

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

LORD, IN THESE DARK AND DISMAL DAYS

Lord, in these dark and dismal days,
We mourn the hidings of thy face;
And when to happier days we turn,
Those days but teach us how to mourn.

The blessing from thy truth withdrawn,
Its quick'ning, saving influence gone-
Unwarned, unawakened, sinners hear,
Nor see their awful danger near.

In dews unseen, or scanty show'rs,
Thy Spirit sheds his healing pow'rs;
The thirsty ground is parched beneath,
And all is barrenness and death.

Yet still thy name be ever blessed,
On thee our hope shall safely rest;
Thy saints shall yet exult and sing
The matchless glories of their King.

—*Lowell Mason*

REMEMBERING THE FOURTH OF JULY

The Fourth of July commemorates the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The act of signing that important document did not bring instant freedom; it merely stated the reasons why they wished to separate from their colonial masters. With the reasons forcibly stated they had a common underpinning for their revolt. This bold statement not only explained to King George the Third why they chose this course, but to make a statement to enlist the support of all the people.

Today we look at this document and consider it to be a very well written statement. Some passages within the document have become very well known, particularly the

statement concerning “life, liberty and pursuit of happiness”. Making the statement did not bring the desired result, but it rallied those pursuing that goal to a long

battle to secure that outcome. After a long, costly warfare the victory was won.

Through the intervening 243 years since that document was written, it has been quoted much. Whether its statements have been fulfilled would be an interesting and perhaps even divisive discussion. It has been important as a basis of the existence of the United States. As citizens we have a certain pride in the events that fostered the establishment of our country. We tend to lavish honor and glory upon the

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success of the armed warfare that was fought following the Declaration's composition. However great the suffering and bravery that was exhibited during the Revolutionary War, perhaps it would be wisest to consider this as one of many times that God has intervened to establish the Independence of our nation.

God has many ways to accomplish His will. He often uses unholy men to affect His desire for the existence of secular bodies. He may use warfare, bravery, and civil efforts to establish governments. He may give success to military forces to secure temporal blessings for His people. He may use the courage of people who have lofty moral ideals. He may use the power given to civil government to secure peace and order. The power of government when used as He intends will protect the good and punish the evil.

Unfortunately, governments do not always confine themselves to God's intended areas. Because of the philosophies that develop from men's over-appreciation of their own goodness, power and knowledge, governments

are perverted from its primary duty of providing protection, order and care of its people. Philosophies that are in accord with Satan's will and wiles often appear and gain support of the people. When these political ideas are implemented, they disrupt the place God deserves in the lives of the people. They forget God has created the nations, governments and laws within His parameters.

God created governments to handle the men's secular affairs. He desires the laws of the civil government to be respected and obeyed. The only time that they cannot be obeyed by His believing children is when those laws are at variance with His Word.

While establishing the civil government to rule over secular affairs in this world, God has also established a separate kingdom for His people. While living in and under the civil government, His followers are under His Spiritual Kingdom. He has shared His will, way and practice for His people through His Word. Although all can read it, to fully understand it, the reader must allow God's Holy Spirit to interpret the Word into his life. Those without the Holy

Spirit can never fully understand what they read. A believer with the Holy Spirit indwelling can understand more than the world's men.

As members of God's Spiritual Kingdom, we have a responsibility to obey and respect the laws of the civil government established to control men who are naturally lawless. We have a responsibility to respect and obey the Spiritual law God has shared with us. We must be honest, dependable, and holy, not because of human laws, but because as the children of God we have a higher and stricter law. We must

be examples to those who both honor and dishonor God. By the salvation God has given us by the sacrifice of His Son, He has provided freedom from the power and effects of sin. He has called us to responsibly use that freedom to serve God and others. In our freedom we become the servants not only of God but for the benefit of others.

As you contemplate the Fourth of July, will it be to glorify war and discord, or will it be to enjoy the freedom you have been given by Christ; a freedom to serve others?

M. C. Cook

THE CHALLENGE OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

Jeremiah once posed the question, "Is there anything too hard for God?" The answer is probably one of the most important ones ever. What is the limit we put on God?

Our problem is that we try to define God in human terms. Of course, there are many things for us that are too hard to do. For us to pull this over into God's arena is to do a great disservice to God and ourselves as well. We are finite and that finiteness is most observed in everyday life.

The sooner we come to our end the sooner God can begin His work in our life. The limit of man's possibility is only the beginning of God's possibility. God's grace always begins where men's strength ends. God specializes in things thought impossible.

Whenever I go to watch a magician who is the epitome of illusions of impossibility. Every time he does one of his "tricks", everybody says, "How did he do that?" His job is to make

sure we do not figure out his trick. As long as he can keep us in the dark about what he is doing, he has a job. Once we figure out his trick, it no longer seems impossible. There is a reason behind everything that man does and once you discover that reason and logic, it begins to make sense.

After an evening of being entertained by magic tricks and illusions, you go home as empty as you came. Even if you figure out the tricks, this really does not change your life that much.

This is where God steps into the scene.

I am sure everything God does, which seems like an illusion to us, makes perfect sense to God. If we could think like God and understand like God, the things He does would not seem so impossible. From our finite position, God's grace seems so amazing and absolutely impossible.

