

# **The Old Hickory Bulletin**

## **Old Hickory Church of Christ**

841 Old Hickory Blvd.  
Jackson, TN 38305  
*oldhickorycofc.com*

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March 14, 2021

Volume 41, # 11

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### **He Always Put the Lord First**

Eight days ago Lindy McDaniel left his earthly tabernacle and went home to be with the Lord. If you were not a baseball fan in the 50s & 60s you have probably never heard of Lindy McDaniel. Lindy was a “bonus baby” in an era of baseball when salaries were not high, but when teams would pay large bonuses to sign a young player right out of high school. Lindy signed with the St. Louis Cardinals for a bonus that today would be worth about a half million dollars. Lindy started his career with the Cardinals in 1955 and later also played for the Chicago Cubs, San Francisco Giants, New York Yankees, and Kansas City Royals. During his outstanding 21 year career he won 141 games, had 175 saves, and had a career earned run average of just 3.45. Twice he received the Fireman of the Year Award, given to the best relief pitcher in each league by The Sporting News Magazine. Although his stats did not elevate him to the Baseball Hall of Fame, he was recognized for many years as one of the most effective relief pitchers in baseball.

But for those who knew him, Lindy McDaniel was more than an outstanding baseball player – he was a devoted Christian. Those in baseball knew him as a Christian and a gentleman. He didn’t smoke or drink; he didn’t “party” after the games; he didn’t “run around” on his wife as many ballplayers did. He was known in baseball circles as being “squeaky clean.” Through the years he taught and baptized several of his teammates. At the time of his death (age 85, COVID related), he was an elder and evangelist for the Lavon church of Christ in Lavon, Texas (about 35 miles northeast of Dallas). For many years he printed a gospel paper called Pitching for the Master, which he mailed out for free to anyone who wanted to receive it. Some of his writings were later compiled and are still available on the internet at [pitchingforthemaster.blogspot.com](http://pitchingforthemaster.blogspot.com).

Even as a young man, at an age when many are sowing their wild oats, Lindy was a man of great character and conviction. Lindy did something in his career that would be unheard of today (in fact, it was unheard of then). Lindy had it written into his contract that he would always attend worship services each Sunday before going to the ball park for a game. I read about this recently when someone was writing about his passing, but I knew it

firsthand 55 years ago from my father (who heard it directly from Lindy). You see, my family lived in Long Beach, California, just a 35 minute drive from Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. Whenever the Cardinals were in town to play the Dodgers, my father would get up early on Sunday, drive to downtown Los Angeles to the hotel where the Cardinals were staying, and bring Lindy to church. As soon as services were over, Dad would drive him to Dodger Stadium for the game. You see, during his whole career, Lindy put first things first. The worship of his God always came first!

What an impression that made on me as a young person. It was like a blazing newspaper headline seared into my brain: "Famous baseball pitcher puts Jesus first." And I'm sure that there were many other young people throughout the country who were impressed in the same way as Lindy visited various congregations in the cities where he was playing. Lindy was "letting his light shine." In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matt. 6:33).

How are we doing at putting Jesus first in our lives? When we have to make a choice between work and worship, which wins? Sometimes we say, "I have to work," and I realize that sometimes we do. But sometimes I wonder how hard people really try to get out of working on the Lord's day. Do we really have to work, or do we choose to work? If asked to work by our supervisor do we try to push back? Do we approach our boss and explain that we would really like to attend church services on Sunday before coming in? I'm not saying that you have to quit your job or even "make a stink," but with a good attitude and a humble approach do we even try? Have we allowed modern culture to bully us into silence?

Brethren, I worry about the erosion of our convictions. (Not just about working on Sunday, but about a lot of things.) I worry that we have become too fearful to stand our ground. I worry that there are certain things that we just "accept" as normal that maybe we should not accept. No one, and I mean NO ONE would have thought that a young 18 year old kid, fresh off the farm in Oklahoma, would have been able to walk into the sacred halls of America's favorite pastime and tell a major league general manager in one of the most storied franchises in baseball history that he wanted a contract that would guarantee him the right to worship God on the Lord's day before going to the ball park. But Lindy McDaniel did exactly that. And if Lindy could do that (in the big money, high pressure culture of major league sports), what are the possibilities that we might be successful (with God's help) in pushing back against some of the cultural demands that are placed upon us today. Brethren, we are going to have to learn to push back. The world is not getting more godly or religious – it's getting darker and more corrupt by the day. The movement in our society is steadily away from God and toward the secular. It is time that we speak up and take a stand against the forces that are seeking our compromise and destruction.

