

THE

HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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LESSONS FROM A SNOW STORM

When a winter storm dumped 15 to 18 inches of snow in our area on the night of March 12, to say we were surprised would be an understatement. We were all absolutely shocked! This had never happened to us before. We never expected our entire county to be handcuffed and wrapped in deep white like a prisoner in a strait-jacket. To compound the situation we also lost electrical power at the outset of the "Blizzard of the Century". Yet, out of all this, we were still reminded of some very valuable lessons.

Electricity is all around us. Just about everything we own runs off of electricity in some way or another. In fact, our lives are very

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dependant on it and we use it much more than we care to admit. Electricity is also one of those things we usually take for granted. We do not fully appreciate it until . . . the power goes out!

The blessings we receive from God fall along the same lines. Those blessings are all around us every single day. When it comes right down to it, everything good in our lives can be attributed directly to God (Jas. 1:17). But like electricity, we take all those blessings for granted. We do not fully appreciate what God has given us. Rather, we complain for more.

During our snow storm, it would have been easy for us to complain about not having electricity. But it did not take long to learn that other homes were also without heat, water, food, communication, etc. My family was blessed and fortunate to still have these 'luxuries'. Thus, we need to give God thanks for everything we do have (1 Thes. 5:18) and quit complaining about what we don't have! Our heavenly Father really does care about us and will provide to his children their necessities (Matt. 6:25-34).

With our electrical service out of operation, next we had to become resourceful. We had to find ways to survive. It is only natural that we will do things to avoid physical death. Without electricity, we found a way to provide heat inside the house while the temperatures outside were dropping below freezing. We turned the surface heating units of the gas range on high and closed off the outer rooms. Then we spent the night on couches and mattresses and in sleeping bags. To avoid losing all the food in the refrigerator, we stuck them in the cool air of the garage. The freezer items were placed in coolers and buried under the snow on our deck. Yes, in times like these we had to be resourceful.

In our spiritual life, there are times when we must be resourceful, too. We have to find ways to survive, to avoid spiritual death. Sin is one thing that can definitely kill our souls (Rom. 6:23; Matt. 10:28). Since sin is a result of being overcome by lusts and temptations (Jas. 1:13-15), often we have to find ways to flee that enticement. We might have to avoid going to questionable places or being in the company of unspiritual friends. We might have to give up a favorite pasttime. Whatever the case, we have to find that way of escape (1 Cor. 10:13) if we want to survive to see heaven. Believe me, a person can be very resourceful when he wants to be!

Another lesson learned from our snow storm adventure was that of patience. We knew that although the electricity had failed, eventually the service would be restored. We knew we would not be without electrical power forever. However, there were four hundred thousand other 'customers' without electricity and we knew we would have to wait our turn. It might take several days but we would have to be patient with the power company's efforts.

Sometimes we need to be reminded of patience concerning Christ's coming. We know that one day our Lord will return for His faithful followers (1 Thes. 4:16). We do not know when that Day will be (Matt. 24:36) but it is definitely coming. So, as we continually fight spiritual battles with Satan here on earth and we feel like giving up, remember to hold on a little longer! The Bible tells us to be patient and longsuffering in all righteousness. *"Watch and be sober"* (1 Thes. 5:6) and pray that the Lord will direct our hearts *"into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ"* (2 Thes. 3:5). It is of utmost importance that we remain faithful to the end if we are to make heaven our home (Matt. 24:13).

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The power to our house was finally restored after five long days. When the den lights suddenly came on, we felt like celebrating. It was considered a milestone achievement, like a runner crossing the finish line or a man being rescued from a deserted island.

No doubt when this life is over and we finally get to heaven, we will also feel like celebrating. I do not know for sure how that may be accomplished, but we are told there can be rejoicing (Luke 19:7). Imagine what it would be like to abide in heaven FOREVER. John tried to describe its beauty in Revelation 21 & 22 but truly, it is beyond our wildest dreams. What a grand reward God has prepared for those who will obey him!

