

BIBLE MONITOR

VOL. CII

OCTOBER, 2024

NO. 10

"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.

GRACIOUS SPIRIT, LOVE DIVINE

Gracious Spirit, dove divine,
let thy light within me shine;
all my guilty fears remove,
fill me full of heav'n and love.

Speak thy pard'ning grace to me,
set the burdened sinner free;
lead me to the Lamb of God,
wash me in his precious blood.

Life and peace to me impart;
seal salvation on my heart;
breathe thyself into my breast,
earnest of immortal rest.

Let me never from thee stray,
keep me in the narrow way;
fill my soul with joy divine,
keep me, Lord, forever thine.

John Stocker

Selected by Lynn H. Miller
Newmanstown, PA

IS GOD LOVE?

Is God love? Scripture tells us that God is love. Probably the most common reference to this is in I John 4:8 and 16. So these scriptures alone answer the question and settle the issue, don't they? But what exactly does it mean that God is love?

During the hippie movement of the 1960's, many young people were rejecting traditional conformity and materialism in America and were turning to seek enrichment in other things; notably to ways in which they perceived for finding deeper spiritual dimension and meaning. From this spiritual wandering came the emergence of new interests and ideas. Praise God that some found the true God in their seeking and became born again believers. Some however, became part of the drug culture

or other perversions of true spirituality in the occult and various forms of Eastern religion. Near the peak of the hippie movement, was the Summer of Love in 1967. Approximately 100,000 people came to live communally in San Francisco and brought with them, their newfound freedom, spirituality and free love. But was this the essence of "God is love"?

Today, similar views of God still exist. Some even twist the meaning by reversing the wording to say that love is God and conclude that God is not an actual being but rather is just some grandiose and inanimate universal emotion. But again, scripture settles it. God is love. But is that all that God is? Some might even argue that love is God by referencing Jesus Himself in

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His answer to the disciples as to what the greatest commandment of God was; that Jesus' response in Matt. 22:37-39 indicates that all instruction from God to man, focuses on love.

However, as we consider the whole of scripture, even in reading the verses just referenced in Matt. 22, we see that God is not simply an emotion, drifting around the earth randomly touching human hearts like a nebulous mystical mist. Rather, we see that while love is clearly one of God's characteristics, we fundamentally see that He is a Holy being, the Creator of all things, all-knowing, all-powerful, ever-present and eternal. Simply put, God is love but is not only love. He is much more. Some think that love is God's greatest characteristic while others think that His greatest characteristic is holiness as it encompasses all His attributes, including love.

Even the Gospel message tells us that God is more than just love. Have you ever considered that if God was love only, reason would suggest that mankind would not have a debt of sin before God that needed to be paid by the Savior. Why? In my thinking, if God was only love, He would have no laws. God's laws

seem to spring from additional characteristics, notably His righteousness and justice. However, these characteristics cannot be separated from God's love. While mankind stands guilty before God's righteousness and justice through the breaking of His law, God's love motivated Him to step in and provide a means for mankind to escape the wages of our sin and be covered by His righteousness. That means of escape was the sacrifice of His beloved Son on the cross in our place, to pay the wages of our sin for us.

By God's grace, through our faith, our sins are covered by His sacrifice at the cross and we are made righteous through Him. We know of no greater expression of love than this! God is love... and much more! Praise His holy name!

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3:16-17

HOW DO I MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS?

The following is Part 2 of a loose transcription of a discussion between Zach Funk and Todd Castle in episode #002 of the Surrendered Soul Podcast of the same title. Zach and Todd are from the Dallas Center, Iowa congregation. See the September 2024 issue of the Bible Monitor for Part 1.

Part 2 of 3

Surrendering the Outcome

The second core principle in knowing that we are making right decisions is that of surrendering the outcome. I must be willing to surrender the outcome of whatever I say or whatever is going on. I must surrender that life is going to be as God wants it. I must be honest, authentic with others and with God.

