

BIBLE MONITOR

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JANUARY, 2020

NO. 01

“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.

JESUS, LORD AND KING

Jesus when he came to earth,
Sent by God through virgin birth,
And the shepherds came to see,
Babe of Bethlehem was He.

Wise men from a distant land,
Came with praises o'er the sand;
Journeyed far to see the King,
And their presents they did bring.

Jesus came a king to be,
And to set His people free;
From the chains of vice and sin,
To a crown of life to win.

Glory, glory to the Savior,
Glory to our Lord and King,
He who died on Calvary,
Just to set poor sinners free.

—A. B. Van Dyke

A NEW YEAR, A NEW LIFE

Every year brings changes. Some years bring success and progress. Other years bring defeat and depression. Many years bring a combination of the desirable and the despised. Throughout the year there are many events that impact our lives. These may be pains or gains that directly affect our bodies and surroundings. Other events may touch us although they do not happen directly to us. These events may bring sorrow, internal aches, or inspiration and gladness.

As these events unfold in our lives, we choose how we will allow them to affect us emotionally and spiritually. We may not be able to control the coming of these events, but we can react so they either defeat us or encourage us. The attacking woes will bring

changes in our lives, but we can allow them either to mold us in positive or negative ways. We can learn from the experience of the Apostle Paul who learned to be content in whatever situations he found himself.

How can we mold the events of our lives, to make them as profitable as possible? Our worldview will affect our response to the events that challenge us. If we have a natural view of life, we will become agitated when changes come that affect our health or wealth. Our continued success is the primary element of our lives. Our possessions become dear to us. Our bank accounts become the primary focus of our lives and any downturn in their value affects us. Any loss will bring not only financial gloom, but also

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psychological disturbance. We are unable to sleep, we may not be able to enjoy our food, and we become unbalanced socially.

If we have an eternity-based worldview, we may be troubled by the temporal events that happen to us, but we know that our eternal lives are greater than what happens along the journey. The pitfalls of this life are but bumps along the way. By trusting God, we know that whatever obstacle appears He will not allow it to be greater than our power to bear it. We may be tested by temporal loss, but our eternal view will allow us to overcome and continue our forever journey. When we accept that our natural lives will not always be easy or enjoyable, we can depend upon God as a wise, merciful Father, who will provide the spiritual strength we need to persevere through the struggles.

Since God has shown us His Grace and Mercy, why can He not also show us persistence and guidance through the losses of lesser things? His care for us goes far beyond the value of temporal possessions. Although He may entrust us with temporal blessings, He is far more interested in our eternal lives.

He wants us to succeed in fulfilling His purpose for our

creation. His desire for His people is to please Him. We cannot accomplish His desire unless we are willing to forego pleasing ourselves with the temporal, material blessings of this life. What gives us the greatest pleasure? Is it the possessions, the positions, the power that we may attain in this time-limited world? Is it the pleasure we can bring to the heart and mind of God by choosing the pathway of service that He desires for us? That is a question we all need to answer during our lifetimes.

It is often suggested that we need to make some resolutions for the new year. These resolutions can be made with the intent that we will improve ourselves in certain facets of our lives. There may be areas in our lives that we can improve by establishing new habits that benefit us in developing new abilities or bettering our personalities and social qualities. Generally, our efforts at keeping these resolutions are doomed to failure. The new habits do not develop quickly enough to keep us from putting aside our resolutions. While the making of resolutions does not usually produce the desired results, there may be value in the resolutions as they remind us that our lives are not

perfect and there are changes that would be beneficial for us to make. Being reminded of those needed changes should push us to let God help us to make changes.

As we enter the new year, we must be sure that we are headed in the right direction. We need to check our lives and decide whether we are fulfilling God's purpose through our lives. Are we pleasing Him? There is no way that we can please Him unless we have a relationship

with Him through the new birth offered through the death, burial and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. The new year will be just like any other year unless we have claimed our Savior. No amount of resolutions or self-improvement will bring the desired result. It is only through the broken body and spilled blood of Jesus Christ.

May you truly have a Happy New Year through Him.

M. C. Cook

TO KNOW GOD IS TO WORSHIP GOD

If asked about God, most people would say that they know God. The problem is, they are confusing knowing about God with actually knowing God. There is a huge difference.

In America today, most people are really too busy to get to know God. They only think about God when there is some trouble they cannot get out of, so they immediately try to pray. If a tragedy happens to someone many people will say, "My prayers are with you." I really do not know what that means.

Most people want God on speed dial or an app on their cell phone so they can get Him in an emergency. However, there is no

such thing as a "God app."

My knowledge of God must be personal and actual. I must know more about God than what I read in some book or what somebody tells me. I need to go to the Bible and get to know God as He desires to be known. What is it that God wants to reveal to me about himself? Once I begin to understand God, I begin to understand everything else including myself.

The more I get to know God on a personal level the more prone I am to fall on my knees before Him in worship. My worship flows most naturally out of my personal experiences with God.

At least four things about God

He wants me to know. When I get to know these things about God on the personal level, my life will begin to change and go in a direction that pleases Him.

One of the characteristics about God that is very important for me to know is that He is “everlasting.”

This is something very difficult for humans to wrap their mind around. We sometimes use the word everlasting, but nothing that we have is everlasting. A time limit rests on everything associated with mankind. With God, however, there is no time element. God knows the end from the beginning because He created it all. What God created was time and time is within the scope of God’s being. Before time, God was, after time, God is.

