

The Old Hickory

Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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WALKING WITH GOD

Moses wrote about people in the days preceding the Great Flood: “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” (Gen. 6:5). What an appalling character of men is shown by God of the inhabitants of the world before the flood!

Wickedness! Men were engulfed in wickedness and evil to such an overwhelming degree that they could think of nothing else. They were wholly committed to living as reprobates, and that development and influence of corruption, that devotion to iniquity, was universal. Hearts of men, which form concepts and sprout ideas, became a poisoned fountain, flowing only with evil thoughts, evil purposes, evil desires and evil motives. Righteousness and devotion to God was extinct. Men had become devoid of any thought of good. There was no place for serious reflection on God, holiness, spirituality, or righteousness. Paul’s description was, “they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer” (Rom. 1:28; see their specific actions in Rom. 1:29-31).

This life! They were concerned only with the desires of the flesh and pursuing the things of this life. Jesus said, “they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.” (Luke 17:27).

Punishment! The God who sees everything took notice of their hearts and actions, was displeased by them, and determined to indicate His disapproval to man by an unforgettable punishment! How great the evil must have been for God to say, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land ... for I am sorry that I have made them.” (Gen. 6:7)!

Are people like that today? Many people would be quite offended to be called atheists, but what are people when they live out the philosophy of atheism, when they do not “see fit to acknowledge God” by what they think and what they do? They may not speak the words, “*There is no God!*” but they live as if there is no God, as if they will never have to answer to Him for their evil thoughts and unrighteous actions. Others would be offended to be called materialists, but they live in a way that demonstrates the primary concerns of their hearts. Just as in the days of Noah, when people paid no attention to the warnings of the “preacher of righteousness” (2 Pet. 2:5), people who have devoted themselves to such routines today will heed no warnings of an impending Judgment Day!

Must people be bad? “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.” (Gen. 6:8). “Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.” (Gen. 6:9b). Noah is exemplary proof that a man can live righteously before God, even when surrounded by a society that is saturated with evil! When all others surrounding Noah lived as they pleased, giving no thought whatsoever to God and His righteousness, “By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of

his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” (Heb. 11:7).

Noah walked with God! Noah did not embrace the ideas of the world around him. His standard for approval in life was not what everybody else was doing. He allowed no wickedness to consume his heart, but rather cultivated a trust in God and a belief in His warnings of world condemnation. He acted on the instructions of God for the saving of himself and his family, and God saw his faith and regarded him as righteous because of it.

Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord! Because of the choice that Noah made regarding who and what he would be in life, Noah found the grace of God. He determined to please God in faithful service to Him, even if he had to stand alone. His devout example shows us the way to God’s favor. Friend, you too can walk with God. How can we help you find and live in God’s favor? Can we help you today?

- GFS

PRIORITIES

They ranged in age from 9 through about 19. The father had died a few years earlier and now the body of their mother lay in state waiting to be carried to a distant city to be placed beside the body of her mate. It was Sunday morning and the children hurriedly dressed to be at services on time. They didn't know what others would say about being at worship while their mother was waiting to be buried, but they knew what the Lord wanted them to do and they knew what Mother expected of them. Beside this, they needed that strength that comes from worshipping God and being with the saints that should understand.

The above is not a fabricated story, it happened a number of years ago and, to my knowledge, all are active in churches across the land to-day. They had learned from a godly woman about spiritual priorities, and had learned them so well that in time of crisis and deep grief they met their appointments with the Lord.

Some seem to never learn this important principle, even after decades of living and hearing hundreds of sermons on putting first things first where God is concerned. I have known of those who have been "Christians" for years who will travel on Sunday and never stop to worship, or if they do, for only one service. They will miss the morning worship hour to get home for the evening service, for, "after all, we can partake of the Lord's Supper then." I have known of those who have attended important seminars or business training sessions and by so doing miss one or both of the Sunday worship services. "It's the only time the information is available."

I have known of those (sometimes whole families) who miss one or both services when one member of the family was sick. If the illness is serious enough to demand close care, that is one thing, but often such is not the case. One could stay with the ill person and the others worship. If the sick one is in the hospital, the hospital staff is competent to care for the sick for a short time without us. Often the same illness that demands our attention on the Lord's Day does not demand it on work days.

It is not my effort in this short article to judge, but rather to bring to our attention the importance of setting priorities. Most people intend to put the Lord first, but without thinking, let other things become more important.

- *Morris D. Norman, Perspectives, Vol. V, No. 4, April 1979*

From the Mouth of a Babe

A little boy on his death bed, urging his father to repentance, said, "Father, I am going to heaven; what shall I tell Jesus is the reason why you won't love Him?"

Power of Habit

The diminutive chains of habit are generally too small to be felt until they are too strong to be broken.

Advice Rejected

They who will not be counseled cannot be helped. If you do not hear reason, she will rap your knuckles.

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"The Simple Faith of Noah!"* (text: Heb. 11:7); Sunday evening: Jesus Christ: A Closer Look – *The Greatest of God's Commandments!* (Mark 12:28-34).

SCHEDULE: Our Vacation Bible School is scheduled for June 20-24, 7:00 PM, with Dwayne Gandy as our guest speaker. Our Fall Gospel Meeting is scheduled for Sept. 18-23, with Eric Reynolds.