If we are trying to be a Christian, we have already lost the battle. We must be willing to die to ourselves and let Jesus make us into His image and thus fulfill His will in and through us. I must decrease, He must increase. We can't be good enough. We can't act good enough. It is wholly the Holy Spirit of God in and through us, without filter, without our input or control.

This is counter to the culture of the world. Everything around us screams for attention. Our flesh longs to "make our mark" on the world and in society. Pursuit of money, fame, notoriety and a good reputation all must die. We justify all of these in our minds, but that is not what God calls us to. If God knows me and I know Him, that is good enough. God is enough.

Author Dick Brogdon put it this way. When we understand that Jesus knows us intimately and loves us deeply, despite what He knows about us, this alleviates any need to be known or exalted by others. Put simply, this means that in relationships with God and others, we have nothing to hide. We have no skeletons in the closet. We have nothing false or shameful to conceal. To be secret-less is to be at peace, never fearful that someone will discover something negative about us. God knows it all and we have brought ev-

everything into His light, so that we are impervious to scorn or blame. This is great freedom and the secret to a powerful life.

So what is it like to live in a state of full surrender? When I no longer concern myself with what others think of me and of creating and maintaining my own facade. I learn that those around me actually get to know the real me. I am relaxed and express myself in laughter and tears equally without reservation, openly.

When we are around people who live behind a facade, living life with masks of all sorts, we think...do I actually know this person? He says something and it sounds good, but something is off. We might not say anything to him or anyone else, but deep down we sense that things are not as they seem. Eventually we realize that his words are not in alignment with the fruit of his life. He is not authentic, and he is secretly desperate to control what you see in him.

When we are false, inauthentic and desperate for control, we can hide this pretty well for a long time. When we are with one group of people, we are one way, when with another group, we are altogether different. But when we are placed under pressure, a hard or a quick response situation, false accusations or allegations, the real us comes out. Maybe it's subtle at first. That burst of anger or melt down. We snap at our children. We "fly off the handle." Later we wonder, why did I say or do that? Those around us are startled as it seems so out of character for us. In reality, that is the real us. Under pressure, whatever is in us will come out.

If I am surrendered, authentic and real, then my reactions are predictable as they are consistent with my daily life and living. Others are able to know how I will or would respond in a given situation as they truly know the real me. I can be at peace no matter the difficulty of my situation as I have already surrendered the outcome to the Holy Spirit and am under His control.

We can tend to label things good or bad merely based on our opinion of it. However, do we really know if something will ultimately result in good

or bad? We say we had a “bad” day when the tire blew making us late for an important meeting. We say we had a “good” day when the day went according to our plan and desires. However, we may not see “our” day as our Father does. He alone knows what we needed in our day to accomplish His desire to conform us further into the image of Jesus. Did God allow that flat tire to happen for a reason? If so, I may not know what that reason is. I may never know, but perhaps He had a specific purpose in it. My job is to respond in full surrender and meekness.

An important fruit of living surrendered and authentic is trust. There are situations that get resolved, situations that are avoided, just because there is trust. You are dealing with an individual and it's all out on the table, they know it's all out on the table and so there is trust. People know. Whether they realize it or not, they make decisions and treat you differently if they know you are being totally real with them. No sense of falsehood, just laying out for them authentically and in truth, waiting for them to make a decision.

To be continued in next month's issue of the Bible Monitor

THE BIBLE vs. THE LATEST ELECTRONIC GADGET

I wonder what it would be like if we treated our Bible like we treat our cell phone. What if we carried it around in our purses or pockets? What if we flipped through it several times a day? What if we turned back to get it if we forgot it? What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it? What if we gave it to children as gifts? What if we used it if we traveled? What if we used it in case of an emergency?

This is something to make you go...hmmm...where is my

Bible? One more thing: you don't have to worry about your Bible being disconnected because Jesus paid the bill.

