

BIBLE MONITOR

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“For the faith once delivered unto the saints”

OUR MOTTO: Spiritual in life and
Scriptural in practice.

OUR WATCHWORD: Go into all
the world and preach the gospel.

OUR AIM: Be it our aim to be more sanctified, more righteous,
more holy, and more perfect through faith and obedience.

JESUS GAVE TO ME

Maxine E. Surbey

On the first day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
Salvation Full and Free.

On the second day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
Everlasting Life.

On the third day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
Peace in my Heart.

On the fourth day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
Love for all men.

On the fifth day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
Joy in my soul.

On the sixth day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
Power from on High.

On the seventh day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
A body Glorified.

On the eighth day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
A Robe and a Crown.

On the ninth day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
A Mansion above.

On the tenth day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
Streets of Pure Gold.

On the eleventh day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
A thousand Tongues to Sing.

On the twelfth day of Christmas Jesus gave to me-
Eternity to Praise.

PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME!

Selected by Shirley L. Frick

CHRISTMAS DISTRACTIONS

The Christmas season is much enjoyed by young or old. There are many reasons behind this enjoyment. Some are highly interested in the presents that they hope to receive. Others enjoy the gatherings of families and friends during the season. Others crave the rich dining on special foods and desserts. Some enjoy the season as a time when people may soften their hearts, desiring to be at peace with others and become more giving. Some enjoy the music and displays associated with the season. The season is a very enjoyable time of the year.

There may be a great deal of celebration, but there may be little regard paid to the reason for the celebration. Christmas is the most looked-forward-to day

of the whole year. Commercially the day is the most important in the business year, since their sales during the season can make or break their bottom line for that year. Advertisers may use many symbols of the season to lure potential customers. All the advantages of the advertiser's art are used to impact people's choices and purchases.

Most of the prominent items of Christmas advertising are distractions of Christmas. Santa Claus has become the predominant figure of the season. He has become the bearer of all the greatest gifts of the season? He becomes the giver of all gifts. He even supplants parents from providing for their children what is needed in their lives. Even more seriously he supplants

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God who is actually “the giver of every good and perfect gift”. God should be the hero of the Christmas season since He has given more than just physical gifts. He has given Spiritual life through the sharing of His Son in human form with a plan of redemption for all who will avail themselves of His offer.

Another distraction of Christmas season is the plethora of presents shared among the people celebrating the season. The presents do not seem to be overly connected with Jesus, whose birthday is supposedly being celebrated. It is commendable to give others presents, but do these gifts at all reflect the type of present one might consider appropriate for Jesus? Are gifts given with the motivation of helping someone else, or with the hope of receiving a nice present in return? We should be open to giving gifts to the needy as prompted by our relationship to Jesus?

Another distraction of the season is the amount and nature of the celebration of the holiday. For many the celebration of the season becomes an unseemly debauchery. For many the season becomes unrestrained imbibing that destroys not only

the dignity of the person but also the season. Mindless celebration distracts from the seriousness of the reason God had in sending His Son. When celebration reaches this level there is little concern about deeper spiritual conditions plaguing those who lose self-control.

Another distraction of the season can be the great displays that are made. With thousands of colorful and entertaining lights and various computerized displays, it is hardly celebrating in a quiet and peaceable manner. No man however brilliant will ever be able to outshine God. With all of the computer programs and bright lights, never will a man get near to God’s displays.

Despite these distractions what does Christmas mean to us? It should be a realization that mankind had fallen to such a low moral state that God needed to empty Heaven’s treasures and send His Son as the Redeemer. Christmas celebrates the faithfulness of the Virgin Mary who bore this Son despite the ridicule that she might have faced. Might we be inspired to be as faithful in our own relationship with God? Christmas celebrates the truthfulness of the Word of God. What had

been predicted throughout the Old Testament came to pass in the New Testament. The New Testament also predicts that He will be coming again. Will we be more ready than His people were when He came the first time?

The Christmas season can provide an opportunity to draw our families around us. We can enjoy the season with family activities and meals. If you do not have a family to meet with, perhaps you can find someone who needs a family and you can fulfill their need.

Christmas speaks of God's

good will towards men. We can always extend to others that good will as followers of God. We can show kindness this season, but even better we can show kindness throughout the year. We can give of ourselves to help others, to share the Word of God with others, to encourage others.

Are you easily distracted from the true meanings of Christmas? Are you planning to enjoy the season in a way that honors God and His Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior?

M. C. Cook

MIRACLE OF LIFE

It never ceases to amaze me when the first radical emerges from the newly planted seed and life begins anew! To watch the cotyledons, which are the first leaves, emerge from that tiny seed is like watching a miracle unfold. Though I have watched thousands upon thousands of seeds germinate and grow at our greenhouse, there is just something about it that still reminds me that life is a miracle every time I see it happen.

Have you ever stood on the ground, underneath a large oak tree and craned your neck until

your eyes reach the top, and thought, "Wow, all of this came from a little seed within an acorn!" The acorn and the seed within seem so small and insignificant, yet they produce one of the most majestic forms of plant life that we observe. So just how does this happen?

