

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.

THINGS THAT MAKE HAPPINESS

Not what we have, but what we use;
Not what we see, but what we choose.
These are the things, that mar or bless
The sum of human happiness.

The things nearby, not things afar;
Not what we seem, but what we are.
These are the things that make or break,
That gives the heart its joy or ache.

Not what seems fair, but what is true;
Not as we dream, but the good we do.
These are the things that shine like gems,
Like stars in fortune's diadems.

Not what we take, but what we give;
Not as we pray, but as we live.
These are the things that build for peace,
Both now and after time shall cease.

—Anonymous

APPRECIATION

Appreciation has many differing forms that we can enjoy. We appreciate a gift or service given to us when we are in need. We enjoy many deep emotions, whether love, beauty, or sentimentalism. We view various natural scenes that produces the thrill of sight and sound. We may be overwhelmed with the beauty of nature, the birth of a baby, the sharing of concern, or the sight of a historical object. Each of these views is an appreciation of something that is greater than our own existence. In each of these situations our appreciation should be expressed toward God for His goodness, care, and love as He shares with us.

We appreciate the blessings shown to us by God. Sometimes God shares with us through

individuals or groups who are motivated by His Spirit to give. Paul writes often of thankfulness. He expressed his thankfulness for God's grace although he had persecuted the church. He urged the Gentile believers to be thankful for God's favor. These Gentile believers had not been accustomed to showing thankfulness to their gods, because they had lived in fear of those gods rather than in thankfulness. They only expected ill will from their gods, not that which they should appreciate.

Christians should realize the mercy and grace that God has shown to us. We were worthy of the worst forms of misery and punishment that could be devised, but instead He has shared with us His Son as our redeemer. As recipients of His grace and mercy,

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we should be very thankful. In our training as children, we are taught to say “please” and “thank you”. That social custom can be hollow if there is no accompanying praise and thankfulness. Our attitudes can make or break our social relationships. These simple words speak of us as needy people. We often need His blessings, whether material, physical or spiritual, that bring joy, health, and prosperity into our lives.

“Please” acknowledges our need and the one who can supply the benefit that we need. We appeal for that needed help. It behooves us in humility to say, “thank you” for the granted blessing.

As a child of God, we should appreciate not only the gift of His Son as our Savior and Redeemer. We should appreciate His Word that teaches us about His Son and our responsibilities to serve and follow Him. God has a higher goal for each believer than that believer has for himself. God desires a level of conscious service that honors Him and is spiritually profitable for believers.

“Appreciation” has other meanings beyond “being thankful”. In financial terms, appreciation is the gain made on invested funds. It is a measure of growth.

Appreciation in a Christian’s

life means a continual growing. The Christian life should not be stagnant. Stagnant water is sickly, developing organisms that poison living creatures in a pond. Christians who are not growing, who are not involved in the teaching, learning, or serving areas of the family of God, are stagnant. Christians who are not growing, not only impede their own progress, but may affect the growth of others.

A good financial investment will produce funds to invest or to provide the capital to acquire a significant item. Investing our lives in Christian service provides the opportunity to grow the base of believers. It also can provide the teaching and study skills so others can be motivated to grow. The time spent in Bible study, teaching, witnessing, helping, and counselling others will bring growth in the lives of those active and those affected by it.

Appreciation also contains the thought of being loved. When love is shown and shared, it appreciates. That appreciation shows love for others and brings growth into their Christian living. Love appreciates the qualities of others. It shares an appreciation for forgiveness and reconciliation that deepens love even when

perfection is unrealized. Our appreciation should not only be toward God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, but for those who are a part of our lives, even when they fail. God appreciates us in our weaknesses, so we should appreciate others who are, like us, less than perfect.

Appreciation gives us an opportunity to grow and prepares our hearts to be thankful for

the multiple blessings that God shares with us. No one has been given as much as a Christian has received, so no one should be more appreciative than a Christian.

Are you an appreciative, thankful Christian? Are you an appreciative, growing Christian? Are you an appreciative, loving Christian?

M. C. Cook

TRUE FREEDOM

The most iconic emblem of liberty, The Statue of Liberty, stands in the New York harbor. She has a broken set of shackles around her feet symbolizing her escape from tyranny to freedom, her one foot is raised as if she is continually on the move, forever bringing freedom to others. She holds a table of law, bringing justice and peace, the seven points on her crown represents a sunburst sharing enlightenment and reason with the world and most significant Her torch and flame signify truth and justice enlightening the world. The saying on the bottom says, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free." It seems that all humans, no matter where you find them long to be free.

An immigrant, sailing for weeks or months, was greeted by her as a sign that their journey was almost complete. Little did they know that soon they would disembark onto Ellis Island, there to wait in long lines to be looked over for sickness, mental illness, lack of paperwork or lack of money. If they did not cut it for some reason, they were detained or even sent home. Those that made it were then allowed to enter the new world, a world of freedom, adventure, and possible fortune.

I believe that we should remember and thank God every day for the freedoms that this land has offered to us. We should be forever grateful for the liberties that come to us. Never should we take them for granted. However

wonderful and great they are, I would suggest to you, that true liberty can only come from Jesus and His redemptive work He performed on the cross and through His resurrection.

Once a sinner has found the cross and has humbly asked God for forgiveness, he is not detained or sent back to where he came from. Jesus welcomes him, heals his "sickness", "mental illness", "broken relationships" and even better, makes him an adopted son of God, a new citizen of a higher and better kingdom. That does not guarantee a life of ease, but to the faithful an eternal home in Heaven. There are many examples of those who did not have physical freedom, in fact they were prisoners but with Jesus and through Him, their spirits were free. Acts 16:24-25, "Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them." Physical affliction can have the same effect as a real prison cell.

