



January 2014

FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL

Dear Missionary Friends,

Hope and pray you are doing well. These have been interesting days for everyone here with the severe winter. They say it's the third-snowiest on record. We've had two "polar vortexes" so far, with extended subzero temperatures and all the complications. Forecasts are for another two weeks of freezing temperatures before any thaw, with three small snowstorms in the next week.

But things are well at church. Pastor's messages are packed full of Scripture and very practical.

The cold, windy, and snowy weather has brought some incredibly beautiful snowdrift landscapes and unusual phenomena like the "sun dogs" in the picture to the right. I'd never heard of them, but they are due to the reflection of the sunlight off of the ice crystals in the air in bitterly cold weather. This one is from WGN's website.



= Updates for Your Information =

1. Be advised that postal rates are going up again. For a single piece of first-class mail, effective January 26, 2014, the rates have become:
 - Letters (1 oz.) — 3-cent increase to 49 cents
 - Letters additional ounces — 1-cent increase to 21 cents
 - Letters to all international destinations (1 oz.) — \$1.15
 - Postcards — 1-cent increase to 34 cents

2. Two stories that relate to one another:
 - a. Story #1: A missionary related to us during his exit interview his plan to regularly communicate personally with all his supporting churches. What a great idea! Not complicated, not ostentatious, but a very effective and ambitious plan.
 - b. Story #2: A pastor terminated the support of a veteran missionary over what was a matter of preference rather than conviction. In this case, had the pastor and the missionary been on "speaking terms" (regular communication other than prayer letters), perhaps the pastor would have addressed the missionary with his concern and talked it over before acting.

LOCAL CHURCHES MULTIPLYING LOCAL CHURCHES

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- c. Lessons learned:
- i. Almost universally, pastors are looking to trim their missions programs so they can add new missionaries who more closely fit their church's perspective. This would be a good time to review the way the churches view our respective ministries and families, looking to eliminate any needless sources of conflict.
 - ii. Pastors and churches are very attentive. What is posted on social media will be noted, so it would be wise to be sure nothing that might be misunderstood is there.
 - iii. A heart to give, serve, and encourage the churches will go far to solidify the relationship. Think: What would help me to lead the church's missions program if the shoe were on the other foot?
 - iv. Prayer letters should be professional, yet personal. They aren't the place to preach or pontificate; but rather, they are to inform, friend to friend. People can tell when a missionary is putting on a show.
 - v. Years ago I read the biography of a non-Baptist missionary who set the goal to write ten personal letters a day to his supporting churches. From the account it appears very unlikely that he had much in the way of free time. Yet the story makes it evident that he had a warm, personal friendship with his donors.

= Sermon Outlines for Your Edification =

Pastor Warren Johnson Thoughts on Leadership I Timothy 4:12; II Thessalonians 3:9

Note the areas where we should live exemplary lives. Though leaders have the power to command, the Bible mandate is to lead by example.

1. Those who are a good example help people (e.g. biography of Thomas Hooker).
2. Those who lead by example do so by way of their clean life (Psalm 51:10) and consecrated service.
3. We do so as we behold the Great Example. (I Peter 2:21) "If I'm to be like thee one day, may I be like thee this day." Jonathan Edwards

We each have a race to run. (I Corinthians 9:24; Hebrews 12:1-2) We are "in it to win it." All will finish their race (eternal security), but not all will win their race. The essential ingredient is the need to keep one's attention focused on Jesus.

Characteristics of the Race:

1. Personal (Hebrews 12:1) with no competition
2. Permanent (never ends, can't quit)

If we win the race, we receive the commendation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

How to Win the Race:

1. Forsake all ways that are weights and that produce doubt. (Hebrews 12:1) The cloud of witnesses are not spectators but rather those who have won their races and who are rooting for us to do so.

2. Forfeit whatever trips us up through sin. (Hebrews 12:1) The word “beset” refers to an entanglement with the resultant hindrance.
3. Focus on the One Who drives you on. (Hebrews 12:2) Jesus is everything—He is the determination, the endurance, the motivation, the power, the inspiration, the concentration. Jesus never fails; people always do. Example of the coxswain on a crew boat: he is the one who gives the directions, as only he can see the destination and the hazards.