If you were to take a bean seed and soak it in water overnight, and then peel it open you would be able to see the radical and cotyledons that already exist within a seed even before they germinate! Plant growth occurs from the process of many biochemical

synthesis reactions. A couple of the primary processes that cause plant growth are photosynthesis and respiration. Photosynthesis is the process of converting light from the sun into chemical energy which can then be used by the plant. Respiration, which is not as commonly understood, uses the oxygen formed during photosynthesis to break down glucose into carbon dioxide, energy, and water. The energy created, or released, during this process is essential to plant growth.

Well, perhaps that is more information about how plants grow than you ever cared to know (and this is only a small fraction of the entire process)! I share this, though, just to point out how amazing life really is!

There are many who believe that this was all an accident. They assert that all of these intelligent and intricately precise and complicated procedures happen out of chance and arose from nothing. It doesn't take much common sense to realize that something doesn't come from nothing, nor does order come from disorder! Think with me for just a moment.

If you see a building do you not automatically assume there

was a builder? Would it not be ludicrous for one to believe that a pile of lumber, bricks, mortar, pipes, wires, windows, and so forth, were lying in a pile on the ground and randomly built themselves into a fully functioning building (not to mention that first, random elements and particles would have had to assemble themselves together to make the materials that were lying on the ground...oh, and then there would be the problem of how the chemicals and particles came into existence...I think you catch the drift).

If you see a piece of art, do you not infer that there was an artist? If you see a watch, does it not stand to reason that there was a watch maker?

If you see Creation then, do you not understand that there was a Creator? If there is life, does it not demand a Life-giver?

(John 1:1-4) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Exodus 20, verse 11 tells us that, "In six days the Lord made

heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." There was nothing made that was not made by God. He is the Creator of life itself. As you enjoy nature this spring, observe it with its Creator in mind. It shows us and points us to the Creator of our lives who loves us and cares for us, because He designed us and formed us with His own hands! As Romans 1:20 teaches, "For since the creation of the world

His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse."

Take a look around you and consider how magnificent life is. Whether it be flowers, trees, animals, or new born babies, consider the miracle of life and the Majesty of the One who created it!

Brother Marlin Carpenter

CHASING THE HOGS OUT

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Revelation 22:1

Virgil Sines used to tell the story of the time he got lost in the woods. He wandered for hours until he finally got to the Savage River. Being exceedingly thirsty, he knelt down and drank deeply. He knew all he had to do was follow the river upstream and he would get home. About a quarter mile upstream he came upon the carcass of a sheep rotting away in the water and he knew that what he had just a few moments ago had passed over that sheep. Today most of us are concerned about how pure the water is that

we are drinking. Some of that bottled water we drink comes right out of a tap. After all how can you tell what is in it, or for that matter, what is not?

The story is told about a tourist from the city trying to clear up a muddy stream to make it safe to drink. A local person was standing behind him trying to hide his amusement. The man said, "That water will clear up. All you need to do is chase the hogs out upstream!"

One thing we can all be sure of is the Word of God is pure: nothing in it will hurt us if we believe. There are no defects or impediments therein. But we need to be careful that we do not bring things into our home to muddy up the water. Are

we strong enough to resist the evil if we allow it to be waved in front of our faces day after day after day? King David could do anything he wanted. After all, he was the King. Yet if he wanted to serve God, which was the foundation of his reign, he had to live for God. When he saw the naked woman on the next roof, he kept on looking until lust brought forth sin. Better to run away from lust, like Joseph did, and suffer those consequences than to give in and allow sin to take over. This sin of King David brought forth death. We must get the hogs out of the stream so that the water will be safe.

We must make careful choices as to what we allow in our home.

What kind of literature do we read? The television has been replaced with screens that fit in our pocket. How much time do we rob God of with these devices? Technology can be useful and even profitable for us. But we must be careful that our spiritual life is not being slowly depleted. We cannot afford to be taken over by sin because of poor judgment on our part.

Grandpa Fahnestock told the story of the dirty collar. In the old days when men wore celluloid collars, a preacher asked his wife if his collar was dirty. He was not sure. She said, "If there is any doubt, it is dirty." Think about your choices. Pray about them, and do the right thing to the glory of God.

Lord, I am fondly, earnestly longing
 Into Thy holy likeness to grow;
 Thirsting for more and deeper communion,
 Yearning Thy love more fully to know.

Dead to the world would I be, O Father!
 Dead unto sin, alive unto Thee;
 Crucify all the earthly within me,
 Emptied of sin and self may I be.

I would be Thine, and serve Thee forever,
 Filled with Thy Spirit, lost in Thy love;
 Come to my heart, Lord, come with anointing,
 Showers of Grace send down from above.

-Elisha Hoffman

Brother Lynn H. Miller
 Mohler's Congregation

EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS

We are living in a time unlike any other time before and yet everything seems to be the same. Solomon made this observation, there is nothing new under the sun, and he was right.

The times in which we are living are calling out people who are trying to understand the times from a secular point of view. Even from religious people we see this mistake. They are trying to take what they see out in the secular world and conform it into some biblical prophecy.