This all really makes one think about priorities. What really is the most important thing? How about this: “...seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matt. 6:33

Lynn H. Miller
Newmanstown, PA

LOVE IS A VERB

Whenever I hear Christians congratulating themselves for “being approachable” I have to cringe on the inside. Being approachable reminds me of a person holding a life preserver while a drowning man is nearby. While this arrangement can be a first step and has great potential, it is basically useless unless acted upon. Is being approachable a way to express love or merely an air of toleration? Does a relaxed face and a visual lack of disgust or hatred equal love; I’d say no.

If you look up modern definitions of love you will repeatedly see the word “feeling” or a reference to emotions. I’d like to challenge us to think like Jesus Christ and see love as a verb. Jesus walked among the people and I’m sure they were often not lovable. In the Bible we were described as demanding, sick, sinful, and dirty, but He saw past the outward and saw their worth as individuals made in the image of God.

A simple way to explain Biblical love is: acting for the good of another. In John 15:13 Jesus states, *“Greater love hath no man that this, that a man lay*

down his life for his friends.”

Whether we desire to strengthen relationships or win souls to Christ, energy must be expended. Jesus did not tell us to rest in the shade of the cross, but to pick it up and follow him. Biblical love is costly, not passive.

Think about how many offenses in the church have arisen simply because someone felt ignored. I want to challenge each one to reach out to the person on the edge of the group; the one who looks excluded. But I also want to implore that same lonely person to reach out to others and not await to be greeted. Never tire of approaching a brother or sister in Christ to kindly ask how their week has been; connecting (and therefore loving) does not have to be complicated. Prov. 18:24 *“A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.”*

This article is written to myself. At times I experience a coolness for people in my heart. I know it is a sin and should not remain. I cry out to Jesus and ask Him to remove that wrong

attitude and fill me with His Holy Spirit so that I can love people the way He does. Then I act in faith and reach out again.

Phil. 2:3 *"Let nothing be done*

through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."

Melissa Brock
Stryker, OH

SURPRISE! IT'S HARVEST TIME

Many people talk about sowing and reaping, and yet the average person has no concept or does not think too much on the idea of sowing and reaping. When something sprouts up in their life, they have no idea where it came from.

Growing up in the country, I understood that what you sow is exactly what you reap. For example, if you sow tomatoes, you should not expect peaches. Peaches do not grow in a garden, they grow on a tree. Whatever you plant, that is what you are going to reap at harvest time.

In order to understand the harvest, you need to examine the seed very closely. The harvest is dependent upon the seed. If I know the seed and the attributes of that seed, I can correctly speculate upon the harvest. If I am very careful about that, I can expect a great harvest. In my garden, I must

know what I am planting and where to plant it. That creates the expectation of a particular harvest.

How many people expect a great harvest but have no consideration about the seed being sown. They do not realize that everything they do every day of their life, they are sowing some kind of seed that will at some point create a harvest.

Many never give thought to this harvest aspect in their life. They believe they can do anything they want to and be associated with anybody they want to and not have any kind of consequences at all. Then, when something sprouts up in their life they are completely confused.

For some people, this idea of expectancy is if you expect strong enough, it will come true. Just have a positive attitude about this and everything will be all right.

Every day, I might go to the post office expecting to get a check for \$10,000. To this date that has never come true. I might be expecting it, but my expectation is not about anything close to reality. I can dream, can't I? I need to understand that expectation is a result of something I am doing. If I am working on a project that will earn me a \$10,000 check, then I can expect it. However, if I am just going to the post office expecting this money to come for no rational reason, I am going to be disappointed.

How many people are living lives with that kind of expectation that turns into disappointment? I have a neighbor who every week expects to win the lottery. The only problem with that expectation is, he never plays the lottery.

The older I get, the more aware I am that old age is reaping young rage. No matter what you did in your youth, you will face the consequences of it when you get older. While you are doing it in your youth, you have no expectation that you will see consequence of it when you get older. We are just sowing "wild oats" without realizing the harvest is just down the road.

You cannot plant peas and expect tomatoes. There has to be realism built in our sowing and reaping.

