

Banner

"You have set up a banner for those who fear you, that it may be displayed because of truth." Psalm 60:4



*"Pleasing God,
Making Disciples
of
Jesus Christ"*

A COMMUNICATION MINISTRY OF QUIDNESSETT BAPTIST CHURCH

There is one thing that is absolutely certain about this issue of THE BANNER. It is late. Very late in publishing and mailing.

Being of an inquisitive nature, I questioned why I allowed the lateness of a normally timely newsletter. I am compelled to self-examination with the ever-searching word "why"?

I do believe that the default and easy answer for the "why" question is simply to dismiss it with a vague, "I don't know" or the ever present self-justification, which is always false, "I didn't have time". Neither of us may get off the hook so to speak with this common escapism of responsibility. So, I must confess. I just didn't feel like writing and the result is lateness. Don't

give up on me. You, too, often don't "feel" like it when it comes to doing things. And this extends into all areas of life, not just the newsletter in this case. It takes us into the most important thing in the world - our relationship and growth in our relationship with the Lord Jesus

"We cannot avoid the why when it comes to what we do or don't do in life."

Christ. Take the test. Why do we do what we do for Him? Why do we fail to do what we are supposed to do toward Him? Consistent prayer, love for the church with unwavering faithfulness, hunger for the Word and fellowship with His people?

We cannot avoid the "why" when it comes to the things we do or don't do in our lives. In this issue we will look at the "why" question from the Gospels. It will greatly help our spiritual lives to learn how to answer it honestly!

Inside This Issue

GOSPEL GLIMPSES <i>"Why are you anxious?"</i>	2
THE PASTOR'S PEN <i>"Why do you doubt?"</i>	2
WALKING WITH THE MASTER <i>"Why do you judge?"</i>	3
BOOK REVIEW <i>Assured by God</i>	3
DID YOU KNOW? <i>"Michelangelo"</i>	3
QBC HAPPENINGS <i>"October & November 2006"</i>	4

GOSPEL GLIMPSES

The Sermon on the Mount has long be heralded and rightly so as “the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest Preacher who ever preached”. Jesus unfolds His discourse with clarity, forcefulness, and compassion.

Sprinkled throughout the Sermon are questions asked by Jesus to provoke thinking and obviously self-examination designed to move one to change. One question which strikes a cord deep in all of us is found in MATTHEW 6:28. It begins with these words, “And why are you anxious?” Allow me to add contemporary commentary on this question, “Why are you worried? Why do you fret? Why are you getting in such a frenzied state of anxiety potentially causing physical

pain?” We all face it, but we all do not respond in the same way and that is the difference maker.

Last Thursday the worry monster raised its ugly head. I was close to time for an appointment for a counseling session and my glasses were no where to be found! Scouring both my office and home, the search ended in vain. Immediately, the monster began to inject the possibilities - “How can you counsel when you cannot even read your Bible? How in the world will you preach when your notes will be as blurred as the fog on Narragansett Bay?” You know the scenario. When worry or anxiety begins, the “what if’s” can easily take over and I have found they are never good!

So, how do we answer the question Jesus presents?” We cannot say, “I don’t know why I worry.

It’s just my nature.” In some ways we would be right. It is our nature and that of sin. Foremost we have to be willing to say and mean that all worry or anxiousness is sin. I know that is simplistic but true. What is the next step in overcoming this and not be guilty of dishonoring the Lord? Here is one suggestion. Lean and believe (really believe) that God is sovereign. Not just the language, but deep inside combat the worry with this on-going realization. God is in control of every single detail unfolding in your life. I realize old habits die hard, and right thinking toward worry is achieved through refusing wrong thinking toward worry. Trust God to be God.

By the way, I found my glasses and my worry was turned into a lesson of humility and submission. He knew where they were all along!

THE PASTOR’S PEN

David Pitcairn served as a minister in the Orkney Islands, Scotland in the nineteenth-century. He wrote a book entitled, Christ Our Rest and addressed the doubts and fears a believer encounters in life. Pitcairn wrote, “Although sanctified by the Spirit of Christ, Christians must continually battle against indwelling sin. It is not surprising that as the Christian life is chiefly characterized by faith and repentance, the Christian’s struggles are largely with manifestations of doubt and fear.”

Whether we admit it openly or inwardly, this tactic of Satan manifests itself throughout the life of a believer. Just a brief reading of church history reveals great saints who encountered doubt. John Newton, author of the famous hymn, “Amazing Grace”, wrote, “When I turn my eyes within, all is dark, and

vain, and wild; filled with unbelief and sin, can I deem myself a child?”

That leads us to the question our Lord gave to Peter during the familiar account of him walking on the water with Jesus - “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” (MATTHEW 14:31).

“The presence of doubt does not mean the absence of faith.”

