

BIBLE MONITOR

VOL. CII

JULY, 2024

NO. 7

"For the faith once delivered unto the saints"

OUR MOTTO: Spiritual in life and Scriptural in practice.	OUR WATCHWORD: Go into all the world and preach the gospel.
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OUR AIM: Be it our aim to be more sanctified, more righteous,
more holy, and more perfect through faith and obedience.

WHO CAN DESCRIBE THE JOYS THAT RISE

Who can describe the joys that rise
Through all the courts of Paradise,
To see a prodigal return,
To see an heir of glory born!

With joy the Father doth approve
The fruit of his eternal love;
The Son with joy looks down and sees
The purchase of his agonies.

The Spirit takes delight to view
The holy soul he form'd anew;
And saints and angels join to sing
The growing empire of their King.

Issac Watts

Submitted by Lynn H Miller
Newmanstown, PA

THE MONKEY TRAP

In parts of South America, Africa and Asia, locals have used a method that is quite deceptive and very effective at trapping monkeys. Perhaps you've heard this story before. If you haven't, here's how it works: those that want to trap a monkey take a gourd and then drill a hole in it just large enough for a monkey's hand to pass through. They then put a little food in the gourd that monkeys like and then secure the gourd to something immobile like a tree or large rock. Then they wait.

You can probably guess what happens next. An unsuspecting monkey puts his hand through the hole in the gourd to retrieve the treasure that he's just discovered. However, to his surprise and frustration, the hole is too small to allow the monkey

to retract the food in his hand. If he would simply release the food from his hand, he could pull his hand back out and be freed. However, typically the monkey will not let go of the treat in his hand and becomes trapped. Because of his desire for this little treasure, he surrenders his freedom and will likely lose his life. Foolish monkey!

As we consider this story, we may initially laugh at the foolish monkey. However, it may soon dawn on us that there is application to our own lives; to look inwardly and evaluate our own susceptibility towards foolishness. Am I like that foolish monkey?

There are many things in this world that we can view as little treasures. Some of these may clearly be wrong and we should

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turn away from. However, many are not of themselves wrong but are things that the Lord made for our needs and pleasures. For these, while not of themselves wrong, they can become wrong to us if we, much like the foolish monkey, view the little treasures that we desire as having more value than the freedom granted to us by Jesus Christ.

While we may not be trapped by men like monkeys, 1 Pet. 5:8 tells us that we have an enemy who walks about, seeking who he may devour. Because of this, our loving Lord warns us to be sober and vigilant so that we are not foolish and become trapped by the enemy.

As we journey through this world, we are safe as we walk close to Jesus. While most of us would say that, of course our freedom in Christ is more valuable than the little treasures, do our lives testify that we believe that to be true?

In this modern world and in our nation of abundant wealth, while we enjoy the little treasures that God lays before us, let us be sober and vigilant to remind our hearts and minds to keep these treasures little and always be ready to release

them if needed to maintain our freedom in Christ, while knowing that our Lord Jesus Christ is the most valuable treasure.

“Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” 1 Tim. 6:17-19

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Matt. 6:19-21

“...the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.” Matt. 13:44

THE 3 REVELATIONS OF GOD - THE SUPREMACY OF THE REVELATION OF CHRIST

(Part 1 of 2)

Two years ago, I preached about the difference between the Evangelical vs. Anabaptist view of salvation and Christian living at an Anabaptist church planting retreat. In that message, I told our brothers and sisters that I could not get to Anabaptist Christianity from an Evangelical Christian mindset. The reason for that is that they use a different theological framework. Their framework supports the outcome of what their Christianity looks like.

