

The Heartbeat of 
The Remnant

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A ministry of
The Berean Voice 



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"The Berean Voice" is an outreach ministry of Faith Christian Fellowship, a church located in Holmes County, Ohio. It is operated by a board of directors, which ultimately answers to the elders of the church.

As a non-profit ministry, we desire to work with the Lord, for without Him we can do nothing. We are trusting God to provide for the ongoing work of this magazine and our other outreach projects through the free-will offerings of His people. Would you join us in prayer for this work and ongoing need?

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~ The Berean Voice Board

It is our goal that the content of this magazine bring honor and glory to God. All Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version unless otherwise notated. In the event of discovering any errors in content or detail, please count it to our oversight and kindly bring it to our attention.

Magazine Contact Info

The Heartbeat of the Remnant

c/o: The Berean Voice

P.O. Box 279

Shreve, Ohio 44676

Ph. (330) 439-9547

website: www.bereanvoice.org

Email Contacts

Questions or Comments

editor@bereanvoice.org

Address Changes & Subscriptions

(Free Subscriptions—Donation Funded)

subscribe@bereanvoice.org

Submitting Articles, Poems, & Photos

(please contact us for requirements)

submit@bereanvoice.org

Board of Directors

Edward Martin *Chairman*

Joel Hostetler *Vice-Chairman*

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Greetings of Christian love to all. The year of 2019 has been one of challenges and changes for us here at *The Berean Voice*. We realize this magazine issue is coming out much later than anticipated, for this we are sorry. There have been several difficulties that were holding us up, but we are thankful that the Lord has been providing answers and a clear way forward. Please keep reading to get a fuller picture. (In answer to potential questions, we are on track to short circuit our normal flow of the printing schedule so that we should be back on schedule for the summer issue, which will be two issues from now.)

We have been going through some growing pains as we endeavor to reach around to cover all our responsibilities. Our vision is to operate with minimal paid staff and with minimal “in stock” resources, in an effort to keep costs down. However, due to this, we have not been able to satisfactorily respond to all the requests that have been coming in. If any of our readers have faced difficulties due to this lack of response, we apologize and ask for your understanding as we go through this time of growth.

As most of you are aware, *The Berean Voice* is a ministry arm of Faith Christian Fellowship, a church in Holmes County, Ohio. This ministry started in 2015 with a focus on providing biblically wholesome literature and audio recordings of biblical teaching, with a specific emphasis on assisting individual churches with research and awareness on issues that are facing the church of today that tend to be somewhat challenging.

One of the goals was to start periodically publishing a doctrinal magazine. During our pursuit of this venture, we were asked to revive *The Heartbeat of the Remnant*, a magazine that was at that time in temporary retirement. We discussed the many different pros and cons of taking this on, and after much prayer and consideration decided that this was the Lord’s will for us. As we look back over the last four plus years, we can wholeheartedly say along with Samuel ... *Hitherto hath the LORD helped us – 1Sa 7:12*. There have been mountains and valleys, there have been joys and sorrows, there have been blessings and wonderings. Through it all God has been faithful.

Looking back, we see two specific areas of difficulty that continue to follow us going forward. The first one is that

since *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* had been regularly published for approximately twenty years it was quite well known and associated with the previous publishers. This has tended to create confusion for our readers regarding the relationship between *The Berean Voice* and *The Heartbeat of the Remnant*. In simple terms *The Berean Voice* is the overall ministry arm, and *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* is our magazine which is published on a quarterly basis. However, the magazine is not the only part of our ministry efforts. We also are working to develop an inventory of audio recordings on various pertinent subjects as well as an inventory of printed literature such as books, booklets, or leaflets pertaining to similar subject matter. We are also actively developing a growing discipleship ministry helping others sort through some of the more difficult issues of life.

Financial Needs Met

The second area of confusion has been that most folks tend to consider our magazine a “free” subscription magazine. Yes, it is free since it is available without a subscription charge, but NO it is not free, because it still costs money for publishing and mailing. Over the years we have tried to encourage folks to stop looking at the magazine as a subscription-based periodical that is free, but instead start realizing that it is a part of a ministry effort that includes much more than a quarterly magazine. The only way our ministry, including the magazine, will be able to continue is if God’s people recognize the value and asset of the overall work of *The Berean Voice* and maintain their financial contributions for the work on a regular basis.

We had been at the point of not having enough funds to continue, so in November of 2019 we sent out a newsletter to most of our readers in the U.S. clearly defining our need. It has been a tremendous blessing to see how God has moved in the hearts of many of you to support the work. The outpouring of donations was above and beyond what we could have hoped for—thank you! This renewed interest in our work by all of you who have chosen to partner with us will allow us to start responding to many of the needs that were coming in, but we were not able to assist due to lack of funds. Again, a big thank you to all who have so generously given of your finances! *Please see the financial report included on page 11.*

continued on page 11...

A Glorious Church

Barry Grant
Arcahaie, Haiti



What do we think about when we think of the term ‘church’? We live in a day when there are many and varied churches. If one church doesn’t suit you, there are others to choose from. While some churches encourage their people to live for God and others instead of themselves, other churches promote a gospel that says lots of money and a better life now are the results of following Christ. However, there are still churches that try to follow what the Bible says—Sola scriptura (scripture alone). Traditionally, the conservative Anabaptist churches in America have tried to function in this manner. But is that changing?

We live in a day when lines are being crossed, blurred, and confused. People aren’t sure what is truth and what is not. Today, men and women around the world are looking for answers and solutions, but where should they look?

I was talking with a young man who testified of being converted at a young age. He attended church faithfully and was considered quite gifted. But there was a problem—he had a sin that he still could not control. As he wrestled with God and pled for victory, he began to hear a re-occurring theme come across the pulpit. “No one is perfect!” “We all have issues.” “Everyone has sin!” Finally, this young man accepted his sin as normal. He justified it because it seemed that everyone was saying they had sin also, that they were not living in complete victory. It led this young man to a place of complete ruin.

Are we preaching and accepting a defeated Gospel—a gospel that doesn’t offer complete forgiveness and complete victory? Many youth of today are confused. Many people in today’s world don’t understand. Anyone can go to church and try to be a better person. But what about the all-powerful, life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ?

The apostle Paul says that Jesus is coming back for *...a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish* –Eph 5:27. And Jesus himself said *...That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* –Mat 16:18.

Before I was converted, I was certainly a slave to sin, but I wanted victory. I was addicted to drugs and alcohol, but I didn’t like it. I wanted to be free. I went to counseling and rehab facilities all over America, but it didn’t work. I had no power. I could quit for a few days or even weeks, then anger and depression would set in and I would return to the substances. One day, I came face to face with the Creator. The hand of the almighty God got ahold of me and opened my eyes. I repented of my sins and was given a clean slate and a clean heart. I never went back. Drugs, alcohol, and two packs of cigarettes a day were finished... forever.

I could hardly believe what God was doing. The power of God was real. I could not overcome by myself, as none of us can, but God has promised us freedom from bondage and

a new life of victorious living if we will submit our lives to him. This ability to overcome the power of sin and then walk in victory, is what the world is looking for. Do we believe that God can free us, not only from substance abuse, but also from anger, selfishness, bitterness, greed and pride? God's Word says *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* –1Jn 1:9. No one is interested in a defeated Gospel, no one except those who are living in defeat because they have chosen the things of this world over God and His Word.

Are we willing to testify of the power of the resurrection? We need to proclaim a gospel that completely saves people from the bondage of sin... forever. We must be bold and confident in our faith so we can lead people to the Master.

I was witnessing to a man when he said in a rather loud voice, "God is not real!" My six-year-old son's mouth fell open and he gasped, "Daddy, he just told a lie!"

My son doesn't need to be convinced that God is real; he believes it with all his heart. The world out there does need to be convinced. They need to see something that science cannot explain. They need to see something that defies all odds.

That something is a heart that has been truly changed. The fighter now loves his enemies. The person with an anger problem now loves others unconditionally. Broken families are healed. Wretched sinners are forgiven and living a transformed life. Hope, peace, love and power are freely given to men and women who seemingly had no hope. *The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them* –Mat 11:5.

Are you living your life so the world can see the work of God being practical, effective, and real every day? Here are a few things that the Church needs in our day to once again draw in the lost.

A willingness to suffer

History would show that the church all through the ages has suffered for Christ. It was part of the cost of following Christ. The Bible says, *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution* –2Ti 3:12. It was something that just happened.

Today many people want the American dream. Folks live a good moral life, they are good citizens, they make a good living, and they go to church on Sundays. But is that what we are called to? When the church suffered persecution, and did so willingly and joyfully, the gospel spread like wildfire. It was something the world had never seen—a faith that

people showed by their life and their death was something worth dying for. Let's not be afraid to suffer for Christ today.

Denial of self

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me –Mat 16:24.

Have you ever wondered why Jesus instructs us to deny ourselves? After all, He gave us desires and passions, so why must we deny them? I have heard people say that we need to align our will with God's, but I do not find this in the Bible. Rather, we should simply deny our will and accept God's will.

I remember the first day of boot camp when I joined the Marine corps after graduating from high school. Close to one hundred young men were there. We all had our own desires and thoughts. We had our own identity. It was amazing to see all the diversity. If the United States of America would have sent us off to battle that first day, it would have been a disaster. So, they had a plan set in place to fix this problem. Over the next three months they broke us. Physically and mentally we learned how to deny ourselves and submit to our commanders and each other. The world is often amazed by the great discipline and unity for which the Marines are known.

When we become a part of the kingdom of God, we cannot be effective if we each do what we want. A body of believers can all have good intentions, but if any one person has not denied themselves, they will never be able to submit to the greater cause. There is a war raging and we cannot fight it alone. We must deny ourselves, join forces with our brethren, and fight for victory in our homes, churches, and lives.

Submission

The Bible calls us to submit ourselves:

- ...to God... –Jas 4:7.
- ... [to those] that have the [spiritual] rule over you [us]... –Heb 13:17.
- ...to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake... –1Pe 2:13.
- ...one to another in the fear of God –Eph 5:21.

Once we deny ourselves, then and only then, can we submit to others. Many people today have great difficulty in submitting to their fellow man. Some feel they are free in Christ; therefore, they can do as they please. There is a reason why we are instructed to submit to others. It is easy for us to drift away from sound doctrine when we believe we can figure everything out on our own.

When we have truly denied ourselves, we find that it is rather easy, and even a great blessing, to submit to the brotherhood. In fact, it is true freedom. What you want doesn't matter, and you begin to depend on your brothers and sisters. When getting our own way isn't important to us, then when we don't get our way, we are fine with it. As we lay down our lives for each other, we become a force that the world doesn't understand. For centuries, the world was drawn to the church, wanting what it had. But amazingly, today it seems that the church is being drawn to the world, wanting what it has.

There is power in submission. Hundreds of years ago a man named Alexander conquered almost all the then-known world using military strength and cleverness, mixed with diplomacy.

The story is told that Alexander and a small company of soldiers approached a strongly fortified, walled city. Alexander, standing outside the walls, raised his voice and demanded to see the king. When the king arrived, Alexander insisted that the king surrender the city and its inhabitants to Alexander and his little band of fighting men.

The king laughed, "Why should I surrender to you? You can't do us any harm!" So, Alexander offered to give the king a demonstration. He ordered his men to line up single file and start marching. He marched them straight toward a sheer cliff.

The townspeople gathered on the wall and watched in shocked silence as, one by one, Alexander's soldiers marched, without hesitation, right off the cliff to their deaths! After ten soldiers died, Alexander ordered the rest of the men to return to his side. The townspeople and the king immediately surrendered to Alexander the Great. They realized that if a few men were actually willing to commit suicide at the command of this dynamic leader, then nothing could stop his eventual victory.

