



The Caller

A Weekly Newsletter of the Elizabethtown church of Christ
Vol. XXXV August 18, 2019 No. 31

Confidence Corner John F. Board

Why is it that we take the time to write regarding our Christian confidence week in and week out? I guess for me, it is because we have a hope ahead—and that hope is not simply a wishing, longing hope, it is a realized expectation of the Christian. In other words, our hope is not simply

a leap in the dark. The confidence we can have in that hope provides us with great peace. I was reminded of one who did not have a great peace on two separate occasions in my reading this week. I would like to share some thoughts from my readings in this week's *Confidence Corner*.

The first place that I noticed the name Robert Ingersoll this week was on the *Christian Courier* website (if you have not checked it out lately, take a look at the resource www.christiancourier.com). Here brother Jackson pointed out that though Ingersoll was raised in a religious home, he "abandoned any hope of eternal bliss." He even wrote a booklet entitled "*Some Mistakes of Moses*." Brother Wayne writes of the statement made by William Jennings Bryan, five-time Democratic nominee for the U.S. Presidency, regarding Ingersoll's booklet: "I would much prefer to hear Moses on 'The mistakes of Ingersoll.'" I always smile when I read that quote. Brother Jackson points out that Ingersoll struggled with his view regarding the afterlife of souls. In this area his human emotions caused him to state he was agnostic when it came to the subject of the immortality of the soul.

Another place to read of Ingersoll is in a book by Charles Pugh entitled *Things Most Surely Believed*. He pointed out regarding Ingersoll that his philosophy could be summed up with the words "The Bible is a delusion." Pugh also conveys the concept that as a naturalist, he believed in the here and now. Both Jackson and Pugh quote Ingersoll's remarks at his brother's funeral which holds no hope for the hearers.

When Ingersoll himself died, his wife desired to keep the body at the home as long as she could (another sign of the total hopelessness that they felt in death). Regarding his passing, Pugh notes that one writer indicated the response of the public was one of hopelessness. And sadly Pugh noted that at his memorial service there was a notice, "THERE WILL BE NO SINGING."

Aren't you glad that as Christians, when we face death, we do so with great hope for ourselves and our loved ones; such enables us to sing with sorrowful yet hopeful hearts.

jfb

The Bible through Archaeology

Did the Israelites conquer Jericho? This is the question Dr. Bryant G. Wood addressed in the March/April 1990 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review* (originally *Biblical Archaeology Reader*). Dr. Wood who has served as supervisor on several archaeological digs in Palestine took another look at the evidence uncovered by Kathleen Kenyon (daughter of Sir Frederic Kenyon) from 1952-1958. Consider the information from *BAR*.

First consider the fact that Jericho was described in Scripture as a well fortified city (think the walls of Jericho and see Joshua 2:5,7,15; and 6:5). Archaeologists found an outer wall of stone that protected the city that they had found in their excavations. One area excavated showed the wall to be up to six feet wide and twelve feet high.

According to Joshua 5:10, the children of Israel would conquer the city in the harvest time (see Rahab's actions in 2:6). What was found in the houses of the city was quite interesting—large quantities of grain. This would be expected at harvest time. What would be unexpected though was that the Israelites did not take the grain with them when they invaded Jericho. How can this be explained?

Remember in OT times grain could be used as monetary exchange (1 Kings 5:11). Any normal invaders would have taken the grain. Yet Israel did not. You see Jericho was to be devoted to God according to the "cherem ban;" though the Israelites would have taken the valuable metals for the treasury of the LORD, they were instructed to take nothing for themselves (6:17-19). The fact that something as personally valuable as grain was left behind, fits well with the Biblical account.

Sunday's Sermons:

A. M. — *God Knows Why*
Exodus 1:8-14

P. M. — *Christian Attitudes*
2 Corinthians 10:1-6

Back to School

It amazes me how quickly a summer passes by. I remember when I was in school, it seemed like we had a much longer summer break. The reason it seemed longer was that my break was longer—three full months.

Well all kidding aside, it does seem like “the powers that be” are constantly trying to find more ways to have time to instruct our children. In a minute we will examine how even as Christian young people, you can take advantage of the education provided to you, but I also cannot help but be concerned with the amount of time others have to be an influence on our children.

One great argument in favor of home schooling is the fact that for the most part, the parents are able to be the primary influence over the children. Why is this important? If others are the primary influence over our children, we cannot control how or with what they influence our children. Some teachers may be great examples, share our same values and even at times share the same faith. Others may not be the type of influences we would desire. Sometimes even good teachers who share our faith have challenges because of the regulations placed upon them by the administration or boards. There is also the influence of classmates that perhaps is the strongest influence of all.

It is frightening to think that we turn over our children to others to influence them—and now even for longer periods each year (with the earlier start times). Not only do many schools influence through textbooks in the concepts of humanism, evolutionism, they also have programs in place, that depending upon which program is used, that can be more harmful to our children than helpful. Some schools employ a program known as “Stranger Danger.” Some programs with this title are good; others can mislead children and actually aid those “well dressed strangers” who harm children (this is not simply written by a fly by night preacher who is writing in an area in which he knows nothing—counseling education and additional years given to the protection of children are behind this statement). In addition, many of the bullying programs in our schools have a homosexual driven agenda.

Having noted all of this you may think “Well John must homeschool his daughters.” Though both daughters had been homeschooled through some of their school years, both also concluded their secular education in the public school system. What that meant for Brenna and me was a greater attention to the girls and what they may be learning (and how that education is influencing them). We needed to have an heightened sense of awareness of what the girls were learning in an effort to explain why some of the things they had learned is not according to God’s instruction for mankind. We need to take more time to be the primary influence in their lives. Parents, think Jochebed—she had two “home schooled” children and one that she influenced well though he attended secular school. All three glorified God with their lives.

That being said, I want to encourage any young person reading this article to realize that you can use secular education to the glory of God. Moses is an example of one who had the highest of training in a secular school. He was even taught falsely regarding religion, yet remained true to God due to the influence of his mother. According to Rodney Cloud, John J. Davis and others, Moses’ secular education probably included instruction early on swimming, horseback riding, hunting and playing and later reading, writing, languages of Canaan, geography, and archery (as well as other areas). My point, God was able to use Moses to write the first five books of the Old Testament; God used Moses’ secular education for His glory.

As young people, please know that you can use the secular education in order to glorify God. Your ability to read and write will enable you to study and teach God’s Word, write for various publications, and utilize other opportunities provided by God to glorify Him. Remember though a part of what made Moses beneficial to God was his willingness to accept the instruction of a godly mother. Rather than be discouraged regarding the start of school, look at it as an opportunity to glorify God!

*John F. Board
Elizabethtown, KY*