There are so many other lessons that could be mentioned here but sometimes it takes a snow storm or a power failure or a brush with death to remind us that we have more to do here on earth than just "eat, drink, and be merry". We need to thank God every day of our lives for the blessings he gives us. We need to avoid sin at all costs by being as resourceful as we can. We have to be patient for our Lord's coming by enduring to the very end. And, if we want to rejoice in heaven, we better be preparing for the life hereafter and do it NOW! Friends, can we say we are ready today?

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. What was Elisha's servant's name?
2. In the feeding of the 5000, who brought the boy with food to Jesus?
3. What happened to King Herod in Caesarea when he did not give praise to God but accepted the praise himself?
4. In Psalms 22, what was wrong with David's bones?
5. In the book of Samuel, why were there no blacksmiths in Israel?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. Whom did God sell into the hands of Chushanrishathaim? ISRAEL (Judg. 3:8)
2. What was one agricultural difference between Egypt and Canaan? CANAAN WAS, GENERALLY, WELL WATERED (Deut. 11:10-12)
3. Who was the first disciple to go into the empty tomb of Jesus? PETER (John 20:5,6)
4. Which book of the Bible uses over one half of its space to record the events in Christ's life and His sayings during His last days? GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN
5. On the way to his wedding, what did Samson turn away to see? THE CARCASS OF THE LION HE HAD KILLED (Judg. 14:8)

Many people do not find God
for the same reason a thief
does not find a policeman.

BORDERLINE CHRISTIANS

There is a story of a county superintendent of education who had three applications to fill the vacancy among the school bus drivers. He devised this scheme for selecting the proper man.

The superintendent took the first applicant to a sharp curve on a steep grade along the road and asked, "How close can you drive the bus to the edge of the road on the curve without going over the cliff with the children?" The interested driver looked and replied, "I believe I can drive within two inches of the edge and not go over the precipice!"

The second person who had applied for the job heard the same proposition. He checked the curve and told the county official "I believe I can drive within one inch of the edge and not go over!"

When the superintendent took the third driver to the same highway scene and made a similar proposition to him, the applicant immediately asked, "Do you think I'm crazy? I'm not interested in seeing how close I can get to the edge with the bus. I'll be trying to see how far I can keep away from the danger line with the bus!"

He received the job.

There is a borderline between the church and the world for the Christian. The church means "the called out from the kingdom of sin". John said, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world"* (1 John 2:15,16)

One who seeks to stay just as near the world of sin as possible and still follow Christ has the wrong attitude. An individual, like the driver, should stay just as far away from the danger zone as possible. Paul wrote, *"Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good"* (Rom. 12:9)

B. C. GOODPASTURE

(submitted by J. W. Moore)

HOW TO KILL, EMBALM, AND BURY YOUR CONGREGATION

1. Don't go.
2. If you do go, be late.
3. If it is too wet, or too dry, or too hot, or too cold to go, publicize the fact.
4. When you go, be sure to find fault.
5. Refuse every invitation to help, then tell how forward and overbearing those are who do help.
6. Never encourage the other members; criticize them and tell others how you would do the job.
7. Never take part in the service.
8. Point out all the mistakes you can to the workers and teachers and condemn them for making such mistakes.
9. Never put more than three cents in the offering. If you had no pennies with you last Sunday, don't give twice as much this Sunday.
10. Believe everything you hear about your congregation without any investigation.
11. Wear a sour face to show your disapproval of everything that's going on.
12. Stalk out of church as soon as the services are over. Don't speak to anyone.

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
April 5 - 9	Delvinta Church Beattyville, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
April 18-23	Hopkinsville, OH	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
April 23-25	Fairview Church Oxford, AL	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
April 23-25	Pleasant Ridge Church Woodbury, TN	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)

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A FEW THOUGHT-PROVOKING SIGNS

(Seen outside various religious buildings)

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*Why can our children read the Bible in
prison but not in school?*

*One half of all people who enter
abortion clinics never come out alive!*

*God's place for a Christian is where he
is needed most!*

*When you are tempted to sin,
think of hell.*

*We always have time for the things we
put first.*