

BIBLE MONITOR

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AUGUST, 2022

NO. 08

“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.

ROSE HILL

O happy saints that dwell in light,
And walk with Jesus clothed in white,
Safe landed on that peaceful shore,
Where pilgrims meet to part no more.

Released from sorrow, sin and strife,
Death was the gate to endless life,
And now they range the heav'nly plains,
And sing his love in melting strains.

They gaze upon his beauteous face,
And tell the wonders of his grace;
Or, over-whelmed with raptures sweet,
Sink down adoring at his feet.

Ah, Lord! With faltering steps, I creep,
And sometimes sing, and sometimes weep,
When shall I wake in heav'n, to prove
The heights and depths of Jesus' love?

—Joseph E. Sweetser

THE BEGINNING AND THE ENDING

This a story that covers forty-seven years. It is the story of a simple, young brother being called to a work bigger than he was prepared to be used. Yet our Heavenly Father provided the health and the resources needed to fulfill the Father's will throughout those forty-seven years. As that time ends, I will be given the title of Senior Editor and Brother Ken Brock will assume the duties of the Office Editor. This change of leadership is coming in the 100th year of the Bible Monitor, which first began to be published in October 1922.

The setting for the beginning of this story was the General Conference of 1975, which was being held at Mission Springs Conference Center,

near Santa Cruz, California. The start of the story had been during the sessions of Standing Committee held on Saturday afternoon and through the day on Monday during Conference. As this Brother and his wife were waiting in the line for supper that evening, he was approached by Elder Jacob Ness, asking me to meet some Elders from the Standing Committee. During the supper we were wondering what I had done that had drawn the attention of Standing Committee. After we had finished our supper, I met with the Officers of Standing Committee at the place they had designated.

The first news from these men was that Standing Committee had received a

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resignation letter from Brother Walter Bird, the current Editor of the Bible Monitor. He resigned because of the state of his mental health, which was in 1975 terms defined as “premature dementia” which would later be termed “Alzheimer’s Disease”. The committee waiting on me asked if I and my wife would be willing to accept a one-year appointment as Editor of the Bible Monitor. We would have until early the next morning to give them our answer.

Our discussion that evening was serious and focused on what we had been asked to do, although it seemed like a job way beyond our level of preparation. After wrestling with our answer, we replied to their query with a positive answer. Before the beginning of Standing Committee, the next morning, they had the answer they had sought even though our answer was far above our level of dedication or preparation.

The actual work involved in being the Editor began quite quickly. At that time, The Bible Monitor was issued twice monthly. There was an issue dated the first of each month and

another dated on the fifteenth of the month. Each issue needed to be prepared and sent by mail to the printer who was located near Wauseon, Ohio, so at least three days were needed to get the material to the printer. The ex-Editor and his wife were busy sending to us the various pieces of equipment or submitted papers that needed to be prepared for printing in the next issue. My assignment was to have material ready for the August 1, 1975, issue.

At the 1976 Conference that was being held at Cleona, Pennsylvania, I was nominated for a three-year term as the Editor of the Bible Monitor. That pattern has continued until this year, when sickness and age combined to cause Standing Committee to nominate another Brother to take this position.

With General Conference accepting the query that would redesign the Monitor staff, I will become the Senior Editor. The Senior Editor position is primarily advisory, although the Senior Editor is tasked with writing the editorial for each month’s issue. I will continue to have a small part in the production of the Bible Monitor.

The amazing part of this story covering the last forty-seven years is that a young brother like myself was made fit by the Father to fill this prominent position. It certainly was a long way from our thoughts that we would be called to the Editor's position and then to continue in that position for forty-seven years. The Editor was not the smartest person to manage the editorial duties. He was not the craftiest speaker, nor was he the most knowledgeable about the writing in the English language. The Editor was a brother who was willing to do what he was able to do. He used the talents that God had given him.

