

The Heartbeat of 

The Remnant

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A ministry of
The Berean Voice



Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us.

Psalm 62:8

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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.

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Greetings of Christian love to each one. Hopefully, you have found Christ as the anchor for your soul and the solution to your difficulties. Another year is past and gone, and what a year it was... An unseen virus encircling the world, unsettling cultures from third-world countries to the most advanced and industrialized. World leaders blaming each other for the ever-increasing pandemic as their country's economies continued to spiral downward. And churches struggling to maintain unity in the midst of their various government's mandates regarding social distancing, mask wearing, and limits on the size of gatherings.

For many, the year 2020 has destroyed or radically altered that which used to be considered normal and has begun establishing new norms and many things may never be the same again. 'Six feet' has become a well-recognized unit of measurement. The sound of coughing draws glances from those within hearing distance. Mask wearing has become the focus of jokes and endless arguments regarding the pros and cons.

Through it all, many have suffered in various ways. Most importantly, I wonder if we have considered the spiritual fallout happening to those around us?

I have heard numerous reports of folks who couldn't handle the loss of fellowship when their local church completely stopped having in-person worship services. Some silently pined away, growing increasingly disillusioned with Christianity. Others, deciding this was 'the straw that broke their camel's back,' took action and left their old church, then joined a new group that was more supportive of their views. There were, however, many churches that chose to "obey God rather than man" and continued to quietly meet for worship.

Conscience in Crisis

This issue alone (governments telling churches how and when to worship) has been the cause of much discussion, disorder, and even dissension in many churches. We are facing unprecedented times. For most of us, we don't have any experience in our past to fall back on which will help us make a clear decision. Some Christians' consciences will not allow them peace while 'disobeying the civil authorities,' while other Christians' consciences will not allow them peace while 'forsaking the assembling of themselves together.' Somehow, this "intrusion" of government into the everyday life of the church just hasn't seemed quite right.

During the 1600s and the 1700s, our Anabaptist forefathers emigrated from Europe to foreign countries in search of a new home where they were free to worship as their conscience directed. Ever since, one of the key aspects of living in America has been that of the "separation of church and state". So, it was with uncertainty and trepidation that we, conservative Anabaptists, have considered that which our local, state, or federal governments have asked of us. One thing that I am extremely grateful for is that the leaders of our local fellowship have maintained very strong admonishment throughout this time, that: "As we sort through each new challenge that comes our way, we must ALWAYS exhibit a godly respect (in thought, in word, and in action) for our civil authorities", especially if we find it necessary to "obey God rather than man".

Another major point of concern was that of the United States elections at the end of 2020. Somehow, this country has become more and more polarized over the last four years, (maybe it has been longer). I heard a report of one man from the world who said that if Trump doesn't win the election then he sees no hope to continue living and he is contemplating whether he should just take his own life and end it all. Sure, a man of the world may not have the hope of a better life to come since he probably doesn't see himself as a "stranger and a pilgrim" here on this earth and most likely he doesn't believe in life eternal. But what about those of us who claim to be Christians, are we doing any better? Are we responding to each situation in fear or in faith?

All of this upheaval in our 'normal' way of life, has brought uncertainty. Uncertainty about jobs. Uncertainty about our future. Uncertainty about our families. Uncertainty about the end of time. And the list could go on with each person filling in the blanks for him or herself.

The Vaccines

The most recent issue of upheaval that is taking front stage both in our minds and in our conversations is that of the vaccine. Will it be "forced" upon us? Are there properties included in this new type of vaccine that will enable others to 'track' us and listen in to all our private conversations? Is it true that there is somehow a microchip, or a multitude of nano robots immersed in that small volume of liquid? Will this new technology that has been manufactured as a synthetic mRNA vaccine somehow change my DNA if I allow them to prick my skin? Is this vaccine the mark of the beast? All these, and more, are questions which I have been hearing with ever-increasing frequency and urgency.

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SPEAKING THE TRUTH in love

by Barry Grant
Titanyen, Haiti

*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; **But speaking the truth in love**, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: – Ephesians 4:14-15.*

Often these verses, namely the latter, are discussed in our day. Sometimes, I wonder if we have not misrepresented the words of our dear brother Paul.

We all know that Jesus never had to retract a statement, he never misspoke or talked out of place. How do we know? Hebrews 4:15 and 9:28 both say that Jesus was without sin, so we can confidently affirm this both in our hearts and in our words.

Now as we look at some of the accounts that Jesus spoke to those around Him, we may say that He didn't sound very loving! *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves – Matthew 23:14-15.*

He called the Pharisees hypocrites many times. He even called one of His most dedicated disciples, Peter, 'Satan'. This account seems to have been quite significant since it is recorded by three of the gospel writers in Matthew 16:23, Mark 8:33, and Luke 4:8.

What does it mean to 'speak the truth in love'? Does it mean that we always talk with a pleasing tone? Does it mean that we never say a sharp or harsh word? Paul tells Titus to *...speak, and exhort, and **rebuke with all authority**. Let no man despise thee – Titus 2:15.* In the book of Revelation, Jesus says... *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten... – Revelation 3:19.* It's almost as if Jesus is saying that you cannot rebuke someone unless you first love them.

The Scriptures record the Apostle Paul as admonishing the church at Ephesus to *...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, **but rather reprove them**. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But **all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light**: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light – Ephesians 5:11-13.* Let's just be honest, it is easier to speak with love and gentleness than it is to rebuke someone that we love. (Or is it rather someone that we want to keep loving us?) Somehow, we will need to forget or ignore the more than 70 times that the Bible talks about rebuke if we want to be a part of the easy, love-only gospel that is all too common today!

When is the last time you spoke the truth in love? Hopefully, most would say today, or a few minutes ago, and that is good. But when is the last time that you rebuked someone for a wayward act? Maybe it has been a while. Maybe the companions you fellowship with believe that it's judging to speak into someone else's life. After all, it could be justified, "We all have beams in our own eyes, right?!" God forbid, let us repent and remove the beams from our eyes so that we can help our brother!

What about in our churches? *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin – Hebrews 3:12-13.* If we only speak 'nice' words to each other, we will tend to start drifting away. The Apostle Paul instructs Timothy... *Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear – 1 Timothy 5:20.* Do we find ourselves obeying these scriptures? Or are we leaning too heavily on others, and thus we justify not doing our part?

Could it be that we have a problem? Could it be that we cannot obey both commands—"Rebuke" and "Speak in love"? Obviously not. We all would agree that these verses do not contradict each other. So how can this be? How can

we rebuke sharply (Titus 1:13) while at the same time be speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15)?

I believe that first we must look closer at the verse in Ephesians. What does the word **in** mean? Does it mean the same thing as the word **with**? I believe not. We can speak the truth **with** love and not be speaking it **in** love. On the other hand, if we speak **in** love it will always be with love in our heart (God's love—love for a soul's eternal welfare), but it may not be the kind of love that is **felt** by the other person if they are going by feelings. Could it be that this little **in** word is causing all the confusion?

Let's look at an example. Imagine that you take your 4-year-old son out to fell some trees for firewood. Everything is going well, because you and your son have a good understanding of how this works. However, when you have almost cut through the first tree you suddenly notice that your son is walking towards the spot where the tree is going to fall. What do you do? Your son's life is in danger. Should you possibly tell him softly and gently to turn around and come to you? Maybe you should ponder for a bit about how to speak to him in a way that would not offend him? There are obviously many different approaches to how the next crucial moments would go. Certainly, the tone of your voice would reflect the love you have for your child. No father would simply not care in a moment like this. His love for his son would cause him to call out to his son with urgency. For me, because I love my son dearly, I would holler or scream. I would do whatever it takes. I would even run into harm's way to pull him to safety. I would then probably scold him to be more careful, to walk more circumspectly.

I believe that speaking **in** love can sound quite sharp at times. In fact, I believe that according to the Bible's teaching, we can rebuke sharply, with authority, and at the same time do it **in** love. The problem is within the heart, when we do not have love in our hearts for our brethren, we disqualify ourselves from speaking the truth to them.

Over the years we have lived in Haiti, I have found that a sharp word spoken in love goes a lot farther than a soft word without love. People often know whether you love them or not. When that love is present, it is necessary at times to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. We will end up with a one-sided relationship if we are never allowed to correct someone or speak a word of admonition into their life.

When we see a problem in a brother's life, our love for him causes us to share our concern with him. That is what true love does. If we are more interested in friendship and smooth sailing, we will neglect this very important practice. Too often we fear speaking into each other's lives because we think that

if we speak honestly to our friend, then they will no longer appreciate us. But remember, if we do not have love one for another, we should just keep quiet. If this is where we find ourselves then we should pray that God would work in our hearts so that we change; after all, God IS love.

Am I saying that we should forget about how we talk? Absolutely not. I hope that is not the message I'm portraying. I know there is a fine line between erring on either side of this issue, but if we allow our hearts to speak with honesty and Holy Spirit discretion, our relationships will be improved and strengthened.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears –2 Timothy 4:3. I feel that the church of today has become too soft. We cannot handle rebuke and therefore we no longer practice this vital part of the Christian life. Due to this, our love and our close fellowship is failing. Instead, we go along with only speaking words that are kind and gentle, thereby never motivating each other to grow. Have we become so easily offended that we can no longer hear God speaking through our brothers? Have we become so sensitive that our fellow laborers do not have the liberty to speak into our lives? God open our eyes! God help us!

Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend –Proverbs 27:17. When we sharpen each other, it may not always feel good. Often it will sting or downright hurt. But it is very good for us and very worthwhile.

Let's say your vehicle is broken down on the side of the road; you're not sure what the problem is. Along comes a brother, and wanting to show you his love, he looks for something 'nice' to say. He comments about the beautiful paint on your car and how clean the windows look. When he leaves, what has he done? Nothing but temporarily lift your spirits. You still have a problem. Another brother comes and it goes quite differently. He looks over the car and says little about the paint and windows. He quickly examines the engine and pronounces that there is a problem that needs to be fixed. He tells you that unless you fix this problem, you're not going anywhere. Would you be angry with him? Of course not. Would you complain that he didn't even care about how nice the tires were? That he didn't say anything about the paint or windows? Not a chance.

But when it comes to the brotherhood, we all want to sit around and talk about the nice things and leave the things that are too 'sensitive' in the dark. Have we silently agreed with each other to not correct one another? It almost seems that when a brother wants to rebuke or exhort another brother, he may as well prepare for 'war'. It should not be this way. If we love each other, which God says we must

or we cannot love Him, then we will be open to speak and listen to each other's concerns.

If we consider anything else in this life—a classroom, the workplace, and even our city streets—without correction there will be failure. We need to listen to those around us who desire to help us. Too many times we would rather be left to ourselves and miss out on a great benefit of true Christian brotherhood. If we want this blessing in our lives, we will need to purposely choose to embrace any constructive criticism that may come our way, no matter from whom it is coming or how unkind it may seem. One thing that goes a long way towards being able to receive 'hurtful' rebukes is to always tell ourselves that the other person is wanting to 'help' us, not 'hurt' us, even though it may feel otherwise.

But speaking the truth in love... Maybe the emphasis in this verse is actually on the word **truth**. Speaking the truth is not always easy; it takes a love for someone else to pull you out of your comfort zone. When you have a group of brethren that truly love each other, they will speak into each other's lives—they will speak truth **in** love.

How we speak to one another certainly means a great deal. The power of the tongue is no small matter. But if we are not unwilling to speak the truth if it means someone will be displeased with us, are we not then at fault? I believe that the fear of man has crept in and controls us more than we would like to admit.

