

# BIBLE MONITOR

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"For the faith once delivered unto the saints"

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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.

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## PREPARE ME, GRACIOUS GOD

Prepare me, gracious God,  
To stand before thy face;  
Thy Spirit must the work perform,  
For it is all of grace.

In Christ's obedience clothe,  
And wash me in his blood;  
So shall I lift my head with joy,  
Among the sons of God.

Do thou my sins subdue;  
Thy sovereign love make known,  
The spirit of my mind renew,  
And save me in thy Son.

Let me attest thy power;  
Let me thy goodness prove,  
Till my full soul can hold no more,  
Of everlasting love.

*Elliot and Toplady*  
Selected by Lynn H. Miller  
Newmanstown, PA

## BLIND SIGHT

The good Lord blessed humanity with five natural senses; touch, taste, smell, hearing and sight. While all are incredible blessings, it seems all are not created equal. I suspect many of you would agree with me that the most important of these senses seems to be sight. Thinking about this, it seems to me that if I lost one of these senses, sight is the one I'd least like to live without. At times, our glimpse of beautiful, colorful, grandiose or complex scenes can stir awe in us; something our other senses generally seem inferior at doing.

However, some people lack sight, whether they had sight and later lost it or never experienced it, being born blind. It is known that when a person lacks one physical sense, their remaining senses often intensify to partially

compensate for the missing sense. This is certainly true for the blind. However, no matter how strong their other senses become, they can never replace sight.

So how does one describe a beautiful scene to another that is blind? Following are some examples of beautiful sights. How the midday light sparkles and shimmers on the water or the appearance of the wind blowing spray atop white-capped waves. The way cloud shadows slowly drift across a valley viewed from a mountaintop or the color transformations during a desert sunset. The contrast of bright light and shadows of dappled sunlight in the woods or the brilliance of fall colors on a sunny day. The golden wind-blown waves across a ripe wheatfield

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or the perfection and order of a sunflower head full of seeds. The intricacies and patterns of closely examined snowflakes or the crystalline and mystical look of a forest coated in ice. Beauty abounds in God's creation and these things can stir awe in us, as they should, and when they do, it should remind us of the One who created both them and our ability to behold them.

But what of the blind? How can they experience the awe of witnessing such things? Those that can see may try their best to describe these things to those who can't but ultimately, no matter how articulate, the descriptions will fall short of the actual vision. Unless God performs miraculous healing, the blind simply won't be able to experience the blessings of sight. However, if the blind believe and trust in God, He will someday fully open their eyes to his awesome creation, majesty and glory.

I have to wonder if John felt much this way in writing the Book of Revelation. How does one who witnessed the things of Heaven describe such scenes to those remaining on the earth who have never experienced the heavenly realm? Could John have felt as

we might, in trying to explain the beauty of God's creation to the blind? John saw a vision of God the Father sitting upon His throne surrounded by elders and beasts. He saw the celestialized earth and all of God's exalted creations worshipping Him. He saw the rainbow round about the throne and the crystal sea of glass before it. He saw the six-winged beasts full of eyes, continually saying "*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*" He saw the Lion of the Tribe of Judah; a Lamb as it had been slain open the seals of the book from the right hand of Him who sat upon the throne. He saw the white, red, black and pale horses and their riders and significances. He saw the stars of heaven fall to the earth. He saw four angels standing on the corners of the earth, holding back the four winds. He saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people standing before the throne and before the Lamb crying "*Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*" And John saw many more things. What an awesome sight those things must be.

What about those of us

that, much like the blind, have never experienced the heavenly realm? I suspect that John, by the guiding of God, did the best that humanity can do to describe the things he witnessed in the heavenly realm. But ultimately, no matter how articulate, it is apparent that John's descriptions fall short of the gift of heavenly sight. However, if we believe and trust in God, He will someday fully open our eyes to his awesome majesty and glory.

*"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."*  
1 Cor. 2:9

*"For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then*

*shall I know even as also I am known."* 1 Cor:13:12

*"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* John 14:2-3

*"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."* Rev. 21:1-2

K. Brock  
Stryker, OH

## WHO IS JAMES L. SNYDER?

*James L. Snyder is a frequent writer for the Bible Monitor. In fact, James has been contributing articles for the Monitor since 2014.*

*The following is an interview with James. The questions are underlined and James' responses follow.*

Where do you live?