Pastor Warren Johnson

More Thoughts on Leadership

II Timothy 1:16

Paul accomplished what was done with the help of others. Some served as peers (Barnabas), others as subordinates (Timothy), and others as workers.

How can Christians help their pastors?

1. Have visitors in church, and introduce them to him.
2. Pray for him regularly, and let him know you are doing so.
3. Let him know when his preaching is helpful and how this is the case.
4. Love his family, and seek to be a blessing to them.
5. Catch his vision for the church, and pass it on to others.
6. Shield him from people and problems that will only serve to waste his time.
7. Go the second mile in ministry responsibilities
8. Be a good steward of God’s money.
9. Share with him blessings and salvation decisions.
10. Exercise a positive, faith-filled, and joyful attitude.
11. Love the unlovely, and care for the down-and-outers.
12. Win people to Christ, and get them into discipleship.

The Importance of Our View of God

Isaiah 40:25-28; II Samuel 7:22; Romans 11:33-36

We cannot do what we should do without His involvement and help, and we cannot walk with Him without working on it.

1. God is not like us. We cannot bring Him to our level.
2. Man has a tendency to attempt to reduce God to our terms in order to “manage” Him. (e.g. the golden calf, Job 38-42:1)
3. Man likewise seeks to elevate humanity (e.g. humanism) and/or human emotions, which, to a corresponding degree, minimize God.
4. God can only be truly known as He reveals Himself:
 - a. Through nature (Psalm 18,19)
 - b. Through His Word. (John 1:1-4)
 - c. Through His Son. (Colossians 1:15-16)

When we walk with God, there are results:

1. Problems and trials still exist but are less important.
2. We worship Him in spirit and truth. (John 4:23-24)
3. We are humbled.
4. We serve Him. (e.g. Samuel, Gideon)
5. Contentment and peace
6. All that we have is at His disposal.

Fishermen's Club Why Be a Soul Winner?

There are many reasons. Here are a few:

1. Wisdom (Proverbs 11:30)
2. Positive results (Philippians 4:8)
3. Gratitude for our own salvation and blessings
4. The need (Romans 3:23)
5. The reality of Hell (Revelation 20:14-15)
6. Because of God's great love for sinners (John 3:16)
7. Because of God's command, the Great Commission

Danny Mendez Lessons From Jesus' Encounter With the Lepers Luke 17:11-17

The plight of lepers is foreign to most of us, the social isolation and poverty and lost status. They drew strength from one another. In this case, one was a Samaritan, but in light of the leprosy, that didn't matter. Together they saw their opportunity—through Jesus.

Jesus commanded, they obeyed . . . and all were healed. Only the Samaritan returned to give thanks. Jesus noticed and brought our attention to what happened. Only the one who returned to give thanks was "made whole." The others were only healed physically.

What can we learn? To learn to be thankful, to work at noticing, remembering, and expressing thanks

Who have we forgotten?

1. Our teachers
2. Our mentors
3. Those who were there in times of crisis
4. The soul winner who led us to Christ
5. Our spouse and our in-laws
6. Our employers
7. Etc., etc., etc.

Bro. Randy Rodgers Praise Psalm 91:1; 100:4

God commands us to praise Him.

The purpose and goal are to get into His courts, the same word as "tabernacle."

It is a step-wise process:

1. Praise is the door.
2. Thanksgiving is the gate.
3. The latch is gratitude.
4. The act of opening is meditation.

In practice:

1. Think of something that I have, and meditate upon it.
 - a. God is good.
 - b. God is sovereign.
 - c. God loves me.
2. Everything that God does to me, for me, or through me is in love

3. God's plan and will are far above whatever hurt, loss, disappointment, etc. we experience.
4. I must yield everything to God—an expression of reciprocal love to the love of God.
5. No worries about tomorrow
6. Sincere thanksgiving
7. Praise becomes natural.
8. Sing to God in the first person.

Pastor Wilkerson Benefits of Loving and Obeying God

1. From John 14:21
 - a. We feel God's love in return.
 - b. His love is manifest.
 - c. Jesus is manifest.
2. John 15:10
 - a. We abide in His love.
 - b. We are enabled to be spiritual leaders (Oswald Chambers).
3. John 14:23
 - a. We abide in Him.
4. I John 3:22
 - a. We see answered prayer.
5. I John 5:2
 - a. We are enabled to love others.