Let's consider some examples in the Holy Bible. If Jesus had allowed fear of man to influence His life, His ministry would have been much different—He would have remained quiet much of the time. Consider the disciples, each one of them suffered for their Ultimately, they couldn't but speak of the things they had seen and heard. John the Baptist rebuked Herod! And he lost his head for it. If you read through the martyr's mirror, in many of the stories the martyrs could have stayed alive if only they would have kept quiet, or spoke nice, agreeable words. But they couldn't, they had to speak the truth, no matter what the outcome was. They loved not their lives, even unto death. I don't think it was the tone of voice that these martyrs used which brought the wrath of man down on themselves, but rather it was **what** they said.

Let's be honest. We all like it when people are happy with us. We work hard and live upright lives for this cause. But is it biblical? I believe that this verse, *speaking the truth in love*, is meant to cause us to get off easy street and begin to say the hard things of Scripture that will cause the world to hate us, to say the hard things that cause a brother or sister to consider their ways and repent.

When we speak **in** love, I believe we have an open door

to say the hard things. I'm so thankful for those that loved me enough to say the things that I needed to hear. I pray that God will continue to put those people into my life, the ones who are willing to sacrifice friendship, if need be, to warn me of error in my way.

O that God would raise up men who have eternity in their vision and know the worth of one soul. Those who know how to sacrifice being well liked, so they can be the light of the world. I believe the first step we need to take to fulfill this verse, is to repent for our lack of true biblical love one for another. Then and only then, will we be able to start ... *speaking the truth in love, [so that we] may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ -Ephesians 4:15.*

The Death of a Sinner

Death seemed certain, the doctors all said.
Was it really true "That in days he'd be dead"?
He didn't want to admit, yet he was driven by fear.
He broadened his shoulders, hid every tear.
Before he knew when his end might be,
He boldly proclaimed his own sovereignty.
To admit his fear of what is unknown,
Would be worse than death and eternity alone.

"No one can know my anguish inside!
I'll act like I'm fine, my feelings I'll hide.
People speak of God, oh the anger that brings!
Please go away, or talk of other things!"
Alone on the bed, his mind starts to race.
"I'm tired of bondage; could there be grace?
No, it will never work, for me it's too late."
With his back turned on God, he awaited his fate.

The preacher knew not what exactly to say,
At the funeral of the man who had gone his own way.
All that he knew, was that he'd made a bad choice,
Hardening his heart and blocking God's voice.
There's no changing it now, he must pay the cost.
Death swallowed its victim—his soul eternally lost.

—By Barry Grant



...continued from page 3



Conspiracy Theories

The uncertainty of it all (the virus, the election, and the vaccine) has spawned many, many conspiracy theories. Usually, if there is a negative connotation surrounding something, then we tend to close ourselves to the possibility that we may be involved. “Surely, the ideas that I am passing on are not a conspiracy theory!”

Or are they? Let’s stop and think about this a minute. *Conspiracy* = a secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful. *Theory* = a supposition or a system of ideas intended to explain something. Doesn’t this fit most of the allegations and claims that have been circulated among us? Almost every new ‘story’ will claim that ‘certain’ people are secretly involved in an all-encompassing agenda to use this certain negative issue of upheaval to bring about a specific negative change that will harm the masses. Most often these ‘stories’ are designed to play on our emotions, triggering a response rooted in fear, that is ultimately designed to protect myself from the alleged personal harm—that of being personally controlled by others, loss of personal rights, loss of personal privacy, etc., etc.

If we are honest about the actual definition of ‘conspiracy’ and of ‘theory’, then we would also need to admit that many, if not most, of the ‘stories’ that are spreading through the rumor-mill are indeed conspiracy theories. I am not suggesting that we bury our heads in the sand, or that we shouldn’t be a prepared people. I am simply cautioning against being sucked into the emotional rhetoric of the many ‘stories’ that are continually being promoted.

There are some questions we can ask ourselves that will help to sort through the confusion of all the various claims or allegations being made. Am I being asked to join the fight to protect the Constitution of the United States? Am I being advised to join others in standing up for our ‘rights’? If I stop and consider what’s happening in my heart, what is motivating me to action—Faith? or Fear? If there is any truth in that which is being alleged, is there anything that I can do about it?

Like I said before, we are facing unprecedented times. Let’s face our future with faith—our God is sovereignly in control. Let’s not lose sight of our future home in heaven—we are called to be strangers and pilgrims in this world. Let’s always remember the promises of God—that He will be with us always even unto the end of the world, and that He will NOT allow us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear. These promises and many, many more are clearly specified in the Scriptures.

The virus hits home

My (Curvin’s) family contracted the Covid-19 virus in the middle of October 2020. It affected each of our family members in slightly different ways, which was interesting to observe. One of the intriguing aspects was that most of us lost our sense of taste and smell. Most of our family didn’t suffer more than we normally would with the normal flu. However, my mother, who lives with us, ended up on the very verge of needing to be hospitalized due to low oxygen levels in her blood. Thankfully, this was averted through a doctor prescribing some potent drugs which had an almost immediate effect on reversing this.

For myself, I was so sick from the virus that I wasn’t able to work for over two months. The only thing that kept me out of the hospital was a daily intake of one restricted drug and double the recommended dose of steroids through nebulizer treatments. This went on for over six weeks. It is now almost two months since I finally started to recover and yet I am still not fully back to where I was prior to contracting Covid-19.

On a side note, we have included an article bringing recognition to the life of Mose Stoltzfus, an older brother from one of our sister churches who died after contracting Covid-19. Considering these two situations, I can say of a surety that the virus is real and not a hoax; that the virus affects everybody in slightly different ways; that some people have hardly any ill effects even though they do contract the virus; and that there are some who do become very ill indeed.

The Vaccine booklet

Back a number of issues we ran a number of articles written by a doctor on the whole issue of vaccines. Our goal was to try to present as balanced of a view as possible. We had numerous requests to have those articles compiled into a booklet format, which we had announced previously that we were planning to do. We encountered a number of practical issues that needed to be sorted through, which took time (much longer than we had anticipated). Finally, we have now arrived at the point of being ready to compile and publish this booklet.

If you want to receive one or more copies of this booklet, we ask that you contact us with your contact information and the number of booklets desired, even if you have previously done so. This will help us gauge the interest level to know how many we should print. We can be reached by mail, phone, or email, each of which can be found inside the front cover of each issue of our magazine, *The Heartbeat of the Remnant*.

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A Country Called Heaven

by Luke B. Bucher

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Today we want to think about a peculiar and wonderful country, a country where there are no tears nor heartaches; a country in which there is no sickness, pain, nor death. The people who live in this country never get tired. They carry no burdens and they never grow old. No one ever says “goodbye,” for separations are unknown—and there are no disappointments. In Heaven there is no sin, for no one ever does wrong. One will travel for hundreds of miles and never see a cemetery or meet a funeral procession.

The clothes that are worn in Heaven are a glistening white, and no one dresses in the clothes of mourning. The flowers never lose their fragrance, and the leaves are always green. There are no thunderstorms, no erupting volcanoes, and no earthquakes. Upon those fair shores, hurricanes and tidal waves never beat. There are no germs nor fevers. There is no sickness and no pestilence of any kind. The sun never shines and yet it is always light for there is no night there. It is never too hot and never too cold. No clouds ever darken the sky and harsh winds never blow. There are no drunkards or smokers in this country, for no one ever drinks or smokes there. None are immoral; men as well as women are pure. Prisons, jails, and reformatories never darken the landscape. The doors have no locks and the windows no bars, for thieves and robbers never enter there. There are no crippled people to be seen anywhere; none are deformed or lame. Nor is anyone blind, deaf, or dumb. Hence, homes for incurables have never been built—for all are well and strong.

You ask me how I know all this? Have I been there? No, I have not yet had the privilege of visiting this wonderful Country of which I speak, but others have. And One, even Jesus, my Saviour and my Lord, has lived there a long, long time. He came here to earth and told us a great deal about it. Jesus called this country “Heaven,” and told me that He is coming again to take me home to be with Him. He says, “in my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And

if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also” (John 14:2-3).

When I think of Heaven, there comes before my mind a picture of a celestial city; a city which has love for its law, perfection for its standard, and Jehovah for its God. It is a city with jasper for its walls, angels for its guards, and saints for its citizens. It is a city in which may be heard the glad “hallelujahs” of the redeemed. Oh, the wonders of Heaven! When one tries to describe it, he feels as if he were going forth with a tallow candle to illuminate a golden sunset. We want to note seven wonders of the country called Heaven.

1. The First Wonder of Heaven Is That Such a Place Could Ever Be

The words in Revelation 21:3-11 are a description of some of the grandeur of Heaven—a place not made by hands: Heaven is a place without grief or graves, without sin or sorrow; a place with gates never shut; no night there—just one eternal day. Heaven is a place of incomparable beauty. Earthly scenes may be described by poets, but Heaven is so wonderfully grand that even the inspired writer Paul could not pen it in earthly language. He says in 1 Corinthians 2:9, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for you.” Who can even imagine or describe the beauties of a heavenly mansion fresh from the Saviour’s hand? Heaven is a place entirely free from pain. In Heaven there are no aching limbs, no darting pains, no swelling tongues, and no sinking eyes. Heaven is a place without cradles or coffins. It is without marriages and without mournings. The Bible says, “But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more, for they

are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God” (Luke 20:35-36).

2. The Second Wonder of Heaven Is the Equality of Its Inhabitants

Think of the inequalities of this life. We have the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the sick and the well, the young and the old, the favored and the oppressed. In Heaven the rich and the poor will sit side by side, each robed in spotless white. The Bible says in Luke 13:29, “And they shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.” In that glorious day when all God’s children are called home, they will be there from all quarters of the earth—all those who have met the conditions of salvation and have accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

All of God’s children are heirs of Heaven. We read in Romans 8:17, “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” In Heaven, we, God’s born-again children, will be completely conformed to the image of Christ. 1 John 3:2 says, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” In Heaven, the poor widow who toiled by candlelight, will come into her full inheritance. The aged pilgrim, tottering with uncertain step toward the end of his journey, will find that in Heaven none ever grows old.

Helen Keller’s faith in God sustained her in the quiet hours when she retreated into the deep silence that only the deaf, blind, and mute can know. But upon the death of her patient teacher, Anne Sullivan, Helen Keller said, “I look forward to the world to come, where all physical limitations will drop from me like shackles; where I shall again find my beloved teacher and engage joyously in greater service than I have ever known.” Some have conceived that Heaven is a place of idleness, but this is not so. Revelation 7:9-17 tells us we will worship God and serve Him.

3. The Third Wonder of Heaven Is That Its Inhabitants Should Be Interested in This Sin-Cursed World

Why should the God of Heaven be interested in you and me? It is comforting to know that God seeks after us as a shepherd seeks after his lost sheep, or as a woman seeks after her lost coin. God is concerned that all men everywhere repent and come to a knowledge of the truth through repentance. “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all

should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). The Bible says, “There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:10).

The words in Luke 15 indicate a tremendous willingness on God’s part to receive sinners. No matter how wicked a person has been, in the day that he really turns from his wickedness, and comes to God through faith in Jesus Christ, God is well pleased. And the passage in Luke 15:10 shows that the matter of salvation is of deep interest to the angels and the inhabitants of Heaven. The conversion of each soul on earth is carefully observed in Heaven.