This brings me to the second characteristic of God that is important. That is, He is the Creator.

For a long time, man has tried to dispel this notion that God is the Creator and to date man has failed. Everything that exists has come from the hand of God. That means, everything is accountable to Him finally.

This does not set well with many people who want to be their

own God. After all, they follow the one who said, “I will be like the most high.” Everybody wants to be God, but nobody wants to recognize the true God. He has created everything, and He created everything for Himself.

God did not create something only to let it spin off to its own destiny. God created everything for Himself. Everything belongs to God and everything finally answers to God.

Now, if God is the Creator this next characteristic of God is important. God never tires.

That cannot be said about you or me. We tire very quickly. The whole world around us has a “tire-factor” and we are all affected by it. We have so much energy and then we run out of it. God never runs out of energy because He never uses energy as we think of it.

Why is it that mankind gets tired? Simply because we are limited in what we can do. We have so much energy, and no more. We must take a break every once and again. We must sleep to regain some of our energy. God never slumbers or sleeps (Psalm 121:4).

God does not have to do any of this. God does not have energy like man. God created energy and

because He created energy, there is a time element to energy. With God, there is no time element and therefore God cannot use up energy.

I think the most important characteristic of God is that He has perfect understanding.

The reason He has perfect understanding is that He knows the end from the beginning. He knows everything and therefore has a perfect understanding of everything.

I have a little bit of understanding, but I do not have perfect understanding. It is very interesting that you know something and then find out a little but more and it turns out to be something altogether different from what you thought in the beginning. Our opinions change

because we get new facts. God's opinion never changes because with Him nothing is new. New is a time thing.

As I begin to understand these characteristics of God and get to know Him on a personal level, I begin to have a deep appreciation for who God really is in Himself out of which begins to flow true worship.

We have worship today coaxed out through all kinds of external simulation, but true worship comes from an inner stimulation with my relationship to God. If my worship can be worked up, it is not worship acceptable to God.

James L. Snyder
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THERE ONCE WAS A TIME...

There once was a time when one of the Brethren, or one of the Sisters, were instantly recognized in public because of their appearance. They were also known in the world because their word was their bond and their honesty was renowned.

There was a time when the Brethren made a day of the Communion service.

They heard the Word of God preached and gathered around the tables in a simple meal. They washed each other's feet, greeted each other with a holy kiss and shared the fruit of the grape and unleavened bread as a memorial to the blood and body of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave His all for us.

There once was a time when

the Brethren would gather at the banks of a creek or stream and baptize their new converts. They would join their voices in the old hymns and hear the Word expounded, then after the baptisms they would rejoice with the new children of God.

There once was a time when the Brethren chose among themselves Godly men, full of the Holy Ghost, to do the work of the church, so that they could “give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word.” (Acts 6:4)

There once was a time when “the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied” (Acts 6:7) and the Brethren grew by leaps and bounds because they were full of truth and life in Jesus Christ and they were different, measurably different, from the world.

Do we as a church show the world these attributes or are these things that we merely aspire to? Do we allow God to change us into His image or do we tenaciously hang on to the leeks and onions and melons of this old world? We need to give the world a hunger and a thirst for the righteousness of God by showing it to them in the Word and in our lives. It was so real to the disciples that all but one GLADLY gave their lives to see it born in others.

Can we say we are measuring up to God’s standard, or are we merely saying, “There once was a time...?”

Help us to view our dying Lord,
And gaze upon his bleeding side;
That we may, faithful to his word,
Eternally in Him abide.

Brother Lynn H. Miller
Mohler’s Congregation

PHIL’S PONDERINGS

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

January 2020 Study Questions

January 5 – Luke 3:1-20

What is Luke’s purpose in naming the various people at the beginning of this chapter?

Why isn’t John preaching in Jerusalem or in other towns or cities?

What is the connection between John's calling and his exhortations to those who heard him?

What are John's expectations of the soon coming Messiah?

Why does Herod want to throw John in prison?

Commentary: There must have been something very compelling about John's preaching. Those who heard him came long distances to John's isolated location at the Jordan river. Thus, Isaiah's description of a "voice crying in the wilderness" is literally true. His preaching also compelled many to change their lives by dealing justly with others. They were not to use their positions of power or authority to enrich themselves at others expense. Those unwilling to change would soon find themselves consumed by the unquenchable fire administered by the coming Messiah. May we all be compelled by the baptizing power of the Holy Spirit so that it burns away the fleshly chaff of our spiritual indifference.

January 12 – Luke 3:21-4:13

Since Jesus was without sin what did baptism represent in His life?

Is there any significance to Luke placing the genealogy of Jesus immediately after His baptism?

How does this genealogy differ from Matthew's?

How do you describe each temptation as it relates to the nature of Jesus' messiahship?

How do these temptations help us recognize the choices Jesus made as the Messiah?

Commentary: Jesus was the Messiah and will be revealed as such when He returns in power. While we know next to nothing about Jesus before His baptism it seems clear to this writer that His baptism served the purpose of accepting and answering His calling as the Messiah. But in answering that call He quickly was tested by Satan who hoped to divert Him to an easier, more popular, less painful Messiahship. But Jesus did not waver in His calling. The

result is that our salvation is completely secure in His nail pierced hands.

