

BIBLE MONITOR

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APRIL, 2023

NO. 4

“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.

I TRIED TO LIVE A LIFE

I tried to live a life,
That was pleasing unto God.
I tried to walk in the same steps,
That Brethren of old had trod.
But though some thought,
This was enough,
I knew I could not save myself.
And then I heard the Saviour say,
Come to me and come today.
And I will save you, I alone,
And we will stand before the throne.
Such a peace overwhelmed me just to know,
That my Lord could love me so.
I tried and failed, but He alone,
For all my sins could well atone.

Lynn H Miller,
Newmanstown, PA

SPRING FEASTS

Who doesn't love a good feast? In the Jewish calendar, there are seven feasts to be celebrated every year. While there are some similarities, the Jewish feasts are markedly different than traditional feasts in American culture, such as Thanksgiving.

As recorded in Leviticus 23, the Lord instructed Moses and the Israelites on these seven feasts in the order of their seasonal observance. Interestingly, the word "feasts" is the Hebrew word "mo'ed" which means to "keep an appointment" or "appointed time". These were not recommended or suggested but were rather commanded by the Lord as His feasts and each is referred to as a "holy convocation". The Hebrew word

for convocation is "mik-rah" meaning publicly called out. Putting this all together, these are not flexible or optional times for casual social gatherings, they are the Lord's sacred public feasts that are commanded for an appointed time. These feasts are not only historical for the Jews, but they are also prophetic for all people.

The first three of these feasts come in rapid succession in the spring; Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits. The Jewish Passover commemorates the deliverance of the Jewish people from bondage in Egypt. Unleavened Bread symbolizes the purging of sin, which like leavening in bread, spreads, perpetuates and puffs up. First Fruits in Bible

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times was a feast of thanksgiving for the barley harvest; the first grain harvest of the season and a promise of what is to come. Most Jews (even secular Jews) still observe these feasts today and will observe them between April 5th-13th this year. Today these three spring feasts are often collectively referred to as "Passover".

The Christian is not commanded to observe these feasts. However, as we look at scripture and compare the timing of these feasts to their perfect correlation to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it is clear that appointed times are quite important to the Lord. Looking at these feasts, they are reminders to God's people of what God has done for them as well as speaking prophetically of Jesus Christ and His coming Kingdom. Prophetically, to the believer, these feasts speak to our deliverance, justification, redemption, sanctification and glorification. All of these blessings and workings are rooted and founded in Jesus Christ.

From the Passover, we can see the sacrifice of the life of Jesus Christ for our sins. As the

Israelites put sacrificial blood of lambs on their doorposts that they would be passed over in judgement, we in faith apply the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, that we be passed over in judgement. *"... ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."* 1 Pet. 1:18-19

From the Unleavened Bread, we can see the sinless life of Jesus Christ and the purging of our sin by His sacrifice; His sinless life in exchange for our sinful lives. *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* 2 Cor. 5:21

From the First Fruits, we can see Jesus Christ as the first of the harvest. He is the first to rise from the dead and in His power, through faith, others will also rise from the dead. *"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For*

as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”
1 Cor. 15:20-22

As we approach this season of spring and begin to see new life springing up on the earth, may it remind us of the Lord's Passover. Rather than allowing sinners to justly die in the Law, through His grace and mercy, He provided His son as the sacrificial lamb, that all could be passed over in judgement. Symbolized by the unleavened bread, Jesus Christ was sinless; the perfect sacrifice for sinners. As a seed dies and is buried in the earth but then springs forth in new life,

Jesus Christ, the first fruit is the hope and promise for the harvest of souls and eternal life.

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.” Matt. 26:26-29

K. Brock

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

Why are you here?

Not just at a given time or place but why are you here? Why did God make you when He did? Why did He put you in the family that you are in? Why do you have the job that you do? What IS your purpose here on this planet?

Is it so that you can get rich and live happily ever after? Is it so that then you can find your bride or groom and have children? Are you here to work a nine to five job and then go home and do nothing, all cares of the day pushed to the next business day? Or is working a nine to five workday the right thing for you, but you bring your work home and keep working and forget your family?

Do you exist to fill the role of a mother, but who does not invest in her children by showing attention or giving discipline, so your children always get what they want but do not feel their mother's Love? Or a mother who forgets her children for the next guy fling that comes along? Or a mother who cares more about what people think and tries to make a good impression in public but runs her children to the ground at home? Is your purpose striving to have the best house on the market or wanting the appearance of your house to match the most modern trends?

Why are you here? Are you here to pursue being the best at sports or to be the prettiest girl in the crowd? Guys are you here to drive the best-looking car on your street, so then you can try to impress the girls? Or girls are you here solely to dream of one day getting married to the prince charming you have fabricated in your dreams? What about trying to be trendy on the social media platforms; is that why you are here? Are you using the time the Lord has given you in this life to accomplish what He's created you for?

