

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32

“And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”

March 29, 2020

FAITH, TESTED AND TRIED

by Jim Stauffer

Most all of us have heard the story of H.G. Spafford who wrote the hymn, *It Is Well With My Soul*. We know the events of him sending his wife and 4 daughters by ship to England with the plan to join them later. The ship they were on sank in the ocean and the 4 daughters died, yet the mother lived. When she related the story to Spafford she told him all was well with her indicating she had found peace even following the great loss.

He then sailed to join her and the captain of the ship he was on told him when they passed over the place in the sea where the ship with his wife and daughters had sunk. It was then he wrote the words to that hymn.

The story of faith and love connected to that hymn does not stop there. The hymn remained only in word form until Philip P. Bliss wrote music to the words.

Bliss also endured tragedy in his life when he and his wife were on a train approaching Ashtabula, Ohio. As they were passing over a trestle bridge it collapsed and the cars of the train fell into the river below. Bliss was thrown clear of the wreckage and would have survived. But as the story is related, the wreckage caught fire and he returned to rescue his wife. It is said she was caught up in a way he could not retrieve her and he then chose to hold her hand as they were both destroyed by the fire.

Now why do we spend time relating stories such as these? For one thing it shows us just how much courage one has when he truly believes in the Lord and trusts Him with our well being.

The Lord has promised and His promises do not fail. He said to Joshua of old, *“No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. “Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.” (Joshua 1:5–6)* What we

must learn from biblical examples like Joshua and from the lives we observe while here on earth is to be strong and to have courage. Our strength and courage do not come from personal greatness but from the promise God has made to all the faithful, *“Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,” so that we confidently say, “THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?”” (Hebrews 13:5–6)*

I am sure most of us have not faced exactly the same thing we are facing today with “shelter in place” orders or in the case of some, personal quarantine. But there may have been other trials in your life that you have overcome and surely there will be in the future.

Can we not adjust? Can we not trust in the Lord? Can we not remind ourselves, His promise to us is true but will come in His time? *“Wait for the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD.” (Psalm 27:14)*

It is contentment for which we seek. Paul told Timothy that some men would use godliness for material gain and for him to realize, *“But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.” (1 Timothy 6:6–8)* This, of course is the text where we find the love of money, not money itself, is the root of all evil.

So, then, how do we find contentment in godliness? We must be on the same page with our Savior. Jesus told His apostles, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to*

observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19–20) So, how do we understand this thing of being with them to the end of the age? He told Paul in Corinth, *“for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city.”* (Acts 18:10)

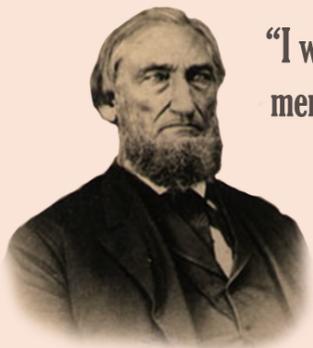
Then we find Paul near the end of his life in prison expecting his execution, saying this, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.”* (2 Timothy 4:7–8)

Now we begin to understand the big picture. We are servants of the Lord. We work to the accomplishment of His will. The King we serve is a Spirit and just as we worship in Spirit and truth, we serve His cause with our spirits. It, therefore, is our spirit, our eternal nature, He watches over in every situation. Our physical lives may well be expendable for His cause and we are to be committed to give our lives.

When we became a disciple, we gave up our lives in order to gain the life He provides (Mat. 16:24,25).

We so want to be with Him in heaven. Let us then live on earth, always trusting Him so that may eventually be.

B.F. Hall: Choosing Truth Over an Education



“I would rather be the humblest member of the Church of Christ than to occupy the loftiest position on earth in any other society.”

—Benjamin Franklin Hall (1803-1873)

 PlainBibleTeaching.com

Benjamin Franklin Hall (1803-1873), at the age of 18 developed a desire to preach. But he felt that he needed an education in order to do it. His father was not a religious man and told him he could preach under one condition – that he leave home and never come back. So the young B.F. Hall left to pursue the education he thought would be necessary for him to preach.

Leaving home with nothing, Hall could not afford to pay for an education. But he had someone willing to pay for him – his brother-in-law. The only catch was that he join the Presbyterian Church. Hall was unwilling to do this, choosing to hold onto the truth rather than compromise to get something that he desired.

“My brother-in-law authorized my sister, as she informed me, to say to me, if I would join the Presbytery, and become a candidate for the ministry, he would send me to Princeton College, N.J. and pay all my expenses there until I graduated in both the Literary and Theological Departments. I was anxious for an education, not, however, to preach Presbyterianism, which I did not believe, but to preach what I understood at that time to be the Gospel. I could not sacrifice principle to policy. Nor could I do such violence to my conscience for worldly honor and renown.

“[...] Had I joined the Presbyterians, where would I have been today? Not a preacher of the gospel, certainly. I would rather be right, however obscure, than to be the Pope of Rome. I would rather be the humblest member of the Church of Christ than to occupy the loftiest position on earth in any other society” (Autobiography of B.F. Hall).

