

Light and Life

Practicing Faith

Jazz icon Louis Armstrong said, “If I don’t practice for a day, I know it. If I don’t practice for two days, the critics know it. If I don’t practice for three days, the public knows it.” Success at anything takes diligent, habitual practice!

“Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that *diligently* seek Him” (He 11:6). The faith of a Christian is never stagnant or regressive. “We are not of those who draw back to perdition but of those who believe *to the saving of the soul*” (He 10:39). Faith isn’t something we just have – it is something we must practice!

Practiced faith is growing faith. “Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins” (II Pe 1:5-9). If we are not practicing our faith to grow, our ‘spiritual muscles’ will atrophy!

“Bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come” (I Ti 4:8). The atrophy of physical muscles can have serious health consequences; but how much more serious is the atrophy of our spirit – both for this life and the next!

We must get in the habit of practicing our faith – “praying without ceasing” (II Th 5:17), “searching the Scriptures daily” (Ac 17:11), “take up our cross daily” (Lk 9:23), “discipline your body” (I Co 9:27), “sing psalms” (Js. 5:13), “bringing every thought into captivity” (II Co 10:5), and “examining ourselves” (II Cor 13:5). Let’s practice faith!

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Apatheism

by Doy Moyer

According to James Sire, apatheism (a combo of “apathy” and “theism”), “a term coined in 1972 by sociologist Stuart D. Johnson, holds that whether God/gods exist is simply an irrelevant question. (Why should I care whether God exists or not? The answer to the question has no practical relevance to my life.)” (The Universe Next Door, 58).

Apathy may well be the last straw. There’s nothing we can do with “I don’t care.” I would rather an atheist argue strongly with me than to shrug with an off-putting “whatever.”

Yet apathy happens among God’s people who know that, of all people, they should care the most. Once we become apathetic, then for all practical purposes we are apatheistic as well, for we are acting as if we don’t care whether God exists. Or if we would say that God exists, we may assume that He, like us, does not really care about what we do. The psalmist speaks of this attitude among the wicked: “The LORD does not see, nor does the God of Jacob pay heed” (Ps 94:7). It is a catastrophic failure to assume that God does not see or does not care about what we do.

There is a reason the Lord told a lukewarm church, “Be zealous and repent” (Re 3:19). We fall into this pattern of thinking that we are just fine, so we need nothing – particularly when it comes to spiritual growth. That failure to pay attention to our growth is fatal. We then leave what is supposed to be our first love and we think it does not matter.

I cannot make an apathetic person care, but I do pray that there is something deeper within our consciences that would spark some level of concern for what we are and where we are going. Do not let any form of apatheism take hold, for it can do no good for anyone.

(edited for space)

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

RADIO PROGRAM

The Bible Speaks



Sunday 9:00-9:30a.m.
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

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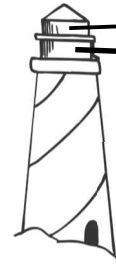
**Be doers of the word
and not hearers only,
deceiving yourselves.
James 1:22**

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Joel Heiligenthal
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
Randy Shell



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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The 30,000-Foot View

The Rocky Mountains look huge from the ground – but from 30,000 feet, not so much. And from space they look as smooth as a baby's bottom. It's simply a matter of perspective.

And our lives can be much the same way. The trials of life can seem enormous – in the moment. Whether it's the break-up with a childhood crush, or the trauma of a terminal diagnosis, the events of life can seem like an unscalable mountain while we are living them. But from 30,000 feet, not so much.

When we are young, and have experienced relatively little of the

world, we may think we have life figured out. But life viewed from old age – from 30,000 feet – looks much different. Life can be a ruthless instructor, so that after 70 years of struggle and hardships we should develop a 30,000-foot mentality, learning humility – and compassion. But sadly, it doesn't always work that way. The world is full of old fools (Job 32:4-8); and even the young can gain 30,000-foot wisdom – if they will go early to the Source (Pr 1:1-4).

The key to a 30,000-foot perspective is to focus on **eternity** (2 Co 4:17), because from that view, **all** of life is as smooth as a – you know.

- **WKing**

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: G&K Fletcher, T Tolbert, J&M Swim, J Marshall, S Shell, L&T Deen

Shut-ins: Betty Jo Young, Billie Pennington, Shirley Cole, Mary Lou Lewis

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

SINGING – Tonight is our regular first-of-the-month singing. Bring your voice – and a heart of praise!

SENTENCE SERMON – Satan divides (1 Corinthians, chapters 1-4), while God multiplies (Acts, chapters 1-4).