What is your purpose here on this beautiful earth that God made? Why did God make you?

Would you consider that God made you so that you will go tell the world about Him, to show His light in this dark night to be that candle that shines brighter and brighter each passing day? Is it to be a comfort to those that are hurting? Is the time He has gifted you just for pursuing your own pleasures or could it also be for you to show His Love to those that do not have any love? Is it to be a friend to the friendless, to the outcast? Is your purpose to be part of the roadblock to the gates of hell, to block the road so that no one can get past it? Did God give you life to be a fighting warrior who will not sit when there is unfinished work of God's Kingdom still needing to be done? Or to be the person who will wrestle in prayer over some areas that are being controlled by Satan? Or to be the one to stand all alone when everybody else buckles and gives in?

What is your duty here? Who are you working for? God has called us here for a purpose. What are you working for?

God has called us here for a purpose. What are you doing about it? When Jesus was leaving this world to go to His Father, what did He command his followers to do? Are you fulfilling that call?

If you say that you are Christian, do the outcasts, the ones who are hurting, the ones who have not seen any love in their lives, the ones who might have a sexual sin problem, the ones who are wanting to kill people because they have not seen true love and nobody cares for them - do they see evidence that you are a true believer of Christ? Do they see that you love Christ more than your own dreams, more than yourself?

If you have felt or thought that you are doing God's work, I ask you, to consider if you are sure you are showing Christ to everyone God brings into your life. Are you pursuing to love the Lord with all your might and to invest most highly in things of eternal significance? What about the youth, who want to do what is right but are full of questions; do you give them your listening ear to help them grow in their spiritual walk with Christ? Are you making sure that they know who Jesus is and not living a certain way just because that is something you do in a church? What about the hurting people who might sit beside you, are you giving them your time and shoulder to cry on in their darkest moments? Does the unpopular kid who is always in the corner and too shy to meet new people or to initiate a conversation with people on their own feel Christ's love for them through your interactions with them? What about the children that have a special need, do they see Christ in you?

Do You Really Care? (abridged)

by Elizabeth Lapp

I'm the woman in the pew next to you.

I've been a widow for months now.

My heart is aching today
With a pain that will not go away.
Do you care?

I'm the woman in the pew next to you.
My son is rebellious, stubborn, self-willed.
I hurt deep inside.
All night I cried.
May I share?

I'm the woman in the pew next to you.
I'm divorced; a curse to our nation.
My life is shattered to bits and pieces.
The pain I endure never ceases.
May I share?

I'm the woman in the pew next to you.
I'm ugly, homely, if you please.
My nose is too long; just everything's wrong.
My hair is thin, and I am fat.
How would you like to look like that?
May I share?

I'm the woman in the pew next to you.
I'm lonely; nobody cares.
Nobody comes; nobody calls.
No little children run through my halls.
Do you care?

I'm the woman in the pew next to you.
I have a terminal illness, cancer, of course.
Please dry my tears and understand my fears.
I want to live; I want to give.
May I share?

I'm the woman in the pew next to you.
I had a miscarriage for the third time.
Disappointment again.
When will it end?
Do you care?

I'm the woman in the pew next to you.
I'm untalented. I can't even sing.
I never taught a class.
Couldn't if I were asked.
May I share?

I'm the woman in the pew next to you.
My baby has colic; he cries for hours.
I'm worn out and weary.
How can you look so cheery?
Do you care?

Yes, I'm the woman in the pew next to you.
Do you really care; may I my burden share?
What will you say;
What will you do
If I unload my woes on you?

May I be more than just the woman in the pew next to you?
Will you be my friend until the end?
Someone on whom I can depend?
Without a friend I cannot make it.
Without a friend I cannot take it.
Will you dry my tears, understand my fears?
Will you listen with your heart and no gossip start?
Will you hug me tight and pray each night
For this burden I can no longer bear?
Tell me, do you really care?

Jesus told his followers to go into all the world and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things He commanded. What does the teaching mean? What about making disciples? The way my feeble mind understands these verses is that we should become pupils that are completely sold out for God and be under God's guidance to learn to be like Him and then go out and teach others who are younger in the faith and help them grow to be stronger in the Lord. These verses tell me that our purpose is partly to be a shepherd helper so the sheep recognize your voice as someone who cares for them, who will not let them down and it draws them closer to the shepherd. Have we grown too comfortable with always being at the feet of Jesus that we have forgotten to go and teach others how to come to know him in a relationship that will be grounded in the Lord?