I think one of the most terrible aspects of this sowing and reaping is the fact that there are times when people will sow into my life, seeds I am not aware of. It was called "tares" in the Bible. And there are many things that have come and ripened in my life that I did not put there but I have allowed someone else unbeknown to me to put that into my life.

If I want a great harvest, I need to define what the great harvest should look like. Once I have defined that harvest, I now need to go through the steps that will get me to that harvest. It is like going backwards. Finding the result, then establishing the plan of sowing the right seed and then laying out a plan that will get me to that result.

If I am going to reach a certain group of people, I need to understand what their needs are and then devise a plan, based upon Scripture, to reach into their lives. I can be a seed sown into the life of someone that down the road, a spiritual harvest takes place.

The apostle Paul said, "*I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.*" (I Cor. 3:6). I can be that sowing machine or I can be that watering machine, but it's God who is bringing all this together in a person's life.

I want to be a healthy seed planted in the life of someone that will bring them to the harvest of knowing Jesus Christ as their Savior.

James L. Snyder
Ocala, FL

AUTUMN

See the leaves around us falling,
Dry and withered to the ground;
Thus to thoughtless mortals calling,
In a sad and solemn sound;

Youth on length of days presuming,
Who the paths of pleasure tread,
View us, late in beauty blooming,
Numbered now among the dead.

What tho' yet no losses grieve you,
Gay with health and many a grace,
Let not cloudless skies deceive you;
Summer gives the autumn place.

On the tree of life eternal,
Let our highest hopes be stayed:
This alone, forever vernal,
Bears a leaf that shall not fade.

George Horne

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.

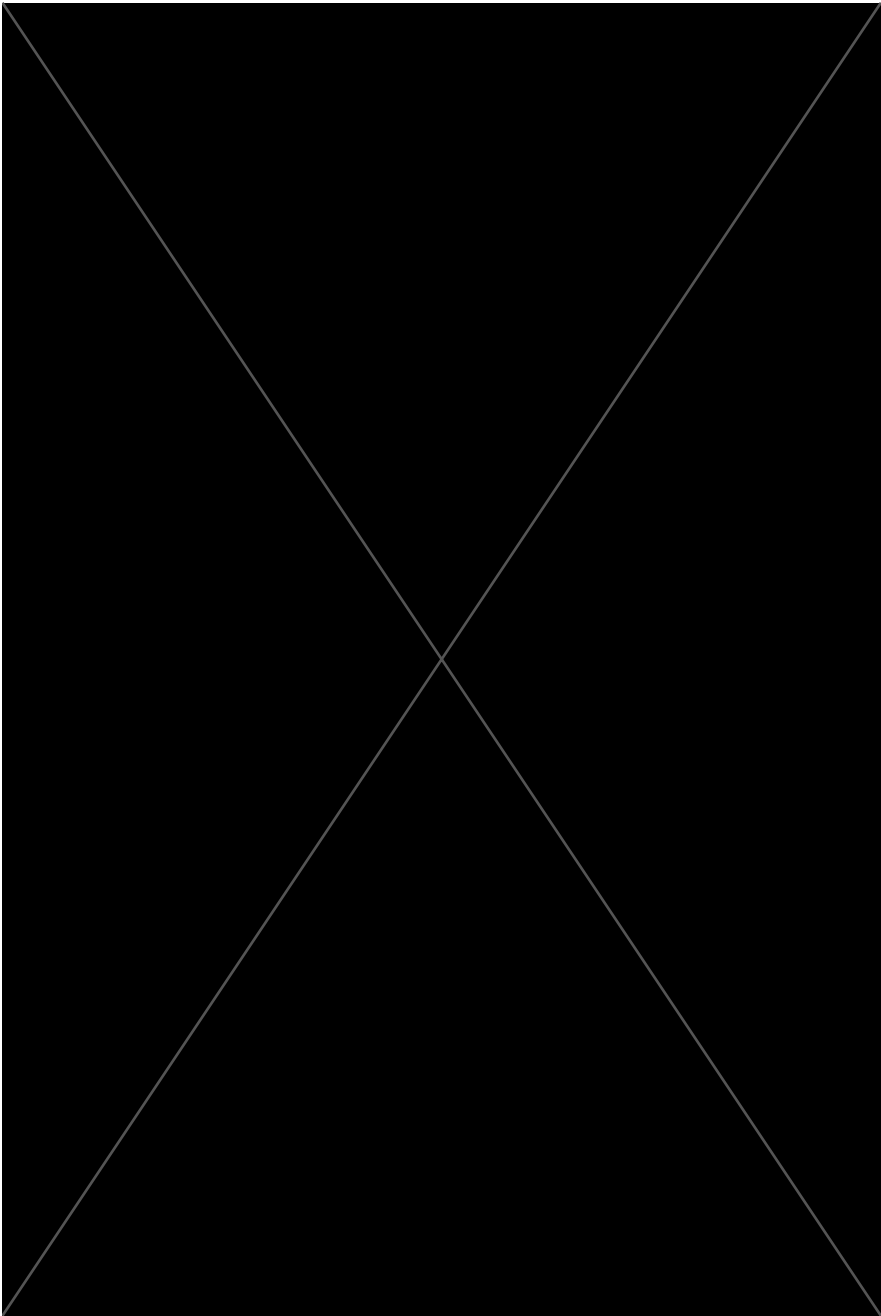
Tolerance is a prized virtue today. Our culture seems to think that the ability to be understanding of people who differ with one's own opinion is a sign of sophistication. Jesus was a champion of tolerance: tolerant of the disciples when they doubted, tolerant of the crowds of people when they misunderstood, and tolerant of us today when we fail.