John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jesus was not talking about physical freedom

but spiritual freedom. In John 14:6, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Here Jesus makes it plain that since He is the truth and the truth shall make us free, and no man comes to the Father but by Him that true freedom comes from the Father.

I think we should clarify the freedom that I am talking about. Freedom in Christ is freedom from the old law, freedom from guilt, freedom from fear, freedom from eternal death, and so forth. It is not however freedom from responsibility, or freedom from pain, suffering or persecution. Galatians 5:1, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Paul was talking about the bondage of the old law. The old law was works based. Freedom in Christ brings us out of that and into the new covenant, which is salvation, by grace through faith, not of works. With the new covenant, God asks of us a relationship. A relationship, with obedience, driven by love and thankfulness for what He has delivered us from. No more covering from the blood of bulls

and goats but a washing by the blood of Jesus.

Freedom in its purest form is found by kneeling at the foot of the cross, dying to self, and asking Jesus to be Lord of our lives. Dying to self means to take our will, our way, and our desires, handing them to Jesus and asking

that a piece of Him and His Spirit come and reside in us. Not only to reside in us, but to take total and complete control of our mind, will and emotions. Then and only then can one find True Freedom.

Brother Joe Cover
Dallas Center, IA

THE FOUNDATION OF TRUE HOPE

Many people boast in the hope they have for the future. Listening to them, it is hard to understand the basis of that hope and how they think they will ever get there.

Sometimes naivety cons us into believing something that has no roots, whatsoever.

It is always good to have some hope. But if that hope is not grounded in reality, it will only end up in complete disaster and often depression.

I want to encourage people to have hope, but I want that hope built on something real and not imaginary. Some people will say you can be anything you want to be. Although it sounds good, it is not reality. History reveals to us that mankind has well-established limits. There is a line set and it is not a crossover.

I like the story of Abram and Sara, who were well past the

childbearing stage of life. They certainly wanted a son and hoped for a son, but the reality of that faded with each passing year until hope of the son had simply vanished.

Throughout the years, I have discovered that God sometimes allows me to get beyond the possibility of my hope for me to trust him and what he has. With Abram, it was just like that.

When Abram and Sara were beyond the fulfillment of that hope, then God stepped in to challenge their faith.

It is interesting in that story that they had no reason to hope for a son; all they could do at the time was trust God. Abram had come to the place of having a right understanding of "Thus saith the Lord." The circumstances, as he learned, have no bearing upon hope if he was trusting in God.

I think Abram had come to the point that I like to think of. When we can handle our situation, it probably is not where God wants us to be. God delights for us to step out in faith and trust him when there is no reason to believe it.

The foundation of my hope is in my relationship with God. As my relationship with God grows, develops, and matures, my hope grows in proportion. Real hope is simply looking forward, based on my current relationship with God.

We sometimes define hope within the context of our human limitations. Consequently, our hopes are far short of God's delightful expectation for us. God is not as interested in us, showing him our strength as he is in showing us his strength and faithfulness. As little children, we try to impress God, but God cannot be impressed with our weakness that we assume is our strength.

I like to think of hope as Having Our Perspective Eternal. That says it for me. I must define my hope within the context of God's eternal grace and love.

When I limit my life and expectation to this world, I fall short of everything that God has put into my life. When I became a Christian, I was "born again" and had a new life within me that transcends this

world and into the next world. I am living for the world to come.

There are many things about my hope that I do not quite understand. But if I know God and develop an intimate relationship with him, my hope will expand beyond my limitations or expectations.

Certainly, Abram was hoping for a son, but he only wished for a son by the time he had reached his present age. The difference between hope and wish is all the difference in the world. Hope is for sure, whereas wishing is not so certain, a fading hope.

In Abram's relationship with God's at this point, God was leading him to a new respect of hope. A personal encounter with God rekindled his hope.

If my hope is in God, I need a constant refreshment of that hope and intimate fellowship with him. This is what is lacking in many people's lives today. Perhaps their hope is God-centered, but they have drifted from that personal, intimate relationship with God that keeps that hope alive and fresh somewhere along the line.

One important aspect of keeping my hope alive and fresh is the responsibility I must show the next generation this amazing God aspect. When God works in my life and fulfills his hope in me, I become

an example of what God can do for other people. This generation needs to see how God really works in a human heart, creating hope that the enemy can never destroy.

Disappointments, failures, and discouragement are always going to be part and parcel of the Christian experience. Those who think no Christian ever gets to that point has not really lived the

Christian life. The thing that raises me above all of this is a renewed hope in God.

My worst failure is a platform upon which God can renew my hope. If I can handle it, why do I really need God?

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PHIL'S PONDERINGS

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

August 1 – Revelation 7:1-17

What do you notice about the listing of the twelve tribes?

What does one hundred forty-four thousand symbolize?

For what purpose are the 144,000 sealed? Ephesians 1:13,14.

Why are they sealed on their foreheads?

What comparisons can we make between the twelve tribes of Israel and those wearing white robes?

What did those wearing white robes experience in the great tribulation?

Commentary: Is God's seal stamped upon your forehead? If there is, it is not yet visible to our human eye except in this regard: we are most satisfied with God as we respond as "servants of God" for His glory. It is not immediately apparent from this passage what will be the service these one hundred and forty-four thousand servants are called to. It seems reasonable to assume that they are the first fruits of God's harvest. Once sealed they are prepared to serve during the great tribulation, even unto death, a much greater harvest of those from every nation, tribes, tongues, and peoples who wash white their sin-stained robes in the blood of the lamb.

August 8 – Revelation 8:1-13

What are some possible reasons for the half hour of silence in heaven?

What prayers would you offer at this point?