Another thing that has been pounding through my head is this; God said that trials and tribulation will come. What do you think those trials and tribulation will look like? Are they here now? Do you think that we will be persecuted for our faith? I don't think it's going to quite look like what we might expect. I feel that Satan knows that persecuting the Christians will only spread the gospel more widely. I think that he is using a different tactic that is harder to spot. He is a very sly creature. I am going to stick out my neck on this one, so hear me out!

I feel that the trials and tribulation will be in the form of a wolf in sheep's clothing and of the Antichrist. I think that Satan is going to use people inside the church to tear apart the church to the point there is no real place to worship Christ publicly because everybody will be scared that if they will start up a church again under the name of Christ then "well-meaning Christians" will think they are part of the antichrist movement. I think Satan's tactics will also include putting enmity between brothers and sisters, to always tempt them to be in a conflict with each other, to make it hard to believe each person's value is equal in the sight of God. To be constantly picking each other apart.

I am concerned that some form of this may be happening in our churches. Is Satan pulling the churches apart and encouraging bitterness to set in, causing families to be split up and not communicate with each other anymore?

If this is truly happening, what are we going to do about it? Are we just going to sit around and say "Oh, this is getting bad. I wish something would happen so that it will not get worse!" Let me tell you with that type of attitude it will only get worse. It is time to get up and do something. It is time to grab our rusty swords and armor to wash them clean with our tears of forgiveness so they become sharp and clean, and to use them in protection from the enemy's attacks.

We then need to start pulling out those ugly weeds that we may have allowed to grow in our hearts and to allow the seeds that God has planted there to be able to prosper in the fertile soil of our hearts.

After we have taken up and cleaned our armor, we can now go and build back up the walls that have been broken down because of these ugly weeds and Satan's attacks. We can now go build back up the walls that have been broken down because of our neglect of fighting off Satan's attacks on our lives and church families.

Now that sounds like a manlier type of thing, so is it just for the strong Christians to have the role to be warriors? Do not think you are off the hook ladies or young Christians you still have work to do. It might not be glamorous or as exciting, but this role that you have is probably more important than being a warrior on the front lines. Being a person who is willing to go in secret and wrestle in prayer for those who are on the front lines, to wrestle in prayer against the conflict that Satan has brought into the churches, to be resolved to fight in prayer for those who are not very stable and are on the brink of being sold over to Satan.

What?!? You say that you need money to be able to go out and serve God! Have you not read the stories of the heroes of faith? Remember George Muller who cared for 10,024 orphans over his lifetime and never asked anyone for money. Instead, he went to God with his needs and they were always answered. Or consider the testimony of Corrie Ten Boom. When she was traveling the world, she would rely on God, and if He wanted her to be at a certain place, He would provide the money for her to get there. Even in my own experience, I can testify that the different times that I have been on the mission field, if I was running out of money and did not have enough to cover my bills or to get to my field, the money has always shown up in time for me to pay my bills. God has always provided the resources for me to be able to go to my field within the time frame that I was planning to go. So, perhaps we should spend less energy on worrying how we will do it and instead trust God to provide for our needs.

You say, "If I give up my good job to serve God, I will not have enough to feed my family or make it comfortable for them." Where is your faith, do you forget that God is a God of comfort, and He cares for your family? If you truly believe God is calling you to leave your job to serve Him in a certain place, and you give everything to answer His call faithfully, perhaps God will provide for your family in ways that you could not even provide yourself.

Do not excuse yourself if you think that you are not cut out to go to distant lands. Again what about George Muller? He was planning to go on the foreign mission field, but God kept shutting that door and then God opened his eyes that his mission field was actually right in his back yard helping the orphans that were swarming the streets of London at the time. Consider also William and Catherine Booth, the ones that started The Salvation Army. They were planning to serve in a nice church with rich people as the congregation, but God opened their eyes that there was more for them on the other side of London. They would not get paid as they would have stayed with the "rich" church. But they were rich because God was blessing them and many people were turning

to Jesus, and their lives were being changed because the Booths were obeying God. They were seeing the worst drunkard become a new creature which in turn would change the whole town around because of what the town saw; a difference in the drunkard.

You say "I am not good at speaking and I am shy with talking in front of people." And I say REALLY!!!!!! Yes you might not be cut out to be a public preacher but how much have you wrestled in prayer during a sermon? Have you not heard that the reason for such a success with the sermons of D. L. Moody, William Booth, and Billy Graham is because they had people praying the entire time they were preaching? Do you also realize that if you feel like you cannot speak well in front of people, God might prefer to use you rather than someone who is very comfortable speaking because you will rely on Him to be the one who speaks and not yourself?