Obedience

Submission and obedience go hand in hand. If we are willing to submit to something or someone, we will want to obey it. It becomes very important to submit to those who are over us, especially the almighty God in Heaven. If we struggle to submit, we will usually struggle with obedience. God forbid if we begin to believe that we are better off doing things alone without our brothers.

Love

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another –Joh 13:35.

People wave to each other at an intersection or they will open the door for an elderly person. People are generally loving people... until something doesn't go their way. Then they can become very difficult. Is that the way the church today is showing their love to the world? As long as everything is going smoothly, and no one steps on our toes, we all get along and we love each other. Then as soon as there is something worth fighting over, we put the "boxing gloves" on. Doesn't the Bible say that charity (love) *beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things –1Co 13:7*. True love is revealed when we face adversity, or when a brother does something to offend us. That is the love that will show the world we are disciples of Jesus.

Do we love our brother enough to help when he is in need? Maybe he is unknowingly straying away from God in a certain area. How much do we love him? Some people think that love is only talking about positive things with each other, but if we truly love our brother, we will go to him in love and speak honestly with him. Then if we are practicing a lifestyle of denying ourselves and submitting to the brethren, it should go well. God forbid if we get angry with a brother who comes to us to show us our error.

When we have chosen to suffer with the people of God, and have denied ourselves, then we appreciate when a brother or sister speaks into our lives. We will not allow ourselves to become offended.

Suffering for and with each other, plus denying ourselves for each other often forms a solid love for one another. This type of love is the kind that the world around us does not know, but desires greatly. The world is getting more selfish and independent as the days pass. We can't afford to miss our opportunities to show them the power of God with our love towards one another.

Godly people throughout the ages have had their opportunity to serve the King and spread the message of the Kingdom of God, but they have moved on to eternity. Today it is our turn. The fields are white unto harvest. Let's plug in and, with God's help, preserve the glorious church of Jesus Christ for our children, the next generation.





As a man was wandering into the night,
He searched for something, not found by sight.
His heart was heavy, his flame growing dim.
He thought of his future, the outlook seemed grim.
“Why go on? What’s the purpose of life?”
Remembering the past, cut just like a knife.
He knew he was bitter, he would no more deny.
As anger drove him, he decided to die.
He had arrived, his decision was made.
He stood on the tracks, hoping the train not delayed.
He felt great relief, as he heard the whistle blow.
But suddenly a new thought, “Where will I go?”
He dove from danger, as the train roared by.
“Where will I go?” he could hear himself cry.
Over and over the question replayed.
As he thought of eternity, the present did fade.
The thoughts of childhood, the sermons he’d heard,
Came flooding back, his whole being was stirred.
“It’s Jesus Christ, His burden is light!”
The message came clear, from out of the night.
He pled with God, broken by sin.
He would not stop ‘til this battle he’d win.
The devil was desperate, his victim so near,
But God saw a sinner, a life he held dear.
Into the night the battle did rage.
Saint or sinner, what would be this man’s wage?
The peace of God flowed over like rain;
Rejoicing he wept, he felt no more pain.
With joy in his step, and victory in his heart,
He left praising God, “How great Thou art!”

Barry Grant

Freedom in Christ

Lee Rufener
Athens, WI

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,
and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage –Gal. 5:1.

There is much ado in our land about freedom. It has been a central and foundational theme for centuries. America is touted as the land of the free and the home of the brave, and many have shed their blood in the pursuit and defense of it. We all deeply appreciate the freedom we possess. Most of us can walk outside without fear of being molested. We are free to worship at the place of our preference and in the manner we choose. We can speak and publish what we will without repercussion. This is legislated freedom at its finest and we can hardly comprehend life without it.

Countless hardships have been endured in the quest for freedom. Miracles have been occasioned by the scores as souls have risked their lives in pursuit of it. From Jesus walking through the midst of His assailants and Peter's angelic deliverance from prison, to the escape of Paul being let down over the wall in a basket, we are all enraptured by the accounts of successful deliverance from evil men. This century has, perhaps, produced more books than ever, published concerning the freeing of Christians from tyranny. In spite of the supernatural involvement of angels and divine intervention, this type of emancipation has nothing to do with the freedom we have in Christ.

A recent exchange in a hospital room with an elderly Ukrainian man who came to America after spending time in a communist concentration camp reveals the truth. As he waited for the life-support machine to be turned off on his dying grandson, great lament filled his soul. Upon landing on the shores of a free nation, he witnessed the ebbing away of faith in the lives of his offspring, and now his grandson has embarked upon a Christ-less eternity. "I wish that I hadn't come," escaped from the lips of the tear-stained face. As he stands upon the vantage of hindsight,

the freedom he once valued paled in the light of the yoke of bondage that has since gripped his offspring.

Perhaps Lot shared the same regret when his former decision toward lifestyle and financial freedom now danced before his mind in maddening mockery. Yesterday it was his godless, heathen neighbors in Sodom that had vexed his righteous soul, but now in his final years, he must face the fact that it was his own ill-advised pursuit of freedom that birthed the heathen nations of Moab and Ammon.

The book of Galatians has been likened to the Christian's *Declaration of Independence* and was known as the battle cry of the Reformation. A brief study of the letter will reveal that Paul was adamant that these Galatians should stand fast in the liberty of Christ. This is one of the few epistles that has no commendation but only pointed correction. He bears no qualms about calling their current understanding ... *another gospel*: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. –Gal 1:6-7. Christianity is not just another Jewish sect, and the Galatian letter distinctly unties the reader from any of the Jewish ordinances. Galatians speaks of important issues: the law, grace, works, the gospel, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, our Lord's death, His resurrection, salvation, and sanctification. These critical realities are all on board in Paul's agenda, but the primary message portrayed throughout its verses is freedom. About twenty times in these six chapters we will come across some form of the word "bondage" or "freedom". But freedom can represent many facets. Freedom from hell, spiritual bondage, judgment, or the Jewish law all rise to the surface of our interpretation. Whatever our persuasion, the believer must duly recognize that the freedom offered by Christ is of spiritual dimension rather than physical. While this freedom is very personal, Scripture gives us no

claim to our own agenda and no roots to hold title to this world's charms.

People have grown accustomed to thinking, saying, hearing, and doing whatever they want. This is freedom, but not that which is offered by Christ. *While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage* –2Pe 2:19. In a land largely free of human coercion, we still find that a vast majority of its citizens are enslaved in spiritual bondage. They are free to select the master of their choice, yet they remain chained to their sin.

The Judaizers were legalistic and believed that freedom was wrought by keeping the Sabbath laws, circumcision, and such like. Others say freedom is found in being bound by no law at all. Even works are accounted evil under this paradigm. Still others insist that rigorous asceticism and self-denial is the key to real freedom.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed –Joh 8:32-36. The truth will not allow you to say whatever you may feel like, or to live independently of the feelings of others. Nor will it exempt you from circumstances that distress, trouble, or frighten you. That is the ministration of this world's freedom. There is no slave that cannot own the full inner liberty offered by Christ. Thus, we are not bound by what others do to us or what offends our personal rights, but rather how we respond in our hearts. Christian freedom enables us to relate to our dire situations via mature faith. Christian faith interprets life according to the Scriptures. A person must simply look at their situations in life and receive both the positive and negative experiences in the light of Christ, who is the essence of true freedom.

If true freedom is available to reach within the recesses of each and every heart, then it must be secured by inner operations. If we have failed to secure it, the fault lies solely within our own confused reasoning. We are the problem, and we will never be free until we are transformed by the renewing of our minds. –Romans 12:2 While there are external yokes that can steal our inner freedom, the vast majority of them have pitched their baleful tents within our hearts and have driven their stakes pretty deep. *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man...* –Mat 15:19-20. Evil thoughts seem to be

the engine that drags these sin-laden boxcars down the tracks of life. It is the presence of these same evil thoughts in our minds that many have very little concern about. We know a murderous thought is wrong, but frustration seems acceptable. Theft may not be tolerated but coveting is normal. Fornication is evil, but discontentment is expected at times. No, the mind is the seedbed for all kinds of evil, and until it is fully converted, we will continually be plagued with the effects of bondage. But Christ has no intention to leave our cognitive thoughts untouched, and thus the Great Emancipator offers freedom from the yokes of bondage unto slavery.

These yokes of bondage arise as the cruel taskmasters of our minds in the form of...

...Exaggeration

When we think something will “always happen that way” or “never happen” we begin to form patterns of belief in our mind. We recognize that lying is wrong, yet it begins as a much more palatable thought pattern. No matter that the thought bears some truth and is “user friendly”—it still tends to bondage. To meditate upon the phrase ... *The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies* –Tit 1:12, will leave us handicapped and uncharitable when we meet an honest Cretian. Elisha meditated long and complete upon the atrocities performed by Ahab and Jezebel, to the point that he believed that he was the only godly one left. Apart from the 7,000 souls he overlooked and slighted, the major damage was done to his own spirit.

...Evil Surmising

People about us have enough evil attached to their character without the need for us to add more to their account: ... *Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates: And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor...* –Zec 8:16-17. There is a subtle carnality that arrives on the doorstep of those who give themselves over to negative thoughts about others. *How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ...they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly* –Psa 62:3-4. Here, again, is the bondage wrought to the negative mindset. Ahab hated Micaiah. But this hatred rode in on the thought that ...*he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil...* –1Ki 22:8.

...Worry

Take therefore no thought for the morrow... –Mat 6:34. Worry is akin to fortune telling, yet seers predict both good and evil. Those given to worrisome thoughts predict the worst possible outcome to a situation. These troublesome

thoughts are driven by feelings, sometimes becoming a trail of self-fulfilled prophecy. Feelings are very complex and are often based upon memories of the past. When an unpleasant occurrence has not been properly placed under God's sovereignty in our minds, we become watch dogs (or worry warts) to ascertain that it never happens again. But we, by taking thought (anxiety), can never add one cubit to our stature. (*see Luke 12:25*) In fact, those given to much worry shorten their life span drastically. *And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind –Luk 12:29.* The doubting mind is a glaring emblem of unbelief.

...Fear

We speak not of reverential fear, but of "phobos": *alarm or fright -Strongs. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love –1Jo 4:18.* Phobia is not a helpful emotion. Fear walks hand in hand with failure and causes us to respond in ways we do not want to. The children of Israel feared to enter the promised land and viewed themselves as grasshoppers in comparison to the inhabitants thereof. So, the future looms quite formidable in the view of those who entertain fearful thoughts. In the last days, men's hearts shall fail *...them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken –Luk 21:26.*

...Condemnation

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved –Joh 3:17. Perhaps condemnation has its purpose in the life of an unbeliever so that he may be moved to repentance, but some continue to attach every innocuous event to their own fault. For some, the event is long over and finished, yet they continue to lament what they could have done differently. Others can hardly ever admit a mistake of their own making. To recognize our errors is noble; however, there are many who live under the cloud of what they should do or should have done. The guilt connected with such thoughts often creates an inner turbulence that further cripples us to accomplish a noble agenda.

...Blame

Blame is the opposite ditch from condemnation. Negative thoughts heap mental blame upon others. The basis for such thinking is that God is an austere man and is on constant vigil to reprimand every disobedient act. If something ill happens, a scapegoat must be found to attach it to. Christ's *...disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither*

hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him –Joh 9:2-3. When we attach blame for our troubles to something or someone, we become a victim of circumstances and are disabled from changing the situation. Many relationships experience ruin. Not by the tragedy of the situation, but by the blame cast at others. Whenever we believe that someone else is the source of our problem, we become powerless to reciprocate anything good and the grace in our own hearts is stanchied.