Bro. Vargo The Sovereignty of God Isaiah 45:1-12

1. We all reach a point where we question God's presence, power, and/or involvement.
2. God is in control. We cannot question Him (irrational, fruitless, etc.).
3. He knows. We don't know.
4. Our responsibility? Faith and obedience
5. Idolatry is mentally creating a God Who operates according to the limits (or within the boundaries) of our understanding and dictates for our benefit and according to our standards.
6. Learn to trust God in the light so you will be able to trust Him in the dark.

Bro. Sprunger Helpful Definitions

1. Gossip is sharing private information with someone who has nothing to do with the situation or problem at hand.
2. Dependability ("the best ability"—Dr. Bob Jones Sr.) is fulfilling what I agreed to do even though it means unexpected sacrifice.
3. A good work ethic is to always stay one step ahead of your boss.

1. Alms giving (vv. 1-4), which addresses our desire to have
2. Prayer (vv. 5-8), which addresses our desire to do, to control
3. Fasting (vv. 16-21), which addresses our desire to be (the flesh)

Comments:

1. All of these go against the grain.
2. All are antidotes to carnal desires; they restore balance.
3. Talking and attempts at manipulation don't resolve people problems.
4. The discipline of the flesh frees the Spirit.
5. The kingdom of God is characterized by righteousness, peace, and joy.

Pastor Wilkerson Avoiding Bitterness Hebrews 12:15; Luke 1:26-37

1. We cannot have peace without holiness.
2. This is a call to diligence. For example, fathers must be diligent as they lead their families.
 - a. Engaged
 - b. Spiritual
 - c. Present
3. God's grace won't fail us, but we can fail the grace of God.
4. How does this work? There is a progression:
 - *An offense → a wound → God's grace available and essential for healing → our job to apply it*
 - *Any failure to apply this grace → root of bitterness → (1) a fall or (2) a hindrance → collateral damage*
5. Lessons from the life of Mary (text in Luke), who could have been bitter considering the circumstances
 - a. She was pure and engaged to be married when it was announced to her that supernaturally she would give birth to the Son of God.
 - b. All of her plans and those of Joseph had to change. Conscious of the damage to her reputation before the unbelieving world, they submitted to the point of going to Egypt to live before returning, not to their home, but rather to Nazareth.
6. How to follow her example and grow in grace in times of an offense?
 - a. Purity is essential. If there is sin, deal with it. confess → repent → forsake
 - b. Always give to the Lord in order to be close to Him, to know Him.
 - c. Follow her example as a thinker. (Luke 2:19; Matthew 1:20)
 - d. Seek the favor of the Lord.

Pastor Wilkerson New Year's Eve: Our Need for the Word of God

Psalms 119

Contact:

1. Unfortunately, we forget that it is a priority, even in the setting of multiple commitments.
2. What we do with the Bible determines what God does with us.
3. It is powerful and sufficient. (Hebrews 4:12)
4. Our problem, our failure, is in the area of application.

5. The organization and content of Psalm 119 is amazing. Listen to it daily.

Blessings of the Word of God:

1. *Blessed* means “happy.” (v. 1)
 - a. 175 of the 176 verses speak of the blessings of the Bible.
 - b. The Bible protects us from those things that would defile us (cause bitterness).
 - c. The key word is *walk*. To please God we spend time with Him in His Word.
2. We must seek (v. 2), which means the blessings take effect if we actively and diligently seek them through His Word. “Casual Christians become a casualty.”
3. We can avoid evil through His Word. (v. 3) We must learn to respond to His voice.
4. We must keep his precepts diligently. (v. 4) “*Study to show thyself approved . . .*”
5. The Word of God generates prayer (v. 5)—a heartfelt desire to please God! Every relationship is improved with communication.
6. Doing so, confidence follows. (v. 6) When you love someone, you are not embarrassed by them.
7. Praise is the result. (v. 7) It is sincere, complete with gratitude.

With our love and prayers,

Bro. Siemer

On behalf of the FBMI Home Office Team