January 19 – Luke 4:14-37

Does Jesus' experience of baptism, temptation, and Spirit empowered ministry connect with how God is working in your life?

What was the mood in the synagogue both before and after He read the scripture in Isaiah?

What was Jesus inferring when He quoted the Proverb?

What really offended them to the point of wanting to kill Jesus?

Why does Jesus consistently rebuke demons to be silent when they proclaim His identity?

Commentary: The most important calling we have in life is when we accept who Jesus is and identify ourselves as His disciples. This acceptance that our truest nature is found only in Christ Jesus will be challenged again and again by the temptations that Satan directs our way. Too often we succumb to his enticements. But God uses our defeats to challenge us to grow more boldly in our faith. Our defeats show how truly needy we are of the Lord's strength which is what His Spirit supplies. When relying consistently upon His Spirit imparted strength to overcome temptation we become more fruitful in the ministry God gives us (Rom. 8:13-14). Our reliance upon God's Spirit empowers us to proclaim the truth even when it is offensive.

January 26 – Luke 4:38-5:16

Why did people start showing up at sunset?

How does Peter become increasingly familiar with Jesus?

Why is Peter afraid of Jesus?

What spiritual process has Peter been experiencing?

Whose idea is it for Peter to follow Jesus?

Commentary: What famous person would you enjoy getting to know? Would it be a movie star, a sports hero, a President or King? Which one of these or one from a thousand other categories you might choose could you imagine yourself saying to them, “Depart from me for I am a sinner who will only besmirch your reputation”? Simon Peter, in a very short period of time, had witnessed numerous miracles including the healing of his mother-in-law. But the stupendous catch of fish had finally made him aware of how close to God in power, in mind, in character, and in holiness was Jesus. He became deeply aware of how much his sin separated him in every way from Jesus. And it scared him to realize his finiteness. Instead of rejecting Peter Jesus gave him a whole new career of catching men instead of fish. Jesus is still in the business of turning people’s lives upside down so that they are right side up in working for His kingdom.

Brother Phil Franklin
Modesto, CA

WALKING ON THE WATER

Rudy Cover

Matt. 14:22-23; Mark 6:45-52; John 6:15-21

Have you ever tried to walk on water? I mean deep water, like a river or a lake or the ocean. Water isn’t solid. When you try to stand on water, you sink. We can get in a boat and not sink but walking on the water is altogether different. It just doesn’t work.

Jesus fed the multitudes with bread and fish and they wanted to make Him a king. Jesus sent the people away and told His disciples to get into a boat and go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is a big lake seven miles

wide and thirteen miles long. While His disciples were going across the lake, Jesus went up into a mountain to pray.

The Sea of Galilee was a beautiful lake but sometimes the wind would blow causing big waves which made rowing a boat difficult. Such was the case with the disciples. The wind was blowing against them and they were rowing for all they were worth. It was early in the morning. They were about half-way across the lake when they saw Jesus.

He was walking on the water just as if He were on dry ground. The disciples couldn't believe their eyes. They were scared to death and cried out in fear. Then Jesus said to them, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Peter answered Jesus and said, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come unto you on the water." And Jesus said, "Come."

It is hard to believe anyone would ask to walk on water especially at night when the wind was blowing and the waves were crashing against the boat, but Peter was an unusual man. He stepped right down out of the ship into the water and started walking toward Jesus. Peter was doing just fine; he didn't sink, he was walking on the water! How wonderful it was to be a personal friend of Jesus – one who could feed five thousand people from five loaves and two fishes – could heal the sick and even cause one to walk on the water. Just then a huge wave crashed in front of Peter and he forgot about Jesus and started worrying how

he could possibly walk over that wave. Peter was afraid and he began to sink – there wasn't a thing he could do to help himself. Then Peter remembered Jesus and cried out, "Lord save me." Immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him and said, "O, you of little faith, why did you doubt?" Jesus and Peter walked together on the water over to the boat. When Peter and Jesus got in the boat the wind quit blowing and the sea was peaceful. Then the disciples who were in the boat came and worshipped Jesus, saying, "Of a truth you are the Son of God."

What a wonderful Saviour we have! Jesus can make you do the impossible, but you must keep your mind on Him. When we forget Jesus and depend on our own strength – we will fail. Jesus said, "With God all things are possible." We can say like Peter, "Lord save me," and Jesus will always be there to help.

Selected from the
April 1, 1980
issue of the Bible Monitor

NEW YEAR

B. E. Kesler

We are now passing another milestone in our life journey and entering upon a new lease of life.

Just how long it shall run, or what it has in store we may only faintly surmise. Only the all-wise

Father knows these things. No doubt it's best that it is so, but somehow, we'd like to know.

We are told "the days of our years are threescore years and ten", but the average human life here is less than one half of this. But "by reason of strength they may be fourscore years." So that no definite number of days is allotted to us. But by using discretion, judgment, wisdom and proper care of our bodies, life may be lengthened, and by a contrary course, life may be shortened. The fact that means the most to us, and in which we should be most concerned, is we are one year nearer the goal, nearer our destiny than we have ever been before.

And now that the old year is forever gone, do we wish we could live it over again? Perhaps. That depends.

But now we must say, Old Year, good-by forever! To some memory of you is a pleasure, to some, a regret, yet all of us must

say, we have reaped what we sowed, and on that sowing and reaping depends our joy or our regret at your parting.