My wife, Martha and I have lived in Ocala, Florida since 1997. We came here from Ohio to pastor a church. I have been a pastor since 1973.

Do you have a family?

We have three children, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Where were you born and raised?

My wife was born and raised in Phoenix, New York.

I was born and raised in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, which is in Amish/Mennonite country.

How did you and your wife meet?

In high school, I felt God calling me into the pastoral ministry. I sent letters to approximately 12 different Bible colleges. I had no help in this because I was the first one on my father's side to graduate from high school. So my prayer then was, whatever school you want me to attend, let them be the first to call me.

Within a month, I received a call from Elohim Bible Institute in western New York. I was accepted.

When I hung up the phone, a thought occurred to me. As a pastor, I needed a wife. I had never dated before and had no idea what to do or where to begin. So again, I prayed, "Father, I need a wife to help me in my pastoral ministry. I pray that the first woman I meet on that Institute campus be the wife you have for me."

That sounds like a stupid prayer. My parents drove me up to the campus, and when we pulled into the men's dormitory, a woman came out with her hair all rolled up in tomato cans, like I've never seen before. I quickly prayed, "Oh God, I'm not on campus yet. I have not put my foot on the ground. This doesn't count." However, that was the woman God had prepared for me to marry.

We met in September 1970, and in February the following year, we became engaged, and then in August of that year, we were married. I could not have chosen a better wife, which is why I trusted God for it. This summer we celebrate 52 years of marriage.

What are some highlights from your youth?

One of the highest points in my youth was becoming a Christian. I remember that day very well and often think of that and thank God that I could hear the gospel and accept Christ as my Savior.

One of the most memorable happenings in my youth was when two retired missionaries who lived just across the street from the church met me one Sunday morning as I was coming into the church and handed me a book and said, "We think you need to read this book, so we want to give it to you." So I smiled and thanked them, and we went into the service.

The next Sunday, as I was coming in, these two retired missionaries stood waiting for me, greeted me, and said, "Did you get to read the book, and how did you like it?"

I told them I didn't because I had so much homework as well as a part-time job after school. So they smiled, and we went into the church.

The following Sunday, the same thing happened, and I told them I did not get a chance to read the book.

This went on for several weeks until I finally concluded that if I didn't at least read the first chapter of this book, I would have to face these ladies every Sunday.

That week I read the first chapter, and my life was changed. That book was "The Pursuit of God" by A. W. Tozer. That book has significantly changed my life.

That Sunday, I greeted them with a big smile, told them I had read the book and was so grateful they gave it to me. I'm not sure they realized how significantly they changed my life by giving me that book. That started me on the path I'm still on today.

How and when did you come to know the Lord?

My family had just started going to a new church in our town, it met up over the town fire department garage. I started to go to the youth group on Sunday and Wednesday nights. They shared the gospel all the time and one night I responded to the altar call and accepted Christ as my Saviour. A few months later, I was baptized in the creek nearby. I think I was 10 at that time.

Can you describe your spiritual journey that led you to today?

In high school, all I wanted to be was a writer. Earnest Hemmingway influenced me in my writing endeavor. We shared the same birthday although not the same year. Then I found A. W. Tozer and my journey changed directions. In time, God began impressing upon me to go into the ministry. All I wanted to do was write. God's persistence brought me to the point where I surrendered my writing ambitions and followed the Lord into pastoral ministry. I believed that God wanted me to give up my writing as Abraham gave up Isaac. I walked away from my ambitions and chose to serve God as a pastor. I never thought I could do both. For me, it was one or the other.

Several years into my pastoral ministry, God began urging me to write. Then I wrote a biography of A. W. Tozer. Following that, I was able to do 29 books based on A. W. Tozer's audio sermons, which have been translated into at least 10 languages.

What is your ministry?

My ministry today involves preaching and writing.

How did you come to start contributing articles for the Bible Monitor?

One of my friends was Keith M. Bailey. He was part of the Christian and Missionary Alliance and counseled me on many things. He then left the C&MA and joined the Dunkard Brethren. I still kept in touch with him and talked at least once a month.

He wrote an article in the Bible Monitor every month. Several years

before his death he was very weak and asked me if I would do several articles for him until he got his strength back. He died in 2015 and I am still doing columns for the Bible Monitor.

I participated in his wife's funeral and also in his.