God often calls those who

may be aware that God wants them to serve Him in a particular way. It may be a way to serve those who are not being asked to serve. God sometimes has incredibly special callings for a few of His people that do not appear of interest to most people, but He might want you to fill that position. The Brotherhood only needed one Editor to fill that position the last forty-seven years, but now He may be calling you to fill a position. Let the Publication Board know that you are interested in volunteering for one of their positions.

May God bless you in your decision.

M. C. Cook

HAVE YOU LOST YOUR FIRST LOVE?

Rev. 2:1-7 "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and

hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his

place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

In this passage, the church at Ephesus was somewhere around 35-40 years old. Paul had made a missionary trip through there and had established the church in what was the wealthiest city in Asia. The capital city was a thriving place of around 250,000 people. It was home to the temple of Diana, the goddess of fertility. Many evil things were included in the worship of her. A thriving business of making trinket idols of silver was among the commerce there.

On his way through Paul had found disciples (Acts 19) and baptized them in the name of Jesus and they received the Holy Ghost. Many mighty works were done during the next months and the people repented of their witchcraft and burned many books worth much money. This is the situation we

find when the church started. Here in Revelation, we see the church is still existing. It has been around long enough and the “first generation” founders have raised their children up and have passed along the mission. Jesus says here, “I know thy works, and thy labour and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.”, they were still doing the programs and the things that they had been taught to do, no doubt good things, designed to bring honor and glory to God. They had withstood those who had brought in evil, they were a separated people. They had rejected the Nicolaitans and their teachings that the things you did during the week did not matter if you were good on Sunday.

The church had some good things going for it however, Jesus says, He is not all together pleased. The church has left its first love!! They didn’t lose it, they left it. They put it in a back

corner and put the labors and the doings above their love for Christ. The things they were doing had value but did not deserve the place of prominence they had given them.

Jesus did not leave them hopeless, He admonished them to return to their first love. Return to a relationship with Him. He did not tell them to stop doing good things, but instead prioritize relationship over busyness. Busyness tends to drift our focus away from God's redemptive work and we focus on how much we are doing for God and His kingdom. It makes us falsely believe we are working for our salvation, and it tends to give us the idea that God sure is fortunate to have us on His team. I came across a list of things that a local pastor had put together that may indicate we have lost our first love. This is not a conclusive list, but these items need some serious consideration. If you have no issue in these areas and your relationship with Jesus is what it should be, PRAISE GOD!! Prayerfully read over these, ask God if He wants to work in these areas. To give credit where it is due, this list was compiled by Dave Heisterkamp, lead pastor

at Lakeside Fellowship.

Personally:

- When you know God's commands but deliberately disobey - Jesus said "If you love me keep my commandments"
- When you have stopped reading your Bible devotionally and instead need to be prodded and scheduled
- When you constantly come to church late
- When you have no margin in your life for quiet time
- When you schedule Jesus around your children's sports/activities rather than your children's sports/activities around Christ
- When devotion to family supplants devotion to Christ - Jesus said "Whoever loves mother or father, brother or sister more than me is not worthy of me..."
- When testimonies of salvation do not stir you
- When it has been at least a week since you thanked Christ for saving you from your sins - (Luther once said he thought Jesus died only yesterday it felt so real to him)
- When you lack anything close

to resembling enthusiasm in worship (I Peter 1:8)

- When you are known more for what you are against than what you are for.
- Corporately as a church:
- When programs become irreplaceable and untouchable - when programs are more important than people
- When you hear “we’ve always done it that way”
- When there is not a large contingent of first-generation believers
- When there are not young families with children
- When there has not been a regular giving of fresh salvation testimonies
- When the banner that flies most prominently over the church is the banner of separation and not the banner of reconciliation - II Corinthians 5:18-21 “we have been given the ministry of reconciliation ...”
- When the building and the budget dominate conversation and meetings
- When the lost are an annoyance to be avoided or contaminant that must be separated from - not community

mindful for the Gospel’s sake.

