

The Old Hickory Bulletin
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FOR THE CHILD'S SAKE- WAKE UP!

I recently read a story of a father who took his little child out into the woods one Sunday afternoon for a stroll. It being a very hot day he lay down under a beautiful shade tree. The little child ran here and there gathering flowers and blades of grass; coming to its father and saying, "Pretty! Pretty!" At last the father fell asleep, and while he was sleeping the little child wandered away. When he awoke, his first thought was: "WHERE IS MY CHILD?" He shouted at the top of his voice, and all he heard was his echo. Running up a little hill, he looked around and shouted again. No response! Then going to a precipice some distance away he looked down, and there on the rocks and briars he saw the mangled form of his beloved child. He rushed to the spot, took up the lifeless body and held it to his bosom; accusing himself of being the murderer of his child. While he was sleeping....

But what is more tragic than this is that while many parents are "sleeping" the children wander off the "precipice" into the "pit" of spiritual indifference, moral shame, and eternal damnation. NOW is the time to give your child training in Christian principles; next year may be too late!

Too often, in these busy times, parents wait until their children get into trouble, then they "turn on the discipline" and are shocked when the only reaction they get is that of resentment. But why shouldn't a child resent discipline from a parent who has completely neglected his training and spiritual development? WAKE UP, PARENTS. Don't TAKE or SEND your child to Bible study, as well as all other services, BRING THEM; study WITH them, pray WITH them. SHOW them what it means to "be fruitful in every good work;" to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." (Colossians 1:10; Matthew 6:33). It would indeed be tragic to be responsible for your child's physical death, but it is far worse to be responsible for his spiritual destruction.

- A.C. Moore

Setting Sail on the Seas of Eternity ("My Departure Is at Hand")

While in a Roman prison near the end of his life, Paul wrote, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand" (2 Timothy 4:6).

The Greek word (analsis), translated as "departure," occurs only in this place in the New Testament. Paul uses the word here as a metaphor for death, and Greek scholars tell us that it refers to the act of releasing a boat from its moorings (Thayer). Picture a boat tied to a dock. It moves up and down and back and forth; the rope becomes tight and then loose. The boat strains to set itself free from the pier. Finally, its owner unties the vessel, and it departs from the dock.

Paul describes living here upon this earth as, in a sense, tied to a dock. The time would soon come for "untying the rope," and he would set sail upon the seas of eternity. His death would be a release.

Consider the way Peter spoke of his death. After saying that he must shortly leave his "tent" (i.e., die), he said, in 2 Peter 1:15, "Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease" (NASB "departure.") The word translated decease (exodus) is the same word used by Luke (9:31) in his account of the transfiguration. Luke points out that when Jesus spoke to Moses and Elijah, He spoke of his "decease" (NKJV), which would happen in Jerusalem. Various other translations use the word "departure." Interestingly, Hebrews 11:22 says Joseph spoke of the children of Israel "departing" from Egypt to go to the Promised Land. This passage has the third use of the Greek term. The children of Israel would "depart" on a literal journey.

Sometimes we refer euphemistically to a person who has died as one who has "departed." Indeed, death is not the end; it merely is a "departure" from this life. When a person dies, his spirit leaves his body (James 2:26) and departs to another place.

Comfort exists knowing that death is a departure. We mourn when loved ones pass away as we know we will miss them. Jesus even wept on such an occasion (John 11:35). However, the person who is a faithful Christian is merely going to another place, which is "far better" (Philippians 1:23). Indeed, death is not the end.

In 2 Timothy 4:7-8, Paul noted that he had fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith. Because of this, he could look forward to his departure, anticipating a

crown of righteousness that awaited. He pointed out he desired to depart and be with Christ (Philippians 1:23). If we faithfully serve God, we also can favorably anticipate our "departure." Paul pointed out that this crown would not be for him only but for all who love His appearing.

There will be a time when we will be "untied from the dock." Will we be ready?

- Mike Johnson

Share a Quote ...

The most beneficial study of God's Word requires diligence and perseverance, but the results are worth the effort. A. B. Simpson said:

"God has hidden every precious thing in such a way that it is a reward to the diligent, a prize to the earnest, but a disappointment to the slothful soul. All nature is arrayed against the lounging and the idler. The nut is hidden in its thorny case; the pearl is buried beneath the ocean waves; the gold is imprisoned in the rocky bosom of the mountains; the gem is found only after you crush the rock which encloses it; the very soil gives its harvest as a reward to the laboring farmer. So truth and God must be earnestly sought."

Christians Must Never Have This Attitude!

In Paul's letter to the Roman Christians he teaches and reminds them of the "free gift" (5:15), "the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness" powerfully producing "life through the One, Jesus Christ." (5:17). Paul taught: "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more," (5:20). Further, "grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (5:21). Thus, the enormity and abundance of sins which triumphed over people since Adam would never triumph over the grace of God. Grace reigns! It reigns through righteousness, realized by the gospel plan of righteousness. The end result of the reign of grace through this prescription of righteousness is eternal life by people who were once captured by sin resulting in spiritual death.

Evidently some of these Christians were concluding that they could continue sinning since God's grace abounds where sin abounds! Notice: "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?" (Romans 6:1). Any who did not know that continuing to sin deliberately and willfully because of the abundance of God's grace

needed to be informed that there is no excuse for continuing to indulge in sin. Paul answers his question: "May it never be!" (Romans 6:2a). Why? "How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" (Romans 6:2b). Further, "Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." (Romans 6:1).

What was needed was not the attitude of free indulgence. They needed to embrace the teaching of Christ: "our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;" (Romans 6:6). The sinner dies to the life of sin. The "old self" and the "body of sin" are the same thing; to crucify the old self is the same thing as dying to sin. Every time belief and obedience to the gospel of Christ produces a Christian (cf. Romans 6:17), a sinner dies. "Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." (Romans 6:11). When a believer is "baptized into Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:3), he is "raised" to "walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:4). What then should be characteristic of this new life?

"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God." (Romans 6:12-13).

The free gift of God's grace is available for all people, but it was provided to alter man's sinful course resulting in spiritual death. It was provided as an avenue for man to alter the purpose of his heart and thus disallow his physical body to be an instrument of unrighteousness in committing sin. Christians make their bodies into "instruments of righteousness" in service to God. They are not looking for excused opportunities to sin more often.

Let every Christian be diligent to form attitudes that are in keeping with our calling in Christ. Further, let us encourage our brethren in the same endeavor.

- Gary Smalley

* "Let a pig and a child have everything they want, and you'll get a good pig and a bad child!"

* "Consider the postage stamp. Its usefulness lies in the ability to stick to one thing until completed!"

* "The only way to settle a disagreement is on the basis of what's right — not who's right!"

* "A mistake is evidence that someone has tried to do something!"

* "Before you flare up at anyone's faults, take time to count ten – ten of your own faults!"

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)