And now that the old is gone, the new is upon us with all it may mean to us. And it is well for us if we can dismiss the old from our minds, and devote our attention to the new, and concentrate our efforts to make the most of it.

That mistakes have been made we are all too conscious. Worrying over these will bring no relief. Entering upon the duties of the new with a hearty good will and a resolution to avoid the mistakes of the past is the best remedy. Losses may have been sustained, but "crying over spilled milk" only makes the anguish deeper.

We turn the proverbial "new leaf" clean, though empty and unwritten, somehow it brings relief in turning our vision from beholding the blurred and blotted pages of the old yearbook, and we confidently sing:

Turn a new leaf for me, Father, I pray,
 This one is blotted; O take it away;
 Cleanse all its stains in the blood of the cross,
 Pardon me graciously, deal with me wondrously,
 Turn a new leaf in my life book today.

The new year means a new lease of life in which to make amends for the shortcomings, and

failures, and sins, of the past, and though we may have passed the threescore and ten, there is still

time to turn from wrong to right, for “while the lamp (of life) holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return”, if he be not a reprobate.

The new year also means new opportunities and new obligations. No amount of regret can adequately atone for the neglect of opportunities. Our duty is to improve the opportunities given us for doing good, and the obligation rests upon us so to do. One common weakness is the habit of waiting for opportunities. Of Jesus in going from Jerusalem to Galilee, it is said, “He must needs go through Samaria.” There was no need, but for his making an opportunity to meet the “woman at the well.” As in this case, opportunities that are made often furnish an occasion for the most effective teaching.

The priest and the Levite missed or lost the opportunity of doing good by “passing by on the other side.” But, the Samaritan, whether looking for an opportunity or not, embraced it when he saw it, and proved himself neighbor to his unfortunate countryman, and the lawyer was told to “go thou and do likewise.”

Human life is one continual round of occurring and recurring events, duties, obligations and opportunities. So that instead

of waiting for something new, or looking for something new, we should bravely take up the duties, obligations, etc., which we have permitted to pass by unheeded. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might.” So that our tasks should be undertaken with earnest goodwill and a determination to do our best. This rule applied to our tasks will make them seem lighter and our success will be assured thereby. “Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord” is a fine motto, which means to put vim and earnestness into our work. Fervent in spirit, warm, or aflame with zeal and earnestness. Enthusiasm, a short name for all these, is the wind that drives away the fog of despondency, the gas that kicks the piston, drives the engine and sets the wheels of life going. It brightens the fire that burns up discontent and warms our hearts on the earth of love and friendship and shapes our destiny on the anvil of consecration and devotion. Enthusiasm, whose father is work and whose mother is love, inspires our life with zeal and determination to surmount all obstacles, to climb the hill of doubt and to ascent the mountain of opposition to the plains of success and final victory.

Our campaign slogan for 1930 is "onward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

So, here's my heart, and here's my hand, for a long pull, a

hard pull, and a pull-all-together for the year 1930. Amen.

Selected from the
January 1, 1930
issue of the Bible Monitor

NEW YEAR THOUGHTS

L. W. Beery

As we look forward into the New Year it is only natural that we have hopes that it will be well with us whatever experiences we may pass through. We are hopeful that the time that is allotted us in this year will be well spent, that our efforts will not be in vain but that they will be crowned with success, and that there will be much fruit as a result of our labors. Much depends upon how we live from day to day as to what the year 1940 will mean to us, so it is well that we take heed unto our ways and give due consideration to everything that we undertake and only do and say those things which are good for ourselves, our fellowmen, and which will glorify God. If we can do this, then it is certain that whatever we may have to pass through we can close the year with gladness.

It should be the aim of each one of us that we make the best of life. This is the only wise way to live;

the way of contentment. Christian people have every reason to live in this way. Paul tells us this, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." (Heb. 13:5-6.) We do not know what this period of time that is before us holds for us, but if we are to make the best of life in this year it means this: whatever the experiences may be whether they may be pleasant or unpleasant we will make the best of our opportunities.

There are so many things that can take place, that one needs a living faith in God and a resignation to his will in our lives, to face the future courageously. During this year we may suffer the loss of loved ones, or have business or financial reverses, and lose all our earthly possessions.

Conditions may arise that may separate us from our friends and loved ones and bring upon us severe persecution. It may be that through sickness or accident we may lose sight, or hearing, or be permanently crippled in body, or become mentally unbalanced. Perhaps some grievous disease may come upon us and hasten us to our tombs. We mention these things because it is possible that such things can take place at any time with us. Although it would be a calamity for any of these things to befall us, yet such things present opportunities that we would otherwise not have. The thing to do, is to recognize the fact that any of these things and many others could happen, and prepare as best we can to make the best of any thing that may befall us, remembering that there is a God above that is able to sustain us under all these circumstances.

Then too, there is a bright side to this matter. It is possible that this year might bring to us some of the greatest joys of life. It might be that the Lord would rise us up into some unique sphere of Christian service. With prayer, and faith, and a completely surrendered life, we might be permitted to enter that realm of association with our Maker that ancient men of God enjoyed who "walked with God" and be a blessing to thousands of

our fellowmen. It might be that in these temporal matters we might fall heir to riches or great earthly possessions which we could use to the spreading of the gospel, the saving of souls and the betterment of many poor and needy of our fellow beings. We may be able to form ties of friendship that will enrichen our lives through a long and useful life. Through our sincerity, zeal and courage in the Christian life we may be able to win many precious souls into the fold of Christ; but the greatest of all is, in this year we might see the return of our Lord to the earth to gather his children to the glory world. All of these things are possible, and we should make every preparation to make the best use of these great blessings that might come our way, and especially be prepared to meet the Lord in the air.