Remember, paths lead to places. No follower of Christ abandons their first love, Christ, in a day.

I write this not to make fun of things we do or the way we live out our lives but to bring a serious look to the value we have placed on works or activities. God asks good works of us, but only as a token of our gratitude and not the act that saves us. Good works are also not to be a substitute to a relationship. Ephesians 2:8 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Just as it was serious when Jesus gave the warning, it is serious now. Jesus says that if change is not made, He will remove their candlestick. An interesting note: The city of Ephesus, is no longer in existence. It is nothing but a pile of rubble. Did the church fail to come back to God and His promise was bought about?

If the church's light goes out in a city of darkness, is there any reason for God to not bring down judgement? Consider your actions, your motives and value system. If God prompts you in any area, ask Him to show you His will and His

way. He will not fail you. He wants to lead you into richer, greener pasture. He wants a relationship. He wants you but He doesn't need you.

Bro. Joe Cover

The Gideon Wager

I have always found quite fascinating the story of Gideon. He was a man greatly used of God but was someone we might have overlooked. One thing I have learned from Gideon is that God rarely calls the qualified, but he always qualifies the called. This was so true with Gideon.

Gideon did not see himself as God saw him. Rarely does anybody see themselves as God sees them. Speaking of Christians, some think too little of themselves while others think too much of themselves. It is very rare to find someone who has a balance between the two.

Gideon did not think very much of himself. He thought he was the last person God could ever use to do a work for him. I am sure Gideon could have thought of a dozen other people

who were much more qualified than him to do the work at hand. But God's work is never limited to any man's ability.

In reading through the story of Gideon, there is one word I find most fascinating.

That is the word, "if." This is a word we sometimes are hesitant to use. We think that faith in God is always a positive upbeat thing. Often it's not. The Gideon Wager is simply this, "If you are calling me to do this particular thing, I will need absolute verification that I'm on the right track."

Often I have found myself, knowing what God wants me to do but not fully understanding the work at hand. Consequently, unless the whole work is understood I am at a loss.

The great missionary, J.

Hudson Taylor, said it this way, "God's work, done God's way, will never lack God's resources."

Often it is easy to recognize the work God wants me to do. The difficulty comes in knowing God's way of doing that work. I can come up with a half a dozen ways that I think are great, but only God's way will give me access to God's resources. Moreover, if it is really God's work it will absolutely need God's resources.

Some people may suggest that if we say "if" to God we are expressing doubts. Well, what is wrong with doubts? It is understanding my doubts that enable me to have faith in God.

The greatest New Testament example would be Thomas. He doubted everything the disciples said about the resurrected Lord. "Unless I see," Thomas said, "I will not believe."

When I begin to address my doubts, I then can begin to apply the word of God to aspects of my life that will result in faith in God. I do not have faith in God because I have a positive attitude toward God. I really have faith in God because I have a negative attitude toward myself and my abilities.

"If" God is calling me to do something, then he is more than delighted to lead me in the way of discovering the resources he has for me to use. God is never compromised by our doubts. God wants to address those doubts so that we can turn around as Thomas did and truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some believe that if they express a doubt they are indeed a very weak Christian. Well, that is also very true. Compared to the job before us, we are weak. Nothing that we do for God can be done through our weakness, but God's grace can be reflected through our weakness.

With Gideon and with Thomas in the New Testament I conclude that God is delighted to back up our confidence in him in a way that will encourage us. God is not like some people think, always trying to break us down and humiliate us. Certainly, there is humbleness of spirit, but that does not involve God humiliating us.

The thing that glorifies God is our faith in him. And our faith in him is built upon dealing with those doubts we might have. Human reasoning will not

satisfactorily solve all of those doubts. However, what does happen is, through our doubts God will lift us above them to see that his grace is never compromised by our doubts.

If God is really calling me to do some work for him his great delight is to be glorified in it. If what I am doing glorifies me, then I can be assured God is not really in that. Often times as Christians our focus is so much on what we can do that we fail to realize who we are doing it for.

