



Family Newsletter

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Looking Unto Jesus In 2019



Gene & Alice Burge
President, BMFP

As we enter into the New Year of 2019, we do so with uncertainty. This uncertainty is caused by the traumatic situations in the world. Now, terror warnings are a way of life, even in the United States. Religious fanatics are blowing up their own bodies and killing innocent by-standers all in the name of their

god. All around the world people are looking over their shoulders wondering what is going to happen next.

It is my prayer that we who know Christ as Saviour may realize our need of "Looking Unto Jesus" for the strength and courage we need to live for Him in these uncertain days that we now live. I believe that the Lord is looking for Christians who will live lives that are pure, holy, and clean in the midst of this wicked generation in which we live.

Hebrews 12:2a says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." H. A. Ironside said, "We do not become holy by looking into our own hearts. There we find only corruption. But as we look away from self altogether, 'Looking unto Jesus,' as He is the object in which we delight, as we contemplate His holiness, purity, love, compassion, and His devotion to the Father's will, we shall be transformed, imperceptibly to ourselves, perhaps, but none the less surely, into His blessed image."

Our text says that Jesus is the author of our faith and He also is the one who will bring it to completion. What was the reason for it all? Hebrews 12:2b says, "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." The cross, the shame, the pain and our sin were laid on Him. It was all done for us but for His joy that we might be with Him forever! What love and compassion Jesus had and still has for us.

God created the world out of nothing. That is His nature. He will not make anything out of us, until we become nothing. He must increase, and we must decrease. We must look "unto JESUS, the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith."



Brian & Cindy Thiessen

Biblical Innovation in Mission Work By Brian Thiessen Canadian Field Administrator

Innovation is defined as the introduction of new things or methods. Some call it, "cutting edge," "state of the art,"

or "contemporary." BMFP uses the slogan "Providing Global Opportunities for Innovative Ministries." Regardless of the terminology, innovation is embraced across society. Businesses are full of entrepreneurs looking for the next big idea. Medical fields look for new advancements to cure deadly diseases or shorten healing. We are familiar with rapid technological advancements. In ministry, including missions, innovation is a double-edged sword, with blessings, benefits, and inevitable dangers. When is innovation a blessing?

1. When it is a means of better facilitating the God-given purposes of the church.

Paul expected Timothy to be doctrinally sound, uncompromising in conviction, and godly in character. But he also understood that Timothy would have to be who God made him to be. Therefore, Paul challenged him to "exercise thyself . . . unto godliness" I Tim. 4:7; to "Let no man despise thy youth" I Tim. 4:12; and to "stir up the gift of God which is in thee." II Tim. 1:6

Paul understood Timothy would be his own man. He did not steer him away from individuality that naturally leads to an innovative approach to ministry. The right kind of innovation is driven by a desire to enable ministry that is more effective, biblical, and Holy Spirit empowered.

2. When it revitalizes and refreshes a neglected or dying ministry program.

Through twenty years of pastoral ministry near Toronto, I concluded several times that our way of ministry was not facilitating the growth and involvement among our church family that God desired. Do we do things like they have always been done, or make changes?

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Biblical Innovation in Mission Work

By Brian Thiessen

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One innovation changed our standard Saturday soulwinning outreach to a program called NETS, facilitating every member, anytime, evangelism. Monthly Sunday evening soulwinning meetings called for a minimum monthly commitment for personal evangelism. Participation instantly went from ten to one hundred! Much more was accomplished in advancing the gospel. The right innovation can breathe life into a ministry.

3. When it helps church members better understand their responsibility and opportunity for service.

When ministry lacks innovation, things can become stale and church members may grow disinterested or apathetic towards ministry. A fresh approach to soulwinning or discipleship serves notice: the church cares about the vitality of its ministries. Its like applying a fresh coat of paint, bringing back life, reenergizing God's people to serve Him!