The lessons from Peter’s doubt are obvious and ones we have heard taught and preached time and time again. There went Peter’s eyes off the Lord and onto circumstances. There may have been Peter’s prideful astonishment at what he thought he was doing on his own. Many lessons stem from this account of doubt for our application. Let me offer one as we work through the very real issue of doubt. The scriptures state

that Peter “saw the wind and he was afraid” (MATTHEW 14:30). How do you “see” the wind? You may see and feel the working of the wind but “see” the wind? Jesus tells us the new birth is like the wind - you hear its sound but you don’t know where it comes from or where it goes (JOHN 3:8).

One of the most aggressive ways doubt arises when sense (feelings, perception) overrides objective truth by means of the scriptures and the Lord Jesus. When this occurs, the fuel for doubt pours forth and that fuel is what Peter experienced - fear. And if doubts persist, the fear may be as paralyzing as Peter exhibited.

So, how do we overcome doubt? We persist in faith in the powerful Word, both in its written application and living experience. As we do, we will find “little faith” giving way to “great faith” - the slayer of doubts!



ASSURED BY GOD

Edited by Burk Parsons

R & R Publishing

Hardback, 200

The book is best described from the forward written by R. C. Sproul, "The key to fruitfulness is to have a life that is founded solidly on the assurance of one's salvation in Christ. The unsure Christian is the Christian who lacks stability in his or her faith. The unsure Christian is easy prey for the assault of Satan, who does everything in his malevolent power to undermine the Christian's confidence of salvation in Christ. A Christian who lacks such confidence can easily become trapped in insecurity and may lack the boldness to venture into the domain of a fallen world."

If you are struggling with assurance, let this book help in the battle!

QUOTABLE QUOTE

"The true cure for self-righteousness is self-knowledge."

J. C. RYLE

If you were sought out to help

evaluate the health of the church, where would you begin your assessment? Actually sought out or not, we all evaluate church. Many well-intentioned people evaluate the church by its programs or activities. Though a part of the process, it is not the end of the process. And it certainly is not the primary part of the evaluative process.

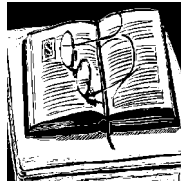
True assessment begins not with actions but with attitudes. In keeping true to our question format in this issue of the Banner, Jesus exposes us to one of the most predominant and glaring deficiencies in the church today and one that not only brings hurt but discredit to His bride - the church. Here is the penetrating question - "Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the

WALKING WITH THE MASTER

log that is in your own eye?" (MATTHEW 7:3). The deficiency, really sin, is judging one another. I did not say discernment of situations to safeguard sheep but wrong and critical judgment of each other. This is manifested by critical speech and the attempts to read motives. Charles Spurgeon once said, "Only God has allowed Himself to see the human heart." It is not only dangerous for individual spiritual health, but it cripples the church in her witness and effectiveness.

So, what is the solution to a judgmental spirit or tongue? It is found in allowing judgment to begin and end where it belongs - with God. This was Paul's position (I CORINTHIANS 4:3-5), and it is the only solution to prevent hearing Jesus ask, "Why do you judge"?

DID YOU KNOW?



Our focus this issue is on the well-known and famous artist Michelangelo.

Whether a true believer or not, he was a historical person of great impact.

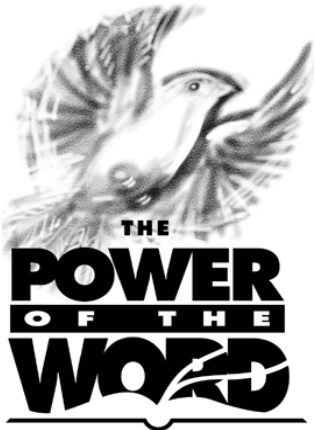
- Michelangelo's reputation was so immense that contemporaries lauded him as "the divine Michelangelo". But before his death the aging artist wrote to a friend that he was only a "poor man and of little value, a man who goes along laboring in that art which God has given me for as long as I possibly can."

- Michelangelo's ceiling of the Sistine Chapel may be a feast for the eyes, but painting it was no picnic. The cramped position atop high scaffolding for four years caused him enormous discomfort. He spent so much time looking up while working on the ceiling that it was some time before his eyes could adjust to looking down again. For a while, he had to read things by holding them over his head.
- Michelangelo had good insight toward experiencing hard times and circumstances. He said, "Do not fret, for God did not create us to abandon us."

QUIDNESSETT BAPTIST CHURCH
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Questions for the heart

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QBC HAPPENINGS

OCTOBER 2006

- Young at Heart Fellowship will be held on *Tuesday, October 10th*
- Leadership training will be conducted *Tuesday, October 31st*

NOVEMBER 2006

- Young at Heart Fellowship will be held on *Tuesday, November 14th*
- Evangelical Minister's Fellowship combined church Thanksgiving service will be held on *Sunday at 6:00 p.m. November 19th*
- QBC Family Thanksgiving Day service will be held at *8:30 a.m. Thursday, November 23rd*
- Leadership training will be conducted *Tuesday, November 28th.*

THE QUIDNESSETT

Banner

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QUIDNESSETT BAPTIST CHURCH

6356 Post Road

North Kingstown, RI 02852

401-884-9111

Email: office@qbchurch.org

Website: www.qbchurch.org