

Be a Berean!

The Bereans...received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day (Acts 17:11). "Be a Berean" will regularly cover topics that arise during Lockport Alliance Bible classes. Contact Franklyn Pfeil—pfeil.lockma@roadrunner.com—with questions or comments.

"The remnant"

They gathered at noon at City Hall on the National Day of Prayer. There weren't many, just a remnant. There will be bigger crowds on your block at backyard parties on the 4th of July. Our President chose not to mark the occasion by his presence at any prayer gathering, although he issued the obligatory nondescript statement. His Presence, I gather, had elsewhats to do, concerns more pressing than prayer.

First they prayed briefly for the mayor of our city. Astonishingly, he never made his way to the microphone. He stood there humbly, the titular head acknowledging our city's need for prayer. And he stood right there until the hour of prayer was over. Lockport is in good hands because, judging from what I saw, Mayor Tucker will tell you that those hands aren't his.

They prayed--audibly, in scattered groups of 4 or 5--for our government, our economy, our military, and the media. They prayed for our children, our families, and our schools. They prayed for the Church.

I looked around at the Church. They are not a prepossessing lot. Outwardly, there's not a lot about them that's attractive.

They are few, like Gideon's crew--maybe not few enough for God, Who periodically culls the ranks (1). The weapons they wield--prayer and the Word of God (2)--are scorned by the world. Why, you might as well bring a slingshot to a war. (3)

The passersby in their cars, waiting at the red light, were bemused at this motley collection: *And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him* (4). Such foolishness to see so few outside the walls of city hall, calling on the name of the LORD. Why, they might as well march around the city seven times, for all the good it'll do. (5)

A voice in prayer, somehow familiar, caught my attention. I looked for its source, and--behold!--it was Cindy, the first person I ever knew who cares more about Jesus than about herself. She'd planted the seeds of my salvation long ago.

She asked me where I'd been. I thanked her for saving my life. I told her I still had the Bible that she'd given me all those years ago. An old blue NASB on the day she'd given it to me, it stood fallow for 20 years. But it's been in continuous use for the last dozen, and I swear it's getting younger and bluer.

I introduced her to Shelley. She introduced us to her son, soon to be married to an absolutely wonderful girl from LAC. Small world.

Then the hour was over. As the assembly departed, it was as if I were looking through other eyes, through God's eyes, at His Church. Amongst that rag-tag remnant were the two bravest, truest, and most beautiful women I have ever known. One planted, long ago; the other, today after today, waters what was sown and reflects the Light of the World into my life. (6)

They were heading back to lives lived against the flow, against the prevailing winds of their culture. Back to offices, to families, even to churches, where they stood alone for Jesus Christ (7). I found myself praying for them, silently wishing them well before God. I lingered, watching, and prayed until there was no one left to pray for.

When all the presidents have come and gone, no longer even footnotes; when all the institutions, their edifices and facades, have long since crumbled and collapsed, these--*the apple of God's eye* (8)--will stand, *for the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.* (9)

And the seed (10) they sow and nurture--old blue NASBs; big, black KJVs; or two-tone leather NIVs--will outlast the very elements:

The heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up (11). Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (12)

Thank you, remnant. You are my heroes. You're the biggest deal in the whole wide world.

Scripture cited: (1) Judges 7; (2) Eph. 6:17-18; (3) 1 Sam. 17; (4) 1 Samuel 22:2; (5) Joshua 6; (6) 1 Cor. 3:6; (7) Rom. 12:2; (8) Psalm 17:8; (9) Matt. 16:18; (10) Luke 8:11; (11) 2 Pet. 3:10; (12) Matt. 24:35

It is our fervent hope that you will 'be a Berean' by attending one of these Bible-based classes this week! —
Christ in History (Ten Windows of God's Redemptive Work)--Sunday at 9:45
Money, Possessions, and Eternity--Sunday at 9:45