

Bible For Today Update

DECEMBER, 2015

THE BIBLE FOR TODAY MINISTRIES

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THE GLORY OF HIS PRESENCE

*I have walked alone with Jesus in a fellowship divine;
Nevermore can should earth allure me. I am His and He is mine.
I have seen Him, I have known Him,
For He deigns to walk with me;
And the glory of His presence will be mine eternally,
O the glory of His presence, O the beauty of His face:
I am His and His forever,
He has won me by His grace.*

(Words by Oswald J Smith -1890-1986)

The above gospel song has been singing in my heart all day. My mother sang this gospel song often in our Ohio house where I grew up. She had a beautiful voice. It was not affected by fads or pretense. Always, it was her duty, as a gospel singer, to sing the words clearly and with meaning without affectation. She would often say that if the gospel singer brought attention to herself, she or he had failed to bring the message of the song to the listener. She warned me about too much jewelry! "Look in the mirror," she would say, "and take off one piece of jewelry." Nothing should detract from the song's message. My mothers's name was Gertrude Sanborn. You may know her by her poems. (*With Tears In My Heart*--BFT #3196) Listening to her sing was a joy for me as well as all those people who were blessed by her songs. Her *singing-words* was a reflection of her heart attitude towards the Lord Jesus Christ. One admonition was "Do not sing a lie!"

I remember my mother and father, Gertrude and Ren Sanborn. They were wonderful parents. My father grew up as a poor Ohio child--often going to bed hungry--but he worked diligently, supporting his family and glorifying God in His provision. Mother watched over my brain-damaged sister until Mother died. You may know her through her poetry (BFT #3196) The death of our middle, beautiful sister at age twenty was a crushing blow to our family. Yet, God proved faithful and brought my parents into a fuller trust in God and HOPE in Jesus Christ through such trials. When I was a little girl of three, a terrible disease overtook me, spending three years in a children's hospital. Praise God I can walk, married Dr. Waite, and was able to bear five children. Yet, God proved faithful and brought my parents into a fuller trust in God and HOPE in Jesus Christ through such trials.

THANKSGIVING DAY

1621--2015

We've come to that time in our calendar year when national holidays are celebrated! One is Thanksgiving. It is an American holiday and a wonderful day to remember the early settlers in North America--our forefathers.

A few years ago a friend sent us an e-mail that spoke of "THE GREAT THANKSGIVING HOAX." According to a Richard J. Maybury, the fall harvest in 1621 was not bountiful. It was a famine year and the colonists were lazy thieves. William Bradford reported that the colonists were hungry because many people refused to work the fields. They would rather steal food. There was much corruption, confusion, and discontent among them. Most of the harvests would be stolen by night by the unproductive. During the years of 1621, there was little abundance as the official story claims--instead famine and death. I read that the first "thanksgiving" was more like the last meal of a condemned man.

But in 1623, a change came. Bradford wrote that, instead of famine, God gave them plenty and rejoicing of hearts that blessed God. In fact, so much corn was produced that the colonists could begin exportation of corn. It was then that questions arose as to their form of economic organization. Up until then, it was required that "*all profits & benefits that are by trade, working, fishing, or any other means*" were to be placed in the common stock of the colony.

"FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY, TO EACH ACCORDING GOT HIS NEED" was a form of socialism. Those that did all the work often didn't receive food that equaled their work. Others who did little towards the food harvest, often took more than what they worked for. In 1623, Bradford abolished socialism. Each household was given a parcel of land and to work for his own harvest to keep or sell as he saw fit.

There were similar problems in Jamestown. The people arrived there in 1607 by ships. Most of the work was done by one-fifth of the men. That is why the winter of 1609-1610 was called "THE STARVING TIME." The population fell from five-hundred souls to sixty. It was then that the JAMESTOWN COLONY was converted to a free market. The results were dramatic. In the 1614 Colony, Secretary Ralph Hamor wrote that after the switch, there was "plenty of food."

Mr. Maybury wrote: "*Before these free markets were established, the colonists had nothing for which to be thankful. They were in the same situations as many are today and for the same reasons.*"

I think he meant "laziness." Some would not work the fields and those that did were tired of doing all the work for the lazy!

After the free markets were established, the colonists' abundance was so dramatic that the annual THANKSGIVING CELEBRATIONS became common throughout the colonies, and **in 1863, THANKSGIVING became a NATIONAL HOLIDAY!**

THE JOY OF PORTRAYING FANNY JANE CROSBY 1978-2015

A few Sunday afternoons ago, after our church's Bible discussion class in the book of I Corinthians, my husband and I we drove to Hamburg, Pennsylvania. It was there in a Bible church nestled in the beautiful Pennsylvania Dutch countryside, that we had been invited to give *THE TRIBUTE TO FANNY CROSBY*. I have portrayed this great Lady of Gospel Songs hundreds of times all in many places, including Singapore, Korea, West Africa, etc. It has been a joy!

Do you know who FANNY CROSBY(1820-1915) was? She was a blind hymnwriter who lived in the late 1800's into the 1900's. Her gospel songs like *Blessed Assurance, To God be the Glory, Pass Me Not, Praise Him, Praise Him, & All the Way My Saviour Leads Me* are just a few! Our church hymnal has eighteen of her songs listed! Her songs were featured in Mr. D. L. Moody's revivals and sung by IRA SANKEY, as well as more recent soloists like GEORGE BEVERLY SHAY. She wrote hundreds. Her songs have been sung throughout the years all over the world. They speak to the hearts of the spiritual needy as well as the bravest soldier of the Cross you would have known. It was a blessing to once again put on that white wig, and those dark glasses, and dress up in those old fashioned clothes and become blind Fanny Crosby once again.