Yet, people try to figure God out. The more you try to figure God out, the more you end up in a maze of unknowing. I have concluded that man's wizardry does not compare with God's possibility. "With God," as the Scriptures declare, "all things are possible."

One challenge to God's possibilities has to do with delays. I know when I want God to do something, I want to snap my fingers and have Him do it right now. Humanity is caught up in the "right now" syndrome. If God does not move when we expect Him to move, we get all flustered and our faith begins to flag in the wind of disappointment.

What we must understand is that God's delays are not necessarily His denials. Because God is not doing something according to our timetable, does not mean God is not going to do that very thing. He is never limited to a timeline as we are.

We are tied down to a timeline and a schedule almost like a train station. Our frustration comes in demanding from God a schedule that we can figure out what God is doing and when God is doing it. It reveals a little bit of our impatience. We are so time oriented that we have lost the eternal view.

Impatience always gets us into trouble. Impatience means I know everything about the situation when in fact I know very little. Patience is when I surrender all of my expectations over to God. David the Psalmist said, "My expectation is from the Lord."

It is quite important I understand that God specializes in things thought impossible. From a human perspective there are mountains that are so big there is no way in our thinking that they can be removed. Jesus taught us that if we had the faith the size of a mustard seed, we could say to this mountain be thou removed, and it would move.

Always keep in mind that God does not indulge in sleight-of-hand or illusion as our magician friends. God is not out to impress anybody with His skill. God is simply out to accomplish His purpose that was foreordained in eternity past. From a reasonable standpoint, it looks impossible. As I begin to understand God, have a relationship with him, and begin to understand that all things are possible with God.

When I allow God control of my life and the things around my life, I begin to see the awesome power of God to do that, which from a human standpoint is impossible. My problem is that my expectation is bordered by my humanity. When I look at God, I need to understand that my expectation of God is out of the realm of myself and into the very heart of God, which knows no limit.

God's possibility is rooted in His character and nature. Who and what He is determines the limits of what He can do.

At times, I am frustrated because I am so focused on my timeline, I forget nothing is ever overlooked on God's schedule. He has everything in absolute control. His delays are never His denials but rather an indication that He has everything under control.

Unlike me, God is never frustrated to the point of desperation when something does not happen the way I want it to happen and when I want it to happen.

As a Christian, all of my possibilities are rooted in God through the Lord Jesus Christ. My possibility is magnified when I join my heart with the heart of God that is infinite in every aspect of His character and nature. God is in control of all elements even though I only see through a glass darkly

It can fairly be said that God begins when man's resources are exhausted.

James L. Snyder
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DISCIPLES

We as Christians are Christ's disciples. A disciple is one who learns from another who is considered a Master and teacher. Saint Paul learned at the feet of Gamaliel, a respected teacher of the Law. Mary sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. (Luke 10:39.) We learn from our Master as we read and study His word and endeavor to put His word into practice.

A Biblical Christian is one who follows Christ because he has a relationship with Him through faith. (John 1:12, Galatians 3:26.) Each new day brings another challenge and opportunity to walk with Christ and live out what we are learning from our Supreme Example. (Colossians 2:6.)

God desires that we learn to be just like His Son. When we speak of a person as godly, what are we really saying? We are saying that he or she is living out the character of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 14:6-9.)

We see examples and demonstrations of Christ's character in the accounts of the gospels. Dear reader, what words would you use to describe the character of Christ? Here

are just a few: compassion, love, faithfulness, humble submission to the Father. Now let's look at just a few scriptural references.

We read about His compassion on the multitudes (Matthew 9:35-38.) We see Him as He seeks the lost (Luke 19:1-9). We read of His forgiving those in sin (John chapter 8). We see His sorrow over those who reject Him as He weeps over the city of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). But He did not mince words when confronting those hardened in sin. Read as He addresses the Pharisees in Matthew chapter 23!

His very purpose for coming to earth could be summed up in one verse found in Luke 19:10, "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost."

We read of His love to the disciples in John 13:1. There in the upper room just a very short time before His suffering and death, as they gather around the table, that scripture reveals Christ's love for His own. "He loved them to the end" could be translated "to the utmost." After all, did He not say that no greater love has a man than this that he lay down his life for his

friends? (John 15:13.)

By His example, Christ shows what true godliness looks like, and He desires that we learn from that example. Christ's character is the Gold Standard for faith, conduct, and practice. Christ's words, thoughts, actions and attitudes are our standard to live by

as His disciples. We will fail because of our fleshly nature, but His life is our guide. Let us not give up, but rather continue to walk as He walked by the power of the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (1 John 2:6, Romans 5:5.) Amen.

Edward Trone

BONES

Ephesians 6:10, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

The bones are the heaviest and strongest organs in the body. They support the body, hold it up, allow it to move and do things. The bones also protect internal organs and allow them to function as God created them.

But we as servants of Christ need to be careful that certain types of bones do not make their home in the church. We have seen the following types:

1. Wishbones: People that wish for better things, but they never pray or work for these better things to be accomplished.

2. Jawbones: These are gossipers that keep everyone off balance and everyone in misery. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of doing

all we can to quench gossip.

3. Funny bones: The funny bone in the elbow causes extreme pain when bumped. Some folks get upset at the slightest bump and threaten to leave the church for the tiniest of reasons.