Jesus uses the word “if” on at least one occasion. “If I be lifted up,” Jesus said, “I will draw all men unto me.” This is the test

of what God wants me to do.

If God is being glorified and Jesus is being exalted then what I am doing is God’s work. On the other hand, if I am being glorified or some method is being glorified then God certainly is not being glorified.

The Angel addressed Gideon as a “mighty man of valor.” Gideon did not see himself that way. And he was not ready to do God’s work until God brought to him the confidence he needed to know that this was what God wanted him to do.

James L. Snyder
Ocala, FL

What Would You Never Do?

Recently I was listening to a Christian radio station and they posed a question for listeners to call in and answer on the air. The question was “What would you never do”. Interesting question. Immediately an answer for myself popped into my mind but more on that later.

I listened for a while to the various answers that callers gave. I must say that I was surprised at the first few answers because they were

much less sinister than the answer I had thought of for myself. As I continued to listen, the answers were all that way. From “I would never run a red light” to “I would never cheat on a test” to “I would never forget my wife’s birthday”. All the answers I was hearing seemed too simple and wholesome compared to the answer I had thought of for myself. And then I realized that these answers that people were giving were all

probably whitewashed for public consumption. Because you see, when speaking on a generally light-hearted broadcast, who wants to announce on live radio the depth and depravity of the things that come from the heart and mind?

And so I was further intrigued with continuing to listen to the answers people gave and wondered what was really going on in their mind. Were their real thoughts hiding behind a façade? If they weren't trying to project a relatively wholesome image of themselves over the radio, what would their real answer be? Really...what would they never do?

This thought brought me back to the answer that I had initially thought of for myself. What would I never do? Ok I'll say it. I would never murder anyone. That was the answer that immediately popped into my head when the question was asked. But then I continued to think about that. So...would I never murder anyone? I certainly don't think I would. I can't imagine ever doing that. What an awful thought! And then my thoughts turned another direction. I wondered how

many people that actually have murdered someone at some point earlier in their life thought that they could never murder someone. This is perhaps a gruesome thought but it brings us to the point that I wanted to focus on.

If we think about it, there are probably many things that we would like to think that we would never do. Given certain circumstances, pressures, difficulties or trials, we might choose to do some things that we never would have believed we would do. However, the believer is not alone in this world. As believers, the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts and minds and directs our thoughts and our choices.

So for the believer, is the question "What would I never do" even applicable? Or is the appropriate question really "What does God keep me from"?

1 John 3:5-9 says "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth

righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

I think we have our answer here in 1 John 3. It would seem that for those that belong to the devil, the “What would

I never do” question might be appropriate. Under their own power they might be able to resist doing those things they don’t think they ever would. However, for the believer, it would seem that the latter question is appropriate. What does God keep me from? This scripture indicates that being born in Him, He keeps me from all sin, from those things that by his grace I would never do. Praise God! What an awesome God we serve!

Bro. Ken Brock

“OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN”

Rudy Cover

Luke 10:13-16

Almost everyone likes little children. There is an innocence and purity about them and they have a beauty that is wonderful. Jesus said “Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven,” and “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein.”

This gives us something to think about. How can we be like

a little child? Jesus was very definite about it. There is no way we receive it as a little child.

We believe that little children are free from sin. There is no sin in Heaven and Jesus said, “of such is the kingdom of heaven.” I’m sure the little children make up a part of Heaven. Many children have died before they ever understood what sin is and they went to heaven to be with Jesus. We read about

angels called, “Cherubims” – maybe these are the ones Jesus referred to.

We must have our sins forgiven. We cannot take one sin along to Heaven. Jesus has made it possible to have our sins forgiven – we must be born again – of the water and of the spirit – believe in God – repent of our sins and be baptized for the remission of our sins and then we are promised the gift of the Holy Spirit. When we are free from sin, we are in that respect like a little child.

