

Upcoming Events

Panera Bread Open Bible Study:
New location: see church website

Determination

“Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal.” – Henry Ford

“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.”

Thomas A. Edison

“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not: nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not: the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.”

Calvin Coolidge

October Birthdays

3 Betty Heitmeyer

28 Allan Brown

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
(Vacant)

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“If They Do Not Listen”

By Joe Chesser

The story Jesus told about the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16 is fascinating on several points. It gives us insight as to what happens to us after we die. Lazarus was taken by angels to Abraham’s side, a place of comfort (16:25). When the rich man died, he went to a place of torment (16:23). The story tells us that once death has taken place, our destiny is forever sealed (16:26). A great chasm is fixed to prevent movement from one place to the other (16:26). No second chances.

But to me, the greatest impact of this story is how it ends. Why? Because the ending of the story affects every one of us now ... today. The rich man could do nothing about where he was eternally, but he desperately wanted his five brother who were still living on earth to avoid ending up in torment with him. His hope was that if Abraham would send Lazarus back to earth to warn his brothers about the horrors of the place of torment, that they would pay special attention to someone who had come back from the dead, and repent. The rich man knew his five brothers were heading to the same place he was ... and he didn’t want them to join him there.

Abraham’s answer speaks volumes about how people listen to God and His word, both then and now. Abraham told the rich man, *“If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead”* (16:31). In the Scriptures God has *“given us everything we need for life and godliness”* (2 Peter 1:3). There is evidence enough in the Bible for everyone who wants to know how to go to heaven when they die to do so. No new miracles or signs are needed. The apostle John put it this way: *“Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the*

presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:30-31). The problem is not insufficient information. The problem is that most people are not listening to the word of God and doing what it says. The rich man and his brothers had access to God’s way of salvation, but they chose not to live by them, as do many today.

Over and over God warns us about listening to Him. That means hearing what He says and doing what He says. Jesus said the wise builder is the one who hears God’s words and puts them into practice (Matthew 7:24). James warned his readers, *“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says”* (James 1:19). Only those who do the will of God will enter into his kingdom (Matthew 7:21). Our soul is too valuable for us to refuse to listen to and obey God.

Constants in a Changing World

By David A. Sargent

“The only constant in life is change.” – Heraclitus, ancient Greek philosopher. Who could have ever imagined the changes that COVID-19 and the pandemic have brought into our lives? One wonders what additional changes lay ahead.

Living in a constant state of change, it is good to be reminded of some things that do not change.

God is still God. *“For I am the LORD, I do not change”* (Malachi 3:6). The psalmist praised God saying: *“Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will have no end”* (Psalm 102:25-27). God is still God and is infinite in all of His attributes such as holiness, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and love.

Sin is still the world’s greatest problem. COVID-19 is a terrible problem in the world today, but it is not the greatest problem. Sin is the greatest problem because it separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1-2) and dooms one to eternal destruction (Matthew 7:13-14).

The Gospel still saves. *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek”* (Romans 1:16). The Gospel (“good news”) is that although every person has sinned and falls short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), God loves each and every one of us and wants to save us from sin (1 Timothy 2:4). He loves us so much that He gave His one and only Son to die on the cross for our sins (John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

God will save those who obey the Gospel by placing their faith and trust in Jesus (Acts 16:30-31), turning from sin in repentance (Acts 17:30-31), confessing Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10), and by being baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). He will continue to cleanse from sin those who continue to walk in the light of His Word (1 John 1:7-9).

Heaven awaits the faithful child of God. An eternity in heaven where *“God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away”* (Revelation 21:4), is God’s promised inheritance to His faithful children (Romans 8:15-18). Please remember, earth is not heaven, so we cannot expect heaven on earth. Christians, however, can look forward to *“an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for”* them (1 Peter 1:3-4).

In a world that is ever-changing, it’s good to hang on to those things that do not change. God invites each of us to cling to Him and trust His promises. What God has promised, He is able to perform (Romans 4:20-21).