Braman Foundation of Charities REVIVE MAGAZINE

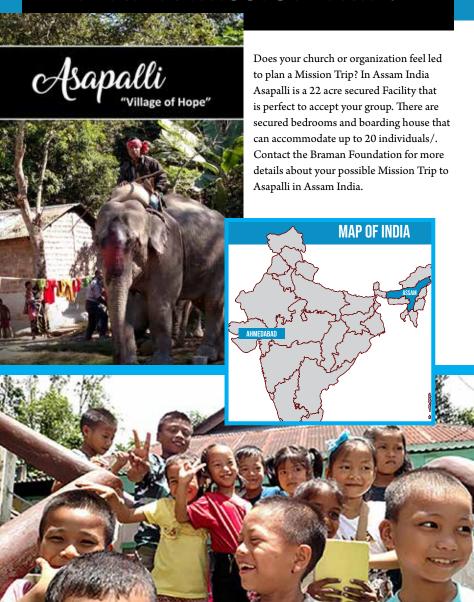
The Magazine of The Braman Foundation of Charities including Biblical Studies and Discipleship

March / April 2025



If your church is interested in growing its Discipleship Programs please contact the Braman Foundation.





Contact the Braman Foundation at info@bramanfoundation.com or call 845.471.2286

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BFC Editorial

Dear Friends!

Lenten Season is once again upon us. Let us be reminded to pursue the Lord.

Often it is so easy to get up in the worldly affairs of our lives. But make no mistake God wants all of you. Take it all to the Lord! Use this Lenten season to spend more time with the Lord and less time with the concerns of the world.

When you pursue the Lord and make Him first you fulfill His command to "Seek Yea First the Kingdom of God". Then God sees that you are serious about Him and will allow you to be used in ways to further his Kingdom.

Additionally you bring more favor, grace and mercy in your life and your families lives with Divine Protection. Fast, spend more time with the Lord, get excited about your relationship with the Lord, go on a retreat, learn how to meditate for 20 minutes in silence, journal about your thought life, do what must be done to expand your relationship with Christ.

If you are a mature Christian your pursuit of God ought to be deeper than it was 5, 10, 15 or 20 years ago. If not do something to get away from your stale routine devotions. Get excited about the Lord! Use this season to get on with your life in Christ!

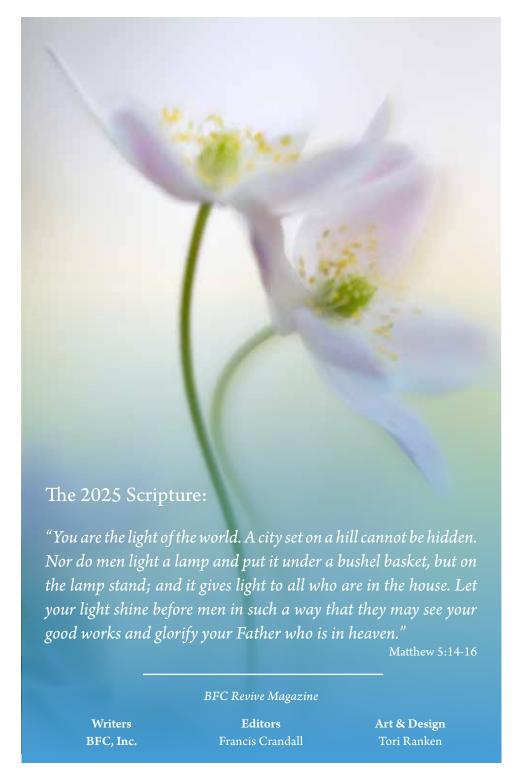
In this issue of Revive we continue to strive to bring the complete information concerning all of our mission partners: Pakistan, India, and Africa. There is a lot of information to process and the ministries are working heartily for the Lord.

BFC is currently in the process of expanding its Community Programs and Corrections Ministry. Whether in discipleship meetings, recovery meeting, or bible studies, BFC has been in pursuit of helping others. With that in mind we have decided to expand our footprint to churches and other related organizations that are seeking ways to serve their congregations more effectively. So look for that upcoming news and pray as we take on this expansion.

We are very grateful for your donations, your prayer requests, and your support as we continue to grow in "Loving your Neighbor".

May your Lenten and Easter Season be a joyful time to celebrate the resurrection of our lord Jesus Christ. May you, your families, and loved ones be ever protected and know His peace.

Always in Divine Friendship, BFC



Asapalli

Missions: India

Letter from Rev. John Carman

Dear Peter Braman,

Thank you for your note and expression of appreciation. I should have gotten this back to you long before this, but I am 92 and moving much more slowly than I once did.

I was pastor at Cobleskill FBC from the middle of 1989 to the end of 1996. When I arrived at that church and found a church family already committed to the support of Julia Rose, and I am sure that continues at the present time.

During my time at that church, I spoke with Julia Rose only once. That was when Heriton visited here. She called me to make sure we would take good care of him.

We were glad to! It was a nice visit and one of our deacons and I undertook to take him golfing.

Either Heriton is a very natural athlete or he had played before! Do they play golf in that part of India?

Whatever the case, it was a very enjoyable time for us - and I hope for Heriton.

My wife and I enjoy getting news of Asapalli from the Braman Foundation. May our Lord continue to use and bless you in your work for Him.

God bless - and thank you for your ministry. John Carman

















Matthew 5:14-16

5



















RWB Sermons

The Walk to Emmaus

"The Lord has risen indeed."

- Luke 24:34

Why were Cleopas and his friend tired going to 7 miles to Emmaus on that Sunday afternoon? Someone suggests that they were trying to escape from a bitter experience. Who could blame them? It is hard to have one's faith laid low and one's hopes shattered. It may be that they had actually seen Jesus nailed to the cross. That would leave them in misery and despair. They were bewildered to buy the rumors of his resurrection. Discussing these things as they journeyed, a stranger appeared and walked along with them.

We know that the stranger was the resurrected Lord. However, they did not recognize him.