What are your biggest interests?

My biggest interests are reading, writing and preaching. I have a library of over 8,500 books. I have many of Keith Bailey's library. Along with my contributions to the Bible Monitor, I write a weekly syndicated column in over 300 newspapers, I do a weekly radio program on 6 radio stations in Florida and in Pennsylvania. I also have a weekly ministry in an assisted living facility here in Ocala. In 2021, I finally separated from the C&MA for the same reasons Keith M. Bailey did.

What encourages you most about what the Lord is doing in you, people around you, the church and the world?

Perhaps my biggest encouragement is how God seems to be using me to get the Tozer books out to the church at large. I am seeing many people respond to his powerful message. Tozer says, "What's more important, the message or getting credit for the message?" That has guided me for many years.

This year 22 of the Tozer books have been published in Romania. The Tozer books have been translated in over 10 languages around the world.

What do you see as our biggest challenges/areas that we, the church, need to focus on?

I believe the biggest challenge is the heresy seeping into the church almost uncontrollably. Many are allowing the world to determine what the church really is. For example, many have allowed contemporary music into our church much to our deterioration. When the current generation goes to a church on Sunday morning, they see no difference to the wild concert they went to Saturday night where drugs and alcohol flowed freely.



Our biggest challenge is to get and keep the world out of the church and make the Word the focus. Where are the prophets of today?

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## BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD

We were privileged to see Queen Esther live on the Sight and Sound Stage. It was excellent as all their productions are. There are many lessons to be learned from the story. For a refresher, read the book of Esther; all ten chapters will take you about 20 minutes. The take-aways for me were this: For the Jews, it seemed that their world was ending. Their daughters were taken away to be presented to the king and the evil Haman had hatched a plan to legally kill them all. The plan involved all the other citizens, and the pay was the property of the Jews. This insured no one would take the side of the Jews. They had no one in their corner, or so they thought.

Like every situation we ever encounter, God already knew. It did not take Him by surprise. I am not willing to say it was God's will for the evil to make

the decisions they did, however He did allow it. He allowed it and had already worked out a way for what the devil had planned for evil, He would use for good. He had already put things and people in place to make possible the seemingly impossible. How many times do we face things that seem hopeless? Impossible? Too big for us? What do we do in those situations? The Jews dressed in sackcloth, cried out to God, prayed and fasted. Esther 4:3 *"And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes."*

The challenges that I walked away with were several. The first one was the reminder of the things God had already done.

These acted as reminders of God's faithfulness and power. He had parted the Red Sea, stopped the mouths of lions, kept the boys safe from the fiery furnace, etc... Everywhere they turned or remembered, they realized God had made a way. They had incredible faith that He would do it again. Even with the reminders and their faith, they still questioned why.

Esther 4:14b *"And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"* This is a question that we should ask ourselves. We aren't here by chance. God's hand has been on us and in our lives preparing us to make a difference where he has placed us. We didn't just happen to be born where we are or to who our parents were or whatever the situation is. God knew all those things and is crafting a way for us to be. Maybe we are the ones in the position to help someone when they see nothing but helplessness? Maybe we are the ones in a hopeless situation? Wherever we find ourselves we can be sure we are not there by accident. Look around and ask, "Am I here for such a time as this?" Society has done everything

it can to duck responsibility. More times than not people will get out their cameras and video an injustice rather than to make a stand for the right or to intercede and stop the wrong. The questions are asked, "Why cause waves?", "Why not bend a little for the sake of peace?", "What about the children?" In the play, these questions were asked of Mordecai when he would not bow to Haman. He answered that he "Worshipped only the Lord God" and "I cannot be bought for any price". We need to have the same mindset. When the world/authorities ask us to do something that goes contrary to God's word we need to stand firm. Not only do we need to stand firm for ourselves, but many times if one person stands up for what is right it gives courage to the rest to stand with them.

In Chapter 9 starting at verse 17, the Jews feasted. They rejoiced, feasted and praised God for being with them. They made known to the world who God was and why they were rejoicing. Not once, but a yearly festival. It is still celebrated today. It is the Jewish feast of Purim. Are we eager to give God praise?

Are we willing to set time aside and celebrate a “win” with our friends, neighbors, brothers and sisters? I think at times we do a great job of it; at other times we brush it aside and assume that things “just worked out” or was “coincidence”. I hope we can have more of the attitude that “Those who leave everything in God’s hands will eventually see God’s hands in everything.”

