

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” - Psalm 119:105

March 25, 2007

In the Shallows

Gary Henry

Down on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi where I was raised, the Gulf of Mexico is very shallow. Visitors go to the beach and are amazed that in order to find water much more than knee-deep, one has to wade out hundreds of yards into the water. Consequently, most people stay in the shallows. Very few venture far enough out that they can enjoy anything more than wading.

In our relationship with God, it's important to consider the richness of God. He is a God greater than we have the ability to imagine. He is eternally and wonderfully vast. Paul exclaimed, *“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!”* (**Rom. 11:33**). In many of our hymns, we sing of God's greatness.

When we obey the gospel of Christ and come into a justified relationship with Him, God offers to us nothing less than Himself. Whatever other benefits there may be to being a Christian, the greatest gift is that of fellowship with God Himself. And we are encouraged daily to grow in the richness of our experience of God's bounty. Peter, for example, wrote that we are to *“grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen”* (**2 Pet. 3:18**).

But too few of us really do that! Having available to us a fountain of abundant life (**John 10:10**), we content ourselves with sipping from that fountain. With the wonder of the ocean of God's grace stretching out before us, we are often content to do little more than wade in the shallows, year after year.

The Hebrew writer said this about his readers: *“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that*

is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:12-14). Here were people who simply had not grown. They had waded in the shallows but had never done any more than that.

We each need to challenge ourselves with the goal of spiritual growth. We won't make progress – we won't get out of the shallows – unless we make a conscious decision to do so (**1 Tim. 4:15**). There is a great need for us to lift our sights to higher things, and make definite plans to get nearer to God. We can't do it on our own, of course; without the provision that God makes, it would be impossible for us to get any closer to Him. But He has made provision for us to grow, and we need to make the choice to avail ourselves of what He has provided.

Does this mean that we can ever forget the basics? Indeed not. There is an ever-present need for us to be reminded of those things that are of fundamental importance, lest we forget them. All of us tend to be forgetful, and we need periodic reminders of even the ABC's of Bible teaching. But we won't be what the Lord wants us to be if we never grow beyond the basics.

It's important, however, to remember this: we do not seek to become “deep” students of the word for pride's sake. What we desire is a richer, fuller taste of God's goodness. Heaven will be for those who have longed for God with all their hearts. If we're not growing in that longing now, then we're simply not making progress toward heaven!

So let's set some significant goals for ourselves in regard to Bible study and spiritual growth. David said, “*Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!*” (**Psa. 34:8**). Let's aspire to taste deeply of God's goodness, and let's “*grow up in all things into Him who is the head, even Christ*” (**Eph. 4:15**).

Weary Well Doers

David Diestelkamp

The words of **Galatians 6:9** are motivation to those trying to do right: “*And let us not be weary in well doing.*” True well doers do their best not to grow weary, especially since their reward is at stake: “*for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*”

But what about those whose actions (or lack of them) weary the well doers? What about those who demand action, but never act? What about those who expect others to study, teach, be hospitable, and work without themselves becoming personally involved? What about people who expect others to develop to be elders, deacons, and preachers in difficult places? What about Christians who require constant correction because they want to be like the world?

It is bad enough that some decide not to be well doers and therefore shall reap the reward of the wicked rather than that of the righteous, but they also affect others. Their inactivity, complaining, gossip, and worldliness may cause some well doers to faint. In that case “*it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea*” (**Matthew 18:6**). Well doer or wearier, which will it be?

“Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, give to the Lord glory and strength.” – Psalm 96:7

Family News

Mary Burnett had another good week.

Connie Cobern had surgery on a place on her skin this past week. She is scheduled to get test results tomorrow.

Quinton Coppage continues to recover.

Metty Fain is in Room B2, 215 Highland Circle Dr, Portland TN 37148.

Barry Fultz continues physical therapy. He is having significant issues with his left shoulder (he may need an MRI). He is scheduled to return to MN in April. Visit caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn for more detail.

Sandra Hunt has pain in her right shoulder and arm. No improvement.

Fred Newman, whom we currently support in Bratislava, will soon end his work there after 7.5 years. He and his family are moving back to NC

Fran Pickens is doing all right.

Cotton Read went to an eye doctor this past week. His eyes are better. **Nancy** continues to have eye trouble and breathing problems.

Laura Reed is about the same. She is receiving some therapy on her arm.

Jack Reiger is scheduled to have surgery to remove cancer next Monday.

Ame White is about the same.

Robert Wray is having some unexplained chest pain. He has a doctor's appointment this Tuesday.

New Reports: **Allen Malone** (Vietnam).

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: **Robert & Candy Jenkins** (Hickman Co. this morning, back tonight); **Allen Malone** (Vietnam).

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