

Our Way Day by Day

By Dan Shipley

Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). The "outward man" is simply the house of the inward man. Day by day that house is "decaying" and wasting away. Who, past forty, needs reminding? Nevertheless, with relentless rapping on the door of our minds come the messengers of aging; the hoary head, the stooped shoulders, the wrinkled skin, the dimmed vision, and all the other infirmities that won't let us forget what Paul says. All men know that much. But God's people know something else.

They know that just as surely as the outward man is decaying, the inward man is being renewed day by day. They know that for the faithful Christian, growing older means growing better. He is growing better because he is growing in the knowledge of God's word. As the newborn babe, he continually longs for the "spiritual milk which is without guile" (1 Pet. 2:2). As he grows in knowledge of the word, he also grows in the faith that is produced by the word (Rom. 10:17). As he grows in knowledge and faith, he also grows in usefulness to the cause

of Christ. He is renewed in his determination to live closer to the Lord, to do what is right and oppose all wrong. In his spiritual growth, the aging Christian has learned that death is not the end, but merely a transition to something very far better. The happy anticipation of being in the Father's house makes leaving this worn out tabernacle a welcomed blessing!

That's why the apostle Paul saw death as gain. But death is gain only when living is for the Lord. Every living man knows that he will keep his appointment with death (Heb. 9:27). He should know that living for the Lord is living at its best because it is living that prepares for death. Though the outward man is perishing and bound for the dust, we nourish and cherish him; we spare no expense to care for him and tend to his needs. Will we neglect the needs of the inward man that we know will survive the grave? With every tick of the clock and every beat of the heart we are getting closer to the end of this life.

The question is are we getting closer to heaven?



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The Auburn Beacon



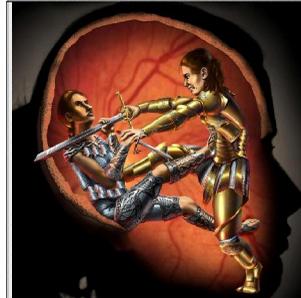
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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Competition for the Mind

By Dee Bowman



Thought to Ponder

He who will not command his thoughts will soon lose command of his actions.

Do You Have a Bible Question?
Call (334) 734-2133 or E-mail: LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM
Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

In Ephesians 4:26-27, Paul commanded, "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil." This passage is variously translated. Phillips renders it, "Don't give the devil that sort of foothold." Goodspeed's translation says, "You must not give the devil a chance." The Twentieth Century New Testament gives it, "And give no opportunity to the Devil." The thought in all of these is the same: mainly, don't give the Devil residency in your mind.

Someone has said, "You can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from nesting in your hair." In the same way, you can't keep the Devil from making periodic

There is a battle raging—a serious, eternal-life threatening battle. We can lose it if we are not careful. The mind is the battleground. Choose your associations carefully and well.

trips through your mind, but you don't have to give him a place to stay.

In this age, there is a constant bombardment of the mind by the Devil. He is seeking a place to stay. And one of the ways he does it is by advertising. Our society is addicted to it. Its influence in our lives is astounding.

This competition for the mind

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Check Us Out On the Internet: www.aubeacon.com

Classes and Meetings this Week

Kid's Class at the Building at 5:15
All Are Invited

Gospel Meeting at the Southeast church in Montgomery
Thur.-Sat.—& PM
Lonnie Oldag speaking on "The Greatest of These is Love"

Sick

Fran Snyder
(Mother of Carla Humphrey)

Pam Dial
(Laura Weldon's Mother)

Albert Boyles
(William Herd's Relative)

Rose Tate
(Toni Herd's Cousin)

Adriana Mininno
(Haley Chittam's Cousin)

Dave and Betty Bradford

Ed Mort
(Friend of Sharon Bailey)

"Grandmama" Odessa Wyatt
(Dyle's grandmother)

Blake Whatley
(Hunt's neighbor)

Dave Brown
(Friend of the Lanier's)

Marty and Aubrey Meeks
(Toni Herd's Nephews)

Carrie Chavers
(Friend of Sharon Bailey)

Carol Dickerson

Chick Wade

Rachel Bragwell

Lori Holloway

Wes Brown

News and Notes

☑ Congratulations to Seth and Laura Humphrey on the birth of Pepper Marie.

☑ Let's remember our expectant mothers: Laura Weldon, Anna Miller and Nichole Pender.

☑ Joel Black lost his remaining living brother recently.

☑ Chris Long has successful back surgery and is doing well in his recovery.