If he were still here I would say, "Brother Lindy, you don't even know who I am, but you made a huge impression on me as a child. Thank you for your example. Rest in peace, brother."

- Wilson Copeland (11/22/20)

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## THE FIRST PROPHECY OF CHRIST

Do you recall the very first prophecy of Christ in the Bible? Genesis 3:15 has long been a favorite of mine since my early days as a Christian in Bible study with Leon Mauldin. In the Garden of Eden, the Lord God said to the serpent: "And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

"Enmity" is a positive, active hatred. Notice that God said that He will put it there, between these identified. Certainly, God indicates that He desires this hatred toward the serpent to continue unabated. (The serpent is identified as Satan in the N.T., Revelation 12:9; 20:2.) Certainly it is virtuous for people to hate evil to the same extent as God. This woman, who shortly before was deceived into placing confidence in Satan's words and suffered great loss as a result, is given a glimpse of the path that will lead to restoration: enmity toward evil and the evil one. But the promise is not limited to her. There would come many generations of people, some who would be faithful to God (cf. John 8:47a) and others who would not (cf. John 8:44). There would always be enmity between them (cf. Genesis 6:4-8; 2 Peter 2:4-10, for one example of many).

We may not know all the thoughts and understandings of Adam and Eve with regard to this promise, but fortunately you and I have the completed revelation of God that explains much about it. What Bob Waldron said about this passage is worthy to notice: "This passage is not teaching that men will always go around stomping on snakes!" There is a deeper meaning to these parable-like words. The shallow view of snake-stomping, given during this time of shame, disgrace and guilt of the first couple, would certainly trivialize these wonderful words of hope.

The effects of the fall of Adam and Eve into sin will be overcome! It is interesting to note that from the woman, who was formerly beguiled, vengeance would certainly come to the serpent. The one who fell would produce the one who would cause Satan to fall.

The passage has to point to the gospel and the coming Messiah, the One of whom the scriptures emphasize, was "born of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). The Lord Jesus was the first man of record who ever dealt Satan a crushing blow (for example, in the wilderness of temptation, Matthew 4:1-11), but the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 was not complete at

that point. There was quite a record of opposition against the Christ, leading to betrayal by Judas. Hatred and malice in the hearts of some among the children of Israel culminated in the conspiracy to use godless hands (Acts 2:23) to crucify and slay God's Son. These events were the wounding of the heel, relatively, a minor injury. Jesus Christ and His Father were not defeated by anything men could devise.

Men are delivered from sin's consequences by the seed of woman, Jesus Christ (see Galatians 3:16). This is the seed that was able to do what men could not do: deal Satan a mortal, crushing blow, from which he would not recover. Christ's victory over sin by His perfect life and victory over death by His resurrection will become totally complete when Satan, the devil, the deceiver will be "thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone" (Revelation 20:10). This victory is already certain!

The Messianic significance of Genesis 3:15 is also noted by Romans 16:20, where Paul encouraged the Christians in Rome: "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you."

In this ultimate conflict involving great enmity, God and His people are victorious through the Son of God, Jesus the Christ! Genesis 3:15 certainly serves as the very foundation of faith – the hope of sinful men for redemption through Jesus Christ, whom God raised from the dead! Those who lived by faith hoped for citizenship in the kingdom of God (Hebrews 11). Ephesians 1:3-14 provides a wonderful summation of what Genesis 3:15 indicated.

Is Christ your hope today?

- Gary Smalley

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\* "All that I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator in all that I have not seen!"

\* "A real Christian is one who can give his pet parrot to the town gossip!"

\* "Adversity introduces man to himself!"

\* "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit!"

\* "An early walk and talk with the Lord will last all day!"

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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)