...Judgment

It is our pride and our prejudice that loves to affix a label to every person or situation we don't fully understand: *...certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts –Mat 9:3-4.* Most of us judge with our feelings. We may piously attach some scripture to our conclusion, but most of our discernment is because we are *...partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts –Jam 2:4.* Even if we recognize this mind-reading error and only judge that which was spoken, we are further instructed to *...take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee: For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others –Ecc 7:21-22.* An honest appraisal of self will go a long way to stop negative judgments. David was guilty of murder and thus declared the death sentence against the man who killed his neighbor's lamb. Unfortunately, much of our inner judgment is likewise tainted by our preferences rather than true, honest concern.

...Ingratitude

Unthankfulness has successfully driven many men to despair. It inevitably drove the prodigal son from his home, occasioned the death of Naboth, and led David into lusting for the wife of Uriah. These had been given much *...and if that had been too little, I [God] would moreover have given unto thee such and such things –2Sa 12:8.* Ungrateful thoughts do not meditate upon what we have, but on that from which we feel deprived. No matter how good we have it, the expectation in our minds lifts the standard of happiness yet higher. The farmer must have bigger barns, the businessman pursues more money, the married man lusts for another woman, the married woman is wanton for better surroundings. Each believes that happiness lies just over the next horizon and lives in bondage to their never-ending desires. But those whom Christ has set free have before them a continual feast regardless of their circumstances. They are free indeed.





The Need for Writers

This brings us to another difficulty that we still are struggling with. Our goal from the beginning has been to provide articles that are originals (not previously published elsewhere). This is not set in stone and we have used some pre-published articles here and there, but we wish to keep moving in this direction. So, this is another area where you as our readers can become involved and partner with us if the Lord so moves in your heart. We specifically need children’s stories (for children between the ages of 8-12) with a biblically moral lesson, sister’s articles (in the spirit of Titus 2), and youth articles (ones that are true to life and interesting).

Before deciding to write, you should give attention to our “reprint policy/publisher rights” which is detailed at the top of the “writer’s guidelines” form on page 33. If you wish to contribute, we ask that you fill out the “contributor’s agreement” which is at the center of this magazine and send it along when submitting an article or poem. If possible, all submissions should be sent as a Word document or PDF to submit@bereanvoice.org. If email is not an option, submissions may also be sent in the mail.



THE BEREAN VOICE FINANCIAL REPORT <i>2019 Year End Report</i>	
INCOME	
Item	Amount
Berean Voice donations	\$4,213
Remnant donations	\$98,397
Total Income	\$102,610
EXPENSES	
Item	Amount
Postage & UPS	\$1,222
Newsletter Printing & Shipping	\$2,844
Equipment and Software	\$1,733
New Office/Shelving	\$434
Office Expenses	\$495
Website Maintenance	\$411
Staff pay & Editor Salary	\$28,490
Books & Literature	\$2,505
Remnant Publishing & Mailing	\$35,229
Miscellaneous	\$175
Bank Fees	\$482
Professional Fees	\$628
Total Expenses	\$74,648

The Magnificence of Jesus

By Harold S. Martin

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PO Box 391, Hanover PA 17331

Unfolding the wonders of Jesus is an almost impossible job. Eternity itself cannot suffice completely to unfold Him. John the Baptist pointed out Jesus as the Lamb of God, baptized Him with the approval of Heaven, and then said of Jesus, “He that cometh from above is above all” (John 3:31). Paul says to the Philippians, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow ... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11).

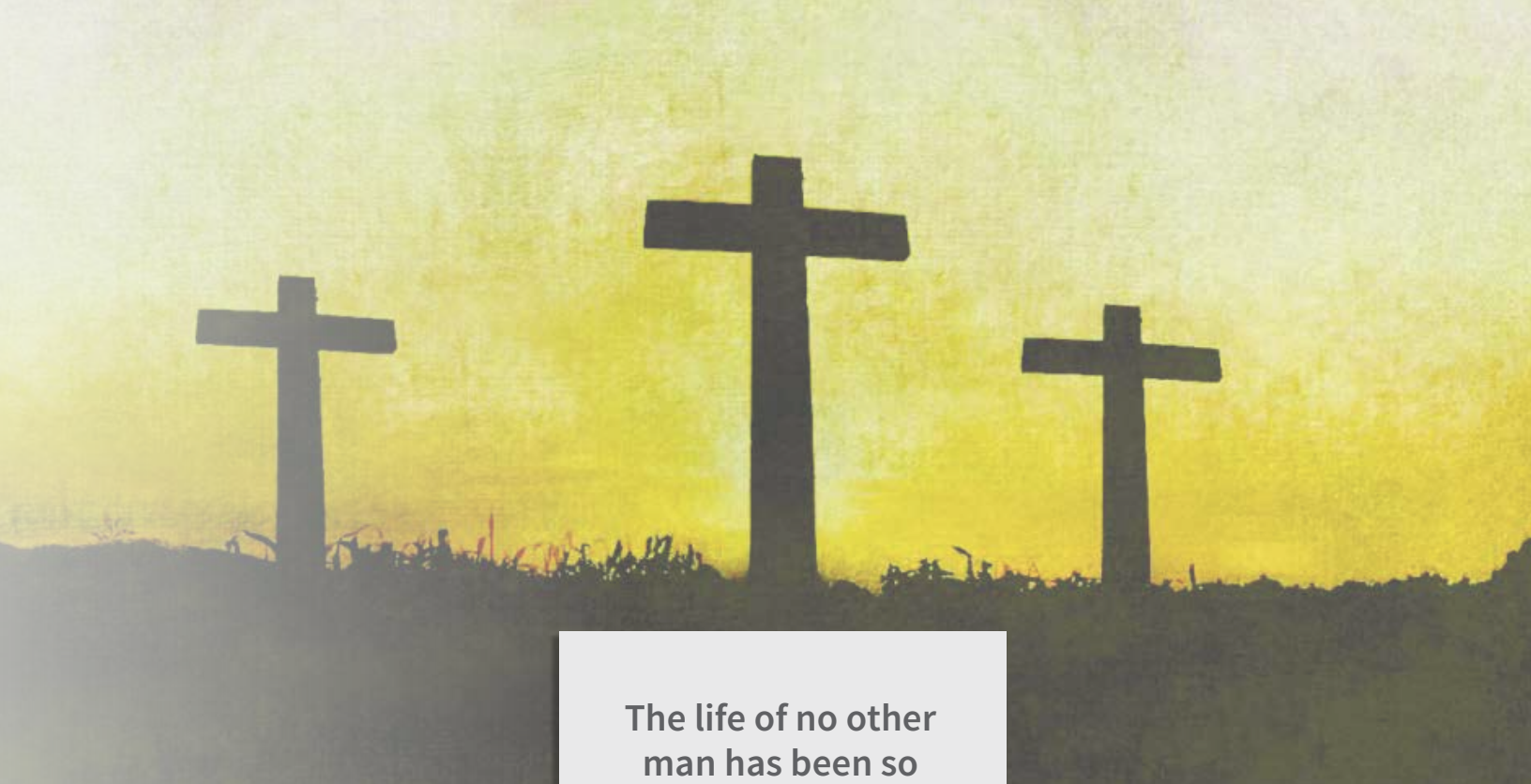
Jesus is the central subject of the Bible. Anyone who reads the Old Testament must surely see the many Scriptures that prophesy of Jesus to come, and as for the New Testament, Jesus Christ is everywhere on its pages. The very first verse of Matthew says, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ,” and the very last verse of the book of Revelation says, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.” The first name in the first verse of the first book of the New Testament is Jesus, and the last name in the last chapter of the last book of the Bible is Jesus. What is it about Jesus that makes Him different from an ordinary man? What is it that makes Him unique and magnificent? Why is Jesus given such a prominent place in the Bible?

1. Jesus Is Magnificent—His Eternal Source

Jesus did not begin to exist when He was born of Mary. John 17:5 says that Jesus had glory with the Father “before the world was,” and verse 24 says that He was loved by the Father before the foundation of the world. Jesus had been present with God in the eternal ages before the world began. The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem did not mark the beginning of a new person, but rather it marked the incarnation of the eternal Son of God who had been present with the Father and “became flesh and dwelt among us.”

Jesus did not begin to exist when He was born of Mary, for the Bible says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God” (John 1:1-2). And so, we see that Jesus was the Son of God long before He became the son of Mary.

Jesus was not just another man. He was there way back in the beginning when everything was started. In fact, before the beginning began, Jesus was. And because Jesus has always been with God, He knows all about us. He knows how we are made. He knows the secrets of our hearts; He knows our needs; and what is more, being God, He is able to supply them all.



The life of no other man has been so carefully and so critically examined as the life of Jesus, yet people of all generations have confessed that Jesus was the only perfect Man who ever lived.

2. Jesus Is Magnificent—His Miraculous Birth

The Bible declares that our Lord’s mother was a virgin, that His conception was miraculous, and that the agent of conception was the Holy Spirit. The Bible says, “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman...” (Galatians 4:4). The birth of Jesus was no ordinary birth. When the Jewish virgin Mary went down into that mysterious land of motherhood, she came back holding in her arms the only baby in all the world who had never had an earthly father. No birth like this had ever occurred before; no birth like this will ever occur again. Jesus (who made man) was born in the likeness of men.

If the birth of Jesus was not supernatural, then He cannot be our Savior, for then He was born a sinner like all the rest of us, and then He needs salvation Himself. But God was not limited to the ordinary. God is not bound by the laws of nature which we have discovered. Anyone who takes away the supernatural conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit (and puts Joseph there instead) also takes away our only hope of

a perfectly pure, sinless Savior. We cannot understand it, but we can believe it.

3. Jesus Is Magnificent—His Perfect Life

Jesus was perfectly God, and yet at the same time He was perfectly man. As man, He hungered; as God, He is the Bread of Life. As man, He said, “I thirst”; as God, He says, “Let him that is athirst come unto me and drink.” As man, He was weary; as God, He gives rest to all who come to Him. As man, He prayed; as God, He hears and answers our prayers. As man, He wept; as God, He wipes away our tears. As man, He was tempted; as God, He did not sin (1 Peter 2:22).

The life of no other man has been so carefully and so critically examined as the life of Jesus, yet people of all generations have confessed that Jesus was the only perfect Man who ever lived. Not a single time did He ever make a mistake. Not a single time did He ever utter a word that He had to take back. Not even His most bitter enemies, though they hounded His footsteps day and night to trap Him, could ever find anything for which to accuse Him. His own

challenge in John 8:46 was this: “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” The thief on the cross was compelled to admit, “This man hath done nothing amiss” (Luke 23:41). Judas, the one who betrayed Him, came with the blood money and threw it at the feet of the Sanhedrin, saying, “I have betrayed innocent blood.” And Pilate, the one who sat in the judgment seat and passed sentence on Him, three times over declared, “I find no fault in him.” Every person has some good points, but Jesus has them all!

4. Jesus Is Magnificent—His Supernatural Power

Jesus has such mighty power that when Peter drew the sword and slashed off the ear of the high priest’s servant, Jesus immediately touched the ear, and it was healed. And no marvel, for actually He created the ear in the first place. John says in 1:3, “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” Who conceived the grace of the young deer? Who devised the majesty of the mountains? Who put the song in the throat of the mockingbird? One name answers all these questions, the precious name of Jesus.

When He stood before the disciples on the Mount of Olives (just before He ascended into heaven), Jesus said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18). Jesus walked on the waves, stilled the storms, healed the lepers, raised the dead, and opened the eyes of the blind.

Jesus meets every need. He satisfies every desire. He hushes every fear. He calms every trouble. He is the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valley, the Balm of Gilead, the

fairest of ten thousand to the soul. He created the world. He changes the destiny of nations. He has the power over death and disease. The Bible says that even the wind and the sea obey Him!