If Jesus was to appear before us today, at this very moment, I wonder how many of us would recognize him? Not too many, I'm sure. Too many of us are unbelieving. We celebrate Easter. We know what Easter stands for and what it means, but we do not really and truly in our hearts believe it. It is just like a story in a book or on TV. We will never know and feel the true meaning of Easter in our own lives until we really accept Jesus Christ into our hearts as our Savior and Lord.

The story we read for our scripture reading this morning is a lovely one. Joseph Fort Newton said that if the Bible were about to be destroyed, and he could save only one flying leaf, it would be the story of the walk to Emmaus. He wrote, "this story never fails me. Weary, dejected; or disheveled, I have only to turn to that page, and there is a human accent as a friend standing near. The words thrall me. A radiant personality touches me. Ages of doubt and cruelty may lie between, but the light shines, and there are footsteps by my side. The scene on the road to Emmaus is not a bit of ancient history; it is a picture of

them biting reality. The Pilgrim Christ is an eternal contemporary of humanity."

I feel that this is a good reminder for all of us. Jesus Christ is constantly at our side whatever we may be doing. We need to only turn and ask him and he will give us strength, courage, faith that we need in all of life. Truly Christ is with us always.

First of all, with Jesus by their side they saw things in a true light and with better perspective. Jesus "explained to them everything in the Scriptures that referred to himself." The scriptures were those of the Old Testament. Beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he drew out the significance of his suffering. His cross was the means of finding his glory. Their faith was revived and their hopes rekindled.

Likewise, would not our faith be revived and hopes rekindled if our Lord suddenly appeared to us? I'm sure they would.

How many times his followers, in the day since that Sunday long ago, have had their darkness illuminated and their perceptions quickened by the presence of Jesus. Sometimes they knew it was he by their side; at other times he was unrecognized. This we know, that when we need him most, he is by our side to give us understanding.

It is true that Christ may not always give us that direct answer or direction but he most definitely does give us a place to start from and points us in the proper direction.

Secondly, with Christ by their side they felt his touch upon their hearts. "Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the

Scriptures?"

Ever since that, the distinctive march of Christianity has been the burning hearts of its followers. Its deepest appeal is to the human heart. "What set their hearts a burning was not the mere word of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was the Christ who was behind the word. It was their immediate contact with that personality, and the mysterious outflow of his life upon their them, which stirred them, as only personality can do, and moved their nature to its very depths. The order of Christianity, it's life and its enthusiasm, its countless efforts, its unwearied service, all that is rooted, not in any creed, but in the immediate presence of a living Christ."

We can remember that John Wesley, at the time of his conversion, said his heart was strangely warmed. Truly the Christ does set our hearts on fire. His gentle touch in our lives comes us and gives us a place that cannot be described but only felt. Each individual has to experience this for himself.

Truly we are Christians to believe, as Easter represents, that Jesus Christ does live, that he is constantly at our side, that we can turn to him anytime. There are no Christians that I know of that are lonely. They always have the company of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, with the breaking of the bread "their eyes were opened wide and they knew him." The eyes of their memory were opened. They had seen him break bread before. This may have been a flashback to the great miracle of feeding the 5000, or to a wayside lunch one day in Galilee. That's the breaking of bread came sacramental, an outward sign of a spiritual grace, a revelation of the Lord, a token of the burning heart. They would never forget that evening hour and meal; that afterwards these two, the hour and the meal, would be sacramental avenues of meaning which would usher them into the unseen but real presence of the living Christ.

We too, as his followers, when we come to this table with the right attitude and spirit, can find Christ here. We can feel and hear his presence. Our eyes will be opened and we will know him as our living Lord.

There is something lovely about moonlight, but judging from its photographs the moon looks like a rather dreary place. Why should anyone want to go to the moon? Because men have wonder. Everything is the object of wonder, even the dreary moon. Now the Earth, that's different. How fascinating is the Earth. Christopher Fry, the playwright, was once talking to a group of high school boys about the wonder of the Earth, where pigs fly, and flowers eat whoever passes by, and little containers the size of your fingernails open and let out green, gigantic things. He was talking about the vampire bat, and the sea anemone that catches and eats the little fish that pass by and the acorn that releases the great oak. There are so many things to wonder about. How does a dolphin balance a ball on the end of its nose? Einstein, one of the greatest minds in our modern world said, "he who can no longer wonder and stand in rapt awe is as good as dead."

And this Easter Sunday we recall that on the evening of the day that Jesus rose from the dead he showed himself alive to his disciples who are gathered in the upper room. Luke says that "they yet believed not for joy, and wondered." The disciples wondered and they had a lot to wonder about. A man who died on the cross and was buried rose from the grave and lived again. Just think about that sometime today. Go off by yourself and read about it in your Bible. Jesus Christ rose from the dead!

Such wonders brings our mind and hearts in touch with mystery, and that is a part of our greatness. Young people face great mysteries - who am I? Why am I? Where am I going? There are still great mysteries - the mystery of God, the mystery of Christ, the mystery of life, of death, I've eternal life. These mysteries stimulate our wonder, they increase our joy, they lead to knowledge, they awaken our faith, they kindle our hope, they bow our souls in worship don't miss the wonder of Easter. For Truly the wonder of Easter is that Christ is alive. "Indeed, the Lord has risen."

Mityana Community Pentecostal Ministries

Missions: Uganda

Pastor John Kamuleguya reports that the ministry continues to grow! He is asking for prayers and donations to cover school fees.















Elderly Care Program

Missions: Kenya

Please pray for myself Jomo Otieno and my wife Sara as we continue to serve the Elders here in the Migori Region of Kenya. We receive money from BFC which daily helps to feed the elders plus handle their medical care.

The donations to help pay for the Motor Bike have been most helpful Thank you and God bless you. We do have others that are in need and want to grow our footprint.