As we think along this line of words of the wise man bear heavily upon us. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." (Ec. 12:13-14.)

Selected from the
January 15, 1940
issue of the Bible Monitor

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Howard J. Surbey

No doubt each and every reader of these lines, has received this wish from friends, has heard it and has read it, many times during the last few weeks. Just what did you think of as these words were brought to your attention? What was your anticipation at the thought of being happy? On the other hand, you each no doubt, have sent others this greeting and perhaps expressed to others, many times during the last few weeks. Just what did you mean by the word "Happy"? To what length did you express this wish to those you talked with?

Were you to canvass the list the thoughts which this word "Happy" brought to various people's minds and were you to list the meanings of the ones who expressed this statement to others; no doubt you would have a long list of various states and conditions which were implied. Perhaps we often make statements which may convey thoughts, which we had not meant to express. Also, we may make statements which carry much more meaning, much more emphasis and a stronger effect

than we really had in mind.

Let us turn to the New Testament to see if we can get a holier and more definite understanding, of what this word happy really means. "Thank, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure." Jas. 5:10-11. "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." I Pet. 3:14. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye: for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified." I Pet. 4:14. Here we find the fact that happiness is brought about by clinging to an ideal, in which we have found faith and proven its certainty.

Also, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." John 13:17. This refers to the acts which Christ has requested His followers to do. "I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of

the Jews." Acts 26:2. In this verse Paul expresses his feelings, that he has the liberty and the opportunity to carry out the teachings of Christ and explain to others why he does the things, which he has learned are required of Christ's followers. "Hast thou faith: have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." Rom. 14:22. The things we do and say, are expressions of our aims and attitudes of life. If we act against our conscience or opposite to that which our ideals in life have taught us is right, then we actually condemn others in the eyes of God who knows all things, and this cannot bring happiness.

These verses give us pictures, from God's Holy Word, what it means to be happy. The word used in the Greek, Makarios, which is translated "happy" in these verses, is also translated "blessed" forty-six different times in the New Testament. This is the word "blessed" which is used so many times in Matt. 5:1-11, which should give us further insight just what it means to be happy or blessed. Let us also turn to the Dictionary and see what the English words "happy" and "blessed" mean. Happy: fortunate, successful, blessed,

satisfied, prosperous and harmonious. Blessed: to praise, to make happy, to consecrate to holy purposes. Are these synonyms which convey thoughts and actions which we would desire? What other things would we desire to have in this life?

May we also note the use of the English word "happy" as found, at a few places in the Old Testament. "He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." Prov. 16:20. "He that despiseth his neighbor sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he." Prov. 14:21. "Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord." Psa. 144:15. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding." Prov. 3:13. "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty." Job 5:17. May these few thoughts and these quotations from God's Word make us realize more fully what it means, to receive the comforting wish of "a happy New Year" and what we should mean when we offer others that blessed and joyful future.

Selected from the
January 1, 1960
issue of the Bible Monitor

THE NEW YEAR

Paul R. Myers

It is time to take down the old, soiled, worn, decrepit calendar which has been hanging before us for a year. In its place we hang a new, clean unmarred one. This act signifies the passing of the old year and the ushering in of the new.

We look back and can see many mistakes which we made in 1949. We possibly can see a few achievements which were attained. Certainly, if we are serious in our meditations, we will have to conclude that we could have done much better had we earnestly tried. Whatever are the results, the year has closed and 1949 is history.

It is impossible to change a single decision we made last year. If they were for good, thank God. If they were wrong decisions, we can ask God to forgive and pray for His guidance in the future. Our experiences gained in 1949 should prove profitable to us for the New Year. We should not make the same mistakes again and if we did anything good or profitable, let us continue to build thereon.

In thinking of the New Year, we are reminded of the promise God made that there shall be seasons,

day and night, etc. These events come and go automatically, as far as man is concerned. Yet, we are very responsible creatures and some day must give an account as to our stewardship. We close the old year either profitable or unprofitable for Christ and the Church. If we have faithfully served in His vineyard, continue all the more so the coming year. If we have been unprofitable to Him, let us take inventory of ourselves and correct wherever the loss lies.

Resolutions made at the beginning of a new year are fine, if they are for good, and if after being made, they are not broken. It is commendable to resolve to do good, to live closer to Christ, to preach, teach and live His Word more fully in our individual lives. I believe that pleases God. But so many times we disappoint God by failing to carry out such promises. Remember, the closer we adhere to the Word, the safer we are.

Satan is trying to deceive and is succeeding. Let each one resolve that he is not going to make inroads in our individual lives. If we can accomplish this, he cannot harm our church.

Resolve to live closer, to

defend the Gospel more, to be a better worker in the church, to read His Word more, to pray oftener, and to renew our promises made in the Baptismal waters. If we sincerely from the heart, make

such resolutions, we need not worry what lies ahead in 1950.

