

# The Broadmoor Bulletin

A Monthly Publication for the Christians at Broadmoor

December 2009

## A Labor of Love

... remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father.

### 1 Thessalonians 1:3

It is sometimes astonishing to see what results come from the efforts of those who are powered by love. When Paul wrote to his Christian friends in Thessalonica, he was writing to people who had begun to suffer persecution as soon as they had become Christians. And yet their love for their new Lord was such that they were not only surviving but thriving! Paul was delighted to pray for them and give thanks for the good things that were coming from their love: "We are always thankful to God as we pray for you all, for we never forget that your faith has meant solid achievement, your love has meant hard work, and the hope that you have in our Lord Jesus Christ means sheer dogged endurance in the life that you live before God, the Father of us all" (J. B. Phillips's paraphrase of **1 Thessalonians 1:3**). The work of these disciples was a work of *faith*, their labor, a labor of *love*, and their patience, a patience of *hope*. These are the true springs from which the highest kind of effort and sacrifice always flow.

We need to bring genuine love for God more to the center of our own motivation. Yet we must be careful. In the warm glow of our love for Him, we must not conceive of God as a doting grandfather, willing to accept anything our sincerity chooses to offer Him. Being moved by love does not mean being presumptuous. God is still God, and it is still His prerogative to say what is required from us. If the true worship of God comes from a spirit of love, it also comes from a respect for truth (**John 4:23,24**).

Yet as our reverence causes us to take God with utter seriousness, how much difference it will make if our love causes us to seek Him with utter thankfulness. Let us never trifle with our responsibilities, but also let us never forget the manifold goodnesses of God that have made us want to accept those responsibilities. When the final tally is made, our labor will matter little if it was not a labor of love. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (**2 Timothy 1:7**).

Love is a far better sustainer than fear. Fear enslaves, but love persuades. Love takes possession of our soul, and we begin to want goodness for itself. God is a kind and faithful friend to those who sincerely become his friend.

Francois de Fenelon

Gary Henry

Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thess. 5:16 – 18

## "How Can I Get More out of Bible Study?"

Many people ask this very question. It comes from a sincere desire to read and understand the Bible – just as God intended – for God did not give us an unintelligible book. He knows we can understand His word, and He gave us that word to comprehend. However, the Bible is a book which must be "rightly divided" as Paul said to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:15). One must study the Bible in order to properly discern its teachings. Timothy was commanded to study and read the Scriptures (1 Tim. 4:13). The fact that he was so commanded means that it was possible for his study to be productive and useful. As Christians, Peter exhorts us to add knowledge to our faith (2 Pet. 1:5). If we achieve this knowledge, it will come through study of God's word. No one will be miraculously endowed with scriptural knowledge in our generation.

If Bible study is to be profitable to us, we must take the proper approach to Scripture. Bible reading is different than reading the newspaper or a novel. Following some of these guidelines for effective Bible reading and study will help you get more out of the time you spend with the Word of God.

- **Read with reverence.** The Bible is "inspired" of God. It did not originate with man. 2 Pet. 1:21 says that the Holy Spirit "moved" the men who wrote the Scriptures.
- **Read with a sense of need.** Realize that you need God's instruction and that He will provide it through His word. Man is incapable of directing his own steps (Jer. 10:23).
- **Think while you are reading.** How often have you read words but did not comprehend because you were not thinking about what you were reading? The Bible deserves meditation – deliberate thinking. Don't imagine that just reading the words of the Bible will help you. The upright man of Psalm 1:2 meditated on the law of God.
- **Don't "read something into" the Bible.** Let the Bible speak for itself. So many people make the mistake of reading the Bible with their minds already made up concerning what it has to say. We must not decide what we want to believe and then go to the Bible to try and prove it. The Scriptures are profitable for doctrine (teaching) according to 2 Tim. 3:16. Allow the Scriptures to formulate your beliefs.
- **Determine to apply what you are reading.** If you love God's truth, you must be governed by it. If you read the Scriptures but fail to do what you read, do not be surprised if soon your Scripture reading stops altogether. We must not only listen to the Scriptures, we must also obey them (James 1:22). The Scriptures are not designed to be ignored.

Why not give these suggestions a try and see if your personal Bible study doesn't improve?