Only my heart is saddened as I think of the scores of young Christians who do not know who FANNY CROSBY was! Their pastors and music ministers are filling those young Christians' hearts –in my opinion– with trivial repetitive choruses that say nothing,, for the most part, and going nowhere. The old songs of *THE FAITH* are cast aside for the “new” and “trendy” tunes of the day—with words strung out and set to indefinite tunes of the day and repetitive!

Who of the younger church-going generation know the great hymns like William Cowper's *THERE IS A FOUNTAIN FILLED WITH BLOOD (1731-1800)* or Horatio G. Spafford's *IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL (1828-1888)*? To say nothing about Charles Wesley's *O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES (1707-1788)*? or Isaac Watt's *I SING THE MIGHTY POWER OF GOD (1674-1748)*? Who among us does not know *COME THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING* (Robert Robinson (1735-1790)? Or Edward Perronet's *ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS NAME (1726-1792)*? Or even Mary A. Baker's *MASTER, THE TEMPEST IS RAGING?* (1831-1921)?

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*** First published in 2015**

**** TO BE PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER 2015 or January 2016.**

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

FOR MANY, IT IS THE TIME OF THE YEAR WHEN THERE IS MUCH FLUTTERING AROUND & HURRYING & SCURRYING HERE AND THERE, BUYING AND WRAPPING GIFTS AS WELL AS PLANNING SUMPTUOUS DINNERS AND BREAKFASTS FOR THOSE YOU LOVE. I suppose there

really is nothing wrong with that *PER SE*, except we spend more money than we should, we eat food we are not supposed to eat, and we get exceedingly tired from doing more than we normally do. **THIS IS CALLED THE “HOLIDAY SEASON” OR “CHRISTMAS”!** THE FACT IS THAT ALL OF THIS FUSS IS NOT BIBLICAL AT ALL! **THE BIBLE DOES NOT TELL US TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTHDAY OF OUR SAVIOUR. PEOPLE REALLY KNOW THIS FOR THEY DON’T BUY HIM ONE PRESENT!** Sometimes we make Him a cake that’s true—and WE eat it. We might read the “Christmas Story” from the Bible that’s true. Or sing “Happy Birthday, dear Jesus” to pacify our conscience.

I will admit that the “spirit of Christmas” gets to you (even if we don’t celebrate). There is feeling in the air. People are kind and friendly—even the shoppers who are wildly buying gifts for those on their list. Shoppers who know (many of them) that they can not pay for the gifts they are buying-- but MUST give them. So they say “charge it!” **THE TRUTH IS, IN FACT, NOWHERE IN THE BIBLE ARE WE TOLD TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTHDAY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!!**

I must admit there is much about “Christmas” that I have enjoyed and probably would, if we still celebrated it. I remember personally a couple momentous “Christmases” as a child. The first “Christmas” HOME--after my hospitalization at RAINBOW HOSPITAL FOR POOR AND CRIPPLED CHILDREN--was momentous. I remember pushing open the big sliding doors in that house on Wagar Avenue and seeing a HUGE tree all in lights and PRESENTS that filled the room! It was amazing!

Years later, my mother told me that the reason there were an abundance of gifts in that room that year was because they were all mine prior to my hospitalization. That was my FIRST Christmas home as a regular person in a regular house with a regular bed. (Everything was my “first” that year.) I probably was six. I like giving gifts to those I love, and receiving them as well. I like sending cards and letters to friends and family. I like the “beauty” of the season, but I must admit that it is a great relief for me personally not to do all that decorating and all that goes into making Christmas “*Christmas*.” Mostly, people forget Jesus whose “day” it was supposed to be, as we celebrate what the world called JESUS’ BIRTH DAY. Do we? For many, the day has NO religious meaning at all. And no matter how hard some of us try--let’s be honest--the day turns out to be very materialist and humanistic! The Bible is true when it says we cannot serve God and Mammon.

In fact, Bible readers can find no date for “His Day” to celebrate it, even if we wanted to. Did you know that there is no mention of such a BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION in the Bible! In fact, if I remember rightly, the Lord Jesus Christ never made a big fuss over His birthday. Jesus NEVER told His disciples to remember HIS BIRTH DAY, that’s for sure. He told His disciples to remember HIS DEATH DAY!-- and what a terrible death it was! (Luke 22:19).

I’m postulating! What if the shepherds in LUKE--CHAPTER TWO (when the angel came to them with the GOOD NEWS and THE GLORY OF THE LORD, shone all around them)--quickly washed their dirty shepherd’s clothes, scrubbed the sheep’s woolly bodies, as well as hid all their other cluttered possessions in order to go find an evergreen tree and light it up with candles and torches to celebrate the news instead of seeing “*this thing*” which had come to pass that the Lord had made known to them?

What if Joseph, after tending Mary in the birth of The Holy Child, decided to house clean the manger area where the baby had been born. What if he burned the bloody garments and rags from the Baby’s birth and helped Mary fix her hair for company was coming. What if he ran into the Inn and bought candy and cookies wrapped in green and red paper as well as ordering their favorite foods for guests to eat when they came to see Mary and the baby. What if?

What if, when the shepherds did get there, where the manger was, and they stayed for the day eating and chatting about common things without paying much attention to the Baby Jesus? What if all day the shepherds only talked among themselves about their experience in the field when the “multitudes of the Heavenly Host” praised God together? What if they laughed and laughed at shepherd

jokes and never paid attention to **THE BABY** lying in the manger out in their shepherd's field? Who would know? And what if they never told anyone about the miracle in Bethlehem that day? What would you think? (**But they did! THE SHEPHERDS TALKED.** Luke 2:8-18)

The Bible says:

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

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