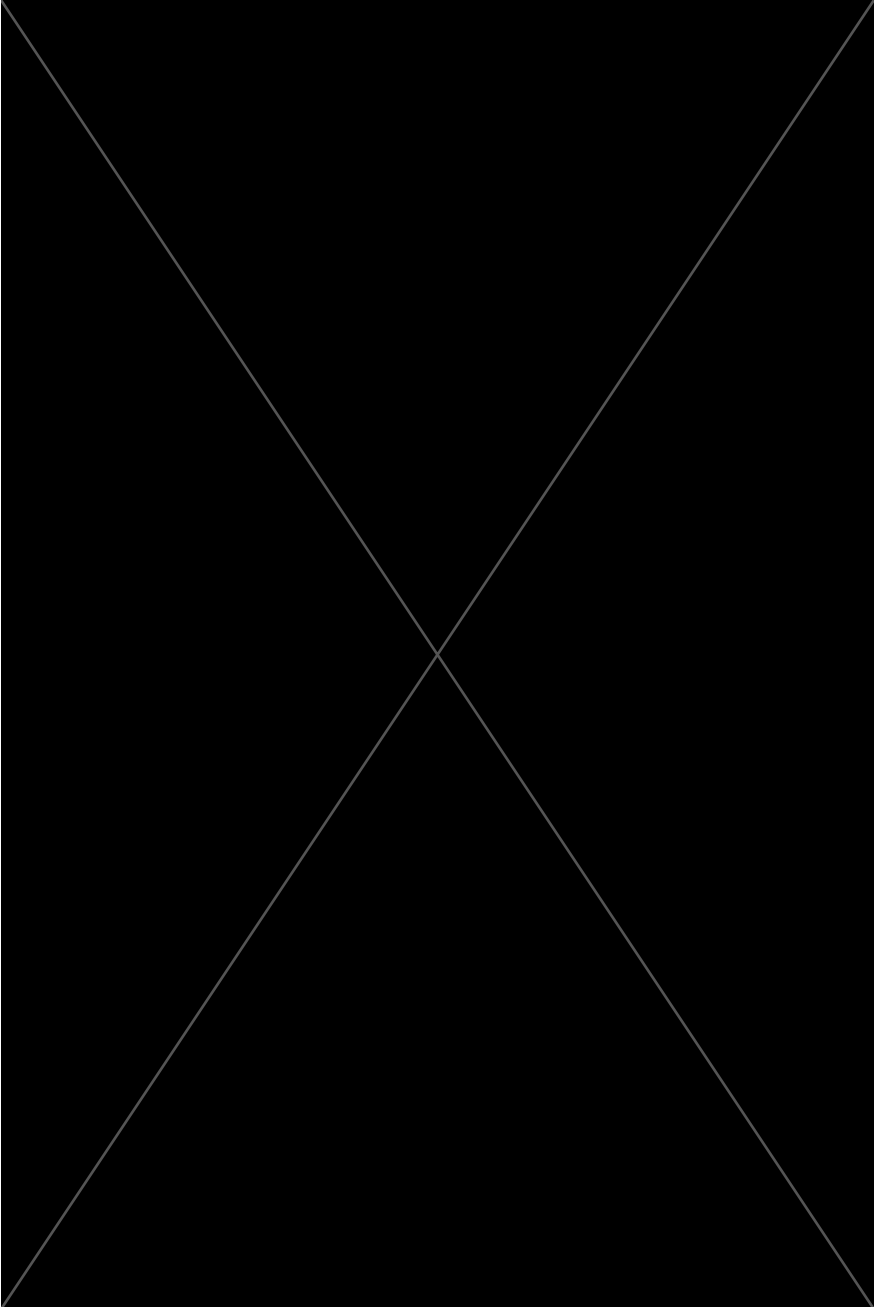
John, who had walked with Jesus, knew Him, heard His words, and lived with Him, speaks about His ability to tolerate others. As John writes in I John 3, I think we can hear John saying, "There are times to be tolerant and there are times to take a stand." He wrote that Christians should become more like Christ. Christians should be characterized by a lack of sin in their lives and by the way they demonstrate love to their brothers and sisters in Christ. Their actions should show the