A theological framework matters because dogmatism is unprofitable if a consistent, reasonable approach to the Scriptures does not back it. I'm not saying that we cannot be dogmatic about what the Scriptures teach or that there aren't any fundamentals to the faith, but that each of these is to be supported by a careful search of the Scriptures and expressed by a rational defense of God's revelation. Everything hinges on our theology (because it defines what we believe about God). A person's Christian life

and ministry is an expression of their theology:

- A poor theology results in poor Christian expression
- A good theology results in good Christian expression
- If the church slides in its Christian expression, fix its theology

The Evangelical church we see today prominent in America is a product of their theology. Many Anabaptist churches piggybacking on the back of evangelicalism will eventually become a branch of the evangelical church. So, we must build a framework of theology that explains why we come to the conclusions we do and uphold the practices we keep. But to build a theological framework, we need material to work with, and God has provided that material through Revelation. Justin the Martyr said, *"From every point of view, therefore, it must be seen that in no other way than only from the prophets who teach us by divine inspiration is it at all possible to*

learn anything concerning God and the true religion."

In no way are we, as humans, able to ascend to a proper understanding of God. Only when God reveals Himself can I know Who He is and What He is like. Three revelations of God inform us of Who God is and What He is like: 1 - General Revelation, 2 - Special Revelation and 3 - Personal Revelation.

Creation is the General Revelation of God, and it is sufficient to show the knowledge of His existence.

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. 1:18-20

Wrath is God's righteous judgment. Ungodliness is that which contradicts the character

of God. Unrighteousness is that which contradicts what is right and true. It is not that people do not know the truth of God's existence and righteousness. It is that people suppress that truth in unrighteousness. The world suppresses the truth because of rebellion in their own hearts. God has revealed Himself in two ways in creation.

The first is our bearing of God's image; God has shown and manifested it in them. We display specific attributes of God, whether it be creativity, intelligence, order, dominion, self-awareness, relationships, or communication. The image we bear and the attributes we display are a witness to God and reveal His existence and our ability to know Him. This also explains why humanity is innately religious.

The second way God has revealed Himself generally is the creation itself. We can understand His *eternal power* that wrought creation: He set the universe in motion, by His power, He built the sun and stars, He filled our world with His creatures, He brings rains in their seasons and fills us with good things.

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Ps. 8:3-6

The sheer brilliance of order and creative power is in everything. The smaller we go, the more amazing the building blocks of life become. God's power is witnessed through creation, and creation testifies to God's divinity over creation. Creation declares a Sovereign, Ruler, and Sustainer. The heavens declare the glory of God, and these things are seen and understood by creation.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and

their words to the end of the world..." Ps. 19:1-4

All people are without excuse. No one will meet God and say, "I didn't know." Creation reveals a Creator. But creation as general revelation by itself is not sufficient to save. There is a second and higher revelation of God in the Scriptures.

We understand general revelation and reality because of special revelation. We can understand creation, life, and human experience because God has revealed it through the special revelation, we call Scripture. Scripture is sufficient to explain our physical existence and reality, spiritual condition, relationship with God, and salvation to God. Scripture teaches itself that it is the unique, inspired revelation of God. *"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."* II Pet. 1:20-21

The Bible is the special revelation of God; the very words of God, revealing the truth, design, and plan of God

and is the revelation we have of nature and the divine. Peter says that God produced Scripture, who specially moved through the Holy Spirit to reveal Himself to the world through holy men. *“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”* II Tim. 3:15-17

The scriptures are sufficient to reveal the path of life in Christ to the lost. God has given us sufficient revelation to know Him and have a relationship with Him. They are inspired, preserved, and sufficient for the believer to know God, His will, and His design. They are sufficient for the complete disciple of Christ.

The Bible has every tool we need in our Christian lives. The Bible is inspired, and the Bible is sufficient.

We will come back to some of these passages in Part 2. God has given us two revelations that give us the material to build our theological framework; a general revelation through our mere existence in His creation and a special revelation, in which God intervened in history to explain general revelation and reveal Himself.

But... the Bible gives us an *Arbiter to the Scriptures, a Supreme Revealer of God*. He is a key, if you will, who leads us to unlock the truths of Scripture and illuminates the special revelation and we will consider this Arbiter in Part 2, in next month's issue of the Bible Monitor.

Jonathan Kinner
Brookville, OH

IRRELEVANT?