Will you pray with me that we as the church of Jesus Christ might stand up against Satan and become warriors for Christ, and not for Satan? Please do not just read this and get all huffy if it stepped on your toes or admit that you agree but then do nothing about what you have just read. Let us use this as a launching pad to become closer with Christ, to purpose to build up and fortify the walls that God has put around us, and to go out and defeat that ugly devil!!

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal. 1:10-12

And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. Col. 3:23-24

MAKING A MARK!!

A person makes a living by what he does, but he makes a mark by how he lives!!

I recently read an article about the man, who for 57 Super Bowls, has been in charge of the grass on the field. He is arguably the best sod keeper in his profession, so much so that he is nicknamed the "Sodfather". I wondered how a person begins a career like that and how you move up the ranks to be the man in charge of the biggest ball fields, for the biggest games in the sport arena. The article went on to explain that he had not always been in charge of the best or the most prominent. He started at a young age and was given the worst fields in the industry, soon making them the best in the business.

His work was not unnoticed and soon he was working on bigger and more important fields for more important teams and games. His work ethic and his commitment to the job and obviously his love for the game soon earned him a top position. I know nothing about this man, George Toma, except what this article told me. He is 94 and is retiring. Without knowing more, I believe we can come to some

proper conclusions. There was something driving George that was more than the paycheck. He loved the game and what he did. I would like to believe he knew God and read his Bible but those things I do not know. I do know that if all he did was focus on grass and never placed his trust in Jesus Christ, his many years of perfect grass and fields will mean nothing when time changes for eternity. No doubt George has a great work ethic.

Colossians 3:22-23
"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;"

I have employed guys that have made this verse their motto and have been excellent employees and seemingly enjoyed whatever they found to do. I have also employed guys that were there only to fill the time and collect a paycheck. They were capable and knew how to work but their

end product was inferior to the guy who was giving it his best and working as unto God. I believe we as believers and ambassadors for the King, must be “better” in this area than the general population. It is a poor representation of our Master if we are no better in our field than the unbeliever.

The workforce seems to be at an all-time low for good, honest, hardworking individuals. It seems fewer people want to work; few people think they should have to subject themselves to a fulltime job especially entry level jobs. Most want to jump into at least the middle of the pack or maybe even the top and be the boss, the leader and enjoy all the perks of the higher position. I say that in this market of workers, Christians should stand out. Don't think we are too good for the job at hand, fill the role to the best of our abilities and cheerfully give our best. Give our full attention to serving our boss, the company, and the customer. Good bosses and employers notice this, and you will gain favor and responsibility quickly. God loves to see His people representing Him well. God loves to see us being

faithful ambassadors for His Kingdom and he loves to see us make Him look good.

I challenge us all to have great work ethics, work hard as unto the Lord. However, let's not stop there. Let the world know why we are great in our field, tell them about Jesus, who He is and what He did and He is the reason we are diligent. Let's make a difference for the Kingdom while doing a great job. We may never know the influence we have had until eternity. I think of the song “Thank you for giving to the Lord”, the small things that we sacrifice may be huge to someone else and when they realize we did it as unto Jesus and He is the reason behind us doing good, maybe that kindness will make an eternal difference.

I recently had a man tell me something like this, “Don't worry about your title or who gets the credit, just do the right thing, and listen for the voice of The Shepherd telling us how to act and what to do. Jesus said, ‘My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me.’ I want to be known by Jesus!”

This is my desire, to be

known by Jesus and that I can represent Him in a way that those that don't know Him will be able to find Him because of the way I served and loved my family, community, employers/

employees, customers and neighbors.

Joe Cover
Dallas Center, IA

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
And the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile but you have to sigh—

When care is pressing you down a bit—
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.
Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns.

And many a failure turns about,
When he might have won if he'd have stuck it out.
Don't give up, though the pace is slow—
You may succeed with another blow.

Often the goal is nearer than,
It seems to a faint and faltering man.
Often the struggler has given up—
When he might have won the victor's cup.

And he learned too late, when the night slipped down,
How close he was to a golden crown.
Success is failure turned inside out—
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt.

And you never can tell how close you are---
It may be near when it seems afar.
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit---
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit."

A minister quoted the above poem in a midweek meeting, in a city, where he was visiting. After the service a man came up and told him the recital of that poem had saved him from taking his own life.

The man said he had been out of work for a long time, his friends had failed him, his money was gone, and he had entered the church for a few minutes meditation before walking to the river nearby to leap into it.

New thoughts and fresh hopes, aroused by hearing these verses, caused him to abandon his suicidal intentions. Before the unhappy man left the meeting, he had been placed in the care of persons who would help him to get a fresh start for Heaven.

God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform!

