



Blackfoot Church of Christ

Published by Blackfoot Church of Christ
Blackfoot, ID

Volume 6 Number 33

August 19, 2018

Long Time No Write

by Jeff Asher

It was John Lennon that wrote the lyric: "Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans" (Beautiful Boy). However, The Reader's Digest gave the credit to Allen Saunders, one of the writers for the comic strip Mary Worth, back in 1957.

Not long after that, I made my appearance in this old world. I can say with great confidence that my experiences in life are supporting evidence for Mr. Saunders' observation. While I don't think they make much in the song lyric department.

However, neither Saunders nor Lennon can take credit for the sentiment. Solomon told us several millennia ago that life is "vanity and vexation, a striving after wind." The only certainty in life is uncertainty. James, the Lord's brother, warned his contemporaries that it was utter folly to say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." He tells us confidently, "You do not know what your life will be like tomorrow" (James 4:13-14). You see, life is likely to happen while you are making these other plans.

Even the Lord spoke to this matter, at least to the reality of upset plans. In rhetorical fashion he asked, "Who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?" He speaks similarly of changing our hair color (Matthew 5:36; 6:37). Jesus' point is that there are just a great many

things over the which we have NO CONTROL. We can plan and plan, but “time and chance overtake them all” (Ecclesiastes 9:11). This is the way the world works, and I believe it works that way for good reason.

Thirty years ago when the babies were coming, I used to think “if I can just get them out of diapers.” Then they were teenagers. While I was planning, life was giving me broken down automobiles, braces, back surgery, college tuition, funerals and unemployment. I should have known it was coming, my parents had experienced the same, and their parents in spades (The Great Depression). I foolishly thought life was supposed to become easier over time, what I learned was youth was just the first act. It doesn’t get easier; hopefully, we get stronger, better, more dependent upon God and look for the wisdom to be gained from our experience (Romans 5:5). Hopefully, we wake up to the reality that life really is “vanity and vexation, a striving after wind.”

I have a good friend with whom I have grown old. He often speaks of the end of our sojourn in glowing terms. He sees us as a band of pilgrims finally making our way back to the home of our Father. When our joyful company is about to enter the city, we look back over the shoulder to see him running over the last hill to glory pleading that we wait for him. You will never yearn for heaven like that until you have been disappointed, been left alone and had to struggle against the wind. Neither will you rush toward the hilltops of glory, if you choose to sit in the ashes and dust of your disappointments feeding anger, resentment and bitterness. Only a vibrant faith in a good God who seeks to perfect us as true worshippers by travail and struggle will ever overcome the vanity and vexation which is life.

An Example of God’s Grace at Work

By Patrick Donahue

Traditional thinking influenced by the reformation era is that men are not to "do anything" (like be baptized) in order to be saved because this is "earning" salvation or "adding to the finished work of Christ," despite the Bible commanding water baptism as a condition of salvation (John 3:5;

Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38). Most denominationalism holds this view to some extent, especially Calvinism.

God does NOT share this thinking. Let's observe ...

Gideon, who led God's army in Israel, was told by God to deplete the army's numbers until a small number of men was reached (Judges 7). Why? God did not want them "claiming glory against God," thinking that their own hand had saved them. So God depleted them to such a small number that only God could be seen as giving them victory. God gave them victory over the Midianites.

Here's the point. God did not think that in order to claim glory, He had to require no works or conditions from the men. God believes, contrary to denominational thought that He can give a gift (war victory in this case) with conditions that men must obey in order to receive. God believes He has the right to require men to do "works" (combat in this case) to get a gift from Him, and still yet His glory is not diminished by the fact that they had to do "something" to get His gift. God had men "do things" and "works" for the purpose of glorifying Himself.

Today people say water baptism cannot be a prerequisite for salvation because that would mean we get the glory. God disagrees, as proved by the Gideon story. Let me say it again. God actually glorified Himself through commanding men to "do things."

One last note. Engaging in warfare is a lot more "work" than being baptized. Yet salvation is infinitely greater in value than the military victory Israel got. If Israel had to do A LOT of work for a relatively less valuable gift -- military conquest -- and God still got the glory, then how can it be said that God does not get the glory by us doing a LITTLE work for a much greater gift--salvation?

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Brenda will start a series of treatments this week to improve her health
- Misty McCray will undergo surgery tomorrow for a brain Tumor, Misty is a friend of the Empey's.
- Update on Shirley Torres: she has started new cancer treatment. Let's continue to remember her and her family in our prayers. The Torres family has visited with our congregation.
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Bible class tomorrow night 7:00pm at Chad and Kass' on evangelism
- Ben has placed membership with the congregation. We are glad to have him work with us.

For prayer requests, call or text

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

Assignments

<u>Today</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Chad Mitchell Lord's Table – David Porter Sermon – Ross Ward	<u>Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – David Porter Invitation – Ross Ward
<u>Next Sunday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Tom Mitchell Lord's Table – Chad Mitchell Sermon – Ross Ward	<u>Next Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – Ben Palmer Invitation – Ross Ward

Blackfoot Church of Christ
370 North Shilling Ave.
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



[www.facebook.com @blackfootchurch](https://www.facebook.com/blackfootchurch)
www.blackfootchurch.com