

Harmon's Lick News

Proverbs 10: 22 The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it

Hello my dearest family, friends and all the kids in our family, including those wonderful kids at Harmon's Lick Free Pentecostal Church. I do thank God, deep down in my heart for all of you.

Glad, I would love to have been there with you, Jan and Krystle, in the hospital. I have not been able to visit anyone because Kylee has been so sick. The school nurse called last Wednesday and told us that Kylee has the flu. Ken went down and got her. All weekend she was feeling good and then bad. She was very sick on Monday, so we went to the White House Clinic in Lancaster. She always goes to the clinic in Berea but her doctor was not there. They told us that Dr. Ravi is retiring. We will miss her very much. She has been Kylee's doctor since she was three years old. (Kylee will be 14 in May). I would like to warn you if your child

is coughing, running a fever and feeling very weak and tired, you need to get them to see their doctor. Flu can turn into something much worse, if not treated. We really do appreciate the doctor and assistant and clerk in Lancaster. They made us feel very welcome, much like the great ladies in Berea.

Last week Kenneth, Kylee, Bub, Brooklyn and River went to a chicken sale at the Amish Auction in Crab Orchard on 39. They always seem to have a great time over there. They eat and talk to friends like Eddie Turner and lots of others whose names I can't remember.

This morning Bub (our grandson, Brandon Gibson) came up to help his Papaw build a horse shed for Harper Lee, Kylee's horse. We sat here and talked till 11:30. That few hours was worth a million dollars to Kenneth and me. It was much better than working. Bub showed us some really great pictures on his phone. The new rooster he bought at the auction was about the best looking rooster I have ever seen. He said he got to feeling sorry for the rooster, caged up, (till he got acclimated to the en-

vironment) so Bub let him out. That's when the action got started. We'll call that Rooster "TROUBLE" with a capital T. He started a fight with a little Banty rooster and nearly killed him. Bub rescued the Banty. Then ole Trouble probably has some kids on the way. He got that done and then he tried to attack Bub. I think Bub was thinking about naming that bad rooster, Satan, so I think my name for him will do till the next auction, when Bub will sell him.

If you are too busy to laugh.....you are too busy.

I wrote about a lot of our neighbors a few weeks ago. I haven't heard one word from anyone. I think my phone will have to be fixed. It blocks those terribly aggravating spam calls, and then it also blocks my sister, Janefter and Todd, my cousin, Jan and I'm not sure who else.

Hello Tiny Lamb. How are you this week? Great I hope.

Anna, thank you for the cute blouse you sent. I really like it. When I showed it to Ang., River was here. He said "Mom, don't you already have a blouse like that?" I said no and he told me he'd seen me wearing

one like it. When all those kids are up here my heart is beating with so much tender love. They make life so interesting and colorful. Kenneth and I want to thank our children and family for all they have done, since Kenneth had that spell with his heart. I know that God was with him and has moved on him. GOD is GREAT!!

I wish we could all get together like we did at John's 40 Year Celebration. There were so many of you there and John received many wonderful gifts. I started thinking about it when John had been here almost 40 years. We got so much from the V.A., like metals, certificates. We got a very nice picture of John from his high school. Carolyn's resident, Vernon, was dressed like John with a white shirt, a

red, white and blue tie. They were awesome!! Now Vernon is gone. I am so glad that we got those pictures of two very fine and dedicated men.

My cousin, Gail, was here. She brought John some great gifts. She has gone on. We haven't forgotten you Gail. You left behind two great sons, grandson and many others that I am too lazy to type out. I planned to sleep and rest all day, until Bub came. He sure can live up a place.

Carolyn, Janefter, Jan, Judy, Glad, and me, Joyce, should get together and take our dear Glad out for a nice day. Let us start praying right now that she will be able to go. And Jan, I am so thankful that the tests on your heart were not bad at all. I think one of these weeks I will write about how GOD has

performed so many miracles in our lives.

Hello to every single person who is reading this paper. I feel like we are in some troublesome times, but I do believe that God wants us to put our total faith and trust in Him.

To sit in the shade on a fine day, and look upon venture is the most perfect refreshment. Jane Austen

Andrew Isaacs, it was good to see you this morning. Thank you for stopping by to tell us about your Dad, Elzie. He was a very dear man.

Hello to you my cousin, Keith. I sure do hope you are having a nice day.

I am running so late. I better say goodbye for now.

May God Bless us all.

Joyce

Church News

Reflections

Thoughts on Scripture for the 21st Century



Rev. Denney is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in downtown Lancaster

Psalm 58—"God is the Final Judge"

"Do you indeed decree what is right, you gods? Do you judge people fairly? No, in your hearts you devise wrongs; your hands deal out violence on earth. The wicked go astray from the womb; they err from their birth, speaking lies. They have venom like the venom of a serpent, like the deaf adder that stops its ear, so that it does not hear the voice of charmers or of the cunning enchanter. O God, break the teeth in their mouths; tear out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD! Let them vanish like water that runs away; like grass let them be trodden down and wither. Let them be like the snail that dissolves into slime; like the untimely birth that never sees the sun. Sooner than your pots can feel the heat of thorns, whether green or ablaze, may he sweep them away! The righteous will rejoice when they see vengeance done; they will bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked. People will say, 'Surely there is a reward for the righteous; surely there is a God who judges on earth.'"