*Keep your eyes on Jesus,
keep them fixed on Him;*

*Let not troubled waters, make
your faith grow dim;
Jesus bids you meet Him, out
upon life's sea;
Keep your eyes on Jesus, and
a victor be.*

Little do we know what an influence we could be in being a witness wherever we go, whether it be in volunteer work in a soup kitchen, sorting clothing and shoes for the needy, making food baskets for the community at Thanksgiving time, sitting with a brother or sister in your church that is on bed rest because of health reasons or just listening to someone who calls you on the phone and needs a listening ear for their troubles.

Lord give us wisdom to speak out the Truth and Help someone along life's way!

Shirley Frick,
Greenville, OH

CONNECTIONS

As members of the Bible Study Board our hope in writing monthly articles related to the Adult SS Lessons is that we all see afresh different points of connection that reveal the Word made flesh.

John 6:16 - 7:17

Life!

The word *life* appears eleven times in this month's studies. In

this passage of scripture, Jesus uses real life experiences to show that He alone gives *life*. In

our recent studies we saw Jesus miraculously feeding over 5,000 people on the hillside. Now, on this side of the sea, Jesus uses that event to teach them (and us) that He is the *bread of life*, from whom we have *everlasting life*.

Unlike the manna that was once given to sustain daily life to old Israel, Jesus is that true bread from Heaven that gives *eternal life* to the entire world. When we partake of this bread (Jesus), we have *spiritual life* which will last forever!

Everlasting life, eternal life, the words of life, are all promises, found in this passage, as a result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because He lives,

we can live also!

This month we (and believers all around the world), will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus! Because He died and rose again, we can have *life* through His name! This *life* not only sustained us day by day, but this *life* will last forever!

Because He lives
I can face tomorrow
Because He lives
All fear is gone.
Because I know
He holds the future
And Life is worth the living
Just because He lives!

On behalf of the Bible Study Board
Bart Hoblit

PHIL'S PONDERINGS

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

April 2023 Bible Study

April 2 – The Bread from Heaven - John 6:16-33

This passage begins with a degree of uncertainty. The crowd wants to make Jesus a king and a king of their choosing. But Jesus has hiked up the mountain and is out of sight. His disciples had been kept busy serving the bread Jesus had broken. Then they cleaned up all the leftovers. They are likely tired and ready to leave but Jesus is gone. What should they do? After waiting till evening for Jesus to return they head for Capernaum in the boat that had brought them to this desolate place. As is common on this sea a fierce wind-storm enveloped them. Their only option was the hard work of rowing their way home. Then Jesus came walking on the water. Their

first reaction was fear. Then they realized who was coming toward them and they gladly received him into the boat. Then suddenly they arrived in Capernaum. When morning came, those who still remained where Jesus had broken bread, put together what they knew about where Jesus might have gone. They too then headed for Capernaum mystified by his disappearance and knowing that he had not sailed with his disciples. When they find Jesus in Capernaum their first question is, "How did you get here" (without a boat)? Jesus does not answer their question. This is not a crowd ready for harvest. They don't really want Jesus, only his benefits package. They aren't hungry for the bread of life, only bread. They don't want a relationship with God, only the password that unlocks His abundance. There are many today who want Jesus, but only are interested in what He can do for them. May we guard our hearts so that it is focused on God that we may glorify Him. In so doing we will have many stories to tell how He came unexpectedly, carried our burdens, and sped us quickly through the wind and waves.

April 9 – The Resurrection! - Matthew 28:1-20

I wish Matthew had written more about the resurrection. It seems so sparse when compared to Luke and John. But perhaps there was more that Matthew had heard but had not been able to verify its authenticity. So rather than including something that might bring doubt upon his gospel narrative he stuck to what he knew to be true. For without doubt the resurrection accounts have been more scrutinized than any other passages. Many have tried to show inconsistencies between the different Gospel accounts. Ultimately, every argument has only served to strengthen the reliability of the accounts we have. There have also been many testimonies given by those who have attempted to refute the historical account and instead have become convicted of its truth. So in spite of its brevity Matthew's account of the resurrection remains unimpeachable. Though brief, it is also the only gospel to mention the soldiers who guarded the tomb. However, on this day and on every Sunday we may add to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John our own account of the power of Christ's resurrection. That power stretches across 2000 years and has given each one of us new life. Its power continues

to gather those throughout earth's history who share in the promise to come. The power of Christ's resurrection stretches into eternity where we will share in His resurrection life completely. Therefore, let us give Him all the praise and glory for not only what He has done but also for what He will do.