4. Dry bones: These people are orthodox but dead. There is no life or spirit in them.

There is one bone with excellent qualities that we must seek to cultivate. It is the backbone. We need people in the church with a backbone. They support the church spiritually and keep the body standing. We cannot stand up for Jesus without backbone.

Why not stand for Jesus? When we stand in His name, He stands with us. When He calls us home, He will be with us always.

Soldiers of Christ, arise, and put your armor on;
Strong in the strength which God supplies, through His eternal Son.

Strong in the Lord of Hosts, and in His mighty power;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts is more than conqueror.

From Strength to strength go on, wrestle and fight and pray;
Tread all the powers of darkness down and win the well-fought day.

That, having all things done, and all your conflicts past,
Ye may o'er come, through Christ alone, and stand complete at last.

-Charles Wesley 1749

Brother Lynn H. Miller
Mohler's Congregation

PHIL'S PONDERINGS

As we "*study to shew ourselves approved unto God...*"

July 2019 Study Questions

July 7 – Judges 3:15-4:10

Backing up to verse 12 how do you describe the cycle Israel keeps repeating in verse 12-15?

What is most typical in the leadership provided by the Judges?

What sort of leaders are Ehud and Shamgar?

How are you like Barak?

Commentary: Human nature is predictable. We rise to challenges when motivated and sink to the familiarly comfortable when routine runs our days. We observe change in families through succeeding generations who tolerate or even embrace what not so long ago seemed unthinkable. The cycle of Israel's relationship with the Lord should not seem too unfamiliar with our own experiences. Left to ourselves we descend toward selfishness. When walking with Him in faithfulness new possibilities in selfless service to our King abound.

July 14 – Judges 4:11-5:9

What is the relationship between Heber and Sisera?

Why did Sisera abandon his chariot?

How do you explain Jael's part in this story?

What may have been some of her motivation?

What lessons in faith might Barak learn about the Lord after seeing Jael's handiwork?

Commentary: How much do you or I or we trust the Lord? How often do we want our faith propped up so that we feel more secure in choices we make? Too often we measure our choices to obey by the risk involved rather than the promises of God we desire to secure in our hearts. Barak could have simply invited Deborah to go with him to the battle. Rather, he based his obedience on her willingness to go with him. The result is that a woman of seemingly little consequence plays a large role in God's victory over Sisera and the eventual destruction of one of Israel's enemies. God often uses the faith of the weak, the simple, and the insignificant rather than the powerful heads of governments and armies to advance His kingdom.

July 21 – Judges 5:10-31

What do some of the descriptions in these verses tell us about life in Israel under the domination of Jabin, a Philistine king?

What are the consequences of Israel's idolatry?

What causes rejoicing in our life?

How many reasons did Deborah give as a cause for Israel to rejoice?

Commentary: Not many of us have ever composed a song or written lyrics that might fit into a familiar tune. But probably many of us, perhaps even most of us have found ourselves singing some simple melody in praise to God. "Thank you, Jesus," or "Hallelujah" might be the only words we sing. Yet there is a richness of heart that only comes as gratitude overflows from our spirit. To this degree we can understand what Deborah and Barak found themselves doing as they praised God for all the evidences of His mercy upon their lives.

July 28 – Judges 6:1-24

In what unusual way did Midian impoverish the people of Israel?

How does God respond to the cries of the people?

Who is the Angel of the Lord?

How is it that Gideon is described as a mighty man of valor?

What character trait makes Gideon so useful to the Lord?

What idol does God ask us to tear down?

Commentary: Good news often sounds like bad news. “But you have not obeyed my voice.” Until we recognize our disobedience, our sin, the afflictions from the Lord cannot be remedied. But amazingly when we begin to see our circumstances from God’s perspective all of God’s work of redemption becomes part of our inheritance and our personal story of faith. And what God has done He continues to do in us who have accepted His Son and become heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Brother Phil Franklin

SOME DO’S OF THE BIBLE

Gen. 6:22	Thus did Noah
Deut. 5:27	He will hear and do it
Deut. 6:3	Hear and observe to do
Deut. 6:25	Our righteousness, if we observe to do
Joshua 1:7-8	Observe to do all commandments.....success
Ezra 7:10	Seek Law of Lord and do it
Micah 6:8	To do justly, love mercy and walk humbly
Matt. 5:44	Do good to them that hate you
Matt. 7:12	Do ye even so to them
Matt. 23:3	Observe and do but do not after their works
Luke 6:46	Why call me Lord and do not...
Luke 10:28	This do and thou shalt live
Luke 10:37	Go and do thou likewise
John 13:15	Ye shall do as I have done...
John 13:17	If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them
John 14:12	Greater works shall he do ...

John 15:5	Without me ye can do nothing
Acts 2:37-38	Men and Brethren, what shall we do ?
Acts 9:6	What wilt thou have me do ?
Acts 16:30	Sirs, what must I do to be saved?
Rom. 2:13	Not hearers but doers justified
I Cor. 11:24-25	This do in remembrance of me
Gal. 6:10	Let us do good unto all men
Eph. 6:6-7	Doing the will of God from the heart
Phil. 4:9	And seen in me, do
Col. 3:17	Whatsoever ye do, do all in the name of our Lord Jesus
Col. 3:23	Do heartily as to the Lord and not to men
Jas. 1:22	Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only
Jas. 2:8	If ye fulfill royal law, ye do well
II Pet. 1:10-II	If ye do these things, ye shall never fall
I John 3:7	He that doeth righteousness is righteous
Rev. 22:14	Blessed are they that do His commandments...