A comedian of a generation ago used as his tagline, 'The devil made do it!' The only problem with using this reasoning is that it simply isn't so. The psalmist is looking at the seemingly powerlessness of the people of God against perpetrators of violence, evil, and oppression. The challenge the psalmist puts forth is that the woes of the godly people of his day experience are not from the supernatural but rather from the wickedness of the human heart. Those who held power exercised violence, greed, and evil in order to remain in power. Their usage of the levers of power were well-known and well-practiced.

The psalmist, however, is not content with simply calling out those whose usage of power and oppression afflicted the people of God. He launches into a rather poetic prayer asking for

God's judgement upon those who practice evil and deny justice. The psalmist, like all oppressed people, is powerless in and of himself to affect change. The only weapon he has is prayer. Our prayers may not be so vividly descriptive as his but they probably should be. After all, if we try to 'clean up' our prayers so as not to sound so 'unChristian' we are just fooling ourselves. If God knows the human heart and mind, then God surely knows what we want to say but don't. Pouring our hearts out to God in our times of personal prayer can be as cathartic as it is powerful.

The psalmist concludes his prayer with the thought those oppressed by the powers of evil people will ultimately rejoice because God is a just God who will bring vindication to the people so afflicted. He envisions the response of people when God's justice comes by saying, in effect, God does reward those who suffer at the hands of evil people and God is a just God.

Many waited for God's justice to 'roll down like a mighty stream'. Let me be the first to say, 'our wait is not in vain'. God will ultimately have the last word.

Prayer for today

Patient God, we are not patient at all. We envision all sorts of ways that your judgement may come on those who misuse power and privilege for their own benefit. Yet we do not fully know your mind, your ways, and your timing. Teach us, Lord, to wait for you to work in the circumstances that oppress, circumstances that we cannot control. Give us faith to wait for your work to reach its full conclusion. Thank you for your steadfast love for your creation and for your wrathful anger at that which hurts it. Amen.

Rev. Denney is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in downtown Lancaster

DYING AND LIVING

Many believers unfortunately deal with a dilemma within their Christian lives. Their desire is to be able to walk closely with God; whereas their daily experiences are seemingly unable to bring this desire about. Each day they wish the ability to do what is right; but often find themselves unable to live up to their expectations. This is a problem that has discouraged many. It was a topic the apostle Paul wrote about to the Corinthian church. As usual, as it was meant to do, this account in the Bible will speak to us TODAY.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed - always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body." (2 Corinthians 4:7-10)

Paul here explains the predicament. The treasure of eternal life in believers is hidden by our earthen vessels. Even though our natural lives may take a beating; as did Paul's; he knew why it had to be that way. By carrying the dying of Jesus in his body; he was therefore able to manifest the life of Jesus in his body. That is why we are in 'earthen vessels' (creatures of dust, Genesis 3:19); yet having the seed of the eternal within (the eternity God put in our hearts, Ecclesiastes 3:11). This is what longs to express itself. It was a problem too big to overcome - until Jesus dealt with it. Jesus had to die to live; as do His believers. We are

not greater than our Lord (John 13:16).

What has to die, you may ask? Our old way of doing things in our own power. Our deceit, our anxiety, our fear, our longings, our doubt. He took our fallen existence to the Cross, and then left it buried in the tomb. We do not have to live the old way; we have a new way to live! Jesus talked about it: **"No one sews a piece of new cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins."** (Mark 2:21,22)

What could Jesus be referring to here? Well, in the immediate context, He was telling the Pharisees that His offer of new life would not fit into their old religious configurations. Just like them, in order for us to experience the life eternal within us, our old earthen vessels must break up some. Our new existence in Christ (pictured as new cloth and new wineskins) will then be able to come out. It is all part of what Christ has done for us. **"Jesus said to them, 'Whoever desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever desires to save his (old) life will lose it, but whoever loses his (old) life for my sake will save it.'" (Mark 8:34,35)**

Jesus died to give us new life (not to clean up the old one); but a new one that will last forever. We must not only believe in His cross, we must participate in it. We must move on to a new life

that will last forever. But HOW may we accomplish this? This is another great paradox of God's kingdom. In order to live - we must die. Our bodies must go through this: as must our spirits. **"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. The things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."** (2 Cor. 4:16-18)

The Bible has just instructed us to look at things which are not seen! What we look at is important; it shapes our lives. Abraham had a promise, Joseph had a dream, David had an anointing, as did countless others. If we want to see Jesus, we must gaze upon Him. Part of our 'dying' is to replace old things with new things. What about the "Things which are not seen?" Perhaps it is not so much the things that we see, but rather which lens we see them through. Take our circumstances for example, do we see them through our natural vision, or through the eyes of faith? Looking through the natural, they may appear scary; looking through eyes of faith, however, will allow us to see God's promises. Circumstances are always temporary, never permanent; they are the middle of a story. God's promises must be seen as the permanent; they are the end of every story. This is how we are to do our 'living' in Christ. We must see things as God sees them, and align our lives with that vision. If we do, pessimism and fear will be replaced with hope and confidence. That is the transformation between dying and living! It can start right now for those who will walk in it!

(credits to: 'The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians', R. V. G. Tasker; 'The Promise of Lent', Christ Tiegreen)

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