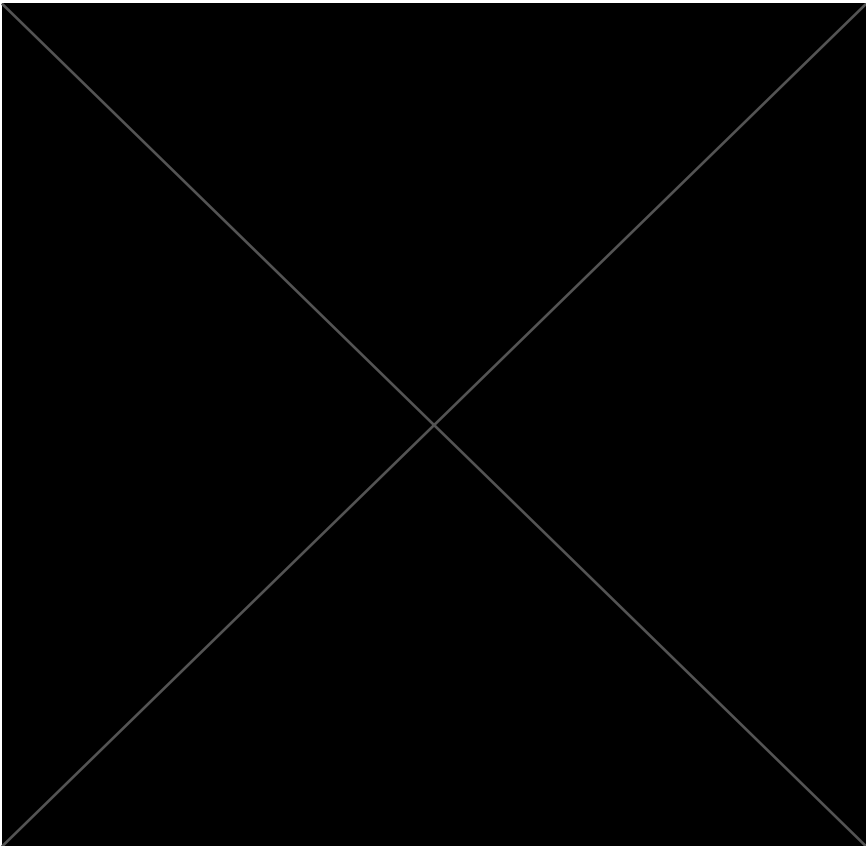
world the beauty of unity.