5. Jesus Is Magnificent—His Authoritative Teaching

Matthew says at the close of the Sermon on the Mount, “And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7:28-29). The scribes were the learned men and teachers of the Jewish nation. They were mostly Pharisees who taught chiefly the sentiments of the rabbis and the traditions which had been handed down from the fathers. They spent much of their time in vain disputes and in quoting authorities. But Jesus of Nazareth spoke differently. There was an air of complete and final authority about all that He said. He never said, “It is probably this way,” or “Consult the experts on the subject.” Jesus Christ is the authority on every subject! Jesus did not say, “So-and-so said...”; instead over and over again He said, “But I say unto you...”

6. Jesus Is Magnificent—His Sacrificial Suffering

Great men of this world may be valued for their lives, but Jesus is known above all for His death. The atonement of Jesus is the scarlet cord running through every part of the Bible. His death was prophesied in the Garden of Eden. His death was pictured in the sacrifices of Israel. Jesus spoke of His death when He said, “For this cause came I into the world.”



There are 255 verses in the New Testament that refer directly to the death of Christ. One fifth of the Gospel according to Matthew, and almost one half of John's Gospel, record the last week leading up to the Cross. The death of Jesus Christ is of supreme value. On that afternoon when the sky was darkened and the sun hid its face and the veil of the temple was rent in twain and the Son of God cried out, "It is finished"—on that great day, the price of our redemption was paid. And now, because of His magnificent suffering, Jesus can reach down into the pit of corruption and lift the sinner up from the miry clay and wash him white in the fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins.

It was no ordinary death that Jesus died—it was God Almighty taking upon Himself the sin of a fallen race. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities ... the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:5-6). Jesus bore my "sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus stood where I should have stood. Because of His sacrificial suffering on the cross, the pains of hell that should have been my portion were removed.

7. Jesus Is Magnificent—His Promised Return

As surely as Jesus came the first time, so certain is it that He will come again. One of these days this magnificent, wonderful, incomparable Jesus will come in all His glory, and all His holy angels with Him. In the 260 chapters of the New Testament, the second coming of Jesus is mentioned 318 times. Jesus himself said, "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not" (Luke 12:40).

When Jesus comes again in power and great glory, He will be the Judge from Heaven who will "bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:14). The books will be opened; the secrets of all hearts will be brought to light. Those who have been faithful servants will be taken home to the Father's house (John 14:1-3).

Jesus is the light of the world, the bread of life, the true vine, the good shepherd, the door to heaven. This Jesus whom we love and serve is peerless, matchless, incomparable, magnificent; He has no equal! He is above all! There is no other that can be compared with him!

The question we must honestly face right now is the one concerning His supremacy in our lives. Where have you placed this magnificent Jesus whom God has highly exalted? Are you giving Him the highest place? Jesus is supreme in every other realm; how can we forbid Him complete reign over the little empire of our hearts?

During the trial of Jesus, Pilate raised the question, "What shall I do then with Jesus who is called Christ?" That is the question you need to answer today. What will you do with Jesus? Your answer will determine your eternal destiny. You are either going to be forever with Him or forever without Him. Today the question is, "What will you do with Jesus?" If you reject Him all your life and die without Him, the question someday will be not "What shall I do with Jesus?" but "What will He do with me?" Believe the gospel, repent, and be baptized today.





Opening Our Doors

Sara Nolt
Stevens, PA

This article is compiled from notes I took at a Sisters' Meeting.

One of the earliest recorded examples of hospitality took place under a tree. Abraham urged three strangers to stay with him and graciously prepared a labor-intensive meal for them. With no travel plazas or fast food options near Mamre, these probably weren't the first strangers Abraham hosted.

Hospitality like Abraham's is a God-anointed idea. It is one way we demonstrate the love of God to strangers or fellow believers, fulfilling 1 Peter's commandment that says, *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves [love each other deeply]: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use [offer] hospitality one to another without grudging –1Pe 4:8-9.* Other New Testament writers also encourage being hospitable. Hebrews 13:6 says we should not neglect to do good to others, but to share what we have as a sacrifice to God. Hebrews also tells us to entertain strangers. Being hospitable is a requirement for leadership in Timothy. And Romans tells us **all** to be "given to hospitality."

Since God wants us to be hospitable, whom should we invite? Our closest friends and the folks we love the most? Yes, definitely, but let's not stop there. If hospitality is an opportunity to reach out as a witness of God's love within us, we should invite the lonely, the ones with no family in the area, the needy, the blind, and those who don't have the means to repay. Invite the discouraged or the tired moms who need a break.

This broader view of hosting guests changes our question from "Who would we enjoy being with today?" to "Who does Jesus want in our home today?" At a Sisters' Meeting at church, a group of ladies listed excuses that keep them from being hospitable. "Our house is too small." "Our house is too dirty for guests." "We are remodeling." "I am too tired."

"My life is so full already." "I don't keep food on hand for spontaneous hospitality." "We are strapped financially." "I am not a good cook." "I don't have anything to offer." "I'm not a people-person."

But the same group of ladies extends hospitality often enough to know its benefits. Here are a few of them. "Hosting deepens or forms friendships, both for adults and children." "When we serve, our focus is taken off ourselves." "Hospitality teaches our children to interact with others and serve them." "Money spent on others is a way to lay up treasures in heaven." "Laughter, that good medicine, happens." "Unbelievers hear the Gospel." And, very practically, "Hospitality is an incentive to clean the house."

What hospitality looks like varies from host to host. Some sisters love to pack their house full, serving food buffet-style and sending the overflow of guests to eat in every room of the house. Others prefer quality conversations with each guest and invite a few people at a time. Our godliness is not measured by the amount of people in our living room at one time (Abraham had three). The heart of hospitality is to love people enough to find a way to host them. Sometimes that requires creativity.

A young mom with four preschool children said, "Right now it doesn't work well for me to have a group of guests over for Sunday lunch. When we get home from church, the children are tired, hungry, and cranky. I can't stretch around to guests, food, and children. But since God calls us to be hospitable, we look for other ways of doing that. On holidays, I cook extra food and take it to our neighbor who can't cook for himself. I sat with another neighbor whose dad died early one morning. We are involved in city ministry and open our home one night a week to city

youth who want a safe place to hang out and talk. I make baby meals for people at church and send along a breakfast casserole for them. While I can't always go to the homes of the hurting, I can always text or call someone who is having a hard time. In these ways, I'm able to offer love and hospitality, even in this stage of young motherhood."

Indeed, hospitality is more than something that happens at Sunday lunch. The Bible talks a lot about serving the poor, the needy, and the widows. Hospitality is reaching out to others with the love of Jesus. We do this by offering what we have with gracious hospitality. Meals for guests do not need to be elaborate and expensive.

Numerous sisters testified that the best hospitality they received happened over simple meals: "One time we visited another church and met someone we hadn't seen in a while. She invited us for lunch saying, 'I don't have anything prepared, but I have a loaf of bread and peanut butter and jelly.' We went there and had a wonderful time of sweet fellowship. The simple lunch didn't matter."

Hospitality is making people feel at home with you and comfortable in your presence. It is not about your house or your food, but about your heart and your attitude toward your guest. Guests can tell when hosts are interested in their lives or if they are preoccupied with house and food.

One woman said, "My dad used to invite strangers home all the time for meals. He brought home hitchhikers or offered lunch to men who worked for a few hours on the farm for a couple hours of pay. Once when he was in a minor car accident, he talked with the guy from the other car while the police wrote up the report. By the time the police left, they were friends and the man came home with dad for lunch. Dad wasn't the greatest conversationalist, but that didn't matter because people felt his love for them."

The children of that hospitable father are adults now with families of their own. By observing their lives, it is apparent that there is another reason we should open our doors in gracious hospitality: our children learn by example. In our sisters' meeting, many of the women who practice frequent and unstressed hospitality came from homes whose parents regularly hosted guests. Our obedience to our Father in this area will live on in the lives of our children, touching the next generation with a taste of God's blessing.

God, give us grace to open our hearts and our doors to those we meet.



The Blessing of Obedience

Edward Martin
Glenmont, OH



“Matthew, I want you to weed the two potato rows in the garden,” said Mother. “I don’t have time and it is a job you can do.”

Eight-year-old Matthew was playing with his toys in the sandbox under the pine tree. He would have much rather made roads and built sand houses, but he knew better than arguing with his mother. Slowly he headed to the garden. The rows looked long, and the weeds seemed tall. If only the sun wasn’t so hot.

“I wonder if Timothy needs to weed his family’s garden?” thought Matthew as he tackled the first row. Timothy was a neighbor boy and Matthew’s closest friend. “Their garden is really small; I’m sure his mom takes care of their garden. I wonder why we have so much work to do. It really doesn’t seem fair.”

The mid-morning summer sun beat down warmly on Matthew. He decided to get a cold drink in the kitchen. Not that he was really thirsty, but time seemed to go so slowly as he worked alone in the garden.

“Matthew, are you getting your job done?” asked Mother from the laundry room.

“The first row will be done soon,” replied Matthew. “Can I go play a while? I can finish this afternoon.”

“No, I want you to finish the job first,” replied Mother. “And besides, the sun will be hotter this afternoon.”

So, Matthew went back to work. At the end of the first row Matthew stopped. Looking over at the sandbox he thought, “I could finish my sandcastle and still be done with the second row before lunch. Mother would never know.”

Quickly he ran over to the sandbox and started working on his sand project again. But for some reason, playing in the sandbox was not as fun as it had been before. Matthew knew he should not be playing, and his play slowed to a stop. “I don’t think Mother would be happy if she saw me,” he thought. “I will go finish the second potato row then come back to the sandbox.” So back to work he went.

For some reason the weeding seemed to go faster. Matthew felt good inside knowing that Mother would be happy with him when the job was finished. He felt especially good knowing that he had overcome the temptation to play when he should be working.

Later, as he was near the end of the second row, Matthew saw a hard object near the root of a large weed he had pulled out.

“What’s this?” he exclaimed. “Why, it’s an arrowhead!”

Sure enough, it was a perfectly formed arrowhead with no broken edges. After washing the dirt off, he discovered that it was not just a normal arrowhead. This arrowhead was special! Arrowheads found around Matthew’s home in eastern Pennsylvania were usually made from a hard, white, flintstone, but this arrowhead was made from a special hard baked clay. Matthew found out later that this type of arrowhead was made and used by the Pueblo Indians from the western United States.

How was it that this little arrowhead had made its way thousands of miles across the United States to Matthew’s family’s garden? And how was it that Matthew had found it?

“I believe I found it because I obeyed you instead of playing,” Matthew told mother. “Maybe God gave me a blessing for obeying.”

This is a true story that happened nearly forty years ago. “Matthew” learned a lesson of obedience that day which he never forgot to this day even though he has lost the arrowhead since then.



Broken into Beautiful

Torn and battered, tattered shreds,
Shards of a heart broken;
Bleeding wounds, trials and tears,
Pain of a word ill spoken.

She holds on tight to the broken bits-
Shatters of dreams once hoped for.
Tears wash her cheeks like rivers of rain;
Shoulders sunk 'neath the weight she's bore.

She dares not lift her hanging head;
The travelers passing by
Understand not the cry of her heart,
They hurry, unheeding her sigh.

The dusk deepens on, still they march
Unheedingly on their way.
"She's a mess," one says to the other.
"I haven't time. Another day."

At last one pauses on the onward trek
Stoops low to the fallen one.
A few short words in a whisper low,
"The victory can still be won."

Then onward again the traveler moves.
"Stop. Stop!" the fallen cries.
"How can you say, when I've lost everything!
I've fallen, here my fate clearly lies."

"My life is in shatters. Try as I may
I can't piece back the pieces.
Yes, for you, victory. For me? Defeat.
You're not lying here in these ditches."

