

Looking Forward to Bible Study

"My eyes anticipate the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word." (Psalm 119:148)

Kids like to go to Bible class. They come into the building and head straight for their classrooms. When they come out they can't wait to show Mom and Dad what they did. I've seen considerable disappointment on some little faces, and at times even tears, when on Sunday evenings they march off to class, only to be told this is not class time.

How about adults? Do we have the same enthusiasm for Bible study? Some do. They always read the text and answer questions ahead of time. Their questions and comments indicate they have been thinking about the text, either forming an opinion or perhaps wondering what something means. Others show less interest. They rarely bring their lesson books, and when they do the book is likely blank. Some are just as likely to be absent as present. They view the worship hour as mandatory but the Bible study hour as optional. When such little value is placed on public study, it would be surprising indeed if much private study takes place.

The psalmist eagerly awaited nightfall, when "the daily grind" ended and he was free to reflect on God's word. What do you do with your spare time?

- by Frank Himmel

Mark Twain on 'Scientific' Conjecture

Mark Twain in Life on the Mississippi, tells how much the river had shortened itself by cutoffs in his own life- time: "The Mississippi between Cairo & New Orleans was twelve hundred and fifteen miles long one hundred and 76 years ago. It was eleven hundred and eighty after the cutoff of 1722. It was One thousand and forty after the American Bend cutoff. It has lost 67 miles since. Consequently its length is only 900 and 73 miles at present. Now, if I wanted to be one of those ponderous scientific people, and 'let on' to prove what had occurred in the remote past by what had occurred in a given time in the recent past, or what will occur in the far future by what has occurred in late years, what an opportunity is here! Geology never had such a chance, nor such exact data to argue from! Nor 'development of species,' either! Glacial epochs are great things, but they are vague, vague. Please observe:

"In the space of 100 and 76 years the lower Mississippi has shortened itself 200 and 42 miles. That is an average of a trifle over one mile and a third per year. Therefore, any calm person, who is not blind or idiotic, can see that in the Old Oolitic Silurian Period, just a million years ago next November, the lower Mississippi River was upwards of one million three hundred thousand miles long, and stuck out over the Gulf of Mexico like a fishing rod. And by the same token, any person can see that 700 and 42 years from now the lower Mississippi will be only a mile and 3 quarters long, and Cairo & New Orleans will have joined their streets together & be plodding comfortably along under a single mayor & a mutual board of aldermen. There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact."

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord..." (Psalm 33:12)

"When America ceases to be good, it will cease to be great," said Alexis de Tocqueville. In this statement we are reminded that the greatness of a nation does not rest in its military power, social advancements, political acumen or its national wealth. A nation's greatness is found in the quotient of its righteousness. Righteousness is the determining factor in a country's future. Solomon, the wisest of men, said "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

Theodore Roosevelt warned, "The things that will destroy America are prosperity-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, the love of soft living and the get-rich-quick theory of life." Is

it possible that this day is drawing near? To a great extent our objectives have become: success, status, and security. These are followed closely by self-indulgence, pleasure, and comfort. Our permissive society turns freedom into license, rights into riots, and pornography into profit.

Concerned about a higher standard of living, we often fail to live by a standard. Riches are elevated above righteousness; power over piety; and science above the Savior. We abandon the moral law then shake our heads in disbelief as crime increases. Look out, America! Remember the words of Will Durant: "No great nation has ever been overcome until it has destroyed itself."

If you really desire to be a patriot; if you are truly concerned about America; if you earnestly want God to bless her – Then live a life in harmony with the will of God.

- by John Gipson

Consistency

Consistency is a key to success in almost any endeavor. In business, in school, in athletics – in fact, in every conceivable realm -- consistency is fundamental to achieving success. We submit that consistency is also vital to success as a Christian.

There are some who go through periods of high interest and energy. For a time they will attend every assembly. They will speak to neighbors and co-workers about Christianity. They will actively pursue every possible opportunity to do good and serve the Lord.

Then, without apparent cause, these same people will enter into a period of almost total indifference and apathy. They stop attending Bible classes. They frequently miss the worship assemblies. They have no interest in personal work. They stop growing as a Christian and show signs that they are actually becoming much weaker.

Folks who exhibit these "hot & cold" cycles in their service to God will not be successful in the long term. The "lukewarm" results of their inconsistency will not please the Lord. In addressing such Christians He said: "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth." (Revelation 3:16).

We need to be "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58). Christian, are you consistent? Think!

- by Greg Gwin