Again please pray for us. God Bless you, Jomo Otieno



Elizabeth Oketch Okelo, 78



Maria Auma Oqubyogz



Benta Akongo Odhacha, 85



Calvin Otieno, Orphan



Samuel Otieno Nyaugage



Jennifer Achala Were



Simeya Songa Nyamburg



Maria Aumo Ogungo





Maria Oketch Argo, 85

Featured Corner

Easter Morning

Nina Gertrude Smith

If there had never been an Easter morn, a bird would sing, I guess, and somehow winter's gray would turn to gold in springtime's gentle dress.

If there had never been a heavy stone rolled from an empty tomb, perhaps the dew would still lie fragrantly upon a bough in bloom.

I cannot say that faith and love would die if Easter came no more I only know this morning brings me hope where there was none before.

Notable / Quotable

The Pursuit

EM Bound

"Your laziness after God is our crying sin... No man gets God who does not follow hard after him"

God says to us, "Seek my Kingdom first". It is a command that affects every detail of the day, and those who respond obediently are blessed.

But more often than not, we reply, "I am tired, maybe later, can't it wait."

Yes there is hope for us if we will invest ourselves on this most important pursuits.

Seek His kingdom first. How?

By unrelentingly pursuing God. Read what He has written in the Scriptures. Doggedly press into each verse and ask "What is God telling me?"

How should I respond? Tenaciously look for God in His creation, in your trials, in the face of those He would have you love today.

Do you pursue God with all your heart? With all your soul? With all your mind? Following hard after God is a lifetime pursuit. Make it your primary one.

Read Matthew 22:37-38

visit bramanfoundation.org for more essays & quotes

Lamentations 3:22-24

RWB Sermons

The Easter Victory (Sunrise Service Easter Morning)

"Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

- I Corinthians 15:57

Easter stands for victory. It stands for several kinds of victory.

In the first place, it stands for the victory of life over death. Nothing escapes death. Death, we are tempted to say, has the last word.

And yet we know that that is not true. It is life and not death that has to last word. We all know that science cannot start life. But have you ever stopped to think that it is equally impossible for the scientist, or anyone else to bring life to an end? You might, as an experiment, take an acre of ground and say to yourself, "in this acre I will defeat life." First you would have to chop down every tree and cut off every living thing that grew there. Then you would have to pull out all the roots and burn them. Then you might plow the field and harrow it. If you have been reading Roman history recently you might even conceive of the idea of sowing that acre with salt. And if you were of an engineering turn of mind you might even consider covering the acre with a thick slab of concrete. When you have finished your work you might dust off your hands and say, "I have defeated life in that acre of land."

But of course you would be wrong. You might defeat life for a year or two in this way. But you could not do it indefinitely—
For you cannot defeat life. It, and not death

has the last word.

Everything that we know about life seems to indicate that God intends it to have the last word. Easter, then, is first and foremost a celebration of the victory of life over death.

Easter also stands for the victory of goodness over evil.

It is no exaggeration to say that in the story of the crucifixion Jesus appears as goodness personified. When he was betrayed he continued to love, when he was denied he continued to be loyal, and when he was crucified he continued to be forgiving. If you want to see the real dimensions of goodness, look at Jesus.

Similarly, if you want to see the dimensions of evil, look at the forces that put Jesus to death. Here are the dimensions of evil—the kind of evil that gets the upper hand in churches that cease to put God's purpose ahead of their own, the kind of evil that begins to work in governments that cease to speak for the people they govern.

And today if you want to see the dimensions of evil look around you. Increased crime rates, increased divorce rates, increased numbers of unwed mothers, increased consumption of alcoholic beverages, increased racial tension, increased tension

of another war.

But there is also evidence of goodness in our world. Look for number of men and women who are making sacrifices serving our Lord through missionary efforts in foreign countries where the Word of God has not even been heard. Evangelist who are touring the world bringing the Word of God to millions of people, thousands of new churches being built, evidence that people are seeking to worship their Lord.

But the message of the story is that even these kinds of evil I have mentioned do not have the last word. Goodness does have and will have the last word. For, even though the church and the state combined to put Jesus to death, God restored him to life.

Easter stands also for the victory of hope over fear.

It is probably safe to say that the oldest hope of the human race is that life may continue beyond death. Some of the most primitive burials that have been uncovered bear pathetic evidence of this hope, for often in the grave one finds a few handfuls of cracked corn to serve as food for the journey into the next world.

High cultures as well as primitive cultures have cherish this same hope: witness the pyramids of Egypt, the hope of life beyond death is universal. But let us face the fact that the hope is always mixed with fear. And the resurrection marks the victory of that hope over that fear. Let me illustrate this by recalling a great discovery.

Columbus, as we are all know discovered a new world. But he did more than that. He dispelled an ancient fear. This was the fear that if you sailed far enough on the ocean you would come to the place where the world sloped downhill or dropped off. There your ship would slide down to be destroyed by monsters. When Columbus sailed to America he laid that fear to rest once and for all. Why? Because he had gone beyond the horizon and came back.

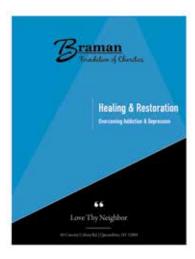
On the first Easter day this threefold victory was communicated to the disciples. It was necessary not only that Christ should rise again, but also that the disciples should know that he is risen; necessary moreover that they should share in the triumph of the Resurrection, in the sense of sharing its triumphant faith. The communication to the disciples was both of the fact and of the faith. The words, "he saw and believed" record the victory of faith in the heart of the disciple; a victory which is Christ's victory, communicated now to man.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and because we are Christians and believe in Him and his teachings, our fear of death should be ended for death has truly lost its sting and is the beginning of an entirely new life with our Lord. There should be no doubts in our minds that life is eternal and everlasting and we can thank God for that.

We truly have something to rejoice in this Easter season for without the resurrection of our lives would be purposeless and meaningless.

This, then, is what the resurrection stands for— The victory of life over death, of goodness over evil, of hope over fear. Thanks be to God who has given us this victory, through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

If your church or organization is interested in offering a program to overcome addiction, please contact the Braman Foundation.