Every good Christian believes in Bible prophecy. Not every good Christian believes he or she understands Bible prophecy and the intricate elements of the time in which we live.

If you go back to the World War I era, they were talking about the same thing as today. "It's the end of the world." "Prophecy is being fulfilled and Jesus is about to come." That was one hundred years ago and we are still saying the same things.

Perhaps we are so caught up with theological technology that we cannot see the simple truth. We like to make things as complicated as possible

because that makes us look smart. Yet, some of the smartest people in the world have been wrong on important issues.

Too many people have clouded the coming of Jesus with personal interpretations that really do not honor the coming of Christ. We become fixated on persons, events and trying to explain them and harmonize everything together in one simple explanation.

I particularly like what A. W. Tozer said along this line. "What is more important, to know who the Scarlet Woman is, or to be ready for the coming of the Lord?"

He has a very good point here. So many people are caught up with the technology of prophecy that they overlook the simple truth that it is important to be ready for when Jesus does come. We may not know the day or the hour, but we know the reality of Christ's second coming.

Then there are some who politicize the second coming. For them Scripture must conform to the political climate at the time. That is where we get into a problem.

Now the question that needs

to be answered is simply this, what should our attitude be in light of the coming of Jesus Christ?

First, it is important that we live as though His coming was today. We do not know if “today” is the day of His coming, but we do know that one “today” will be the day that He does come. I need to live today as though this was that day.

Second, sorting out things that would not be important is necessary, in light of His coming. If Jesus was coming tomorrow at midnight, what are some of the things in my life that would not really be important? How do I know He is not coming tomorrow night? I need to begin to sort out the things in my life that are not significant in light of the soon coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no day better to start than today.

Most people have lives cluttered with nonsense that is only weighing them down as they travel forward in their Christian walk. Get rid of some things. Evaluate elements of life that can be discarded. And get on with what the Bible calls the “straight and narrow way.”

Third, do not fantasize about the coming of Jesus. Keep

within the scope of clear, plain Bible teaching. Some people have added to the teaching of God’s Word to the extent they have polluted the Bible doctrine of Christ’s second coming.

If anybody thinks they understand every detail of the second coming of Jesus, they do not even know the first aspect of it.

What is important is not when, but Who is coming. If I can focus in on the Lord Jesus Christ and realize that He is the One coming back to earth to collect His church and take them home, I will begin to live a different kind of life of true expectation.

Some people believe that Jesus is going to come back and fix all the problems of the world. Why should He? The world made those problems let the world take care of its own problems.

Jesus is coming back for His people. His focus is on His church. When He comes the second time He will be gathering from the four corners of the world all of those who put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

Take the theology of the second coming and strip away from it all of the additives people have added down the years. Get

to the real core of this doctrine. Because the Bible says that this is the “hope” of the church.

My hope is not in politics. My hope is in the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I do not know how much worse the world will get before Jesus comes. I suspect it will get a whole lot worse than it is right now. However, my hope

is not in cleaning up the world, rather, it is that Jesus is coming to rapture me out of this world and I will be in His fellowship throughout all eternity.

“Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

James L. Snyder
324 Bahia Circle
Ocala, FL 34472

PHIL’S PONDERINGS

As we “study to shew ourselves approved unto God...”

December 2 – II Peter 1:12-21

What benefit do you experience when reminded of spiritual truths in which you are already established?

What does Peter mean when he says he wants to “stir you up”?

What argument is still used today to question the Biblical portrayal of Jesus?

Why do you think Peter refers to being an eyewitness of His majesty at the Transfiguration rather than the Resurrection?

What confirmed the prophetic word?

What is the purpose of prophecy?

Commentary: By whatever means Peter is convinced that his life will soon be over. Rather than brooding he is busy reminding those who will read this epistle of what is greatest importance. He wants to stir their hearts with the greatness of Christ’s majesty. He is an eyewitness of that majesty not a co-conspirator in an elaborate hoax only meant to deceive the gullible. Of many possible moments and experiences in Peter’s life hearing God speak the words of confirmation: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” stands above all others. It came from completely outside of any imagining or believing on his part and was a self authenticat-

ing event in which he could only respond as an eyewitness. Thus there was no possible private interpretation of his own experience.

December 9 – II Peter 2:1-11

How do the first three verses connect back to the previous three?

What heresies are most familiar to you?

How do they fit Peter's description of them?

How can a heresy be brought in secretly?

What do heresies represent to those who promote them?

What is attractive about heresies to people who accept them?

What contrast does Peter portray in verses 4-9?

What contemporary examples can you think of in verse 10?

Commentary: In the midst of great beauty, contentment, and spiritual intimacy with God, a voice, full of incredulity, shocked and appalled with dismay, and with greatest of concern asked, "Has God indeed said, '...?'" How quickly our parents were deceived and how costly has been the result. As night follows day, so God's truth and the gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ, comes under attack by those who would deceive, question scornfully, and deny its veracity. Those who mount such an attack are greedy for power and gain. But their doom is writ just as surely as God has decreed. We in turn must stand firmly on the foundation which is Jesus Christ and upon the sure Word of God. Only with such vigilance can we avoid being deceived.

