

The REMINDER

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, TX

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AN UNATTAINABLE GOAL?

Each time I read through the New Testament I am impressed with the magnificent strength of character which so many of Jesus' followers attained. Look at Peter, early on a timid fisherman who fell at Jesus' feet saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord"; later, an immovable rock of faithfulness able to affirm with boldness, "His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness" (Luke 5:8; 2 Pet. 1:3). And what about John? At first a brash, young "son of thunder", who then focused his energies toward serving Jesus and in the eve of his life confessed, "I have no greater joy than to hear of my children walking in the truth" (3 John 4). And Paul, once a blasphemer, a violent aggressor, a persecutor of Christ "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord"; later, a joyful Christian happily singing praises to God while imprisoned for the cause of Christ (Acts 9:1; 16:25).

Why can't you and I be that kind of Christian?

These men were human beings too, faced with the same straits and obstacles in life with which we are confronted. They were inspired apostles, true. But this guaranteed only that they would be faithful communicators of God's will, not faithful practitioners of it (Gal. 2:11-14). They were not supernaturally charged with a moral stamina that enabled them to easily ward off the temptations that came their way. Theirs was a slow, painstaking road to spiritual maturity. These early Christians simply began with a love for Jesus and an appreciation for what God had done for them, then cultivated this daily to make it grow and blossom, developing in themselves an overwhelming adoration for spiritual things, and an unquenchable desire to do right.

What prevents us from following this same course? Paul said, "I bow my knees before the Father...that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:14, 16). Either Paul's prayer was a vain petition, or by the mighty power of the word of God we can be strengthened to be the kind of Christians we know we should be, that we've always dreamed of being. We can be steadfast soldiers of the cross, unafraid of the devil's weaponry, and unwavering when confronted with adversity. We can be confident in death, not fearful; so assured of that promised eternal home with God that we can say each day with the confidence of the apostle, "to live is Christ, and to die is gain!" (Phil. 1:21).

What hinders us from such a spiritual achievement? Perhaps, in part, a lack of faith; a failure to really believe God's way is the best way, and that every aspect of God's will is designed for our ultimate good. We tend to serve God in a general way, but in certain particulars we are not content to let the Father's will be done. The course he lays out just doesn't seem best to us. We need to consider well the truthfulness of Jeremiah's affirmation, "A man's way is not in himself; nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps" (10:23).

(concluded on back)

Bulletin Board

Sermon
Notes:

AM Lesson - Jack - "Self Control - The
Forgotten Fruit of the Spirit"
PM Lesson - John Moon

NEWS AND NOTES: We have quite a number on the long term sick list. Please take note of those folks. Several of them are undergoing treatment or have health concerns that impact them every day. We also learned Wed. night that Terry Kornfeld's dad spent some time in the hospital last week with anemia. He had several transfusions, and is better. He's home now. Michael Robinson's grandmother took a fall. She's OK, but it's still a worrisome thing.

Several out of town this weekend. Barbara is on a trip to Europe. Hope she has a great time. Steve and Muffy are in north Texas. Steve is in a meeting in Crowley. They should be home tomorrow. Probably others out of town also. Our prayer is always for a safe journey and happy homecoming.

Lizzie Mann was baptized Wed. night after services. We have such a great group of young folks here, and are thrilled to see several of them obeying the gospel. We're thrilled for Lizzie and the whole family.

Remember our singing/gospel meeting. There are flyers on the table to pass out to people you know or just meet. Oct. 4-5 are the days.

Unattainable Goal (concluded from front page)

And then, perhaps we are too impatient for spiritual maturity to take place. The attributes of a Christian are of such a nature that they need to be diligently practiced, and that takes time (2 Pet. 1:5-10). Spiritual strength, no matter how greatly desired, cannot be developed overnight; it must be cultivated over a lifetime. And curiously, if one thinks he has completely attained it, in all probability he has not. "Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold..." (Phil. 3:12).

"The word of God is living and active and sharper than any two edged sword," said the Hebrew writer (4:12). It is so powerful that it can take a man with a submissive will and make him into a stalwart Christian. Lord, help us to be submissive.

Marty Piclup

"One of the greatest uses of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it."

"Do you still remember the good old days when all a government did was govern?"

"The greatest danger of free speech is that many people who have it are too free with it."

Assignments for today

Sunday, September 15, 2013

Morning Service

Announcements.....Rudy Black
Hymn Director.....Weston Hodge
Scripture Reading.....Mark 15:1-20
Scripture Reader...David Gorski
Opening Prayer.....Jim Carithers
Closing Prayer.....Rudy Black

Evening Service

Hymn Director.....Steve Garrett
Opening Prayer.....Scott Clanton
Closing Prayer.....Rudy Black

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Schedule of Services

Sunday:

9:30 AM Worship
11:00 AM Bible study
5:00 PM Worship

Wednesday:

7:30 PM Study and Devotional
Minister and editor
Jack Smith and Steve Garrett

The Reminder is published weekly by the church of Christ in Bellaire