

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

May 6

2018

Our Example

Christians need to be concerned about their example and influence. Jesus told His disciples to *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Matthew 5:16). Our number one concern should be to glorify our Father in heaven. We do this by living the kind of life He would have us live. I have been very discouraged by some of the things members of the church post on Facebook and other sites. I see posts of members wearing clothing that is surely immodest. I see members “bragging” about their children going to the prom.

There was a time when things like immodesty, gambling, dancing, drinking alcoholic drinks, etc. were readily condemned by all Christians. Now, these things are not only condoned, but are engaged in by many professing to be Christians. With this thought in mind I would like to share a post my daughter, Jennifer Stout, recently had on Facebook. She said, *“If Jesus were a man on this earth today would you invite him to be your Facebook friend; or, would you be embarrassed for him to see some of your pictures or status updates? Would you invite him to be a guest at your prom; or, would you realize that he would not be comfortable in that atmosphere? Would you want him to hang out with you and your friends; or, would you be afraid that he might drag down the ‘fun’ level. Friends do not be deceived! Christ is with us each and every day. The*

question is are we living our lives to bring Him glory or dishonor? ‘Choose you this day whom you will serve.’”

I would encourage every Christian to consider these thoughts. Your example is either glorifying God or it is not.

✍ James Hahn



Editor’s note: I have often stated that one of the greatest blessings in going to heaven is the fact that we will be in the presence of our Father and Jesus. The following story submitted by Mike Dearing illustrates that truth. The author is unknown. (JH)

THE DOCTOR AND THE OTHER SIDE

A sick man turned to his doctor, as he was preparing to leave the examination room and said, “Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me what lies on the other side.”

Very quietly, the doctor said, “I don't know.”

“You don't know? You, a Christian man, do not know what is on the other side?”

The doctor was holding the handle of the door; on the other side of which came a sound of scratching and whining, and as he opened the door, a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with an eager show of gladness.

Turning to the patient, the doctor said, “Did you notice my dog? He's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. He knew nothing except that his master was here, and when the door opened, he sprang in without fear. I know little of what is on the other side of death, but I do know one thing. I know my Master is there and that is enough.”

Today may there be peace within you. May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be?

Don't Ever Give Up

In 1993, while dying of cancer, Jim Valvano coined the phrase “don't give up, don't ever give up” as an effort to encourage others who were battling cancer to never give up on their hope of defeating their cancer. Now, I would like to borrow Valvano's signature phrase, and I would like to encourage my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to never give up on their hope of obtaining eternal life in heaven, which God has promised (Titus 1:2) to those who faithfully serve Him.

So, my beloved brethren, don't ever give up on your hope of obtaining eternal life, but rather be one who diligently strives to maintain (i.e. keep in an existing state) a healthy spiritual heart (Luke 8:15). How is this possible? Well, when one truly does love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30), and is one who seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33), they will be one who can effectively maintain a healthy spiritual heart.

Also, it is important that one utilizes the power of prayer (Philippians 4:6-7), and when one stumbles and grows weary, just as David did, ask God to “*Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me*” (Psalm 51:10). So, don't give up, don't ever give up, but rather be one who puts first things first, abhor what is evil, cling to what is good (Romans 12:9), and always strive to live soberly, righteously, and godly (Titus 2:12) each and every day of your life.

We also need to be one who never gives up, but rather one who always remains steadfast in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58) no matter what comes our way. You see, life isn't always a bowl full of cherries, for there are and will be some difficult times that will come our way. However, the truth is, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will face adversity (2 Timothy 3:12). So, knowing that, when faced with the various trials of this life, although they may sometimes be difficult to bear and hard to endure, always understand and never

forget the fact that God does care for you (1 Peter 5:7), that the testing of one's faith is profitable (James 1:2-3; 1 Peter 1:6-9), and that our light affliction is but for a moment (2 Corinthians 5:16-18).

Therefore, put on and keep on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Ephesians 6:11-18). For, when one does resist the devil while steadfast in the faith (1 Peter 5:9) he will flee from them (James 4:7). So, don't give up, don't ever give up on your hope of obtaining eternal life in heaven, but rather always run the race set before you with endurance (Hebrews 12:1), keep your eye on the prize (Philippians 3:13-14), and run in such a way that you may obtain it (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

Once more, my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, I encourage you to never give up on your hope of obtaining eternal life in heaven, for as John revealed, we can know that we have eternal life (1 John 5:13). So, with that thought in mind, don't give up, don't ever give up, but rather always sanctify the Lord God in your heart and hold onto the hope that is within you with meekness and fear (1 Peter 3:15-17), and be one who remains faithful unto death so that you may receive the crown of life (Revelation 2:10).

✍️ Brad Phillips

Belleville church of Christ

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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