December 16 – II Peter 2:12-22

How would you respond to someone who fits Peter's description of a false teacher?

What makes them attractive to believers?

What are the character traits of a false teacher?

What is the ultimate end of their doctrine?

Who do they glorify?

How can we best discern false teaching?

What responsibility do we have toward those who seem to be lured away from "sound doctrine"?

Commentary: If living faithful, in spite of suffering, is the primary theme in I Peter then recognizing false teaching and false teachers is the primary theme in II Peter. Peter's description of false teachers removes the covering of deception and portrays the desperate wickedness of heart at work in them. We think ourselves far removed from such influences. But we are only prepared to overcome such deception by three primary means: 1) cultivate a rich depth of Biblical literacy; 2) emphasize spiritual growth among our members; 3) the leadership of the church acts transparently as they exercise their leadership responsibilities. Otherwise ignorance, immaturity, and lack of openness are a fruitful vineyard for false teachers.

December 23 – John 1:1-15 – Birth of Christ

How did God create the universe?

Why does John call Jesus the Word?

In verses 1-5 how does John describe Jesus' true identity?

With what characteristics does John describe Jesus?

What realities are John describing as he contrasts light and darkness?

What ironies does John describe?

What verse(s) tell you that your life has purpose?

Have you beheld the glory of Christ?

Commentary: John doesn't start with the beginning of Jesus' earthly life. He starts with our beginning in the sense that creation is the beginning of time and history. It is not the beginning for Jesus as the Word. Only that He was in the beginning with God creating with the Father all that is relevant to our time and space. Ultimately Jesus, as the pre-incarnate Word, steps out of eternity and comes into our time as the Word that became flesh. While we celebrate the birth of Jesus, John points us to the ultimate reality of the incarnation. Emmanuel, God with us, is now among us. Yet, we cannot rejoice in His presence among us until we receive Him for who He truly is. By faith we receive the greatest Christmas gift possible. We become the children of God. Our new birth echoes the glory of His birth anew.

December 30 – II Peter 3:1-18

What is “spiritual amnesia” and what does it have to do with Peter’s intent in writing these epistles?

What is the root basis for those who scoff concerning the “coming of the Lord”?

How does God view time?

What fruit should we be producing as a result of our faith in Christ’s coming again?

What is the most common description in the New Testament of the coming again of the Lord?

How is the longsuffering of the Lord salvation?

What is the error of the wicked?

Commentary: How often does your spiritual mind need to be stirred up? Life is often a blur of work and activity that can numb our hearts to spiritual realities. So many things crowd and seek our attention. No wonder Jesus said to shut the door to the room before praying. We must be intentional everyday in our relationship with the Lord. Peter intentionally sought to stir the minds of those he wrote to including us. And why was he concerned? Because the forces at work in this world do scoff at our faith, seeking to marginalize every testimony and every witness of the Lord of Life and of all Eternity. They want us to feel and act as though our faith is foolish and of no significance whatsoever. How do we inoculate ourselves from these numbing forces? By stirring up our minds in such a way that our highest priority is to grow. Grow in confidence, grow in witness, grow in love, and grow so that we can overcome every obstacle that exalts itself against God. We are to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Brother Phil Franklin
Modesto, CA

SOLOMON DIDN'T HAVE IT!

Rudy Cover
Luke 12:22-34

Solomon was the wisest man in all the earth. His fame was in all the nations around him, so the kings of the earth came to hear his wisdom. Because Solomon didn't ask God for riches or honor but for understanding that he might rule the nation of Israel, God not only gave him an understanding heart but also riches and honor. There was none like King Solomon before or since. When the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to prove him with hard questions. Solomon answered them all. When she had seen Solomon's wisdom and the house that he had built and all his riches she said to the king, "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words until I came and mine eyes had seen it; and behold, the half was not told me."

There are many things that we have today that Solomon never saw. He didn't have an automobile, nor had he ever

seen an airplane, a steamboat, a train, a radio, a television, a telephone, a refrigerator, or a vacuum sweeper. Many things that we think common-place, Solomon didn't know about.

One time Jesus was talking to His disciples about how we shouldn't worry. He said, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, neither for the body, what you shall put on. Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If God then clothe the grass, which is today in the field and tomorrow is cast in the oven; how much more will He clothe you, O, ye of little faith."

Jesus wants us to completely trust Him for everything. Today, we live in a time of mechanical marvels but we should not put our trust in them. Even the lilies of the field have more beauty than all of Solomon's glory. God's power is unlimited. Jesus can do anything! If we put our trust in Him, He will supply all our

needs and bless us in ways that were unknown to Solomon. Today we have the Gospel of Jesus revealed to us. If we choose to serve Jesus, He has promised us eternal life. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten

Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Solomon didn't have it!

Selected from the
October 1, 1979
issue of the Bible Monitor

THE GREATEST GIFT

Maxine Surbey
John 3:16

"Oh! Oh!" exclaimed the five year old twins, Melvin and Marlin, as they eyed the gaily wrapped gift Aunt Minnie had given Grandpa.

Grandpa took the package in his hand. He held it to his ear, gently shaking it. "No, it doesn't rattle," he said. He balanced it on his hand. "No, it's not very heavy, either. It's not large enough for a shirt or a sweater." He scratched his head in perplexity. "What could it be?"