Will the Lord save us by His grace and mercy if we disobey these commandments to **do**?

Will God in the judgment day say "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom" if we have failed to **do** these commandments? **NO**

Brother Franklin "Frank" B. Surbey was a good Sunday school teacher, an excellent mid-week Bible Study leader and a deacon of the Englewood Dunkard Brethren Church.

This article was found in

one of Frank's books and was written out by him for one of his teaching efforts.

Selected by Shirley Frick

Editor's note: This article emphasizes the commandments given by God. These commandments are for the blessing and spiritual health of the believer who will become obedient to the God who has shown unlimited Grace and Mercy to him.

WHERE IS YOUR CANDLE?

Rudy Cover

Mark 4:21-25; Luke 8:16-18

Do you use candles for light at night? We all know what candles are, but we don't use them for light unless we have to. Nearly everyone has electric lights but sometimes there is a storm and the electricity goes off, then we light a candle. A candle doesn't give much light compared to an electric light but when the room is dark a candle can be very important. With just the light of one candle we can see but where there is no light we cannot see. If we are not very careful, we will stumble and fall.

When Jesus was here, candles had not been invented. Even if they had been, they would not have been very practical in that hot climate. In Jesus' time people used lamps made by placing a wick in a bowl of olive oil. The bowl had a spout for the wick on one side and a handle to hold it by on the other. When the King James Bible was translated from Hebrew and Greek into English, the people in England used candles instead of lamps, so they translated the original word, "candle." It really doesn't make any difference

since a lamp or a candle gives light and that is what Jesus is talking about.

Jesus said, "No man, when he has lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or puts it under a bed; but puts it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be made known." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

We can't hide anything from God, neither should we be ashamed of being a Christian. We ought to tell others how wonderful Jesus is and how much He has done for us. By doing this we are letting our light shine – we are lighting our candles, so others may see the light. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." If we are followers of Jesus, we are the light of the world and we can be like a city on a hill that cannot be hid.

Where is your candle? Are you trying to hide your life from Jesus? or are you a bright and shining light so others can see your good works and glorify

your Father in Heaven?

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

LIGHT

Russell Zumbrum

“Jesus spake unto them saying, I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life.” (John 8:12.) Jesus says if we follow him, we will not walk in darkness but have the light of life. To have this light we must follow him. So, let us see what it means to follow Jesus. First, we see Jesus coming to John to be baptized. If we want this, we must be baptized. Then we hear him say (Luke 9:23) “If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” Again, we see if we want this light, we must deny self. This is hard for some to do. They seem to want the light but cannot deny themselves of all the worldly pleasures. They would like to go to the movies or fairs and ball games and such things. Others cannot deny themselves of some of the unnecessary thing

such as rings, bracelets, beads, powder and paint.

Well, I don't believe we can have this light with these things. We cannot deny self with them but are allowing self to get in the light and we still are stumbling along in the dark. So, we must deny ourselves of anything that is questionable, for if anything is in question to us, if it be right or wrong, we had better stay away from it or we might be led into darkness unawares.

Psa. 119:105: “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and light unto my path.” So, if we want our path lighted, we must keep close to God's word. Then we hear Jesus say we must take up our cross, daily and follow him. Yes, it is a daily work, not just a Sunday or just when it suits us. Cross bearing means quite a bit. It means persecution, for Jesus said, “If they persecute me they shall persecute you also.” But if we want this light, we must

follow him through it all. Then we want to consider why Jesus wants us to walk in the light. First, it is for our soul's salvation, and also that others might be led to the light. What would we have known of the light if we did not see it shine thru some true follower that led us to the light.

Matt. 5:14 says, "Ye are the light of the world." If we are the light of the world and only let our light shine a part of the time when someone is watching or reading our life, and cause them to be led into darkness, would be just as someone carrying a light for us to see to walk, and when coming to a precipice blow it out. We may do this with

our spiritual light. You may not know who is being guided by your light and perhaps at some critical moment you do or say something that would blur the light and they might be lost. So, let us make it a daily business to let our light shine.

"Christian let your light shine
All along the way.
You may guide a wanderer
To eternal day;
You may save from endless
night,
If you let your lamp burn bright."

Selected from the
July 1, 1929
issue of the Bible Monitor

NOT FAR

J. F. Britton

"Not far," is how far? In the twelfth chapter of Mark, we have a record of a heated and contentious discussion between Jesus and the Pharisees and the Herodians, about certain subjects and doctrines in which he discomfited them in their treacherous efforts to "catch" and entangle him in his "words" and doctrines.

Then came one of the Scribes, with a question about

"Which is the first commandment of all"? Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord."

The writer believes it would be a blessed thing, if the church people of these latter days would just pause or stop long enough to listen to the voice of Jehovah speaking through his Gospel, instead of listening to the magazines and radios. In the

exposition that Jesus gave about the first commandment, he added saying, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely, this, Thou shalt love, thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

In the 32nd and 33rd verses, the Scribe acquiesces and admits that to love God with all the faculties and powers of ones being, "is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. When Jesus saw that he answered discretely, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." Therefore, the persistent query is, not far, is how far?

