

Shining Your Light!



by Dawn Reed
E. Ky. Columnist

Last Friday was a sad day on Happy Lane. (That's

where we live in the parsonage.) January was breathing down on February so it was finally time to take down my Christmas tree and decorations. It's an unhappy day that says, "the party's over".

My beloved is a peach and lets me keep it all up however long I want, but even I knew it was time. I unwrapped all the pictures on the wall; down came the nativities and stockings. I took all the ornaments off the tree and unstrung the lights.

Each year, I gingerly tuck everything into tubs and put it back in the attic, and I do mean "gingerly". We have ornaments that date all the way back to 1980-our first Christmas. There are baby booties and mobile parts from when

our cherubs were little, plus many other treasures from the past. We add a new one every year-for 2019, it was a paw print of our grand-dog, Winnie. My plan is for it all to last for-EVER.

Though I gingerly pack everything up, it's shocking that every single year our Christmas lights don't ever make it. I plug in a strand, wiggle a bulb here and there, but none of them work. We have to buy new lights EVERY CHRISTMAS! I've pondered this conundrum all season long as I admired our eight brand new sets of LED old fashioned C7s adorning the tree.

To explain the phenomenon, I've wanted to say that things just aren't made as well as they used to be, but

now I think I have it figured out.

I love, love, LOVE our Christmas tree! I turned it on every morning and then off again before work. It was turned on briefly when I went home for lunch and on again right after work until bedtime. On the weekends, it shined brightly all day. Everyone could see the bright lights through the windows. It was a warm reminder of the season especially on foggy mornings and dark nights.

After a little figuring, I'm thinking those brand new LED C7 lights burned around 730 hours this Christmas season! NO WONDER MY LIGHTS ONLY LAST ONE YEAR! They're just worn out! Through this pondering,

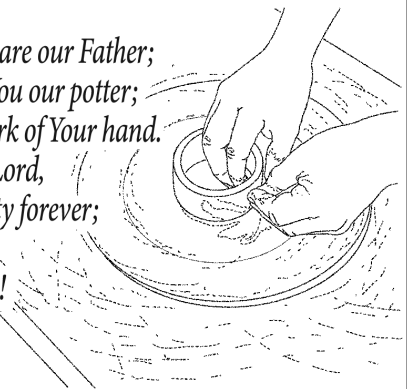
I've realized that we are also like Christmas tree lights. We only have so many hours in our days and days in our years. We need to make them count! Before we know it, our season will have passed!

Shining a light is our job, too! In Matthew 5:14 & 16, Jesus commissioned the disciples (and us!) to be a bright light: "You are the light of the world..." He said, and "...let your light shine before others". No LEDs here; He was talkin' full, bright, darkness-shattering light!

No matter the season, no matter how old we are, Jesus can use us to make a difference in the world. And we will always shine brighter when we are plugged in to Him!

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

But now, O Lord, You are our Father;
We are the clay, and You our potter;
And all we are the work of Your hand.
Do not be furious, O Lord,
Nor remember iniquity forever;
Indeed, please look
we all are Your people!
ISAIAH 64:8,9



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BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

PSALM 24:8, 10B

Who is **this** King of glory? **The** LORD **strong** and **mighty**, the **LORD** mighty in **battle**. The LORD **Almighty**—he is the **King** of **glory**.

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R Y T H G I M L A S
L P W L I Z X W I N
Y O U M H T H I S B

Find the **bolded/underlined** words in the diagram. They run in all directions — forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

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seeds of Hope



"Check on me" was a familiar request that we heard every night as our youngest son, Byron, began walking to his bedroom. Even though we took every precaution to make certain that our home was safe from any threat or danger, there was nothing more comforting than a nightly visit before the lights were turned off. Knowing that someone was near by and readily available if an emergency arose made falling asleep much easier. The need to know that we are safe and secure is important to each of us. Stripes divide streets and signs give important instructions to drivers. A checklist must be completed before an aircraft can take flight. Warnings about

possible problems surround us wherever we go or whatever we do. Sometimes they seem to get in the way of life. But warnings are important to warn us of impending dangers.

Psalm 91 reminds us of the unpredictability, yet the certainty, of dangers that await us. But it does not do so to frighten us, but to give the assurance that we are safe at all times and in all situations because of the faithfulness of our God. Listen as the Psalmist assures of the safety and security we have in God: "You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that strikes at midday...if you make the Most High your dwelling!"

How gracious of our God to assure us that we do not need to ask Him to "check on us" - He does it constantly.

