



THE BELL

October 2021

Gather, Love, Serve, Impact

Countdowns, Supply Chains, and Us

And so, it has begun. As this is being written there are seventy days until Christmas. It's two weeks before Halloween, forty-one days till Thanksgiving and people are already putting up Christmas decorations. Every year the beginning of the Christmas season seems to be earlier and earlier. Eventually, if we live long enough, we may be singing Christmas carols in July.

As if all of that wasn't enough, due to the pandemic and global supply chain problems we are told there may very well be very little on the shelves to purchase as Christmas gifts. Combine that with everything else that we have dealt with since March of 2020 and it is easy to lose hope for the future, or even for an enjoyable Christmas season. But I hope for those of us on this side of the cross of Jesus Christ that we will not be part of that crowd.

Now before you think this is one of those anti-materialism of Christmas speeches, that's not where this is going. Yes, there is a huge amount of commercialization of Christmas that takes place every year. However, I would argue that that is not necessarily a bad thing. There is a certain level of influence that Christianity brings to the season that effects a larger population than just those who attend church. Even people who are not religious, enjoy the Christmas season. They tend to treat each other and even strangers better at this time of the year. And even people who would not claim to be believers are more inclined to a certain level of spirituality, searching and hope during December, more so than the rest of the year. Christmas and Easter seem to share in this distinction and this influence on the public at large.

Instead of arguing against commercialism at Christmas, maybe we should just let it be. It's the world, let the world be worldly. If we have learned anything over the last few thousand years of history, it is that we will not change the world. The goal isn't to make the church more like the world, or the world more like the church. Part of our calling is to make the difference between the world and the church clear to everyone who can see. Our existence is filled with contrasts. Night/day, heavy/light, light/dark, male/female, and the list goes on, endlessly. This has always been the case and we should look for opportunities to demonstrate the contrast between the world and the church. I know, that sounds so easy right, but really, how do we do it?

Well, like I said above it's not about changing the world, it's about demonstrating to the world how God has changed us. The easiest and surest way to accomplish this is to demonstrate an attitude in our daily lives that is not like that of the world. Are you like the anxiety ridden and bitter people who are not hopeful for the future? Do you see and telegraph doom and gloom to your neighbors, co-workers, and friends? It's easy for the world to be hopeless but it would seem like hopeless, and Christian are two words that should never be used to describe the same person. Granted we have no idea what tomorrow holds, but we know what our future is. Why struggle or conform to the world when your Savior has defeated that world. Why feel anxiety over things you cannot

change when your Creator has told you, "I will wipe away every tear from your eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." We know how the story ends; we know there is a hope that does not disappoint. More importantly, we know that God uses everything the world throws at us to bring about good on our behalf.

So, I guess the difference between the believer and the world could best be understood or observed by our reactions. We are different from the world because our lives have been changed by a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. That relationship not only causes us to see the world differently than others, but it also causes us to respond to the world differently. If you spend any time reading the Old Testament, it is difficult to not see that God wanted Israel to be different than those who surround them. And the greatest difference between them and their neighbors was in the way they worshipped their Gods. For the pagans, worship was something you did to make the god's do what you wanted them to do. For believers, whether Jewish or Christian, worship was something you did to glorify the one true God. God is most glorified when we, His children, are most satisfied in Him. Satisfying God means walking in His ways, being the people and the church, He has called us to be. He is not glorified in anxiety, worry, bitterness, or fear. He is glorified when we are humble, faithful and willing to be vulnerable with each other. So instead of worrying about supply chains, government mandates or whatever else the world wants to focus on lets be different. Be humble, serve one another. Be faithful, share His "Good News" and live in a way pleasing to Him. Be vulnerable, by depending on and standing with each other when times are good or bad.

Missions

Thank you to those who gave funds to go towards Camp Quaker Heights Scholarships. This helps offset registration fees for next year's campers.

The mission focus for October will be the Home Emergency Fund. Please designate as so on the memo of your check.

MEN MUST BE
GOVERNED BY GOD OR
THEY WILL BE RULED BY
TYRANTS.
-WILLIAM PENN

Calendar

10/13-DEEPER 6:00
meal and 6:45-7:45
classes

10/17-Monthly potluck
with Committee C
hosting

10/20-DEEPER 6:00
meal and 6:45-7:45
classes

10/21-USFW meet at
Mama DiGrado's at 5:45

10/27-DEEPER 6:00
meal and 6:45-7:45
classes

11/3-DEEPER 6:00
meal and 6:45-7:45
classes (Potluck)

11/7-Monthly Meeting

11/10-DEEPER 6:00
meal and 6:45-7:45
classes

11/14-Quaker Men's
Breakfast 8:00

Children's Church has begun for the year and will be the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month.

PreK-5th grades are welcome.

God Works for Our Good

The Bible doesn't say that all things are good, but that God uses all things for good. This is pivotal in thinking about how life unfolds. We have highs and lows, good and bad along the way.

Sometimes people say, "If I had it to do over again, I wouldn't change a thing." I think, if we are honest, all of us would do some things differently. My dad would often say, "If I had it to do over again, I would do..." Generally, he wasn't talking about the big things of life, but how he would do a carpentry project differently.

We all want to know that there is a meaningful pattern to our life., Some people live as though life is a script, and every good thing and every mishap is preordained. Others live like they have total responsibility for everything, deserving credit for

the good and blame for the bad. One view may lead to apathy-whatever will be will be-and the other can lead to prideful control. Both can lead to anxiety about the future.

Paul brings us to perspective. Just as creation groans for renewal, we too groan with longing for things to be good, right, and true. We look forward with anticipation to a realized hope of God's intended good for us and others, but we must consider the realities of pain and suffering, injustice and oppression, loneliness and sadness.

The biblical view is not one of ignoring the bad but looking deeply at it and seeking to cooperate with God to birth something good out of it.

Paul Almquist

Fruit of the Vine

Oct, Nov, Dec 2021

Library Ledge-Fall is Here

Fall is here. It's time to sit back and enjoy a book from our library. We have so many books in our library! Music CD's and DVD movies as well. Come in and see what we have.



MYSTERY FRIEND

Our Mystery Friend for October was born in Waterloo. They went to school in Waterloo and Manchester College. They have a mom, dad, 2 children, 3 step-children, and their only brother is deceased. All of their jobs have been in community service. Favorite foods are bacon, shrimp, and pickled beets. Most people would not know that this person loves eggplant parmesan. He/She has traveled to Ireland. They especially like the sense of family and involvement of all ages at Bangor Liberty.

Letters in our Mystery Friend's name are:

EEEEOINMGRJLLL

The Mystery Friend for September was Natalie Ann Nichols.

Little Rock Ministries Fall Fundraiser

Sunday, October 24, 10:30am-1:00pm @ Dorothy's Senior Center, 1306 17th Ave, Eldora.

The meal will include Spaghetti with Meat Sauce or Chicken Alfredo, Lettuce Salad, Garlic Bread, Chocolate Cake, Ice Cream, Coffee and Lemonade.

All for your freewill donation. You may eat in or pick up and take home. (No drive thru this time.) Profits will help with general expenses of utilities, food for kids' clubs meals and craft projects.

