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BHAPs

"Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, 'O sun, stand still at Gibeon, and o moon in the valley of Aijalon.' So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the nation avenged themselves of their enemies. Is it not written in the book of Jashar? And the sun stopped in the middle of the sky and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. There was no day like that before it or after it, when the LORD listened to the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel," (Josh. 10:12-14). Author, Jim Collins, once observed that one interesting common denominator between most all major "visionary" successful businesses and corporations was they all had a BHAG (short for Big Hairy Audacious Goals). With his very first dime store in 1945, Sam

Walton set the BHAG to "make my little Newport store the best, most profitable in Arkansas within five years." As the company grew, so did Walton's BHAG's, including the eventual goal for Walmart to become a \$125-billion company by the year 2000. Spiritually, we need to have a similar "visionary" mindset in regards to the work we must accomplish in the Kingdom. The only way any serious attempt to push and drive ourselves to the kind of growth we are truly capable of is unless we each have BHAPs (Big Hairy Audacious Prayers). Yet, too often, we offer up the timid, domesticated prayers that are leashed to our own limited unimaginative spirits. Consider one of Paul's BHAPs for the Ephesians in chapter 3: *"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom*

every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God,” (Eph. 3:14-19). That is one Big Hair Audacious Prayer right there if I’ve ever seen one! You can almost imagine some skeptical Ephesian hearing this being read for the first time thinking, “You might as well ask for the sun to stand still!” Almost in anticipation for some to roll their eyes in dismay at the far reaching request of Paul on their behalf, the Apostle adds these reassuring words: *“Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen,” (Eph. 3:20-21).* Think about that. He is able. We are typically able to grasp this

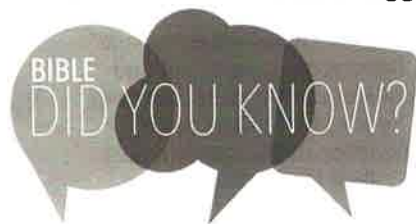
concept of God without too much difficulty. He can create by speaking into existence that which never was, and there is virtually no limitation to the extent of His power. We get that. We believe that and are in awe of that. But when we begin thinking about the extent of God’s power and abilities in immediate reference to what He can do in our lives specifically, all of a sudden God becomes shrink-wrapped. We constrict and conform Him to act in accordance with our own self view of limited timidity. This is why Paul adds the comment about God’s ability to perform beyond all that we ask or think. In other words, the scope of what God is able to accomplish in us is often sadly miniaturized by the very manner in which we ask Him to work in us. Consider the Big Hair Audacious Prayer of Joshua. God has promised to deliver Israel’s enemy into their hands. *“So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him and all the valiant warriors. The LORD said to Joshua, ‘Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hands; not one of them shall stand before you,’” (Josh. 10:7-8).* In confirmation of that very assurance, the Israelites witness hailstones being hurled upon

their enemy as God lends a hand in the battle (Josh. 10:11). But this is no ordinary battle. Unlike other occasions where Israel would systematically take on one individual city after another, this battle was against an enormous army of 5 different kings who forged a mega alliance to fight against them (Josh. 10:1-5). Rather than merely be satisfied with the LORD's promise to fight for them, Joshua decides he'd also like to get this particular battle under wraps in one single day, making one big hairy audacious request for the sun to stand still until they can finish defeating their enemy. As Paul points out, God's ability to work beyond what we typically ask or think is only *"according to the power that works within us,"* (Eph. 3:20). The scope and magnitude of our faith is what initially allows us to stretch our imaginations to a broader range of what God may accomplish and bring ourselves to consequently stretch our requests. Ultimately, it was Joshua's trusting faith in the power of the LORD to drive out the giants in Canaan which enabled him to make a request which would go well beyond what anyone else would even think to ask. *"Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of*

Jephunneh...spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, '...do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them,'" (Num. 14:6,7,9).

Feed your faith with the awesome display of God's limitless power in scripture, and push the limits of what you envision to be spiritually accomplished in your life. Go beyond what we so often timidly ask or think, and ask "the sun to stand still" in the Big Hairy Audacious Prayers of our own.

— Daniel Ruegg



What does "testament" mean? Testament means "covenant" or "contract."

Which single author contributed the most books to the New Testament? The Apostle Paul, who wrote 14 books (over half) of the New Testament.

FIFTH SUNDAY PHOTOS

Every fifth Sunday of the month, we try to highlight some of great things happening around our congregation that were captured through photography. If you happen to get a good picture of one of those great things, please feel free to post it on our Facebook page, tag us on Instagram (@wellsburgchurch), tweet us at @wellsburgchurch, or e-mail us at minister@wellsburgchurchofchrist.com with a little description of what is happening in the picture.



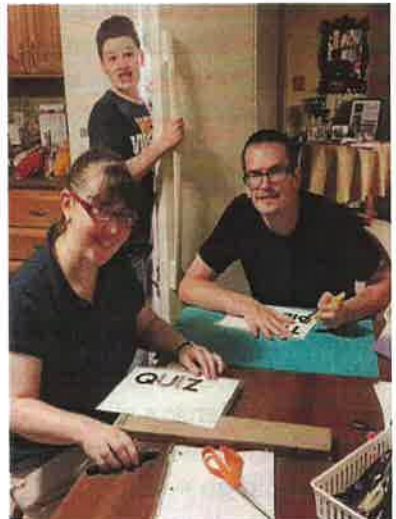
"Many hands makes light work!"
Several gave their time and contributed their skills to putting together a fun and inviting attraction for fair-goers to test their bible knowledge.



Our Test Your Bible Knowledge booth at the Brooke County Fair was a success! Thanks to all the volunteers who came out to work the booth!



It's always a wonderful morning to worship God, especially when you are welcomed by such beautiful flowers.



Sarah and Corey were so focused in their work, not even a mysterious Lincoln emerging from the fridge distracted them!