



Volume 12 Issue 53

December 31, 2017

PICKLES LAST

I heard a preacher once tell the story of going on a field trip with his elementary school class to the Heinz pickle factory. As they toured the factory, they were permitted to go into the office of Mr. Heinz. On his desk was something he said he never forgot, and it wasn't a ginormous pickle. It was a little sign framed on his desk which said, "God First, Others Second, Pickles Last." It made quite an impression as he was blown away by the magnitude of the factory and of course the prestige of a man so successful to have his own name plastered on jars of condiments filling nearly everyone's refrigerators. It made a great impression that no amount of success, wealth or adulation could ever take the place of the glory and honor of serving the one who created everything, who alone is worthy of complete obedience and worship. "Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory

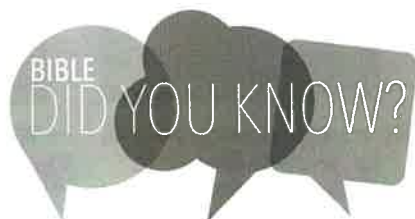
because of Your truth. Why should the nations say, 'Where, now, is their God?' But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases...But as for us, we will bless the LORD from this time forth and forever. Praise the LORD!" Psalm 115:1-3, 18. In the gospels, when Jesus is introducing a new generation to the glory of the creator, it's as if He is reminding everyone that no matter how far we may go in this life and no matter how successful or comfortable or important we may become, there is still only One who is able to achieve what is impossible for us. In our world among our greatest achievements and abilities there are still life altering and life ending diseases and afflictions which no one has been able to cure or eradicate. And so it was

in Jesus' day, and He reminded them all who God is. The One who has no bounds with Whom nothing is impossible. "A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse – after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak. For she thought, 'If I just touch His garments, I will get well.' Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction," Mk. 5:25-29. As we marvel at our technology and seemingly "worship" our own devices (we speak to people named "Siri" and "Google" and wait for them to give us instructions...), we must face the reality that there still remains no app for preventing death or extending life. When Jesus came to this earth, it was a refreshing reminder that the limitations of our humanity can only be amended by the hand of God. No other source can deal with the pain and sorrow and failure which the momentary distractions of this life come painfully short of. "Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues

and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people. The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them," Mt. 4:23-24. I love how this description of the divine power of Jesus immediately precedes the words of His great sermon on the mount in Matthew 5-7, indicating that the same miraculous power demonstrated over our physical limitations is available to us in His Word to deal with our spiritual limitations. The Word of God, full of Christ's teaching on the Kingdom of Heaven and the Good News of the hope and victory in eternal life, has been left to us to offer a cure for the most lethal terminal disease – sin. Through His work and teaching, Jesus brought to light the miserable failures all of our earthly affections truly become in light of their complete inability to save us from the debilitating effects of sin, as they merely drain us of all our joy and fulfillment due to the temporary nature of their short lived distraction from the harsh reality of our sin stained world.

“Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life,” Jn. 4:13-14. God provided a way through His Son for us to die to the inevitable disappointments and painful hole left in our hearts from our attachment to this life and truly live and find meaning and fulfillment through heavenly treasures. “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also,” Mt. 6:19-21. We all have “pickles” in our life. We all have something that represents the highest degree of value to our life and gives us the greatest sense of self worth. Careers. Relationships. Hard earned valuables and treasures that are irreplaceable. We all have those attachments in life which compete for our undivided attention and adoration and threatens the place God wants to have and should have in our hearts. Let

us remember the irreplaceable treasure God is and the eternal gifts we find only in Him that we may also truthfully say, “God First, Others Second, Pickles Last.” “I will give You thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to You before the gods. I will bow down toward Your holy temple and give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; for You have magnified Your word according to all Your name,” Ps. 138:1-2.
– Daniel Ruegg



Angels serve Christians in ways unknown to us.

“But to which of the angels has He ever said, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet’? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?”

Hebrews 1:13-14

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.



Nathan and Shannon became Mr. and Mrs. Marshall! Congratulations to the newlyweds and may God bless you both in your marriage!



Roberta Gilday put on Christ in baptism being buried in water for the forgiveness of her sins! We rejoice for our new sister in Christ and thank God for her example!



Callie points with anticipation and excitement of the arrival of her new sibling! She is going to be a great big sister and can't wait to meet the newest member of the Minor family!



This dog was lost and thankfully found the perfect friend to be cared for and protected by until the owner arrived. "A righteous one has regard for the life of their animal, but even the compassion of the wicked is cruel." Prov. 12:10