What purpose do the noises, thunderings, lightnings, and world-wide quake serve?

What similarity do the four seals and four trumpets serve?

What response would you have to the message of the angel in verse 13?

What commonality do the four trumpets share?

Commentary: News highlights during the Tribulation. The price of lumber has skyrocketed due to so many forest fires bringing the construction industry to a halt. Beef farmers are going out of business due to hay shortages. The Cruise Ship industry has cancelled all cruises due to an unexplainable amount of blood in the oceans. Water bottling companies cannot keep up with the demand for potable water while riots occur at many grocery outlets. Scientists meet to ponder the latest astronomical disasters and how this will impact global weather patterns. Church bombings reach a new all-time high this week. As usual God is just not all that newsworthy.

August 15 – Revelation 9:1-12

What noticeable difference occurs with the fifth trumpet from the four previous?

What does the star falling from heaven to the earth likely symbolize?

What does Abaddon or Apollyon mean?

Is there a difference between Hades and the Bottomless pit?

What is the significance of 5 months?

Commentary: I am reasonably certain that all of us have stumbled over various scriptures that we are at a loss to give any good explanation. But while the purpose of this passage seems elusive there are still hints as to its overall meaning. The star fallen from heaven seems reminiscent of Jesus' description of Satan's fall from heaven. But there is no effort to portray this as the same event. Its similarity suggests evil results. Jesus has the keys of Hades and Death. The star (perhaps an angelic being) has the keys to the bottomless pit. There is no hint that Jesus has loaned out His keys. So, it seems likely that the bottomless pit is not Hades. Nor are its inhabitants human. It is a super race of locusts being released causing much affliction to humans but not able to harm those who have God's seal upon their foreheads. Finally, and you may think this strange, but God's mercy is evident. The evil that God allows always serves a greater purpose. Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead are our best reminder of this truth. The locust swarm coming out of the bottomless pit is only given five months to carry out its mission and can do no harm to those sealed as mentioned previously. While God allows, He also restrains. Apart from God's mercy none of us has any hope to live joyfully beyond these brief moments of life we now live.

August 22 – Revelation 9:13-10:7

Whose voice is heard in verse 14?

Since the four angels were prepared for their mission, what does this suggest about God?

Why does John tell us that he had heard the number of the horsemen?

Since the rest of mankind did not repent, even though a third of them died, what do we learn about the nature of evil?

Commentary: As we study these portions of Revelation there is a certain unreality that begins to cause our minds to go numb. The events as described are difficult to process and make sense of both naturally and supernaturally. Whether figuratively or literally the carnage becomes overwhelming to the reality so far removed from our own. But part of our difficulty is fathoming these events is our humanity refusing to come to grips with the wrath of God. In some small way we refuse to see or hear

God's judgment implicit upon our own lives as it is explicit in the lives of those who refuse to repent. If we are to gain a deeper appreciation for the book of Revelation, we must repent of the hardness of our own hearts that keeps us from recognizing that apart from Christ we are as deserving of wrath as those who continue in their sins despite the severity of God's righteous judgment upon the earth.

August 29 – Revelation 10:8-11:10

What in our own lives tastes sweet but is bitter in our stomachs?

Does verse 11 give us any hint of what is in the little book?

What do the numbers three and a half, forty-two months, and one thousand two hundred and sixty days correspond to in God's numerical value system?

Who do the two witnesses remind us of?

What is the name of the great city?

Commentary: Sometimes I am left to simply speculate about what I have read. Why does the little book taste sweet as honey but is bitter in the stomach? Why does the angel tell John that he must prophesy again...? I am reminded of Jeremiah's lament over his many detractors who mocked him repeatedly. He tried not to open his mouth, but God's word was like a fire in his bones. A few verses later in our text we are introduced to the two witnesses. They are prophets like Moses and Elijah in their prophetic powers. They are under constant attack and finally after three and a half years they are killed, and the peoples of the earth rejoice in their deaths. The thread of prophetic proclamation seems to tie these together. God's Word can be so sweet in our mouths but the results of the spoken word often stirs up anger and resentment that can result in violence in multiple ways. We cannot withhold the truth. The bitter and the sweet walk hand in hand. When during such controversy we must rely upon the might of God's Spirit to strengthen our resolve and devotion so that we can speak boldly as we ought to speak. (Eph. 3:16, 6:20)

Brother Phil Franklin
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MUDDY BOOTS

“Freely ye have received, freely give.” Matthew 10:8

It was mid 1800’s Scotland. Early fall was usually the start of Revivals in this beautiful farm country, but this year religious fervor started them earlier.

Seamus was busy cutting hay with an old scythe, which he would stop and sharpen with a stone every half-hour or so. It was tedious work, but fresh air, sunshine, and strong muscles were the benefits. He looked forward to revival at the little chapel he attended, but he was often disappointed in the high-toned monologues that the preachers brought with them, often saying little about Our Blessed Savior. Seamus had been studying in Matthew concerning Jesus sending out the disciples. He paid special attention to what Jesus required of them, and their mission. He knew God has a special work for him to do, but he did not know what it was. He also knew that God had a message for him. How would he know? He had some praying to do.

Revival consisted of two to three weeks, with a different preacher each night. Seamus concluded that somewhere in this meeting held the key to his understanding. He needed to have

his faith bolstered, and only God could do that. Jesus said, “Follow me”, and the men that did so walked by faith, often not knowing the outcome.

The first night came. The brethren gathered an hour before to pray. The preacher walked up the aisle at the end of the last hymn. He wore a brand-new suit. He was well groomed, and his footwear gleamed. His preaching had volume but no authority. It was well written but without substance. After he was done, he got many compliments about how good the message was. The crowd was delighted, but Seamus was disappointed. “Tell me about Jesus”, he thought as he walked home. He never said too much to the people at church. They seemed higher class than he was. Many avoided him. Tomorrow was another day.