Little children are also dependent upon their parents. Whenever they have trouble or get hurt, they will go to mother or father. A child knows that he needs protection and care. We, as children of God, should also be dependent upon our Heavenly Father. Of ourselves we are helpless. Jesus says, “Without me you can do nothing.” It is very important that we realize our dependence upon God.

When we are dependent

upon God, we become humble. When we are independent and think we don’t need God, we become proud and unyielding. God wants to help us and care for us, but if we will not choose to let Him, He cannot and will not receive us into His Kingdom.

The rain falls on the just and the unjust but that is only the natural blessings that God gives to everyone- the rain – the air we breathe – the food we eat – the sunshine – the bodies that we live in and the many things in life that are good and beautiful.

The blessings of entering God’s Kingdom of Heaven are something else. Peace of mind, the love we have for others, the hops of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins are not given to everybody. If we want these real blessings of God, we must become as a little child for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Selected from the
November 15, 1981
issue of the Bible Monitor.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNION

Howard Surbey

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread,” 1 Cor. 10:16-17.

In this chapter Paul is reasoning upon the subject of mixing Christianity and idolatry. He emphasizes the shortcomings of many of the Jews, who had so great a godly heritage in the worship of the True God, and yet were mixing many of the weaknesses of idol worship into their religion. Is it possible that some Christian professors set down to eat and drink at the Lord’s table and rise up to play. V.7? It is not possible to partake of the bread and the cup of the Lord and at the same time be considering devices of Satan. It is an insult to our Lord, to allow any thing of Satan to enter our heart, at this time at least.

Paul appeals to their intelligence and good

judgement, about the wisdom of his admonitions. Do not have any part with the evils of Satan, do not mix in any of the practices of idolatry, actually “flee from idolatry.” Paul, an inspired teacher, would at least in this case leave it with the Corinthians, to judge whether he reasoned righteously or not. Can we be in alliance with Christ or have friendship with God, without accepting His commandments and covenanting to live faithful to Him? Those who truly partake through faith, of the emblems of His broken body and shed blood make a profession of fellowship with one another as part of His body of believers and a profession of desiring to belong unto God as His servants.

Fellowship, communion, joint participation, our individual share in Christ’s blessing is the key thought in this sixteenth verse. Devoted Christians are partakers in common of the same purpose as God and Christ and of the blessings arising therefrom, “That which we have seen and heard

declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," I John 1:3. The word "communion" denotes the fellowship of persons with persons in one and the same purpose. The Jewish feasts centered in the Altar and its sacrifices. The unseen objects of idolatrous worship centered in the idolatrous feasts. The communion centers in the sacred worship of Christ, celebrates in common (of like mind and purpose), separated from all others and devoted to obey Christ's commandments.

Christ blessing this cup makes it forever "the cup of blessing." Through the bread and cup believers participate together in Christ, in the sacrifice of His body and blood offered unto God, and in the whole redemption brought about through His bodily life, death and resurrection. This reached from the incarnation (taking on of the flesh and blood)"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as

a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," Phil. 2:7-8; through the forgiving and reconciling of the sincere believer "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight," Col. 1:21-22; to the heavenly glory "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself," Col. 3:21. This is our communion because of the covenant brought about by His sacrifice on the Cross.

There is one bread and we are many, yet through partaking of this bread we are one body in Christ. His common nourishment will feed only one type of life, and identical life to His. Partaking of one common bread (body) and one common cup (blood) seals and unites the participants in Christ "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we

be Jews of Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit;: 1 Cor. 12:13. The fellowship of the Lord's table is vital to the church and the mixing of the sins of idol worship destroyed this vital fellowship in the Corinthian church. Through proper partaking of the bread and cup we assure ourselves of a part in that one body and a

part in communion with Christ. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1:7.

Selected from the
August 1, 1962
issue of the Bible Monitor.

