

"LIGHT FOR OUR AGE"

January, 2016

Volume 8

Issue #1

*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
Psalm 119:105*



Feature One: Editorial

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Robert T. Oliver

Dark Matter, Dark Energy, and the Barber Pole

Many of you knew my father, R C Oliver, as a preacher or college professor; but you may not know that he was also a barber. As a young man he went to barber college even before he went to Freed-Hardeman as a student. He worked in his brother's barbershop.

One day he told me about the history of the barber pole. He said that at one time in our nation's history the barber was the man who treated your illnesses. When you were sick, you would go to him and he would draw blood from your veins. The practice of blood letting was a very common practice to treat disease, for disease, they thought was in the blood. The barber pole was the sign that the barber would treat your illness. The white color represented bandages and the red represented blood, or blood soaked bandages.

Then it was discovered that the Bible was true, that life was in the blood. (Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood....) Science was horrified at the practice. Doctors were elevated in the mind of men, but barbers were destined to keep the barber pole. Bloodletting was so widely practiced that George Washington was greatly weakened by this treatment. He officially died of pneumonia, but the loss of blood was a contributing cause. Notice a line from

pbs.org, "... the gruesome details of President George Washington's final hours on the 215th anniversary of his death. The retired commander-in-chief woke up at 2 a.m. on Dec. 14, 1799, with a sore throat. After a series of medical procedures, including the draining of nearly 40 percent of his blood, he died that evening."

Not knowing or accepting what the Bible has taught for years has been a weakness of science. Many scientists totally discount what the Bible teaches no matter what evidence is there to back up the claim.

Consider now what we know about "dark matter" and "dark energy". Many scientists believe that these mysterious "items" exist in the universe in great abundance.

"According to some scholars, dark energy - a force moves the galaxy and the universe is expanding. This is just a hypothesis, and such matter has not been found, but scientists suggest that almost three quarters (74%) of our universe is just out of it. Most of the remaining quarter (22%) of the universe consists of dark matter. Dark matter has mass, but it is invisible. Scientists realize that it exists only through the power that it has on other objects in the universe." This is taken from an article entitled: "15 amazing facts about space that are confusing modern scientists". The Internet encyclopedia Wikipedia writes this about dark matter, "Dark matter is a hypothetical kind of matter that cannot be seen with telescopes but accounts for most of the matter in the universe. The existence and properties of dark matter are inferred from its gravitational effects on visible matter, on radiation, and on the large-scale structure of the universe. Dark matter has not been detected directly, making it one of the greatest mysteries in modern astrophysics.

Dark matter neither emits nor absorbs light or any other electromagnetic radiation at any significant level. According to the Planck mission team, and based on the standard model of cosmology, the total mass-energy of the known universe contains 4.9% ordinary (baryonic) matter, 26.8% dark matter and 68.3% dark energy.[2][3] Thus, dark matter is estimated to constitute 84.5% [note 1] of the total matter in the universe, while dark energy plus dark matter constitute 95.1% of the total mass-energy content of the universe.

Why am I interested in dark matter and dark energy? Because I believe science is noticing what the Bible teaches concerning our universe. Hebrews 1:3 reads: "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power..." Of this statement, The Bible commentator Albert Barnes writes: "That is, by his powerful word, or command. The phrase "word of his power" is a Hebraism, and means his efficient command. There could not be a more distinct ascription of divinity to the Son of God than this. He upholds or sustains all things - that is, the universe. It is not merely the earth; not only its rocks, mountains, seas, animals and human beings, but it is the universe - all distant worlds. How can he do this who is not God? He does it by his word - his command. What a conception! That one simple command should do all this! ...There can be no higher idea of omnipotence than to say that he upholds all things by his word; and assuredly he who can "hold up" this vast universe so that it does not sink into anarchy or into nothing, must be God.

The Bible teaches what science will never understand. God is all powerful and he created all things. I recently was watching a program on television and a scientist said the universe would end either in fire or ice. I thought for a moment that he might have it, then he said, "but I believe it will end in ice." He should read the Bible. He was almost there. 2 Peter 3:10 "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Feature Two: *an article by R. C. Oliver*



R C Oliver

Feature 2: An Article by R C Oliver

"The Parable of the House"

From Light, Volume 1, October 1955 #9

The following parable is based upon a true-life story.

The church of the Lord is like unto a house that was owned by a certain woman. This house stood in need of much decorative work, and the woman advertised for qualified men who might do it for her. Soon two men answered her advertisement, and after she had informed them of both the kind of paint and the kind of workmanship she expected, she then very carefully gave to them directions necessary to find the house, and sent them to work.

By and by she went to inspect the work the men were doing upon the house, and though she found them diligently painting a house, and with the kind of paint and workmanship she had required, yet she found that they had confused her house with that of her neighbor's and that they were not working upon her house at all. When she called this to their attention, the men were greatly disappointed for they suffered great loss in both the working hours they had spent upon the neighbor's house, and in the money that they had used to purchase the paint. Both their labor and paint had all been lost upon the house of a man who had never contracted with them to work for him.