The second night was a carbon copy of the first. The preacher was fancy in dress and demeanor. Everything he wore was new. He came in at the last possible second. His message was as stale as week old bread. The crowd loved it. At the end of the service, when greeting the preacher at the door, Seamus was rushed out as if he had the plague.

The third night was a little different. When the brethren gathered before hand to pray, the preacher was right there. He prayed earnestly and sang earnestly. His dress was plain and ordinary and was worn in spots. His boots had a little dried mud on them. He had to walk to church, just like Seamus. His message was anointed of God, his eyes moist with tears for the lost. It hit home to Seamus. This is what he prayed for. The revival had begun.

Author's note: Although we are told in scripture not to judge by clothes and class, we see that soldiers wear a uniform to indicate their rank and which army they are from. Seamus saw a compliment between the clothes and the message. The saints need to be careful in this day because worldling and scriptural truth often mix, causing confusion. Do not let this happen to you.

Brother Lynn H. Miller
Mohler's Congregation

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Rudy Cover

Luke 10:25-37

Once while Jesus was speaking to the people, a lawyer stood up to tempt Him. Many times, the scribes and Pharisees had tried to trick Jesus into saying something that would cause Him to be arrested. The lawyer asked Jesus, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

This is a question which everyone should be interested in. We would all like to live forever, but what can we do to bring it about? Jesus said, "What is written in the law?" The lawyer answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,

and with all my strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."

This lawyer knew his Bible because Jesus said, "Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." So far, the lawyer had not caused Jesus to say anything wrong. This man felt he was doing things just about right, but he wanted to justify himself before Jesus. The scribes, Pharisees and lawyers were a proud, self-righteous people who thought themselves above helping anyone who was poor or of a lower class than themselves.

Jesus knew exactly how this man lived – just like He knows all about you and me. Jesus told the lawyer about a man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. The road between these two cities went through some rough country. Many times, people were robbed along this road and that is what happened to this man. As he was going along, he was met by thieves which stripped him of his clothing and beat him up, leaving him wounded and half dead.

This road was traveled by a good many people and it was not long till a priest came along. The priests were supposed to help people and be good to them, but this man had other things to do and when he saw the wounded man he passed by on the other side of the road. Maybe he thought he might get some blood on his clothes. Anyway, he could not be bothered.

Next there was a Levite who came and looked at the helpless man and he, too, passed by on the other side. A Levite was one who helped in the temple service, and you would surely think this man would have stopped.

The next one who came by was a Samaritan. He was a man who was only partly Jewish. The Samaritans were despised by

the Jews and were not allowed to worship in their Temple. Jesus said that when this man saw the one who was robbed, he felt sorry for him, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine. The wine was for cleansing and the oil for healing. Then he set the man on his own beast and took him to an inn. He gave the innkeeper some money and told him to take care of the man and whatever more it cost he would pay when he came that way again.

Jesus then asked the lawyer, “Which now of these three was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves.” The lawyer said, “He that showed mercy on him.” Then said Jesus, “Go, and do likewise.”

I can imagine that the lawyer had more than he bargained for. I am sure he was not used to helping those who were down and out. Neither were the Pharisees and scribes. Jesus said the Samaritan, whom the Jews despised, was the one who showed mercy rather than the priest or Levite.

Can we show mercy unto those who need help? Jesus wants us to be good neighbors to those about us.

Selected from the
February 15, 1981
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ELIJAH AND THE FIRE

A.W. Tozer

“And Elijah came to all the people, and said, How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him, but if Baal, follow him. But the people answered him not a word.” 1 Kings 18:21

This chapter covers a low period in Israel’s history when the nation should have been committed to the highest righteousness in personal living and conduct and the purest worship of the Most High God. In spite of God’s covenant and His giving of the law and privileges, their lives demonstrated a continual and constant controversy going on between them and God. The chief blame belonged to someone I call the Sidonian vampire, Jezebel.

Jezebel was the wife of Ahab, the king of Israel. He wasn’t much of a king, really, but he filled the place for a time. His wife was not Jewish. She was the daughter of the king of Sidon, and thus she was a Sidonian and a Baalite, someone who worshipped Baal. Ahab was a Jew and was supposed to be a worshiper of Jehovah, the great God, and I Am, that I Am. Even though the

Baalites were set against the Most High God, Ahab apparently wanted a wife from the royal family of Sidon, so he picked this good-looking Jezebel and married her.

The worship of Baal involved cruel and immoral rituals. And Jezebel was the evangelist of the hour. Not for Jehovah or decency and righteousness, but for Baal and evil.

All this led to a moral dilemma for Israel. Here was the royal family, a Hebrew with his wife, a Sidonian. The king was committed, at least nominally, to the worship of Jehovah, and his queen was committed positively to the worship of Baal.

This reminds me of a passage of Scripture that is very mysterious. There’s much to say about it, though I must say it may lead to being accused of being a mystic. The verse (John 1:9) says Christ was the true Light, giving light to every man that comes into the world. So even the man or woman who has never heard of the Bible, God, or the gospel, nor anything having to do with revealed religion, still has more light than we imagine.

For every person has been, in some measure, illuminated by “the true Light” so that they know something of what is right and wrong.

If you’re worrying about crooked politicians and movie actresses with five husbands, change it around and thank God for the good people you know. Sometime when you’re feeling real mean, when you just feel emotional as if you were not a Christian at all, your faith is holding, and you really do know who you are. Your anchor holds in the storms of life, but if there are times when nothing seems right, get down on your knees and then on a piece of paper write down the names of the good people you know. Be grateful to God for the ability to appreciate them.