Recently my mind has been drawn to the question “Is the Old Testament relevant today?” I believe the majority of Christians would say emphatically “Yes!”

Yet how can we be sure?

First and foremost, the scriptures say that the Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit and this is something that

we must firmly believe for us to understand that the Old Testament is important for our lives.

When we read about the Creation, do we really believe it if we think Genesis is not important? If we don't think it's important, will we begin to believe the theory of evolution? Can we learn anything about the fall of man and how sin came to be? There is so much to learn from just this one account about how easy it is for Satan to sneak into our lives and lead us to listen and believe his lies.

The first example of evangelism in the Old Testament is the story of Noah. He built the ark for many years, all the while witnessing of the true God and warning of the coming judgment. As judgment came, the world was destroyed by a flood and the only ones saved were Noah and his family. Is that relevant to society today?

A foreshadow of God's plan of mercy upon mankind is Exodus chapter 12, in the account of the Passover in Egypt. By sprinkling the blood of a male lamb, without spot or blemish, on the doorposts and the death angel passing

over. This is a type and shadow of Jesus Christ shedding his blood for our sins and God's judgement passing over us.

If the Old Testament is irrelevant, how do we explain the connection between the book of Psalms and Philippians 4:6? Psalms is filled with scriptures of praise and supplications. One of those examples is Ps. 142:1, *"I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication."* This verse stretches all the way to Phil. 4:6, *"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."*

The accounts in Hebrews 11, the faith chapter, tells us of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Issac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, and others of how their steadfast faith is an example of how to grow our faith.

Thousands of years later, the relevancy of the Old Testament is even applicable today in our support of God's chosen people, Israel. Gen. 12:3 says *"...I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee..."* Our society is fighting

the battle of blessing or rejecting Israel. Riots and fightings to destroy Israel in our own country are weakening our support for Israel. If this continues, might America be “down the tubes” so to speak in receiving blessings from God?

Take time to really think and compare the Old Testament and New Testament. They are both relevant today and will be forever.

Martha Heer
West Unity, OH

SORROWFUL YET REJOICING

As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing... (II Cor. 6:10)

These two terms contradict each other everywhere but in the Christian life. This is how Paul said it because he lived it. Earlier in the chapter he describes his sufferings and those of his brethren and how depressing it was, but yet they always rejoiced, especially in their home above and in Christ their Saviour. No one could take their joy from them.

Paul and Silas were arrested, beaten, and jailed but at midnight, they sang unto the Lord so loudly that they woke everybody. Nothing could quench the joy they possessed. Paul's letter to the Philippians was written from jail and the conditions within that jail were inhuman, yet the theme of the letter is joy. It is mentioned

sixteen times. His faith was not contingent upon circumstances. How about ours?

Jesus said, *“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.”* (John 15:11) Heb. 12:2 says, *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”* The cross was before Him, yet the joy of heaven and God's presence was also before Him.

Sorrowful yet Rejoicing: This is the birthright of every Christian. We do not have to live in darkness if Christ is out light. Even when things are dark here, light is ahead of us.

Awake, my soul, to joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song for me,
Hi lovingkindness, oh, how free!

Samuel Medley

Brother Lynn H. Miller
Newmanstown, PA

FAITH WORTHY TO STAND ON

Daniel and his friends found themselves in a rather difficult situation. Should they adhere to government regulations or stand on their faith and take the consequences?

Allowing the world to define us has become one of the great travesties of our generation. It moves us off our spiritual foundation and makes us dependent upon an outside force. Only those who have put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ can stand on faith against the world around them.

Daniel made a proposition. He asked to be allowed to eat according to their requirements and, at the end of the time, to be examined to see if it was worthwhile. At the end of the time, Daniel and his friends were much healthier looking than anybody else, and they were

allowed to continue that diet.

If we allow our faith to define us and guide us, we will see ourselves in a better position. Not that we will not have resistance. We certainly will have opposition because the enemy does not like what we are doing.