Healing & Restoration

Millions of us suffer needlessly from addiction and depression. The reasons for this are many. In this program we emphasize the 12 Step Method of Recovery, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and Meditation techniques to overcome difficulties. We also rely on God's grace to help you be lifted from your dilemma. If you or a friend or loved one suffers from difficulties surrounding addiction or depression please contact us for our free booklet.

In addition we are available to schedule a convenient time when we can present a workshop for your organization to study these principles. All of the principles really are not new, but when presented together in one workbook and when applied in one's life, miracles can occur. Be sure to call, email, write, or fax us. May you be blessed as you seek greater joy and a truly happy life.

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"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket, but on the lamp stand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 5:14-16

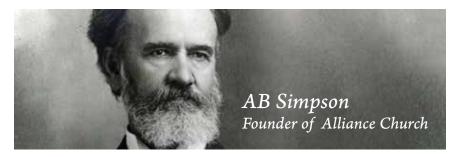
South Sudan

Missions: Africa

Here are some pictures of the missionary work in Renk last week. I was there with some colleagues Pastor Michael Char, Sheikh Abdon Tong, and Missionary Michael, Fajok. We did the training for four days and the number of attendees was 123 people. As for my travel to Malawi to study for my Masters degree, I am still in South Sudan, I won the ticket from the Executive Committee office to pay me the amount. I need your prayers.



A Daily Devotional



The heartbreaking events of Good Friday did not signal the end of Jesus Christ's ministry to His disciples—far from it. His resurrection on Easter morning was the beginning of a unique and significant time in His ministry on earth. For the next forty days, until His glorious ascension to heaven, Jesus appeared many times to His followers. During this remarkable period, He taught them about the kingdom of God and explained the requirements of discipleship, His own divine nature, and the power they would soon receive to expand the kingdom of God "into all the world" (Mark 16:15). Today, we can experience that same power to accomplish God's work.

Those forty days were a link between heaven and earth that is a pattern for us. As we walk with the resurrected Christ, we discover how to reproduce His life in our own experience, and we gain a new sense of His glorious reality and continual presence with us day by day. Just before His ascension, Jesus promised to be with us "all the days," even to the end of the age.

Relive those forty days with Christ, following the risen Lord to a higher place of spiritual life and victory.



Biblical Studies

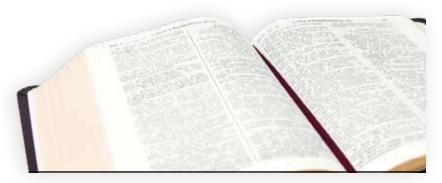
Self-Reflection

Psalm 139:23-24

"Search me, Oh God and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts, see if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way of ever lastingness"

2 Corinthians 13:5

"Test yourselves to see if you are in faith; examine yourself."



BFC Commentary

The Need for Self-Reflection

In the Christian world today, much emphasis is given to the concept of a testimony. By testimony, people usually refer to some story of conversion, and the more dramatic the better. The goal of a testimony is to share a story of faith to encourage others.

While testimonies are powerful stories, they are only half of the equation. Once you commit your life to Christ you aren't done. Instead, you begin a

long journey of becoming more conformed to the image of Christ which is referred to as the process of sanctification.

The missing piece of a testimony is the ongoing story of spiritual growth. It focuses solely on the processes of conversion and coming to faith, leaving out the process of becoming more and more like Jesus.

This is a long and difficult process, only made more difficult by a lack of understanding of how

the process works. Many Christians know what it means to come to faith, but few know how to move beyond their initial conversion and into deep intimacy in their relationship with God.

The goal of this chapter is to discuss the importance of self-reflection in the process of spiritual development. This is only one aspect of spiritual development and by no means an exhaustive study of the topic, but it will introduce you to the role of self-reflection in your relationship with God, the biblical basis for his idea, and a simple practice to get you started.

What is Self Reflection?

Self-reflection is deliberate time set aside to slow down in the busyness of your life to look back on your day, month or year in an attempt to learn from your experiences, desires, and feelings. In life, it's very easy to become driven by your schedule but prefer to spend downtime outsourcing your mental energy to something like TV or video games.

Both busyness and mind-numbing activities are ways to avoid self-reflection. Self-reflection runs against the grain of a busy culture. It requires us to set specific time aside to be quiet, still, and alone. From this place, you can begin to prayerfully enter the presence of God and begin processing what has been going on in your life.

You can ask questions like, "Am I satisfied with what I'm doing?" Sometimes life gets so busy that you can forget why you even got so busy, to begin with. Or you can ask God, "Is my life orchestrated in such a way to make my relationship with you a priority?"

Life can become filled with many good things that overcrowd your time and mental capacity. Asking God this question may prompt you to remove things that feel important in order to create more space and time for God. Your good life may not be God's best

Without creating the space to have this self-reflection and communication with God, you will likely operate on autopilot, being driven by values instilled by your culture, family of origin, and immediate community. Intentional self-reflection is aimed at creating space for you to sit with God and ask meaningful questions about life and your relationship with Him.

For those unaccustomed to self-reflection. It may be helpful for you to begin meeting with a Christian counselor. Christian counselors are trained to help you begin reflecting on your life and experiences

They can help lead you to a place of self-reflection and train you to enter this place on your own.

What Does the Bible Say about Self Reflection?

Some Christians have taken the position that self-reflection is too close to the concept of Eastern meditation but that is not necessarily the case. Eastern forms of meditation are designed to empty the mind, but Christian meditation and self-reflection intend to bring you into a quiet place with God where you can intimately converse with him about your experiences and emotions.

For those concerned about this topic, consider these four scriptures related to self reflection and spiritual growth.