CONNECTIONS

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

The study of the life of King Saul is an interesting and instructional study for each of us. When we first read about Saul in I Samuel 9, we read about a handsome and respectable yet simple and humble young man who is told that God has chosen him to be the king. His response is one of humility as he demonstrates a willingness to do what God has called him to do.

However, only a few chapters later we see Saul as a king who

is disobeying God's instructions and leaning more and more on his own thinking. As a result, he suffers the consequences of ignoring God's leading and disobeying His instructions. Jealousy has settled into his heart and has caused him to repeatedly attempt to take the life of David, one of his most valuable and loyal fellow countrymen.

He has lost his direction and seems to be flailing in his attempts to remain relevant in his own kingdom. He has a rather impressive position as king of God's people but he is feeling threatened by a young shepherd boy who has more courage and valor than Saul himself. His determination to do

away with David seems to stem from a fear which consumed Saul; a fear of seeing David stealing away the hearts as well as the respect and admiration of the people.

Saul's anger and hostility toward David leads him to attempt to harm his own son, Jonathan, for standing up for David. More poor decisions eventually lead to God turning His back on Saul. As a result, Saul decides to visit a woman with a familiar spirit in hopes that she can call up the spirit of Samuel to give him some instruction.

The story of the life of Saul comes to a tragic and disgraceful end as he and his sons are killed along with many of the army of Israel in a battle against the Philistines. Saul was a man who started out with great potential but ended up dying in shame. David, the man who he wanted so badly to destroy, took the place of Saul's sons as his replacement on the throne.

So, what happened to Saul? How could a life with so much promise and potential end in such a disappointing way? How could the first king of Israel lose all of his honor and die the death of a common soldier? There are

probably many answers which could be given but one of the main answers can be found in I Samuel 15:23. After Saul had disobeyed God and tried to make excuses for his actions, Samuel said to Saul, "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king."

Saul could have been a great king, but not on his own. He needed God's help and guidance. As he tried more and more to do it all on his own and in his own way, he failed more and more in carrying out his responsibilities.

The same is true for us. We all have talents, abilities, and opportunities. We may not have the same abilities or the same callings that Saul had but we are equally incapable of using those abilities or fulfilling those callings on our own. Our wisdom and strength will fail us just like Saul's failed him.

One of the key lessons which we can learn from the life of Saul is that we need God. We need His wisdom. We need His direction. We need His help. We need His mercy. We need His forgiveness. Without seeking out and accepting those things

in our lives, we will end up like King Saul. We will never reach our full potential. We will never fulfill His calling in our lives. We can never and will never be the

people who God created and intended us to be without Him.

Bro. Nate Meyers

On behalf of the Bible Study Board

PHIL'S PONDERINGS

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

August 2022 Study Questions

August 7 - 1 Samuel 18:17-19:3

How do you describe Saul from the perspective of his faith in God?

What does Saul presume about David marrying one of his daughters?

Why is Saul pleased that Michal loves David?

How does Saul hope to use the Philistines as David's executioner?

While Saul failed in this effort how will David succeed in doing the same thing?

What is the net effect of Saul's schemes?

How is Jonathan trapped by Saul's fears?

Commentary: Power has a way of changing our perspective as to what is right or appropriate. Through the last several chapters we have witnessed a change in Saul. He was used to following orders but not familiar with giving them. His tentative use of his authority as king sometimes landed him in trouble. Other times he used his authority without considering the consequences. While struggling to lead he has become used to exercising power, even when what he is planning is evil. Such is the nature of kings and those who exercise great power. Their fears and fantasies are little

different from their predecessors. Right and wrong are often defined by what someone can get away with rather than any moral, spiritual, or ethical restraint. Saul imagines that David is trying to replace him and focuses his fears on such fantasies. As he exercises power Saul's fears make him willing to do anything to keep it. David soon finds himself swimming against the tide rather than enjoying swimming with it. He soon shall become the hunted rather than the hunter. For David this is all part of the learning process that grows his faith and trust in the Lord. Rather than giving into his earthbound fears he gains wisdom from above. Like Joseph (enslaved) and Moses (a refugee) before him, David learns more about the proper use of power while being hunted, far from those who sit in the seats of power.