Standing on our faith will be a testimony to those who are seeking the truth. Not everybody is seeking the truth. However, some are seeking the truth and need to see what standing on faith in Jesus Christ is all about.

Now, what is this faith? The Bible says, *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Rom. 10:17). My faith is not simply what I believe. My faith is what I believe based upon the direct word of God. Yes, people can take a verse

here and a verse there and twist it to mean something the Bible has not set forth. What we believe must be in complete harmony with all of the Bible.

No difference exists between the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is a preparation for the New Testament, and the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. When I put my faith in God and ground myself in the word of God, then I will have a faith worth standing on.

The most important thing for me is to understand the impact of my faith in my life. Daniel understood what it meant for him to believe in God and how it affected his everyday life.

A problem of today is that sometimes our faith is Sunday morning, and then we are on our own the rest of the week. How is that working? A look at the community around us might tell us that this is not working very well.

What is my faith, and how does it impact my life and change my perspective on the world around me?

Out of my faith will come personal convictions. I know

many people that have convictions because someone told them they should have these convictions. I know some people that have certain convictions because their parents or their grandparents had those convictions. I believe conviction is a personal matter between God and me, and the pathway to God is the word of God. As I immerse myself in the word of God, I begin to see God's perspective on things, and out of that, I develop a conviction that I can truly stand on.

I do not know if Daniel was tempted to compromise on his diet regulation in order to gain a position. But he did not, and that is what made Daniel the person he was. Many Christians are not confident in their faith, so they waver when the pressure begins to build. The true test of my faith is when I am willing to stand on it regardless of the opposition. When God demonstrates his grace through my situation, I will begin to see fruit in my life that I never saw before.

I am not sure Daniel understood the full consequences of his actions. I know he was not overcome by the potential consequences;

he was only concerned about his conviction and his standing on faith. We know the rest of the story; because Daniel was confident in his faith in God, God was able to use him as no man had been used before. I need to trust God even though I do not understand what is happening. Daniel did not know what was going to happen when he made that commitment.

Many times, I face decisions and consequences that I'm not quite sure or understand, but as I trust God and not my circumstances, He can lead me in a way that brings honor and glory to God. I must remain true in a hostile and secular environment. The Christian life is not very compatible with our

society today. You are either going through the society channel or you are standing against society and following Jesus Christ and standing on your faith.

The foundation of my faith establishes my personal conviction. Occasionally, I need to examine my personal convictions and why I have such convictions. If I cannot trace each conviction to a solid biblical foundation, I must examine whether that conviction should stay in my life. When I put God first, He will establish my testimony to the world around me.

James L. Snyder
Ocala, FL

THE TWO VIEWS ON LIFE

An Atheist's View on Life

I will live my life according to these beliefs
God does not exist
It is just foolish to think
That there is a God with a cosmic plan
That an all-powerful God brings purpose to the pain and suffering
in the world
Is a comforting thought, however
Is only wishful thinking
People can do as they please without eternal consequences
The idea that
I am deserving of Hell
Because of sin
Is a lie meant to make me a slave to those in power
"The more you have, the happier you will be";
Our existence has no grand meaning or purpose
In a world with no God
There is freedom to be who I want to be
But with God
Everything is fine
It is ridiculous to think
I am lost and in need of saving.

A Christian's View on Life

(To see this view, read again but from bottom to top)

~ Author Unknown

Selected by Eli Yoder
Hutchinson, KS

CONNECTIONS

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

The Final Focus

I pray that we are all inspired as we study II Timothy this month. Paul, as a spiritual father to Timothy, gave some final instructions to Timothy that are very relevant to our lives in today's world.

In II Tim. 2:1-7, Paul cautions us to not become entangled so deeply in this world's affairs that we lose sight of God's purpose for our lives. We need to keep in mind that,

"...the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (I John 2:17). Are we too entangled in worldly endeavors?