"Search me, Oh God and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts, see if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way of ever lastingness"

-Psalm 139:23-24

Ask the Lord to search your heart and give unto Him all of you - all of yourself. He knows all of you, yet you hold unto tendencies that are not holy that contribute to your disturbance. Remember. "He whose mind stays on 'Thee is in perfect peace:' He that remains in One remains in peace. Grow in asking the Lord to search you and reveal the crustiness of your heart and repair it. But you must ask because the Lord is a gentleman. Seek and you will find, ask and He will answer, knock and the door will open. You do not have because you do not ask. The Lord years to use all of you, not just some of the time, but all of the time. So learn to ask, "God reveal to me the gulf that exists between you and I," then expect an answer. It may be difficult but expect to listen and He will reveal.

When you ask the Lord to test you, be aware that He will. When you say show me my inner sin nature that blocks off the sunlight of the Spirit He will reveal so be prepared. You will experience pain, difficulty and hurt, but remember God will never give you more than He and you can handle. Your Lord again and again is the nearest of the near and dearest of the dear. Therefore, my friend go with Christ. For He will never fail you or let you go. He is the friend of all friends. All of us, at some point will move on, but God will always stay. This God ensures. God has a way in which to get your attention.

Do not be afraid to be in relationship with Christ or the Holy Spirit for there is no one closer. Take a deep dive and know God. Learn to give of your self, your true nature.

What is offensive to the Lord? Ask the Lord to reveal why you are separate from Him and listen to the still small voice. Holy listening is the art of growing in listening to God. Are you spending time listening or are you telling God what to do? Asking what you need? Instead of seeking Him you are seeking after His gifts. Are you?

Remember in Matthew 6:33 / Christ is saying, "seek yea first the kingdom of God and His righteous and all these things will be added unto you. The gifts will be added, but first seek Him and His righteousness.

Search me, Oh God and reveal to me the sin, the gulf that exists between. What is this gulf, is it fear, that causes the gulf. If so, why do you rely on self to sustain you? Over and over you have struggled with this? And the Lord reveals your stronghold. Learn to grow in letting go of self. Seek the Lord to purify you, sort of, purge you from your difficulty.

Then you will gain the knowledge of knowing. In the meantime, may the Lord bless you, keep you, and may His favor ever be upon you and may you find peace.

"Test yourselves to see if you are in faith; examine yourself."

-2 Corinthians 13:5

Is your faith real, genuine? Faith is the substance of "things" hoped in the evidence of the unseen. So what are you hoping for that you have not seen that is not manifesting, as real and tangible?

Is your faith genuine by asking, by believing even though it is not by sight? Are you believing and knowing the truth? Examine your thought life. Are you constantly doubting and moving in anxiety? Seek and ask, but remain still and listen for the answer. It will come if you wait. Listen for the still small voice, not the voice that is lying, creating havoc. "Be still and know I am God. Psalm 46:10: Spend time daily, often in examining your thought life. Remember your thought life proceeds your physical manifestation in your life. Believe it or not you reap what you sow in your thought life. So examine your thoughts often and seek to have a lofty, peaceful thought life, that is vision casting. Always remember His Grace and mercy is always present protecting you and lifting you up. He is your victor, you only are His instrument. Come to rely on Christ as the source of all your strength and not yourself. "Learn not to lean on your own understanding, but acknowledge Him in all your ways and He will make straight your path." for He truly is a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path. Praise Him! Acknowledge Him! And grow in blessings. For God is omni-present! God is always available, always. Be forever grateful regardless of difficulty! Amen!

This Biblical Studies is an excerpt from An Understanding of Devotion.



Asapalli

Missions: India





If you would like more updates from the school, request a copy of the Asapalli School Magazine. BFC will happily accommodate your request.



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RWB Sermons

Believing in Easter

"The Lord has risen indeed."

- II Chronicles 5:15

Easter is one of the greatest hours in the experience of man. I am sure we all know what it means to observe or celebrate Easter, but how many of us really know what believing in Easter means?

First of all, to believe in Easter is to believe that God is supreme and rules the entire universe. It is to believe that God is the beginning and the end and above all, it means not only to believe in personal survival after death but also to believe that God, who created heavens and the earth, is alive and unconquerable. Even though sometimes we might feel that his plans seem to go astray, it is to believe that God will rule supreme in the end. Regardless how dark things may look to us, they will turn out for our best because God is the ruler of all.

It also means that we can be confident that we do not walk alone but that God is with us always to help us and guide us if we are willing to let him. Regardless of how sinful we may be or may have been, if we truly repent of our sins from the bottom of our hearts, God will forgive us and be at our sides always. It is to 'walk into the valley of the shadow of death and fear no evil." To believe in Easter, is to believe completely and thoroughly in God.

Secondly, to believe in Easter, is to experience complete joy and peace within us. We can go back to our scripture lesson this morning and experience the emptiness, loneliness and sadness the eleven (11) disciples must have experienced on that first "Good Friday" nearly 2000 years ago after Jesus Christ had been crucified. Not only did the disciples experience these feeling but the two Marys and the other followers of Christ did too. Gloom did prevail because they had lost their beloved leader, their master, their teacher, their King. This gloom prevailed until Easter morning when the two (2) Marys found the tomb empty. When these people receive the news that Jesus Christ was gone and had risen, can you possibly imagine the joy that filled their hearts. Their Lord had risen and would be with them always. Think for a moment of the first meeting they had with Christ in Galilee. All of the doubts that existed vanished as Jesus Christ appeared to them and filled their hearts with the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ can fill each of our hearts with the Holy Spirit if we want him to and if we are willing to commit our lives to him and be his followers and disciples. This is the best way, the only way to celebrate Easter; to let Jesus Christ come into your heart and fill it with loving concern for other people instead of selfish desires and wishes for ourselves. If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior before, now is the time to renew this acceptance.