Selected from the
January 1, 1950
issue of the Bible Monitor

LOVEST THOU ME MORE THAN THESE

Beulah M. Fitz

This is a very interesting and important question which Jesus put to Peter. I notice that the Bible Study Board has called our attention to the same.

As people read this scripture, different minds think of its meaning in several different ways. One very common view if it is, that Christ was asking Peter if he loved Him (Christ) more than he did the other Apostles. Another view is gathered from the fact that this question was recorded so closely following the miraculous draught of fishes (John 21:6-11), that some think Jesus was asking: "Do you love me more than you love the fishes?"

Both of these ways of thinking carry with them practical lessons. When used as an illustration they teach us not to love our brethren and sisters in the Church more than we do Christ. And again, not to love our occupation and

the results therefrom more than Christ.

Now let us take another interpretation. Jesus was speaking to Peter. The name Peter means rock, stone. Before he was called by Christ, his name was Simon, son of Jonas. It was Jesus who gave him the name Peter. John 1:42, "And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone." Also Matt. 16:18 "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter."

Peter had experienced close association with the Master and loved Him greatly, but sad to say he also had a very good opinion of himself. Before the crucifixion Peter showed his self-assurance when he said, "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." John 13:37. "And again he spake

more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise." Mark 14:31. Also in the garden he was forward to use the sword in defense of his Master.

It is true that the other disciples also desired to be great, as seen in Luke 22:24, "And there was also a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest", yet it is evident that Peter felt in his heart that he would do more for Jesus than anybody else.

Up to this time of Christ's trial, Peter had felt very strong, relying only or mostly upon his own strength, however. Then came the night of the trial. Through the weakness of the flesh, poor Peter denied the Lord three times. "And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." Luke 22:61. When he realized that he had done this awful sin, he felt strangely weak. He no doubt wondered if Christ could ever forgive him. He was very penitent. The word says, "And when he thought thereon, he wept." Mark 14:72. There was no chance for him now even to talk to Christ.

Now again to John 21. This wonderful miraculous person who

had been crucified has arisen from the dead and has made His appearance to the disciples. Jesus addresses Peter by name, "Simon, son of Jonas", thus, to remind him that he had not yet attained to be Peter, the rock. He had at least temporarily lost the name of Peter, and he, himself, realized his unworthiness of the name of Peter.

It is interesting to note that his call to active discipleship followed a miraculous draught of fishes, and that his reinstatement into the apostolic office, also came after another miraculous catch.

Jesus called him "Simon, son of Jonas" each of the three times that He put the question, "Lovest thou me?" Putting the question three times reminds Peter of his denying Christ three times. Love is the foundation of all Christian service.

To ask, "Do you love me?" would indicate that the questioner could not realize any love from the other party.

From the time that Christ told Peter that "upon this rock will I build my Church" and the time Peter had said, "I will lay down my life for thy sake", he no doubt had felt that he loved Christ more than any of the other disciples did. But during the trial

he had fallen from grace and now Christ puts him to a very serious thinking: "Lovest thou me more than these?" that is, more than these other Apostles, who loved Christ too, and who had not denied Him as Peter had.

Taking the foregoing thoughts into consideration, I would understand the question to mean: Do you feel able to say now, Simon, that you have greater love for Me than the other disciples do?" It was a very pressing question. It pierced his heart and brought Peter to the deepest sense of his guilt.

His answers appear similar but there is a very interesting difference, because in the original language there are two words for love. The one means an ordinary sense of love, while the other means a constant deep affection, including something of reverence. The first time Jesus asked, "Lovest thou me more than these?" He used the form of the word love which, in the original meant, *constant, deep affection*. Peter's reply was "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." But he used the other word which would only indicate a very ordinary love. Nor does he dare to say that he even cherishes the lesser affection more than his fellow disciples. Nor is his

yea full of the bold assurance of his former assertions of faithfulness. "Thou knowest", he says to Jesus.

As the question is asked the second time, Jesus omits the words "more than these", for He knows that Peter's trust in self is broken. Jesus was aware that Peter had answered, using the term which expressed the more ordinary kind of love. So, the third time the question is put to Peter, Jesus uses Peter's word love, thus asking him if he has even the ordinary love for Christ. This deeply hurt Peter. The Christ was looking at him. Think how we would feel, as he saw the sad yet gentle face of the Master with His piercing, searching eyes. He knew that those eyes could see his every thought. Every bit of self-confidence left him. Humility has taken its place. He gives himself up completely and turns whole-heartedly to Christ, saying, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

Christ can use the humble, can fill the hungry soul with His Spirit and power. Psalm 51:17, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise."

Selected from the
January 1, 1960
issue of the Bible Monitor

PRECIOUS

D. K. Marks

“Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.” I Pet. 2:7. There are precious things here in this world, things that are very valuable and cost large sums of money. The most precious gift the human race received was Jesus the only Son of God. When the children of Israel were living in the land of Egypt, Moses led them out on the way to the land of Canaan. There were times when Moses was precious to them, other times he was not precious to them, they murmured against him.

Moses prophesied in Deut. 18:15, “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall harken.” The children of Israel lived in the land of Canaan about 1,400 years. In the fullness of time Jesus was born into this world and laid in a manger. The angels came to speak and sing of the precious child, Jesus, to the shepherds. The shepherds went to see and worship Jesus and then spread the news abroad.