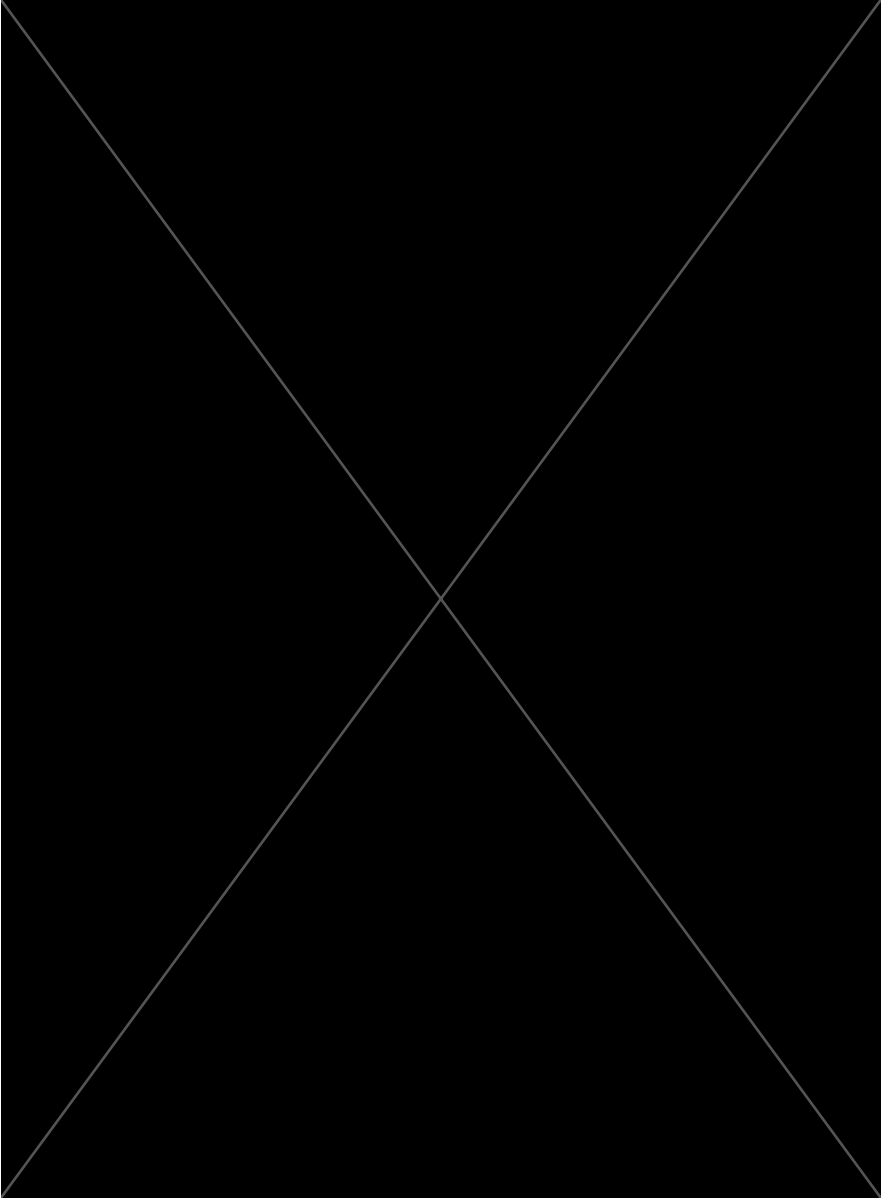
Paul also reminds us in II Tim. 2:11-16 that if we truly die to self, we will also live with Jesus. And if we deny Jesus as an unbeliever or a sinner, Jesus will remain faithful and cannot deny Himself. Since Jesus is the ultimate example of love, He will continue to love us until the end. Jesus said that the two greatest commandments are