Third, to believe in Easter is to believe that Jesus Christ is alive forever to bring light and life to all. We can all have the experience of really knowing our Lord if we will let him come into our lives and we can know the power of the living Lord. Today in our modem world we hear about all kinds of physical power which man is trying to harness, especially atomic energy. Man has invented and devised all kinds of means to harness this power. This power can be used for constructive purposes or destructive purposes. Science has placed this power in our hands but it does not tell us how this power is going to be used. Only God can help us decide this. Actually to believe in Easter, is to know what spiritual power is. This power is found in the living presence of Jesus Christ. In the days of Jesus' earthly ministry this power was only known by his physical presence. On the first Easter morning it was discovered that this power was still alive although Christ was not physically there. Paul called it "the power of the resurrection." This renewing power is available to everyone. We can never sink so low in sin that God forgets us, as long as we are willing to accept it and let Him help us. Everyone regardless of color or creed can be saved through the saving power of Jesus Christ.

Fourth-To believe in Easter is to hear good news about man as well as about God. Man can be saved, he can be redeemed, he can be reformed and he can be born anew - tis is done by the saving power of Jesus Christ.

Of course to believe in Easter, is to believe in life everlasting. To observe Easter is a social matter confined to the activities of a single day. To believe in Easter is to know a life that conquers death. The risen Lord says to each of us facing death, "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms and I go and prepare a place for you; let not your hearts be troubled,

neither let them be afraid." If there had been no Easter, the Christian religion would have ended with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. But Jesus was crucified, he did rise from the dead and he is with us always, which is a promise for everlasting and eternal life. If we do not believe in eternal life then there would be no point to living at all.

To believe in Easter is to live in a new kind of climate. "Old things are passed away, behold all things become new." Maybe as children we wondered what happened to or how we got rid of the old dinosaurs and monstrous reptiles that once roamed this earth. Then as we grew up and went to high school and on to college we found out. The climate changed; the old beasts could no longer survive; and a new kind of life came upon the earth. And so it is with you and I, when we truly accept Jesus Christ into our hearts, the climate changes, our lives change and all of the wicked things we use to do and be, will vanish because there is no longer room in our lives for worthless and useless things that are not important. Jesus Christ became important to us and He becomes first in our lives.

(1-A) A traveler in Russia found written across the door of a church the words, "God is not here." Someone disillusioned with the pretentiousness and hypocrisy of the church could have written this. But the unknown author could have meant more. He could have meant that as he looked upon life -as he studied science, anthropology, biology and physics, as he noted the human scene and observed man's inhumanity to man; visited the sick and dying, noted life's blind and crushing fate meted out to man -even Jesus' death upon the cross -he could have said, taking it all into account-"God is not here. There is no God." But to believe in Easter is to have a different view of the universe. On Easter there came to men, as realistic, as earnest and as concerned for truth as any of us, the absolute assurance. "God is here"

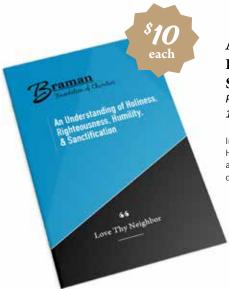
(2A) Dr. Wernher Von Braun, a scientist, has this to say about God and science. "Many people seem to feel that science has somehow made religious ideas untimely and old fashioned. But I think science has a real surprise for the skeptics. Science, for instance, tells us that nothing in nature, not even the tiniest particle, can disappear without a trace. Nature does not know extinction. All it knows is transformation. Now, if God applies this fundamental principle to the most minute and insignificant parts of his universe, doesn't it make sense to assume that it applies it also to the human soul? I think it does. And, everything science has taught me -and continues to teach me - strengthens my belief in the continuity of our spiritual existence after death. Nothing disappears without a trace."

Unless we care for the Father whom Jesus revealed, unless we share his interests and likes, the purpose on which his heart is set, Easter must be anything but a happy festival with Easter eggs and Easter bunnies. Its victory long ago declares so mistakenly who rules the world and who succeeds in his world.

So if we are to believe in Easter we have to, (1) believe that God is supreme and rules the entire universe and to believe completely and thoroughly in God. (2) To believe in Easter is to experience complete joy and peace within ourselves by the true acceptance of Jesus Christ in our lives. (3) To believe in Easter is to believe that Jesus Christ is alive forever to bring light and life to all and to know what spiritual power is. (4) To believe in Easter is to hear good news about man as well as God and to believe that man can be saved, redeemed, reformed and born again. That life is everlasting and eternal. To believe in Easter is to live in a new kind of climate with our lives changed and turned to God. Jesus Christ not only wants us to believe but to live the right kind of life according to his will. We are to be his followers, his disciples and to show concern and compassion for others. We are to be witnesses to these facts that Christ has changed our lives and he can change the lives of everyone. We will want to have fellowship with other Christians and we will want to share our Christian experience with those around us. This new life we have found with Christ will be a joyous, happy one. So this Easter day let us truly accept Jesus Christ in our lives.

How vain is our faith, if the Christ be not risen; How dark is the tomb, if the Lord is still there! How heavy our burden of grief and transgression, How deep our despair!

O' justified faith in a finished salvation; O' sure resurrection that comforts our lives! O' Glorious light in the valley of shadow-Because Jesus rose!



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Reflections

We are pleased to offer to you a "Daily Reflection" for every day of the year. It is vital to use a strong, spiritual based, Christ centered reading to help start your devotion or to end your devotion.



Favorite Scripture & Prayers

Braman Foundation of Charities has collected and discovered Promises and Commands from our Lord through scripture for decades. Additionally, we know there are prayers that have been written throughout the bible to give us both guidance and comfort. This collection, when reflected on will give deep direction, comfort, and joy.



Understanding the Holy Spirit

Growing in understanding of the Holy Spirit is so important in one's faith because the Holy Spirit is your constant companion. Thanks to God through Christ the Holy Spirit has been given to us for various reasons. This body of work has been written to support this fact. One's faith must continue to grow in order to better serve the Lord in all our endeavors.



An Understanding of Devotion, Confession, Self Reflection & Repentance

This short essay is to help the believer with tools to bring him or her into a deeper relationship with Christ. Simply, to the point, and to testify in truth and the word of God. Progress into a relationship with Christ that is the single most important relationship in your life. He will never leave you, nor forsake you.

