

# **The Old Hickory Bulletin**

## *Old Hickory Church of Christ*

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## **This World Is Not My Home**

*By Ron Boatwright*

As the words of the song say, "This world is not my home; I'm just a passing thru. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue". Jesus says, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matthew 6:20-21). We must lay up our treasures in heaven, not here on the earth. The Bible says, "And as it is appointed for man to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). When we draw our last breath, what we have accumulated here on the earth belongs to someone else. After we die our fate is sealed and we will be judged.

Life here on earth is so temporary and short. Life passes so quickly. James 4:14 says, "Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." Many people are living their lives as though they will live forever here on the earth. One day this earth and all of its possessions will be burned up. No one knows when this will be "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness" (2 Peter 3:10-11).

As the words of the song continue to say, "If heaven is not my home, then Lord what will I do?" For the vast majority of people, heaven will not be their home (Matthew 7:13-14). Their home will be a real and living hell in which they will be tormented day and night forever and ever in burning fire and brimstone (Revelation 20:10, 15). But for the few whose home is heaven, "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

The apostle Paul was longing to leave this world and go home to heaven. He says, "For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you...For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:23-24, 3:20).

As mortal human beings we cannot begin to imagine how great and wonderful heaven will be. We cannot comprehend its glory. We have, "an inheritance incorruptible and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4), "knowing that you have a better and enduring possession for yourselves in heaven" (Hebrews 10:34). As human beings we are eternal in that we live forever and ever in one of two places. Our home will be either heaven or hell. We make the choice as to where we will go. If one is not preparing to go to heaven he will end up in hell. Our number one goal in this life must be for heaven to be our home. No one will accidentally go to heaven.

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## He That-Will See Good Days

I feel that every sane person wants to be happy in this life. Most every one, I believe, desires also to contribute to the well-being of humanity. Yet, it is evident that they do not know how to be happy; they have no way to find the formula, or, having found it lack the faith and courage to apply it.

No doubt many persons do not really know what happiness is. If asked to define happiness, they could not give an adequate answer. Is it contentment? Is it having every fleshly desire

filled? Is it being without work to do? Is it being without responsibility?

Without leaving any misconceptions about having all the answers, I do want to consider a passage of scripture which I feel is important in this respect. (I Pet. 3:10-12). Peter says: If a person would see "good days," he must do certain things, or we might say follow certain rules.

Real happiness is no accident. It does not just come to some and evade others. If one expects to reap a corn crop, he must first prepare the ground, then plant good seed in the proper season, cultivate it and wait till harvest time. And with all this, the wise farmer will recognize that there are many other factors over which he has no control; God makes it all possible. The same is true, I affirm, for the person who desires to reap a harvest of happiness. It does not just happen by chance. Certain things must be done, if one expects to "see good days."

Man alone, with his wisdom, cannot produce lasting happiness (Jer. 10:23). The Creator has set forth the formula; if man will follow, I am convinced he has the greatest chance possible of obtaining lasting happiness -- here and now and it reaching into eternity.

The "good days" of which Peter speaks, means a fruitful and meaningful life. It is what we might call a "successful life," judged in light of eternity and considering the whole of man. In order to accomplish this goal, seeing good days, one must:

1. *Control his tongue and the mind behind it.* "Let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile." It is out of "the abundance of the heart" that "the mouth speaketh" (Lk. 6:45). The person who violates this rule cannot see "good days." Look around and see if this does not hold true in real life. Will you be persuaded? Quickly remove from your mind every suggestion of deceit - "speak no guile." If it is not first in the heart, it cannot emerge from the mouth.

*2. Be negative toward "evil" -- that which is contrary to God's will, and be positive toward that which is "good."* The Lord knows man in his entirety; and He also understands exactly what man needs to be satisfied; likewise, His directions are to that end. Man is tempted by a great amount of "evil" in the world. Often he endeavors to justify his acts by saying, "everybody is doing it." So what? That does not make it right, beloved! One must do more than just avoid evil; he must be active in that which is "good," according to God's standard. No one can be genuinely happy "doing nothing." Constructive activities -- worshipping, serving, and living for God -- are a necessity.

*3. He must seek peace!* Peace must be pursued; effort and time must be spent in this endeavor. Peace is being in harmony with God, doing His will and trying to move others to comply with the same. One must be a Christian to be at peace with God (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:16; Acts 11:26). Others, therefore, must be brought to a knowledge of His will, and they must be caused to render obedience to it, if they are to be at peace with God. Each person is to live peacefully with all men, if he possibly can (Rom. 12:18).

*4. Be made righteous by the gospel (Rom. 1: 17).* Only when one is made righteousness by complying with the good news of the covenant of Christ, does he have the right and privilege of talking with God and being sure that he is heard. However, when he carefully complies fully with the terms of pardon, he is forgiven and has the blessing of God. This is the person who has lasting happiness. Yes, he'll have a heavy heart at times and be required to suffer hardship and endure pain, but in his heart he'll have a peace of mind that can praise God while being bound with chains (Cf. Acts 16:25).

Beloved would you see good days? Are you familiar with the formula? Do you have the faith to apply it? I would to God that

all men had a mind to see good days and were familiar with the formula and would apply it in their lives. However, I only have the power to express my concern and the words of God. You alone have the power to secure to yourself these good days. Won't you, therefore, act immediately? I pray that you Will.

- William C. Sexton, 1972

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Lord, grant that I may shed Your light  
Where wickedness is rife,  
And may it help some sinful soul  
To find in You new life. —DJD

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- > Your daily life is the only true testimony of your religion.
  - > A flower has to go through a lot of dirt before it can bloom.
  - > How you say it may well be as important as what you say.
  - > A foolish son is the ruin of his father. Prov. 19:13
  - > Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
  - > Prayer - Don't give God instructions - just report for duty!
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**SUNDAY'S LESSONS:** Sunday morning: *"Get Back!"* (text: Genesis 4:3-7); Sunday evening: Jesus Christ: A Closer Look – *In The Hour of Need!* (Mark 5:21-43).