4. The Fourth Wonder of Heaven Is That It Should Be Opened To Foreign Immigrants

The wonder is, that saved sinners may enter. It would be of little value to us to hear of Heaven if there were not a possibility for us to gain admission. But God, in His goodness, invites us to become citizens of that celestial city. Jesus came to the earth as a foreign immigration agent—not only to tell us of the place, but to arrange our entrance. The Bible is God’s inspired letter to inform us of that great City, and to tell us how to prepare for citizenship in it. “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14). We need to read the Bible and take time to study it and obey it.

The incident is told of some folks who were traveling. In the late afternoon, as they sped wearily along the highway, yearning to reach their destination after traveling all day, they saw a sign in front of a cozy house, which read, “If you lived here, you’d be home now!” Just so, this world is not the Christian’s permanent home. Hebrews 13:14 says, “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.” Here we are but “strangers and pilgrims” (Hebrews 11:13). How wise we are in obeying the Scriptural directions, “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:20). “Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:1-2).

5. The Fifth Wonder of Heaven Is the Condition of Citizenship

It is said that Stan Berman calls himself the world’s greatest gate-crasher. A “gate-crasher” is one who attends social functions or gatherings uninvited. Stan Berman claims to have crashed more than three thousand parties, eating free meals, and rubbing elbows with statesmen, presidents, movie stars, famous athletes, and notable persons. Berman, who is a taxi-cab driver, says his only reason for gate-crashing is to prove that a humble cabdriver can get along with the

great persons of earth. But there is one gate that cannot be crashed—and that is the gate of Heaven: Jesus, in relating the story of the Marriage Supper, in Matthew 22:1-14, tells of the man who had come to the wedding feast, but who had not worn the wedding garment. And the king said to the servants, “Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

What does the Bible say about the conditions of citizenship in Heaven? “And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Revelation 21:27). Heaven is only for God’s redeemed ones; those who have placed personal faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. If we would reason like the world does, we would conclude that a place like Heaven would be just for good people, those who do good deeds, those who have their name on a church roll—this would be a title to Heaven. The Bible makes it clear that “Whosoever will, let him come.” Heaven is for all who will come and meet the conditions of citizenship (See John 3:3-7; John 3:36). Sinners may enter Heaven, but they first must be converted, changed, and born of the Spirit (John 3:5). None can enter Heaven as naturalized foreigners; all must be citizens by birth—the new birth.

6. The Sixth Wonder of Heaven Is That All Its Splendor Will Remain Forever Unchanged

Earth’s great cities don’t last. Where is Rome with her ancient glory? Babylon with her hanging gardens? Athens with all her learning? All have faded like the beauty of the plucked rose. Everything that this world offers will pass away. But Heaven is an abiding city. Its glories never fade.

A little girl who had been blind from birth underwent surgery. The operation was a success and when the last bandage was removed from her eyes, the child was able to see for the first time. First she ran into the arms of her mother; then she ran to the window and out through the open door. As her eyes took in the beauties of earth, she screamed with excitement, “Oh Mother, why didn’t you tell me it was so beautiful?” The mother wiped away her tears of joy and replied, “My precious child, I tried to tell you, but I couldn’t put it into words.” One day when God’s children go sweeping through the gates of pearl and catch their first vision of the heavenly City, I believe we will go to the Apostle John and ask, “John, why didn’t you tell us it was so beautiful?” And John will answer, “I tried to tell you in the last chapters of the Revelation, but I could not find adequate words to describe it.” Revelation 22:5 says, “And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle,

neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever.” The hymn-writer says, “It will be worth it all, when we see Jesus.”

7. The Seventh Wonder of Heaven Is That More Do Not Prepare To Make Their Home There

When we think how quickly time is passing, and that we cannot stay here always; when we think of the heartaches, the sorrows, the disappointments, it is a wonder that more do not hasten to prepare for an eternal home where happiness and joy abide forever. My friend, are you prepared today to be a citizen of that heavenly home? “Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20). If you are not prepared, you may be. Prepare by believing that Jesus Christ is God’s Son and that He came from Heaven and died on the Cross for you. Believe in and accept His precious blood to wash away your sin. Believe that He rose from the dead on the third day and ascended into Heaven to intercede for us (1 Corinthians 15:3; Hebrews 4:14).

Some years ago, Dr. Charles E. Fuller announced that he would speak the next Sunday on “Heaven.” During that week, a beautiful letter was received from an old man who was very ill, and the following paragraphs are a part of that letter:

“Next Sunday you are to talk about Heaven. I am interested in that land because I have held a clear title to a bit of property there for over fifty-five years. I did not buy it. It was given to me without money and without price. But the donor purchased it for me at tremendous sacrifice. I am not holding it for speculation, since the title is not transferable. It is not a vacant lot.

“For more than half a century I have been sending materials out of which the great Architect and Builder of the universe has been building a home for me, which will never need to be repaired because it will suit me perfectly, individually, and will never grow old. Termites can never undermine its foundations, for they rest upon the Rock of Ages. Fire cannot destroy it and floods cannot wash it away. No locks nor bolts will ever be placed upon its doors, for no vicious person can ever enter that land where my dwelling stands, now almost completed and almost ready for me to enter in.

“There is a valley of deep shadows between the place where I live in California, and that to which I shall journey in a very short time. I cannot reach my home in that City of God without passing through this dark valley of shadows. But I am not afraid, because the best Friend I ever had, went through the same valley long ago and drove away all

its gloom. He has stuck by me through thick and thin since we first became acquainted fifty-five years ago, and I hold His promise in printed form, never to forsake me nor to leave me alone.

“I hope to hear your sermon on Heaven next Sunday, but I have no assurance that I shall be able to do so. My ticket to Heaven has no date marked for the journey. There is no return coupon. Yes, I am all ready to go, and I may not be here while you are talking next Sunday, but I shall meet you there some day.”

Heaven will be our eternal home. Think of stepping on shore and finding it Heaven. Think of taking hold of a hand and finding it God’s hand. Think of breathing a new air and finding it celestial air. Think of feeling invigorated and finding it immortality. Think of passing from storm

and tempest to an unknown calm. Think of waking up and finding it HOME! Jesus says in John 14:2-3, “In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

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...continued from page 7

Continued Changes



Over the last year or two we have pursued various ways of streamlining our production efforts. One of these, which we have mentioned before is that of working towards having multiple authors write articles for the various specific columns, such as the Children’s Corner, Sister to Sister, A Word from The Doctor, etc.

One of the changes you will see is that we will have more than one doctor writing articles for the medical column.

Finances

As you will notice, we have included a financial report in this issue for the year of 2020. A year ago, we had made known through our annual newsletter that things were quite desperate for us financially and that we needed funds if we were going to keep going forward. The response was overwhelming, and we have been blessed by all who decided to partner with us in this need. However, as you can see by the financial report, there is a need for continued financial support since our expenses are ongoing. For those of you who are actively involved in this way, we say thank you and may God richly bless your generosity.

A Point of Interest

The children’s story in this issue of the magazine holds special interest for me. While the details of the story may not

all be according to fact, there was a John M. and Catharine Kurtz family that lost five children in infancy and then years later they lost six children to diphtheria. Only John S. Kurtz survived, but was joined by two younger siblings later on. John was ordained to the ministry at the age of 27 and married Maria Horning almost two years later.

John S. and Maria (Horning) Kurtz were my great, great grandparents. So, that line of my ancestry can be traced back through the time of another pandemic and tremendous upheaval in people’s lives, through that of the only surviving child out of a family of 12. For me, this brings personal interest and perspective to some of the situations we are facing today.

May God bless and keep each one. As the world becomes ever darker and more chaotic, let us as Christians draw ever closer to our Lord. In this, He has given a command containing a promise for each of us to: Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded –James 4:8.

Curvin L Wenger



i will

by Sheryl Zeiset
Tanzania, East Africa

Arough, Old Testament warrior and a 21st century housewife—what might they have in common? Reading through the Psalms, we find a man who was determined to find the heart of God and walk in obedience. While there are not many similarities between my life and the life of this man, his words still touch my need and steady my floundering heart.

David set his heart on God even when his life was fraught with difficulty and distress. He was often unable to have the secure life he craved. As I read through his writings, I embark on a personal journey of faith and obedience. Often when confronted with a need in my life, the first words that come to my lips are “I’ll try”. It is so easy to allow emotions of frustration, fear, and worry to rule, instead of making the conscious choice of obedience. Many times, throughout the book of Psalms, David uses the words “I will”. David was determined to steer his heart in the way of obedience. Follow me on my journey thru this beautiful book as we explore a few of David’s “I wills”.

- *I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart.* –Psalm 9:1a
- *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.* –Psalm 18:1
- *I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised.* –Psalm 18:3a
- *I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.* –Psalm 32:5b
- *I will keep my mouth with a bridle.* –Psalm 39:1b
- *I will wait on thy name.* –Psalm 52:9b
- *I will trust in thee.* –Psalm 56:3b
- *I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.* –Psalm 56:4b
- *I will declare what he hath done for my soul.* –Psalm 66:16b
- *I will praise the name of God with a song.* –Psalm 69:30a
- *I will go in the strength of the Lord God.* –Psalm 71:16a
- *I will remember the works of the Lord.* –Psalm 77:11a
- *I will meditate also of all thy work and talk of thy doings.* –Psalm 77:12
- *I will be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness.* –Psalm 17:5b

Most of David’s “I wills” were a conscious, emotional choice in the middle of unruly circumstances. Without emotions, this world would be a cold, hard place unable to be inhabited by God’s Spirit. All humankind was created with emotion, but women especially are easily dominated by them. We deal with the ebb and flow of our emotions daily, often like a wild horse which constantly tries to get out of control. But God also gives us His strength to rein in this ‘wild horse’ and guide it in the right direction. Once the choice is made, God’s grace is all ours. Opposite from what we often tell ourselves, we are not victims of our feelings or emotions. We are responsible to take action, for this is, in fact, a war between good and evil. It is a war between our sin nature and the nature of Christ.

I want to look at a few struggles which are common to women and then we will look at how a God-directed “I will” can change our perspective and ultimately affect our emotional responses and spiritual health.

Comparison

For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise –2 Corinthians 10:12.

It is our natural tendency to compare ourselves with others. Yet every time, we end up feeling either superior or inferior to the other person. This evokes many emotions that can either depress us, or unjustly affirm ourselves. Neither of these responses produces a peaceful heart. Instead of following this tendency of comparison, we can say like David, “I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.” Having our eyes on Christ will fulfill our hearts in a way that our desire for human reassurance and acceptance never can or will.

Fear

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee –Psalm 56:3.

It doesn’t always feel like we have a choice in this one, as fear tends to crash in on us without warning. But in some of my recent battles with fear, God showed me that living in continual fear is refusing to believe the promises found

in His Word. David's "I will trust in Thee" is a conscious choice that I also need to make. As some have said, "Fear is living in the future without God in it." God's grace is here for me today and it will be here for me tomorrow, but I cannot try to find grace today for tomorrow's trials.

Discontentment

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content –Philippians 4:11.

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content –1 Timothy 6:8.

Everything about the advertising strategies of today's world are designed to create a desire for more. No matter how beautiful of a house we live in, our human nature will always crave just one more thing. Consider the peace that is available for you as a woman of God, if you choose to imitate David's attitude, "I will be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." As God fulfills the longings of your heart, there's no longer a need to search for a counterfeit fulfillment.

Gossip

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man –Colossians 4:6.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers –Ephesians 4:29.