Mark White

# “Nakedness”

(Of the Soul)

Some folks who would never think of wearing shorts or any apparel that insufficiently covers their bodies leave their souls without a stitch on them. This is a shameful condition, just as physical nakedness has always stood as a symbol of shame (2 Sam. 10:4; Isa. 20:4). If physical nakedness is a shame, then we should really be embarrassed about spiritual nakedness.

The church at Laodicea thought they were rich and clothed spiritually but Christ said, “... and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked,” (Rev. 3:17). He counsels them to purchase “white raiment that thou mayest be clothed” (v. 18). It is, therefore, altogether possible to think that one is sufficiently clothed and not know that the shame of his unrighteousness is laid bare to the eyes of the Lord.

The only way one can clothe his soul is by righteousness. This righteousness involves purity of character (white raiment as Jesus used it), love for the Lord, and complete submissiveness to his will. Jesus said to John concerning His baptism – “For thus it behooveth us to fulfill all righteousness,” (Matt. 3:15). Jesus was totally submissive to God’s will – so must we be that we do not appear naked and ashamed.

Are we truly righteous? Let us anoint our eyes with the Lord’s eye salve that we may see ourselves as God sees us.

**Jim R. Everett**

## Are Strict Teaching and Love Mutually Exclusive?

Many in the religious world today stress that we need to use caution in what we teach and preach from the Bible. Some tell us that we need to avoid teaching about controversial subjects and instead focus on our love for one another and Jesus’ love for us. They contend that we lack love for others if we teach and demand a strict, conservative interpretation and application of the Scriptures. Is this proposition valid? Can we demand strict adherence to the teachings of the Bible and still possess love for one another? Or, as many claim, are the two mutually exclusive?

To find an answer to this important question, let’s look at the instructions Paul gave to Timothy. In 2 Tim. 1:13, Paul instructed Timothy to “*Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*” Here Paul commanded Timothy to “*hold fast*” to the form or pattern that he had given him. Many in the religious world today would put a large number of the things that Paul had taught Timothy in the “controversial,” “taboo” category. What, then, did Paul mean by this instruction? Did Paul expect Timothy to disregard the controversial “*sound words*” that he had heard of him and only “*hold fast*” to the non-controversial “*sound words*”? Maybe Paul wanted Timothy to just use the “*sound words*” as a general “guideline” for the things that he would believe and practice, modifying the “*sound words*” if they got too controversial? Obviously not! Paul wanted Timothy to hold on to the things that he had taught him, controversial or not.

Some would contend that this interpretation places Timothy in a position that would cause him to be devoid of any love. After all, they would claim, if Timothy were to be inflexible and strict about something he had been taught from Paul, think of all the

controversy that he would cause. The answer to this objection is found in this verse. Paul tells Timothy to “*hold fast*” to the things that he had been taught “*in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*” Clearly, then, demanding a strict adherence to the things that Paul had taught him would not cause Timothy to lack any love for others. Rather, Timothy was to possess love as he held on to the things he had received of Paul. We can “*hold fast*” to the teachings of the Scriptures and still possess love.

While some would agree with our conclusions drawn from this verse, they might argue that this instruction was just applicable to Timothy’s personal life. Paul had taught Timothy some things that would cause trouble or controversy if taught to others. They might go on to say that Paul was concerned that Timothy would hold on to the pattern that he had learned, but didn’t want him to teach this pattern to others. This, however, was not the case. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul told Timothy, “*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*” We see that Timothy was not only to “*hold fast*” the pattern that he had received of Paul in his own life, but that he was also to teach this pattern to others. These individuals, then, would “*hold fast*” to the pattern in their personal lives and “*teach others also,*” all the while possessing the “*faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*”

Clearly we can teach and demand a strict adherence to the teachings of the Scriptures and still possess love for others. We need not allow the rhetoric of the “religious” world to keep us from following the divine pattern that Paul delivers in 2 Timothy 1:13 and 2:2.

**Jacob Gwin**

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.  
**2 Timothy 3:16 – 17**

## Daily Bible Readings

December 20	1 John 1 – 2
December 21	1 John 3 – 5
December 22	2 John
December 23	3 John
December 24	Jude
December 25	Revelation 1 – 3
December 26	Revelation 4 – 6
December 27	Revelation 7 – 9
December 28	Revelation 10 – 13
December 29	Revelation 14 – 16
December 30	Revelation 17 – 19
December 31	Revelation 20 – 22

### Times of Service

Sunday Bible Class	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	9:55 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

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