August 14 - 1 Samuel 19:4-24

What is Jonathan's basis of defense for David?

What seems to be the tipping point for Saul that leads to another spear being thrown at David?

How does Saul escalate the conflict?

How does v17 illustrate how irrational Saul has become?

Where is Naioth?

Why does David flee to Samuel?

What do you imagine David felt as he saw first the messengers and then Saul prophesy?

Commentary: If David ever needed an object lesson to teach him to trust in the Lord his experience at Naioth must certainly have been one that David could reflect upon again and again. All the messengers who came to arrest David ended up prophesying. It happened three times before Saul himself went and ended up prophesying for the rest of that day and all night long. The presence of the Lord was so strong that worshipping the Lord was the only possible response. The messengers reported back to Saul

because they had no other option or way to apprehend David. Saul was forced to go himself and likewise was humbled by the Lord. David was beyond his reach. Yet this episode is scarcely remembered by most of us. While David is repeatedly mentioned as present there with Samuel we know nothing about how David experienced this sequence of events. If he relates this experience through the Psalms he never specifically referenced it. Psalm 140 is but one of many that could easily reflect these circumstances where David is running for his life. Not every experience in David's life is ours to reflect upon. But no experience, whether David's or our own, is ever wasted. God can use every part of our lives to reveal more of Himself to us. Often we experience similar situations. Typically, our response is, "Lord, why do I have to keep learning this lesson over and over again?" There is always a good reason. God wants to display His handiwork in our lives. Seldom do we learn in just one or two lessons. He wants all to see that He is trustworthy through all of life's circumstances and challenges. He causes us (All things work together for good) to grow in godliness.

August 21 - 1 Samuel 20:1-23

Why does David leave Naioth?

How aware is Jonathan of David's situation?

What is meant by "David sware...?"

What covenant did David and Jonathan make with each other regarding the future?

Has a good friend ever helped you overcome a blind spot with someone in your family?

Commentary: How do you tell your best friend that his father is trying to kill you? What an awkward situation for these two young men to find themselves in. They care for each other deeply. They are the best of brothers. They both know how to inspire others. Their faith in God is fearless. Yet, they are also quite human. How can Jonathon not know of his father's anger, fear, and distrust for

David? He seems in disbelief that his father has threatened him to the point that David believes he is “but a step between me and death.” He argues that his father tells him everything whether large or small. As they relate their perspectives to each other they constantly keep bringing the Lord into the midst of this trial. They are wise enough to know that they don’t know all that they need to know. Only the Lord knows all things. They are able to decide on a simple plan without drawing any undesirable attention from Saul. They are wise enough to not just trust in their own feelings. They are willing enough to put their perspectives to the test. They are mature enough to know that the future may separate them in ways that neither one of them desires. Love finds a way to draw them closer to each other rather than letting sorrow pull them apart.

August 28 - Daniel 1:1-21

Why do conquering nations often take many of the best educated people back to their nation?

Why was Daniel concerned about defiling himself with the king’s meat and wine?

How had the Lord brought Daniel into good favor with the prince of the eunuchs?

With what was the prince of the eunuchs most concerned?

How does Daniel persuade the steward to provide them with only vegetables to eat?

How do two people, who both want the same thing but only one can have it, come to agreement?