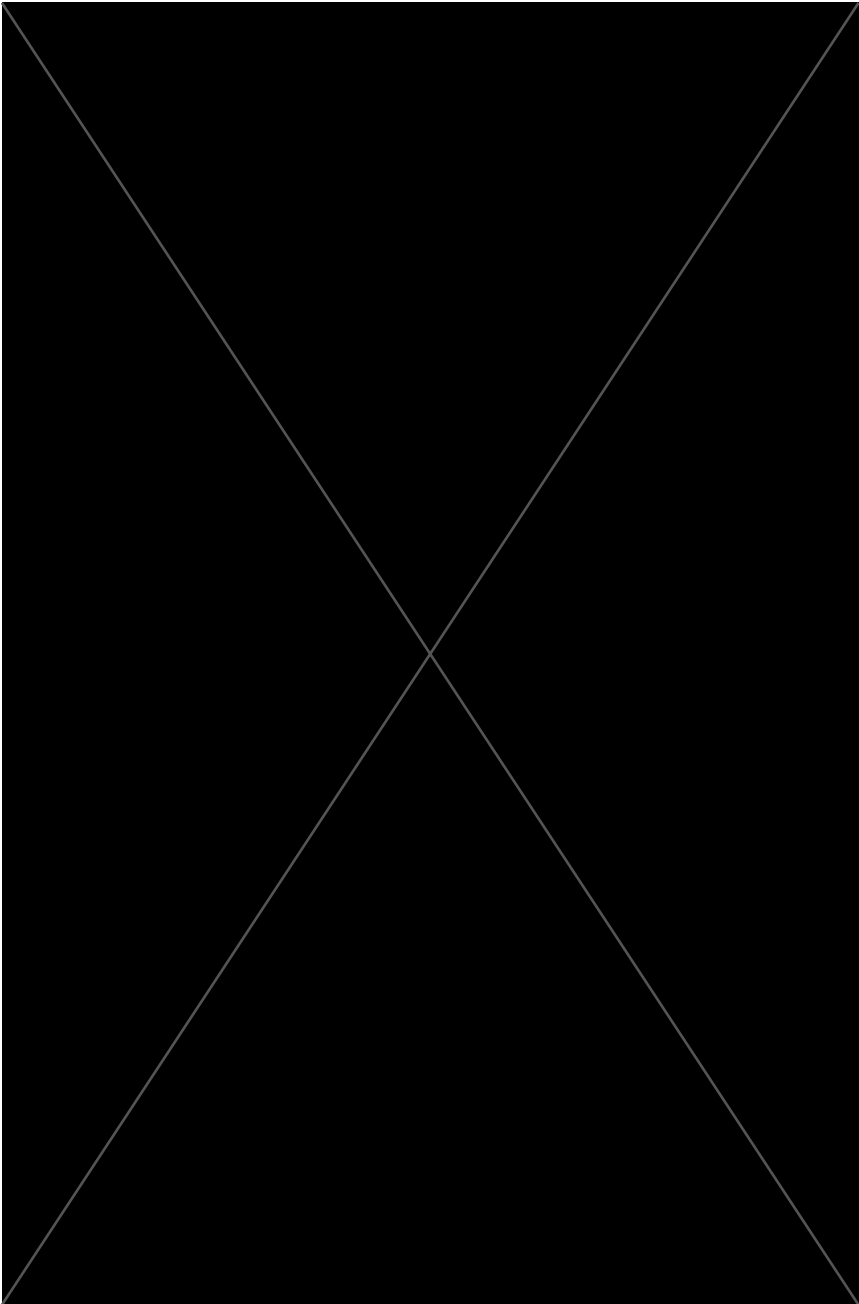
that we love God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. And that we love our neighbor as our self. (Luke 10:27). Is this the way we live our lives?