"Hurry and open it, Grandpa, then you will find out what it is!" said the boys as they jumped up and down in their excitement.

Grandpa cut the ribbon and slowly tore off the wrappings. It was a book! Grandpa reached in his pocket for his glasses, perched them on the bridge of his nose and read the title, "*Children's*

Stories for Grandparents to Read Out Loud." When the twins were comfortably settled in his lap, Grandpa leafed through the book till he found the Christmas Story. The True Meaning of Christmas

Some children are taught that if they aren't good, obedient boys and girls, Santa Claus won't give them any gifts at Christmas. They try extra hard a few weeks before to prove themselves worthy of their desired gifts. They look forward to a brightly lighted Christmas tree and hang up their stockings by the fireplace for Santa to fill when he slides down the chimney Christmas Eve, for his midnight visit.

"When I was a young boy, I always felt sorry for the poor children at Christmas time. Many of them were worthy of good gifts, but somehow, Santa

passed them by. They were so disappointed because they saw that the children of wealthy parents, were given many costly gifts whether they were good little boys or not."

"But that's not fair!" exclaimed Melvin.

"No, it isn't, agreed Grandpa. "But Santa Claus is just a myth, not a real person, neither do Christmas trees, which originated as a heathen custom, many years ago, have anything to do with the true meaning of Christmas."

"What great event do we celebrate on Christmas Day" asked Grandpa. "It is the birthday of Baby Jesus!" said Melvin.

"Yes, God gave us the best gift of all when He sent His Son to earth to teach us how to live a righteous life. He left the splendid courts of Heaven and was born in a humble stable and laid in a manger for a bed. Angels came to humble shepherds on the hillside. They told about the birth of God's Son, our Savior, then left singing, "Glory to God in the Highest, Peace on Earth, and Good will to men!"

The shepherds left their sheep and hurried to see this Christ Child and fell down and worshipped Him. Wise men from

the East followed a star which led them to the place where the Child Jesus was. They brought gifts and worshipped Him, too.

Jesus grew up to be a great teacher, whose teachings are recorded in the Bible, God's Word. Jesus gave His life on the cross that all men, rich or poor, might have salvation.

Some day if we accept His plan of salvation, we can live with Him, for He rose from the dead and went to heaven to prepare a home for us, so we can dwell with Him forever!

God's gift to us was the priceless gift of His Son, Jesus, given to all men, rich or poor alike.

Our gift to Him should be our heart's devotion and a dedicated life of service to Him. We need to Accept the gift, Open God's Word, Read it, Love and Obey its teachings.

CHRISTMAS IS...

Remembering the Love
Of our Saviour above,
Who came to earth to teach man,
That they can live on,
After this life is gone,
When they live by His perfect
plan!

Poem by Irene Stout

Selected by Shirley Frick

I BRING GOOD TIDINGS

B. E. Kessler

If left to human perception, there would probably be as many conclusions as to what is good or what is evil as there are individual minds. Then, too, things are good or evil relatively, according to the use or abuse of them. Whatever is, is good, as related to its author or creator or designer. Not all good is good. Neither is all bad evil.

Measured by our conception, the angels brought the best message, to the Judean shepherds that have ever been proclaimed to our world. And one good thing about it is, it was to "be to all people", not merely and only to those shepherds. Another great and good thing about it is: it was to be "good tidings of great joy" to those who were waiting for it and ready to receive it.

Measured by the Jewish leaders of that day, it was a token of evil, and of dark forebodings. As they saw it, a rival king to be, had come into the world; their prestige and influence, be at a discount, and their government overthrown, a rival leader proclaimed, and a new form of government set up in which they

would not be recognized. To them, the "tidings" were anything else than good as they saw it. Why should anybody want a different leadership, or a different form of government? Why should a new church be organized, "seeing the people, with their leaders, are all holy!" These were questions with them that no one should raise. Were they not keeping the law to the jot and tittle? and who but them should interpret the law, they said.

Have recent developments brought to us similar conditions? Were new leaders and a new organization hailed as "good tidings of great joy"! Yes and no. To those who were grieved and burdened at prevailing conditions in the church, yes. To the then leaders no. The one rejoiced; the other deplored. To the one, the church was "coming to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto perfection, unto the measure of Christ", and the zenith of her power. To the other, she was drifting away from Christ, having "lost her first love", unity was being destroyed, her power and influence for good,

on the decline, "her glory having departed".

The announcement of the incarnation of the Son of Man as "God in the flesh" was good as related to its author and its helpful influence upon the children of men, but evil or unapprehended good, unto those who were unwilling to receive it, as related to the author of their unwillingness. God, truth, honesty, uprightness, obedience, fidelity, righteousness, and so forth, are good in the estimation of God's people, but evil in the estimation of Satan and his followers. "The devil is good", -a good devil, -a good preacher one time said, "As good a devil as God could make". As to being a good devil, he, perhaps, is correct, but as to God making him, some, at least, would dissent.

