

*In
Search
of ...*

Truth & Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

A publication of the
**Wellsburg
Church of Christ**
Which meets at:
112 Sunset Ave.
Wellsburg, WV 26070
304-737-1422

We appreciate so much your presence here with us today. We would like to extend an invitation to join us at any of our other times of worship.

TIMES OF SERVICES SUNDAY

Bible Classes*

10:00 AM

AM Worship

10:45 AM

PM Worship

6:30 PM

Today's Sermon:

*The Christian Man
As A Husband*

*Audio CD's are available
free of charge in the foyer.*

*Please visit our website:
www.truthandright.org*

*If you have any questions regarding
what we teach and practice, please
feel free to ask.*

God's Works: Seen and Unseen

Gary Henry

via-WordPoints—March 10, 2009

"Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" — He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Mark 2:9-11

Most of us tend to hold our trust in reserve until we've checked things out for ourselves. When told about something that's hard to believe, we disbelieve it until we have seen it "with our own eyes." We've been taught not to be naive or gullible, and we know that a certain amount of skepticism is healthy.

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Yet this tendency, if carried too far, can get us into trouble. While it's good to do our own thinking and double-check before we put our trust in something, it's not good to close our minds with a rigid I-won't-believe-it-until-I-see-it-myself attitude. In regard to God, many of the most important things that we need to believe lie in the realm of spiritual reality. It is not possible (at least not yet) for us to personally verify the truth of these things with our own senses, and it's a foolish person indeed whose spiritual knowledge is limited to what he himself has seen.

When God asks us to accept unseen realities, however, He does not ask us to do so without any reason or support. If there is something in the spiritual realm that we need to accept His word for, He never asks for that acceptance without having offered a sufficient guarantee in the physical realm that His word is dependable. Jesus, for example, asked His hearers to believe that He could forgive the sins of the paralyzed man in Mark 2:1-12, a spiritual claim that they certainly could not verify with their own senses. Yet He backed up that claim by physically healing the man. In effect, He was saying, "Believe that I can do the impossible in the spiritual realm, which you can't see, based on My having done the impossible in the physical realm, which you *can* see."

Everything that God has ever done in the physical world, from the first moment of creation until now, shouts to us powerfully concerning the kind of God that He is: almighty, wise, good, and, above all, *trustworthy*. If in the Scriptures He asks us to take His word for certain things, it's only after He has *proven* Himself to be perfectly truthful -- time and time and time again.

"All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen"
Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Result of Growing *Wayne Jackson*

The inspired apostle declares: "*For if these things be in you and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (2 Peter 1:8). He speaks of the "Christian graces" cataloged in the previous passages. Peter further announces that if such traits are incorporated into one's life, he will not stumble; moreover, he will be granted an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom (1:10-11). The following observations will thus focus upon four results of Christian growth.

First, the Christian life can never be one of idleness. From Eden onward productivity has been an identifying mark of those who please God. Adam, even prior to his sin, was to keep the garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15). The Old Testament is filled with warnings against idleness. The book of Proverbs chastises the sluggard (6:6) and him who is of "slack hand" (10:4). Idleness is not natural; it is learned (1 Timothy 5:13), and in the early church such inactivity was to be disciplined (2 Thessalonians 3:6ff). Christianity is a vocation of sweet labor. The Lord admonishes: "*Go work today in the vineyard*" (Matthew 21:28). We were created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God prepared aforetime that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:10). James admonishes that faith, divorced from works, is profitless, dead, demonic, barren, and imperfect (James 2:14ff). The child of God can truly be happy only when he is vigorously employed in faithful service to his King.

Second, fruitfulness is an effect of Christian growth. There is a two-fold thrust to this aspect of maturity. As one commences to pursue the upward way, he is, of course, walking in the light of the Spirit's instruction as such is revealed in the Holy Scriptures. "*Walk by the Spirit...*" was Paul's admonition in Galatians 5:14. He then subsequently observed

that "... *the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control ...*" (5:22-23), and that against such there is no law. The growing child of God will surely develop these marvelous traits as he is transformed by the power of Christ.

Moreover, as one is refreshed by the joys of salvation, he becomes keenly aware of the fact that he is under a divine debt to see that others know of the gospel (Romans 1:14). It is not surprising, therefore, that fruitfulness is biblically connected with winning souls. "*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; And he that is wise winneth souls*" (Proverbs 11:30). The principle is clear: a good tree will bring forth good fruit (Matthew 7:17). In the narrative of the vine and the branches, the Lord affirmed that those in union with Him would bear "*much fruit,*" and he further warned that barren branches would be severed and destroyed (John 15:1-6). Indeed, one of the crucial reasons we are joined to the Lord is that we might bring forth fruit unto God (Romans 7:4).