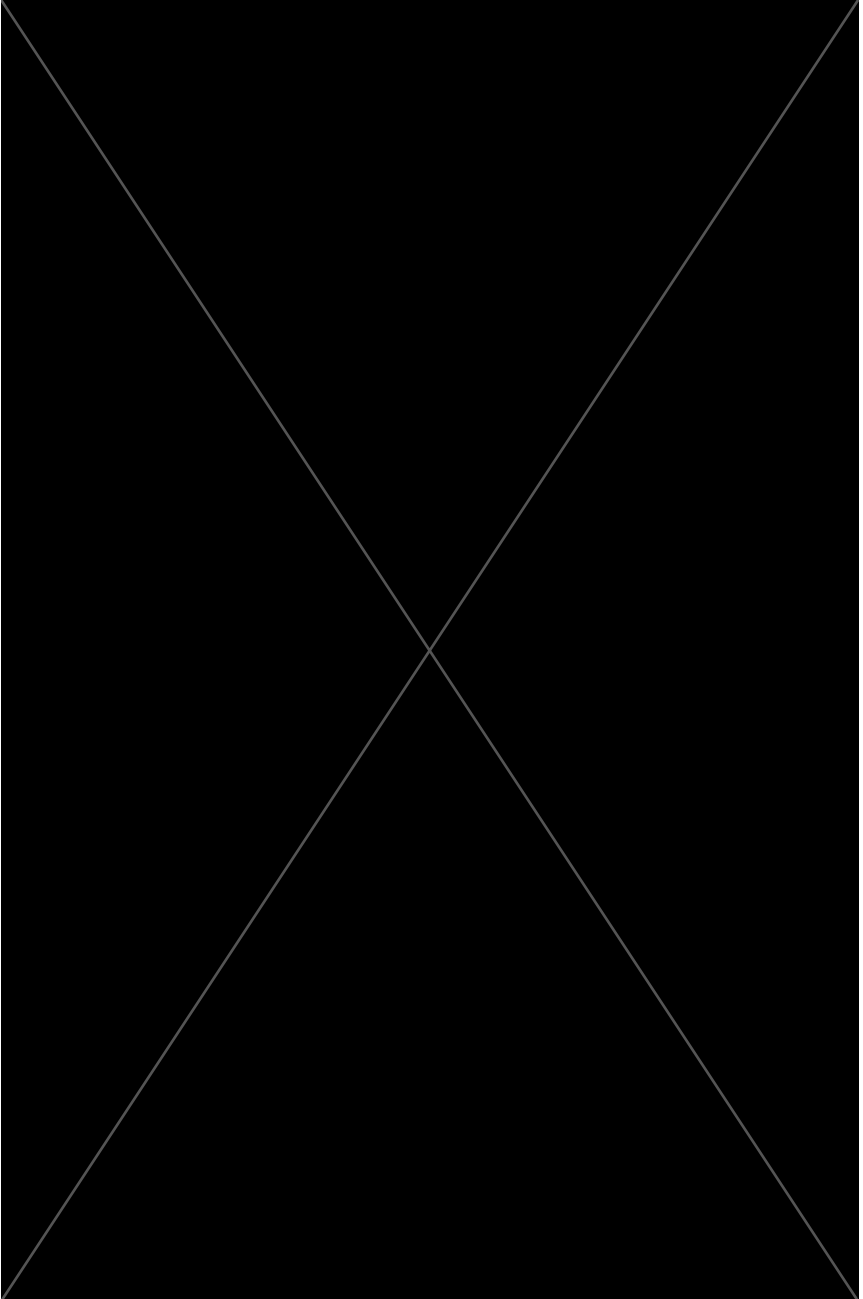
According to Paul, in II Tim. 3:1-5, perilous times will come, and are possibly upon us today. People will only think of themselves and have an "entitlement" mentality. How do we withstand this tsunami of selfishness and godlessness? Paul says that by reading God's Word, studying and letting the Word change us, we will be able to be what God wants us to be. (II Tim. 3:14-17). Do we read the Bible each day with a prayerful attitude?