Sower Ministries.org
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The Thief on the Cross

by **BOB CASEY**, preacher
Cornerstone Church of Christ
70 Bond Street at Camp Avenue in West Irvine

Archive Message from February 12, 2014

Some time back Jack McElroy announced that the next evening he was going to preach about the greatest thief in that particular town. At this point one might think of several people that he would talk about. The next evening he spoke about "the thief on the cross," and indeed he is the most popular thief in any city. At this point one might wonder why did one become so popular, or significant.

After over 40 years of attempted gospel preaching, I have encountered many who when the plan of salvation is mentioned, his argument is: what about the thief on the cross? How sad it is to see well meaning people sweep aside many passages that plainly teach that one must be baptized in order to be saved from their sins, such as Mark 16:15-16, Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, and I Peter 3:21, and others we will mention in the lesson. If one can be saved without being baptized for the remission of sins, then we must have a lot of errors in the New Testament, but of course it is just not so! In Matthew 27:38, Mark 15:27, and Luke 23:33 we find the story of this event. At this point of his repentance, our Lord announced his forgiveness, saying: "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

So no honest Bible reader can deny that this man was saved from his sins. So today many will use this passage in an attempt to avoid baptism for the remission of their sins. But the avid Bible reader also knows that at his birth, his crucifixion, that our Lord was living under the Old Testament Law of Moses, and while living and working under that Law had the

power to forgive anyone of their sins (Mark 2:10). But when our Lord died upon the cross and shed his blood it ushered in a new plan for the redemption of all sinful mankind. When our Lord was baptized he set a new precedent, or example for all of mankind. Before his ascension into heaven he commanded his apostles to preach and to baptize every obedient sinner unto the remission of their sins. If there were no other places where this was taught in the New Testament, it would still be enough. Therefore, baptism is made a condition of salvation under the New Testament but was not a condition under Abraham, Moses, or David.

In order to verify that baptism is a part of conversion in the New Testament, we can read the accounts of 3,000 on Pentecost in Acts 2, the Samaritans in Acts 8:12, Saul of Taurus in Acts 22:16, Cornelius in Acts 10:47; Lydia in Acts 16:15; the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:33, the Corinthians in Acts 18:8, and those of Ephesus in Acts 19:3. How many more would the Lord have established to make his point? Even in the days of John the Baptist there were those that sought to avoid John's baptism (Luke 7:30), "But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him." I am all too afraid that most are repeating history all over again failing to obey the Lord's simple plan given to save them, but sadly, it will be to their own destruction. No one will be to blame but themselves, your parents, your preacher, even your spouses, because if you can read the Bible all these plain teachings are given to save you. It will be your fault, think about it! The Hell of fire awaits all the disobedient (Revelation 22:8). Let us help you to avoid this tragic end. Attend with us this Lord's day at 262 Broadway.

Sincerely, Bob Casey, (1-859-369-4165), anytime

BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Lamentations in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Which book could be summarized, "By human standards you're looking OK, but by God's, you're failing"? Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah
3. From Genesis 41, who had the vision of seven fat cows coming

out of a river? Adam, Moses, Pharaoh, Abraham

4. Who was suspended by a lock of hair between heaven and earth in a vision? Samson, Esau, Elijah, Ezekiel

5. What church did John describe as one with an "open door"? Sardis, Philadelphia, Antioch, Smyrna

6. From Acts 10, where did Cornelius encounter an angel? Temple, Well, House, Field

Answers on bottom of Page 12

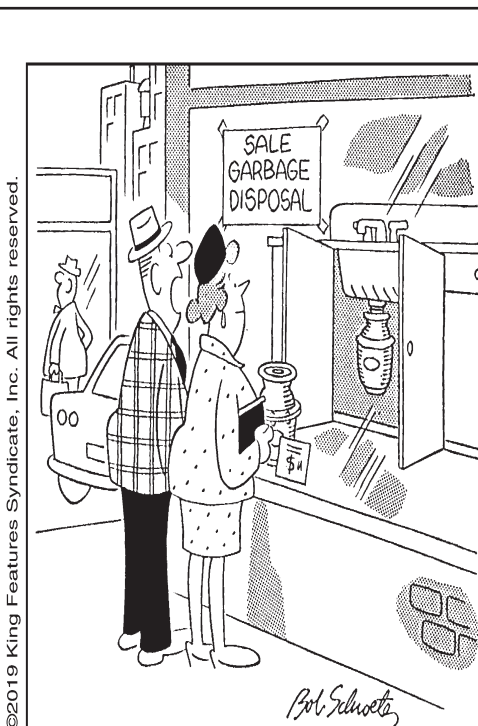
Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in stores and online.

Americanisms



"In real life, every person is the leading man or woman. We don't think of ourselves as supporting or character actors."
— Wallace Shawn

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SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Inward

WORNING

Brutal

VAEGAS

Charm

ELFTART

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VOLGER

TODAY'S WORD