Israel should have known right and wrong by the deep wisdom that lights up every man. God’s people also had access to divine revelation, the Holy Scriptures, which nobody else had. Even though they should have known what was right, who to worship, how they should live, Jezebel set the standard for morality and worship. However, she chose to dress and live, others followed her ways. They also worshiped the way she

worshiped, because the people were too weak and cowardly to obey God, and they found it easier to follow what was in vogue. That’s always the easiest thing.

If you’re going to be a Christian, you’re going to have to learn to listen to the voice of God and heed the sound of an inaudible drum. There are people marching all together in another parade, and a world marching to the world’s music is going the wrong direction.

We’re going to have to decide whether this religion business is of God, whether God’s in this, whether the Bible is real, whether hell is hell and heaven is heaven, or whether we can just follow what’s in vogue and be like everybody else. You’re going to have to make up your mind.

As I said, Israel was in a dilemma, and, of course, nobody’s at rest when they’re in that condition because deep down people know when they are following a band or parade that isn’t going to heaven. They know they’re being cheated, robbed of something very precious, and it worries them. A man knows he’s dishonoring his soul, and he’s deeply ashamed until he covers it up with amusements. He knows

he's violating the holy laws of God and it makes him afraid, but of course, the effect will depend upon the degree of light.

Will we worship Baal or Jehovah? If Baal, 1 Kings 18:21 applies: "How long will you falter between two opinions?"

I say the religion of our day is the religion of Baal. It is a religion that will let you get away with anything, if you just talk about love and the unity of mankind and the brotherhood of the world. If you just talk nice and sound pious, you can do just about anything; the sky's the limit. And there's no morality, no righteousness, no godliness required, just live any way you want, provided that in the end you say, "Well, we're all going the same way, we're just going by different roads." It sounds so very spiritual, but it's just the way the Baalite lady Jezebel talked.

She told them, "Now, you Jews, don't you know that Baal has something to be said in his favor too." Of course! They have sex orgies and rites of iniquity to worship him, but that's all right. That's our way of looking at things.

What does Baal offer? What does the chief shallow religious world offer? They offer a few things. They offer the customary

fun and conformity. If you do it, if you conform and go along with the crowd, they had to have it. But Jehovah, He called you to the good, hard way; the good, hard way with its present cost and its eternal compensation. What has Baal to offer? What has the world to offer? Will we surrender to the world? What has it really to offer? It would lead you to think it has a great deal to offer, but how utterly helpless it is when tragedy strikes.

A trimmed-down gospel never saved a soul. A trimmed-down, diluted, edited religion is not the religion that Christ died to establish. And the heaven over yonder is not filled full of weaklings who had to have somebody to go along and help them over the rough spots. It is full of people – soldiers and the martyr and the dreamer and the prophet and the rule followers – who loved God and loved their generation and lived and died having lived a good life, a hard life. We've got to make up our minds. Are we going to go the way the world goes? Jezebel will see to that. What are we going to do about it?

Baal has a lot to offer; we might as well admit it. I've heard the preachers talk about how

burdened down men are with sin, picturing them with great weights on their backs and preachers say there's no pleasure in sin. Of course, sin has pleasure, but you've got to break with it and follow Jehovah. The worse the country is, the worse the state of society, the harder it is to break and the more it is going to cost you to break from sin's pleasure.

Make up your mind. Don't be in the middle because you're neither hot nor cold. God will spew you out of His mouth. The only place in the Bible where God gets sick is when He faces up to people who can't make up their mind about whether to serve God or Baal. I believe that God has more respect for a Baalite down on his knees before a sex alter than He does for the fellow caught in the middle who is afraid to worship God, trembling in the middle between right and wrong.

Does that describe you? God says it makes Him sick, and He spews you out of His mouth.

If Jehovah is God and Jesus Christ did indeed say, "Come and take up your cross and follow me," there will be a judgment. God is to judge every person's heart according to their thoughts and according to their deeds. With Baal, you've had your fun,

but the day is coming to take your medicine. Every time you're led astray, remember the person that leads you astray really leaves you in the lurch.

When Judas Iscariot betrayed Christ, Judas was deserted by the people to whom he had sold Christ. With a spasm of conscience, Judas went back to the priests and said, "Here take the money." But they turned coldly away and said, "What is that to us?" It's always like that – people will lead you astray and then leave you in the end.

But thank God for the one named Jesus, who leads us on the right path and never leaves us.

The Baalites had their fun, but they couldn't be cleansed inside. You're going to die someday, and I trust you want to die with a clean conscience. How do you do that? The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses you from all sin. So, if Baal is your god, serve him, but he'll never forgive your sins, never cleanse you within. Want somebody who can direct you and lead you through that cleansing process? Baal can't do it. Baal can have a big-time Saturday night, but he will leave you with a frightful hangover Sunday morning. Baal just can't help you through in the end.

I always pray and look to God. Sometimes I've blundered, but I keep going to Him. I do not run around asking advice from people who don't know any more about Him than I do. The Scriptures say God's name shall be Counselor. Jesus Christ, the Lord, leads the blind by the way they don't know. He guides them in paths where they have not been. He makes the darkness light before them, when they can't think straight. He does all this.

If you choose Baal, if you choose anything other than the true God, you go without a counselor, an advocate. If you choose Baal, you go without anybody to direct your way. If you choose the world, you go without cleansing and forgiveness.

Then there's the hereafter. I like to think about the here-after. Of course, we want something in the by-and-by. It is a complete fool who lives his life out to the end not knowing what's out there. I want to know what's out there.

Good people live in expectation of the world to come. Nobody's going to shame me because I believe in God, the Father Almighty. I also believe in His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,

and I believe in the Holy Ghost and the forgiveness of sin and life everlasting.

