

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Jackson, TN 38305

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May 28, 2017

Volume 37, # 22

Greener on the Other Side

The scene is a common one: a cow with her head stuck through a fence reaching as far as she can for lush mouthfuls of green grass. In fact, so common is the sight that a well-worn expression has resulted. We've all heard that 'the grass is greener on the other side of the fence'. The saying is used metaphorically to describe someone who is not content where they are – always looking for something different (better as they see it) just beyond the confines of their present situation.

Unfortunately, Christians in a local church are sometimes known to seek the 'greener pastures'. They grow discontent with the situation in their own congregation and see other churches that they imagine are better. This frequently results in them leaving 'here' and going 'there' in hopes of finding something more to their liking.

These folks typically do not stop to recognize or appreciate the good things where they are. They seem oblivious to the work and effort of their faithful brethren, and discount the efforts being made. We would encourage them to 'stop and smell the roses' where they are.

Furthermore, those who are inclined to 'fly the coop' most often do so without making any serious effort to improve the perceived issues in the initial congregation. All churches have problems – including the one where they might eventually 'land'. Mature Christians know this and will not walk away from a local church without trying hard to help make the needed changes.

Sometimes leaving a congregation is the right decision – but it is a decision that should not be taken lightly. A sense of 'family' loyalty ought to exist among spiritual brothers and sisters that will make this a last option rather than a first one.

'Greener on the other side'? Maybe. But if you look around, you might just realize that you are 'knee deep' in a wonderful situation. Think!

- Greg Gwin

IS JESUS NOW REIGNING AS KING?

ACCORDING TO PROPHECY

Jesus was to reign as king when David's days were fulfilled (after his death) and while he slept with his fathers (while he was in the tomb, thus before the resurrection of men). (2 Sam. 7:12-14; Psa. 89:3-4; Heb. 1:5).

Jesus was to reign "upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom" (Isa. 9:6-7). (Note: In ruling over Israel Solomon is said to have been seated on David's throne, on his own throne and on Jehovah's throne. David's throne was indeed Jehovah's throne. (1 Kings 1:46-48; 2:12; 1 Chron. 29:23).

Jesus was to go on the clouds of heaven to "the ancient of days" (God) and receive dominion, glory and a kingdom. (Dan. 7:13-14).

Jesus was to sit and rule upon His throne and be a priest upon His throne. (Zech. 6:13).

ACCORDING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

The angel of the Lord told Mary before the birth of Jesus that Jesus was to be given the throne of David his father and rule over the house of Jacob forever (Luke 1:32-33). Jesus is now sitting on the Father's throne (Rev. 3:21).

When Jesus ascended on the clouds of heaven to the right hand of the Father He did indeed receive dominion, glory and a kingdom. Jesus was placed far above all rule, authority, power, dominion and every name that is named; all things were put in subjection under His feet, and He was given to be head over all things to the church (Acts 1:9; Eph. 1:20-23).

Peter, in Acts 2:25-31, emphasized the fact that David was dead and yet in the tomb and stated that David, foreseeing the fulfillment of the promise God made to him (to set one of his seed upon his throne), spoke of the resurrection of Christ and His sitting upon David's throne. Peter then, in Acts 2:34-36, stated that Christ was sitting at God's right hand and had been made both Lord and Christ.

Jesus is sitting now and is priest now (Acts 2:33-35; Heb. 4:14-15; 6:20), and if He were on earth, He could not be priest (Heb. 8:1-4); therefore, according to Zechariah 6:13, Jesus is now ruling and is on His throne now.

Jesus is sitting now at God's right hand, and is to sit until His enemies are made His footstool. (Acts 2:33-35), Jesus is to reign until His enemies are put under His feet. (1 Cor. 12:25). Therefore, Jesus is sitting AND ruling now. The last enemy to be abolished is death, and death shall be abolished at the resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:26).

Jesus stated that some of those living while He was on earth teaching would not taste of death until they saw the Son of man coming in his kingdom. (Matt. 16:28; Mk. 9:1; Lk. 9:27). Either some of those people are still living upon the earth and are about 2,000 years of age or Jesus has come in His kingdom.

- Bill Crews

Church Member Hitchhikers

With his thumb, a hitchhiker says, "You furnish the car, gas, attend to the repairs and upkeep, supply the insurance, and I'll ride with you. But you must be going my way, and if you have an accident, I'll sue for the damages." Sounds pretty one-sided, doesn't it?

There are hitchhikers in other places than just along the roadways. Unfortunately, there are sometimes hitchhikers in local churches. These members seem to say, "You go to the Bible classes, attend the various assemblies, do the visitation and personal work, shoulder the responsibilities, take care of the meeting house and grounds and all of the things that need doing, and I'll go along for the ride. But if things aren't done to suit me, I will complain, criticize, and probably get out and hitchhike to another group."

You've seen them too, haven't you? You've seen professing Christians that seem to just be along for the ride. They frustrate the growth and progress of the local church. Because of indifference or lack of total commitment, they add nothing to the furtherance of the Lord's cause. The only thing they add is more work for the faithful.

- Bob Dickey

Are They All From God?

Let us suppose that an evangelist comes to our community to conduct a religious meeting and proceeds as follows:

- At the first service he preaches that salvation is by faith only. But at the next one he contends that it is by faith exercised in obedience to the gospel rather than by faith alone.
- At the third service he declares that either sprinkling, pouring or immersion is baptism, but at the fourth service he plainly shows that immersion is baptism.
- At the fifth service he says that penitent believers are the only spiritual subjects of baptism, but at the sixth service he teaches that babies should be baptized due to “original sin.”
- At the seventh service he preaches once in grace, always in grace, but at the eighth he tells the people that it is possible for them to fall from grace, that some have fallen, and that the Bible tells how to keep from falling.
- At the ninth service he teaches that it is right to have human creeds, but at the tenth he declares that we should take the Bible as our only guide in religion.

No thoughtful person would continue to listen to ONE preacher like that, but the majority of people 'are perfectly willing for TEN preachers to preach these conflicting ideas. They say that if one man should preach that way he would contradict himself and be inconsistent, but what kind of a God do they suppose we have if He endorses all these conflicting doctrines and has sent out these preachers to present them?

- Leslie G. Thomas

- > “There is no ignorance like ignorance of God, and no poverty like poverty of soul!”
 - > “Temper is a valuable possession, so don’t lose it!”
 - > “Dogs may be excellent companions for children, but not substitute companions!”
 - > “A drunk in the gutter is in a better place for himself and us, than behind the steering wheel!”
 - > “A wise man will desire no more than he may get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly!”
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THIS WEEK’S LESSONS: Sunday morning: “*The Highest Love!*” (Text: 1 Cor. 13:4-7); Sunday evening: “*Love and Judgment!*” (John 3:16-21).