April 16 – Rejected by His Own - John 6:34-51

There seems to be one key verse that unlocks the doors of meaning for this passage. It is v.51. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." We can rule out one error that causes this conversation to be a source of confusion and controversy that has plagued the church much of its life. So, no, we don't have to eat the flesh of Jesus Christ in some sort of cannibalistic ritual. But Jesus does want to be so much a part of our lives that partaking of Him is like eating bread. Physical bread provides life for our physical bodies. Jesus, as the living bread, nourishes our spiritual body. How did Jesus give us his flesh for our spiritual nourishment? By dying on the cross for your sins, my sins, and the sins of all mankind. When we receive forgiveness for our sins we receive His life in exchange for our sins. How do we receive forgiveness? Not by chewing on his flesh or eating bread that has been consecrated for us when we gather together in our love feasts. We receive His forgiveness by faith anywhere and anytime we are prepared to receive it. For as long as we have life Jesus is present and willing to give us His living bread that we might have life through Him.

April 23 – Truth Misunderstood - John 6:52-71

All of us are attracted to people who have some claim to fame. Whether they are a sports star, actor or actress, politician, or evangelist most of us have some favorites. Fame is inevitable for those who are frequently in the public eye. Jesus is becoming increasingly famous. With that fame comes followers who hope to see and perhaps share some of that fame. Jesus doesn't want followers who are drawn by His fame. He wants followers who ultimately

have placed their trust in His hands. To separate the sheep from the goats Jesus presses forward to a ridiculous conclusion concerning eating His flesh and drinking His blood. The luster of His fame is starting to tarnish in the eyes of those who have been drawn to Him by it. It is more than just not understanding on their part. They are offended by the notion. Jesus escalates the conversation further. In effect Jesus asks them if He would be famous enough for them to continue following Him if He ascended back to heaven from where he came? Jesus does not bargain for our loyalty to Him. We can't be all in with one foot and ready to run away with the other when Jesus says something with which we disagree. Jesus concludes His conversation with them by saying His fame is simply a work of the flesh and is not capable of supporting their devotion in Him. Only the Spirit can give life that lasts through all the ups and downs of a life lived by faith in Jesus. Like Peter we must confess, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6:68)

April 30 – Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve - John 7:1-19

Just a footnote so to speak regarding John 7:1. John uses the phrase "the Jews" frequently without any greater specificity as to who he means. In this first verse John makes a clear distinction that is political in nature. We tend to think of Jews in a religious context. John makes a political distinction. Jews are those who live in Judea. Galileans live in Galilee even though both are Jews religiously. Nevertheless, the Jews see themselves as superior to their Galilean brethren who in turn are always trying to prove themselves equal to their Jewish cousins. Heb 4:15 says, "*For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*" In the conversation between Jesus and his brothers there is obviously some tension. They seem to be mocking Him for not going to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus replies suggesting that their interest in the Feast has more to do with partying than obeying God. Jesus knows something about living with siblings who don't always get along with each other. It must have been tempting at various times to set them straight with something less than God's best for them. Though He refused to go with his brothers to the feast Jesus

still had their best interest in mind. He knew that conflict awaited Him in Jerusalem. The farther He stayed away from His brothers the less likely they would become objects of harassment simply because of who they are. He needed for both His own sake and theirs that His presence be kept a secret till He was ready to reveal Himself to those at the Feast. So whether the conflict was in the home, within the larger body of Brethren, or with the world Jesus is intimately acquainted with our infirmities. Most importantly He knows how to respond through us without sinning when conflict touches our homes, Brotherhoods, and neighbors next door or around the world.

OBITUARIES

Patricia Peters

Patricia Ann (Boone) Peters, daughter of Josiah Harold Boone and Mary Pearl (Johnson) Boone, was born August 13, 1949, in Rocky Mount Virginia. Mom went home to be with Jesus on Sunday, January 22, 2023, surrounded by her family in her home.

On February 1, 1969, Mom was united in marriage with Roland Lee Peters of Troy, Ohio and was ten days away from celebrating their 54th anniversary. She was baptized on May 15, 1973, and committed her life to Christ. She was a faithful member of the Cornerstone Dunkard Brethren Church in Covington Ohio.

Mom had a kind heart and a joyful spirit that her family and friends enjoyed. She loved spending her time tending to her flower gardens, sewing, having a good cup of coffee, traveling and spending time with her faithful husband, children, and grandchildren. Mom always made sure her family had what they needed and served others with a grateful heart. In 2014 she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Even through the hard times she never complained, faithfully accepted His will for her, and fought a valiant battle that she ultimately won when she met her Lord and Savior.