The word 'gossip' is defined as "casual or unconstrained conversation or reports about other people, typically involving details which are not confirmed to be true." It is often an effort to elevate our own ego which is rooted in insecurity. David says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle." Even though he had every reason to spread 'stories' about his enemies, he found no need to devalue others through gossip.

Here we have considered only a few examples. I encourage each of you to prayerfully evaluate your own emotional responses and the way they can dominate your life. Here is a list of questions to help you discern the areas in your life that may need a change of perspective.

1. Do you need more of an "I will" attitude in your life?
2. Are you listless and wondering about the meaning of life?
3. Are you struggling with depression?
4. Do you struggle with your priorities and lack of motivation to change them?
5. Do your children need more words of encouragement?
6. Do you struggle with unhealthy eating habits?
7. Are you caught in the cogs of negative thought patterns?

8. Are you fighting your husband's desires and leadership?

Good intentions and change are often only separated by lack of faith and motivation. Often, we don't understand how God intimately cares about these emotions and problems in our lives and is waiting to see our willingness to change. When we take the first step of obedience, His grace is there to do the miracle. The "I'll try" mindset brings lethargy and defeat. The "I will" opens up God's endless store of grace. Every day brings hundreds of small decisions. How we respond to these decisions eventually form the woman we become and the woman we will be in our old age.

Mary, the future mother of Jesus, was suddenly face to face with an angel one day. His words troubled her and she "cast in her mind" what he was telling her. She could have allowed herself to be overcome with fear at the thought of what the angel's words meant for her. Instead, she said, "Behold the handmaiden of the Lord, be it unto me according to Thy word." She chose faith and it impacted the world in ways she could never have imagined.

It was a choice. A choice for which she could not take days or weeks to prepare. However, her being a part of God's plan for the salvation of the world hung on that choice.

Esther, the queen was faced with a serious dilemma. Her people were in danger of being wiped out by the treacherous Haman. Mordecai told her that she was a queen for such a time as this and she must go in to the king and beg for his help. Her heart quavered. She was well acquainted with the king's rules that whoever ventured into his palace without an invitation would likely be killed. But she chose courage... "If I perish, I perish." She was going to do what she could for her people no matter what the cost.

It was just a choice. Yet the safety of her people and the miracle of their deliverance came through her willingness to make such a difficult choice.

Attitudes and emotions—the negative, or the positive—are all hidden choices we must make. Which will you choose, the faithless "I'll try" or the courageous "I will"? Will you choose, by God's grace, to make the right choice? God has promised to perfect the things which concern you, but He will not do His work in your life without your "I will". It is up to you.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: –2 Corinthians 9:8.



The Urgency of “Anointed” Preaching

by Edwin R Eby
Greencastle, PA
October 2009

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! –Romans 10:14-15.

Truth is urgent. Earnestly and passionately preaching the truth is urgent. Even though it eventually cost Him His life, Jesus urgently and passionately taught the will of His Father in Heaven. Paul urgently and passionately declared the whole counsel of God until his conscience was free from the guilt of the blood of all men.

Passionate, urgent, Spirit-anointed preaching is prophetic *...for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy – Revelation 19:10*. It is prophetic as it bears witness to the life of Jesus. Upon the choices of mankind hinge the earthly spread of either **the kingdom of darkness** or **the Kingdom of Light**. Urgency-filled, passionate preaching furthers the cause of Christ.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God ... For ... it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe ... Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men –1 Corinthians 1:18-25.

Passionate preaching is a forceful factor in identifying that there is no middle ground in Biblical warfare. This passionate preaching stirs the conscience and convicts the heart. It drives the listener to *...choose you this day whom ye will serve...* –Joshua 24:15. He cannot hang in the deceptive clutches of ambiguous indecision. Passionate preaching urges the faithful to ongoing surrender and awakens the drunken sleeper to repentance. It defines sin, separating it from holiness, thereby compelling a decision.

...Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts –Zechariah 4:6, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Urgency filled, passionate preaching propels, teaches, convicts, and moves individuals in ways that even urgent personal Bible study, personal devotions, and discipleship cannot. No other form of teaching can effectively replace this God-ordained method of ministry in the churches of Jesus the Christ. God ordains that His work, first done in the heart of the preacher, makes possible the persuasion of men. Such messages clearly define kingdom boundaries and bear upon the listener irresistible accountability. Sovereignty deems that under passionate, Spirit-anointed preaching, the conscience cannot resist accountability. Without revoke and aside from choice, upon the conscience of the hearer is laid either damnation or assurance.

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine –2 Timothy 4:2. Our Anabaptist forefathers believed in the urgency of passionately calling men and women to more than a mere understanding of truth. They called for active faith—obedience. They preached with expectancy, believing that their voices would move people at the core and bring about radical lifestyle changes. They expected their preaching to send men into evangelistic endeavors... even unto death. They expected their influence to move men and women to live under the banner and direction of Jesus’ practical example.

Current preaching styles have trended **from** *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...* –2 Corinthians 5:11 and *...We ought to obey God rather than men –Acts 5:29*; **to** “God understands and feels your pain.” Such is not erroneous, per se, but passionate urgency must fill the preacher’s heart to convince, to convict, and to pierce the darkness of today.

If preachers, sermon after sermon, simply present facts

in monotone manners, and speak without passion, they dull the hearers' conscience. They urge them to lackadaisical living, leaving them unmoved. It sears and hardens. It kills vision and burden. It is a seed bed for apostasy. It heightens satisfaction in hypocritical living. It entrenches complacent legalism into the core of the heart of man.

But if all prophesy [preach], and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth – I Corinthians 14:24-25.

Conviction never lacks emotion. Neither does Holy Spirit-anointed preaching. Emotionless preaching covertly identifies to listeners that the preacher lacks compelling passion for his own words. Whether a message is encouragement, warning, or doctrine, urgent passion and emotion are urgently imperative.

The secret closet of the preacher must be full of Light... Biblical Light. The "Sword" he bears must first be severely laid to the roots of his own flesh. Indeed, it presses upon

his soul until the fire in his bones can no longer be silent and the Lord is honored.

No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier – 2 Timothy 2:4. The preacher needs to be intellectually prepared. God must have worked through his personal Bible study and his prayerful preparation. Less preparation is a symbol of a preacher's own complacency and will be the ruin of his God-appointed accountability. He cannot wield the Sword (Word) of the Lord effectively... *to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit...* – *Hebrews 4:12*, unless it happens within his own heart first. The husbandman must first taste and feed on his own fruits. Through such enabling grace, the parishioners will either be spiritually moved to deeper levels of passionate living, or their conscience will be hardened against the Holy Spirit's convicting influence. Through faith, obedience, and the blood of the Lamb, it defeats willful sin, fiendish demons, sensual flesh, and Satan. Thus, urgent, Spirit-anointed, passionate preaching removes all middle ground while it purifies the church.



A Tribute to 'Brother Mose'

by Larry Zook
Kalona, IA



Editor's Note:

Normally, we haven't used our magazine to bring focus to any specific individual. However, in regard to Mose, we felt it would be fitting to provide a small tribute. Mose was instrumental in helping to get The Heartbeat of the Remnant magazine started way back over twenty years ago when it was first begun. Then years later when several churches divided some of the various aspects of ministry between themselves, Ephrata Christian Fellowship with Mose as one of its leaders, took on the publishing of the magazine as their own effort. They continued this for a number of years until it eventually went out of print temporarily due to their editors moving out of the area. Fast forward to 2016, when we (The Berean Voice) wanted to begin publishing a newsletter/magazine. When Mose realized what we were about to do, he requested that we take over the publication of their magazine since he and his fellow laborers wished to see it continue in print. In short, this is how we ended up publishing a magazine that had originally been published by another church in another state. Thus, it seems fitting to give recognition to the life Mose has lived and the path he has endeavored to blaze for others. It is with gratefulness that we remember the life and example Mose has left us with. And it is with humility that we will persevere in our efforts to keep this torch (the magazine) burning for Truth.

Mose S. Stoltzfus entered into his eternal rest on December 6, 2020, following a brief battle with Covid-19. The testimony of his life was that of a race well run, leaving a legacy of godly faithfulness to the end which others can follow. Brother Mose, as he was often referred to by his church brethren, will be greatly missed. Family, friends, business associates, and church brethren remember with gratitude how his life was a blessing to them. Most of all, he will be missed by his beloved wife, Rhoda.

Mose grew up in a home where he was taught the "fear of the Lord" and had a new birth into the Kingdom of God at the age of 15. This was the beginning of his love for God and His Word, the Holy Scriptures. This was a love which he pursued for the rest of his life, and which in time enabled him to be mighty in word and deed.

It has been my privilege to have known Brother Mose for nearly 30 years. Most of the fellowship we had together was related to the work of the Church, and of the Kingdom of God. What I want to share here concerning Brother Mose is largely related to his ministry in the Gospel.

One of the prominent gifts the Lord gave to Brother Mose

was the gift of preaching. It was a gift that he pursued with zeal, not by constraint, but willingly. Whether it was just a few gathered in a living room or hundreds gathered in a community hall, he loved to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He often preached to men and women who had troubled souls and were seeking a Savior. He preached to small assemblies of believers where new churches were beginning, helping them to be established in the faith. He preached in large churches and fellowship gatherings of saints encouraging and exhorting them to follow Christ.

Those who were around Brother Mose during his years of ministry know that he loved singing. He encouraged believers to open their mouth and praise the Lord in song, both individually and in the church assembly. Between 2010 and 2015, he took a small choir with him on several trips to Canada, singing and preaching as they visited various churches. He also made at least two trips to Germany during those years as well. The choir of youth that traveled with him would sing, and then he would preach in the German language. They visited about a dozen churches over the course of each three-week trip. On one trip, they also included a stop in a city for street witnessing and passing out

tracts. Here again, Brother Mose preached in the German language to those under the sound of his voice.

When I consider the spirit and zeal of Brother Mose, the words of the Apostle Paul to the Romans seem very fitting: *I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also –Romans 1:14-15.* Brother Mose saw himself as a debtor to make Christ known to many and was ready to preach wherever there was an open door. His ‘Rome’ was across America, Canada, and beyond. He was ...*not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: boldly proclaiming it to be ...the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek –Romans 1:16.*

For nearly two decades, from the late 1980’s and onward, Brother Mose frequently teamed up with Denny Kenaston, and they would travel to communities where they had an invitation to preach. Often, this would be a weekend event, starting Friday evening, going all day Saturday, and Sunday morning and afternoon. Sometimes it was a whole week or more of evening messages. One of them would preach one night, and the other the next night throughout the week. With much unction from the Holy One, they would preach the Gospel. There are many testimonies of new conversions, of repentance from sin, of revival, and of straying souls returning to the Savior.

Brother Mose sought the lost from any background and any place where they would come to listen. He even preached on city streets to those who never went to church. When he held meetings, many evangelical, protestant denominations were represented in those who came to hear him preach. But it was the various conservative, Anabaptist groups toward which his heart was especially drawn, since this was his own background. His specific concern was regarding those who had backslidden or strayed from the way of Truth. Whether those he encountered were Mennonite, Amish, or Hutterite, he could relate to their background and was well versed in the history of each group. He was able to preach in a powerful way to expose sin and error, while warning of judgment to come. He preached the cross of Christ as the hope of salvation to all who would believe.

Another gift Brother Mose had was in speaking with individuals one-on-one. It could be a middle-aged person on a hospital bed, a youth in a living room, or a young adult who had responded to the Holy Spirit’s moving after a preaching service. He had a way of gently asking them about the needs in their life, and then explaining clearly what needed to be done in order for them to be reconciled to God.