☑ Susan Sullivanne is having knee surgery on March 23.

☑ Prayers are requested for the Bell and Brown families in the loss of their daughters (friend of Sharon Bailey)

☑ Audio CDs of Today's Sermon will be immediately available.

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is relentless and indefatigable. Just as the means is subtle and effective. Secularism is disguised as success; materialism wears the mask of excellence; free love is passed off as freedom of human expression. The result is indifference toward God.

Those who give over to this cunningly devised plan will find it hard to leave. Once they enter this world of "let me do it my way," they quickly become so mired that only the strongest will can divorce them from their predicament. The appetite for such loose activities cannot be satisfied and calls for an ever-deepening, always increasing evil just to top the last "satisfaction" they enjoyed.

Such careless subscription to the devil's ploys results in disaster. The giving of oneself to a life without restraint results in a cluttered, undisciplined mind, one difficult to penetrate and often without much feeling for others. Such thinking dampens the spirit of purpose, causes its adherent to be tentative in his plans, temporary in his judgment. It restrains the inclination to grow—intellectually, spiritually, or any other way.

It is short-sighted, foolish to listen to promises of the sort we see everywhere displayed by our adversary. Three things stand out to me as necessary to guard against the Devil's ef-

forts to capture the mind:

1. Make sure your focus is right.

Where are you looking? In what direction are you heading? Like Paul, we must "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (**Philippians 3:14**). The Hebrew writer said of Jesus, ". . . who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross . . ." (**Hebrews 12:2**). We need to set before us the hope of heaven.

2. Develop a determination toward self-regulation in your life.

Paul said it was necessary. "But I keep under," (buffet – ASV) my body and bring it into subjection: that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (**1 Corinthians 9:26-27**). The life that is not managed properly vacillates, is tentative, not fixed on course.

3. Return to a regular association with truth.

It is just so that we are influenced by our companions. When you tolerate associations with the Devil, you are just apt to be like him. But when you are in constant contact with the truth, it will be the pervading influence in your life.

There is a battle raging—a serious, eternal-life threatening battle. We can lose it if we are not careful. The mind is the battleground. Choose your associations carefully and well.



Hope is to be Found in Christ

By Bill Hall

"I wish I could think that I have come just a short distance toward being as prepared as he was," a woman said to me recently concerning a man who had died. Her statement was intended to be an expression of confidence in the deceased, and I shared her confidence, but the truth is: if that lady is living a faithful life in Christ, she is fully as prepared as any other person in Christ.

Let not the young in the faith, then, be intimidated by the attainments of the more mature in the faith. Let not the mature become proud and over-confident. All must be faithful.

Entrance into heaven will not be based upon a long list of credentials built up accumulatively through the years (so many new converts, so many passages memorized, so many lives influenced, so many years in the service of the Lord, so many sermons preached, etc.), the person's chances of going to heaven being enhanced with each new credential. Entrance into heaven will be based on the merit of Christ's blood. One prepares for heaven by entering into Christ through faith, repentance, and baptism (**Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3**); living a faithful life in Christ; and dying in Christ. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" (**Rev. 14:13**). This is the true basis for one's hope, whether he has been a faithful Christian for fifty years or is just rising from baptism in newness of life.

Now if the lady had said, "I wish I could think that I have come just a short distance toward being as Godlike as I believe he was," that would have been different. Here is the prevailing purpose of every Christian, to become more like God every day. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is

pure" (**1 John 3:3**). Regular worship, liberal giving, unceasing prayer, concerned benevolence, unfeigned love of the brethren, self-control, etc.—all of which are commanded of God—are a means to the end of becoming like Him, or as stated by Jesus, "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (**Matt. 5:45**). One who ignores these commands shows his contempt for God, becomes

unfaithful, ceases to be like God, and loses his hope of heaven. On the other hand, one who does conscientiously obey the commands of God becomes more Godlike, and the person who has done so for fifty years will obviously have attained a greater degree of Godlikeness than one who has just begun the Christian life. But while we recognize different levels in attainment toward becoming like God, all who are faithful, and are thus purifying themselves as He is pure, share equally the hope of heaven. None has earned his way to heaven. All are dependent on God's grace, and His grace is extended to all the faithful.

Let not the young in the faith, then, be intimidated by the attainments of the more mature in the faith. Let not the mature become proud and over-confident. All must be faithful. All must be growing. All must become more and more like God. And all must die in the Lord. And to all who do so, the Lord will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou has been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

