

# **The Old Hickory Bulletin**

## **Old Hickory Church of Christ**

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### **When You Are in Over Your Head**

“Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, ‘Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.’ Having said this, He breathed His last.” (Luke 23:44-46).

“He breathed His last.” Those words cause one’s heart to sink. When Jesus exhaled for a final time on the cross, all the minions of Hell may well have thought that the battle was over and that victory belonged to Satan, their evil commander. But how wrong they were! And how horrified they must have been just a short time later! Yes, Jesus suffered and died. He was buried. But then “He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:4)! Furthermore, “He [The Father] has put all things under His feet” (v. 27)! Think for a moment about the wonderful implications of that truth that should compel us to praise, worship and live for God.

“He has put all things under His feet” (v. 27). Do you ever feel that you are in way over your head with problems? That may be the case, but Jesus is over all things. He is in Heaven, interceding on your behalf! A glorious fact is powerfully declared in Romans 8:34, “Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.” Where are your problems? “Under His feet”! Jesus is alive! He is in control! Jesus is coming again!

Beloved, is there someone in your life who is hurting, suffering, struggling? Consider sending that person a note of encouragement and be sure to use Romans 8:34 as a closing verse of hope. Letting one know that Christ is alive, above, active and working on the behalf of His people can bring a comfort and strength that nothing else can produce.

- Johnny Hester

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# ON GOD'S SIDE

In life, it is rather normal for people to be on a side. When people go to a tournament, even though the teams playing are not related to some of the spectators, the spectators cannot long remain neutral - they begin pulling for one side or the other. People who do not follow baseball through the long months of the season get interested in the world series each fall, and each one finds himself somewhat pulling for one of the teams to win.

But, in religion and some of the most vital issues of life, there are so many people who do not want to take sides, and they think it is terrible when others do. There were two sides at Mt. Sinai - those who worshipped the golden calf and those who didn't. Moses came down from the mountain and shouted, "Who is on the Lord's side?" The Lord had a side, and everybody should have been on His side. And, friends, the same is true today. We need to find the Lord's side in life and stand on that side with all our might, for that is what He would have us do.

- Unknown, via *The Instructor*, March, 1973

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# TRUE GREATNESS

Read Mark 10:35-45. James and John promptly left their fishing business when called by Jesus, who promised that in the regeneration, when He sat upon His throne, they also would sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:27-30). The excitement of sitting upon thrones was still in their minds as they requested a special favor of the Lord, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask of You." (Mark 10:35). In Matthew's account we learn that their mother made the request with them (Matthew 20:20). Naturally she wanted the best for her sons; what mother would not? But the request was made in a way that is typical of a child; they wanted Him to agree to fulfill their request before they even told Him what it was. This tactic was suited to their worldly ambition.

Jesus asked them, "What do you wish?" Their mother replied to Him, "Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left." (Matthew 20:21). Jesus was to sit upon His throne in His kingdom, which was to be His glory (Mark 10:37). But because these two were thinking in terms of the familiar earthly thrones, they wanted to get their bid in early for the available top positions of authority and honor. But these worldly ambitions did not coincide with the intentions of the Lord for His kingdom, nor for the character of His disciples. Christians are not to be led by low ambitions to occupy positions of glorious honor and far reaching authority in the church

of the Lord. Some desire to be "officers" so others will look up to them as fine leaders; some want to rule other brethren. Such are not very good followers of Christ.

"But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?'" (Mark 10:38). Jesus was referring to the awful sufferings that He would have to endure before He ruled on His throne. He would be immersed (baptized) or overwhelmed in sufferings. Could James and John endure this? They were confident, and Jesus said that they would drink that cup and be overwhelmed with that immersion (it would happen soon enough). He continued, "But to sit on My right or on My left, this is not Mine to give; but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." (Mark 10:40). Such positions of honor would not be dispensed on the basis of earthly favoritism. A superior divine arrangement would be followed. Jesus stated that the Father would determine who would sit in that position (Matthew 20:23).

The manifestation of a self-seeking spirit caused the other apostles to be indignant. It is good that James and John had a change of heart later and thus retained their usefulness to the cause of Christ. Jesus likened their ambitions to the Gentile kingdoms and said, "But it is not this way among you," (Mark 10:43). The Lord's kingdom would not be made up of "great men" to exercise authority and rule over others. Whatever authority they would possess would be because of their divinely inspired utterances (cf. Matthew 18:18). They would not be at liberty to form their own directives for others to follow.

Jesus continued, "... but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all." (Mark 10:43-44). Jesus was not saying that those who preach are the greatest. Minister simply means servant. As far as worldly standards go, the great man is one who has many serving him. Here Jesus shows another startling feature of His kingship. If true greatness is what the disciple desires, it can be attained through service. In this the welfare of brethren is the first consideration, inhibiting selfishness. Self-centeredness must not characterize Christians.

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45). Jesus came to serve. This was taught by example when He washed His disciples' feet (John 13:3-17). Jesus said, "... But I am among you as the one who serves." (Luke 22:27). Jesus showed compassion by serving men in many ways. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, comforted the sorrowful, showed mercy to the weak, and taught truth at every available place. But what's more, He paid the necessary price that secured release from the shackles of sin for all men by His death on the cross. Jesus is the ultimate servant, for He gave His life to free man from sin.

Friend, would you desire the blessings that accompany citizenship in His kingdom? Would you strive to be great in the Lord's sight and not man's? Would you humbly serve Him in all things? If so, heaven will be yours! May we assist you?

- Gary Smalley

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- > "Life's greatest tragedy is to lose God and not to miss Him!"
  - > "If you are not as close to God as you used to be, you do not have to guess who moved!"
  - > "Men fall in private long before they fall in public!"
  - > "The lap of Delilah proved too strong for the heart of Samson, and what a thousand Philistines could not do was done by the ensnaring influence of a single woman!"  
- C. H. Mackintosh
  - > "If you find yourself loving any pleasure more than your prayers, any book better than the Bible, any house better than the house of the Lord, any table better than the Lord's table, any persons better than Christ, or any indulgence better than the hope of heaven — be alarmed!" - Thomas Guthrie
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**THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** The sermon for Sunday morning is: "*Songs in the Night!*" (Text: Psalm 104:19-23).

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## ***What Must I Do To Be Saved?***

### **HEAR THE GOSPEL**

(Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17)

### **BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST**

(Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6)

### **REPENT OF PAST SINS**

(Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30)

### **CONFESS CHRIST**

(Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

### **BE BAPTIZED**

(Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21)

### **LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE**

(Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25)