But Baal doesn't have it. The world out there doesn't have it. That slick world that comes into your home by TV doesn't have it. And that theater doesn't have it. They don't have it out there, brother. Only Jesus has it. "No one comes to the Father except through Me."

So, if you want forgiveness of sin, inward cleansing, the power to direct your life and the advocate God for you above, a counselor to take you through, peace at last, and a place in the Father's house, I recommend Jesus Christ, now.

Our story in 1 Kings 18 ends with the Baalites calling out to their god, but no answer came. They prayed all day and cut themselves all day, but still nothing happened. Then Elijah prayed to the Most High God, and in no time, fire came down. God confirmed Elijah's faith and gave witness to his obedience. And that's what God will do for you.

Chapter 18 of the book,
The Fire of God's Presence.

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Editor, James L. Snyder

SOWING AND REAPING

A G. Fahnestock

Paul says to the Galatians “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Gal. 6:7. Any boy or girl that is familiar with sowing and reaping knows, that if we sow wheat, we cannot expect to harvest corn. Why did Paul have need to say to the Galatians, to adults, to such who profess to know God, “Be not deceived”? Have they overestimated the mercy of God, thinking that they can do practically as they please and the Lord will forgive them? It seems in our day and age there are many who think so.

The apostle Paul also says, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth.” Gal. 3:1. To Titus, Paul wrote, “For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake.” (The object of gain) Tit. 1:10-11. To the Galatians he writes, “If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” Gal. 5:15.

In the second clause of the text, Paul writes, “God is not mocked.” This seems to tell me

that they were conscious of what they were doing. I fear this is the case too often today. It is important that we give serious heed to Paul’s warning, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” Jesus when here, made known to us that many shall be called but few shall be chosen. There is a cause for this, and the blame cannot be put upon God, nor upon Christ, neither upon someone else, it is up to the individual.

About twenty-five years ago I spoke to a man (who worked in a hardware store), he knew our doctrine and knew the Bible fairly well but was not willing to observe some of the ordinances and commandments. This man wanted to argue with me, saying that it was not necessary to be baptized by immersion, neither was it necessary to wash feet and if a war was declared it is our duty to go and fight for our Country, etc. Said he, “God would not be a merciful God, if He would demand of us that we keep all the commandments and ordinances precisely as He says.” He followed this by saying, “I’d rather go to hell than be with such an unmerciful God.” This man’s health was good, as far as I know and by what others told me; but within two days after making

the above statements, he dropped over and was found dead. He belonged to a church and claimed to be a Christian.

The apostle Paul, through his experience, was in a position to know that, whatsoever we sow that shall we also reap. Let us notice: Paul helped in the stoning of Stephen, Acts 7:58-59. Paul was stoned and they drew him out of the city and supposed that he was dead, Acts 14:9. Paul beat the followers of Christ, Acts 22:19. He was beaten, Acts 16:22-23. Paul persecuted the church, Acts 22:4 and Gal. 1:13. Paul was persecuted, 2 Tim. 3:10-12. Paul put men and women in prison, Acts 8:3. He was imprisoned, Acts 16:23 and 2 Cor. 11:23-31. No wonder he wrote to the Galatian brethren, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Paul in ignorance and with a pure conscience (because of his former teaching) did these things and had to suffer for it. Do you suppose that people in our day, who know better will escape?

God said to Ananias, "I shall shew him (Paul) how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Acts 9:16. Paul saw his error and gladly suffered these things for Christ's sake, looking forward to the crown awaiting him

and the opportunity of spending eternity with his Saviour. How glad and thankful we should be for this warning and for the day of grace, so we can get right with God and our fellowmen. If we will take heed to this warning, it will bring us joy everlasting.

Have you ever visited the inmates in prisons or penitentiaries? Did they tell you what brought them there? I feel sure that nearly all of them would admit that they have not taken heed to warnings from: parents, the law of the land, or have gotten in wrong company, went to ungodly places, read filthy literature, or left envy, jealousy, unrestrained temper, etc. control them. I have seen bitter tears shed in prisons; their behavior there was good, hoping to shorten their sentence. Let us never forget that if we do not give heed unto God's Word and fully accept the plan of Salvation as given through Christ Jesus, our sentence will be to spend eternity in hell. The wailing and gnashing of teeth will avail nothing. Therefore, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Selected from the
August 1, 1961
issue of the Bible Monitor

TESTS OF PURE RELIGION

Howard J. Surbey

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.” Jas. 1:22. As we meditate upon this subject let us keep in mind several things. Religion is not only an outward profession, but it is an inward reality which bears outward fruits. In this chapter James sets this forth in some practical ways. Our Christian life is determined by the way we approach and use the opportunities which come in our experiences of life.

James opens the subject by telling us that it is a great joy to fall into divers (many and varied) temptations. Without the various little trials and temptations which we encounter even before we learn to walk, temporally and spiritually, we could never endure or overcome, the many which we will meet during our life. If our faith is genuine, temporally in our parents and spiritually in our God, no temptations will rob us of our faith. Patience is a jewel which enables us to size up a temptation and overcome it. Jas. 1:6-9 urges us to be steadfast and dependable upon our faith, a faith which is built upon facts, and then we will be dependent upon it

and not lose or be uncertain of it.

Our faith is not built upon pride or wealth, but upon facts and a willingness to learn. We humbly submit unto those over us, who are more experienced and successful. Those who are not experienced or successful, we do not allow to be over us. The supreme test is to be certain that our faith and practice is genuine and built upon a certain foundation. God does not tempt us but does make a way by which we may escape when we are tempted. We must yield unto God’s teachings and not to our carnal lusts. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Jas. 1:17.