Now the parable is this: The house is the church of the Lord, and the woman who owned the house is the Lord. The two men represent the thousands of honest, sincere and zealous men and women who have heard the Lord's invitation and who have promised to serve him. And though they have served him faithfully in much of the work that he has commanded, yet they will suffer the loss of all things at the judgment because they have performed their work in the various churches that have been built by men, and not at all where he has commanded them to serve him, that is, in his own church-the church that he purchased with his own precious blood!-Acts 20:28.

Friend, in whose church are you serving the Lord today? Are you serving him in his own church? Or are you serving him in one of the hundreds of churches that have been founded and built by men? It is not only necessary that we serve the Lord; we must serve him in the place that he has specified, namely: the church of Christ! If therefore you are serving him, but if you are serving him in the wrong place, "we pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God." - 2 Corinthians 5:20. The only acceptable approach to God is through the church of his Son, for it is written: "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."-Ephesians 5:21.

Feature Three: Sandy's Women's Corner

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Sandra Oliver

"THE HULK"

Some of you will remember when churches were involved in a bus ministry. Almost every church had a bus. We worked with a congregation that had several buses; and we had teams that rode the buses, teachers that taught the children in class, and even some that had children sit with them during the worship service. Some congregations had special services for just the bus children.

I was teaching a class of first and second graders during our summer Vacation Bible School, and we had a very large group of children attending. They were fairly well behaved, except for one little boy.

Jason had been diagnosed with a brain tumor when he was only two, and the doctors told his parents he would not live to start school. He had surgery to remove the tumor, and the parents began preparing for him to die.

The parents were very permissive with Jason. They allowed him to do whatever he wanted to do. So as you might expect, Jason was a discipline problem.

One morning at the beginning of Bible class, Jason was being disruptive in class. He wouldn't sit still, and he would not stop talking. I had to pick him up to keep him from hitting another little boy. When I did, Jason stiffened and said, "I am going to turn into the Hulk". Then he held his breath; and I watched as his face turned, not green like the Hulk, but red.

I was shocked! I wasn't sure what I should do; so I tried talking to him, telling him that God loved him. He replied, "I don't love God". What do you say to that?

What happened next surprised me, and it surprised him. Tears filled my eyes, and I tried to tell him that God loved him even if he didn't love God. Jason couldn't understand why his statement would make me cry.

Eventually, Jason learned to love God, his teachers, and Bible class. He wasn't perfect, but he learned to be reasonably well behaved. We discovered that he became frustrated when he couldn't color or write his name like the other children. He had never been taught, because his parents thought he was going to die and didn't need to learn those things.

Christians are often like Jason. We sometimes aren't very well behaved; and we respond to our fellow Christians, our friends and neighbors as though we don't love God. We often give the impression that the Bible, the church, and religion in general is not first in our lives. Surely God must look down on us with tears. Then He loves us in spite of our behavior. He gives us another chance.

As we begin 2016, we need to look at our lives and evaluate our attitudes, our decisions, our friends, and our priorities. Do we love God? He loves us!

Feature Four: Our Communication

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Assume Best Intentions

With the increase in texting and short e-mails, it's often hard to know the intended tone of communication. I regularly hear people complain about someone's attitude from a perfectly innocuous email. People end up reading in the emotion that supports their own point of view. If any animosity exists between the parties, the perceived tone goes south, fast. With any short communication, always start with the assumption that the intentions are good on the other side. If there's any doubt, pick up the phone and give them a chance to insult you directly--just so you can be sure.

<http://www.inc.com/kevin-daum/8-ways-to-improve-your-communication-right-now.html>

Feature Five: Bible Question

Feature Five: Bible Question Answered in *Light*, March, 1955

May a congregation without an eldership follow parliamentary procedure in conducting men's business meetings for the church?

Where a proper spirit prevails among the brethren this procedure may well be followed; however, where an improper spirit prevails, no procedure is likely to be right! Regardless of the method followed, we should always remember that we are to so act as to "Let all things be done decently and in order." - 1 Corinthians 14:40 (R C Oliver)

Humor

A teacher was testing the children in her Sunday school class to see if they understood the concept of getting to heaven.

She asked them, "If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into Heaven?"

"NO!" the children answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would that get me into Heaven?"

Again, the answer was, "NO!"

Now she was smiling. Hey, they're getting it, she thought! "Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave candy to all the children, and loved my husband, would that get me into Heaven?" she asked.

Again, they all answered, "NO!"

She was just bursting with pride for them. "Well," she continued, "then how can I get into Heaven?"

A five-year-old boy shouted out, "YOU GOTTA BE DEAD."

In Closing

Another year has come and gone. Time seems to pass by so quickly. I trust you will have a great 2016. It is hard for me to believe this issue begins our eighth year with this e-journal. May God bless each of you this new year.

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abiblecommentary.com/lightforourage

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