I want to leave us with this challenge. Instead of looking around and seeing all the bad, all the things we wish weren’t and pulling back into ourselves like a scared turtle or snail, take the attitude of, “For such a time as this.” Look around and make a difference. Do what needs to be done. Motivate others, commandeer some help and make a difference. I do not believe that it was God’s will for man to fall, but that instead, He would have a relationship with them as He created in the garden. However, He knew that with a free will, Adam and Eve would sin and bring death and separation. An all-knowing God looking into the future and seeing the choices that were made, took that which was meant for evil and made a way of redemption. The last part of

Revelation 13:8 *“of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”* tells us that before man was created, God had planned redemption. We are recipients of that plan today. We are aware of it, and we celebrate it every time we take communion. I challenge us to make it more known. Make it known to everyone we meet. In Esther 4:13-14 Mordecai says to Esther, *“Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king’s house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father’s house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”*

With God’s help, let us determine to be part of the solution and not a weak, abashed, people. Let us be bold, share the answer to the world’s questions and problems. No matter the question or the problem the answer is JESUS! Be bold for him and rise to the challenge FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS!

Joe Cover  
Dallas Center, IA

## HOW TO BE MISERABLE

*“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud...”* 2 Tim. 3:1-2

Many years ago an anonymous source (from an old trac) brought forth an article entitled, “How to Be Miserable”. In it, we are told, “Think about yourself. Talk about yourself. Use “I” as often as possible. Listen to what people say about you. Become jealous and envious of everyone. Get upset at any unfavorable comment directed at you. Be unforgiving. Trust nobody but yourself. Insist on your right to respect, whether you deserve it or not. Believe that everyone must agree with you. Always remind people of any good you have done, no matter how small. Do as little as possible.”

This is the condition of the world: complete and utter self-centeredness. They no longer live to “Keep up with the Jones’”, they live to exceed the

Jones’ and be superior to them. They live for themselves. The Christian, as Christ did, lives for others, that they also may serve God.

How to be miserable: Worry about money all the time and whether or not you are going to make it. This writer speaks from experience. Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there!

The church is a fellowship of blood-washed children of God. We must bear each other up. We have something the world does not have: a Heavenly Father who loves us, and we as a church have each other. At the old mission in Lebanon, Pennsylvania years ago, at the end of the service they would pass the hat. The preacher would say, “If you have money, put it in. If you need money, take what you need.” A brotherhood of believers in Christ should operate this way. Why be miserable when God has already provided?

The following hymn gives us another reason:

Oh, how glorious and sweet it must be,  
 In that peaceful abode!  
 Where, from sin and from misery free,  
 We shall dwell with our God.

Oh, that beautiful, beautiful land,  
Is for you and for me!  
There to be with that glorified band,  
Oh, how sweet it will be!

H.B. Brenneman, 1883

Lynn H. Miller  
Newmanstown, PA

### AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE

Some things in life are a one-time opportunity. If not careful, we miss an opportunity that will never present itself again. That is sort of the tragedy of life.

With Philip in the New Testament, he had a one-time opportunity to share his faith with one person. God was able to use him in the situation because Philip was available. He did not know what opportunities lay before him when he got up that morning. But he was ready to be used by God for anything.

We can be looking in one direction and prepared for something over there, but the real opportunity comes from the direction we are not expecting. I think that is the great challenge and excitement of living the Christian life. God sometimes surprises us with an opportunity that we never thought of before.

Philip did not know the person that he was sharing the gospel with. He probably never heard of him before and more than likely never saw him ever again. He had a one-time opportunity, and he did not fail.

Because we do not know tomorrow or the opportunities tomorrow may bring, our trust in God is vital. I need to understand that I am today where God wants me to be and I am taking advantage of God's resources for me today. I know the phrase "living in the moment," means many things to different people. But I think in this context, it means that I am living the life that God wants me to live at this time.

I do not want to live my life, then look back, and see that I missed an opportunity that was right before me. I know that that can happen and probably will.

However, I want to minimize this as much as possible. I desire to stand at the ready so that God can use me whenever he chooses.

Of the problems I have faced is that I limit myself to what I have been trained to do. We are obsessive when it comes to training and education. Do not get me wrong, I am all for it. However, God often opens up an opportunity for us that we have never been trained for and were not prepared for. At least from our perspective, we are not prepared for it.

