

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Seeing Jesus

It has often been noted that the resurrection of Jesus had a life-altering effect upon the apostles and other disciples. Jesus had predicted that His arrest and subsequent death would cause the disciples to desert Him (Matt. 26:31) and they would be overcome with sorrow (John 16:20). They do indeed scatter—they “left Him and fled” (Matt. 26:56). They were hiding behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leadership that had seen to the death of Jesus (John 20:19).

But then something changed. Those who had scattered and once sought safety behind closed doors suddenly became undefeatable. They became world beaters. They were ready to tell anyone and everyone about this Jesus who had conquered death and cleared a path to the presence of the Father. The cowards became champions! They now realized that everything Jesus had ever said was true. They now understood that His resurrection from the dead meant that they didn't have to be afraid of anything because He had defeated all the things that might make us afraid (death, isolation, etc.).

Seeing Jesus changed everything!

Such should be true of us as well. We won't get to experience the same things the apostles did—no broiled fish dinners (Luke 24:42-43)—but we can still see Jesus. The Bible (not just the Gospels, but the complete canon of Scripture) reveals the Son of God to us.

As Jesus said to Thomas: “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29; cf. 1 Peter 1:8).

May we all see Jesus and be forever changed!

- Bart Warren

Your Obituary Has Not Yet Been Written

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel awoke one morning to read his own obituary in the local newspaper:

“Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, who died yesterday, devised a way for more people to be killed in a war than ever before, and he died a very rich man.”

Actually, it was Alfred's older brother who had died; a newspaper reporter had bungled the epitaph. But the account had a profound effect on Nobel. He decided he wanted to be known for something other than developing the means to kill people efficiently and for amassing a fortune in the process. So he initiated the Nobel Prize, the award for scientists and writers who foster peace. Today he is more widely known for the Nobel Peace Prize than he

is for inventing dynamite. Nobel is quoted as saying, “Every man ought to have the chance to correct his epitaph in midstream and write a new one.”

As I read this quote, I was hit with a very arresting thought: My obituary has not yet been written. Whatever it is that men think of me, I still have the opportunity to make it better. Whatever mistakes I have made in the past, the possibility still exists for me to correct them. Whatever it is that I have yet not done, but should have, I still have time. As long as God gives me life and liberty, I can make of it something meaningful and lasting. As long as I have breath and desire, I can do my part to improve myself, my family, my neighborhood, the church, even the world.

Everyone still has the opportunity to correct his epitaph, up until the day he dies. Of course, the best thing that could ever be written in our obituary is that we were a faithful Christian. And certainly there are many wonderful things we can add to that. And if you awoke this morning and are able to read this, there’s still time to make sure that is the case.

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:15-17, ESV).

- Edd Sterchi

Be Careful, You're Bending That Twig

We are all aware of the old proverb that says, "As a twig is bent, so will it grow," And when we seriously consider this, we know it is true. But it is so easy to forget this lesson. For parents, Solomon expressed the same principle when he said, "Train up a child in the way that he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6).

Parents, remember, you are bending that twig. One way or the other, to the right or to the left, for better or for worse, you are determining the course of life which that child will take. Be careful, lest you bend it in the wrong way!

Paul commanded parents to "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). This includes:

1) Train your children in morality - in clean thoughts, words, and deeds. "Wild oats" that are practiced in childhood and adolescence cannot be productive of purity later. If you complacently watch their immodesty in childhood, you can expect to see impurity in adulthood.

2) Train them in honesty. It is still the best policy! Help them to regard truth and fidelity as precious qualities. Show them, by word and by example that half-truth is only a lie and that a man's word should be as good as his bond.

3) Train them to respect authority, always - the policeman, the teacher, the parent, and the Lord. If they do not learn to respect the first three, they will hardly respect the Lord either.

Your children deserve the best you can give them. They did not ask to be born, and their destiny is not really theirs alone, but in your strong or weak will. And the best you can give them is not just measured in education, culture, financial security, etc., but in the character which you produce in them.

Yes, you are bending that twig. Be sure you bend it right.

- Leslie Diestelkamp

Will we be happy in heaven if our loved ones are not there?

“We are sometimes asked, “How could a person be happy in heaven knowing that lost friends and loved ones are in torment?” In response we might ask, “How could a person be happy in heaven if evil people WERE NOT confined elsewhere?” Listen. There is no one in this world who loves the lost more than God does. He gave His only Son to save their souls. He knows where they have chosen to spend eternity. He sends them there. They have no place in His holy presence. God's love and justice for all concerned will not allow it. The knowledge of this reality does not ruin heaven for God, and it won't ruin it for the saved either. Caught up in the glory of His loving and holy presence, surely we will be at peace in the knowledge that the inhabitants of heaven are those who are there according to the will of God, whose robes have been washed white in the blood of the Lamb.”

- from Steve Klein, in Klein & May, “*HEAVEN - O For A Home With God,*” pp. 100-101.

- > "Even if you have pains, you don't have to be one."
 - > "You should never imagine that you know too much to learn something new."
 - > "Some people are like blisters; they never show up till the work is almost done."
 - > "Television is an invention that permits you to be entertained in your living room by people you wouldn't have in your home."
 - > "When all is said and done, a lot more is said than done."
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*Whose Worship Will God Accept?*" (Text: Phil. 3:3); Sunday evening: "*Death: A Biblical Perspective!*" [#2 of 3] (Rev. 14:13).

GOSPEL MEETING 2015: Our Gospel Meeting is scheduled for July 19-24, with Jerry Crolus, of Conway, AR, preaching.