Throughout his ministry, Brother Mose labored much to establish churches on a right foundation. He was directly involved in the formation of a number of new churches, as well as advising and helping already established groups. He ordained men for the ministry in many churches, often with the assistance of elders from his own fellowship or those of a sister church. Issues such as brotherhood, unity, and proper leadership were important to him.

Brother Mose was often the watchman on the wall for the church in this generation. He would frequently warn against false doctrines that threatened to creep into churches. He was on guard against false teachers, false prophets, and even false brethren. In the face of these dangers to the church, he gave much attention to teaching sound doctrine. The Word of God was lifted up as the safe and sure foundation by which to judge what is true and what is false.

Brother Mose was a true leader. He led by direct action and by example. One thing that seemed to make him restless in spirit was to observe a situation where there was lack of leadership, for want of a man to stand in the gap. He was ready to step forward and serve when occasion called for it. But even as a strong leader, he surrounded himself with men who would labor with him. Throughout his years of ministry, he worked as a member of the body. Many of his preaching events across the country would be with fellow ministers preaching alongside him. When dealing with church problems, he would frequently seek out the council of fellow ministers. In the last handful of years, he was actively involved in the annual ministers’ meetings held in Indiana as the “Agape Christian Fellowship” group was being formulated and established. He would express, sometimes with tears, his rejoicing in the fellowship and council of his brethren who were laboring with him for the welfare of the various churches represented. There was also humility of mind in looking back over the years at those things that should have been done differently, whether errors or omissions, and acknowledging them as such. His passion was to see the church endure faithful unto the end.

And now Brother Mose has entered into his eternal rest. To those of us who knew him and labored with him remains the responsibility of carrying on the work of the Kingdom until Christ returns for His Church. May we be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless.



For I Know the Plans

by Trenda J Sensenig

Shippensburg, PA

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Based on an actual happening in the 1800s



“The man at the hardware store told me today that there is a diphtheria outbreak in Lancaster County,” Samuel Kurtz announced at the supper table.

Thirteen-year-old John looked up at his older brother. *Diphtheria? The deadly disease that everyone fears?* Dread settled deep in his stomach.

“Oh, dear,” Mam said, glancing at Dad. Mam was no stranger to death, for she and Dad had buried their five oldest children who had all died in infancy.

“You don’t think it will reach us here, do you, Dad?” Barbara asked. “Lancaster County is pretty far away.”

“I don’t know,” Dad replied. “Only God knows the future.” He paused. “I don’t want you children to live in fear. God is in control, and He will do whatever is best.”

“God can take care of us, right, Dad?” Four-year-old Anna looked solemnly up at him.

“He certainly can. Why don’t we pray right now and ask Him to protect us?”

The family bowed their heads as Dad prayed. “Dear Lord, we know that You are in control, and we ask You to protect us from this disease, if it is Your will. Be with the people who are sick right now and comfort those who have lost loved ones. Give us strength and help us to trust in You. Amen.”

John felt better after Dad’s prayer. They had placed their fear in God’s hands, and what better place was there to leave it?

Several weeks later, John was sweeping in the cabinet shop when the door flew open and hit the

wall with a bang. Startled, John stopped his sweeping as his sister Catherine ran through the door.

“Dad, come quickly!” Catherine gasped. “Jacob is sick, and Mam needs you right away!”

The tingle of fear returned to John’s heart as he raced after Dad to the house. Mam was holding six-year-old Jacob in her lap. Her face was tight with worry. “Can you look down his throat?” she asked Dad.

One glance at the swollen glands and the thick grayish membranes forming at the back of Jacob’s throat told Dad all he needed to know. “I’m going for the doctor!” he called over his shoulder as he headed out the door.

When the doctor arrived, the family fearfully huddled around while he examined Jacob. Finally, the doctor stood up. “It’s diphtheria,” he said gravely. “I’m sorry, but there’s not much I can do. You can give him these medicines, but I don’t know if they will help. Just keep him comfortable until...” The doctor stopped and shook his head. “I’m sorry.” There wasn’t anything else to say.

That night Samuel fell ill too, followed by Anna. Mam didn’t sleep all night as she traveled between sickbeds, doing her best to cool fevered bodies and ease the sore throats.

By morning, the sick ones had grown worse. John stood numbly by the sickroom door and listened as his siblings gasped for breath. By nightfall they were dead. All three of them were gone within six hours.

Three days later, John watched with tears streaming down his face as his little sister Anna and his only brothers were buried. The funeral was held at the little church across the field. Anna lay in Samuel’s

arms in one coffin while Jacob was buried in a separate one.

John was the only child who was able to attend the funeral. Barbara, Catherine, and baby Sarah were all at home, fighting for their lives. They, too, had been grasped in the awful clutches of diphtheria.

As Dad and Mam and John returned home from the funeral, a pale-faced caregiver met them at the door. "Catherine is gone," she told them.

Mam gasped and sank into a chair, weeping.

The next morning Barbara slipped away, and that evening Sarah breathed her last in Mam's arms. For Dad, Mam, and John, it seemed as though there were no more tears left to cry.

Once again, John watched silently as coffins were lowered into the ground. Kind family and friends gathered around to offer comfort and support, but John could not be comforted. All six of his siblings were gone. The walk home from the funeral was silent. There was nothing to come home to but an empty house.

Months later John sat in the grass by Samuel's grave and hugged his knees to his chest. As he gazed down the row of tombstones that marked his siblings' final resting places, his heart ached with a grief too deep to express. At times, his loneliness almost overwhelmed him. All of his siblings had died and only memories remained, along with a few of his sisters' dresses. The dresses hung silently in the closet now, a reminder of death's merciless hand.

Over and over, John wondered why he hadn't died along with his siblings. Why had he been spared? And yet, each time he asked himself that question, Dad's words came back to him. "There's a verse in the Bible, in Jeremiah 29:11" Dad had said. "It's about the thoughts that God has for His people, plans to give us an expected end." Could it be that God has special plans for him?

* * * * *

John smiled as he gazed down at the tiny face of his new little brother, Christian. He had two brothers now, for Christian was the second of two boys who had been born since the diphtheria epidemic. The whole family rejoiced. Mam's face would never lose the lines that sorrow had written there, but the arrival of the babies had awakened the sparkle in her eyes.

The Lord had blessed them. There was new life in the midst of death. In the face of unfathomable loss, He had given them comfort and strength.

With time, it became apparent that God had special plans for John's life. At the age of twenty-seven, he was ordained to the ministry. Two years later, he married Maria Horning and eventually became the father of seven children. He also became a successful inventor and businessman. Because of John's dedication in following God's plan for his life, generations have been blessed by his godly example and the legacy he left behind.



Admonition for Uncertain Times

by Larry Zook
Kalona, IA

Having faith in perplexing times

And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken –Luke 21:25-28.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair –2 Corinthians 4:8.

It is not comfortable to be perplexed. And in general, the sooner we leave perplexity behind, the better off we are. However, if even someone like the *Apostle Paul* could be perplexed, then I can surely expect that I will be perplexed. And I should be humble enough to acknowledge that I may not have a quick answer to some issues. In our perplexity, we should not despair. God has not abandoned us, and this did not take Him by surprise. God will give wisdom if we ask. Remember, God is never perplexed about anything.

Perplexity tends to produce fear. Or even despair. But in that hour, we need to turn our heart and mind toward God in faith. *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God –Romans 10:17.* I would encourage each one to read all of 2 Corinthians chapter 4 and encourage yourself in God's promises.

Be on guard against entering into strife with your brethren because of perplexing issues. Seek wisdom together and be at peace among yourselves.

Vaccine Concerns for Conservative Anabaptists

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves – Matthew 10:16.

I have concerns about the vaccines being rushed into use for COVID-19. This subject would merit much more detail on some of the following points of concern, but I will briefly list a few thoughts:

The rushed nature of the approval process resulted in shortcutting the standard testing procedures and safety measures that are normally applied to vaccines and medicines. This means the safety of the vaccines are not fully known, especially the long-term effects. As good stewards of our bodies, we should take care to consider both short-term and long-term effects.

The new mRNA technology has not been used before in vaccines. While that does not mean it must be rejected, it is reasonable to be a bit cautious before blindly accepting it as the *jab-that-saves-the-world-from-COVID-19* remedy. Some concern has been raised that this new mode of action could cause sterility in women of childbearing age. Are those concerns valid? Have studies been done? Just be aware that in a society that embraces abortion as okay, sterility may not be seen as a great problem, but for those with a Biblical worldview which understands that children are a blessing, a heritage of the Lord, this is a cause for concern.

There seems to be a mainstream, fear-based narrative that pushes everyone to accept the vaccines as the only hope for the COVID-19 problem, while at the same time there is concerted effort to suppress information on the use of existing therapeutic remedies. Add to that the oft-repeated narrative of 'listen to the experts' or 'follow the science'. Then the accepted narrative censors the experts and the science that doesn't support the mainstream narrative. This creates a situation where it becomes difficult to discern what is fact and what is fiction. I would just urge that before we rush out to share with others the latest amazing and astounding, or heartbreaking new 'fact' about COVID-19 or its treatment, please apply what due diligence you can to verify if what you have heard can be trusted. Apply some critical thinking. Consider the source. Are there multiple testimonies to the issue? As Christians it is important to remove hype or fear from your decision-making process.

On the opposite side (alternative medicine) of the issue there have been many, both professional and lay folks, who

have taken advantage of the confusion, and fear resulting from the pandemic. Many conspiracy claims have been spawned and propagated, purporting to be the ‘inside’ or ‘real’ story. Again, try to apply some due diligence. Some claims and allegations, when personally followed up on by church brothers, it was discovered that the purported ‘facts’ were inaccurate or untrue. Many home remedies have ‘gone viral’ even among the plain people, some of them if followed exactly as promoted have the potential to cause serious harm or even death. Even a good thing, *in excess*, can be dangerous. One thing is certain, this side of the issue has tested and tried the conservative, Anabaptist people in the areas of gossiping, making, and believing a lie, and bearing false witness. The same critical, objective thinking needs to guide our journey on this side of the issue as well, as we strive to establish the ‘facts’. The same carefulness needs to again be applied here, that of not allowing either fear or hype to motivate or dictate our decisions.

Informed Consent and **Getting a Second Opinion**—have both been the long-standing ethical basis of decision-making in choosing medical treatment. I hope we retain both.

The Imminent Dangers of Deception

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world –1 John 4:1.

There are dangerous heresies around today, and one of them is this: an individual seeks a subjective experience as the means to ‘hear from God.’ Then that experience and what ‘God tells me’ begins to displace, and sooner or later, contradicts what the Word of God *actually* says.

Dangerous deceptions take root in people’s hearts when they believe ‘spirits’ that are not of God. However, what often precedes people allowing deception to take root is that they first open themselves to false teachings which they embrace leaving them unable to discern what spirit is speaking to them. These people embrace false teachings concerning spiritual warfare, and the work of the devil and false teachings about ‘casting out’ sin, rather than ‘putting it away’, ‘putting it off’, or ‘turning away from’ as the Scriptures teach. This is the danger of subjective experience becoming our guide in the realm of the spirit, rather than steadfastly keeping the Word of God as the foundation for all Truth.

We are not ignorant of Satan’s devices, and this one needs some thorough exposure to deliver us from its snares.

Being Aware, Prepared, and Watching

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many –Matthew 24:4-5.

