

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Truth Is Eternal

Truth does not change; it does not fluctuate; it draws a hard and fast line within the borders of the kingdom of God and demands all men to fashion their lives according to its sacred precepts if they would enjoy the advantages it proffers. It is stationary and firm and will not be washed about by the changing tides of public opinion and human endeavor. It calls all men to priesthood and nobility; it will raise their standards and grant them the privileges of Sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Men cannot trifle with it, change it or re-arrange it. It does not grant to men the privilege of alteration, and will condemn and destroy those who endeavor to do so. Through the vicissitudes of twenty centuries it has dealt with and defeated every device of man to change its face or mar its beauty; what was Truth when Jesus walked among men is Truth still; it has not changed with the passing of time. Time does not render it old or dull; but as the centuries drop away into eternity it shines all the more bright as it lights the path of wayward feet. Indeed! It "shall make you free" is applicable only to this product of God; nothing else can share its place or can be its equal.

Truth will be in the Judgment, and the billions that have lived will then face it either as its enemy, or its friend. It will be kind to its friends but terrible to its enemies. Let us become acquainted with truth; love it, teach it, practice it. Embrace it in life and it will give you a cloak in death, one which no man can take away.

- Jesse M. Kelley

LIFE — NOW AND FOREVER

LIFE IS IMPORTANT! When there is but one time to accomplish something important, the urgency of the task is more readily understood. Life should be approached with such a spirit of urgency because we have only a one-time earth-life existence. "It is appointed for men to die once, and after this comes the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). God wants us to enjoy our days upon His good earth. "There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good. This also I have seen, that it is from the hand

of God" (Ecclesiastes 2:24). However, God instructs us to put earth-life in its proper perspective.

LIFE IS FLEETING AND UNCERTAIN! Earth-life does not come with enough time to allow us to approach it haphazardly with the expectation of finding proper guidance in the distant future. The Bible says, "our days on the earth are like a shadow" (1 Chronicles 29:15). "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.' Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away" (James 4:13-14).

LIFE: A DASH BETWEEN TWO DATES! The mark that we make on earth-life is relatively insignificant. Very few are influenced or affected by our lives. But just wait a while! What mark will we have in this world a hundred years from now? Perhaps, on a tombstone, someone will see a little dash between two dates that marks the life of Thomas S. Poarch. Perhaps even some great-grandchildren will walk through a hillside of graves interested in seeing where the body of one resides who is in their family tree. At best, in the years to come, my life will be but a brief story to tell to a very few interested folks.

SPIRITUALITY ALONE ENDURES! When this vapor of existence is properly viewed against the backdrop of eternity, the home of the soul is all that is of enduring importance. The Savior understood this perfectly and admonished us to live each day with this in mind. "Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). Paul directed us in this ideal thinking and living when he wrote, "keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth" (Colossians 3:1-2).

TAKE IT WITH YOU! God's instructions and exhortations to a life of spirituality do not deprive us of anything worthwhile. The greatest deprivation is when one labors totally for this world's goods and popularity and then loses it all in the moment of death. God wants us to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20), and to abound in the work of the Lord, knowing that our toil is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58). Christ wants us to receive the blessed rest that comes to those whose deeds do follow them (Revelation 14:13). He wants us to take it with us -- to heaven.

- Tommy Poarch

Share a Quote...

Regarding James 1:2: "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials," — James never suggested to his readers that Christianity would be for them an easy way. He warns them that they would find themselves involved in what the King James Version calls "divers temptations." The word translated temptations is *peirasmos*. ... Peirasmos (GSN3986) is trial or testing directed towards an end, and the end is that he who is tested should emerge stronger and purer from the testing. The corresponding verb *peirazein* (GSN3985), which the King James Version usually translates *to tempt*, has the same meaning. The idea is not that of seduction into sin but of strengthening and purifying. For instance, a young bird is said to test (*peirazein*, GSN3985) its wings. The Queen of Sheba was said to come to test (*peirazein*, GSN3985) the wisdom of Solomon. God was said to test (*peirazein*, GSN3985) Abraham, when he appeared to be demanding the sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22:1). When Israel came into the Promised Land, God did not remove the people who were already there. He left them so that Israel might be tested (*peirazein*, GSN3985) in the struggle against them (Judges 2:22; Judges 3:1, 4). The experiences in Israel were tests which went to the making of the people of Israel (Deuteronomy 4:34; 7:19).

Here is a great and uplifting thought. Hort writes: "The Christian must expect to be jostled by trials on the Christian way." All kinds of experiences will come to us. There will be the test of the sorrows and the disappointments which seek to take our faith away. There will be the test of the seductions which seek to lure us from the right way. There will be the tests of the dangers, the sacrifices, the unpopularity which the Christian way must so often involve. But they are not meant to make us fall; they are meant to make us soar. They are not meant to defeat us; they are meant to be defeated. They are not meant to make us weaker; they are meant to make us stronger. Therefore we should not bemoan them; we should rejoice in them. The Christian is like the athlete. The heavier the course of training he undergoes, the more he is glad, because he knows that it is fitting him all the better for victorious effort. As Browning said, we must "welcome each rebuff that turns earth's smoothness rough," for every hard thing is another step on the upward way.

- William Barclay, *The Letters of James and Peter* [slightly edited – GFS]

The Ukrainian Refugees

Conditions in life can change so very quickly! The Ukrainian refugees are today's daily exclamation point of this fact. We are not untouched by the effects of wrongs committed against these people in the destruction of their homes, properties, livelihoods and land. We are especially outraged at the violent, indiscriminant destruction of lives. To the Bible

student, such is reminiscent of what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet regarding Herod's enraged slaughter of "all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under" — "A voice was heard in Ramah, Weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; And she refused to be comforted, Because they were no more." (Matthew 2:16-18).

Prayers rise from God's people throughout the world, first for the family of God affected by the violence: Christians, be faithful to the Lord God in every respect! The crown of life awaits the faithful (Revelation 2:10)! Endure the trials that are upon you by counting it all joy because you know that the testing of your faith and the outcome of endurance brings a good result (James 1:2-4)! The Lord cares for His people and will supply their every need (Philippians 4:19)!

Prayers rise from God's people throughout the world for all the victims of oppression from wicked men who control powerful forces and dispense misery upon others. We are praying that the trials all people are forced to endure will result in thoughtful reevaluation of their lives to the extent that they will "seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist," (Acts 17:27-28), "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 17:31).

Recall the words of the Lord Jesus: "The foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31). May our hearts be open to actively help in areas where we can to relieve the suffering of people who have been forced out of their livelihood and their homes (cf. James 2:14-16). May we continually pray to our heavenly Father, that out of His great wisdom and power, He will bring glory, praise and thanksgiving to His holy name (Remember Elijah, James 5:17-18.)! May the Lord's will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10)!

- Gary Smalley

* "When the church seeks to be popular in the world, the world has already become popular in the church!"

* "Cars aren't the only thing recalled by their maker!"

- * "There are many people who look upon Sunday as a sponge to wipe out the sins of the week!" - H. W. Beecher
 - * "The poorest way to judge a preacher is on the basis of popularity. The world's only perfect preacher was crucified by popular demand!"
 - * "The key indicator that the world's wisdom is vain? It has no knowledge of God (1 Corinthians 1:21)!"
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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)