All through the Old Testament, we see man after man whom God chose to do something and they did not believe that they were qualified to do what God wanted them to do. You see, our service for God is in God's hands. We do what we can do. We study hard. We read books. We understand theology as best we can. But in the long run God is in charge and God wants us to be ready at a moment's notice.

It would have been interesting to talk to Philip after his experience in witnessing to that Ethiopian man. I wonder what he said about it. I wonder how it changed his life and ministry from that moment on.

We also might think that

we can only witness to those within our own culture and lifestyle. I know it is difficult to witness outside of our culture and lifestyle. But we need to understand we are not limited to outside circumstances when it comes to being used by God. God has no limits here.

One of the great privileges of my life as a Christian is to tap into the unlimitedness of God and see him do things through me that I could never do on my own. What a great joy it is to do what you cannot do.

When I limit myself to what I can do, I hinder God from using me as He wants to use me. My relationship with God needs to be of such a nature that God can, at a moment's notice, use me for His glory.

We train ourselves to share the gospel. And such, we should do. But there are some situations for which we are unprepared and untrained. I think Philip found that out. I need to trust God when an opportunity comes but I am not prepared for, that He will use me as He sees fit.

In our present-day society, we are caught up with the idea that everything has changed and so we have to keep up with

“the Joneses.” In reality, things have not changed. Certainly, technology has changed and our way of gathering information and sharing it has changed. But the really important things in life have not changed.

I need to be ready for any situation that will come my way where I can share the gospel of Jesus Christ. I am not thinking about preaching a sermon, although that is okay. But I want to be in a situation to say and do something that will open the

door for God to use me to lead someone to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

I must get rid of the idea that I can lead people to Christ. It is Christ in me and the work of the Holy Spirit that explains the gospel in such a way that they can understand it, believe it and trust God. If I do my part and allow the Holy Spirit to do his part, God will be glorified.

James L. Snyder  
Ocala, FL

## CONNECTIONS

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

### Protecting His Disciples

Why did Jesus go to this garden specifically, in John 18:1? This was a garden to which He and the disciples often went. A place that was surely known by Judas. It seems that Jesus chose a peaceful, secluded place to be arrested rather than waiting to be arrested in the middle of town.

What do you think the disciples were feeling as His arrest was taking place? I think they were scared, confused, and intimidated. But Jesus did not leave them in

the weight of those emotions. John 18 tells us that Jesus didn't fall back into the shadows or hide behind his disciples when Judas and the officers came. No, instead he stepped forward and said, “I am He.”

Jesus knew that he was surrounded by a host of angels to protect him, yet He chose to surrender to protect his disciples that night. Matthew Henry writes that “When he exposed himself, he excused them [his disciples],

because they were not yet fit to suffer...And besides, they had other work to do; they must go their way, for they are to go into all the world, to preach the gospel." In following his Father's plan for Him, He made a way for his disciples to fulfill the Father's plan for them.

Are we not also called to be and make disciples? We can fulfill the Father's will in our lives if we rest in his protection and obey His calling to make disciples of all nations.

*On behalf of the Bible Study Board*  
Brother Gerry Priest

## PHIL'S PONDERINGS

As we "study to shew *ourselves* approved unto God..."  
October 2023 Bible Study Commentary

### October 1 - John 15:9-27 – Chosen and Ordained

Jesus asks us to abide in His love. He does so because of the confidence He has in His Father. Jesus has already tested the height and depth, the width and length of the Father's love for Him. God's love for Him was perfect in every regard. It never failed or came short of meeting every need. In turn Jesus has loved his disciples with the same love. His love provides a never-ending assurance of his care for us regardless of circumstances. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.* (Rom 8:35-37)

So how do we know we are abiding in Christ Jesus? He tells us that if we keep His commandments we will abide in His love. But what commandments is He specifying? I haven't killed anybody nor committed adultery, so I have most of the 10 commandments covered. We don't sacrifice any animals on altars, so all those commandments are outdated. I've been baptized by trine immersion, and I wash my brother's feet. I don't swear and I kneel in



prayer. And so the list grows. We are so prone to making lists we can check off that Jesus keeps the list very simple.

