

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

December 25

2011

## MISSING THE OBVIOUS

I often have people talk to me about various problems they are having in their lives. Sometimes it involves problems husbands and wives are having in their relationship. It may have to do with their working with other brethren. Whatever the problem may be I have learned that the solution is often very obvious. It usually demands some change in the person discussing the problem but for some reason the solution has escaped their attention.

I had this fact impressed upon my mind several years ago by a young man who was a student in a Bible class I was teaching. Someone had made a comment about the number of people who were always late for Bible classes or other periods of worship. After some discussion on this matter this young man spoke up and, with all seriousness, said, "*James, I know that I have a problem along this line and I just can't understand why I am late all the time. I leave home at the same time every Sunday.*" Well, after the whole class stopped laughing, the young man realized what he had said. I asked him if he had ever considered that this just may be the reason he was late all the time. To this young man's credit he started leaving home earlier and I do not remember his being late again.

Maybe the solution to all our problems is not quite as obvious as the solution to this young man's problem but I am convinced that if we will examine ourselves very closely we may find the answer to most, if not all, of our problems.

If you are having problems in your home what are you doing to correct those problems? Are you truly seeking to do all you can to be

a good husband or a good wife or are you trying to find everything you possibly can to criticize in your mate. If you have a problem with a brother in Christ, what effort do you put forth to establish communication with that one in view of solving the problem?

Many of us spend more time talking and complaining about our problems than we do in seeking solutions. If we would use as much time and effort in seeking solutions as we do in complaining we may be amazed at how obvious the solution really is.

*James Hahn*



## IS HE AN ATHEIST?

Sometime ago a letter appeared in a Kentucky newspaper written by a man who was very upset over the fact that some of the children in his community thought he was an atheist "*just because I don't go to church.*" He made reference to his concern for his fellow-man and his community service as evidence of his belief in God. It just might be that some of the children in his neighborhood know more about what it means to believe in God and His will than this man does.

The thoughts expressed in that letter reflect the thinking of so many people. They think they can believe in God and at the same time refuse to serve Him as He has directed. I know that just attending the public worship does not make one pleasing unto God within and of itself, however we must recognize that there are many things God would have us do that we cannot do if we fail to assemble ourselves together. How can one say that he really believes in God or say that he loves God if he will not even take advantage of opportunities to worship and praise Him?

The person who truly believes in God will demonstrate that faith by faithful service unto Him. Yes, we will help our fellowman and we will do all that we can to make the community in which we live a better place to live, but we must recognize that these are the by-products of being a Christian. The primary goal of the Christian is to so live in this life that he will have that eternal life in heaven with God when this life is over. If we ever lose sight of this goal we have lost sight of just why Jesus had to come to this earth and die the cruel death upon the cross. He did not die on the cross to bring about

social reform or to provide for the physical needs of man. He died on the cross to save men from their sins. Any humanitarian can provide the social and physical needs of men; however only the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse men of their sins.

Do you believe in God? Can the children in your neighborhood tell that you do by observing your actions? Do you take advantage of the opportunities you have to worship and praise Him? True believers do!

*✍ James Hahn*



## PROPER VIEW OF THE BIBLE

People look upon the Bible in different ways. Some view it as the word of God while others see it as simply an antique book, preserved through the ages because of the religious beliefs of people. How do you view it? And even among those who believe it to be the word of God there is a difference in how they look upon the things it teaches. Among those ways of looking at the Bible as God's word are the following:

1. We can do anything the Bible does not specifically forbid.
2. We can do only those things the Bible authorizes.

Do you view the Bible in one of these ways? Which? I believe the proper view of the Bible is #2 and here are my reasons for so believing.

The Bible says it is sufficient to guide man to every good work that God wants him to perform (2 Timothy 3:16,17). Paul warned the Corinthians about the danger of going beyond that which was written (1 Corinthians 4:6). Peter told the saints to whom he wrote that God had given them all things that pertained to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:1-4). When John wrote his short letter to the elect lady he warned her that anyone who went beyond the teaching of Christ did not have God's blessing (2 John 9-11). If the Bible IS the word of God and IF he meant what he said in these passages, then the only logical conclusion one can reach is that we can only do those things the Bible authorizes IF we are going to please God. Now, if we admit the Bible to be the word of God then we are bound to view in this way if we

want to please him. It would be unreasonable for God to give a book of instructions and then to bless people who simply did everything that he did not specifically forbid! Why not just give a book of "thou shall not" and then tell us everything else goes? No, God gave us a book telling us THE THINGS HE WANTS DONE and if we want to receive his blessing then we have to follow these instructions.

I recognize we have to study and rightly divide (2 Timothy 2:15) what God has written. Sometimes this may be a little complicated as we strive to understand what is said and how it is to be applied. We have to make a distinction between simple statements of fact, commands, examples, etc., but after we have done all of that we still have to settle on some view of how we look at the Bible. So, I ask again--do you view the Bible in one of the ways listed in the first paragraph? If so, which? If you did choose the first one then I ask on what basis do you view it this way? I gave my reasons for the second view. Taking the passages I gave in paragraph two how can one uphold view #1? If God gave a book that is complete then we have to follow it. And following it, we have to confine our activities to the things it authorizes. In doing this we can prove all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21; Galatians 6:4) and we can give a reason for our hope (1 Peter 3:15). This reason will be speaking as the oracles of God as Peter said we should (1 Peter 4:11). How do you view the Bible??

*✍ J. F. Dancer, Jr.*

### **Belleville church of Christ**

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[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

#### **Schedule of Services**

Sunday Bible Study. ....	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship. ....	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship.....	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study.....	7:00 p.m.

#### **Evangelist**

James Hahn. .... (317) 745-1507