The traveler turns and speaks again,
"My friend, you are quite mistaken.
I, too, have lain in the bogging depths,
By all on this road forsaken."

"I cried in misery, torment, in rage;
The hope within me was shattered.
My heart throbbed in agony, injustices burned,
My endurance worn beyond tattered."

"No strength to go on, I lay in the mire.
I was broken, myself my foe,
When onward by a workman passed
In his hands a stained-glass window."

"The sun shone down on that dirt highway,
The glass that light reflected.
The colors shone in the light, distinct;
The shards someone had perfected."

"I saw those shards and I pondered deep
The beauty in that glass reflected.
Yet each one of those pieces was once a whole,
Shattered to be perfected."

"My friend, the shatters of your own life
Do not shine at now as a rainbow.
But if you'll place them all in the Master's hands
He'll create that stained glass window."

-Katie Good

The Security of Submission

Donald Brechbill
Chambersburg, PA

Submission to a higher authority is a concept that is found throughout Scripture. So much so, that we could say it is foundational to the Christian faith. Faith believes what God has said to the point of doing what He requires without questioning His authority.

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were given the freedom to choose between submission and rebellion. They chose to rebel, and today we are still living with the consequences of rebellion.

In another garden, the Garden of Gethsemane, another man, Jesus, was given the freedom to choose between submission and rebellion. He chose to submit, and through His submission to His Father's will He brought eternal life to millions.

The choice to rebel against authority is often fueled by a desire to experience the freedom of independence from authority. This is an illusion, because when we rebel against God-ordained authority (our parents, our husband, our church), we come under the tyranny of another dominion—Satan's dominion.

Submission becomes a choice between two superpowers—God's or Satan's. God's eternal plan is to save you from eternal destruction. Satan's plan is to bring you to eternal destruction. The choice becomes ours.

God has established earthly authority: *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation* –Rom 13:1-2.

This passage is referring to civil authority. It is clearly stated that civil authority is “ordained of God” and that to resist civil authority is to resist the “ordinance of God”. This is one example of God-ordained earthly authority. The purpose of civil authority is civil order and tranquility.

God has ordained an order of headship in the home. *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body* –Eph 5:22-23. And... *But I would have you know, that*

the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God –1Co 11:3.

In a previous article we addressed the role of the husband to be a loving, caring head. In this article we will unpack the meaning of submission. We will begin by assuming that your head (husband) is a loving, caring head. Later we will address the issue of having a head that is not ideal.

The call in this passage is to submission. Submission is a condition of the heart. Submission must be voluntarily given. It cannot be forced. A husband may be able to force *obedience*, but he cannot force *submission*. Obedience is the act of complying with a higher power; submission is the act of choosing to surrender the will.

In marriage, the decision to submit or to rebel lies with the wife. Her decision determines under whose dominion she will live—God's or Satan's. If she chooses a life of submission, she will reap the rewards of living under the blessing of God. Let's examine a few of them...

...Power

A modestly dressed woman who has her head covered and is living in submission to her husband or father emits an aura of divine presence wherever she goes.

Our daughter just began working in a local nursing home. Recently she commented about how differently men treat her as compared with her coworkers. She receives none of the rude stares or coarse jokes that others receive. Instead men hold doors for her and treat her with dignity.

There is more at work here than just “look like a lady, get treated like a lady”. The Apostle Paul wrote that *For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels* –1Co 11:10.

This verse is found in the middle of Paul's teaching on headship. He is saying that a woman who is living under her husband's authority is given spiritual power. This power comes from choosing to live in the sphere of God's dominion instead of Satan's.

...Protection

A wife who is under the authority of her husband is protected in many ways. Men are ordained to lead, and

most men want to lead. Men thrive under the challenge of leadership. Decisions that may overwhelm a wife will motivate the man. This may vary according to the personality of the couple, but as a rule this is true.

My wife has a definition of submission that she likes. She says, "Submission is ducking so that he gets the blow." While not a biblical quote, the concept is true. Submission is placing the responsibility on the shoulder of the one who has been ordained by God to carry that responsibility.

The Apostle Peter tells wives they should respond to their husbands ... *Even as [just like] Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement -1Pe 3:6.*

When Abraham and Sarah traveled into Egypt, Abraham was concerned for his life. He asked Sarah to tell the Egyptians that she was his sister, which was "half true" (she was his half-sister). Sarah had a decision to make. Should she submit, or rebel?

She chose to submit and leave the situation and results in the hands of a higher authority. The initial outcome was that she was taken into Pharaoh's harem. This act of submission required a faith not unlike the faith of her husband Abraham when he was asked by God many years later to offer up their son Isaac as a burnt offering. It may be that Sarah's faith choice here in Egypt empowered him when he faced his time of testing.

Sarah's faith was rewarded with divine intervention. God acted on her behalf and troubled the house of Pharaoh because of Sarah, prompting Pharaoh to return Sarah to her husband Abraham. The Apostle Peter recommends Sarah as an example of godly submission.

There are two subversive lies that are prominent in our day.

Lie Number One: "A loving husband will never ask his wife to do something that she does not want to do." This lie is intended to neutralize the authority of the husband. A wife who has never had her will crossed knows nothing about submission.

Lie Number Two: "In a loving relationship a wife should never need to suffer." It is the nature of submission, not just for wives, but for all who would live godly, that the will must yield, and the flesh must bow to the Spirit.

Even Jesus learned ... *obedience by the things which he suffered; -Heb 5:8.* This means that He yielded to the will of His Heavenly Father even though it meant the agony of the cross and momentary separation from God.

This is not a license for abuse in marriage. It is rather facing the reality that the blending of two lives into one requires a yielding of wills and a willingness to change for the health of the relationship. Am I saying that the wife must

do all of the yielding? No! I have covered the role of the husband in previous articles. In this article we are speaking to the wives on their role in submission.

...Peace

The third fruit of submission that we want to address is that of peace. The Apostle Peter in addressing wives gives this directive: *Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price -1Pe 3:3.*

Note that after cautioning against outward adornment he urges women to focus their energies on developing and maintaining the "hidden man of the heart ... even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit".

He recommends this ornament as a rare and precious jewel to be coveted and ardently sought after as an enhancement to feminine grace and beauty.

Men intuitively understand that a woman who will not yield herself to male leadership will make for a contentious relationship. Inversely, a woman who freely yields herself to the headship of her husband possesses a feminine grace and serenity that bears witness to "the hidden man of the heart".

This meek and quiet spirit also has a profound influence in the home. The spirit of the mother toward her husband is quickly mirrored in the hearts of the children. If the mother is at rest with her role in the home, she can create an atmosphere of peace.

If the mother is resisting her husband's leadership in the home, she is, by default, training her children to rebel against the leadership of their father. One father decided that he did not want his family to be listening to instrumental music. While their father was at work their mother allowed them to listen to instrumental music. When their sons reached their teen years, both of them experienced a season of rebellion. Their mother trained them to disregard the authority of their father.

Examine the lives of godly men and women and you will find that the secret of their peace was a resignation of their will to the will of God. They understood that no man can thwart the eternal plan of God for their lives and they rested in this assurance.

The Dysfunctional Head

God's plan for the husband to be the head and the wife to submit to that head is a blessing to the family if we are considering a godly husband and wife relationship. But what if the husband is not a godly man? What is a wife to

do if her husband is not providing spiritual leadership in the home? What if he is actually sinning and leading his family into sin?

These are hard questions and currently there are conflicting answers available. Much of the counsel available today is based on popular psychology which is driven by emotional responses. Our intent is to turn to Scripture for answers to these difficult situations.

Allow me to ask several questions and provide a biblical response:

1. Has your husband broken covenant?

The strength of covenant is being challenged in our churches in our day. While we have taken a strong position against divorce, we are weakening on “covenant for life”. Many women today are walking away from their marriages due to their husband’s moral failure.

While this response “feels” right, it is often motivated by seeking revenge or avoidance of suffering. This response is essentially a second breach of covenant. I am not suggesting that the wife ignore the problem or cover for him or enable him. I am suggesting that she “fight for her marriage”.

I am suggesting that she assume the position that “we” have a problem (not that she has sinned, but because she is in covenant with her husband who has sinned) and that she enter into the search for a redemptive solution.

I am suggesting this because I have observed marriages that have remained strong in spite of the husband’s failure when the wife came along side and helped him to overcome.

For more on this subject I recommend that you read my article “The Strength of Covenant” in the Summer 2019 issue of the “The Heartbeat of the Remnant”. For a biblical example of commitment to covenant read the book of Hosea.

2. Is your husband sinning?

What is a godly wife’s response to a husband who is sinning apart from a breach of covenant? The Apostle Peter gives a direct answer to this question in his epistle. He wrote: *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear – 1Pe 3:1-2.*

Here he is addressing a situation where the husband is rejecting the gospel (without the word). Peter is not suggesting that she cannot speak into the situation. He is suggesting that the most powerful influence against his unbelief is the upright behavior of the wife.

In the last verse he adds “coupled with fear”. This is not referring to timidity or anxiety. This is referring to a godly reverence for the husband in spite of his unbelief.

What is a godly wife’s response to a husband who is sinning? She cannot force him to change, but through prayer and a godly, reverent lifestyle, Peter says that he can be won.

3. Is your husband requiring you to sin?

I ask this question because many wives are deserting or destroying their marriages because of issues that are really not moral issues. She simply does not agree with him and the relationship becomes a battle for control.

Before taking an issue to the next level of reporting to another authority or going for counseling ask yourself, “Is this really a sin issue? Am I willing to sacrifice my marriage over this? Is God big enough to handle this situation if I support my husband in this way?”

Many if not most marriage conflict begins with issues that are not moral issues at all—merely a difference of opinion. In these kinds of conflicts, the husband should hear the heart of the wife and consider her point of view, but ultimately if submission has any application at all in a marriage, then the wife must concede to the husband’s leadership.

4. Is your husband resisting his authority?

If you as a wife are beginning to feel trapped in a situation that you cannot change let me offer this solution. You can appeal to your husband’s authority. Your husband is under authority. You can appeal to his authority be it church authority, employer, or even civil authority.

The principles of Matthew 18:15-17 are not limited to brethren and can be applied to a marriage relationship. If you are unable to resolve your marriage conflicts reach out to others in the church or community for help. Know that there is help available.

As Anabaptist people we are reluctant to report to civil authorities. We are witnessing the devastation that occurs when civil laws are broken, and the church covers the crime and fails to report it. I am referring to child molestation and similar crimes.

A wife can become complicit in crime if she is aware of a crime and fails to report. It is not necessary for her to sue or even to press charges. She is merely being a witness.

Summary

I understand that this is a difficult subject to address. It is impossible for me to address every likely scenario. I trust that I have given enough encouragement that you can understand that God’s way, the biblical model, is the best way. If you are in the midst of conflict, try God’s way and allow God to show Himself strong in your life.





You Want to Become a Doctor?

Wolf Miggiani M.D.
Millersburg, OH

So, you or someone you know would like to become a doctor (or a nurse)? Great! The world needs more Christians who are compassionate about being part of Jesus' healing ministry. It also takes a special gift to have the desire, knowledge, and ability to effectively address the physical needs of your patients, without neglecting their spiritual needs. At the same time, it is important to recognize that there is a personal cost to pursuing such an endeavor.

What I hope to address in this article is first, what I believe to be the essential characteristics of anyone endeavoring to enter a medical career field. Then I hope to shed light on some of the lesser known, yet important considerations and factors that people often don't think about when looking into this occupation. Finally, I'll have some suggestions and conclusions to help folks when making these big decisions.