Dad and Mom were blessed with and survived by three children, Tonia & Darren Schauer, Heath & Betsy Peters (Bowman), Tri-

cia & Stephen Bowser, and 14 grandchildren, Vidol Schauer, Sydney (Nathan) Jennings, Rylee (Jonny) White, Britton (Baily) Schauer, Ty Schauer, Videline Peters, Barbara Peters, Daphka Peters, Drake Peters, Crew Peters, Kanyon Peters, Eva Bowser, Will Bowser, and Vivien Bowser, one great-grandchild, Delilah Jennings, surviving siblings, Clinton and Carol Boone, Rosemary Cassada, Lowell and Liza Boone, brother-in-law Charles Crenshaw, and many nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by her father and mother, Harold and Mary “Gran” Boone, her father-in-law and mother-in-law Raymond and Evelyn Peters, and her sister Linda Crenshaw.

We want to extend a special thank you to her caregivers who faithfully helped mom through her battle with Alzheimer’s these last years, Sydney Jennings, Esther Mwaura, Jenna Shuck, and Elsa Nicodemus.

Funeral services were held on Friday, January 27, at the Old German Baptist Brethren Church, 6360 Farrington Road, Covington with burial following at Highland Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer’s Association-Miami Valley Chapter, 31 W. Whipp Rd. Dayton, OH 45459, or Ohio’s Hospice of Miami County, 3230 N. Co. Rd. 25A, Troy, OH 45373.

Beulah Swihart

Beulah Irene Swihart, 93, of Goshen, Indiana died Monday, February 13, 2023, at her home. She was born January 6, 1930, in Hasty, Colorado to Melvin and Sarah (Jarboe) Roesch.

On December 13, 1952, she married Robert W. Swihart in Fostoria, Ohio.

She is survived by two daughters, Sharon Swihart of Goshen and Carla (Dave) Burgess of Quinter, Kansas; a son, Delbert (Connie) Swihart of Quinter, Kansas; six grandchildren and 16 great-grand-

children. Along with her parents and husband, she was preceded in death by three adult sisters and an infant sister.

Beulah loved to spend time with her family and was an excellent cook. She enjoyed celebrating with others by giving cards and gifts.

Funeral services were held on February 20, at Yoder-Culp Funeral Home in Goshen, Indiana, with burial following at West Goshen Cemetery. Brother Dennis St. John from the Pleasant Ridge congregation officiated the services.

Memorial contributions may be directed to The Gideons International.

NEWS ITEMS

Notice

Please be sure all queries, reports, and any other business for 2023 General Conference are in my hands by April 15, 2023.

Thank you,

Bro. Ken Brock, Writing Clerk of General Conference.

Address: 1520 County Road 2260, Stryker, OH 43557

Phone: 419-515-3396

Email: kenbrockdb@gmail.com

Minister Address Change

Bro. Keith Snyder's new mailing address is 991 Kutztown Road, Myerstown, PA, 17067.

Lititz, Pennsylvania

Everyone is welcome to the spring revival meeting at the Lititz, Pennsylvania, congregation Wednesday, March 29 through Sunday April 2. Services are planned for 7:30 p.m. each evening and 9:30 a.m. Sunday morning, with Bro. Ray Stuber from the Shrewsbury, Pennsylvania congregation as evangelist. The meetings will conclude with the service Sunday morning. Lunch will be served following that service. Please keep the meeting in your prayers.

Arlene Birt, Cor.

Pine Grove, Pennsylvania

We will be having Love Feast April 2nd at 2 p.m. Weekend meetings with Brother John Eberly from the Chambersburg, Pennsylvania congregation will be held April 14th-16th. Evening services Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. Sunday morning service at 9:30 a.m. with a fellowship meal afterwards and no afternoon service. Visitors are so very welcome!

Rachel Noll, Cor.

Quinter, Kansas

The Quinter Dunkard Brethren Church will host District meeting for the third district April 7-9th, 2023. There will be a preaching service Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. The business meeting will be conducted Saturday morning followed by lunch for everyone at the church. There will be an examination service Saturday afternoon and communion that evening. Times to be announced. Sunday will include Sunday school and preaching service followed by lunch. Reservations for lodging will be coordinated through Kristi Miller. Please call or text her at 785-391-1068. We look forward to fellowshiping together.

Beth Jamison, Cor.

West Fulton, Ohio

The Lord willing, the West Fulton Congregation will be holding their Spring lovefeast meetings, April 14-16th, 2023. Bro. Kidron Crist from the CornerStone, Ohio congregation will be our evangelist. Friday evening service at 7:30 p.m. Saturday examination service is at 2:00 p.m. followed by lovefeast at 7:00 p.m. Sunday services are at 7:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend. Please pray for Bro. Kidron as he prepares for these services.

Joy Reed, Cor.

Pleasant Home, California

The Lord willing, the Pleasant Home Congregation will hold their Revival Meetings April 16-23, 2023, with Bro. Brad Wertz from the Quinter, Kansas congregation as our evangelist. Please pray for Bro. Brad as he prepares for these meetings. Weeknights 7:00 p.m.