*This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.* (John 15:12) Jesus knows that this one commandment teaches us everything we need to know about commandment keeping. It can't be done. At least it can't be done by ourselves alone. It requires help from someone who has unlimited resources of love and is willing to share that love with us so that we can love our brothers and sisters. If we abide in our Father and His Son, we will experience God's love at work in us to love those that have been, and still are at various times, unlovable. We also will experience that same love extended to ourselves by our brothers and sisters when we are, from time to time, unlovable. Either way we can rejoice in the grace of God that, time and time again, fills us with His love so that we can love one another as He commands us to do.

### **October 8 - John 16:1-16 – The Holy Spirit: Comforter and Helper**

It is getting late into the evening. Presumably, their observance of the Passover began after the sun slid behind the horizon. As the night grew darker Jesus shared more things about what would begin happening in just a few more hours. Jesus has been taking advantage of these last hours with his disciples trying to pour as much as possible into this very pregnant moment in their lives. What they heard and what they thought they heard didn't always match. So much of what Jesus wanted to share with them was not easily understood. But God had already planned ahead for just such an occurrence. Jesus could reassure his disciples that they soon would have another helper, the Holy Spirit. He would bring to their remembrance all that Jesus said.

Nothing would be lost that was said that evening nearly 2000 years ago. But the Holy Spirit is more than some ancient recording device.

We live at a point in history where communication, both near and far, is instantaneous. Yet, we don't always know whether we can believe or trust what others are saying. The early church was led by

the apostles, those men who shaped what we read in the New Testament. In their humanness they did not always understand what Jesus said. So it was also the work of the Holy Spirit to guide their thoughts and understanding. Some changes happened quickly while other conflicts within the church lasted many decades. Even to this day there are many different views on how the church is to conduct itself as it proclaims the message of salvation. We are still needy of the work of the Holy Spirit in our own hearts and minds and to bring to our remembrance what Jesus taught his disciples. We need the guidance of the Holy Spirit to help explain what the Gospel of Jesus Christ means today while staying rooted in its beginnings 2000 years ago.

### **October 15 - John 16:17-33 – Plainly Speaking**

I hope that each one of us sees themselves in a similar situation as some of the disciples did in the opening verses of our study. They have no clue what Jesus has just said. The words that Jesus uses are easy to understand. But there is little common ground between what they hear Jesus say and what they understand Jesus to mean.

At least 30 years ago a woman attended our services for several Sundays. On her second visit I had a chance to visit with her before she left. She asked me if we believed in a particular doctrinal issue that was completely unknown to me. I asked her to repeat it because I had never read or heard it mentioned before. I asked her what it meant and I was no more enlightened by her brief description. I was perplexed. I was at a loss to understand or comprehend its importance to her. She never returned for another visit as far as I know.

In our text some of Jesus' disciples were perplexed by what He had just said. If we were to go back through John's gospel, we would discover that such events were common with Jesus. Nicodemus had no clue what Jesus meant by being born again. The woman at the well was confused by Jesus' reference to living water. His disciples were perplexed many times by what Jesus said and struggled to know what he meant. So it should come as no surprise to us when we encounter similar situations. Our tendency is to default to

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a literal understanding. Nicodemus is a good example. How does someone return to their mother's womb? Such a conclusion should alert us that we are starting from a nonsensical perspective. If we are to make sense of what Jesus says we must dig deeper to understand all that He wants us to know. Our faith must grow so that we can hear more clearly what Jesus is trying to teach us.

Finally, let us not be afraid to ask someone else what they think and understand. Not only do we all need help to be spiritually knowledgeable but also taught how to reason more accurately from a biblical mindset.

### **October 22 - John 17:1-26 – Sanctify Them Through Thy Truth**

What is most important that we learn from Jesus' prayer? Notice that His prayer is divided into three sections. He prays for himself, His disciples second, and then, thirdly, for you and me. Most of us, without necessarily recognizing it, have developed a spiritual etiquette when it comes to prayer. My guess is that out of modesty we pray for ourselves last. At least on this occasion Jesus prays for Himself first. Just to reinforce this thought, notice that He asks His Father to glorify Him before He glorifies His Father. This is beginning to turn our spiritual etiquette on its head. But consider this thought. With what can we glorify God if He has not already glorified us? We are lost sinners without God until the Lord reveals Himself to us that we might glorify His saving grace for us. Jesus needs the glorifying love of His Father so that He has the strength to complete the work given to Him by His Father that ultimately glorifies the Father. We are no less needy.

