

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

March 25, 2014

Issue No. 137 Mark Aites, Editor

Action

"Action may not always bring happiness; but there is no happiness without action." – Beaconsfield

"Active natures are rarely melancholy – activity and sadness are incompatible." – Christian Nestell Bovee

"Give me the ready hand rather than the ready tongue." – Giuseppe Garibaldi

"It is not enough to have ideals. We must translate them into action. We must clear our own little corner of creation." – Toyohko Kagawa, *Meditation on the Cross*

"I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair." – Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *Locksey Hall*

For years we have heard the old cliché that, "Actions speak louder than words." In the church we seek to encourage the brethren to put their Christianity into action. Yet, the struggle for activity remains.

Considering the scope of sermons we have heard over the years, one would think that the church would be very active. We seek to give the reminder that Jesus did His disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19-20). "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature'" (Mark 16:15).

Perhaps the best text on this subject comes from James. Warning: it is hard hitting. "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:22-25).

James uses the word *doer* three times in this short text. And even closes verse 25 with an action word. The concern focuses on a person getting to a state where they are a "forgetful hearer."

It is interesting that James says that a person can deceive themselves. This applies to one who only is proficient in hearing the Word of God spoken, or in reading or studying Scripture. This makes us realize that it is possible to absorb what God has to say without ever putting a single thing into action.