

A—Afterlife

Revelation 21:3,4: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." When this wretched life of sin and pain is over, Christians have only begun their walk in life. While upon the earth, God taught us to be separate from this world: sojourners. We are just traveling through this world on our way to eternal life with God. How wonderful it is when a faithful Christian dies. Sure, those still on their journey will miss their physical presence with them, but we can also rejoice in knowing that they are just a step closer to their eternal reward around God's throne for all eternity.

We can be thankful for the hope of the eternal afterlife.

N—Never overburdened with temptation

I Corinthians 10:13: "...God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Did you see that? God will not allow us to be tempted beyond the point that He knows we can bear.

Some will say, "But why does God allow us to be tempted at all?" We have the freedom of choice to choose for ourselves who we will follow. Therefore, with that choice also comes consequences. Because of that freedom, He allows the devil to tempt us. Because there is choice, that means there must be at least two opposing sides: we choose either evil or good. Therefore, because we have an advocate with the Father, we have the ability to not be over tempted. Only Christians can boast this blessing.

We can be thankful for having someone who will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear.

K—King for a Bridegroom

I Timothy 6:15: "[The Lord Jesus Christ—v. 14] Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Revelation 21:2: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." As Paul described in Ephesians 5, the relationship of Christ and the church is one of a husband and a wife. The privilege of being a Christian is knowing that we have the blood of Christ covering us through our marriage to the Bridegroom. The vows husbands and wives often express to one another in their wedding ceremony often pledge to love one another "in sickness and in health, rich or poor, till death do us part." Christ pledged with His ultimate sacrifice, the death on the cross, that He would be faithful to us for all time. He is someone Who sticks closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24; John 15:12-14).

We can be thankful for our Bridegroom Who is *the* King Who died for us and protects us through all things.

S—Salvation

Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." There is no salvation in any other but the One about Whom this verse is referencing. Only the Christ has cared and was fully capable to take away the sins of the world. Now, is this salvation important? In the words of one of my professors, "You becha!" The only entrance key into the pearly gates to Heaven is the one shaped out of His iniquity for us. Not in personal property, monetary gain, or worldly wisdom should we put our faith and trust, but only the One who gives us salvation. We must understand the importance of salvation. Sin separates us from God. To be separated from God means that God's grace is not extended toward us. It is a frightening thought to go through this life without God, but imagine going through death and eternity without God by our side all the way!

We can—indeed, we must—be thankful for the salvation that has been extended toward us by God through Christ.

I pray that as you sit around the table this Thursday, you can be focused upon your blessings and the things for which you can be thankful.

However, I want to challenge each and every one of you reading this to be thankful for the above written blessings as well as many other things. I also challenge you to list the blessings you have and see if you can ever finish.

Thanks be to God for loving us and for giving us His Son.

Kyle Moses, Mathis, TX

BELVEDERE BEACON

"Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14)

Volume 7

Number 47

November 19, 2006

A PUBLICATION OF THE BELVEDERE CHURCH OF CHRIST

535 Clearwater Road, Belvedere, SC 29841-2574

(Greater Augusta, GA area)

"T-H-A-N-K-S Be Unto God"

It is hard to believe. The end of the year now faces us and we are threatened with another season of holiday shopping, expanding waistlines, empty bank accounts, and maxed-out credit cards. Really? Is this the way that you or I look at the holiday seasons every year? I sure hope not. The holidays mean so much to so many people. I want us to think now of the holiday that now greets us this very week: Thanksgiving Day.

What are you thankful for? Many families have the tradition of going around the dinner table and expressing their thanks for whatever. If this is a tradition with your family—or even if it's not—I want you to read this article and hopefully think of the things for which you are thankful.

Taking the letters T-H-A-N-K-S, let's look at some things for which we can be thankful.

T—Truth

John 8:31,32: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." If we have no truth in this world, then the entire world rests on relativity. The world has already seen such an event take place. "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).

According to the history of the Jews, we know that this form of morality based upon relativity did not work. The Jewish nation fell apart, eventually to the point where God said, "Enough!" Being a people based upon moral principles, Christians are guided by the truth that Christ and His inspired writers gave in the New Testament. We are guided by the truth of the Scriptures, therefore, we can truly be set free. Freedom comes from truth and not relativity.

We can be thankful for the truth God has given us to show us the way.