I. Qualifications—the Three-Legged Stool

The following qualifications are, in my experience, the essential qualities of a Christian that would like to enter the medical field. All three qualities are essential, and like a three-legged stool, the absence of any one of the three leads to an unstable situation, resulting in an entirely predictable crash.

a. Compassion

Jesus said, ... *Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me* –Mat 25:40. As I mentioned in previous articles, *compassion* is the joining of *com* meaning together, and

passion meaning to suffer (as in “The Passion of Christ”). In essence, it is the ability of one to join in suffering with another, to help bear their burden, for the sake of love. Galatians also reflects this sentiment: *Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ* –Gal 6:2. This quality is essential: if one does not love people, it is best to find another calling.

Clearly, a medical practitioner without compassion is not a good health care provider, and it is not necessary for someone to have a poor experience to see this. The atrocities of NAZI physicians, such as Dr. Josef Mengele, make this plain to see. The fact that most among us were brought up in a plain or conservative Christian setting shouldn't cause us to become complacent on this point. There is evidence that quite a number of Mennonites living in Europe during this time period joined the German army, some joined the various arms of the SS, and some even served as prison guards for concentration camps.^{i, ii, iii, iv} Also, as early as the June 1934 edition of the *Mennonitische Blätter*, military nonresistance was officially erased from the Mennonite confession for the Mennonites living in that area of the world.^v (Here a side note is in order: a large segment of Mennonites had previously emigrated to various countries in North and South America during the 1700's and 1800's because they were not willing to compromise on the two-kingdom principle and on the issue of nonresistance.^{vi, vii} This is obviously a better example given to us by our spiritual forefathers, which we should strive to emulate—that of unwavering Christian faith and love in action coupled with an unwillingness to compromise.)

This is the one extreme (or “ditch”) to fall into—not having a good sense of Biblical compassion. The other “ditch” is too much compassion.

How is this possible? It is the desire to end the suffering, at any cost, even if it violates the Fifth Commandment, *Thou shalt not kill* –Exo 20:13. Though this topic deserves its own article, **assisted suicide** is now legal in nine states and in the District of Columbia. The “assisted” part usually entails a physician or nurse administering lethal medicines. If trends continue following libertarian and anti-Christian waves of sentiment in the nation (and in the world), as seen also in trends of drug legalizations, these laws will soon cover the entire nation. If the trends in Europe are any indication of our future (they have had a longer history of assisted suicide and euthanasia), eventually practitioners will not have the option of declining this “service”, or at the very least they will be “responsible” for finding another doctor to do so. The medical skills of alleviating suffering, without causing death, are not easily learned, and are quickly being forgotten. The result is medical professionals not only unwilling, but unable, to ameliorate (to make better or more bearable) the pain involved in the aging and dying processes.

It is revealing that both ditches result in the same outcome: death. It is no coincidence then that God calls us to the opposite: *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: –Deu 30:19.*

b. Steadfastness in the Faith

The next vital component that every Christian medical professional needs is that of having a firm foundation in their faith of the true and living God. I have seen too many young Christians fall from their faith while being compassionate and sincere in their desire to help their fellow man. While there are many Christian professors in medical and nursing schools, they are vastly outnumbered by agnostic and atheistic professors—too many of which seem to take pride in dissuading Christians from their convictions.

There are many examples I could give from my experience, but the one that stands out in my mind (after 25 years) was the requirement that all medical students learn to “understand” ALL their patients, including homosexual patients. The “required material” included watching homosexual pornographic videos with a soundtrack of Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*. I was the only student that stood up and walked out. There were quite a few Christian students that heeded the professors’ stern warning that one should not “judge” that which one does not “know”. (My view was more in line with that of Joseph when he was in Egypt: he did not need to experience debauchery up close and

personal before he knew it was wrong, and that it was time to escape –see Gen 39.)

The Christians who do not walk away (flee) from these types of situations become ever more desensitized to the way of the world. I believe it is a detriment to their spiritual walk, at a minimum, and a loss of their faith, at the worst. One brother I knew in a conservative Anabaptist church, whose daughter studied to become a social worker, stated that while she was still a Christian, her “joy in the Lord” was gone.

My experiences are not unique. There may be other schools that are more Christian friendly (however these schools may be even more dangerous, since they can lure believers away in a more subtle manner). Considering all these issues, strong Biblical discernment is needed to deal with the many anticipated and unanticipated moral landmines.

There are straight-forward biblical answers, but the concepts must be conveyed to biblically illiterate patients, colleagues, and supervisors in a simple manner that they can understand and respect. While there are simple, God-affirming answers to these questions, here is a smattering of dilemmas that Christians, contemplating a path into the medical and nursing fields must face. I will let you ponder the answers to these questions and will not provide the answers—they each deserve their own articles:

Corporal Punishment –Research has shown that corporal punishment (spanking) is detrimental, producing angry children, who in turn become more violent. Why shouldn’t it be outlawed (and discouraged by medical professionals)? (Hint: Is all research of the same quality? Also, definitions are important: In the eyes of the researcher who is gathering data, is beating a child in anger regarded in the same manner as spanking a child in love? –see Proverbs chapters 13, 22, and 23.)

Palliative Care –If a person’s quality of life is very poor, and they don’t want to continue living in pain, it is wrong to allow them to keep on suffering. Why shouldn’t we put them out of their misery in as gentle a way as possible? (Hint: What is God’s purpose for our lives? Do the dying still have a role? If so, what is that role? –see Exodus 20:13, and Philippians 1:21.)

Birth Control –Young people are going to “do it anyway” (being promiscuous). Why not protect them from disease by teaching them to use appropriate “safety” precautions when they fornicate, plus give them birth control to avoid having children that they are incapable of caring for? (Hint: Is it true that young people can’t meet a higher expectation than this? Who is really in control? Don’t we actually corrupt youth by expecting this lower standard? –see Acts 5:29, Luke 17:2.)

If you are struggling with finding a Biblical answer to these questions, then imagine how much more of a struggle a young and inexperienced Christian would have (often having to think on the fly), if you multiply these dilemmas by ten or even by one hundred.

No soldier would go into a minefield to find and defuse mines (which could destroy him in an instant) without great carefulness and knowledge of the specific dangers, nor without prior safeguards being put in place. Likewise, no Christian should go into the minefield of the world to receive specialized training without first establishing a complete “toolbox” of Biblical knowledge and discernment—and a basic set of what Peter calls ready answers: *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: –1Pe 3:15.*

In summary, are you willing to:

1. Flee from evil (even if it will cost you your career, or more)? –read about Joseph in Genesis 39.
2. Stand alone (even if you’re not alone)? –read about Elijah in 1 Kings 18.
3. Stand for Righteousness—are you willing to speak, stand up, and defend the faith, even when all manner of lies are told? –Consider the example of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in Daniel 3. (Remember that silence is consent.)

If you can do all the above, then maybe you are ready for medical or nursing school.

But here is one final consideration about the firmness of one’s foundations, and it requires a strong sense of “spiritual honesty”. I have observed that too many young people from plain backgrounds start with a focus on entering medical or nursing school yet end up with the type of education that becomes a steppingstone into the world. Few in the church can criticize a young person for wanting to help others, but it takes an honest self-assessment to ask how strong their drive is to work in a worldly environment, free from significant accountability.

Parents also need to ask the question, *For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul –Mar 8:36?* Too often, I have also encountered parents from plain Anabaptist churches (including a bishop!) who beamingly tell me about their child, the doctor, only to discover that the child has left the church. How sad and tragic for both the pleased parent and the “successful” child!

c. Knowledge

In the interest of time and space, I will not devote a great deal of attention to this “leg” of the stool, yet it is just as

important in becoming an effective Christian medical professional. Needless to say, it is a poor witness if you are not good at what you do. Anyone contemplating a career in *nursing* or *medicine* MUST be an excellent scholar!

No matter what profession or occupation we choose, we should be excellent in what we do just like Jesus our perfect example: *...He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak –Mar 7:37.*

II. Practical Considerations

So perhaps your “stool” has three strong legs. Here are a few practical matters to consider.

Most plain people who enter the medical field prefer to go into primary care. This is a logical desire, since a family doctor or pediatrician has the most continuity of care with their patients. You become part of your patients’ lives. But primary care has the most dilemmas to deal with.

Following is a list of some of those dilemmas:

All hormonal birth control has abortifacient (abortive) mechanisms. There is a growing demand for such, even among plain people.

Unless your work in primary care is exclusively among plain people, there is an expectation that unmarried women will receive birth control shots and pills. (I can count on one hand the number of primary doctors I know of that have not buckled under the pressure to provide this.)

A large part of this type of practice deals with vaccines, many of which are derived from, and grown on, fetal tissue cell lines.

Here are some other considerations:

Unless a doctor has his or her own practice (which is becoming ever more rare these days) the work environment is much more likely to be worldly.

Often there is a mixing of the sexes in a close-working office environment. Workers are predominantly women and office romances are not unusual.

When the workplace is not predominantly Christian, then the office music tends to be very secular.

When you are working with non-Christians, there is always the potential for unhealthy language.

It takes a solidly mature individual to routinely treat patients of the opposite gender and many times in various stages of undress.

III. Women in the Medical Field

Often it is women who feel called to this field of work, since it dovetails nicely with a woman’s nurturing spirit. But it takes a special personality to find the right balance

of work and home. Here are some unique considerations.

A good doctor or nurse must be assertive, at times. For example, sometimes I need to have a good nurse tell me that what I am about to do may not be the best decision. (Yes, I and others working with me do occasionally make mistakes, though the vast majority are minor, and/or they are caught by good nurses or others on the team.) The problem is that it is VERY difficult to leave this character quality at work, resulting in a VERY high divorce rate (especially in fields like Emergency Medicine, where assertiveness is especially important). This assertiveness often ends up being brought home, where transitioning to a meek and quiet spirit is exceptionally difficult.

Just like it is for men in the medical field, a medical career for women can be consuming. There will be missed birthdays, church functions, and services. Holidays, weekends, and nights must be covered in many of these jobs, which is especially hard for women who have or hope to have children.

The earnings are good. While most don't see this as a problem, if the husband is not the main breadwinner, there is a strong pressure to have the husband work less, since she may make much more. If he sticks to working full time, unless the wife minimizes work (to the financial detriment of the family), the children will obviously receive much less of the attention they need. The pressures to reverse roles, and all the implications on how the family functions in such an adverse situation, should be easy to see.

IV. Suggestions

So, you've made it this far and are still interested in the medical field? Here are some suggestions for keeping you on the straight and narrow, to be a good witness for the Lord:

a. Vision

Do your research and have a plan of action. KNOW if this is truly God's will for you, and if so, then decide what you want to do, where you want to go, and how you will serve the Lord once you get there—ahead of time, NOT as an afterthought.

b. Wait on the Lord

Nowhere is it written that an MD or RN degree must be pursued straight out of high school. Few young people in their early 20's have the maturity it takes to go through such schooling unscathed. While every individual is different, I recommend that young people should gain several years of real-world experience and skills before they go on to a degree. Not only will they be able to better identify with their patients, they will also gain the maturity to stand faithful. If someone simply can't wait, this is evidence that

they must wait to gain wisdom and maturity.

c. Accountability

Churches should take an active role in ensuring their members have the support and accountability they need to succeed. This does not include simply having a farewell service or goodbye party as they are sent off into the world. Students should stay within commuting distance of home. Regular and frequent meetings should be scheduled for the local church leaders to help students from their church find their way through the mine fields, temptations, and emotional turmoil that often accompanies higher education. Spiritually mature medical professionals who are established church members should also help shepherd those that are newcomers to the field of medical education.

d. Choose Wisely

Research where you will be studying and eventually working.

A casual work environment may seem to be a good place to work but may be a spiritual disaster zone. Also look for negative attitudes, which are contagious and can quickly become toxic. Professionalism and common values are a must.