The word "far" necessarily suggests distance; that two objects are removed from one another. The distance may be great or little, but the fact remains, that there is an interval of space between the objects. And that interval that intervened between that Scribe and the Kingdom of God is where the trouble was. He was not far, but far enough to be on the outside. If we look into the background of that Scribe's char-

acter and ascertain the reasons why he came to Jesus, we can see the insincerity of his heart. He did not come because he loved or believed in Jesus, but to entangle and to catch him in his words and doctrines. In the consideration of that Scribe it should be noted that he was then an ordinary man of his day and time. The very fact that he was a Scribe, reveals the fact that he was both educated and intelligent, and well versed in the tenets of the Jewish sacrificial services. But he was like thousands of people in these latter days, they have lots of book learning and intelligence, and are not far from the kingdom of God; just on the outside. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." (I Cor. 1:26.)

While education and intelligence are ennobling and qualify one for the various vocations and duties of life, they are not enough to induct one into the kingdom of God.

There were "Ten Virgins" who "went forth to meet the bridegroom. Five of them went in with the bridegroom to the marriage, and the door was shut. Then came the other five virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

“But he answered and said, verily I say unto you, I know you not.” (Matt. 25:12.) These five virgins were not far from the marriage feast, just close enough to be on the outside, to knock on the door, but alas the door was shut. Hence it is not enough to be close by the kingdom of God, with all our good morals, deeds, and good intentions, they will not avail, unless we get inside the kingdom.

King Felix was not far from the kingdom of God, when he trembled under the conviction and burning preaching of the Apostle Paul, but alas, we have no assurance that he ever got into the kingdom of God.

Moses was not far from the promised land; just close enough that he could see it.

Reader, how is it with thee: Is thy heart right with God? Do you have the assurance that you are really in the kingdom of God? These are vital questions that will determine your eternal destination. Dear Reader, if you have not already answered these vital questions in the interest of your greater and highest interest, the writer desires to appeal to you in Jesus name. Do not procrastinate, do not delay to make your peace and election sure by getting into the kingdom

of God, while it is still day. The night of death is coming. Listen to the solemn tolling of the bell of time.

“Almost persuaded, harvest is past!

“Almost persuaded, doom comes at last!

“Almost cannot avail; Almost is but to fail!

“Sad, sad, that bitter wail, Almost, but lost.”

“Lost”, the saddest word in the English language.

That interval that intervened between that Scribe and the blessed Christ, is a dangerous realm, and is infested with many delusions and deceptions. Therefore, it behooves us, “to get into the kingdom of God” while we have the time and opportunity.

Oh God, in the plentitude of thy great power and mercy breathe upon the readers of this article as well as on the writer, and help us, not only to be “Almost”, but altogether what thou would have us be. Help each one of us to say, Thou art the Potter, but I am the Clay, mould me, make me, what thou would have me be. Amen.

Selected from the
July 1, 1929
issue of the Bible Monitor

CHRIST'S CHURCH

Howard J. Surbey

"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. 5:27. The church is a group of individuals organized into a body, that they may purify themselves and so keep themselves from the evils of Satan, in order to some day become the bride of Christ.

Christ's church will certainly be a glorious church, for its members are "as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." I Pet. 2:5. Christ is our good shepherd and He gave His life for the sheep, John 10:14. Christ was the light of the world and "the earth was lightened with his glory." Now "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." Matt. 5:14.

The members of Christ's church certainly have a royal calling, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but follow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Eph. 2:19. It is a divided family

because some are still upon the earth and some are in heaven, Eph. 3:15. Christ's followers are grown-up, controlled individuals under their head Christ, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Eph. 4:14-15. Am I ready to be part of the bride, the Lamb's wife?

The church is God's precious possession and He jealously guards its purity. Christ has given Himself to redeem the church, yes, He is the life of the church. "For in Him we live and move and have our being." Acts 17:28. Christ is the vine and we are the branches, unless we feed on Him and His examples, we will die and yield unto Satan. Am I true to Christ or am I a spiritual adulterer, subject to the punishment of such? Joining a visible body does not make one a part of Christ's church, but rather our fashioning ourselves

according to His instructions, for the honor and glory of God and the service towards man. Thus, we must continue until God calls us, that we may be “holy, and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.” Col. 1:22.

Christ’s church is “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” I Pet. 2:9-10. The sacrifices of the Old Testament were a type of atonement, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Heb. 9:14.

When we are forgiven and washed from the contamination

of sin, through repentance, confession and baptism, we must strive to live “holy and without blemish.” Do I have zeal and determination enough to “be an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” to take heed unto myself and unto the doctrine and continue in them? I Tim. 4:12-16. Will I give time to prayer for myself and others?

How much am I willing to sacrifice for the church: by setting a good example, by taking care of the work which I can do, by encouraging others to live for Christ? Have we found a place in the church? Do we appreciate our wondrous relationship and the sacred duty, to keep ourselves in the love of God, as we look forward to the future glory awaiting the people of God?

Selected from the

July 15, 1959

issue of the Bible Monitor

YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN

Harold S. Martin

The new birth is the great change which God works in us when we meet the conditions of salvation. The new birth is

not turning over “a new leaf.” It is not changing our attitudes or cleaning up our language. The new birth is a work of grace

wrought in the heart of repentant sinners when they respond to the invitation of the Gospel.

