

April 30th, 2022

Brethren,

As we endeavor to bring April to a close, we are appreciative of the opportunities that have been afforded us to continue to work in the kingdom. It has truly been interesting.

The month began with a request from one of the grandchildren regarding a letter received from a “friend” regarding Pentecostalism. After the “friend’s” assurance that everything said was right from the Bible, an investigation was afoot to determine if it was so.

There wasn’t anything in the text that came as a surprise: same ole arguments with a great deal of assumptions and very little Bible. To nail down the assumptions, the writer says, “I assure you everything I’ve told you about in this text is 100% in the Bible.” With that assurance, how could someone go wrong?! 😊

Local evangelism has been limited, but none-the-less productive (I guess). At the time, the upcoming “Easter” service(s) provided a bit of Biblical contemplation. Having dealt with the origin and referring to the brethren being charged with remembering the Lord’s death I explained that we (the brethren) do so every first day of the week. The statement was puzzling to a local Assembly of God “pastor” (another subject in and of itself). On the heels of that, we had a lady visiting in the Bible study (and services) unfamiliar with “Easter,” so I took the opportunity in class to at least touch on some high points. I had spoken with the young lady (that has heard me speak on occasion), a day or two before the Sunday assembly and she said, “I’ve heard you speak and try to follow along, but by the time I find the passage(s) you have moved on.” So, a day or so before, I provided her with a list of the passages to which we would be referring and provided her with a Bible and placed the pages numbers along side the scriptures. So, the night before, she looked up and read all the passages. She said it helped her greatly and she was able to follow my train of thought and understood more of that sermon than she had of all the others put together (we’re not talking dozens 😊). What is a fella to do? I provide an outline for the brethren to follow during the sermon: should I provide the outline a day prior to the assembly? That, in and of itself, would be interesting since I often complete the circular (containing the outline) late the night before 😊.

There have been calls from brethren checking in on my mental state (💡 if that’s not humorous I do not know what would be). I do appreciate everyone’s concern, but there’s not much I have to say: it is what it is. Bobbi-Jo would be the one to make the evaluation. She has been a trooper and I know it has been a trying time, and often frustrating for her: she is in the ranks of the un-sung caregiver’s club. The evaluation she has made is that, whatever is going on in my brain (which isn’t usually a problem), it is not affecting the delivery of Bible class and sermon material. It is not the work that causes a conundrum, it’s the rest of the world 😊.

In addition to the well-wishing calls and cards, there has been a healthy supply of...(I'll think of the word here in a minute)...phone correspondence (that's it). Connecting with brother Roger Bruner provides both of us the opportunity to discuss our varied studies. We can discuss a bunch of this, and some of that, before the conversations are complete: they are always welcome and edifying. Brother Larry Smith, (elder in San Bernardino, CA), is a regular: discussing matters related to the faith of Abraham, Isaiah's references to Messianic prophecies and related passages in the book of Acts, the procedures of the Jewish Passover, and others that I just flat out did not write down 😞. I had a good discussion with brother Jim Wilson in Reno, NV, related to the faith and works of Abraham. Jim, and his wife Debbie, are in an exceedingly difficult work in their area. Notwithstanding, they continue to persevere (persevere, that is short for stronger than horseradish). In addition, I get occasional emails from brother Steve Fontenot. I try not to respond because I know, as sure as I do, he is on the other end, shaking his head, and thinking...what is wrong with that boy? 😊

The focus of the Sunday a.m. sermon is exploring the establishment of a solid foundation: listed on the website under "Grace and Faith." Sunday a.m. Bible study is surveying a study of the book of Acts. Do not recall who it was, but one of the brethren stated that we have spent more time with Cornelius than Peter did. Nevertheless, it has been an edifying study for me, if for none other. Sunday and Wednesday evening studies have focused on the prophets. Focus is centered on, what I like to call the Faith, Fortitude, and Frustrations of the Prophets. And yes, I will no doubt be putting together a series on the subject. Not sure how I ended up with the process, but it seems that everything I study ends up in a series. I have failed to adequately embrace the "Stand up, Speak up, Shut up and Sit down" method of preaching.

Here is one for the cud. I studied with a gentleman who has the desire to obey the gospel: that is good. However, he is undergoing a series of procedures that prohibit baptism: immersion medically prohibited. Having made inquiry of the doctors, all they say is "sprinkle," but no submersion. He asked me about it, and I said, "I do not make the rules. You read the Lord's requirements and verbally stated your understanding without any "interpretation" from me." He said, "I know you do not make the rules and cannot change what the Lord has revealed: that is why I called you in the first place." We have been acquainted for about 50 years. So, at the moment, the recourse is...prayer. He had been taught, all of his life, that salvation was based upon the Holy Spirit entering his heart. He said, "I asked, "how will I know?" They, says he, always said, "Oh, you'll know." Well, that never happened, so, he called me to help him understand how the Holy Spirit works. He said, "I will not resist him if he comes, but he hasn't." So, after two-three hours of study, discussion, and understanding it was he who said, "What shall I do?" Then I had him read Peter's answer to that very question: and he believed. So...time will tell. I hope I got that all straight. The Lord has blessed him with improved health and I'm fairly certain that he will want to be baptized as soon as his wounds heal sufficiently to allow it.

Reading/research material has been all over the board: Edersheim: Temple ministries, Wisdom, etc. | Milligan on Hebrews, and other related rabbit holes | WOKE movement, it's attack on the family, and related articles | Two projects "Lest we lose them all," and "Conflict Resolution | Two gospel meetings scheduled for this year.

Bobbi-Jo and I had planned (over fifty years ago) a two-week trip outside of the continental United States. We have made three or four attempts over the years, but circumstances prohibited: two years ago, it was Covid. This year, and with me dealing with Lyme Disease (tick bite, etc., or some such) which I do not even know what the symptoms are, and post-covid aftereffects, my primary doctor said I needed to stay home. So, we decided to forget the trip and stay in the Continental US. Who knows? We may decide to go to Texas, that's almost out of the country. We'll figure out something once my health allows. Some indicate that may be months, years, or sometime in-between. According to Bobbi-Jo, my mental and emotional states have greatly improved, with only occasional relapses.

Websites: [Home < Plainview Church of Christ \(cocplainview.com\)](http://cocplainview.com) and [Jones Church of Christ in Jones, Ok \(jonescoc.org\)](http://jonescoc.org) remain a part of our weekly (sometimes daily) labor. I appreciate the brethren at Plainview for allowing me to post articles therein.

We want to express our appreciation for all the prayers, calls, encouragement and support the brethren have provided: may it bring forth "fruit that increaseth your account" (Phil. 4:17). I appreciate the cards we've received from the brethren in London and Somerset, KY.

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