Be up front with your coworkers and supervisors about your faith and convictions.

Consider training in a specialty field other than primary care. There is definitely a need for Christian doctors and nurses in primary care (but the ethical conflicts are many and growing). There is no such need for compromised Christian doctors and nurses.

e. Be Ready to Walk Away

Even with the proper research, finding a good place to work may be difficult. I once worked at a small hospital ER. I told them that I was a Christian doctor, and that I didn't do abortions and didn't refer for them either. They did not have a problem with this, and gladly hired me on. When I started to see a number of abortion complications coming through the ER, I found out that, unknown to many, some abortions were being done in the hospital. While certainly any patient in need must be helped, since I was one of the ER doctors, I was considered (officially or not) as a part of their abortion team. When I confronted the administration about this, I requested that they choose between stopping the abortions or my resignation. They chose my resignation.

f. Balance

Medicine can become an all-consuming occupation, so learn how to "Control the Beast." (I am still learning.)

Realize that nobody is indispensable. If I, as an ER doctor, were to pass away today, they would not close the ER down. Administration may need to scramble to fill in the gaps, but the ER will stay open.

Realize that if you don't recognize your indispensability, you may be afflicted with a "god complex", which is where no Christian should find themselves.

Consider the toll taken on the raising of your family by your prolonged absences. Find a job that will allow you to not neglect your family. Those jobs are out there.

Learn to say "No." This will allow you to spend more time with the Lord personally. It will also give you more time to be active in other ministries for the Lord at church and at home.

Specifically concerning medical school, under normal circumstances it takes a minimum of 11 years of study (after graduating from high school) at a tremendous financial cost to reach the time when one can actually start practicing medicine unsupervised. Add to this the time that I recommended earlier in this article that a young person should take to become spiritually mature. Now a potential medical student is looking at being over 30 before finally settling down! (I was 34.)

Nontraditional Routes: There may be some less costly options in terms of time and expense such as becoming a Physician Assistant or Nurse Practitioner, which can

take about half the time. Grads can also specialize in fields as diverse as orthopedics (bone), oncology (cancer), or ophthalmology (eye).

Conclusions

The medical field is certainly an attractive one to go into for many reasons. I hope I have provided some insights into some of the finer, yet more important things that Christians need to consider. If you have gathered that I would advise extreme caution, you would be correct.

In fact, there has only been *one* young man that I met in my career who I actually thought should go into medical school. He was quite intelligent, he had a strong vision, and he felt called to be a missionary serving a very primitive people. He had the support of his church and had developed a plan of accountability with his family. His faith and his knowledge in the things of God had great vitality and stability. I gladly offered him a recommendation, should he choose to go to medical school. He declined my offer, spent the next three years becoming an emergency room RN (registered nurse), gaining experience, then promptly went into the mission field in Peru. I think he made the right decision.

Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it... -Psa 127:1.



Endnotes

- i <https://themennonite.org/daily-news/scholars-address-nazi-influence-on-mennonites/>
- ii <https://themennonite.org/feature/mennonites-holocaust/>
- iii https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/goossen/files/goossen_a_small_world_power_2018.pdf
- iv <https://lisschirch.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/summary-of-mennonite-participation-in-holocaust-white-supremacy-and-impacts.pdf>
- v <https://mla.bethelks.edu/ml-archive/2004Mar/regier.php>
- vi <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Mennonite>
- vii John Landis Ruth, *The Earth Is The Lord's* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2001) pp 43-268

Do You Know God?

Noah Strickland
Liberty, KY

Do you know God? Do I know God? Let's each stop and personally ponder this question.

At my place of employment, I have the privilege of working with a group of brethren from my local congregation. We spend hundreds of hours together processing meat in a local butcher shop. Our conversations are many and varied. We have spent many an hour discussing matters of church, different passages of Scripture, as well as many subjects of daily life. Since we spend so much time together, we *know* each other quite well. I can predict, with reasonable accuracy, how various ones will respond to different situations. I also know what they believe about many, various subjects.

But how did I get there? It was not accidental. It comes from the many hours spent together. It comes from taking an interest in each other's lives and what makes the other one tick. And a big part, maybe the one that sums all the others up, is that we care about and love each other.

As humans, we each have different levels of acquaintance with different people. There are some people we have only met a time or two, others we have had a number of conversations with, and some we may even know a lot about. But we don't really *know* them. We don't know their heart or understand what goes on deep down inside.

If we want to truly know someone else, we need to spend lots of time together. We need to share at a heart level. Only then will we know what they like or dislike, what pleases them, and what they can't stand. We will enjoy being in each other's presence. This is the kind of knowing that I am referring to in this article.

And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth

all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever –1Ch 28:9.

This is David, near the end of his life, giving direction to his son Solomon close to the beginning of his reign as king. This is the David about whom God Himself said, *...I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will –Act 13:22.* This is the David who wrote all the wonderful Psalms of praise to God. In these Psalms, we get a glimpse into the heart of a man who truly knew, loved, and delighted in his God. This is the king who never lost a battle. This is the king who related in such a godly way to the unreasonable, tyrannical king Saul. These accounts still inspire us today.

Now, as David is handing the reins of the kingdom over to his son, this is the charge that he gives Solomon. I can almost hear the passion and the urgency in David's voice, as well as the love and concern for his son. I can picture him saying, "*Solomon, know my God! Know him the way I do. It's not enough that I as your father knew Him—**You** must know him.*"

Now let's transfer this charge to us as young people. No, we are not receiving a kingdom, but very shortly we will be receiving, in a sense, the church of tomorrow. Most of us have Christian parents who know God, and I pray that we all have church leaders who know God. Still, the reality is, that very soon you and I are going to be parents and some of us will be leaders in the church. Do we know God? A church's level of spirituality, her love and unity, and her light to the world will be determined by how well her members know God. If you and I do not know God, I'm afraid there isn't much future for our churches. My dear young people, we *must* know God!

How do we know God? I believe that many of the same principles of our human relationships can apply to our relationship with God. Let me hasten to say that there is also a big difference in relating with God and relating with human beings. God is our Omnipotent, Omniscient Creator. He knows us even better than we know ourselves. There is absolutely nothing hidden from His sight.

Nonetheless, I was recently challenged by some of these thoughts on knowing God. To know God takes much time and effort. No deep relationship is formed overnight. Are we setting aside time each day to seek God through prayer and reading His Word?

I vividly remember the preciousness and excitement of getting to know God when I was a young believer. I would go out into the fields in the early morning and again in the evening and talk to God. There were many areas of my life that needed growth, and God became more and more real to me as I spent time with Him.

Little did I know then how much I would need God's grace in the coming years, as some very dark valleys awaited me. If I had not gotten to know God in that way, I honestly doubt I would have made it. My relationship with God served as the anchor of my soul to weather the storms of life.

I don't share this to lift myself up, but rather to say that the same experience is available to anyone who will make time for it. It will not happen by accident. You will need to make intentional choices to set aside time to seek God. David said *One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple* –Psa 27:4.

We all have that one thing that will take priority over all else in our lives. What is that one thing for you? What will you neglect other activities for? I would like to challenge us that, without making "knowing God" our one thing, we will not get to know Him.

What things are distracting us from seeking God? There are many things that distract young people of our day. For young men it can be their car or truck, or it can be hunting. For the young ladies it can be their dresses, or their shoes, or it can be decorating their surroundings. These are just some suggestions to start us thinking. What are some more things that we could allow to get in the way of knowing God as being our number one priority?

One big thing that I see in our world today is technology. I know from experience how distracting it can be. It can

be hard to be focused on personal devotions while my phone is receiving notifications. Probably many of us could confess that with so much so readily available to us, it is a whole lot easier to spend an evening being involved with our technology than to spend that time with God. What is more important to us, technology or God?

I think it boils down to the question: What are our interests? You won't get to know a person deeply unless you are interested in them and care about them. It is the same with God. If we are honest with ourselves, I think too often we simply do not have the passion to seek God. We don't share the zeal that Paul expressed in Philippians 3, where he talks of the achievements he had made. But he considered it all to be nothing for the sole purpose and desire of knowing God. *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, ... That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;* –Php 3:8-10. Do we share this same passion?

I am inspired how David poured out his heart to God in the Psalms. When he felt overwhelmed, he told God about it. When he was discouraged, afraid, or convicted, he told God about it. His Psalms are also full of praise to God for what He had done, and for that which He had promised to do.

Relationships require a mutual sharing of hearts. God has already shared His heart for us in the Bible and He will reveal Himself to us in a deeper way as we seek to know and to understand His heart. But are we also pouring our heart out to God? When we feel misunderstood, or think others have wronged us, what do we do and where do we go? When we are discouraged, to whom do we turn? When we go through grief, tragedy, or loss, whose comfort do we seek? There is nothing like experiencing the comfort of God when we go through dark valleys in our life.

Relationships require maintenance. Without spending time together on a regular basis, deep relationships cannot continue. Just because we had an encounter with God and may have gotten to know Him at one point in our life does not mean that we currently have a connection with Him. Jesus said, *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered...* –Joh 15:6. If we do not make seeking God a daily part of our lives, our relationship with the Lord will wither away.

Now let's ask some questions: "Where do early mornings find you? Are you up before your day begins, seeking God,

giving that time of devotion to Him through Bible reading and prayer? Do you focus on knowing Him better each day with the goal of making Him known to a lost and dying world throughout your day? Or do you slumber and sleep through that precious opportunity? Were you up late the night before, partying with your friends or wasting your time on countless other things that have no eternal value, and therefore can't rise in time to seek Him?"

I don't believe that the morning is the *only* time a person can connect with God, but I do believe there is something precious about denying our flesh of that time when we would rather be in bed and devote it to seeking His face. It gives a wonderful platform for living the day for Him. I challenge you to make this a priority in your life. It may be hard to get started but persevere and soon your body will grow accustomed to rising early, and your spirit will blossom. Most of all, your life will become one that honors God and shines from that relationship with Him.

In the latter part of 1 Chronicles 28:9, David assures Solomon, *If you seek Him, you will find Him*. What a precious promise! There is guaranteed success to the soul that sets itself on seeking God!

People seek for countless things in this life. They may spend their entire lives seeking for riches, only to find that the happiness and fulfillment evades them when they reach their goal. They may seek fame and honor of men, only to find once they achieve their goal that it is an empty, lonely existence with no real friends. We could go on and on of all the things we human beings set our hearts to that don't really exist or are unattainable. But here is something that is attainable—*We can know God!* But it won't happen by accident, nor will it happen if you give it a halfhearted attempt.

I would like to briefly consider the life of Rehoboam, Solomon's son and David's grandson. Although Solomon did forsake the Lord at the end of his life, he still left an incredible kingdom to his son. With David as grandfather, and with all the promises that God had given Rehoboam was provided incredible potential. Not only that, but after the division of the northern tribes, the Bible tells us in 2 Chronicles 11:16 that all those who set their hearts to seek the Lord from the ten northern tribes resorted to Rehoboam. This man could have had an incredible kingdom!

He also seems to have had a fear of God, for in 2 Chronicles 11 and 12 we have two accounts of where he was confronted by a prophet, and he responded accordingly. Yet from the beginning we see him making an unwise choice of counselors. Later we see him forsaking the Lord and His Law after the

kingdom was established in his hand. Finally, we see the shame that Judah was brought into, that of serving the king of Egypt as a result of forsaking God. Why all this? What was Rehoboam's problem? Why couldn't he make wise decisions? Here is the answer: *And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD* –2Ch 12:14.

What kind of decisions are characterizing your life? Are you making wise decisions that you will not be ashamed of in eternity? Or will you hang your head in shame at the foolishness of how you lived your life and the choices you made when you reach that great throne of judgment? Are you serving the king of Egypt (the world), living by what the world deems important, dressing like the world tells you to dress, listening to the kind of music the world listens to, having an attitude of casual indifference; or are you serving the King of Kings and His Kingdom?

