

The Old Paths

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"A Big Thank You & Some Thoughts"

Jarrod Jacobs

Our gospel meeting with brother Lanny Smith concluded on Friday night. As we reflect on the week, I wanted to take a moment and say "thank you" for

- ◆ Showing interest in the souls of friends, loved ones, and neighbors and inviting them to the gospel meeting.
- ◆ Showing interest in the gospel by coming and supporting this meeting last week with your presence and prayers to God.
- ◆ The hospitality shown to brother Smith, as well as to me and my family this last week. How kind you are!
- ◆ Thank you for being zealous in getting the word out. I am keenly aware of the efforts some brethren have made to give people gospel meeting flyers, and encourage those of the community to come each evening and hear the gospel preached.
- ◆ Our gratitude is extended to brother Dye for leading our songs all week. Thank you!

Brethren, I hope this week has made it clear that a gospel meeting requires everyone's participation if it is to be successful. This meeting was a success because YOU worked at it!

Brother Lanny did his part in preaching the gospel (II Tim. 4:2). He unselfishly and unashamedly proclaimed the whole counsel of God this week (Acts 20:27). Brethren, this is the kind of preaching necessary for standing strong in the Lord and being grounded in the truth. We ought to be thankful to God for His providence in allowing brother Smith to be here. Yet, we have to live up to our responsibilities as well. Now that we know the truth, what will we do with it? Will we hoard it up for ourselves, or will we be active in spreading God's word to others (II Tim. 2:2)? Will we apply the truth we heard to ourselves, or will we ignore it and continue to do as we please? Will we move forward, striving to live ever closer to our Lord, and to tell others about salvation in Christ and being His child? How wonderful it is to see what can happen when we set our minds to spreading the gospel in this area.

Let's not stop this work simply because our gospel meeting has ended. May this gospel meeting serve as, among other things, a "jump start" in our spiritual lives. We have opportunities daily to tell others the truth and lead them to Christ. Let us take the lessons we have learned from brother Lanny and apply them to our daily lives! Though the meeting has ended, what is stopping us from inviting a friend or neighbor to services this week? Nothing is stopping us but our own fear and/or neglect (Rev.

21:8; Jn. 9:4). Let us get rid of this attitude and resolve today to let others know of the gospel. Let us be like Andrew and Philip, and bring people in contact with the message of Christ while there is still time and opportunity (Jn. 1:40-45).

At times, we have sung the song, "I want to be a soul-winner for Jesus every day..." did we mean it? Do we mean the words we speak when we sing, "Whate'er you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord"? If we do, then let us be busy fulfilling what we promised the Lord that we would do! Solomon said, "*Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few... When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin ...*" (Ecc. 5:2, 4-6). Let us heed these wise words!

The results of this gospel meeting will be felt for some time, for God's word will not return to Him void (Isa. 55:11). The word has been planted (Lk. 8:11; I Cor. 3:6), and if we will water it, God will give the increase (I Cor. 3:6)!

Will this meeting give us renewed strength and zeal to live by the gospel and spread it to others, or will we simply turn a deaf ear to what was said? The choice is yours. Please choose wisely according to the Bible standard!

Point To Ponder

"Most people know HOW to be silent.
Few know WHEN!"
(Study: Prov. 10:19, 13:3, 17:28, 21:23)

The Church At Ephesus

Aric Russell

Revelation 2 begins a series of letters to seven churches in Asia Minor. Each of these letters includes information we can learn and apply today. The first letter is to the church in Ephesus. Ephesus was a city on the western coast of Asia Minor. The city was famous for its temple of Diana or Artemis (Acts 19:27). Pilgrims came to Ephesus from all over the Mediterranean world to worship the goddess.

The first thing to note in this letter to the Ephesian church is that the message is from the Lord Jesus Christ. Revelation 2:1 says, "To the angel of the church in Ephesus . . ." This is not John's message to the Ephesian believers; it is a message from the Lord, the One "who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands" (Rev. 1:20). The lampstands are the churches themselves, portrayed as lights in a dark world; the stars are the angels or messengers of the churches, held in God's hand.

Jesus affirms the Ephesians' positive actions when He says, "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary" (Rev. 2:2-3). The Ephesian church was a hard-working group of believers. To their credit, they did not compromise with evildoers. They showed patience

and endurance in hardships. Jesus commends the church at Ephesus further when He states, "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." We don't know much about the Nicolaitans and their doctrine. However, we know that Jesus said He hated their deeds. Therefore, we know their deeds were not acceptable to God.

However, Jesus also notes their shortcoming. In Revelation 2:4, Jesus says, "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love." They were hard working, but they no longer had the same passion for Christ as when they first believed. Their work was no longer motivated by love. Therefore, Jesus called upon the Ephesians to repent. He said, "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works" (Rev. 2:5).

Jesus also warns His church of impending judgment if they did not repent. He said, "I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place" (Rev. 2:5). In other words, their punishment would be the loss of fellowship with God and Christ. The light in Ephesus would go out.

Jesus concludes this letter with

a promise to those who heed the word. In Revelation 2:7, Jesus states, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God." The "tree of life" and the "paradise of God" refer to the new heavens and new earth, discussed in Revelation 21-22. Those who conquer, or the "overcomers," are simply believers (1 John 5:4-5). The Ephesian believers could look forward to the future glory of eternity with the Lord.

Let us learn from the church at Ephesus. Not only must we hold fast to the doctrine of Jesus Christ and do the work that is set before us. We must also make sure we keep our first love. Always keep the love of God in your hearts.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

Are you praying daily for our work here at Caneyville? Are you constantly asking for God's blessings on our elders, deacons, preachers, Bible class teachers, our elderly, the widows, the spiritually weak, and every brother and sister in Christ? We have a great and powerful tool in prayer. Use it!

One way we spread the gospel.
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I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!
Come and meet with the church of Christ in Caneyville.
Location: 103 N. Main Street Caneyville, KY

Meeting Times:

- Sunday Bible Study - - - - - 10:00 a.m.
- Sunday Worship - - - - - 10:45 a.m.
- Sunday Worship - - - - - 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday Bible Study - - - - - 7:00 p.m.

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