Jesus prays next for his disciples. These men are very special to Jesus because they were given to Him by His Father. They recognized that the words Jesus spoke originated with the Father. By faith they have believed all that He has taught them. Jesus prays that they may be one as He and the father have been one. He prays for the joy they can experience and protection from the evil one. He prays that they be sanctified by the truth.

Finally, Jesus prays for us. This ought to have been encouraging to his disciples for it is the promise of growth in the infant church that now stretches out nearly 20 centuries beyond this night. Jesus prays that we should and can be one as He and the Father have been and always will be. Our oneness with Jesus Christ and His Father goes beyond the doors of our church houses. There are Brethren of all stripes and denominations that are encouraged, as we are, in being one with our Lord, who seek the love of Christ, and the words of His Father.

### **October 29 - John 18:1-18 – Drinking the Cup the Father Gives**

Perhaps you have been surprised as I have as we begin studying the 18th chapter of John because there is no mention of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. John, for whatever reasons, chooses to omit that part of that evening. Perhaps John is well satisfied with the accounts that Matthew, Mark, and Luke have provided us. Beyond that explanation we are unlikely to gain anything more that will only be speculative in nature. But John does provide us with an additional element to contemplate.

Though Judas leads a motley band of men and officers it is Jesus who first initiates the verbal confrontation. “Whom seek ye,” He cries. They reply with demands in their voices, “Jesus of Nazareth. I am he,” Jesus replies. There is power in His voice such that those in front are knocked backwards into others coming behind with the result that they all end up on the ground. Not exactly an auspicious beginning for this motley band. Jesus is, after all, a king and deserving of their subjection. Jesus asks again whom they are seeking. Perhaps they answer this time with a little contrition in their voices. Jesus barter His compliance to their demands for the safety of His disciples. Though Jesus is led away like a lamb, His captors are less certain of their own power than when they first came. They have not only met the lamb who takes away the sins of the world but the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. In His presence they walk carefully lest they provoke the Lion that can devour their hearts.

## OBITUARY

Fern A. Kegerreis, 84, of Bethel, passed away on Sunday, September 10, 2023. She was the wife of the late Harold Kegerreis, who passed away in 2005.

Fern, a daughter of the late Eldon and Ethel (Miller) Bernheisel, was born in South Manheim Township. She is survived by her two children, Sheila M. wife of Paul Noecker; and Leslie H. Kegerreis, husband of Tammy; six grandchildren, and six great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her sister, Mary Fessler.

She was a graduate of Schuylkill Haven High School, class of 1957.

Fern was a member of Bethel Dunkard Brethren Church.

Throughout her life, Fern was a homemaker, a teacher, a Sunday school teacher, and a caretaker. She worked for twelve years as a teacher at Bethel Dunkard Brethren Church School.

A funeral service was held on September 15, at Bethel Dunkard Brethren Church, followed by burial in Bethel Dunkard Brethren Church Cemetery.

## NEWS ITEMS

### **New Ministers**

As noted below, August was a busy month with three men being elected to the Minister's office.

#### Pleasant Home, California

Bro. Mark Cordrey Jr. was elected to the Minister's office. Bro. Mark's address is 3825 Missionwood Ct., Ceres, CA 95307.

#### Berean, Indiana

Bro. Marlin Carpenter and Bro. Marc Wray were elected to the Minister's office.

Bro. Marlin's address is 5095 S. St. Rd. 19, Peru, IN 46970.

Bro. Marc's address is 5268 E. 775 S., Peru, IN 46970.

*Please pray for the Lord's blessing and guidance for each of these men and their wives as they step into this new responsibility:*

Bro. Mark & Sis. Maddy Cordrey  
Bro. Marlin & Sis. Amber Carpenter  
Bro. Marc & Sis. Jenny Wray

### **Women's Retreat**

Attention ladies ages 14 and up...there's still time to register for Women's Retreat to be held October 6-7 at Lake James Christian Camp and Retreat Center in Angola, Indiana. Please join us for a time of spiritual encouragement, fellowship, worship (and excellent food!). This year's theme is "*Women Building Community*" and the speakers are Rita Noecker, Blossom Hollinger and Kiara Marks.

See the brochure that was sent through the Dunkards Chat email for information on the schedule and registration. After Sept. 17, the cost for registration is \$80.