Teachableness is an important test of pure religion. “Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.” V. 21. No doubt more souls will be lost for eternity because of the lack of teachableness and humbly submitting unto the Word of God, than for any other reason. Let us look into and listen unto the perfect law of liberty “the New Testament” and live thereby. God’s Word will not profit us if we only hear it. Why

not believe it? Why not practice it? Why not make Christ and His teachings the very purpose of our living and being?

Pure religion will: bridle our passions, control our tongue, cultivate our love for all mankind, develop our concern for the needy and underprivileged and at the same time keep us from the evils of the world and the foolishness of sin. Why is not our life a light and a comfort unto others with whom we come in contact? We dare not deceive ourselves about the facts

of God's Word, but rather open the gates of light that God can teach us and make us what He would. Christian practice is that proof which confirms every other indication of true godliness. The way is open for us to each meet the conditions of faith and practice which He taught. Lord help us in every hour of need and give us wisdom to direct our paths according to Thy Word.

Selected from the
August 15, 1961
issue of the Bible Monitor

WHO IS THY NEIGHBOR

William N. Kinsley

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Rom. 13:9. This is a commandment that was brought forth from the law, the Old Testament, and put into the New Testament, the dispensation of grace or church age. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. Ex. 20:16-17, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor and thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbor's. Prov. 14:21, "He that despiseth his neighbor sinneth: but he that hath

mercy on the poor, happy is he."

Under the law or by carnal nature it was, love your neighbor and hate your enemies, but now Jesus says, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Matt. 7:12, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them..." Is this the practice of the Christians of this day and age? We know this is not the way of the old man or the carnal nature of humanity. The stronger taking

the advantage of or over-powering the weaker and the rich oppressing the poor. In other words, to have our way and force everyone into our way.

A young man, a certain lawyer willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, who is my neighbor? Luke 10:30-37, Jesus said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, which wounded him and left him lay. By chance came a certain priest that way, when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place, looked on him and passed by on the other side. A certain Samaritan came where he was and when he saw him, he had compassion on him. He bound up his wounds, poured in oil, set him on his beast, brought him to an inn and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he gave two pence to the host and said unto him, take care of him and if thou spendest more I will repay thee. Jesus said, which now of these three thinkest thou was neighbor unto him, that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go and do thou likewise. This was plain and direct likeness or parable, to teach us what we owe to our fellowman.

This certain Samaritan was no doubt a stranger to the man who fell among the thieves, and we do not know how many miles they lived apart. Some people think only the next-door people are neighbors. Here in this parable distance was not considered, but he that shewed mercy or compassion.

Some Christians even think we dare not be lenient, sympathetic or have compassion and mercy, but rather be stern, strict, and harsh especially unto those who we think are in fault. The word neighbor means: one near to another, one who is friendly and concerned about the welfare of others. He that despiseth his neighbor sinneth. Some people address their fellowman as brother, friend, and some neighbor. If we love our neighbor as ourselves, it means a great sacrifice to this old selfish nature and especially to a person having an elevated mind or self-righteous nature. Eph. 4:25, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour; for we are members one of another." There are some who are guilty of defrauding their neighbor.

As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Heb. 12:14, "Follow peace with all men,

and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." For the kingdom of God is not just meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Recompence to no man evil for evil." Did not Jesus shew mercy to all humanity? 2 Cor. 8:9, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Was this not a neighbor? Rom. 5:8, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." How are we treating our neighbors?

Rom. 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." So, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Now being justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. 2 Cor. 9:15, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." For the gift of God is eternal life. Eph. 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Matt. 25:34-41. Then shall the King say unto them (the good neighbor), I was a hungered and ye gave me meat. I was thirsty and ye gave me drink. I was a stranger and ye took me in. Naked and ye clothed me. I

was sick and ye visited me. Then shall the righteous say, Lord when saw we thee hungry and fed thee? Or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? Naked and clothed thee and so forth. The King shall answer them saying, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. This is what the good Samaritan did to a stranger, being a good neighbor. There is a time coming, that will prove who was a real neighbor, or brother, or friend indeed when in need. Then it will be too late to change our ways.

James. 5:11. The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. James. 5:1-5, Ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted. Ye have heaped treasures together for the last days. Behold the hire of the laborer, who have reaped our fields, which is of you kept back by fraud. The cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth. Ye have nourished your hearts. Grudge not one against another, lest ye be condemned. For the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

God is no respecter of persons. James. 2:9, "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin and

are convinced of the law as transgressors.” Do not rich men oppress you and despise the poor. If thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well.

So, we in all that we sell or buy,
That we would have our neighbors do.
From others never with-hold their dues,

Is the rule of equity our practice and delight?
Do we renounce unrighteous gain?
Do we always integrity maintain?
Come let us search our ways and see,
Have we really, really been just and right?

Selected from the
August 1, 1961
issue of the Bible Monitor

OBITUARIES

RUTH CEASE

Sis. Ruth Elizabeth Cease, 88, of Biglerville, Pennsylvania, passed away June 22, 2021, at WellSpan Ephrata Hospital.

Born in Burlington, West Virginia, on May 26, 1933, she was the daughter of the late Thomas and Mary (O'Brien) Leatherman. Ruth was predeceased by her husband, John B. Cease, who died in 2013.

Ruth was a member of the Chambersburg Dunkard Brethren Church. Attending Sunday Worship Services was the highlight of her week.

She had been employed for twenty years at the Rice Fruit Company in Gardners, Pennsylvania. Ruth's life was her beloved family and her church.

Survivors include three children, Frances Eberly (James) of Lititz, Pennsylvania, Janet Althoff (Clair) of Biglerville, Pennsylvania, and John K. Cease (Kimberly) of Orrtanna, Pennsylvania; seven grandchildren; eighteen great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews. Ruth was predeceased by her two brothers, Richard, and James Leatherman.