Third, spiritual growth will prevent stumbling (2 Peter 1:10). Calvinism asserts that since the Bible teaches that God is able to keep His child from stumbling (Jude 24), if that child were to fall, it would reflect upon the Almighty's ability. That notion reflects a woe-ful misunderstanding of Jude 24 and related passages. Certainly the Lord is able to prevent our stumbling by means of the strength inherent within His powerful word! But it is only when we, by individual initiative and the application of God's truth, add the divine graces of 2 Peter 1:5ff that we are assured of not stumbling. When one fails to develop these qualities he is "blind" (2 Peter 1:9) and is bound to stumble. But walking within the light of the Holy Scriptures will surely prevent such stumbling. Notice how Jude stresses individual responsibility in this connection. "*But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*" (20-21).

Finally, the faithful servant of the Lord will

be granted an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom of Christ. The term "*kingdom*" is used in several senses in the Bible. For instance, the reign of God among the Hebrews was called a "*kingdom*" (Matthew 21:43), which would be taken from them and given to a more productive nation (i.e., the church—1 Peter 2:9). Then again, the Lord's church, as to its governmental form, is a kingdom (Matthew 16:18-19; Luke 22:29; Colossians 1:13; Revelations 1:5, 9). In addition, the final state of the faithful is biblically termed a kingdom. Near the end of his final epistle Paul declares: "*The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom ...*" (2 Timothy 4:18). And, of course, in the passage at hand (2 Peter 1:11) saints are promised an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom.

It is interesting here that the term "abundant" [plousios] is related to the word "riches" [ploutos] in the Greek New Testament. The loyal saint will be afforded a rich entrance into the final phase of God's kingdom [i.e., heaven itself]. We are cautioned, though, that this glorious kingdom will be entered only through "*many tribulations*" (Acts 14:22).

Yes, there are tremendous rewards in store for those who continue to mature and remain steadfast in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us each resolve to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the Master's work (cf., 1 Corinthians 15:58). Such labor will not be in vain!

"Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, ⁶ and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, ⁷ and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. ⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:5-8

Those Serving This Week

Sunday AM

Class Prayer	Earl Miller
Announcements	Don Coen, Jr.
Song Leader	Ken Prager
Scripture	Ezekiel 47:13-23
Reader	Chuck Isinghood
Prayer	Dan Marton
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Lord's Supper	
Bread	Don Coen, Sr.
Fruit of the Vine	Ed Roberts
Serve	Terry Smith
Serve	Harold Marshall
Closing Prayer	Tim Henderson

Please inform the one in charge of announcements if you are unable to fulfill your responsibilities.

Sunday PM

Announcements	Don Coen, Jr.
Song Leader	Ed Roberts
Scripture	Ezekiel 48:1-17
Reader	Harold Marshall
1st Prayer	Chuck Isinghood
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Communion	Ken Prager
Closing Prayer	Don Coen, Sr.

Wednesday

Announcements	Don Coen, Jr.
Class Prayer	Earl Miller
Song Leader	Singing/Praying
Invitation	Tim Henderson
Closing Prayer	Dave Harless

News N Notes

Please continue to remember these in your prayers:

Recovering:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Earl Miller - Marie Roberts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ann Rudolph - Joyce Coen |
|--|---|

Prayer Requests:

- Zeda Goddard
- Virginia Malick, Peggy Miller's mother
- Cary and Grace Lancaster
- Alfred & Mary Jane Myers
- Albert Miller, Earl Miller and Marie Robert's brother.
- Zeda Goddard's sons, Dallas and Terry, and her daughter Tammy Garrison
- Rick Miller, Dorothy Lancaster's nephew
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband, as he continues to deal with cancer treatments.
- Jimmy Roberts, Ed & Marie's son
- Jim Roberts, Ed Roberts' father
- Bud and Merl Frey

Don't forget our Shut-ins

Nursing Home:

- Ethel Mahan
- Pauline Sellers

At Home:

- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Betty Hunter
- Pauline Midcap

Send them a card—give them a call—let them know we are thinking about them.

If someone needs to be added to this list, please call 304-914-2262