name (nature and authority) and His kingdom (Acts 8:5, 12). When they believed this, then they were taught to be baptized. Later in the same chapter Philip taught the Ethiopian, but Philip did not say to him, "Here is water, don't you think you should be baptized?" Think about this.

Must the essentiality of baptism be taught? Absolutely. But it is not where we begin. Study Acts carefully. To try to persuade others to be baptized prematurely sends the wrong message. They must first realize they are lost. They must see that we are urging them to become part of the eternal kingdom of God. If we start with baptism, we have failed to follow His plan. Sometimes we hinder obedience by prematurely saying to others they should be baptized. It must be said but not said prematurely! Pray about this. It is His work and His plan.

### **God is Love**

By David R. Ferguson

I'm continually amazed and grateful for the many ways God demonstrates His love to us. During my devotional time, I began to make a list of them and want to share them with

you. I pray that you will be blessed as you are reminded of His great love.

**He doesn't change.** Hebrews 13:8 tells us, *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever,"* and Malachi 3:6 says, *"I the Lord do not change."* His love is always sure. Seasons change, people change, the world is changing, but God never changes. We can rely on Him.

**He is faithful.** God isn't moody or fickle. We are. People will love us for a while and then they don't. But God isn't like that. He sticks with us. Whenever He asks us to obey Him, He also provides everything we need (1 Thessalonians 5:24). We can trust the One Who calls us to do that for us.

**He's our protector.** He is our shield. And He is our "always there" protector. *"So our hope is in the Lord. He is our help, our shield to protect us"* (Psalm 33:20). It's so comforting to know that everything that comes our way has to go through the shield about us before it touches us.

**He's always thinking about us.** Psalm 139:17 says, *"How precious it is, Lord, to realize that You are thinking about me constantly! I can't even count how many thoughts turn towards me."* This is one of the neatest things. When we think about it, there are over seven billion people in the world, and He still thinks of us constantly. He's able to give us His undivided attention.

**He's always with us.** This is made abundantly clear in Scripture. For He Himself has said, *"I will never leave you nor forsake you"* (Hebrews 13:5). No matter where we are, God will be there with us. He's never too busy for us. He never goes away, takes a break, or goes on a vacation. He will always have time for us!

**When we are in trouble, we can be encouraged.** Deuteronomy 33:27 tells us, *"The eternal God is a hiding place, and underneath are His everlasting arms."* Those arms are longing to embrace us today as His child, for as John puts it, *"God is love"* (1 John 4:16).