District Meeting will be in the morning on the 22nd at 10:00 a.m. Saturday Examination service at 5:00 p.m. a song service, and our Communion following. Sunday services, morning worship at 8:00 a.m. Breakfast following, Sunday school 9:30 a.m., Preaching service 10:30 a.m. Dinner at 12:00 p.m. Afternoon service at 1:30 p.m. All are welcome to come and worship with us.

Carol Walker, Cor.

General Conference

The Lord willing, the 2023 General Conference of the Dunkard Brethren Church will be held June 10-14, 2023, at Aldersgate Christian Camp in Turner, Oregon. (www.aldersgateretreat.com)

The closest airport will be Portland, Oregon. (approx. 70 mi. from conf.) There is a commercial shuttle service from the Portland Airport to Salem. (10 mi. from conf) (groometransportation.com) **Advance reservations are recommended on Groome Transportation** There is a charge for this service. If you miss your scheduled shuttle you are supposed to call them to reschedule. There is Amtrak service to Salem. (10 mi from conf.)

We will run our own shuttle from conference to those 2 locations in Salem as needed. Please let us know if you are planning on using our transportation from Salem to the conference grounds. We are only picking up by appointment. Cell #'s Dennis 503-931-2940 and Norma 503-559-1481. Email normastamy@yahoo.com .

Lodging reservations should be sent to Dennis and Norma Jean Stamy, 1539 SE Miller Ave. Dallas, OR 97338. Call, text, or email. Cell Phone: 503-559-1481. Email normastamy@yahoo.com If possible please have your lodging requests in by May 1, 2023.

Earliest check in time will be 4 pm on Friday.

There are limited rooms that have a bathroom in them. **IF YOU ARE WILLING TO SHARE A ROOM WITH SOMEONE ELSE, PLEASE LET US KNOW.**

Bedding and 1 set of towels per person will be furnished for the 5 days. There will be the option to have clean towels midway through the conference.

There are RV spots available. Not all have full hookups.

Please let us know if you will be arriving after the 6:30 pm meal time on Friday. We need to have a count for the evening meal. If you will be arriving on Saturday please let us know approx. time so we can adjust meal counts.

If you are staying off site, please let us know which meals you will be there for.

We do need a signed medical release for anyone under 18 without parents attending. We have a form available if you need one. Just let us know.

It will be cool in the late evenings and early mornings, possible upper 40's to low 50's. You will need to bring jackets. Not heavy ones just lightweight. Like a sweater or sweatshirt.

Oregon has a law in place that you cannot pump your own fuel into your vehicle. They will pump it for you. Everyone needs to be aware of this so you don't try to pump your own. There are a few rural locations that will let you pump your own.

We have a list of popular places to visit. Just let us know and we can email it or if enough time I can mail it to you.

Travel Directions to Aldersgate Camps and Retreats:

From the North:

Exit from I-5 at Exit 252 (Kuebler Blvd.). Turn left at light. Proceed east to stop light at Turner Rd. and turn right. Follow Turner Rd. 4 miles into Turner. Continue to follow the main road through Turner following signs to Aumsville. You will cross Mill Creek on your way out of Turner. Entrance to Aldersgate is 500 ft. on the left.

From the South:

Exit from I-5 at Exit 248 (Turner-Sunnyside Rd). Turn right at stop sign. Proceed 4 miles east on Delaney Road into Turner. Turn right at the stop sign just after the railroad tracks. Follow the main road through Turner following signs to Aumsville. You will cross Mill Creek on your way out of Turner. Entrance to Aldersgate is 500 ft. on the left.

Thank You,
The Lodging Committee

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR MAY 2023

May 7 - John 7:20-36 - Doing Good on the Sabbath Day

1. On what day was a male child to be circumcised?

2. How often do we judge on the basis of appearance rather than on righteous judgment?

3. How many different, often contradictory opinions, did people have about who Jesus is?

May 14 - Luke 1:26-60 - Mother's Day

1. What does Mary think of herself?

2. How many different kinds of emotions does Mary experience while Gabriel is present?

3. What words spoken by Gabriel are echoed again by the other mother in this passage?

May 21 - John 7:37-53 - A Prophet or Not

1. To whom is the promise of living water given this time?

2. How important is it to you that we know who Jesus is?

3. Are you ready to give testimony to and defend Jesus on the basis of the Biblical account?

May 28 - John 8:1-20 - Eager for the Truth

1. In the broader context of organized human behavior what label would you apply to the actions of Jesus' accusers?

2. What does this account foreshadow for all of us?

3. How does the intimacy of Jesus' relationship with the Father impact your relationship with God?

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