The key verse in I John 3 is verse 10, which tells us that a true child of God practices righteousness and loves his fellow believers despite their differences. Verses 1-10 deal with counterfeit Christians. Instead of giving us a list of evil characteristics, John ends the chapter with a clear description of God's children, and the contrast between the two is obvious. True Christians are tolerant of differences but not of sin. We cannot truly love one another without faith in Christ, nor can we truly believe in Jesus without loving each other well. Are you continuing your journey of sanctification and pointing the world toward Christ by the way you love your church family? Let's represent Christ well in our relationships with each other!

On behalf of the Bible Study Board
Brother Gerry Priest







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Joel Royer	Dallas Center		
Seth Skiles	Juniper Hills		
Delbert Swihart	Quinter		
Ivon Wertz	McClave		

NEWS ITEMS

Quinter, Kansas

We, the Quinter Dunkard Brethren Church, issue an invitation to join us for our Fall Revival Meetings, September 25-29 with Bro. Paul Skiles from the Juniper Hills Congregation in New Mexico. Week-night services will be at 7:30 p.m. On Saturday, Examination service is at 11:00 a.m., followed by a planned lunch and Communion at 3 or 3:30 p.m. and fellowship time and a light supper afterwards. Sunday includes Sunday school at 10 a.m. with a preaching service at 11 a.m., followed by a planned lunch. A Sunday afternoon service is yet to be determined. Please pray with us as we look ahead to fellowship and spiritual growth through these meetings.

Beth Jamison, Cor.

Pine Grove, Pennsylvania

You all are invited to Pine Grove Weekend Meetings, September 27-29 with Bro. Ray Stuber, from Shrewsbury, Pennsylvania. Services are at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday evenings and at 9:30 a.m. Sunday morning with a delicious basket lunch afterwards. Come praying and bring others!!

Rachel Noll, Cor.

CornerStone, Ohio

All are welcome to join us for our annual Harvest Meeting, September 28-29 with Bro. Mike Wray, from Peru, Indiana. On Saturday evening, a service will be held at 7 p.m. On Sunday morning, Sunday school will be held at 9:30 a.m. with the concluding service at 10:30 a.m., followed by a carry-in lunch. Please pray for the Wrays as the meeting approaches. The CornerStone meeting house is located at 5430 Greenville Falls Rd., Covington, Ohio.

Arlene Rolle, Cor.

Women's Retreat

Women's Retreat is October 4-5 at Lake James Christian Camp and Retreat Center in Angola, Indiana. Please join us for a time of spiritual encouragement, fellowship, worship (and excellent food!). This

year's theme is "Women of Reconciliation" and the speakers are Jill Skiles, Marlene Oberholtzer and Bev Ann Bowman. Make sure to see the brochure for information regarding registration. Please pray for this year's retreat and for the speakers as they prepare.

Pleasant Ridge, Ohio

Everyone is invited to join us for our fall Lovefeast services October 18-20 with Bro. Keith Snyder, from Lititz, Pennsylvania. Services start Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. Saturday there will be a service at 2 p.m. and the communion service begins at 7 p.m. Sunday services are morning worship at 7:30 a.m. followed by breakfast, Sunday School and preaching service at 9:30 a.m. followed by lunch and the concluding service will be at 2 p.m.

Teresa St John, Cor.

Berean, Indiana

Lord willing, the Berean congregation will hold Lovefeast weekend meetings beginning Friday evening, November 1st at 7:30 p.m. Brother Dennis St. John from the Pleasant Ridge congregation in Ohio will be our guest speaker. Examination service will be held on Saturday at 4 p.m., with a light supper served at 5:30 p.m. The communion service will follow at 7 p.m. Sunday morning worship will begin at 8 a.m. with breakfast to follow. Morning service will begin at 10 a.m. for Sunday School, and the message at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served following the morning services. Please pray for Bro. Dennis and Sis. Donna as they prepare to come and share with us. All are welcome to join us for these weekend meetings.