Is there a good understanding of the end time events as

prophesied in the Scriptures, so that we are not deceived? There are some who give it little study, perhaps because it is difficult to understand. But the Scriptures tell us: *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand –Revelation 1:3.*

Throughout the history of the church there have been a number of times when wrong interpretations of the prophetic Scripture have led to serious errors in doctrine and practice. Likewise, today, there are some errors leading people astray. And I am concerned about some teachings, that today seem like just competing lines of interpretation, but in the future may have major impact on our faith. One I am thinking of is the timing of the rapture. The most common view in the evangelical churches of our day is that the rapture occurs before the tribulation. I believe the Scriptures teach that it will occur at or near the end of the tribulation at the second coming of Christ. And therefore, we should prepare our minds to understand that Christians need to be faithful in the midst of tribulation.

When we see all these things come to pass, ...*then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh –Luke 21:28. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen –Revelation 22:20-21.*

The Mark of the Beast

And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six –Revelation 13:16-18.

**He which
testifieth
these things
saith, Surely
I come
quickly.
Amen. Even
so, come,
Lord Jesus.**

This World is Not My Home

I have been reading and hearing that some people are concerned that the Covid-19 vaccine is the mark of the beast spoken of in Revelation. This topic is a combination of my previous points. While I think there are valid reasons to be concerned about the vaccines, I don't see it as the fulfillment of the mark of the beast. Even though a vaccine could be mandated or required for everybody before they are allowed to travel or even function in society, it seems to lack some specific details of the prophecies concerning the mark of the beast.

As we see in the above Bible passage, the mark is **required by the Beast**, which Scripture speaks of as a particular end-time ruler. Daniel's prophesy calls him the 'King of the North'. Isaiah calls him the *Assyrian*, Paul called him the *Man of Sin*, and John called him, *antichrist*. The Apostle Paul said this man of sin would be revealed before the day of Christ. The mark this end-time ruler requires clearly signifies **worship** of the Beast, which would imply allegiance. And it would imply that to receive it is a choice on our part, and not something we are deceived into getting, only to realize later that it is the mark of the beast. According to my understanding of the Scripture's teachings, the *Beast* is not referring to the *world* or to sin in general, but to a specific end-time ruler.

In conclusion, lets read Luke 21:25-36...

25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. 27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. 29 And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; 30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. 31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. 32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. 33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. 34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. 35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

1. *This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue;
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door,
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.*

Chorus:

- O Lord, you know I have no friend like you,
If heaven's not my home, then Lord what will I do?
The angels beckon me from heaven's open door,
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.*
2. *They're all expecting me, and that's one thing I know,
My Savior pardoned me and now I onward go;
I know He'll take me thro', tho' I am weak and poor,
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.*
 3. *I have a loving Savior up in glory-land,
I don't expect to stop until I with Him stand,
He's waiting now for me in heaven's open door,
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.*
 4. *Just up in glory-land we'll live eternally,
The saints on every hand are shouting victory,
Their songs of sweetest praise drift back from heaven's shore,
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.*

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our spirit matters

by Irene Martin
Glenmont, OH

The last several years God has been leading me through a valley, a long and seemingly unending one. It seems as soon as one situation resolves; another one pops up. These difficulties demand a response. Many times, it's not so much a response of physical action as it is a response of the spirit. For me, it took about two years before I came to a place of beginning to learn healthy and, even more importantly, Biblical emotional choices.

"Spirit" in this article is defined as "a temper or disposition of the mind or outlook." The Bible mentions several types of spirits that God has been teaching me. Two are more general for everyone and two are specifically given for us ladies.

Before it is of any value to discuss what a Biblical and healthy spirit is, it is essential that we understand that it is a choice. It is not a result of circumstances. It will not come upon us on a whim. As young ladies, especially, we find it very easy to be driven by emotions. But most emotions that "drive" us are not healthy. A Biblical spirit is a result of conscious—not emotional, circumstance-driven—choices. If we let them, unhealthy emotions can become monstrous and pull us downward to many undesirable places such as depression, bitterness, and immorality. In response, God calls us to intentionally choose the type of spirit that is defined in the Bible.

A Broken Spirit

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite [crushed] and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones –Isaiah 57:15.

Above all else, it is essential that we choose to become

broken. It is hard to stress the importance of this enough. If we do not allow ourselves to become broken, we are opening the door for all manner of negative emotions, reactions, and, especially, sin.

Brokenness is a difficult, almost impossible choice to make on our own. Often God leads us into difficult situations where we must make a choice—either godly brokenness, or something unhealthy like anger or discouragement. Brokenness strips everything away. It requires us to surrender our control over bad things such as sickness or disappointment and over good things like our desires for the future. Brokenness means we give God control of everything; we keep nothing. Most times deep brokenness doesn't happen all at once; it's a painful journey in which we give up, and give up, and give up again. Without becoming bitter. Without losing faith in God. In fact, the times of crushing are when we choose to believe good things of God even if there seems to be no good reason to.

Brokenness is a choice—a very difficult one which paves the way for God to receive glory, since it is the process of eliminating self. It also makes it possible for other finer qualities to reveal themselves.

A Sober Spirit

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, [and] be sober... –1 Peter 1:13.

The definition of "sober" in this verse is "to be calm and collected in spirit; to be temperate, dispassionate." This is an intriguing word. According to this verse, we are commanded to be calm and collected in spirit. As young ladies, we know how easy and even automatic it is to let our feelings about situations and circumstances spiral out of control.

For myself, I was at a place of limbo and uncertainty, and I was so discouraged that I could hardly go on. I could not focus on important things like work and reaching out to others. While studying this verse, God convicted me that, yes, even though I was in a very dark time, His command to me was to be calm and not let my raging emotions control. He brought me to a place where I had to **choose**, moment by moment, to take control of my spirit. I found that as I chose God's way, He gave me the grace to live accordingly, resulting in a much more stable and restful spirit.

So, take heart in the dark times! Choose to respond to circumstances in God's way. As He refines your spirit and your character, He also wants to receive the glory for it. This is a journey God is taking me on, and I'm thankful to Him for continuing to patiently break and shape my spirit for His glory.

A Meek Spirit

*But let it be ... the ornament of a **meek** and quiet spirit...*
-1 Peter 3:4.

In many ways a meek spirit is a yielded spirit. It is a spirit that is totally under the control of Almighty God. It does not fight unpleasant circumstances or strive to make life "better." But neither is it a passive, "roll with punches", cowering attitude. Actually, this spirit denotes someone who has gifts and abilities, is trained and effective, and could

be very useful to the work of the church, yet is in complete subjection to God, moving only at His will.

A Quiet Spirit

*But let it be ... the ornament of a meek and **quiet** spirit...*
-1 Peter 3:4.

A quiet and restful spirit is an amazing quality. It is not humanly possible to achieve. When you see this spirit in someone, you can know it comes from a heart of brokenness. According to Isaiah, it is a choice: *...In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: **and ye would not*** -Isaiah 30:15.

A quiet spirit and a meek spirit go hand in hand. It is an attitude of sitting back and letting God lead—whether exciting or boring, whether easy or difficult—and not resisting Him in any way.

There are times when we feel very disquieted in spirit, and it's not possible to pull ourselves out of it by sheer willpower. But the Word of God is life-giving, and by studying the promises of God we can receive peace and rest for our spirits, as well as courage and grace to go on. *I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope* -Psalms 16:8, 9.



Vaccinated... To Be or Not To Be?



by John Waldron MD
Gladys, VA

Meet the doctor who wrote this article for our medical column. (See the editorial under the section “*continued changes*” for further details.)

Hello,

My full name is Vincent “John” Bradford Waldron (I go by John) and I am a Family Physician in south central Virginia. My family and I attend church at Bethel Mennonite Church in Gladys, Virginia. My wife, Elaine, and I have been married since 2002 and have five children. I have been in practice for twenty years; the first seventeen I practiced in southern Indiana.

Currently, I practice in an outpatient setting taking care of patients in the small town of Brookneal. My vision is to care for people as Jesus would. I want to share the Gospel with those who need it and to minister to the needs of those who are hurting. The majority of my patients are not from a conservative Anabaptist background and perhaps the only way they will see Jesus is through me.

John

Editor’s Note:

Currently, the details are changing, sometimes daily, regarding the vaccines, the unexpected problems associated with providing the vaccines to the vast multitudes of the world’s population, and the potential side effects developing from receiving the vaccine. This article was first written prior to the first vaccines being available, since then it has been revised at least twice.

We realize there are many unknowns surrounding this whole issue. It is with this in mind that we have tried to be as balanced as possible as we have considered the information that was available at the time of writing. We plan to keep our ears tuned to the progression of these situations. And we will do our best to continue investigating and evaluating concerns that are directed our way. If the Lord wills, we plan to print updated information regarding these issues in succeeding issues of the magazine.

Bottomline, as a board, we second the comments found in Larry Zook’s article (Admonition for Uncertain Times) found in this issue of the magazine... “Informed Consent and Getting a Second Opinion—both have been the long-standing ethical basis of decision-making in choosing medical treatment. I hope we retain both.”

Coronavirus vaccines are in the news these days. When the first vaccines were finally considered ‘safe’ for use by the medical community the initial focus was on England as many “Brits” were among the first to receive the vaccine including one man, who interestingly enough, has the name of William Shakespeare. As of the writing of this article, here in the U.S., the FDA has approved the initial Covid-19 vaccines developed by Moderna and Pfizer.

The Initial Vaccines

The first two vaccines that have come out and been approved were vaccines that used synthetic mRNA (messenger RNA). In cells, DNA encodes the different proteins that cells need to produce in order to function. The only thing is that no proteins are actually made in the nucleus, they are actually made in the ribosomes of the cell. So, the cell needs a

messenger to go from the nucleus to the ribosomes and carry those instructions. That messenger is mRNA.

The mRNA takes the messages from the nucleus to the ribosomes. After a time the message degrades, and the ribosomes stop making that particular protein.

In the case of mRNA vaccines, the synthetic mRNA in the vaccine encodes a protein that looks like the spike protein on the COVID virus. As cells make this protein, the body’s immune system will identify those proteins as foreign and begin to create antibodies to them.

Does mRNA Change DNA?

I know that there is much fear around the idea that these vaccines will change our genetic code. This, of course, could be really dangerous. Fortunately, the mRNA doesn’t make

its way to the nucleus and instead is only active where proteins are made. This technology (mRNA vaccines) is quite different than stem cell gene therapies, and the various gene-editing therapies, such as CRISPR. Both of these fields of therapy do affect a person at the level of their genes, but the mRNA vaccine does not.

Effectiveness

In the studies that looked at the two mRNA vaccines, we found that they were quite effective. There were only 8 cases of COVID identified in the patients seven days after the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine, while in those who got the placebo vaccine, there were 162 cases in that same period. Looking at severe cases, there was only one case in the vaccine group (this happened between the first and second doses) and nine cases of severe COVID in the placebo group.¹ The Moderna vaccine showed similar effectiveness.²

There is still a question out there. Do these vaccines actually prevent **all** COVID infections or do they just turn COVID infections into low-symptom or no-symptom infections? Currently, studies are being done to look at this. The only way to know is to run antibody testing on patients who have gotten the COVID vaccine for proteins that are not in the vaccine. So, for instance, there is a protein called the “n” protein that is in a different part of the virus. Someone who has had the vaccine, but not an infection with COVID will not have an antibody to this protein, while someone who has had an actual COVID infection will have this antibody as well as an antibody to the spike protein.

In the meantime, everyone, even those who have received the vaccine, will still need to practice extra caution, such as wearing masks, hand washing, and social distancing, at least until we know for sure whether or not it's possible to get infections (even with the vaccine) and how contagious these potential infections may be.

