

At the dawn of a new year, 2013...many people have been talking of resolutions they have made. Usually they entail something we want to try and do better or what we want to focus on in the new year. I wonder though how many new year resolutions have been made concerning spending more time with God's word. We make resolutions to lose weight or to tackle some project that is

important to us. However, how important is it for us to grow spiritually? In a recent article I read, it pointed out that merely 11 months out of typical lifespan of 75 years was spent in Bible study if attending one twice a week. Do we desire more? Or is that enough? We need to realize studying the Bible will never disappoint us. It will always promote more knowledge, more service, more repentance, and draw us closer to God. After all, it is the will of God revealed to us. Have you resolved to spend more time personally and even involving your family with more Bible study this year?

Worship Times :

Sunday Morning Worship
9:30 AM

Sunday Morning Bible Study
approx. **11:15 AM**

Wednesday Evening Bible Study
7 PM

-John Adams

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www.pghchurchofchrist.org

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1300 Spring Run Rd. Ext.
Coraopolis, PA 15108



"And you shall know the TRUTH and the TRUTH shall make you free" (Jno. 8:32).

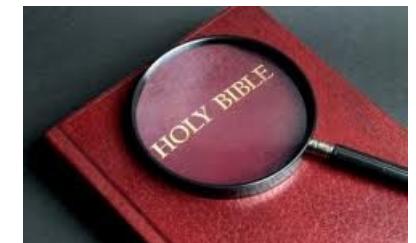


The Westside church of Christ Presents: *Gateway to TRUTH*

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Preaching the Gospel of Christ in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan area

"Nothing To Hide!"



Consider this:

- If someone has some printed money but is not willing to have it carefully examined, people will probably think it is counterfeit.
- If one stands accused, and is afraid to take a lie detector test, people will almost certainly think they are guilty of the crime.
- If someone conducts a business but is unwilling to let anyone investigate it, folks will probably think they are running a crooked business.

Yet many people teach doctrines that under no circumstances will they test or allow to be tested by the Bible. However, millions of people will accept them as upright, honest teachers of the truth, and will risk their salvation upon them.

What makes the difference? The Bible instructs us to test those who claim to be teachers of spiritual truths (**1 John 4:1**). The truth never fears investigation! It has nothing to hide!

- Bill Crews

"Hardening Pharaoh's Heart"



Of all the characters in the Bible, few have caused as much speculation as the Pharaoh who ruled Egypt during the time of Moses. God spoke to Moses about Pharaoh and said, "I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go" (**Exodus 4:21**). This promise of God was repeated on several other occasions (**Exodus 7:3; 9:12; 10:20,27**).

Many fanciful theories have been devised to explain how God hardened Pharaoh's heart. Calvinists often point to this case and claim that God miraculously hardened his heart by the Holy Spirit. But, as is always the case, their argument fails in the light of other passages.

Three times in the narrative we read that Pharaoh "hardened his own heart" (**Exodus 8:15,32; 9:34**). Four other times the Bible simply says his heart "grew" or "became" hard (**Exodus 7:14,22; 8:19; 9:7**). The record also indicates the magicians had a hand in the hardening of Pharaoh's heart (**Exodus 7:22, 8:19**).

When we put all the pieces together, what do we find? Pharaoh was an insolent, arrogant and cruel man. He had two reasons for not wanting to release the Israelites: pride and covetousness. It would look bad for a monarch to allow nearly two million slaves to go free. It would also hurt the national economy if he lost his labor force.

It went against the grain for one to make demands in the name of Jehovah. Every time Moses spoke Pharaoh's heart grew harder.

The magicians also played a part in the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. By the use of enchantments, they tried to minimize the miracles of Moses. Jamieson commented, "The art of those ancient magicians, who were not common jugglers, but educated men, was enlisted in support of idolatry of Egypt ... it is not difficult to imagine what immense power those professors of occult science must have wielded over the minds of men in an age of darkness, when the superstition of Egypt was in all its glory."

God hardens the hearts of men today the same way He did 3,500 years ago. Some will never listen to a simple gospel preacher. The "pride of life" (**1 John 2:16**) will cause them to close their ears. Pride kept many of the rulers from confessing Christ, "Lest they be put out of the synagogue; for they love

the praise of men more than the praise of God" (**John 12:42-43**). When a man repeatedly hears the gospel message, yet refuses to obey it, his conscience becomes "seared" (**1 Tim. 4:2**). To some men, gospel preachers are the "aroma of life," but to those who have had their conscience seared, they are the "aroma of death" (**2 Cor. 2:16**).

False teachers also help to harden the hearts of some. Pentecostal preachers, by their use of "signs and lying wonders" (**2 Thess. 2:9**), have deceived people into putting their trust in things other than God's word, Denominational creed-books and traditions have also blinded men to the truth (**Matt 15:8, 9**).

Pharaoh had the opportunity to heed the message of God. I am sure he would give 1,000 worlds like this one for another chance. You have the same choice Pharaoh had. The difference is that he cannot change his decision, but you can.

- David Padfield



The T.V. is my shepherd. My spiritual growth shall not want. It maketh me to sit down and do nothing for the cause of Christ, because it requireth all of my time. It keepeth me from doing my duty as a Christian because it presenteth so many good things that I must see. It restoreth my knowledge of the things of the world, and keepeth me from studying God's word. It leadeth me in the paths of failing to attend worship and doing nothing in the kingdom of God. Yea, though I live to be a hundred, I shall keep on viewing T.V. as long as it will work, for my T.V. Is my constant companion. Its sound and its picture they comfort me from doing important things with my family. It fills my head with ideas that differ from those set forth in the word of God. Surely no good will come to my life, because T.V. offereth me no time to do the will of God; and I will dwell with the devil and his angels forever.

Psalms 23 or Channel 23?????

Which is yours?

- Selected and adapted