Funeral services were held June 26, 2021, at the Chambersburg Dunkard Brethren Church, 2175 Lincoln Way East, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania with Bro. Caleb Heckman officiating. A graveside service followed at the Biglerville Cemetery in Biglerville, Pennsylvania with Bro. John Eberly officiating.

JERRY E. MOREHOUSE

Jerry E. Morehouse, age 70, of rural Evansport, Ohio passed away

June 30, 2021, in Toledo, Ohio. Jerry worked as a maintenance man at the Bryan High School and the West Unity Schools for many years.

Jerry was born on July 24, 1950, in Wauseon, Ohio, to the late Edward and Patricia (Roehrig) Morehouse. After graduating from Stryker High School in 1969, Jerry married Nadine Pike on June 26, 1971, and she preceded him in death in 2013.

Jerry was the Detroit Tigers' number one fan and frequently went to games. He also enjoyed taking his children to the Bowling Green tractor pulls every year. He liked hunting and driving the school bus for high school sporting events.

Surviving Jerry are his daughter, Holly (Elbie) Atkinson of Defiance, Ohio; daughter, Sheri (Terry) House of Stryker, Ohio; son, Scott (Katrina) Morehouse of Sherwood, Ohio; and daughter, Amy Yates, Paulding, Ohio. He is also survived by grandchildren, Tristan, Hannah, Olivia, and Walker Atkinson; Seth, Evan, and Chloe Morehouse; and Larkin and Kayti Yates. He was preceded in death by his wife, Nadine; parents; and grandson Anthony.

Funeral services were held July 7, 2021, at the West Fulton Dunkard Brethren Church with Bro. Brant Jamison and Bro. Lyndell Noecker officiating. Burial was in the Evansport Cemetery.

NEWS ITEMS

DEACON LIST UPDATE

Please add to the Deacon List: Brother Andrew Stoner of the CornerStone Congregation. His address is 4041 Hamburg Road, Eldorado, Ohio 45321. His phone number is 937-533-3456.

CORNERSTONE, OHIO

We, of the CornerStone Congregation invite you to join us for revivals, August 4 through August 8, 2021. Brother Gerry Priest, from Chambersburg, Pennsylvania will be our evangelist. Evening services at 7:00 P.M., Sunday services 9:30 A.M. and 10:30 A.M. and a welcome to stay for food and fellowship after Sunday services. Mark those calendars and we hope to see you then. Please pray for Gerry, his wife Heidi, family, and all of us!

Sister Arlene Rolle, Cor.

DALLAS CENTER, IOWA

The Dallas Center Congregation looks forward to our summer revival weekend, August 13-15, 2021. Bro. Loren Zook from the Lititz Congregation will be our evangelist. We will have a Lovefeast service the evening of August 14, 2021. All are cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Sister Brenda Meyers, Cor.

NOTE OF THANKS

We want to thank everyone who remembered us with cards and Good Wishes for my wife's 90th Birthday, and for our 70th Anniversary. They were truly appreciated, and we trust the Lord will bless you for your thoughtfulness.

In Christian Love,
Dean and Nancy St. John

CONNECTIONS

Contributed by the Bible Study Board in reference to this month's Sunday School Lessons. Our hope in writing a monthly article is that we all see afresh different points of connection that reveal the Word made flesh.

As the heat mounts as we move through summer, so does our study of Revelation. The tribulations that began in our studies in July intensify in our studies in August.

Some may refrain from frequent study of the Book of Revelation for various reasons. Some because they feel that it is difficult to understand. Some might be frightened by the foretold tribulations. However, in Chapter 7, the joy in Heaven seems to be building. Further, from angels holding the four winds of Heaven to God's two witnesses that cannot be harmed for 1,260 days to the proclaiming of the coming end of time. God's power and dominion over all things as expressed in Revelation is truly an awesome and glorious part of our future.

While it has been uttered many times by some to describe chaos, for the first time in history, all hell actually will break loose. But only for a while. Only as permitted by the omnipotent God. Make sure that He is your God.

Your Savior. Your Lord. Make sure that your name is written in His Book, in the Lamb's Book of Life. Make sure that your light from the Holy Spirit shines to those around you that they too might call Jesus Christ their Lord and Savior.

So, while we may struggle to be at ease with the Book of Revelation, we can take comfort in the words of our Lord in Matthew 28:20 that He will be with us always, even unto the end of the world. We can also encourage one another and look forward to those beautiful words from His mouth, "... Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:34b

Brother Ken Brock for the Bible Study Board

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2021

Sept. 5 – He Shall Reign Forever Because the Dragon Goes Hungry –Rev. 11:11-12:6

1. What similarities and differences do you see between Jesus' resurrection and ascension and that of the two witnesses?

2. How do the events of the last year and a half help us understand the events at the close of human history?

3. What events are described in verses 12:1-6?

Sept. 12 – Holy War in Heaven and on Earth – Rev. 12:7-17

1. What precipitates the war in Heaven?

2. What defeats the power of Satan?
-
-

3. Who is the persecuted woman?
-
-

Sept. 19 – The Unholy Trinity – Rev. 13:1-18

1. Who constitutes the Unholy Trinity?
-
-

2. How does the first beast differ from the second beast and who do they mimic?
-
-

3. What is the significance of their rising from the sea and the earth?
-
-

**Sept. 26 – Which Name Will be Written on Your Forehead?
– Rev. 14:1-13**

1. What is the most spiritually encouraging attribute of the one hundred forty-four thousand?
-
-

2. What makes worshipping God as creator of heaven and earth so important?
-
-

3. What is meant by “their works will follow them”?
-
-

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