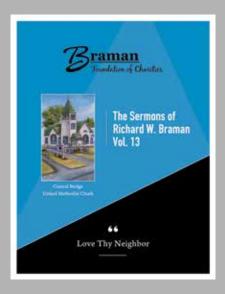
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"Be part of a Christ centered movement to Love Our Neighbor"

The Sermons of Richard W. Braman NOW FEATURING VOL. 13

As you read these sermons may the Holy Spirit continue to guide your path and may the Grace of our Lord continue to bless your life and your families' lives. If you have never had the experience of realizing Jesus as your personal Savior just ask him to come in your heart and He will. These can be read on our website.

Shout out to the BFC team for helping put this new book of sermons together.



Volumes 1-13 of the Richard W. Braman Sermons are available to be downloaded from our website, bramanfoundation.com. You may receive a printed hard copy of any volume by calling 845-471-2286 or emailing info@bramanfoundation.org.



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CORRECTIONS & PRISON MINISTRY

If your church or organization in interested in learning how to approach prison or local correctional facilities, please call the Braman Foundation.

Let BFC help in training, organizing, and implementing.



Behind the Walls

Includes Training and Life Line Literature

Learn a devotional program than you can bring into your local correction facility to help inmates come to Christ and strengthen their walk in Christ. It is a thorough program using the 12 step method of recovery, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Meditation techniques as well as a program for dealing with violent behavior. In addition, our program helps to provide clarification concerning the negative learned behavior that unfortunately comes out of some families.



Lifeline

Includes Matchcard for 15 Inmates and Personal Training

This program, when instituted, will enable any individual being released from a facility the opportunity to be united with a home church and a contact person in their home area. In addition, we will offer a mentoring program. Learn how to bridge inmates from the facility to your church.

Jesus Christ Church & Ministries

Missions: Pakistan

Where no one goes where God's word here is a lot of children who do not know about the Bible teachings, about who God is and all about the Lord.

They do not know that God started working here thru God's Word and we go out 150km to spread the word . Please pray for us.



St. George Foundation

Missions: Sierra Leone



Name: Amadu Gassama

Age: 7 years old

School: Devine Grace School

Residence: Waterloo Mother: Fudia Gassama Father: Victor Gassama



Name: Mohamed Gassama

Age: 14 years old

School: Devine Grace School

Residence: Waterloo Mother: Fudia Gassama Father: Victor Gassama

Background

Mohamed Gassama, a 14 years old student in form one at Devine Grace School, and his 7 Years old brother, Amadu Gassama, a class 2 student at the same school, are two of the five children of Fudia Gassama, a Security Officer. The Gassama Family lived in Waterloo Korea Area, near the site where fire victims had been buried. The family has faced tremendous hardships following the untimely death of their father, Mr. Victor Gassama, in November 2024, after a long battle with what was described as "Spiritual Illness" allegedly caused by being "fired with a witch gun". Despite spending their merger savings in an attempt to cure him, Victor succumbed to his illness, leaving behind his wife and five young children to fend for themselves.

Family challenges

In the wake of Victor's death, the Gassama family found themselves in dire financial straits. They were evicted from their rented property because they could no longer afford the rent, plunging them into an even more precarious situation. Fudia now a widow with a toddler to care for in addition to her other children, found herself overwhelmed by the responsibility of raising her children in an increasingly difficult environment.

Fudia had always struggled to make ends meet, but after the loss of her husband, it became nearly impossible. With no place to stay, no money for food or clothing, and little hope of recovering financially, she made the painful decision to take drastic action.

In an effort to ensure her children would not suffer further, Fudia made the heart-wrenching decision to take four of her children to the Western Area Rural District Council office at Waterloo, where she left them. She hoped that by leaving them there temporarily, she could raise enough money to secure a new place to live and begin providing for her family. At the time of drop-off, Fudia was under immense pressure. She was financially broken, homeless, and emotionally drained from the loss of her husband and the challenges of raising five children on her own.

Fudia's Decision was motivated by a desire to protect her children, knowing that they would have better chances of receiving care and attention if they were at a safe place, even temporarily. She intended to retrieve them once she had the financial means to care for them adequately, but the situation remains uncertain.

After some time, two of the Gassama children, Mohamed and Amadu were referred to the St. George Foundation Interim Care Centre by the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs. This referral marked a turning point for the children, as they were given the opportunity to receive proper care, support, and educational services in a safe environment. The Ministry's intervention ensured that the children would not be left without basic necessities, and their immediate well-being was addressed.

Current Situation

Now, Mohamed and Amadu are receiving care at the St. George Foundation Interim Care Centre, where they are receiving food, shelter, education and emotional support. They are no longer at risk of further neglect or deprivation, thanks to the timely intervention of the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs.

Conclusion

The Gassama Family's Story is one of immense hardship and resilience. The loss of the father and provider, compounded by financial instability, homelessness, and emotional strain, left the family struggling to survive. However, the intervention of the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs and the support from organizations like the St. George Foundation Sierra Leone have provided a lifeline for Mohamed and Amadu.

This case highlights the importance of timely intervention for vulnerable children and the need for greater social support systems to assist families in crisis. It also underscores the resilience of mothers like Fudia, who despite overwhelming circumstances, continue to fight for the well-being of their children, even when the odds seem insurmountable.

The Braman Foundation has been very helpful in supporting St George Foundation reaching the most vulnerable of the poor in communities. These children deserve much better opportunities by providing educational support and protection mechanism that has upscale their social wellbeing. These children are so much happy as St George Foundation continues to provide support to them for a more brighter future.





International Day of Street Children

Every year on April 12th, International Day for Street Children provides a voice for children that live on the street so their rights cannot be ignored. The day provides opportunities for St George Foundation to spread awareness for the number of street children throughout Sierra Leone.

According to recent statistics, up to 150 million children throughout the world live on the street. Some children live on the street with their families. Other children spend a majority of their time on the street begging for food and money. Still, others live on the street as orphans with no family or no home to return to at night.