Please direct questions to Amber Carpenter or Elma Cook at:

Amber: 765-470-2920 or email [amdancar@gmail.com](mailto:amdancar@gmail.com)

Elma: 765-391-0976 or email [elmacook56@gmail.com](mailto:elmacook56@gmail.com)

Please pray for this year's retreat and for the speakers as they prepare.

### **Leadership Conference**

Leadership Conference 2023 is being hosted at Berean Dunkard Brethren Church in Peru, Indiana, November 10-12. The theme for this year is forgiveness. Officials should be receiving more information on the conference soon, if not already.

For lodging reservations please contact Amber Carpenter at 765-

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470-2920 (call or text). Please have reservations in by October 28th. Thank you!

### **Swallow Falls, Maryland**

The Swallow Falls congregation invites you to join us for a week of revival meetings with Brother Mark Andrews as evangelist. The dates are October 8-15. Sunday morning services start at 10:00 a.m. and all evening services are 7:30 p.m. The final service will be Sunday morning October 15 followed by a fellowship meal. All are welcome! 2191 Swallow Falls Rd, Oakland MD 21550.

Abbey Yoder, Cor.

### **Lititz, Pennsylvania**

Weekend revivals are planned to be held October 13-15 with the Lititz congregation. Brother Brad Wertz is the speaker for the meetings. Services are at 7:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Sunday services start at 9:30 a.m. with lunch following. Lovefeast is Sunday evening. All are welcome!

Sis. Arlene Birt

### **Pleasant Ridge, Ohio**

Everyone is welcome to join us for our Lovefeast weekend October 27-29. Services are Friday night at 7:30 p.m., Saturday at 2:00 p.m. with Communion at 7:00 p.m., and Sunday starting at 7:30 a.m. with morning worship followed by breakfast. Sunday School begins at 9:30 a.m. followed by preaching at 10:30 a.m. Lunch will be served and we will close with a service at 2:00 p.m.

Teresa St. John, Cor.

### **Subscription Price Increase**

For 2024, the subscription price for the Bible Monitor by mail will increase to \$10 per year. Subscribers can still receive the Bible Monitor by both mail and email (e-Monitor) upon request. For subscribers that don't want a paper copy and only want the e-Monitor, the subscription price will remain \$5 per year. While this increase will not completely cover the cost of publishing and distribution, it

will come closer than does the current price of \$5 per year.

For those interested in a little history on this matter, when the Bible Monitor began in 1922, the subscription price was \$1 per year. While this might sound like quite a bargain, let's not forget about inflation. Due to inflation over the last 101 years since 1922, that initial \$1 subscription would be equivalent to approximately \$18 today. The subscription price then remained at \$1 until it was increased to \$2 in 1981 (about \$6.70 today) and then increased to \$5 in 1998 (about \$9.35 today).

## **ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR November 2023**

### **Nov. 5: - John 18:19-40 – What is Truth?**

1. Why did Peter feel that it was necessary to keep his identity and relationship with Jesus a secret?  

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2. How did Jesus defend himself and yet not avenge himself? How might we be able to imitate his example when we are caught in conflict?  

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3. What does Pilate's conversation with Jesus reveal to us about Pilate?  

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### **Nov. 12: - John 19:1-22 – Pilate's Dilemma**

1. Pilate seems to be caught between keeping Jesus alive or keeping his position. Why was Pilate so afraid to crucify Jesus?  

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2. As referred to in verse 14, this trial takes place over the preparation of the Passover. What was God's purpose for having Jesus's crucifixion take place over this time?
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3. Why do you suppose Pilate wrote, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews" for Jesus's cross, despite the protest of the Jews?
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### **Nov. 19: - Psalm 100 & 111 - Thanksgiving**

1. How can we practice gratitude in our everyday lives?
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2. Taking into consideration the time and place that these Psalms were written, how does the portrayal of God in these passages compare to the gods of the lands surrounding Israel?
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3. How can the "fear of the Lord" lead to wisdom?
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### **Nov. 26: - John 19:23-42 - The Death of The Son**

1. Where are different places in scripture that prophesy about Jesus's crucifixion?
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2. There are several theories as to what Jesus did between his death and resurrection. Which one(s) seem most biblically sound?
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3. What do you think the disciples were thinking and feeling at this point? How can we relate to them?
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