Many came to worship Him, bringing presents to Him and His mother, Mary.

The birth of Jesus was not precious to king Herod, he was troubled and intended to take the life of Jesus. The angel of the Lord commanded Joseph to take the child and His mother and flee into Egypt. Later the angel of the Lord told them to return to the land of Israel again.

Jesus was precious to Mary; they took Him to the temple at the feast of the Passover every year to worship. When Jesus was 12 years of age, after the feast of the Passover when His parents went home, He remained at the temple. He asked and answered questions with the doctors of the old law. His parents, supposing He was in the company, traveled a whole day, at evening they discovered that their precious Jesus was not with them, they were filled with sorrow. The next day they journeyed back to Jerusalem seeking Jesus, on the third day they found Him in the temple talking with the learned doctors of the law. Mary was sad, but Jesus told her that He was doing His Heavenly Father’s

business. Jesus became more precious to Mary and all that knew Him.

When Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan, a voice came from Heaven said, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus was precious in the sight of God. Immediately Jesus was led into the wilderness and tempted 40 days and nights, He refused to be a servant of the devil. Jesus became more precious in the sight of God.

Jesus came to the sea of Galilee and saw Peter and John fishing. He said, "follow me", and immediately they followed Jesus. The third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, Jesus and His disciples were there, they were in need. The mother of Jesus told the servants, "Whatever he saith unto you do it." Jesus was precious to her; they all received a blessing by obedience.

Jesus went from city to city teaching and healing the lame, blind, deaf and all manner of incurable diseases of the body. He also healed and cleansed their souls. Jesus was precious to the twelve and all who believed on Him. Peter, in his sermon in Jerusalem, said Jesus was the

only Saviour of the world. Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

After Jesus ascended into Heaven, He still remained precious to Peter. He went out on several missionary journeys preaching and witnessing for Jesus. He wrote the book of first and second Peter. Peter comes with a message, Jesus is the chief cornerstone, elect and precious: unto you which believe He is precious.

We should read the whole chapter of I Pet. 2. The first verse tells what every believer must set aside that Jesus can be precious to them. Then the believer can grow and live spiritually and be a lively stone in the spiritual house where Jesus is the chief corner stone or foundation. We must be a separate people from this dark and sinful world and live the life of Jesus as He taught in His word.

Peter also refers to the disobedient ones, those who do not believe and do not build on Jesus, they will be lost and punished forever. May we all see the need of building, working and living faithful unto the end of life for our precious Jesus, as Peter did.

When Saul of Tarsus heard

and saw the work of Jesus in the apostolic church, he went from city to city to kill and destroy those who believed in their precious Jesus. Jesus was not precious to Saul, when Saul came near to Damascus he learned of the power and love of Jesus. Step by step Saul, who was now called Paul, accepted Jesus as precious in his life, he accepted Jesus for his only spiritual foundation.

I Cor. 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Paul took Jesus for his guide and leader, he followed Him faithfully

unto the end of his life. Paul went on three missionary journeys to teach and preach Jesus. "How He lived and gave the plan of salvation, died on the cross, arose from the grave, taught forty days and ascended up into Heaven, there to live forever." Paul suffered many hardships and persecutions for his precious Jesus. Psa. 116:15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Selected from the
January 1, 1950
issue of the Bible Monitor

THE TARES AMONG THE WHEAT

Reuben Shroyer
Matt. 13:24-30

The lesson shows or pictures before our minds two sowers, two growing crops and two yielded harvests.

Two sowers, "The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept an enemy came and sowed tares." Christ's explanation of this is He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world. Reader, note the statement the field is the world, not the church as some teach. The good seed

are the children of the Kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one. The enemy that sowed them is the devil. First sower, the Son of Man. He is the owner of the field. "Didst not thou sow good seed **in thy** field?" He sowed the field with good seed, the wheat. He made man pure and upright. He created him in His own likeness.

He planted in him holy principles, good desires a **divine** nature. Satan, the second sower. He sowed tares. Christ says, the

enemy that sowed them is the devil. There is an enemy then, and we know who he is, the devil. He sowed the tares, the evil seed. By this we understand the introduction of evil into the hearts of men. God is not the author of evil. "An enemy" says Christ, "hath done this." The wheat only have I sown. While men slept the enemy sowed tares. It is only as men sleep now that the agent of evil can succeed. In proportion to the deadness of human faculties, the drowsiness of the human soul, the non-alertness of human society can evil get the chance to spread. On earth we have both the tares and the wheat; every where in the world may be seen the vicious and the good, the vile and the holy, the enemies and loyal servants of God. The mixture everywhere prevails. God allows it, for why, is not for us to determine, but He will overrule it to His glory.

Two yielded harvests. The proprietor said "let the two harvests grow together" for a time. He would not trust his servants to make a separation. "Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares ye root up also the wheat with them." For men to discriminate between good and bad is not always an easy matter. Don't forget, dear

reader, the field is the world. We have no authority to destroy the bad. God must have His own purposes in allowing the wicked to live. He thus exhibits His long suffering, gives men time for repentance. But there is a maturity, a harvest time for good and for evil. The reapers are the angels, beings free from liability to make a mistake. There will be absolutely no mistake made, no erring of discrimination. (See Matt. 15:31; 2 Thess. 1:7, Rev. 14:15). The treatment of the evil; bind them in bundles to burn them, in bundles implies that the wicked belong together. Even now it is said birds of the feather flock together. The wicked will be grouped together. They have grouped themselves in bundles, each will go to his own place. The treatment of the righteous: "But gather the wheat into my barn." "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:43.) We shall be without spot or wrinkle. His servants shall serve Him. They shall shine forever and ever. Oh, what a glorious prospect that!