On the other hand, we must be intellectually honest and careful to acknowledge the dangers that creep in under the guise of innovative ministry. Let's carefully contemplate:

1. The danger of violating biblical precepts and principles.

We need understand this implicitly, and state it explicitly. There is a danger of getting so caught up in new trends that we overstep the boundaries of what is pure, modest, and appropriate in a biblical sense. Wrong sorts of innovation lead us away from biblical standards of separation.

2. The danger of becoming dependent on innovation more than we are dependent upon God.

We can gravitate to thinking success in ministry depends upon new programs and innovations. To be balanced on this issue, our success does not depend on old, "tried and true" methods either. God does not need our programs, old or new, to breathe out His power and blessing.

3. The danger of innovating for purely pragmatic reasons.

Perhaps there is pressure to keep up with ministry trends, so we mimic the innovations of others. We take note of outward success other ministries enjoy, and wrongly think if we copy their program we will enjoy similar results.

Concluding Thoughts

If you were Moses, would you expect Joshua to follow your ministry methods; bring water from a rock, fashion a brass serpent? God designed each ministry to be unique!

God called Moses to a ministry of deliverance, but appointed Joshua to one of conquest. Both were godly, faith-filled, spirit-led men. Yet, it would have been folly for Joshua to seek to duplicate the methods of Moses, and it would have been unwise for Moses to mandate it.

Today, God calls men and designs them for unique contexts within His work. He expects us to be men filled with faith and biblical conviction. He desires us to follow **Him** into innovative and effective ministry rather than blindly follow the methods of those who walked before us or mimic the ideas of those who walk beside us.

News From the Fields

Eli & Katie Guiltner

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I am happy to announce that we completed tracting all the train lines from our home station to the end (17 stations). We invested a year into this project so please pray for all those who read these tracts. Next term, I will start a new train line. God has also given us an opportunity to witness in English and convicted us about the number of foreigners we see, so we are making Chinese and Vietnamese websites to follow up the tracts with Bible lessons.

We are also pleased to announce that baby Guiltner #2 is on the way! Please pray for Katie as she recovers from morning sickness, continues teaching Sunday School, and takes care of our energetic little Mary.

Larry & Kay Ferguson

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We want to express our deepest gratitude for all the prayers and gifts and praise God for His miracles experienced during the hurricane. God also added another military family to our church—Angelo and Jessica. Jessica's long-awaited prayer was answered as Angelo received Christ and was baptized. Please pray for them and for a Korean lady, Kyong-Mi who recently joined the church. Her son Yihan needs to be saved.

Reasons To Rejoice This Coming Year! by Gene Burge

(1) My sins are forgiven. (2) The Lord Jesus is my Saviour. (3) A wonderful wife who loves me and faithfully serves the Lord with me. (4) Our daughter, son, their spouses, our grandson (now in the military), our granddaughter, her spouse, and two great-grandsons. (5) The promise that Alice and I will see our second son and our parents in Heaven one day. (6) My three sisters and their families. (7) To be able to serve with a faithful BMFP office staff, dedicated Field Administrators and wonderful missionaries. (8) Many Christian friends that have been a blessing to us as a result of our missionary retreats and meetings. (9) The Word of God to guide me. (10) The Holy Spirit to lead me. (11) A loving sending church family and pastor and his wife. (12) Health that allows me to keep going for the Lord. (13) Faithful supporters that enable us to have Alice and my needs met. (14) A good home, car, and nice clothes to wear. (15) So many answered prayers. (16) People who love me and pray for me. (17) Souls saved this past year. (18) Christians that have been called into fulltime service, especially in missions. (19) With the New Year coming, it means I have a new start. (20) When I pass from this life, I have a home in Heaven with my Saviour and love ones.

Indeed we are Blessed. Try listing some of your own!

On behalf of Dr. Burge, and all of our missionaries, we would like to sincerely thank all those who graciously gave special Christmas gifts to our missionaries. You may never know how much your love, prayers, and support mean to missionaries serving around the world. We truly appreciate all you do for our Lord and Savior!