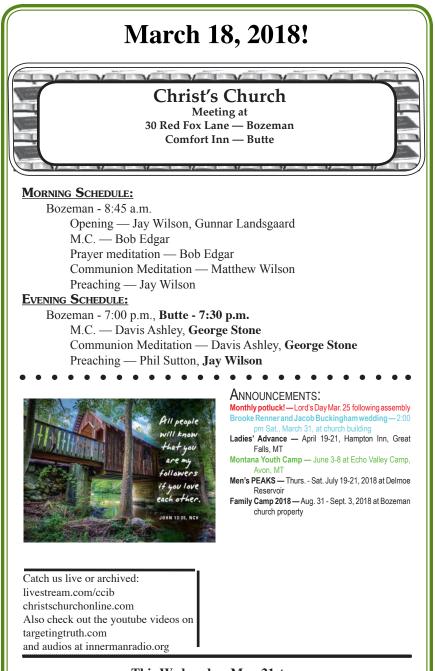
God makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow, cuts the spear in two, and burns the chariots with fire

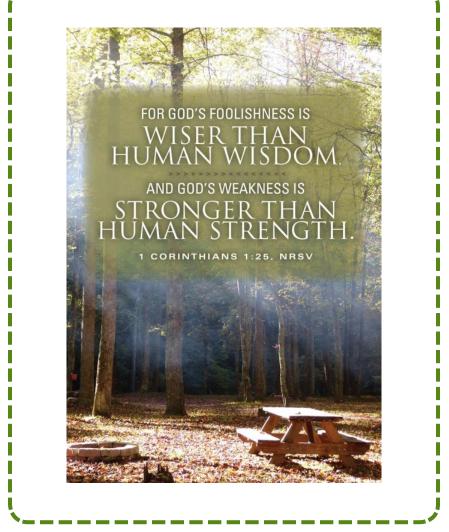


Kaden Reijgers, Caleb Wilson, and Lydia Sutton enjoying some fellowship at break time a day at Bozeman Christian School Bozeman, MT

John the Immerser "was the lamp that was burning and shining, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light." John 5:35



This Wednesday, Mar. 21st – 7:00 p.m. — Some enlightenment from Ephesians – Phil Sutton



Question of the week:

What was the Lord doing through the signs that accompanied those who preached the gospel in first century AD?

Last week's question: What happened to the ten spies who brought back a bad report of the Promised Land to the sons of Israel and discouraged them? *Answer: They died by a plague before the Lord (Numbers 14:36-38).*

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:

Bible School — 97 Morning Assembly — 107 Evening Assembly — 63 Wednesday Night (3/14) — 61 **Butte Lord's Day** — 17 Great Falls Lord's Day — 40,63



Letter Kills; Spirit Gives Life

Comfort/encouragement from Second Corinthians ...

"The Law," inculcated the apostle Paul, "is holy, and the commandment is righteous and holy and good" (Romans 7:12). If the Law and its associated commandments are good, how is it that the Law failed? The problem is sin and the carnal desires of mankind. "Sin," explained the apostle, "taking opportunity through the commandment, deceived me, and through it killed me" (Romans 7:10). The Law only acts when it is broken; and in breaking the Law by violating one of the commandments, the individual is put to death spiritually. The apostle Paul, servant of the new covenant and steward of the mysteries of God contained therein, would thus call the old covenant—which was

the covenant "of the letter," having come "in letters engraved on stones"—the covenant of *death*. By contrast, the "covenant of the Spirit" is also *the covenant of life*.

- Ministry of death The covenant of the letter had no solution for those who broke its commandments. In his epistle to the Romans, the apostle Paul spoke of its tenets as encapsulated in the expression "the law of sin and of death" (Romans 8:2). The connection between sin and death is simple: a person sins, a person dies a spiritual death. Hence Paul speaks of the Law as "the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones" (2 Corinthians 3:7).
- Comparison of glories "The Law was given through Moses," averred the apostle John (John 1:17). Early in his ministry, Moses began to receive the words of the Law in a very special fashion. When he came down from Mount Sinai with the replacement set of commandments, his face was shining because of his having seen the back edge of God's glory. He delivered the next section of the Law, and then put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not see the glory fade away. From that point forward, Moses would be called to the tent of meet-

ing where the Lord would descend in a pillar of cloud and speak to Moses "face to face," and the Lord would deliver the next section of the Law. Moses, then, with shining face, would in turn pass the directives on to the people. Having thus delivered these "living oracles," Moses would once again cover his face with the veil. This *shining face* was the *glory* with which the Law was exposited to Israel. "But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on

The Old Covenant had no glory in comparison to the glory of the New Covenant!

stones," comments the apostle, "came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory?" (2 Corinthians 3:7,8). The new covenant, "written by the Spirit of the living God on tablets of human hearts," is far superior that which was written on lifeless stone; hence it comes with much greater glory than that which shone in Moses' face.

The superlative nature of the new covenant continues to be expounded upon by the apostle. "For if the ministry of condemnation has glory," speaks Paul of said Law, "how much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory?" The righteousness of God only comes to those who are indwelt by the Spirit of God; thus the expression "the ministry of righteousness." The apostle superadds, "For indeed what had glory [the Law], in this case has no glory on account of the glory that surpasses it [the new covenant]" (2 Corinthians 3:10). That old covenant, with the paltry glory as compared to the brightness of the glory of the new covenant, was in fact temporary. "For if that which fades away was with glory," says Paul of that which came with the fading glory of Moses' face, "much more that which remains is in glory" (2 Corinthians 3:11). The new covenant is eternal, and comes with a glory much more powerful than that which shone in Moses' face!

JAY WILSON