Some medicines and foods are good when properly used, but very harmful when improperly used. Electrical appliances are good and helpful, or bad and destructive owing to how controlled and applied.

In the good tidings of the angels all families of men may be blessed, or will be condemned according as they accept or reject Him from whom the

tidings came. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned, but he that believeth not on Him is condemned already, because, he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God, and this is the condemnation that light is come into the world and the world comprehended it not. The light shineth in the darkness and the darkness apprehended it not. He that doeth evil hateth light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." He says the light is evil. "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." He says the light is good.

The promise is that the tidings which these heavenly messengers brought "shall be to all people." This is good news to all who "look for redemption in Israel." Good news "to all who are afar off", Peter said, "even as many as our Lord shall call." And it is good news to all God's faithful children to know all may be blessed in Him, and that this blessing comes down to our day and goes on down the ages to the end of time. Blessed be His name forever. But how his satanic majesty frowns and winces, when we tell him, "He

is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." To him the tidings are anything else than good, and bring to him and his imps anything else than joy.

I bring you good tidings, the recurring anniversary of the advent of Moses' "Prophet", Isaiah's "child", Jeremiah's "righteous branch", Zechariah's "man whose name is the branch", Christ Jesus our Lord, whose birth was heralded by an angel of God accompanied by "a multitude of the heavenly host praising God". If angels were

made glad and happy by the coming of the Christ child, how much more should we rejoice and be glad and praise God too for "his unspeakable gift"!

Halleluiah! Amen! Halleluiah!
 Praise the Lord ye heavens,
 adore him,
 Praise him angels in their height.
 Sun and moon rejoice before him,
 Praise him all ye stars of light!
 Halleluiah Amen Halleluiah Amen!
 A-m-e-n!

Selected from the
 December 15, 1928
 issue of the Bible Monitor

GLORY TO GOD

L. W. Beery

As we approach another Christmas Day our thoughts naturally turn to the event many centuries ago which we pause to commemorate. The birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was heralded to the shepherds by the angel of the Lord who was accompanied by a multitude of the heavenly host who praised God and declared, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward man." This message of the angels has been echoing

and reverberating through all the centuries since that time and it is still cheering the souls of men in all the walks of life.

It seems that the human family is prone to forget or discard much of the teaching of the Christ of Bethlehem yet there is something about the simple story of the birth of Jesus that touches the hearts of man and prompts them to do good deeds or give gifts at this season of the year in which we commemorate the birth of

our Lord. Surely that love that prompted the Father to give His only begotten Son for the salvation of the fallen human family is still operating upon the hearts of men even in these dark days. Millions of hearts will be made glad by the giving of gifts or some manifestation of good will, before another Christmas day has passed by.

Great sums of money are spent and much time and effort expended in various ways each year and although much of this is not in keeping with the teachings of our Lord, yet the fact that the world in this twentieth century still recognizes that there was once a Christ born as a Savior of the world is a matter of great significance. Unconscientiously, many people are glorifying God, the One whose love brought to a lost world a Savior whose shed blood atoned for sin and brought peace and good will to men.

The gift of this only begotten Son was a great sacrifice to the Father and it has prompted human kind to sacrifice, to share with others who are less fortunate. Regardless of how poor people may be, most of them will contrive in some way to have a few gifts for their neighbors or friends or do

some special favor for someone during the Christmas season. As a result, a feeling of good will seems to prevail and joy and gladness abound. If this spirit would predominate the whole year around much of the sorrow and trouble that besets us would be eliminated.

Not only was the birth of Jesus a glory to God as the angels declared, but His whole life on the earth was spent to that end. He glorified the Father by a life of submission and obedience. In one of His prayers to the Father, Jesus said this, "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." In observing a day in honor of the birth of our Lord we should not be forgetful of this fact. As Christian people we have the same mission in the world that Jesus had. "As Thou has sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." (John 17:18.) Jesus here declares that His disciples have a mission in the world and if we would glorify the Father as we should we need to be working at the task that is allotted to us.

We can glorify our God by the giving of gifts and the manifestation of good will to men

during this Christmas season, but let us not be forgetful as Christian people that our service to our fellowmen should last throughout the whole year. Let us strive earnestly to impress upon our fellowmen the fact that this Christ that was born in Bethlehem is the "lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." That by exercising faith in him and submitting to His will in our lives we can have the atoning blood of Calvary applied to our hearts and come into possession of that spirit that makes us emissaries of peace

and good will at all times. To labor for the salvation of souls is indeed glorifying God. It is through this Christ whose birth we commemorate with joy that we are saved from our sins; "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.) Glory to God in the highest for this unspeakable gift.

Selected from the
December 15, 1938
issue of the Bible Monitor

WONDERFUL JESUS

D. K. Marks

Isa. 9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." It was wonderful that the prophet Isaiah could look 740 years in the future and see the birth and work of Jesus.

Isa. 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and

shall call his name Immanuel." It was wonderful, when the angel Gabriel came to virgin Mary and said she would conceive and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus. The virgin birth was wonderful to Mary and to the human family up to the present time.

