

The Vincennes Voice

"...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight..." (Matt. 3:3)

A teaching bulletin produced and provided by FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Volume 1 ♦ Issue 8 ♦ February 23, 2020

REASONS FOR WRITING

Larry R. Ping II

Divinely inspired authors wrote for many and varied reasons in the New Testament. Consider some of these.

1. "...we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood" (Acts 15:20). Sometimes, the words in the Bible served as a notice to keep away from certain things (I Thess. 5:22; I Pet. 2:11). We, too, should pay heed to those things which are written as they are penned in order to keep us safe and in a relationship with God.

2. "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you" (I Cor. 4:14). Often, God's Word served as a warning, such as in this place. God's warnings indicate His love for us and His desire to see us succeed spiritually (Rev. 3:19). We would do well to observe these warnings. Remember, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" (Heb. 12:6).

3. "For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things" (II Cor. 2:9). Now and then, the writers of the Bible wrote to determine the spiritual status of others. Frequently, we do the same, writing to be sure somebody else is doing well. This exhibits love, care and concern for another's soul (Php. 2:4-5).

4. "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance" (II Pet. 3:1). Commonly, New Testament writers wrote in order to remind their readers of important things. Peter did this often (II Pet. 1:12-15). Timothy was told "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ (I Tim. 4:6).

5. "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (I Jn. 1:4). The written word is often used to convey joy and happiness.

Countless thousands of letters have been written world-wide in order to proclaim great news. Still, in many ways, it goes on today. People of God are called upon to "Rejoice with them that do rejoice" (Rom. 12:15).

6. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (I Jn. 2:1). Much ink in the New Testament was reserved to encourage folks not to sin and not to yield to temptation. Occasionally, we need written reminders not to surrender to our lusts. We also would do well to remind each other we have a Savior "that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5).

7. What about you? Folks still like to receive hand-written notes. Lately, have you encouraged others, warned others, rejoiced with others or reminded others with the power of your hand? If not, today would be a great day to start!

THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE

Larry R. Ping II

In using the word “above,” the Bible authors were noting things which were great, lasting or important. Consider the following several uses of this term.

1. Jesus is above all others. John wrote “He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all” (Jn. 3:31). Paul affirms this fact in Php. 2:9, Eph. 1:21 and Eph. 4:6. As He is above all others, we should listen to Him, and only Him (Matt. 17:5). There is no other Son of God. It is this only Son of God who will judge us by His words (Jn. 5:22; Jn. 12:48).

2. A lame man above forty years old was healed. Luke writes about this in Acts 4:22 and Acts 3:1-10. The Holy Spirit chose to include this fact to illustrate this man had lived roughly 14,500 days with his ailment. In fact, he sat “daily at the gate” asking alms. It was only through the power of God he could have been healed in such a way.

3. Some put one day above another, some don’t. Paul wrote of this in Rom. 14:5 saying “One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” In this context, Paul is teaching that both parties are acceptable to God (Rom. 14:3-6), and that neither should try to bind their opinion on another, or to become a stumbling-block to their brother (I Cor. 8:7-9).

4. We will not be tempted above that which we can bear. Paul penned God is faithful in that He “will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (I Cor. 10:13). God loves us and wants to be saved. Peter penned God “is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Pet. 3:9). God “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (I Tim. 2:3-4).

5. After His resurrection, Jesus was seen by above 500 brethren. The apostle affirms this in I Cor. 15:6. Many doubt the resurrection of the Son of God, but there are many proofs that He most certainly was raised. What better sort of witness can there be than that of the “eye” variety?

6. Paul was beaten with stripes above measure. This alerts us to the fact Paul endured brutal and merciless beatings, as evidenced by his own writings (II Cor. 11:23). God’s people, from time to time, will endure persecution (II Tim. 3:12). It is up to us to endure it patiently and wait for the heavenly reward (Matt. 5:10-12).

7. God is able to do above all we can imagine. Paul penned “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Eph. 3:20). Let us not think too lowly of God. He can do what He wants, when He wants, where He wants to whom He wants!

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY
Bible Study – 10:00 am
Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY
Bible Study – 7:00 pm