Side Effects of COVID Vaccine

The most common side effects that have been noted so far has been arm soreness. This usually lasts for one to three days and then resolves. Many people also often feel tired and achy. They may even run low-grade fevers for one to two days after getting the injections. However, this seems to be a bigger issue with the second injection.

There have been isolated allergic reactions to the vaccines as well. The rate of anaphylaxis (severe allergy) to COVID vaccine does seem to be somewhat higher when compared with other vaccines. Because of this, it is recommended that people get vaccinated in locations where there is treatment available to take care of such a reaction and that they should stay for a minimum of 15 minutes after the shot (or 30 minutes if they normally carry an epi pen).³

Updated Side Effects

In the last several weeks, nearly 15 million people in the United States have gotten at least one dose of the COVID vaccines. There have been a lot more doses given around the world. As we have done this, certain things have been clearer as far as side effects.

Anaphylaxis is the most serious “common” side effect. The CDC is saying that the rate of serious allergy to the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines is about 11 per million doses given. This sort of an allergy requires medications like epinephrine to reverse it and is seen with other vaccines and medications too.

In Norway, nearly all of the patients in nursing homes were vaccinated against COVID.⁴ In the subsequent six days, 23 of the frailest of those died. At this point, it is being investigated as to whether or not the vaccine contributed in any way to those deaths. From what we know, those patients weren't in good health prior to the vaccine, but I think I would probably avoid giving the vaccine to people who are in extremely poor health (understanding that if those folks get COVID they probably wouldn't do well either).

A lot of people have had muscle pains, chills and even low-grade fevers after the second dose of vaccine. Several of my co-workers had these sorts of symptoms and all of them resolved within 48 hours of getting the vaccine.

I think one last thing to remember is that just because something happens after you get vaccinated, it does not mean the vaccine caused it. So, if you get a shot and then get hit by a car, clearly the shot didn't cause the accident. One possible example of this is a doctor in Florida who got a COVID vaccine and then developed really low platelet counts and eventually died. There is no indication that the vaccination caused the low platelet count and we have not seen this in any other patients who have gotten vaccinated for COVID. The guess is simply that he was probably developing this disorder already and that the vaccine didn't cause it or affect it.

Simply put, when you give millions of doses of anything, there will always be some who develop other illnesses soon after getting the medicine or vaccine. The challenge is to figure out what is related to the therapy and what is just “noise.”

Ethical Issues

Other than the two vaccines listed above, there are many others being researched and developed. Some of these vaccines are grown on cell lines that were derived from babies that were aborted in the 70s and 80s. I need to be clear that there are no ongoing abortions being utilized to make any vaccines.

In light of this, the one good thing is that the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are not grown on these fetal cell lines.

Other Vaccines

Janssen (Johnson and Johnson) Pharmaceuticals and Astra Zeneca are both working on vaccines that are more traditional vaccines—that is they grow the virus, then kill it, and then give small doses of the killed virus to trigger the immune response. create immunity. The Astra Zeneca vaccine probably will be released before too long. The studies on it are a little more unclear with regard to its effectiveness.

The important thing with these vaccines is that they are both grown on HEK293 fetal cells, which are derived from an aborted infant.

There are a number of other vaccines that are a little further away from release, but there is one from Merck is a non-mRNA vaccine that is also ethically sourced (not grown on aborted fetal cells). The Lozier Institute has a web page that lists which vaccines use fetal cell lines and which ones do not.⁵

Other Questions

There have been a number of questions about who was behind these vaccines and a variety of concerns with respect to their development. Some have even speculated about companies introducing a “microchip” into the vaccines.

The needles being used to administer these vaccines are a very small caliber (21 gauge or smaller) which makes it unlikely that a microchip could be administered through such a needle. It seems probable that to administer a microchip, it would require a significantly larger needle than the ones being recommended, (the microchips that are normally used in pets are roughly the size of a kernel of rice).

Making a Decision

Is it worthwhile to get one of these vaccines, and, if so, which one?

The biggest reason to get a COVID vaccine is to avoid the possible long-term effects of a COVID infection. In some people, COVID produces chronic fatigue, a long-term cough, and “brain fog.” Getting one of these vaccines certainly would help to avoid those disease-induced problems along with the possibility that COVID could also cause some heart damage.⁶

What if You’ve Had COVID already?

Many in our circles have already had COVID. If you know you had COVID then probably the best thing to do is to wait. There is no particular reason to run out and get vaccinated, since we believe your antibodies should remain active for three to six months. In studies, they did seem to decline over time, but folks who had COVID should be immune for a minimum of 3 months and probably longer.

It seems most reasonable to wait and see if one of the vaccines shows itself to be superior, with regard either to effectiveness or fewer side effects, than the others.

Who Should Not Get Vaccinated?

Currently, there are certain people who should not get the vaccine. The first category are groups that weren’t in the studies. So, children under the age of 16, pregnant women, and nursing mothers should all avoid the COVID vaccines for the time being. It may be that the vaccine would be safe for people in these groups, but since they weren’t tested, they shouldn’t get it for now.

Secondly, if you actively have COVID or are currently isolating because of being exposed to it, you shouldn’t get the vaccine. I suppose this makes sense as we don’t typically give vaccinations to people who are already sick.

Finally, you should be careful if you have a history of severe reactions to other vaccines.

Everyone else

If someone has not had a COVID infection, I would certainly lean towards getting the vaccine. Personally, I have started getting vaccinated using the Pfizer vaccine and feel comfortable with that. For those who are working in health care, I would lean towards getting one of the vaccines. The issue for me is not the risk of infection to me, rather my concern as a Christian doctor is the danger that I might pass COVID on to one of my patients.

If you are caring for the elderly and have not had a COVID infection, I would also think strongly about getting vaccinated. Once again, the primary concern should not be how you will handle the infection, but instead who you might pass that infection on to.

Conclusion

I understand that others’ comfort level may be lower with these new vaccines and if that is the case, I would wait. These vaccines are being given to millions of people and if there are issues, they will become apparent fairly quickly.

Finally, I am glad that there are going to be several ethically sourced vaccines available to those who desire them.

Endnotes:

- 1 <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa2034577>
- 2 <https://www.statnews.com/2020/11/18/pfizer-biontech-covid19-vaccine-fda-data/>
- 3 <https://www.goodrx.com/blog/side-effects-covid-19-vaccine/>
- 4 <https://www.fhi.no/en/news/2021/international-interest-about-deaths-following-coronavirus-vaccination/>
- 5 <https://lozierinstitute.org/an-ethics-assessment-of-covid-19-vaccine-programs/>
- 6 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects.html>



What Are You Living For?

by Chris Miller
Dundee, OH

Picture yourself on a hot, humid, sunny day hiking back to a remote village in the mountains of Haiti. You are there to share the gospel with the many hurting and dying souls who need to hear about Jesus. As you are nearing the end of your journey, the terrain is very hilly and rough. You are almost ready to stop for a rest when somehow you trip over a rock. In the process of falling and trying to not get hurt, your precious jug of water opens and spills onto the dry, dusty ground.

I want to liken our lives to that jug of water. What kind of water comes spilling out when somebody knocks us over? How about when we're having a really busy day and someone pulls out in front of us as we're driving to our next destination, what's our reaction? How about our co-workers, can they feel God's love, peace, and joy flowing from our life in such a way that it draws them to Him? Or what about when we're in town shopping, are we encouraging others with our smile, and being friendly to the man at the gas station? I'm not saying this to put anyone on a guilt trip but rather encourage our thoughts down those lines.

Paul says, *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity* – 1 Timothy 4:12. Let's take a closer look at this verse. It starts out with, *Let no man despise thy youth*. How should we view our youth—our teenage years? Some view this as a time to live life to the fullest, to have a party, and to do whatever they want. This path leads to much sin, foolishness, immorality, and more. I think we should view the time of our youth as a huge opportunity to do all we can do, and to be all we can be, for Jesus!

**But be thou an
example of the
believers, in word,
in conversation, in
charity, in spirit, in
faith, in purity.**

Something that the world does not often see is a spirit-filled young person who is passionate about serving God, someone who is not afraid to be different than the world. A young person who is living a pure, holy, upright life is so unusual in today's world, that this type of youth should really stand out to those around them. So, my question is, are we living up to that? Are we loving God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength? Or are we only doing just enough so that we can get by? For example, it

is easy for an employer to tell if one of his employees is putting his heart into his work, or not, by how well he does his job, by how he relates to others, and by his attitude. In the same way, I believe the world can tell very quickly if we are serious about serving God and following His principles, or if we are only doing what we are doing because the church 'requires' it, while our heart is far from it....

Going on into that verse it says, *But be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*. It makes me think of a man in my life who I really appreciate. He has a zeal for God and a burden for the lost that is refreshing and inspiring.... So, what kind of example are you and I leaving for our younger siblings, our friends, our co-workers, and whoever else it might be that our life comes in contact with? We **are** having an impact on those around us! Is that impact positive or negative?

You may feel like you're young and not able to do big things for God, but I would encourage you that God has a plan for each one of us. If we have a broken will, a yielded



heart, and a willing spirit He will use us—maybe in ways we never thought or dreamed of.

But first, we must learn to be faithful in the small things in life. What about our thought life? You may say, “Nobody will ever know what goes through my mind.” But God knows all the thoughts and intents of our heart which is why He wants us to continually be *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; -2 Corinthians 10:5.*

In this day and age that we live in, Satan is doing his best to discourage, distract, and derail as many people as he possibly can. All he wants you to do is cool off just a little in your love and zeal for God. What is that thing in your life that is shifting your focus off of God? Let’s take some time to ponder that question. Because too often it is something that happens so slowly that we ourselves don’t even realize it.

What is it that Satan is trying to use to get our minds off God? Maybe it’s bad music or maybe it’s being under a wrong influence. Whatever it is, we each have a tendency towards something. Let’s each allow God’s Spirit to honestly search our heart; because, unless we are serious about our walk with God, we will become lukewarm....

So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth -Revelation 3:16. This makes it pretty clear that God wants people who are on fire

for Him and who are sold out for Jesus! What must you and I do in order to remain faithful? I believe that at the core of it all there needs to be a deep personal relationship with God.... So how do I get to that point? In response to that question, I would like to ask another, how did we get to know our best friend? Did it happen overnight that suddenly, we just had a best friend, or did our relationship develop over time as we spent lots of time together, sharing struggles, goals, dreams, and many other things?

I believe that spending time with God is the only way we can ever expect to learn to be totally dependent on Him. He wants us to surrender every area of our life to Him so He can use us as a vessel ‘fit for the Master’s use’. We may need to sacrifice other things in our life in order to make this happen. I have found that no matter what, I make time for the things that I really want to do. So then it comes down to what my priorities are....

In conclusion, I would like to bring us back to my title, “What Are You Living For?” I want to encourage all of us to be 100% sold out for Jesus and to be willing to do whatever it takes to keep a vibrant relationship with Him so that we can fulfill Jesus’ teaching in Matthew... *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid -Matthew 5:13-14.*



Outside the Inn Crowd

Lee Rufener
Athens, WI

Sitting squarely on the great divide of our measured timeline of years lies the incarnate birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. He rightfully owns this place, for no other advent could so astutely impact humanity. The years before His birth are known as B.C. or “Before Christ”, while the years following are known as A.D. (Anno Domini, Latin for “The year of our Lord”). While His birth has been utterly cluttered and confused by pagan influences and personal indulgence, the simple radiant beauty of the occasion is still available for all who will but candidly gaze upon the unbeguiled scene.

