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SELECTING THE PATH...

Lawrence Berra, better known as Yogi Berra, the long time catcher for the New York Yankees is quoted as having said, “when you come to a fork in the road, take it.” Then again he also noted, “no matter where you go, there you are.” Granted he may not have been as succinct as others, but he did cause one to give pause and ponder. Sitting back and reflecting, it may trigger a thought about something Robert Frost wrote in his poem “The Road Less Traveled”. Two paths are presented (a fork in the road), both look inviting, but doubting he would ever return to this spot again, he must make a decision. The poem concludes the following, “Two roads diverged in a wood, and I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.”

As Jesus drew near the end of the Sermon on the Mount, He made a like comparison. In verse fourteen of Matthew the seventh chapter, He set forth the “Golden Rule” and quickly sets forth the following. “Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.” (vs 13-14) A crossroads. The proverbial fork in the road.

As we journey through life, there will be any number of paths/roads presented before us. Choices will have to be made as to which path to follow. Many will appear promising and oh, so attractive. But there is but one that harmonizes with what our Creator would have us to do. Notice what is seen in Jeremiah the sixth chapter and verse sixteen. “Thus says the Lord; ‘Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk in it.’” The blatant refusal to travel along the

good path defies logic. Yet so many then and well opt to embrace the pathway that as Jesus noted is “wide” and “broad” and leads to destruction as opposed to the narrow pathway that leads to life.



In essence the “road less traveled”, is one that eschews the crowd and embraces a life of devotion and obedience to Jesus who is the Christ; He is the way. “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6) The only pathway that leads to the Father is the pathway that Jesus blazed for His followers.

“Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:2)

The path we choose in life is pivotal. Following as it were a spiritual GPS as found in God’s word. Notice the following passages the first from Psalms 16:11. “Thou wilt make known to me the path of life; in Thy presence is fulness of joy; in Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.” Solomon writes in Proverbs chapter three and verses five and six, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.” “Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.” (Psalms 119:105)

It takes courage to follow the narrow way, however it is the only one that leads to life. For it alone shows us the way to the Tree of Life. “I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.” (Psalms 32:8) “Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.” (Revelation 22:14) Praise God for the path that leads to life. (wbe)

The Bulwark

ROMANS 13 v. THE UNITED STATES, CONT.

Not wanting to think the worse of our governmental leaders, perhaps they were well intended in looking out for the welfare of those attending a religious service. Regardless that does not give them carte blanche to violate a basic Constitutional right nor fly in the face of a basic human right. By so doing there is the “law of unintended consequences” that comes into play. For by their actions they are, as the perception may well be that they are impeding those who seeking to serve God. In essence fighting against the God of Heaven. It is somewhat like what is found in the book of Isaiah. *“Now go, write it on a tablet before them and inscribe it on a scroll, that it may serve in the time to come as a witness forever. For this is a rebellious people, false sons, sons who refuse to listen to the instruction of the Lord; who says to the seers, ‘You must not see visions’; and to the prophets, ‘You must not prophecy to us what is right, speak to us pleasant words, prophesy illusions. Get out of the way; turn aside from the path, let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel.’”* (Isaiah 30:9-11)

As children of God we are faced with a dilemma. Clearly we have been directed to obey the laws of the land, as seen in Romans 13. Notice verse five of Romans 13, which states the following. *“Wherefore, it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath but also for conscience sake.”* What happens when “conscience sake” is divided? Jesus, when He came in the form of man and walked on the earth, He was subject to the laws of the land. He paid taxes and observed the laws. Yet, He was consumed by zeal and drove the moneychangers out the temple. Not once, but twice as recorded in John 2:14-18 and Mark 11:15-18. He did not sin.