There are many reasons children end up on the street. One of the most common reasons is the Menpikin syndrome that is common among Sierra Leoneans taking children to stay with them with the hope of sending them to school in bigger cities. Children in this situation are either separated from their family or

their family members have died. Some children leave home voluntarily because they are abused by family members. Other children live on the street because they are rejected by their family, have mental health issues, or are being forced into criminal activity. No matter what the case, street children are often denied an education, health care, and other basic human rights.

Human Rights

In 1989, the UN held the Convention on the Rights of the Child. According to the Convention, some of the rights that all children in the world should have included the right to:

- · a stable, loving, and nurturing environment
- · healthcare and nutrition
- · clean water and electric power
- · equal opportunities
- · live in dignity and freedom

Sadly, children on the street do not have these rights. It's for this reason that organizations such as the St George Foundation are trying to enact the Four Steps to Equality. These steps include making a commitment to equality, protecting every child, providing access to services, and creating new solutions On the verge of celebration street children were brought together to share sensitive information on the dangers of children living and working on the street and for them to make an informed decision about their lives through radio engagement on St George Foundation radio on 91.1 FM in creating more awareness on family and social cohesion.

Football event was organized for street children who have developed their talents was set up into four football clubs representing different ghetto setting or communities they came from to raise awareness on the dangers of street children living on the street and the advocating with government for an improve policies for an improve nurturing environment, promote care and nutrition, clean water supply and electricity, equal opportunity for them and upscale their living condition from street to home by ensuring social cohesion with families.







St. George Foundation Partnership with Family Support Unit

In March 2024, St George Foundation in strong partnership with the Family Support Unit (FSU) of the Sierra Lone Police referred five (5) children (4 girls and 1 boy) of the same family to St George Foundation home at Grafton for temporal shelter and protection. These children were living with both parents in the same address at Rokel in the Western Area Rural District of Freetown. The father of these children is a kekeh ridder that transports people from one location to another as a source of living for the family. These children were very happy as they were going to school and having food on the table just as a normal family could enjoy life, the mother who was very supportive of her husband knows where the husband used to keep the money he gets from his Kekeh riding for the benefit of the family.



Unfortunately for the wife she was tempted to cat-away with the money her husband has already saved to be put into a private business without the notice of her husband and other family members. She took with her a total sum of fourteen thousand (14,000) leones converted into dollar \$ 600. The children and their father searched for more than one week trying to locate their mother which they could not find, the father became very uncompromising with his wife behaviours and decided to hold the children as hostage for a week thinking that will move the mother to come out from her hiding sport and bring out the money. The children became

the victims of their mother's theft situation and the father denied them food for days, closed neighbours reported the situation to the Family Support Unit of the Sierra Leone Police who promptly intervened and rescued the children and referred them to St George Foundation for protection and the father was arrested and locked up.



The wife families traveled from the provincial town to Freetown when they heard the information about the family situation, soon they arrived they negotiated with the police and agreed to accept the children to live with them and the father was released with strict bail condition, the children were allowed to be reunified back with extended families for their up-bringing while the mother was still on the run.



SPURGEON'S CORNER

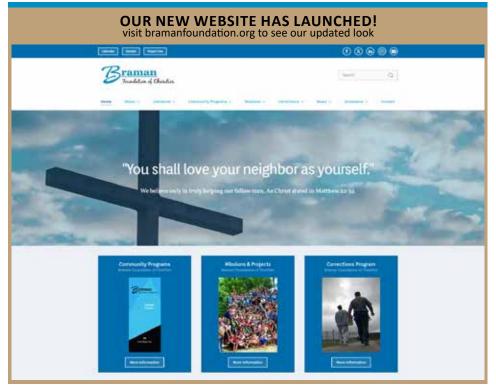
"If there be no resurrection,—."

—1 Corinthians 15:13



"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

— 1 Corinthians xv. 12— 19.



Community Meetings



Prayer & Meditation

Every Sunday, 7pm

Discipleship

Every Tuesday, 7pm



The BFC Discipleship Program continues to thrive on Tuesday nights as we study and discuss materials like Understanding of The Holy Spirit, a concise BFC booklet. Each week, we also work through the Discipleship Workbook. Additionally, several members of the senior community are transported in the new BFC vehicle to attend services at Beulah Baptist Church on Mansion Street. Attendance is steadily growing, as participants are blessed by the opportunity to study God's Word on Tuesdays and worship on Sundays.

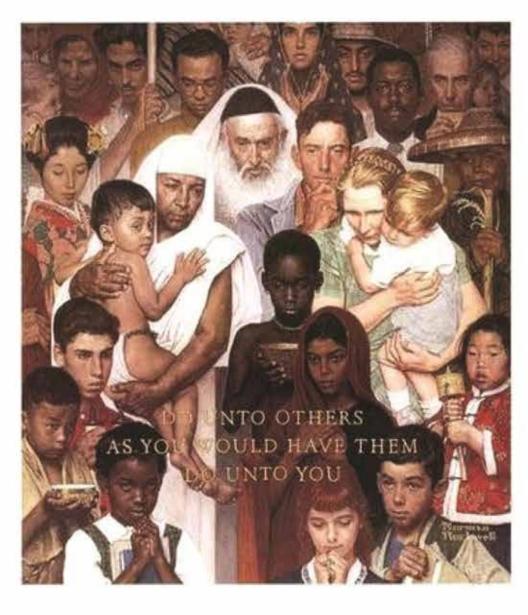
On Sunday nights, prayer and meditation sessions are held at the BFC offices at 18 Davies Place in Poughkeepsie. While there are several regular attendees, more individuals from the local nursing home have expressed interest in joining, requiring additional time for transportation arrangements.

Overall, the BFC community meetings are well-established and continue to flourish as we grow in sanctification. We are especially grateful for the support and fellowship at Beulah Baptist Church and look forward to strengthening our relationship with them.

Thank you, Fudia Braman







NORMAN ROCKWELL "DO UNTO OTHERS"