While the calendar has placed the birth of Christ on December 25, most scholars have concluded that this date is inaccurate. It has also been determined that the actual year ascribed to His birth is also inaccurate by 4-6 years. The date was set by the bishop of Rome in accordance with a popular pagan festival called Saturnalia. The heathen Romans worshiped Saturn as the god of agriculture by

feasting, parties, adorning their houses with evergreens, the exchanging of gifts, and general merry making. It was the bishop’s endeavor to provide a sanctifying influence upon the revelry and turn the minds of the general populace away from selfish indulgence to God incarnate. As we may well expect, the heathen festivities never missed a beat and continued on at the same pace. The church that initially frowned upon the proposition eventually accepted the idea and by the fourth century was fully acclimated and indoctrinated to the hybrid mixture of that which was Christian and pagan.

Thus, we are left with a dilemma today. How should a Christian regard the birth of Christ? Should we attempt to keep Christ in Christmas or get Him out? Regardless of our opinion, each of us must veritably resolve to understand the significance of the virgin birth apart from the emotional ties to the hybrid celebration and recognize the birth in a God-ordained fashion. In contrast to the millions who celebrate



His birth in our day, there were but a paltry handful who were able and worthy to attend the actual event.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men –Luke 2:8-14.

It was a band of lowly shepherds who received the first birth announcement. Even these foolish and unlearned men knew of, and longed for, the anticipated Messiah. *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting –Micah 5:2.*

As the star-spangled heavens erupted to life, the shepherds gazed in mesmerized awe at the scene before them and a new day began to dawn upon the horizon of their souls. The angelic host proclaimed their message to the shepherds, then soon vanished; yet the good news remained. The encounter was but a brief vapor, yet a three-fold fragrance lingered in the burning hearts of these men: A Savior... A Sign... and A Song...

...A Savior

The very fact that a Savior is promised, implies that there is something that we need to be saved from. Whatever our physical lot may be, man's spiritual condition has been on the precipice of despair since the fall in Eden. Through four millennia, the human race had cowered under the diabolical cloud of sin and many had fallen prey to its menacing darkness. Sin can take a candle of hope and snuff it out in an instant. It can breathe its icy breath upon the fairest of flowers and wilt them in an instant. It takes loving marriages and introduces them to the throes of internal war. It takes the sincere bloom of youth and robs it of the fragrance of its innocence. Those who have managed to break free from the bondage of its personal subjugation can easily see their narrow escape from the mad society about them. Thus, the humble shepherds rejoiced at the advent of a Savior.

All have sinned and come under its condemnation. The very thought of freedom from the impending jurisdiction of our just punishment is a breath of fresh air. *For God sent*

not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved –John 3:17. Those who have been genuinely converted carry in their soul the hope of eternal life and the promise of heaven. They become new creatures as the Holy Spirit takes up residence in their hearts. While this bears a dramatic effect on the life of a believer, these are not the only issues of salvation. This Savior is also a Lord.

Just as the title of "Savior" implies a desperate need, so likewise, the name of "Christ, the Lord" implies a dominating victory. *He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil –1 John 3:8.* Not only shall we be freed from the condemnation of sin, we must also be rescued from its power and influence as well. The debilitating habits that we have accumulated in our sinful nature must be dealt a death blow. The passions and lusts that overpowered us before His influence came upon our lives must be subject to Him. The egotistical pride and driving temper within man that has destroyed relationships and wounded the lives of those that we love about us, must also be swallowed up in this victory. If Christ is not our Lord, then neither is He our Savior.

What child is this. Who laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe the Son of Mary.

...A Sign

One may well think that the angelic visitation was a much larger sign than the infant in the manger. Who among us has ever experienced the delight of hearing such a heavenly chorus? As we read the account, one can only imagine the enrapturing beauty of a myriad of celestial voices resounding together and filling the mountainside with a glimmer of heaven that earth has never known since the day of creation, *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy –Job 38:7.* Yet the angels were not the sign.

The fact that this child was conceived by the Holy Ghost as detailed in Matthew 1:20, must be received by faith and can hardly be reckoned as a terrestrial sign. The fact that the child was wrapped in swaddling clothes was nothing

unusual, for all mothers of the day did that. In one of the most graphic chapters depicting the birth of a child, God mentions that no one cared for Israel at their birth: *And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all –Ezekiel 16:4.* These clues will be useless in a search for the child. The tell-tale sign of this event is marked by the cradle of the infant. No mother would choose a cattle lot for a birthing suite and lay her newborn in a feed trough unless necessity demanded it.

The sign of the manger in conjunction with their scriptural knowledge of Bethlehem were all that was needed for the shepherds to find the child. Scripture makes no mention of the comforts of a stable at all. The shepherds were intimately familiar with the areas of town allotted for the animals and their journey began.

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach – Hebrews 13:12-13. This sign calls for personal participation. Everyone whose heart beats loyal to the scene must also go to accompany Him. This will not be fulfilled by attending a living nativity scene, a “Messiah” performance, or by going to Grandmother’s house for Christmas dinner. We must be a partaker in his sufferings as Thomas when he said ... *unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him –John 11:16.*

To visit the Christ child will require us to haunt the place outside the inn. The Inn Crowd is the place of popular reception, popular understanding, and popular behavior. There awaits the comforts of friends, family, and fraternity, while it ministers a sense of belonging and acceptance. Christ knew no such luxury in His birth nor in His death, and He made His choice outside of the Inn Crowd.

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not –Isaiah 53:1-3.

The despised shepherds lived most of their lives outside of the Inn Crowd and were the first to believe and receive Him. Loyalty to Christ requires separation from the loyalties of the world including most of its ever-popular celebration of Christ’s birth. It is a call to follow His choice to go without the camp. This is the difference between nominal worship and the heartfelt praise of His redeemed who will but follow Him to the manger.

Why lies He in such mean estate,

Where ox and ass are feeding?

Good Christians, fear, for sinners here

The silent Word is pleading.

Nails, spears shall pierce him through,

The cross he bore for me, for you.

Hail, hail the Word made flesh,

The Babe, the Son of Mary.

...A Song

Those who desire to know him must venture outside The Inn and partake in ...*the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death –Philippians 3:10.* As they reap the scoffing and scorn of the Inn Crowd, they will also find that they are greeted with a heavenly song. *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men –Luke 2:14.*

As our portion in this earthly life diminishes, our quantum of glorious praise shall increase. The Jews were offended that the Messiah did not come to give them a larger portion and victory over the Roman world. Jesus ...*beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes –Luke 19:41-42.* Peace on earth will never be apprehended by environmental perfection. Those lodged at The Inn, find their peace within the clean, convenient, and courteous companionship of each other. This is the popular, pampered peace the world promotes and portrays, but does not coincide with that of the babe in the meager manger. But it was those outside the inn that learned the song.

And they sung as it were a new song ... and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth –Revelation 14:3. These are those who are at peace with their earthly lot. These shall not be moved when someone else is promoted, carries more earthly possessions, or receives more attention. They are content with a cottage while others cloister in a castle. They cannot be persuaded to envy though others are... going there, doing that, or owning one. Others ...*think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you –1 Peter 4:4.*

Peace on earth is nothing more than the great gain that arrives with godliness and contentment. Some wonder how David could fall into sin with Bathsheba while he possessed his multiple wives. How could he not? An abundance of options does not breed greater contentment. The fussing child in the store bawls because his hands are full, and he

cannot have more. So, do the motel connoisseurs on our day depreciate any lodging accommodations that are less than perfect. They can sing the praises of a five-star hotel and diner, but are oblivious to the song by the manger.

Those whose hearts resound with goodwill to men, experience great joy as the wealthiest of earth's inhabitants. They can rejoice in another's promotion, good fortune, and success. In doing so, they inherit the earth. This is the song that Stephen sang proceeding his earthly departure. He spake of Abraham removing himself from his land, Acts 7:3 of Joseph being sold out of his home, vs.9 and of Moses being cast out, and fleeing to Midian. vs.21. This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness. vs.38. This was the same despised church that Stephen took up membership in and thus he received the same treatment. *Then they cried out*

with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him ... And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep -Acts 7:57-60.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,

Come, peasant, king, to own him.

The King of kings salvation brings,

Let loving hearts enthrone him.

This is glory to God. This is peace on earth. This is goodwill toward men.



THE BEREAN VOICE FINANCIAL REPORT <i>2020 Year End Report</i>	
INCOME	
Item	Amount
Berean Voice donations	\$124
Remnant magazine donations	\$56,327
Total Income	\$56,451
EXPENSES	
Item	Amount
Postage & UPS	\$653.80
Office Equipment and Software	\$3,404.49
Office Expenses	\$1,153.23
Staff pay & Editor Salary	\$25,796.31
Books & Literature	\$216.14
Remnant Publishing & Mailing	\$35,399
Miscellaneous	\$175
Bank Fees	\$696.70
Total Expenses	\$67,494.67
Difference	- \$11,043.67

I Used To Pray

I used to pray for sunshine,
No storms to mark the sky.
For cool breezes and flowers
To please and turn my eye.

I used to pray for happiness,
For smiles, joy, and peace.
That all things would be easy,
And all harsh things would cease.

I used to pray for someone,
To walk with in this life.
To love, laugh with, and cherish,
And dissipate all strife.

I used to pray that always
Life's pathways would be clear.
That no unwanted circumstance
Would make existence drear.

But those prayers seemed to go unheeded,
For life didn't flow that way.
The storms—they came uninvited,
Thick rains made many a dark day.

The flowers were not to be seen,
The wind did cut and slash.
No peace could be found about me;
Instead, the thunder did crash.

Not one was found to walk with me,
Alone, through rough ways I did roam.
Gone were the dreams of tranquility,
My soul cried with desire for a home.

Then, a rich voice spoke inside me,
“You've been seeking the things you can see.
The true prayers of your heart can be answered,
If you would only but look unto Me.

I have heard your needs and desires,
Your prayers did not fall unheard.
But I saw that your heart needed different
Than the way that ease had preferred.

You prayed for clear skies and sunshine,
For cool breezes and flowers to start.
But I saw that just these would not yield you
The real peace you sought in your heart.

I ordered the rough ways you have followed,
Not to disappoint, but to purge.
For I knew that true happiness begins only
In the heart that with Me does merge.”

So I fell at the feet of my Master
And yielded to His will and His plan.
No longer demanding my wants now,
But trusting He'd finish what He began.

Not long after, I found I was happy;
Not a cloud in my heart could prevail.
Even if my circumstances seemed weary,
No outer storm my inner Sunshine could pale.

The cool breezes of sweet rest in Him,
Did calm all my worries and fears.
And always the flowers of His promises,
Were visible when life brought me tears.

I found also, I no longer walked alone;
The Good Shepherd was there by my side!
With Him I could share my joys and sorrows,
And amidst any battle, in Him I could hide.

So now instead of praying
For things of earthly ease,
I thank the Lord for sending things
That brought me to my knees.

I pray instead for humility,
To lead me through the day.
For an eye to serve, and share the blessings,
That the Lord does send my way.

I pray that my heart would be yielded,
To the touch of the Master's hand.
Allowing His will to change me,
Through everything He has planned.

For I've found that true happiness,
Is not in a smooth, perfect life.
But it's found when in Christ we are rooted,
Not moved through fire or strife.


If He rules the inmost being,
Then nothing outside will disturb.
For He is the solid Foundation,
And the real source of True Life superb.

—By Adrianna Fanton

The Heartbeat of
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Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 2 Peter 3:14