H—Hairs are numbered

Matthew 10:29-31: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." It should astound all of us to know that God, the Creator of the universe, the Creator of billions of lives, the Sustainer of our lives, and the Lord, God, and Father above all is concerned with each and every one of us. When He sent Christ into this world, why did He do it? First, He did it because He loves the world (John 3:16). Second, He did it because He wants the lost (everyone in this world [cf. Romans 3:23]) to be saved (Luke 19:10). What a blessing it is for an infant to have his/her mother and father care for and watch out for him/her. How much more wonderful it is to have our Eternal Father in Heaven caring and watching out for us.

We can be thankful that we have someone as mighty and majestic as the Creator Almighty watching out for us and watching each individual.

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 10.00 am.
Morning Worship 11.00 am.
Evening Worship 6.00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes for all ages 7.00 p.m.

EVANGELIST: Ken Chumbley - Tel. No. (803) -279-8663

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THANKSGIVING DAY

This coming Thursday, November 23, is celebrated in this country as "Thanksgiving Day."

Governor Bradford of Massachusetts gave first Thanksgiving proclamation three years after the pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock. In his declaration he stated, "In as much as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, peas, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and has made the forests to abound with game and the sea with

fish and clams and inasmuch as He has protected us from the ravages of the savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own CONSCIENCE. Now, I your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the daytime on Thursday, November 29th, of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty three and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on ye Plymouth Rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings."

George Washington, as the first President, issued a Proclamation in 1789. This stated, "Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor -- and Whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint committee requested me to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness." He then set aside Thursday November 26 of that year as the day of Thanksgiving. He continued his Proclamation, "That we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks -- for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation -- for the signal and manifold mercies and favorable interposition of His providence which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war -- for the peaceable manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one not lately instituted -- for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge, and in general for all the great and various favors which He hath been pleased to confer upon us." The Proclamation concluded with these words, "To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and us -- and generally to grant unto all mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as He alone knows to be the best. Given under my hand in the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789." George Washington.

Many today want us to believe that "separation of church and state" should mean that the state is completely separated from religion. Clearly that was not the case with the Pilgrims and the Founding Fathers of this nation, as seen in the two Proclamations quoted above. When they talked about "separation of church and state," they had in mind the concept that this nation would not have a state religion, as was common in most European countries. They did not want one religious denomination taking precedence over others by having it recognized as the state religion. The concept that many have today, that has led to pray being taken out of schools and other changes, was completely foreign to the thinking of the Founding Fathers.

Abraham Lincoln also issued a Thanksgiving Proclamation in 1863 setting apart the last Thursday of November "as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens." In part, his Proclamation stated, "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us."

What was true in 1863 is sadly true in 2006. Many have indeed forgotten God. For far too many, Thanksgiving Day is nothing more than a day off from work eating turkey dinners and watching Football on television! We should pause and be thankful for all of the blessings and bounty we enjoy that comes from the hand of a loving God and above all the salvation that we have in Christ Jesus. On this Thanksgiving Day let us truly give thanks to Almighty God for the rich bounty He has bestowed upon us.

Ken Chumbley

NEWS AND NOTES

Let us continue to keep in our prayers Helen Culpepper, Pam Gossett and her mother, Kathy Treadway's mother, Lanny Niver's father.

Our sympathy is extended to the Arnold family in the passing of Tim's father in Ohio after a long illness. The family left Thursday for Ohio.

Adrienne Mitchell was hospitalized for couple of days. Test proved negative. Parys Mitchell was also discharged from the hospital on Friday.

Steven Wilson has had strep throat.

Continue to keep Dot McLemore and the family in your prayers.

BE CONTENT

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

(Hebrews 13:5)

Benjamin Franklin said: "Content makes poor men rich; discontent makes rich men poor." Inspiration urges: *...be content with such things as ye have*" (Hebrews 13:5). How do we translate this advice into action? Try these guidelines.

Don't over-estimate material possessions! Many conclude that material abundance is the abundant life. That's a false conclusion. Jesus said, *"...a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"* (Luke 12:15). Our affluent age is prime proof of this truth. Perhaps no similar amount of space in the world can claim more combined wealth than Beverly Hills, California. Has prosperity provided for its residents? Well, Beverly hills claims 193 psychiatrists. That's one for every 170 citizens!

Don't fret over what you don't have! One day Ahab pouted in his palace. Flinging himself across his bed, he turned his face to the wall and refused to eat. What was wrong? He wanted to buy a certain vineyard and the owner wouldn't sell. Ahab was a wealthy man, but all he could think about was this vineyard he didn't have. Many are content with their property until they focus envious eyes on a choice possession of another. Some can't go window shopping without returning home miserable.

Don't overlook what you do have! Contrast what you are with what you might have been, but for the grace of God. Stop looking at the things you don't have long enough to focus in the things you do have!

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