Selected from the
January 1, 1930
issue of the Bible Monitor

RENUNCIATION

—*Sarah Carter Lewis*

I loved my Saviour gratefully,
Because He first loved me,
Continually I thanked Him for
His death which set me free;

The devil said, "He'll fill your life
With misery and woe,
You can't do what you want to do,
Nor go where you would go."

And others I would sometimes tell
Of how He loved them so.
I did my "tithing" cheerfully,
And tried the Word to sow:

"What if I can't?" I thought, "My Lord
Has earned the right to be
My guide through life; can I not trust
The Man who died for me?"

But there was something lacking, and
I knew it in my heart.
One day I came across a verse
Which made the tear drops start;

I'll give up everything I own,
Or ever hope to have;
Accept me now, I pray Thee, Lord,
Make me Thy true bond-slave."

It said, our bodies to the Lord
A sacrifice should be.
And as I sat and read His Word,
He seemed to speak to me.

I had desires, ambitions, hopes,
Which meant so much to me;
I'd planned my course, "Thou knowest, Lord,
Just what I'd hoped to be;

"I've bought thy body with my blood
And it is mine," said He;
"I'd use it for My glory, wouldst
Thou keep it back from Me?"

But Thou hast conquered. Everything
I on the altar lay,
If my poor life can be of use,
Accept it Lord, I pray."

I hesitated for a time,
With shame I tell it now,
I feared to take upon my lips
That solemn, final vow.

How can I tell the joy and peace
Which o'er me then did roll;
Or how the Holy Spirit took
Possession of my soul.

I found a peace which could exist
In sunshine, or in rain,
A joy which flooded all my soul,
E'en in the midst of pain.

And when I stand before Thee, Lord,
All in Thy beauty dressed,
I know I'll see in everything,
Just how Thy way was best."

Selected from the
January 15, 1950
issue of the Bible Monitor

OBITUARY

HAROLD W. LONG

Harold W. Long of 1740 West Main Street, Ephrata, Pennsylvania passed away on August 24, 2019. He was the husband of Dorothy Lou (Weidman) Long. They would have been married forty-seven years on October 14, 2019.

Harold was the son of the late Brother Homer and Sister Frances Long. He was a 1969 graduate of Lampeter-Strasburg High School. He did carpenter work for several years and later worked as a service technician for John Weidman and Sons for over forty years of which he was a part owner.

Harold served as a deacon in the Conservative Baptist Brethren Church for twenty-eight years and was a Sunday School teacher for many years. He leaves behind his wife, Lu, daughter Hollie and son Kerry and three grandchildren. He was predeceased by a still born son in June 1976.

Funeral services were held August 30, 2019 at the Lititz Dunkard Brethren Church. Brother Tim Alspaugh and Brother David Hill were in charge of the services. Burial was in the Mohler's Church of the Brethren Cemetery, Ephrata, Pennsylvania.

Thanks for the cards and prayers.

Sister Lu Long

NEWS ITEMS

NOTICE

The Editor seeks the help of each Presiding Elder, or his designate, to provide him with information concerning the officials and scheduled events of their respective congregations. This material will appear in the February 2020 issue as a source of information for the Brotherhood. Contact the Editor: by mail at 1138 E 12th Street, Beaumont, CA 92223; by phone at 951-845-6231; by text at 951-206-9180, or by email at miltoncook1943@gmail.com.

Thank you, Brother Milton Cook.

GENERAL CONFERENCE 2020

2020 General Conference will be held June 6 through June 10 at Roxbury Holiness Campgrounds located at 13763 Cumberland Hwy, Orrstown, Pennsylvania 17244.

Please bring your own sheets and pillowcases. There is plenty of room for campers and trailers.

When making reservations please state date of arrival, approximate time of arrival, number of people in party, and approximate time of departure. The campground will be available for occupancy Friday afternoon, June 5. The phone number of the campgrounds is 717-532-2208.

Please send e-mail, text, or phone reservations to:

Duane and Tena Priest

51 Hillside Ave.

Manheim, PA 17545

505-771-2974

Duaneandtena3@icloud.com

Conference Lodging Committee

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR FEBRUARY 2020

February 2 – Faith Finds A Way – Luke 5:17-39

1. What is significant about Jesus forgiving the man's sins before healing his body?

2. Is there any heart too hard for the Spirit and grace of God to work on?

3. When is it easier to fast? Why?

February 9 – The Lord of the Sabbath – Luke 6:1-26

1. How have you made Jesus, Lord of your Sabbath?

2. What does it mean to be poor?

3. How have the rich received their consolation?

February 16 – Living the Kingdom Life – Luke 6:27-49

1. How do you bless others?

2. Can we as Christians “out give” our Heavenly Father?

3. Why is it important to have a strong foundation in our spiritual life?

February 23 – Is Jesus the Messiah? – Luke 7:1-23

1. Do you have compassion for those around you, who are sick?

2. How do rumors of Christians today compare with the rumors of Jesus in verses 16 and 17?

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