Jesus (as well as the apostles Peter, James, and John) refers to spiritual regeneration as a “birth” (John 3:5-7; I Peter 1:3, 23; James 1:18; I John 3:9). The Holy Spirit moves quietly into the heart of a penitent and believing person and brings about a marvelous change. The whole experience has an element of mystery about it. Jesus says, “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). We want to look at what the Bible says about being born again.

The Necessity of the New Birth

Jesus told Nicodemus (a man who was highly respected and a person of clean morals), “You must be born again.” The word “must” makes it clear that the new birth is not optional. The new birth is an absolute necessity.

a) The new birth is necessary because of our own inability to please God. The first man Adam (through the sin of disobedience) acquired

a sinful nature, and this nature has been transmitted by birth to each of his descendants. Each of us has a sin nature, a nature which is at enmity with God, and thus incapable of pleasing God. Mankind (since the Fall in Genesis 3) has been placed in a state of sin – a condition so profound that we cannot lift ourselves out of it. We do not, by natural birth, automatically desire and understand and enjoy the things of God. Jeremiah says that our hearts are deceitful above all things and are desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9).

b) The new birth is necessary also because of the absolute purity and holiness of God. God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. God inhabits eternity and His name is “Holy” (Isaiah 57:15). He remains always and forever the absolute and eternal enemy of sin. Holiness means to be clean and pure and free from defilement. God desires us to be holy because He is holy (I Peter 1:15-16). And yet when we think of the sinful desires of inclinations which have characterized our lives in the past, we know that we have not met the standard. The holiness of God demands

a radical change within us, and unless we are born again, there is going to be a gulf fixed between us and God.

The Nature of the New Birth

If the new birth is such a tremendous necessity, what is it all about? How do we explain it? Where can we go to find it?

The term “born again” speaks of an inner moral transformation that leads to an outward change in one’s way of living. The Apostle Paul calls it “the washing of regeneration” (Titus 3:5). The Apostle Peter speaks of it as becoming “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). The Apostle John says it is “passing from death unto life” (1 John 3:14).

The new birth is an inward change of heart. It is being “born of the Spirit.” When a person believes the message of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit imparts to that person a new life – the life of God. It is described as a renewing which comes by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). The new birth is a tremendous spiritual change accomplished in the human heart by the Holy Spirit. It is not just being forgiven for past sins; it is being made over again! God in His grace offers

a change in human nature – a change so decisive that the dominion of sin is broken. The new birth is a mystery you cannot really explain; but at the same time, it is a reality that no person can explain away.

The new birth is accomplished by the Holy Spirit working quietly in the believing heart, but the Holy Spirit only performs the change when there is at least a three-fold human response.

a) We must realize our sinful and lost condition. Our definitions of sin are often very shallow, and we fail to realize how seriously all of us have offended God.

b) We must demonstrate repentance for the past life of sin.

Repentance is a reversal of our attitudes. **Those who repent reverse their attitude toward sin.** They hang their heads in shame and sorrow for having indulged in obscene stories, foolish talking, desecration of the Lord’s Day, illicit sexual attitudes, and the like. **Those who repent reverse their attitude toward God.** They are especially grieved at the particular sin of having rejected Christ for so many years. **Those who**

repent reverse their attitude toward themselves. Instead of justifying their wrongdoing, they become overwhelmed with a sense of their own unworthiness. Repentance is such a sorrow for sin that one is willing to turn from sin with all his heart.

c) We must believe on the work of Jesus on the Cross.

When Jesus told Nicodemus about the new birth, He explained how He would hang upon a Cross (see John 3:14), and then concluded with the words, “Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:15). The tense of the word “believe” expresses a continuous action. It means to keep on believing. The emphasis is not on one isolated moment of faith, but on a continuous attitude of faith in Jesus Christ and of submission to Him. The individual follows the Lord in the experience of water baptism, seeks fellowship in a Bible-teaching church, and makes a commitment to walk day by day with the Lord Jesus.

The new birth, then, is an inner moral transformation accomplished by the Holy Spirit, but in order to experience that transformation, there must be a human response.

People do not necessarily weep or shout or tremble when the new birth occurs. Jesus says that the new birth is in many ways like the wind (John 3:8), and all of us know that a wind does not always blow the same way. Sometimes it blows up a severe storm (a tornado, cyclone, or hurricane) – but more often the wind settles down to a gentle evening breeze. Just so, our experiences of conversion (the new birth) vary a great deal. There are those whose conversions are almost cyclonic; they are born again in thunder and lightning and storm. The Apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus, experienced a sudden light and a voice from heaven. But others have a much less dramatic experience. In earlier years, they had godly parents who daily gathered around the family altar. They had been spared the depths of the most wicked kinds of sins. But still, they have been born with sinful tendencies, with natures inclined to sin – and even in early years – gave expression to self-will, and bouts with anger, and the like. Their conversion is often as simple and as natural as the gently blowing of a summer breeze.

Such a conversion can be just as genuine as the conversion of one who for many years was living in the depths of sin, and then had an explosive conversion experience.