Hall’s convictions were commendable. But they also led him to forfeit his education. Understandably, he was discouraged when this happened. To many, it would seem as though his thoughts of preaching the gospel were ruined. After all, without a formal education, how could he possibly learn to preach effectively? Fortunately, Hall met a young preacher named Harrison Osborne. He recalled Osborne’s advice to him when they first met:

“He told me if I was called to preach, I ought to be at the work. He advised me to quit school and travel with him around his circuit through Fleming, Lewis, Mason and Bracken Counties” (Autobiography of B.F. Hall).

If one is to preach, he does not need a formal education. Of course, he must have a good knowledge of the Scriptures and be able to teach them to others. But as far as a formal education, it is unnecessary.

We should learn two lessons from the early life of B.F. Hall. First, knowing the truth is more important than getting an education. Second, one does not need a formal education to preach the gospel. Whether we intend to devote our lives to preaching the gospel or not, we must value the truth of God’s word over the education found in any institution of man.

Taken from Plain Bible Teaching; Andy Sochor Editor’s note:

Hall did eventually become both preacher and Dentist as he ultimately attained his education.

In All Things Give Thanks!

As I write these words I am hunkered down in my super – secret bunker known only to my family and a few select friends. Actually it's my eldest daughter's former bedroom which I use as a home office, but that's how I feel right now. I am sure there are many reading these words who feel the same. And who wouldn't feel this way? It's like life just got placed on a pogo stick and you've never used one before. (If you are old enough to remember when the Democrats and Republicans respected each other you know the feeling!) With all the bad news dominating the media these days let's remember a few things.

Paul told the Thessalonians, *“Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward,”* **1Thes. 5:16-18**.

What Paul was saying was that in any and every circumstance you can find something for which to give God thanks. Corrie Ten Boom was in a German Concentration camp during WWII under appalling circumstances and was still able to give God daily thanks. None of us have it that bad! It will require us to do some looking, that's all! We have a health-care system that is light-years ahead of anything a century ago, you could start with that! Our food supply is incredibly stable so put that in there. I am sure you can find a few other things!

The Holy Spirit also had Paul write to Timothy, *“For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and discipline,”* **2 Timothy 1:7**. Fearfulness comes from Satan, not God. As servants of the Almighty we have every reason to look ahead with courage because God is with us every step of the way!

Cleveland Reddinger

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

“Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary” **(Luke 1:26-27)**.

Luke's narrative has moved from the temple in Jerusalem to Galilee. Zacharias' vision that his wife, Elizabeth, would bear a son, brought fear and incredulity. When Zacharias asked, “Could it be true,” his lack of faith rendered him without speech until the baby came. Then the same angel, Gabriel, appeared to Mary, bringing her news about another baby. How could this

be true, *“since I am a virgin?”* Gabriel answered: *“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God”* **(Luke 1:35)**. Mary's virginity is integral to the story, but it would not be a problem. A son will come; but not just any son. Mary's son will be called *“the Son of God.”* He would be THE son, to whom all the world is summoned to bend low in worship and praise and thankfulness.

Luke believed in miracles. He said Jesus would be born of a virgin; the angel said so; and now Luke records that truth; there was no hedging on his part, no, well maybe this or that. We believe in miracles, too, don't we? That is, we believe what the Bible says about the birth of Jesus. A virgin was betrothed or engaged to Joseph; her name was Mary; she said she was a virgin. But now, she is going to have a child. Add to Luke's account, the layer of OT prophecy about the virgin birth of Christ. **Isaiah 7:14** says: *“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”* The prophet said the same thing Gabriel said: a virgin would conceive and have a son. The birth of Jesus was normal; the conception of Jesus was supernatural.

This son, born of a virgin, would save people from sin **(Matthew 1:21)**. Can we be saved, really saved, from sin? Is salvation a reality or a myth? While unbelievers deny the virgin birth and its consequences, the Deity of Jesus is exclaimed loudly by the events surrounding the conception and birth of the Savior. He is the *“Son of God.”* He is King on David's throne, ruling in His eternal kingdom. Yet, He was born of a virgin; He lived as a man among men. How did He make His advent into this world? Through the virgin birth.

Impossible you say! Not with God! Faith in the virgin birth shows our respect for God's word. The Bible says this is what happened. We either believe what Luke said, or we don't believe. Do we want to be saved from sin? If we believe we can and will be saved through Jesus, then how can we turn in disbelief from His virgin birth? Why accept anything Jesus said? Why obey anything He commanded? *“Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word. And the angel departed from her”* **(Luke 1:38)**. *According to your word.* Mary believed what the angel said. Do we?

Randy Harshbarger

“I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait, And in His word do I hope.” **(Psalm 130:5)**

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

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Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship
Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

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TAKE A LOOK AT TEMPTATION



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins

Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10