

Something Was Missing



by Dawn Reed
E. Ky. Columnist

"If you hear our smoke alarm, everything is fine." I texted our neighbor after it went off the fourth time, lest he come over with a water hose and/or the fire department. He sent back a thumbs up emoji.

My beloved and I fanned the sensors, opened the windows, and even brought in a box fan. Still smoke hung in the air.

I make biscuits. And my family loves them. Whenever my kids are in, they can always count on buttery homemade bundles of goodness. Last Saturday morning, I set to work early, cutting the but-

ter into the flour, then adding the buttermilk. I patted out the biscuits into round shapes and placed them on the cookie sheet. They looked the same, but something seemed different. I tasted a pinch of the batter. They tasted different, too, like something was missing. Still, I put them in to bake at 450 degrees, as usual.

A few minutes later, I peeked in at the biscuits. They were still the same size as when they had gone into the heat. Something was wrong. Suddenly, smoke began billowing out of the oven! I turned on the exhaust fan and opened the window. And then . . . the

smoke alarm went off-the first time.

What the thunder was going on? I made the biscuits the same way I always did. I used the same type of butter, the same pastry blender and buttermilk. But . . . someone trying to help had put all-purpose flour in the self-rising flour bin. Salt and baking powder were what was missing! The butter in the dough had melted and dripped onto the bottom of the oven. Hence the smoke.

Salt and baking powder are necessary for biscuits to rise to all that they are meant to be. Reading God's Word and spending time in prayer

are necessary for followers of Christ to rise to all they are meant to be. If we neglect daily reading of Scripture and being in contact with our Heavenly Father, we may look the same, but eventually-when the heat is on-it will become clear that something is missing. Alarms will sound in our hearts (the Holy Spirit at work!), alerting us that there's a problem.

Psalm 119:147 shares a wonderful recipe for good day: "I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in Your Word."

After the smoke cleared on Saturday, my family decided to have toast.

Seeds of Hope



Can you remember a time in your life when you thought, "God has abandoned me! I can't find Him anywhere! When I pray, my words bounce back from the sky and when I cry God won't wipe away the tears. What did I do to deserve this?"

Often in our journey to become disciples of Christ we resent the discipline that comes with our calling. We want the journey to be sunshine and flowers and not showers and lightning. Yet in the midst of those times of drought we do indeed wonder. No doubt that's why the Psalmist gave us some choice words of comfort: "The Lord will not abandon or reject His people, He will never forsake His inher-

itance."

The Bible tells us of two men who "went out from the presence of the Lord." One was Cain and the other Jonah. When Cain went out, the Lord left Him alone. He chose not to go after him and bring him back into His presence. But when Jonah went out, the Lord did not choose to leave him alone. Why the difference? Cain was not one of the Lord's - but Jonah was.

Jonah was disobedient to the calling of God but was willing to accept God's discipline. He had a terrible time surrendering to God but God never left him because he did want God's will for his life. God stayed with him and disciplined him because he accepted God's plan for his life. Cain was different. He refused to honor God and do what was right. And God rejected him because he would not give God his best.

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Making the Most of Our Opportunities?

by **BOB CASEY**, preacher
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The definition of 'opportunity' is "to advance one's circumstances and to take advantage of a situation." There are a few others, but this is enough at this time.

First of all, what type of circumstances do many find themselves in today? The thing I wish to point out is this. We may find ourselves so engulfed in the cares and attempted achievements of this life that they may crowd out the most important thing we all are surely facing; that it, the cessation of life.

Solomon said in **Ecclesiastes 3:1-2**, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: ²A time to be born, and a time to die." There we have it very clearly. Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 15:22**, "For as in Adam all die." **Hebrews 9:27**, says, "it is appointed unto men once to die."

Now then! Faced with this information we have at our hand concerning the reality of death, why do so many shun discussion about it? Reasons for each person may vary, but this we know from dying is, that it is a cessation of living here upon this earth. Along with this occasion brings forth an end to all our earthly involvements in a personal way; and also, the opportunity to prepare for the future after our walk upon earth is over.

One time, a man was casually asked, 'How are you doing these days?' His reply was, 'Well, I am making the most of my opportunities.' This is probably a good way to live; that is, if we include godly living and preparations to die. But, sadly, many feel that all opportunity for future advancement ends at the grave. Plus, and for many, it does end the opportunity to live forever after life here on earth is over.

Once an elderly brother replied to the preacher after he had brought a sermon about Heaven, 'I sure am glad to hear that sermon about Heaven for I have an interest in it for many years now, and I have been investing in it every week! What a good manner of life to live. So, investing in earthly things is not wrong,

but to leave out our investing in the future life is but to utterly fail in God's plan for you.

You may be one who has achieved a great amount of prosperity in earthly things, but if you have ignored and left out on your life a plan for your future when death comes upon you, then you have been a complete and utter failure in your earthly life. In **John's 3rd epistle, 1:1-2**, we find this "The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. ²Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

What a greater desire could anyone express to a well-beloved friend? So, as we may wish for earthly prosperity of wealth or health, the main thing is that we must not ignore the prosperity of the soul that lives on after we leave this earth. The poor man in Luke 16:19-31; he enjoyed none of the prosperity that could come to a healthy man because he was crippled. But some time in his misery he had the prosperity of soul by believing and obeying the Lord. So when he died, the Lord sent an escort of angels and took him to Paradise, the intermediate state of the dead, and he was now comforted in this place. Why? Because he had prepared before now. But notice the rich earthly-advantaged man was not so fortunate because he had the same opportunity as did the poor man but did not take time to put preparation to die upon his schedule. How sad!

In closing, is it wrong to lay up for future earthly things. No! Because we are instructed to do it. **2 Corinthians 12:14** says so. But if earthly possessions are the only things we prepare for, we will have made a poor choice of what the Lord intended us to live for, and that is to live with him in his heaven forever.

Why not have the best of both worlds? The abundant life with Jesus here, plus, as it is written in **Ephesians 1:3**, that "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

So, are you making the best of your life here? Only you and the Lord know. So, do not wait until the Judgment Day where all your work will be exposed. Obey the Gospel, get your life in order before it is too late to do so.

If we can help you to do this, call 1-859-369-4165. Sincerely, Bob Casey.

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

The eyes of the arrogant will be humbled and human pride brought low; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.
ISAIAH 2:11



Olmec stone head, Veracruz, Mexico

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BIBLE WORD SEARCH

by Elie's Spiritual Treasures

ISAIAH 64:4

Since **ancient times** no **one** has **heard**, no **ear** has **perceived**, no **eye** has **seen** any **God** besides **you**, who **acts** on **behalf** of **those** who **wait** for **him**.

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F W V H E E L E E I
X E E N N F V H E W
D B C T I A W X S N

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

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Americanisms



"I've never lost a game. I just ran out of time."
— Michael Jordan

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BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of 2 Chronicles in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. How many pieces of silver did Joseph's brothers get when they sold him into slavery? 0, 2, 19, 20
3. Where does it command brides to shave their heads and manicure their

nails? Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

4. From Exodus 28, what fruit was used as a design on priestly garments? Grapes, Pomegranates, Pears, Figs

5. In which Psalms does it talk about grease? 1, 23, 119, 150

6. From 1 Kings, which prophet was fed by birds? Paul, David, Elisha, Elijah

Answers on bottom of Page 12

"Test Your Bible Knowledge," with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in bookstores and online.



"Harold used to throw his _____ around — now all he can do is drag it."

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!

- Peek
- DANGER**
- Guard
- DARWEN**
- Fairy
- PRIEST**
- Stigma
- MESAH**

TODAY'S WORD