

The Old Hickory

Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Savior And Judge!

Someone recently gave me a copy of an interesting story. I want to share it with you. With the popularity of courtroom dramas these days, it is worthy of repeating.

Once upon a time in the wild west a young woman was driving her buggy across the prairie when a lightning flash and crashing thunder stampeded her horse. Straight ahead a deep chasm promised certain death, but a young lawyer, riding his horse nearby, saw her distress and galloped to her rescue just in the nick of time.

The man and woman went their separate ways. The woman lived a sinful life and ultimately was arrested and convicted of murder.

When she appeared before the judge he sentenced her to death. It was only then that she realized the judge was the same man who had saved her from the stampeding buggy.

She cried out, *"Judge! Don't you remember me? You saved my life, how can you possibly sentence me to death now?"*

The judge, looking down from his judgment seat, replied, "*Lady, in that day I saved you I was your savior. Today I am your judge. Take her away.*"

Such a story reminds the Christian of the precious blessings he enjoys in the remission of his sins (Acts 2:38; 10:43; Rom. 3:25; Luke 24:46-47) and the hope of heaven (2 Pet. 1:11; Titus 3:5-7). He was sent for this purpose: "to be the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14). "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31). We "eagerly wait" for this Savior (Phil. 3:20). What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Lord!

The door of salvation is open for all men right now. "Behold, now is *'the acceptable time,'* behold, now is *'the day of salvation'*" (2 Cor. 6:2). But the New Testament is clear on this point: the offer of salvation will not last forever!

In the words of the old spiritual song, "there's a great day coming!" Apostolic preaching was very clear on the fact that God has "fixed a day." "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." (Acts 17:30-31). This is the "last day," the Day of Judgment (John 12:48).

When that day comes, Jesus Christ will change His role from Savior to Judge. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." (2 Cor. 5:10). God "gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is *the* Son of Man." (John 5:27). Peter declared before the household of Cornelius, "this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead." (Acts 10:42).

What do these facts mean for us? Very simply, "we will all stand

before the judgment seat of God.” (Rom. 14:10). On that day, “God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 2:16). When “the Lord comes,” He will “bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of *men's* hearts;” (1 Cor. 4:5).

The story above serves to remind us that we have a Savior today, who is offering salvation to all who will obey Him (Heb. 5:9). But much like the young lawyer, the day is coming when He will be our Judge. Friend, are you ready for that day?

- GFS

Offerings That Cost

“And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will verily buy it of thee at a price; neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto Jehovah my God which cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing-floor...” 2 Samuel 24:24

David, the king of Israel, had sinned grievously against God and His people by proudly numbering the mighty men of his army, in spite of the Lord’s prohibitions. As punishment for this sin, God sent a terrible pestilence upon the land and thousands of the people died. When David realized the gravity and consequences of his actions, he set out to build an altar upon which he would make burnt offerings and peace offerings unto the Lord.

In searching for a suitable place for the altar, David approached the threshing floor of Araunah. And when

Araunah saw the approach of the king, he graciously sought to donate everything that David might need for his sacrifices. But as kind and generous as this offer was, David rejected it. While the king was willing to pay Araunah for the things he would use for sacrifice, he strongly refused to offer unto God that which had cost him nothing. David understood that it would have been no real sacrifice on his part to offer that which had been freely given to him. He would only offer that which cost him.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if every child of God had this attitude today? Too often we want to get by as cheaply and easily as we possibly can. This is revealed not only in the pittance some contribute, but also in the unwillingness to sacrifice time and energies to work in the kingdom. Some are willing to give a little, work a little, and worship only a little, as long as it doesn't cost too much. And if some kind modern-day Araunah is willing to do more than his share of the sacrificing, they are happy to be relieved of the cost -- let God have what others give to Him. May we remember that when it costs nothing, that is all it is worth – nothing! Let us be sure that we are offering God true sacrifices.

- Bob Dickey

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"The Royal Family of God!"* (text: 1 John 3:1-2); Sunday evening: *"Laws of Sacrifice!"* (a lesson from Leviticus).