Noah and Enoch were two men whose relationship with God was so intimate that the Bible says that they 'walked with God'. At another place, the Bible also asks the rhetorical question, *how can two walk together except they be agreed?* Obviously, these two men sought God, and they were agreed with Him. They thought about things the way God did. The burdens of their hearts were in tune with the burdens of God's heart. They saw the world and the things in the world the way God saw them. But it didn't just happen; these men spent time with God intentionally.

So, whose example are you following? When your life has been lived, and you have passed on to eternity, what will the epitaph of your life be? Will the commentary be that you walked with God? Or will the sad truth be told that you did evil, because you didn't prepare your heart to seek God?

We will not always have the opportunity to seek God. Someday, our lives will be over.

So, again I ask... Do you know God? Do I know God? Do we really know God? Are we close enough to God to hear His heartbeat, to see things like God sees them, to know what pleases Him and what displeases Him? Is His presence your joy, and the absence thereof your sorrow? If not, when are you going to change? The opportunity to seek God is a limited time offer.

Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Isaiah 55:6



A Wee Little Prayer

Sara Brubaker
Wooster, OH



My new job had more things for me to learn than I could count. I absorbed directions and techniques as fast as my co-workers gave them, but I still couldn't catch up. My brain was overloaded.

One day my actions betrayed my bursting brain. It was early evening at the bulk food store, and we had almost an hour until closing time. The store was filled with the usual closing-time rush.

Standing nervously behind the deli, I worked alongside my boss who was slicing cheese with a speed I couldn't match. He whipped cheese out to one customer after another until the whole line was waiting on me to slice their deli meat. I felt intimidated and exceedingly slow. I turned bravely to the next customer in line. Smiling, I asked what I could slice for them.

"I'll take a pound of black forest ham sliced medium."

I scanned the deli case. I still didn't know where all the kinds were kept. Finally, I found it and painstakingly sliced a pound. I turned toward the label machine. I concentrated on finding black forest ham on the screen. Of course, I couldn't find it. Embarrassment crept up my cheeks.

My boss noticed my hesitation and took time to ask, "What are you looking for?"

I held the bag up at the same time that I said, "Black forest ham."

With a glance at the meat in the bag, he pointed to the words on the screen—roast beef.

"But I sliced black forest ham," I croaked.

He looked doubtful, and then smiled kindly. "Well, you've got roast beef there."

I wilted. "What a dreadful mistake! I'll deal with this later," I thought. I placed it into the deli cooler and proceeded to slice a pound of Black Forest Ham. My mind was full of concentration as I helped customers until the store cleared out a few minutes later.

Then I thought about the mistake again. How was I going to pay for roast beef? Well, I would need to pay for it even if it would only make four sandwiches at my house. It would never do to leave my mistake to the expense of my boss.

Suddenly, I had an idea. Why hadn't I thought of it before? I looked at the clock. With a determined heart I prayed. "God, I know there's not much time left before we close, but if it is Your will, will You please bring someone who wants a pound of roast beef?"

The doorbells jangled as a few people came in. Could this be my answer? But, no. Some of them didn't even want anything at the deli and those that did, didn't need roast beef. My faith faltered as darkness fell over the snow-clad landscape and the hands on the clock steadily moved closer to the end of the day. I wiped up some crumbs and tidied the slicing counter. Then I noticed someone standing at the deli. "Hello," I said. "What can I slice for you?" I tugged on a pair of gloves.

He casually said, "I'll take a pound of roast beef, sliced medium."

Momentarily, I stared dumbfounded at the pack of roast beef in the deli. Then I snapped out of my reverie and grabbed it, handing it triumphantly to him. "Anything else?" My heart beat rapidly and I couldn't stop smiling, my mind reassured.

He walked away, having no idea that he was an answer to prayer.

"Thank you, God." I whispered repeatedly. "You allowed him to come in here before I ever prayed. Thank you!"

I had known that God cares about the little things. Now I had experienced it personally. He even cares when my mind is full and I make mistakes, creating my own problems.

Psalm 40:17 But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.



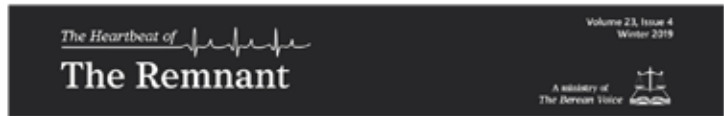


The Berean Voice

...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily... Acts 17:11

Writer's Guidelines

~ revised October 05, 2018



Since the Bible teaches that we should “know them that labor among [us]”, we will not publish any articles that do not include the author’s real name. However, in the event of security risks due to mission work in closed countries, we will give special consideration on a case-by-case basis.

Reprint Policy

- We request first rights to all printed material submitted to us. “All printed material in this magazine may be copied or reprinted in its entirety, so long as no changes are made. Whenever reproducing any of our material please reference the magazine details: name, date, and issue number as found on the front of each issue.”

Content

- All articles should be written from the clear teachings of God’s written Word, the Holy Bible, obtained by a literal, common-sense reading of the text.
- Ideas gleaned from the text of God’s Word should always be consistent with the context of the passage and not be taken out of context in an effort to push a personal agenda.
- We will expect that Scripture references and quotations be from the King James Version (KJV). In the event this is not possible, please clearly note which version or translation was used.
- Because of the clear transfer of spiritual requirements for God’s people, from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant, we will be publishing articles that are written from a New Covenant perspective.
- Because of the importance of practicing what we preach, all articles should be written out of godly wisdom coming from personal experience, not just head knowledge.

Articles

- The word-count for most articles should be between 1,200 and 2,200 words. The children’s articles should have 500 to 800 words. The best way to send articles to us is to create it in a word document, save as a PDF, then send via email.
- All “doctrinal” or “spiritual-direction” type articles should be written by spiritually-mature brothers (not novices), whose lives are bearing fruit consistent with the article’s content.
- All articles on the “Godly home” should be written by spiritually-mature, married brothers, preferably with children. Their homes should be bearing visible fruit that is consistent with Biblical teachings and the article content. He should be a servant-leader, guiding his home as being the head, and “dwelling with his wife according to knowledge”.
- The “Sister to Sister” articles should be based on the teachings of Titus 2:3-5; Eph 5:22, 23, 33; 1Pe 3:1-6; and other similar passages. They should be written by spiritually-mature sisters, preferably married, who are living in harmony with their home and church, according to the Biblical guidelines of headship order – submitting unto their own husband as unto the Lord and giving him reverence in all areas of life. Widows are also encouraged to write, especially those who are older.
- Articles for the youth and on church history should be written by spiritually-mature brothers, young or old, single or married.
- The “Children’s Corner” articles may be written by anyone. Children are also welcome to write children’s stories. If they are not converted, nor members of their local church, then their parents should fill out the “Contributor Agreement”, affirming that they, as parents, agree with and support our “Statement of Faith & Practice” and our “Reprint Policy”. The youth who is submitting a story must be living in godly harmony in their home and be under their spiritual authority.

-The Berean Voice Board

Matt Miller has been involved with *The Berean Voice* as a board member since the autumn of 2015. He is a 38-year-old single brother who could be defined as quiet, steady, level-headed, and biblically focused. His thoughtful input is greatly valued and appreciated by the rest of the board.

He spent practically all his life in the Holmes County area. His parents are part of a conservative Anabaptist Church and raised him and his siblings in the Christian faith. Matt has been a faithful member of Faith Christian Fellowship since 2008. And he is the youngest brother of our lead elder (bishop) Mark Miller.

Matt works at Weaver's Furniture, a retail furniture store that also does custom finishing for Amish furniture manufacturers. He is the Operations Manager at Weaver's, which means he is responsible to oversee all the operations of the business... 1) That the customer has a great experience throughout the production and delivery process. 2) That the employees fulfill their necessary duties to accomplish number one. And 3) That the product which has been ordered is delivered in the correct condition and in a timely manner to accomplish number one. In order to keep all this flowing, Matt is in constant contact with customers and employees to take care of any issues that may arise and put a smile back on their face. These experiences have helped to mold and shape Matt into the man he is today.

Matt enjoys leading small Bible studies for people who are interested in learning Bible History. The one thing that Matt pours his heart into whenever he has spare time is studying the Holy Lands and connecting the modern-day locations with the Biblical record of what happened there.



He also enjoys studying the different Scriptural terms that are somewhat challenging to understand according to our language usage of today. (e.g., What is meant by the much-used phrase in the Bible, "over against"? Answer: When something or someone is on the opposite side, as in Deuteronomy 34:1 where Jericho is on the opposite side of the valley from Mt Nebo, etc.)

Occasionally Matt puts together a small study group and travels to Israel and Egypt to study the Bible stories at the specific locations where they took place. He has personally taken numerous trips to the Middle East to study Bible History on site and has been to Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. On his most recent trip, he traveled to Saudi Arabia in October 2019 to see Mt Sinai and study the Exodus.

Matt has developed a personal website to display some of his studies and travels. For anyone interested in checking it out, visit: www.onsitebiblestudies.com.



Mount Sinai

What Is a Blessing?

It seems that Christians rich and poor,
Persecuted or free,
Claim that God has richly blessed them.
But can this really be?

One or the other must be wrong
So let's have a little quiz
And see if we can figure out
What a true blessing is.

A blessing is a gift from God
That makes us love Him more.
It makes us long to be with Him
On heaven's golden shore.

A blessing profits us throughout
That long eternity.
It's something we do not deserve,
Yet it's completely free.

Is it perhaps a mansion grand
Or just a cottage small,
That makes us long for Heaven's home
Beyond the jasper wall?

Is it cupboards full of good food
In this world here below?
Or maybe it is hunger, thirst
That makes us long to go.

Perhaps it is a bumper crop,
A summer with much rain.
Or does a drought bring longing for
That bountiful shore to gain?

Does having a big bank account
Make us for heaven sigh?
Or does poverty bring a longing
For treasure in the sky?

Is it second-hand clothes, or ones
Designed to fit just right
That makes us long to join the throng
Of angels robed in white?

Is it a healthy life, or one
With sickness, pills, and pain,
That makes us put all effort forth
That healthful shore to gain?

Is it freedom of religion
To worship without fear
Or persecution bitter fierce
That makes our faith so dear?

Is it ease or is it sorrow
That makes us long each day
To have God take us in His arms
And wipe all tears away?

Oh when the end of time has come
And earth shall be no more,
Kneeling by God's blissful throne
What will we thank Him for?

Will we thank Him for earth's riches
That filled our hearts with strife;
Or for the rough way that has led
Unto the tree of life?

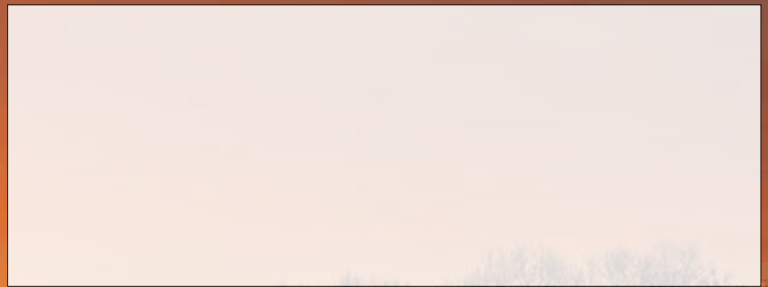
So in conclusion, friends, let's take
That strait and narrow way.
We say we're only pilgrims here,
So why not live that way?

-Darren Brubaker

The Heartbeat of
The Remnant

c/o The Berean Voice
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Keep thy heart with all diligence; for
out of it are the issues of life.

Proverbs 4:23