Read Luke 1:34 to 37 and have faith in God. It was prophesied that Jesus would be born in the town of Bethlehem, the birth place of David. When the angel appeared to Mary she was living at Nazareth. It was

wonderful how the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and persuaded him to take care of the virgin, obey the law of the king of the country and they go together to Bethlehem to be taxed. How easy to have Jesus born in Bethlehem. It was wonderful that a host of angels sang to the shepherds at night and said Jesus is born in Bethlehem. The shepherds went to see and published the wonderful news. It was wonderful that wise men living miles away came to worship and bring gifts to the child Jesus, guided by a star.

When king Herod killed the infant children it was wonderful that the life of Jesus was saved. Joseph and Mary obeyed the voice of the angel and fled into Egypt. Later the voice said arise and go to the land of Israel and they lived at Nazareth. It was wonderful how the prophets prophesied of Jesus where he would live and all things that would take place in his life. Every prophecy was fulfilled to the letter. The wisdom and the work of Jesus were wonderful after Jesus was baptized that he fasted 40 days and was tempted of the Devil. Jesus overcame the sinful things of the world and

Satan, and then angels came and ministered unto him.

Jesus began to teach and preach the kingdom of Heaven is at hand, he healed all manner of sickness, and made: the blind to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. Jesus fed many thousands of people with a few loaves of bread and a few fishes in a desert country. Jesus walked far on the sea, calmed the storm, when the ship was ready to sink. He forgave the sins of men and drove out the evil spirits that the Holy Spirit could dwell in them.

Jesus was no respecter of persons, he loved all mankind. He taught love, peace purity, humility and obedience to all, rich and poor, those who thought they were good, also publicans and sinners. The people were amazed and astonished at the wonderful works of Jesus. It was wonderful how Jesus spake and taught. The people said, no man ever spake like this man. Jesus brought the plan of salvation from heaven. He taught it by precept and example from the beginning to end.

He called 12 men and said follow me. As they followed him day by day they were astonished and amazed at the wonderful

work and life that Jesus lived. Jesus told his disciples how he would be put to death. It was wonderful when Jesus rode on a colt and entered into Jerusalem, the multitude that went before and those that followed him honored and praised him as a great king. Jesus went into the temple and taught those that were living in sin to live a new spiritual life.

It was wonderful how those people began to hate, speak all manner of evil and untruth about Jesus, they kept on with their sinful work and deceiving the people till the majority of the multitude cried out to crucify Jesus. It was wonderful that Jesus, who had no sin, allowed men to spit on him, buffet him and scourge him, then take him out of the city and nail him on the cross, between two sinners.

There He was hanging, suffering great pain and agony, slowly bleeding to death. Then he prayed that wonderful prayer, Father forgive them for they know not what they do. Jesus said it is finished then he died. It was a custom to break the legs of those that were hanging on the cross before their bodies

were taken from the cross, to hasten death. It was wonderful not one bone of Jesus was broken. Jesus was poor in this world's goods. It was wonderful that he was buried with the rich. Judas, one of the twelve, betrayed Jesus and all the others fled and left him alone. Peter denied that he was a disciple of Jesus.

It was wonderful that Jesus arose from the grave and came to his disciples and taught them for 40 days: the plan of salvation, how to rescue men from their sins and be filled with the fruits of righteousness. It was wonderful when Jesus and his disciples walked out to mount Olivet that they could see Jesus ascend up into Heaven. When we celebrate the birth of Jesus again, may we think, meditate and thank God for his wonderful precious gift he has given to the world. May we stand, work and live for Jesus as his disciples did, on and after the day of Pentecost, until the end of their lives.

Selected from the
December 1, 1948
issue of the Bible Monitor

JOY TO THE WORLD

Howard J. Surbey

“Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” Luke 2:28-32. Here we find the reactions of a very old man, of very great note, “just and devout”, who had such understanding and faith in God’s Word that he looked for the coming of a Saviour into the world. This man was near death but had been so faithful to God, that he had been promised a view of Jesus before he would die. As is true of God’s promises, this man received more than he had been promised, for he not only saw Jesus but he had the privilege to hold Him in his arms.

We cannot realize that joy which must have been, in this man’s life. Why, a heavenly hope and promise was fulfilled, which certainly confirmed and proved the faith and understanding of a devout soul. If he could

actually see this fulfillment, of a promise made so many years ago, and longed for by so many through the years, there could be no doubt of the many other promises of a heavenly eternity. Can you imagine this godly man’s joy as he blessed God and said, “Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.” Has it ever been your lot to see God’s promises fulfilled? Have you praised God for them and perhaps longed for the reality of that home in heaven? Just for instance: seedtime and harvest, showers and sunshine, protection from various dangers, forgiveness of sins, sinners converted, God’s wonders revealed through His Word and many other Christian experiences through which we know and understand God.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:11. Does this bring joy to you, this Christmas season? Unto you personally, yes, how wonderful, unless you harden your heart and will not accept Him. Christ the Lord, came to earth to: shed His blood for

our sins, to show us God's Will which should control our lives and even to guide us by precept and example into Peace on earth. A Divine Being from heaven, come to earth in the form which we can see and realize, that we might be abundantly blessed.