Peter and John, when told they were not to *“speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus”* (see Acts 4:18), their response was succinct, *“Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”* In the fifth chapter of Acts, it is reported back to the Council that the apostles were teaching and preaching in the name of Jesus in spite of the directive they had been told. They were brought before the Council where the high priest said to them, *“We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.”* (v. 28) Without hesitation the apostles gave their response, *“We must obey God rather than man.”* (v. 29)

Now getting back to the dilemma mentioned earlier. There is no denying that we have been told to be in subjection to the laws of the land, but we also have a command from God, *“Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”* (Hebrews 10:24-25) To be sure there is the availability of livestream and zoom, but that can never replace congregating together with those of like precious faith. Which is precisely what God has directed. For whatever reason, people have a distorted sense of safety. There is a level of comfort going to the grocery store, gas station, restaurants, beauty parlors, barber shops, post office and of course the office of a doctor; but sadly for some not so much when it comes to assembling with the saints. The percentage of transmission of the virus traced back to churches is infinitesimal, not so with the other venues mentioned.

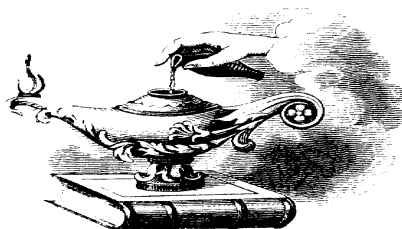
As the early stages of the pandemic raged last year and brought about the “lock down”, many in the brotherhood expressed genuine concern about if once things leveled out would members return to worshipping in person. The realization has proven that concern was warranted. Across the country news of congregations suffering falling attendance and membership is common place. It is beyond heart breaking. The “lock down” imposed by the government should not have stopped any from assembling. Remember what the apostles stated as seen in Acts 5:29, *“We must obey God rather than man.”* The governmental imposed “lock down” has served as a catalyst of sorts for rationalization on the part of individuals seeking a level of comfort and acceptability in opting for the “digital” instead of the personal. It is one thing to be absent because of illness or incapacity, but not because of “lock down”, “mandate” or any other created element of man.

The founding fathers of the United States would be aghast that those in authority would even entertain the notion of forbidding citizens from assembling together to worship God. Consider the following from the Declaration of Independence, *“all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”* Then factor in The First Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1791, provides that *“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”* It is more than evident that the framers of this great country wanted to secure the freedom of all to worship and to assemble together for such purpose, unencumbered by the government or any other person or movement. Should we ever be faced with a like situation in the future where the government imposes anything that violates God’s word, as Christians we must respectfully oppose. We would in no way be in violation of Romans 13. (wbe)

TIMES OF ASSEMBLY

SUNDAY

- Bible Study 9:45 a.m.
- Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
- Afternoon Worship 2:30 p.m.



WEDNESDAY

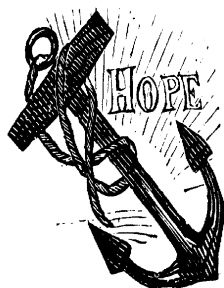
- Bible Study 7:30 p.m.
- On Line & In Home Studies Available On Request*

News & Notes

PRAYERS REQUESTED...

In your prayers please continue to consider the following in your prayers

- ♦ **Ann Joseph** (home bound)
- ♦ **Linda Miller** (numerous health concerns)
- ♦ **Kathy Thompson** (health concerns)
- ♦ **Phil Chatman** (eye disease/health concerns)
- ♦ **Linda Smith** (on going cancer concerns)
- ♦ **Greg Miller's grandmother** (issues with her heart)
- ♦ **Manny Gonzalez** (serving in the military)



MEN'S BIBLE CLASS...

The *next men's Bible class will be on Saturday morning, June 4th at 10 o'clock.* The class will be held at the Evans'.

"GUEST" SPEAKER...

Next Sunday, **JACOB MACHENGETE** will be presenting the lesson during the morning service. Men of the congregation are given this opportunity when there are five Sunday in a month.

LADIES BIBLE CLASS...

The *next ladies Bible class will be Saturday morning June 18th at 10 o'clock.* The class is held at the Evans'. For more information contact Linda Evans.

**"This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil. "
Hebrews 6:19**

Something To Consider...

