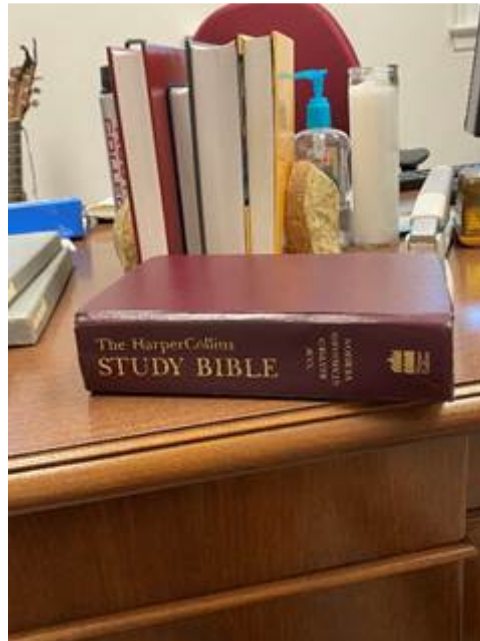


# AColyte

June 4, 2020

A Journal of Faith, Doubt, and Other Things  
at Austin College



## I also have a Bible

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN...

Wynne Chapel  
Under the Steeple  
June 2020

*Am I lying to anybody?*

--Tommy Earl Bruner,

A character in the Dan Jenkins novel, Baja Oklahoma

When I woke up Tuesday morning,  
I checked the Associated Press App on my phone.

I do that most mornings,  
just to get a little sense of what's going on in the world as I start my day.

When I opened that app Tuesday morning,

I saw a picture of a man  
Standing in front of a Church,  
And holding up a Bible.

And I thought to myself,  
"I know that book.  
I also have a Bible."

That Bible says:

*Beware of practicing your piety before others  
in order to be seen by them;*  
(Matthew 6:1a).

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God.*  
(Exodus 20:4).

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*...faith apart from works is barren*  
(James 2:20).

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*All who exalt themselves will be humbled,  
and all who humble themselves will be exalted.*  
(Matthew 5:12)

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!  
For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven.  
For you do not go in yourselves,  
and when others are going in, you stop them.*  
(Matthew 5:13)

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God,  
serve one another  
with whatever gift each of you has received.*  
(1 Peter 4:10).

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!  
For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin,  
and have neglected the weightier matters of the law:  
justice and mercy and faith.  
It is these you ought to have practiced  
without neglecting the others.*  
(Matthew 5:23)

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*[T]he Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords,  
the great God, mighty and awesome,  
who is not partial and takes no bribe,  
who executes justice for the orphan and the widow,  
and who loves the strangers,  
providing them food and clothing.  
You shall also love the stranger,*

*for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.*  
(Deuteronomy 10:17-19)

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!*  
*For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate,*  
*but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.*  
*You blind Pharisee!*  
*First clean the inside of the cup,*  
*so that the outside also may become clean.*  
*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!*  
*For you are like whitewashed tombs,*  
*which on the outside look beautiful,*  
*but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth.*  
*So you also on the outside look righteous to others,*  
*but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*  
(Matthew 23: 25-28).

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*You shall not commit adultery.*  
*...You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*  
(Exodus 20:14, 16)

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*"With what shall I come before the Lord,*  
*and bow myself before God on high?*  
*Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,*  
*with calves a year old?*  
*Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,*  
*with ten thousands of rivers of oil?*  
*Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,*  
*the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"*  
*He has told you, O mortal, what is good;*

*and what does the Lord require of you  
but to do justice,  
and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?*  
(Micah 6:6-8)

I also have a Bible.

In that Bible, Jesus says:

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.  
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.  
Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.  
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom  
of heaven.  
Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you  
and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.*  
(Matthew 5:3-11)

I also have a Bible.

That Bible says:

*Beware of false prophets,  
who come to you in sheep's clothing  
but inwardly are ravenous wolves.*  
(Matthew 7:15)

I also have a Bible.

In that Bible, God says:

*I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.  
Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,  
I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals  
I will not look upon.  
Take away from me the noise of your songs;*

*I will not listen to the melody of your harps.  
But let justice roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*  
(Amos 5:21-24)

I also have a Bible.

The phrase "Law and Order" does not appear anywhere in that Bible.

But that Bible says:

*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*

9 times (Leviticus 18:18; Matthew 19:19, 22:39; Mark 12:31, 33; Luke 10:27; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8).

I also have a Bible.

I saw a picture of a man  
Standing in front of a Church,  
And holding up a Bible.

And I thought to myself,

"I know that book.  
I also have a Bible."

In my experience,  
That Bible is more useful as an object of study  
And a context for serious conversation  
About which things matter more than other things  
Than as a prop for a photograph.

Until next time,  
I remain,  
Just Another Cowboy Preacher,  
Tired of Being Manipulated, Ridiculed, and Lied To,  
And Grateful That I Also Have a Bible,

JOHN WILLIAMS  
Chaplain

# ONE MORE THING:

## A NOTE FROM THE AUSTIN COLLEGE GREEK COUNCIL

If you are looking for a way to support the George Floyd Memorial Fund, this is one way you can donate. All proceeds raised will be donated to the George Floyd Memorial Fund under the name: Austin College Campus Community.

Zeta Chi Omega sorority is accepting any amount of donations to the Zeta Chi Omega venmo (@zetachi-omega). This is the link to our Instagram post if you would like to read more about what we are doing— <https://www.instagram.com/p/CA5pQjrjPQx/?igshid=m2684mdj98sz>