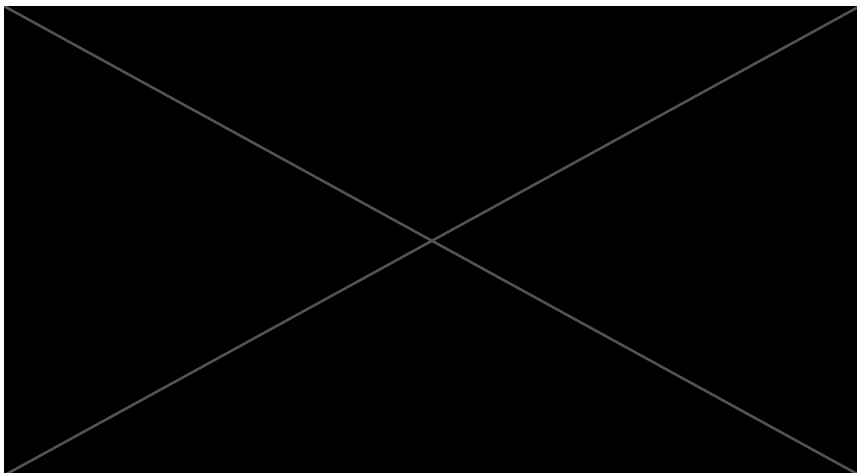
In II Tim. 4:8, Paul finishes with the wonderful picture of what is in store for those who love Jesus. And not only love Him but are also anxiously awaiting His return. Question: Are we praying each day for Jesus's return?

*On behalf of the Bible Study Board
Brother Ward Deaton*









NEWS ITEMS

Minutes in One Volume

As decided by General Conference 2023, the Minutes from General Conferences 1976-2022 is now available on the Dunkard Brethren website at <https://www.dunkardbrethrenchurch.com/>

On the website:

- Scroll down to “Publications”
- Click on “Learn More”
- In “Dunkard Brethren Church Minutes”, click “Download”

This digital version of the Minutes is quite useful as the Table of Contents has a live feature. When a topic is selected, it will automatically take you to that section of the document.

A special thanks to Bro. Marvin Lorenz for the many hours he has invested in this project. Marvin continues work on this project to keep the digital version up to date with new conference Minutes and to incorporate the older Volume of Minutes (1927-1975) digitally.

Bible Monitor Archive

Ever want information from a previous issue of the Bible Monitor, only to realize that you already pitched it? We might be able to help. Older digital issues of the Bible Monitor are now available on the Dunkard Brethren website at <https://www.dunkardbrethren-church.com/> Currently, the digital archive consists of issues from 2018 through March 2024 and will be updated periodically. There is also a search function available within the archive.

On the website:

- Scroll down to "Publications"
- Click on "Learn More"
- In "Bible Monitor", click "Bible Monitor"

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR August 2024

August 4 - II Tim. 4:9-22 - Personal Instructions and Final Benediction

1. Why do you feel Paul wanted Timothy to make the journey to come see him at Rome, and that it was urgent to come before Winter?

2. Many men had been involved in spreading the Gospel with Paul. Some of them had turned against him. There was one who stood with him (vs.17) and delivered him (vs.18). Have you ever felt forsaken by others but strengthened by the Lord?

3. What was Paul's attitude towards those who had forsaken him (vs.16), and towards all Gentiles who would hear the Gospel (vs.17)?

August 11 - Titus 1:1-9 - A Greeting of Common Faith

1. What was Paul's purpose in calling Titus his son (vs. 4a)?

2. Paul's greeting to Timothy includes an introduction to a "common faith". What does this common faith include?

3. Paul had previously appointed Titus to appoint elders in many cities. In verses 6-9, there are several qualifications listed. In this list, Paul seems to elevate one's character and lifestyle above talents and skills. Do you feel this is a good list for all of us to strive to live by?

August 18 - Titus 1:10-2:5 - Speaking, Teaching, Living Sound Doctrine

1. Paul calls out the evil, abominable, and disobedient. In contrast, he encourages us to be "sound in doctrine, in faith, in charity, in patience, and in our speech." What does this look like for us to be "sound" in these things today?

2. What are the instructions specifically to older men, and also to the younger men?

-
3. What are the instructions specifically to older women, and also to the younger women?
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-

August 25 - Titus 2:6-3:3 - For the Grace of God Has Appeared!

1. What does “a pattern of good works” (vs. 7) mean to you?
-
-

2. “For the Grace of God brings salvation” and “teaches us” what?
-
-

3. What are we really “looking for”?
-
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