The Evidences of the new birth

The new birth is something that no one can hide. If a person is really born again, there is going to be a radical change in life and character. The mysterious work of God in the human heart changes our tastes and habits and desires and opinions and appearance and our hopes for the future. Evidences of the change will be seen in a number of areas.

a) There will be a new love for fellow human beings.

There will be a love even for enemies. The Bible says, "Everyone that loveth is born of God" (1 John 4:7). This does not mean that every mother who loves her child is born of God, or that every young man who loves his sweetheart is born of God. There are special Greek Words to describe those kinds of love. The love John speaks about is the "1 Corinthians 13" kind of love. It is a love that suffers long, and is kind, and is not easily provoked. Everyone

who loves with this kind of love is born of God.

The real test of whether or not we have genuine love is our attitude toward those who misuse us. That is the test which Jesus manifested from the Cross. He looked down on the blood-spattered hands of those who crucified Him and said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Stephen showed real love when he prayed for those who were stoning him, and said "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). One of the evidences of the new birth is a new love even for those who mistreat us.

b) There will be a devoted obedience to God's commandments.

The Apostle John, in 1 John 5:3, says that for one who is born of God, the commands of God "are not grievous" (not burdensome).

In some circles today, "obedience" is almost a dirty word. If one talks about obedience to the detailed commandments of the New Testament, they say "It sounds like you are trying to work your way to heaven." But that is not it at all! We are saved by the grace of God through faith in

Jesus Christ – not by our good works. There is a difference between “good works” and “obedience.” **Good works** are warm deeds of love springing from a right attitude toward God. Good works speak of “service.” **Obedience** is an act of earnestly carrying out the instructions of another. Obedience speaks of “compliance.” (To escape the error of salvation by works, some have fallen into the heresy of teaching salvation without obedience.) The Bible does not recognize faith as a valid faith unless that faith leads to obedience. See Hebrews 5:9. Those who think they are saved, but don’t care about obeying the specific instructions of the New Testament, had better take another look at their tickets!

The Bible says that believers are to teach new disciples “to observe all things” that our Lord has commanded us. It is not those who say, “Lord, Lord” that shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but those that “do the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). Those who are born again, not only desire to hear, but to do, the will of God.

c) There will be a deliberate refusal to practice sin. We read

in 1 John 3:9 that “whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” The Greek tense clearly refers to the continual practice of sin. Sin is not a regular habit in the lives of those who are born again. Those who are born of God do not live in sin. They have received a new nature – a divine nature – a nature that hates sin. They despise every form of it. Instead, they find themselves loving the Scriptures more, and eager to pray more often, and day by day they become increasingly more warm and gracious and positive persons. The born again person moves on toward spiritual maturity, and new victories are gained over the inroads of sin.

A group of atheists were criticizing the Bible. One of them spoke about creation. He said, “What man with any common sense could believe that several thousand years ago, God stooped down and picked up a piece of mud, breathed on it, and changed it into a human being?” A new-born Christian man standing by overheard the conversation and responded by saying, “I can’t answer all the questions about creation, but this I know: One night God stooped down and

picked up the dirtiest piece of mud in this city, breathed upon it by His Spirit, and changed a gambling, drinking, thieving, fornicating wretch into a peace-loving man of God. I was that man.” (And just so, my friend, whoever you may be – what God has done for others, He will do for you!)

For all of us, the future is uncertain. The time is quickly passing. You may never have another opportunity like you have right now. My friend, the day will surely come, when those who are not born again

will wish they had never been born at all. Jesus died to provide the way of eternal salvation. Why not believe, receive, and obey Jesus today? Make a commitment to continue the path of discipleship – seeking to follow Him day by day.

Note: Additional copies of this tract sent free on request. Ask for our sample packet of Bible Helps.

Bible Helps
P. O. Box 391
Hanover, PA 17331

LAWFUL, BUT NOT EXPEDIENT

J. F. Britton

The purpose of this article is not to find fault, and unjustly criticize, but to call attention to some Gospel virtues and principles that have been neglected in the last decade.

The modern church, in her zeal and passion for more aggressive mission work, has at the expense and sacrifice of discretion, prudence and discipline virtually been prostrated on a level with the world. This statement is evidenced and verified by the deplorable conditions as they exist in the church today. It

seems that the church has been compromising with the world to the alarming extent that the church has about everything in her fellowship that the world has, in the way of immorality, immodesty and indecency. And, too, the modern church has gone into the mercantile business and is commercializing her religion. Some, like Judas Iscariot, who sold his “Lord for thirty pieces of silver.” Others, like “Esau” of old, are exchanging their “birthrights,” for the cravings of perverted appetites,

and the frivolities and vanities of this world.

While it is true, there are many things that are lawful and legal within themselves, but are not expedient nor conducive for the followers of Him who spake as never man spake, to waste their valuable time and energies that should be conserved and dedicated to the service of Him "who came that we might have life." (John 10:10.)

Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." (Matt. 5:13.) Salt is not only a condiment that gives taste and flavor, but it cleanses, purifies and preserves, and the Divine purpose of the church is to cleanse and purify individuals through faith, repentance and baptism, that they may be qualified to be enrolled as a co-worker with Christ in his kingdom of grace and truth. And having been "created in Christ Jesus unto good works," "they continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine," and are preserved in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It should be noted that Jesus also said, "If

the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted, it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." What a sad arraignment against the modern nominal church.