Commentary: Most of us are familiar with signs that help us drive safely. One of those signs is usually triangular and possibly yellow or red in color. It has one word in bold letters: Yield. As a result, drivers are made aware that the cross traffic has the right of way. Therefore, make sure it is safe to cross this intersection before you enter it. In human relationships there are many unseen yield signs

that help govern how we relate to each other. If we don't practice or take these signs seriously, conflict is frequently the result. Yielding is not a sign of weakness or giving in to something that is untrue. In human dynamics it may be the quickest way to find agreement amongst parties who disagree. Yielding may be the strongest asset we can bring in the midst of conflict. We recognize how important it is to the other person to be able to share their point of view. We can disagree without becoming disagreeable. I think this is how Daniel gained favor with those who were over him. He didn't demand his own way but sought ways that were acceptable to all parties. A ten-day test on their dietary desires would not have put his "bosses" at risk. But it was sufficient to prove Daniel's point of view. If we were continuing our study in Daniel, we could see this same dynamic being used by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. They submitted (**yielded**) to the Lord at the cost of their lives who in turn exalted them for their obedience and saved their lives.

NEWS ITEMS

NEW BIBLE MONITOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Much appreciation is given to Bro. Milton Cook and his wife Marilyn for their many years of service for publishing the Bible Monitor. Bro. Ken Brock is now assuming the duties of the Editor of the Bible Monitor. Please send all future digital materials for publication in the Monitor to Ken at kenbrockdb@gmail.com or by mail to 1520 County Road 22-60, Stryker, Ohio 43557. You can also contact Ken by text or call at 419-515-3396.

DEACON ELECTION, CHAMBERSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Bro. Galen Wingert was elected to the Deacon's office. Bro. Galen's address is 9655 Eden Dr., Chambersburg, PA 17202-9530

CORNERSTONE, OHIO

CornerStone welcomes you for Revival Meetings, August 10-14. Brother Rodney Kimmel from the Berean, IN congregation will

be our guest speaker. Evening services Wednesday through Saturday at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday morning services begin at 9:30 a.m. with a carry-in lunch to follow. Please join us!

Arlene Rolle, Cor.

PLEASANT RIDGE, OHIO

Sunday, September 11th, Pleasant Ridge congregation will have a Harvest Meeting with Bro. Kidron Crist from the Corner-Stone, OH congregation as the speaker. Sunday morning service begins at 9:30 a.m. with a potluck lunch to follow. There will be a closing service at 2:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to come worship with us.

Teresa St. John, Cor.

THANK YOU

We want to thank each one who helped make our 50th wedding anniversary special, either by attending our open house or sending cards, etc. We have many nice memories. Thank you very much.

In Jesus,
Ruth Ann & Maury Wells

SPECIAL DEAL

Currently the Publication Board is selling copies of the Dunkard Brethren Church History Book, "They Counted the Cost" by Keith M. Bailey for 50% off at \$20.00 per copy. Contact a member of the Publication Board to buy your copy.

MINISTER'S ADDRESS CHANGE

The new address for Jason Carpenter is 821 Archibeque Ave. SE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124-3218.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2022

Sept 4 - Find the Arrows - 1 Samuel 20:24-42

1. What do we discover is Saul's primary concern in the conflict between Saul and Jonathan?

2. What does Jonathan discover about his father's plans for David?

3. What does Jonathan mean when he says to David, "The LORD be between me and thee...."?

Sept 11 - David at Nob and Gath - 1 Samuel 21:1-15

1. Why does David lie to Ahimelech rather than tell him the truth?

2. What makes Gath seem like a good place for David to flee?

3. Why does David begin to act like a madman?

Sept 18 - The Distressed, Debtors, and Discontents - 1 Samuel 22:1-19

1. What is a possible contributing reason for David choosing Moab as a place for his parents to live?

2. Why is Saul staying in Gibeah instead of Jerusalem?

3. How does Saul attempt to gain the affections of his servants?

Sept 25 - David Delivered - 1 Samuel 22:20-23:15

1. What are some of the contrasts between Saul and David's leadership qualities that you notice in David's conversation with Abiathar?

2. What are some possible reasons why David's men are not convinced to follow David into battle after his first inquiry of the Lord?

3. Have you had any experiences with the wilderness and what are some of the things it has taught you?

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