

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

August 27

2017

## The Time and Day is NOW

Of all the great things about serving God, perhaps one of the greatest is that the Bible spends a great deal of time talking about God's foresight and wise plans for the future. As one continues through the scriptures, he is able to read the fruition of those plans and is shown time and again that what God has promised always comes true. Some seven centuries before Christ, the prophet Isaiah wrote, *"In an acceptable time I have heard You, and in the day of salvation I have helped You."* The Messianic writer continues by saying, *"I will preserve You and give You ..."* (Isaiah 49:8).

The idea of God "hearing" us and "helping us" is profound and powerful. To know that THE Creator of the universe was willing to listen to our concerns and assist us in time of need is humbling. Yet, Isaiah points out that the total fulfillment of these great promises lies in the future and was not for the present.

Some two decades after Jesus lived on the earth as a man, the apostle Paul quoted Isaiah's words about God's open ears and willing hands. Paul, however, goes further by saying, *"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"* (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Our service to God must also be marked with a willing mind. Had God wanted humans to automatically obey Him, He could have made

that happen. Instead, from the very beginning, God gave mankind the ability to choose whether or not he did one particular thing over another. When we serve God willingly, we acknowledge this fact and we tell our Creator that we voluntarily "choose" to be in service to Him. Equally important is the fact that this choice is a "public" one wherein others see our desire to serve God.

It's important for us to know that God can't be fooled. It's equally important for us to know how vital it is to be loyal to the Creator and to serve Him willingly. Not considering these things jeopardizes our relationship with God and hinders our ability to live in full service to Him while setting the right examples for others. We'll never be able to fool Him and, if we remain faithful to His cause, that will never be a concern. **We count it a privilege to serve this great God!**

*Leland Ping*



## Creating a Lasting Remembrance

When considering their temporary existence on earth, most people hope that they'll "leave behind" something of value so that their children, grandchildren, and future generations can remember them and the good they did. Yet, if we're honest with ourselves, we are forced to admit that even if our immediate heirs miss us, remember us, and think back fondly on their time with us, it won't take long before no one is affected by our passing. The wise man Solomon recognized this when he wrote,

***"For there is no more remembrance of the wise than of the fool forever, since all that now is will be forgotten in the days to come. And how does a wise man die? As the fool!"*** (Ecclesiastes 2:16).

Needless to say, this isn't the most comforting thought. To know that any good that we've done or legacy we've left will eventually fade away from the remembrance of any and all men can, for some people, be a very saddening affair. What's more important than future generations knowing our specific deeds is the remembrance that each

of us can create by teaching others the truth, bringing Christ into their lives, and by providing a lost and dying world with the necessary opportunity to know God and the salvation He provides through His perfect Son.

It is often said that we are but one generation away from people who don't know God. How true and how frightening this is. If you don't teach others about Christ and I don't teach others about Christ, then no one will. When we're gone and they're left, it will be impossible for them to teach something they've never learned. It doesn't take long, then, for something as tragic as a completely lost world, void of God's children, to come into existence.

While the thought of physical death is unpleasant for many, we can take refuge in the thought that, even when we're gone from this earth, the remembrance of Christ remains. Think of it: the very words we utter this day can affect countless future generations. While it's true that the men and women of those generations are souls that we'll never meet or know, it's exciting to know that our lives of obedience today and willingness to teach Christ to others is a lasting remembrance that can and will impact countless others whose lives have yet to occur but whose eternities are just as important as our own.

✍️ Leland Ping



## Restoring The Erring

In his letter to the Galatians Paul said, *“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”* (Galatians 6:1). In James 5:18,19 we read, *“Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”*

These passages show that it is possible for a brother to sin and that efforts should be made to restore him. To do this certain things are necessary. First of all we must recognize the seriousness of sin.

Sin separates us from God. Isaiah says, *“But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear”* (Isaiah 59:2). To be separated from God means to be without hope. Paul, in describing the condition of the Ephesians prior to becoming Christians, said, *“That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world”* (Ephesians 2:12).

Also, we must understand and have compassion for those who have sinned. We must recognize that we, too, may fall. Paul said, *“considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”* (Galatians 6:1). He told the Corinthians, *“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”* (1 Corinthians 10:12). The over-confident self-righteous individual will have no success in restoring one who has been overtaken in a fault.

To be successful in restoring the erring we must love God and love the souls of all. We must love His word and have a knowledge of it. We must believe and obey His word ourselves. Luke, in describing the contents of his previous letter to Theophilus, said he had written of *“of all that Jesus began both to do and teach”* (Acts 1:1). Jesus, the master teacher, taught what He practiced. So must we.

✍️ James Hahn

**Belleville church of Christ**  
5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258  
[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
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