Again, Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." (Matt. 5:14.) Therefore, it is logical and true that Christians are illuminated with "the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9), will be constrained by the love of God, and a yearning and a passion for the salvation of souls, to let their lights so shine through their lives that are consecrated and dedicated to their Lord, that many weary tempest tossed souls may see their light of righteousness "and pull for the shore."

And as the kingdom of Christ is a Spiritual Kingdom of righteousness, it stands to reason that her executive rules and principles are "faith which worketh by love," sanctification, "and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14), and trust in the living God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And the subjects of this kingdom are characterized

by honesty, veracity, virtue, modesty, decency and vital piety. And their adornments are self-control, prudence, discretion and “a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price.” (1 Pet. 3:4.) “Against such there is no law.” Bless God and praise His Holy Name that He has redeemed His people through Christ Jesus and made them free from the servitude of the flesh and sin.

Quite recently a mother of four or five grown girls, in high society, talking to the writer about present conditions asked, “What is the trouble with the girls?” The writer said, “Madam, if you will tell me what is the trouble with the mothers; I’ll tell you what is the trouble with the girls.” Then this mother looked at the writer and said, “What do you mean?” The writer answered, saying, “Madam, just think, mothers with bobbed hair, sleeveless dresses, bobbed at the bottom so short that when they sit down they don’t cover their knees, with faces all painted and powdered till they don’t look like human mothers, spending their time and energies in clubs and entertainments at the expense and sacrifice of home duties, and then they

ask, what’s wrong with the girls. And the fathers indulging their perverted appetites and passions in their various carnal habits, right before their boys and girls, and spending their time and energies in the lodges and other places of amusement at the expense and sacrifice of the family altar, and other family duties. What can you expect? Notwithstanding these very fathers and mothers that are crying out and saying, what is wrong with our young people, are saying those are lawful, and folks have a right to their opinions. Yes,

“Sin has a thousand treacherous
arts,

To practice on the mind:
With flattering looks, she tempts
our hearts,
But leaves a sting behind.

“With names of virtue she
deceives

The aged and the young;
And while the heedless wretch
believes,
She makes his fetters strong.”

From a human point of view, the indulgences in carnal pleasures may be lawful, but from a Divine point of view, they

are not expedient nor conducive to the building up of Christian homes. Hence the inspired writer says, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (I Tim. 5:8.) This scripture alone, shows the sacred duty that every father and mother owe to themselves and their families.

Will they dare to stand before the judgment bar of the great God of this universe, and talk about what is lawful and claim they have a right to their opinions?

Oh readers, what will your answers be?

Selected from the
July 15, 1929
issue of the Bible Monitor

NEWS ITEMS

BETHEL, PENNSYLVANIA

The Bethel Dunkard Brethren Church School has some openings for the next school year 2019-2020. There is a need for an administrator, second grade teacher, gym teacher and a high school teacher. If interested, please contact Bro. Jesse Alspaugh, phone 717-933-9197. Thank you.

CHAMBERSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

The Lord willing, the Chambersburg Congregation looks forward to Revival meetings, July 21-28, 2019. Bro. Nathan Meyers, Dallas Center, Iowa will be the evangelist. Sunday school at 9:30 A.M., message at 10:30 A.M., Sunday night at 7:00 P.M., nightly at 7:30 P.M. Sunday, July 28 a fellowship meal provided followed by closing service at 2:00 P.M. Pray for the services and Bro. Nathan as he prepares to bring forth the Word. Come worship with us.

Sister Janet Shaffer, Cor.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR AUGUST 2019

August 4 – By the Men That Lapped – Judges 6:25-7:8

1. What is the balance between letting the One True God speak for Himself and us speaking for Him?

2. Is it okay for us to “put out a fleece” today? Why or why not? If so, how?

3. The Lord thinned Gideon’s army down to 300 men to show His might. Where is He thinning you down, to show you His glory?

August 11 – He Worshipped and Returned – Judges 7:9-8:9

1. As Gideon was preparing to go against the Midianites and Amalekites the Lord offers Gideon, because of his fear, the option of taking Phurah with him. Why are we required to go alone sometimes, like Daniel and at other times we can have help, like Moses and Aaron?

2. How willing am I to go against the enemy with no physical weapons, but with the trumpet declaring the Lord in one hand and the Light of the Gospel in the other?

3. Why would neither the men of Succoth nor the men of Penuel help Gideon and his men by providing them with food?

August 18 – As the Man is, So is His Strength – Judges 8:10-35

1. Why did Gideon respond the way he did rather than allowing himself to be set up as the king?

2. What was the purpose of the ephod supposed to be and how did it end up being used?

3. Why is it so easy to return to playing the harlot after Almighty God has shown Himself so strong?

August 25 – Self Control – I Corinthians 9:1-27

1. Throughout the first 15 verses of the chapter Paul lays out the reasons he could expect to be remunerated as a minister. What then are the reasons that he continues being a “tent maker” and providing the Gospel freely, without asking for financial support?

2. In what ways do we today need to become “all things to all men” to win them to the Gospel, as Paul did?

3. Paul likens us to someone playing sports, who brings their body into subjection. In the 21st century, are the ways that we must subject ourselves to win the crown any different? Why or why not?

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