No matter how much you revisit the past, there is nothing new to see

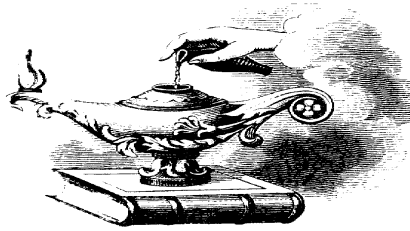
"...but one thing I do; forgetting what lies and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

(Galatians 3:13b-14)

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- On Line & In Home Studies Available On Request*

Men To Serve

Sunday Morning, July 29th, 2018

Announcements:

Bruce Evans

Opening Prayer:

Jim Maury

Scripture Reading (Matthew 26:36-46)

Phil Chatman

Song #635 A Beautiful Prayer:

Tyler Foster

Song #170 In Gethsemane Alone

Tyler Foster

Scripture Reading (Luke 23:33-47)

Randy DeBruler

Song #666 He Bore It All

Dan Walker

Song #580 Ten Thousand Angels

Dan Walker

Song #578 The Old Rugged Cross

Dan Walker

-Contribution-

(see below for men to serve)

Scripture Reading (1Corinthians 11:23-28)

Jacob Machengete

Song #160 One Day

Tyler Foster

-Lord's Supper-

Al Hantsbarger, Mike Odorizzi

Bob Martin & Ed Fredricks

-Lesson-

Song #180 Wonderful Story of Love

Closing Prayer

Loel Bohannan

NEWS & NOTES

PRAYERS REQUESTED...

One of the great blessings we have from God is that of prayer. We need to be constant in our petitions to our Heavenly Father. Please remember in your prayers those listed below.

- ♦ **Linda Miller** (degenerative eye disease/pain & mobility issues)
- ♦ **Sandra Rader** (COPD)
- ♦ **Gloria Odorizzi** (health concerns)
- ♦ **Johnie Binder** (Lupus)
- ♦ **Eddie & Ann Joseph** (health concerns)
- ♦ **Terri DeBruler** (pain & mobility issues)
- ♦ **The Wallace's** (traveling back to Abilene)

LADIES BIBLE CLASS...

The Ladies Bible Class meets Friday mornings at 11 o'clock. All women are encouraged to come and join in the study.

THANK YOU...

A special "thank you" goes out to **Tyler Foster** who conducted the Wednesday evening singing and Scripture reading.

NEW CLASS...

A new Sunday morning Bible class will begin next week. The study will focus on the need for individual outreach to a world lost in sin. All are invited to come and take part in this vital study

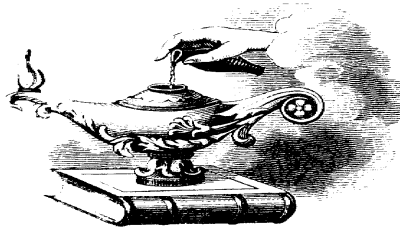
Something To Consider...

*"Before you talk, **listen**. Before you react, **think**. Before you spend, **earn**. Before you criticize, **wait**. Before you pray, **forgive**. Before you quit, **try**."*

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NEWS & NOTES

IN OUR PRAYERS...

Let us be certain to consider in our prayers those listed below.

- ♦ **Linda Miller** (eye disease/pain & mobility issues)
- ♦ **Ann Joseph** (home bound/health concerns)
- ♦ **Phil Chatman** (eye disease/health issues)
- ♦ **Darlene Kirtz** (MS)
- ♦ **Johnnie Binder** (Lupus)
- ♦ **Kathy Thompson** (eye disease)
- ♦ **Kathy Adams** (ongoing pain and discomfort)
- ♦ **Mike & Susan Odorizzi** (recovering from Covid)
- ♦ **The work here at Winnetka** (take time wherever you may be @ 5pm daily)

NEW CLASS BEGINNING...

The class on The Holy Spirit will begin the first Wednesday in December. While the class will be made available via livestream on YouTube, it is highly recommended that all attend in person.

LADIES CLASS...

The Ladies Bible Class will not be meeting until after the first part of the new year. The exact date of the resumption of the class will be made available in few weeks.

PRAYER, PRAISE & PROCLAMATION...

We will be resuming on *January 22nd, 2022 our annual Prayer, Praise & Proclamation meeting at 10am.* The meeting will continue until noon. The theme for this special meeting is *"Faith, hope and love"*. One speaker has already agreed to take part and we are looking for another man in the congregation to step forward and present a fifteen minute lesson on either "hope" or "love" as "faith" has already been chosen. See Bruce Evans for more information.