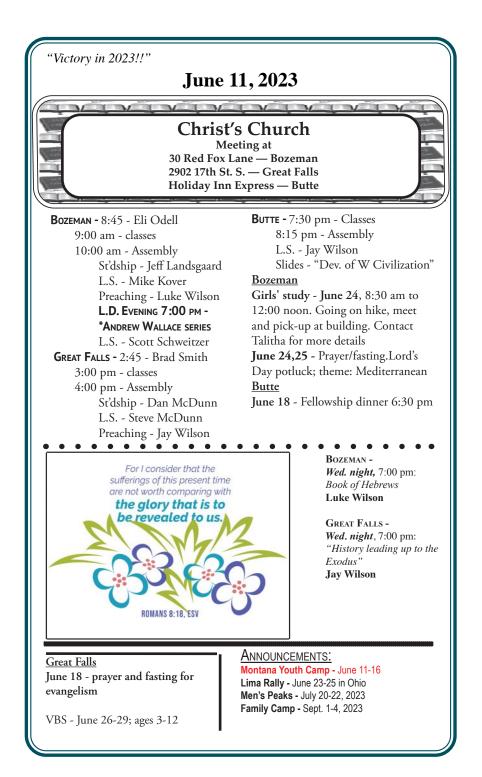
"Once God has spoken; Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God" -- Psalm 62:11



David Mann and Liam Coull both of Wauseon, OH area participating in some good conversation Lancaster Family Camp over Memorial Day weekend Lancaster, OH

"So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase."

Acts 9:31





Question of the week:

When the apostles were arrested and tried for preaching the resurrection on the temple grounds, Gamaliel persuaded the Sanhedrin not to execute the apostles. What was the punishment instead?

Last week's question: In 2 Samuel 22, David's song of the Lord when he was delivered from the hand of Saul and his enemies recorded. It is also essentially the same as which Psalm? *Answer: Psalm 18.*

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:

Bible School – 83	Wednesday Night (6/7) — 82
Morning Assembly – 117	Butte Lord's Day – 10
Evening Assembly – 66	GF Lord's Day – 41,77 Wed 45



The Epistles to the Evangelists

He Saved Us!

The dreadfully lost condition of man apart from God must be processed in order for the wonderful awesomeness of the gospel to be appreciated. One sin is all it takes for the struggling earthling to be separated from God. James stated it this way: "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all" (James 2:10). Mankind as a whole may think of that judgment as being overly strict, but mankind as a whole does not make the rules! Those who remain in that guilty condition, whether they "do not know God" or whether they "do not obey the gospel," "will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:8,9). One of the pictures from the Apocalypse

God regen-

erated and

renewed us!

of John is "the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night" (Revelation 14:11). So these are tremendous words of joy and release coming from the apostle Paul, "He saved us" (Titus 3:5).

- Not on basis of deeds One sin, then, separates a person from God. From that point forward there is no amount of "good deeds" that can be done to pay the price for that one sin. Thus when the apostle writes, "He saved us," he also adds for emphasis and clarification, "not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness" (Titus 3:5). Every person must clear the idea out of his head that somehow there is a scale where if enough good things can be put in the pan on one side to outweigh the bad on the other side, the person will go to heaven. Not the way it works!
- According to His mercy The justice of God requires that all sinners be punished by an eternity in hell. Since the record is that all have sinned, the eternal picture is bleak for all of mankind, except that God has mercy! Mercy is basically God's willingness not to meet out the punishment due, because of the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ and intercessory ministry of Christ as High Priest. "He saved us," Paul

reminds Titus, "according to His mercy" (Titus 3:5). Saints in Christ are blessed that Jesus became "a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17). "For God has shut up all in disobedience," explained the apostle, establishing that both Jew and Gentile need the redemption found only in Christ, "that He might show mercy to all" (Romans 11:32).

 Washing of regeneration – How, then, is this mercy to be obtained by the lost individual, since

is not automatically granted to the entire mass of humanity? Paul, consistent with his other writings and that of the other apostles, says "by the washing of regeneration" (Titus 3:5). When the apostle penned his epistle to the brethren in Rome, he pointed out that as the old self is buried with Christ in immersion, the new self is raised from the waters "to walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). This is clearly "regeneration," "born of water and Spirit" (John 3:5).

Renewing by the Holy Spirit – Forgiveness and mercy meet the individual as he is lowered into the watery grave, provided he truly believes, is repentant, and has confessed Christ as the Son of God. But the regenerative power must be provided by the Holy Spirit, as Jesus expounded, "It is the Spirit who gives life" (John 6:63). The "washing of regeneration" must therefore be coupled with the "renewing by the Holy Spirit" in order the individual to be a new creation in Christ Jesus.

God has indeed "saved us"! But He did not merely save us from sins by granting us forgiveness; He "regenerated and renewed" the lost by causing them to be born again to a living hope, being called out of darkness into a new abundant life in Christ. The Christian is not only free from past sin; he walks in the liberty of Christ provided by the Holy Spirit, free to walk in the footsteps of Christ and follow the upward call of God.

JAY WILSON

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