The first manifestation of "Joy to the world" as a result of the birth of Jesus was expressed by the angels sent from heaven to announce, because man was so engulfed in other activities that he did not understand or look for, the heavenly One which was come. The angel of the Lord spoke to the shepherds, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Luke 2:10. We hear news in this enlightened age continually, but much of it is not "good tidings" and much of it does not bring "great joy". Sorry to say that perhaps "all people" receive this earthly news more readily, than they are willing to receive and accept the news which this angel brought.

Almost at once, we find that a multitude of the heavenly host further spread this eternal joy of Heaven, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward

men." V. 14. Does the world today find joy in giving glory to God? Or are we too occupied with other things? Sad that we must, even on Sunday, occupy ourselves with: catching up on needed rest, doing the neglected odd jobs about the house, fixing a big dinner, touring the countryside and many others; rather than gathering apart from these things, to thank praise and worship our Creator. Do we find joy in cultivating, encouraging and maintaining peace on earth, or is it our delight to pick at someone, get even with someone, exploit the possessions and wishes of others and use our abilities within ourselves rather than towards earthly peace? We think of and enjoy good will towards ourselves but do we find joy in bringing "good will toward men"?

The shepherds brought "joy to the world" in their humble simple ways and were made happy thereby. First, they believed what God revealed unto them and it brought joy in their hearts, to know of the fulfillment of God's prophecies. When they saw the reality of the angel's words, they told others of the joyful event "they

made known abroad the sayings which was told them concerning this child." "The shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen." How many church services do we return from, glorifying and praising God for the things which we have seen and heard? Is our worship service a joy to us? Does it lighten and beautify life's pathway? If not, could it be possible that we have not put enough effort into the service to make it joyful?

"I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" and "Likewise, I say unto you there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Luke 15:7, 10. There is joy in heaven and among the angels when a sinner repents. How much joy is there on earth when a sinner repents? How much in your heart? Perhaps our hearts have been so calloused over with sin, that we see neither the deadly destructive power of sin

nor the glorious, joyful freedom brought about by repentance?

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." 3 John 4. Does it make our hearts glad to see people believing and obeying God's Word? Does each and every item necessary to complete worship of our Lord, bring joy to us? No doubt each of us has experienced the trials, problems and heartaches in the service of sin. If we have not found unspeakable joy in God's service, I feel we have not whole-heartedly served him. "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." Luke 6:22-23. The service of God True pleasure affords.

Selected from the
December 15, 1958
issue of the Bible Monitor

NEWS ITEMS

NOTICE

Presiding Elders or their assistants should send all changes affecting the officials within each congregation to the Editor of the Bible Monitor by January 1, 2019. By sending this material, the information contained in the February 2019 issue will be as accurate as possible and officials can be contacted more easily. The Editor may be addressed at 1138 E 12th St, Beaumont, CA 92223, by email at mcookdb@gmail.com or by phone at 951-845-6231.

BIBLE MONITOR SUBSCRIPTIONS

This is the season when most new and renewal subscriptions are sent to the Editor. When paying by check for the subscriptions, the checks should be made out to the Bible Monitor or the Publication Board, not to the Editor. Thank you.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

This reminder is repeated at this time, since some may want to make extra donations to the various Boards and Committees at the close of the year. The various Boards and Committees of the Dunkard Brethren Church depend upon your contributions of funds to function properly. These donations make the individual and congregational contributors a part of their work. Each Board that has a treasury has appointed Brethren to act as Secretaries and Treasurers. All donated funds need to be sent to the Secretary of that particular Board for his records and he will forward the funds to the Treasurer of that Board to pay the expenses of the Board. With recent National and State banking law changes, it is important that the checks sent as donations to these Boards DO NOT contain the name of the Treasurer of that Board. **THE DONATION MUST BE MADE TO THE BOARD ITSELF NOT TO A PARTICULAR PERSON**, even if designated as Treasurer. Thank you for your cooperation. God bless you for your donations to the various Boards.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

The Editor and his companion take this opportunity to wish each reader and their families a very cordial Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Brother Milton & Sister Marilyn Cook

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR JANUARY 2019

January 6 – Joshua the New Leader – Joshua 1:1-18

1. What territory in your life are you ready to conquer in obedience to God?

2. What provisions are you taking to sustain you in the battle?

3. Who have you enlisted to help you win this battle?

January 13 – An Oath Between Rahab and the Spies – Joshua 2:1-24

1. What were Rahab's fears before the spies lodged with her?

2. What hopes inspired Rahab to risk her life for a God and people she did not know?

3. What was the "good news" that the spies brought back with them?

January 20 – The Crossing of Jordan – Joshua 3:1-17

1. What immediate concern do you think the people had as they camped at Acacia Grove?

2. For what reason does God choose this particular time to exalt Joshua?

3. If you were one of the priests bearing the ark what thoughts might you have had as your feet stepped out into the Jordan at flood stage?

January 27 – A Memorial for Future Generations – Joshua 4:1-14

1. What is the purpose of a “memorial”?

2. What memorials have you set up in your life that remind you of God’s faithfulness?

3. How does the writer of Joshua know that the twelve stones Joshua piled up in the midst of the Jordan are still there?

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