

Attention!

What a great gospel meeting we had with brother
Danny Linden! Outstanding lessons!
Everyone was edified!

Review Regularly...

Living a Wise Life...in an “upside down world”

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart”

“Don’t be afraid”

“Always do good”

“Love your neighbor as yourself”

“Leave vengeance to God”

October Birthdays

28 Allan Brown

November Birthdays

10 Daniel Brown

November Anniversaries

2 Shannon & Susan Hudson

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When Not Seeing is Believing

John M. Buttrey II

We have heard it said for years: “Seeing is believing.” Perhaps we have personally said it hundreds of times ourselves. Even more, without really thinking about it, maybe we have actually even believed it. The problem is this familiar saying is not an absolute truth. Seeing does not always lead to believing.

In the New Testament, there are countless examples of people seeing Jesus perform miracles. Yet not all who saw the miracles He performed came to believe in Him. At times, despite what they saw, people walked away from Him in unbelief (cf. John 6:66-67). As Jesus hung on the cross between two condemned men, only one saw and came to believe.

In the book of Acts, we have the account of Peter and John healing a lame man (Acts 3). As the council considered what to do with the apostles for their (as they saw it) “offense,” we have this admission from them: “But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another, saying, ‘What shall we do with these men? For the fact that **a noteworthy miracle has taken place** through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it’” (Acts 4:15-16 Emphasis Mine). In other words, they saw a great miracle had taken place. However, they did not come to belief in Jesus.

Other similar examples could be offered. The fact is seeing does not always lead to believing. Interestingly, the Bible tells us the greater blessing, in terms of a right relationship with God, comes to those who have not seen, but have believed.

The apostle Thomas was one who apparently lived by the saying “Seeing is Believing.” When the other apostles told him they had seen Jesus alive after His death on the cross, Thomas said, “*Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails and put my finger into*

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

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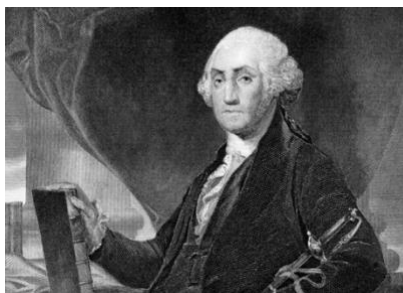
(Address Service Requested)

the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe” (John 20:25). Thomas got his chance to see and believe. Here is how the apostle John recorded the event: Thomas answered and said to Him, *“My Lord and my God! Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, have you believed? **Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed**”* (John 20:28-29 Emphasis Mine).

Pay close attention to the words of Jesus, *“Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.”* Seeing is not required to believe in Jesus. Not seeing and believing is known as faith. Paul said it well: *“**For we walk by faith, not by sight**”* (2 Corinthians 5:7 Emphasis Mine).

The Hebrew writer made it even clearer: *“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, **the conviction of things not seen**”* (Hebrews 11:1 Emphasis Mine).

How ironic! Despite the long-held belief that seeing is believing, the greater truth is spiritual blessings come to those who have not seen but have believed. We call it faith! Scripture tells us faith comes by hearing (not seeing) the word of God (cf. Romans 10:17).



Civility
Bruce Evans

It is said that everybody liked George Washington (well, except for the British), until he became President, then not so much. Now two-hundred and fifty plus years later any number of people are going back and re-visiting Washington and coming away with a decidedly different impression.

It is not the intent in this article to engage in such, rather to consider what was found written by Washington in one of his schoolbooks sometime around 1744. Apparently, what he had done was to copy some maxims that were first set forth in the 16th century in France on the proper behavior for one in the company of others. In total there were 110 rules that he wrote. It was published under the title of “Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation”. It is said to have shaped his life as it was something he strove to practice daily.

Civility is the key word and seems to be in short supply in the current culture. Miriam-Webster defines civility as “civilized conduct (especially courtesy or politeness) or a polite act or expression. Training in humanities.” Humanities is defined as being, “compassionate, sympathetic, or generous behavior or disposition: the quality or state of being humane”. While the word civility doesn’t appear in the Scriptures, clearly the definition and practice thereof are seen. *“And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”* (Ephesians 4:32) *“Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.”* (Colossians 4:6)

Could civility be understood as embracing kindness? Comity: mutual courtesy. If only such would be employed across the breath of society. But that may be a bridge too far so to speak. But what if it were put into practice by those within the body of Christ? Long before Washington jotted down a check list for “Rules of Civility”, Paul pointed out the following. *“Love is patient, love is kind...”* (1Corinthians 13:4 take note of verses five through eight as well) *“...put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness...”* (Colossians 3:12) *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”* (Galatians 5:22-23)

What is so striking is that for the most part we know what is included in civility. Respect enough of self to extend respect to others. So why is it so difficult for us to put it into practice? Especially to those of the household of faith. Take a moment to look at Ephesians chapter four and verse twenty- nine. Then bring to bear what Solomon writes in Proverbs 25:11. *“Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in right circumstances.”* Civility. Kind.