Donna Wray, Cor.

Leadership Conference

Officials and their wives are invited to attend the 24th annual Dunkard Brethren Leadership Conference. This year's theme is "Reconciliation: The Way Through Christ Jesus". The conference will take place November 8-10 at the Pleasant Home Congregation in Modesto, California.

For lodging reservations please contact Evelyn Cordrey via text or call at 209-638-3502 or email at ejbrock444@gmail.com. If you have any food allergies or restrictions, please let Evelyn know.

Subscription Renewal

As we approach the end of another year, it may soon be time to start thinking about renewing your subscription to the Bible Monitor. For 2025, paper subscriptions remain \$10/year. Paper subscriptions also come with a free email subscription upon request. Email only subscriptions remain \$5/year.

Please send all subscription payments to the Editor (see information at bottom of Page 2). Make checks payable to “Dunkard Brethren Church”. Please contact the Editor with any questions regarding your subscription.

New Polity Booklets

Fifteen years have passed since the Dunkard Brethren Church Polity was last published in booklet form in 2009. After a number of revisions since that time, it was time for a new edition.

The June 2024 edition of the Dunkard Brethren Church Polity was recently published and is now available in booklet form. Booklets were recently mailed to the congregations. If you have questions or need additional copies of the polity booklets, please contact a member of the Publication Board. Note that the polity is also available digitally on the Dunkard Brethren website.

Invitation to Write

Avid readers of the Bible Monitor know that most of the content of the Monitor comes from a handful of regular writers and a handful or two of occasional writers. We very much appreciate those that diligently contribute material for the Monitor. There have recently been some new writers contributing, including some younger writers and that is very encouraging.

If you haven’t written for the Monitor before or haven’t in a while,

this is an invitation to consider doing so. We welcome appropriate articles, poetry and news items. While many of our articles are devotional, other topics for publication may highlight topics such as youth, parenting, outreach, women's interests, etc. If you aren't used to writing and struggle with sentence structure, grammar or the flow of writing, the editor can help with rewording, corrections and general polishing before publishing.

Please send all materials for intended publishing to the editor by email at kenbrockbd@gmail.com or by regular mail to 1520 County Road 2260, Stryker, Ohio 43557. Any questions can be sent to the editor by email, mail or phone (text or call) to 419-515-3396.

Bible Monitor Submission Schedule – Articles and News Items

When submitting an article for publishing in the Bible Monitor, please try to submit it to the editor by the 1st day of the month prior. For example, please try to have an article submitted by November 1st if you would like it to be published in the December issue. Likewise, for shorter writings such as news items, please try to submit them by the 5th day of the month prior. It is preferred that materials for publishing in the Monitor be submitted by email to kenbrockbd@gmail.com. However, they can also be submitted by regular mail to 1520 County Road 2260, Stryker, Ohio 43557.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR November 2024

Nov. 3 – I John 4:7-21 – God is Love and First Loved Us

1. What will the evidence of our love for God and our love for fellow believers look like?

2. Would Jesus, if asked, say that you are abiding in Him?

-
3. Are we treating all people with the love of God, or just those we like?
-

Nov. 10 – I John 5:1-10 – The Victory that has Overcome the World

1. What does it mean to become a child of God and overcome the world?
-
-

2. How can the Spirit, the blood and the water all agree?
-

3. How do we make God a liar?
-

Nov. 17 – I John 5:11-21 – He Who has the Son has Life

1. Does God only hear our prayers if we ask in accordance with his will?
-

2. What is sin that doesn't lead to death?
-

3. How will we know "Him who is true?"
-

Nov. 24 – Phil. 4:1-23 - Thanksgiving

1. How do we rejoice and remain thankful when our situations seem beyond hopeless?
-

2. How do we remain honorable in a world with no honor?
-

3. Are we content with God's provision, even when it doesn't meet our standard of provision?
-

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