

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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### Jailer Bound, Prisoners Free

The jailer had received strict orders to keep certain prisoners safely. He bound them in stocks, in the inner prison; but at midnight a great earthquake loosed their bonds. Thinking his prisoners had escaped, the jailer was about to kill himself, when one of the prisoners said, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here".

Small wonder the keeper began to think that these men, jailed because of religious practices, might have information he sorely needed. Bringing them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:23-30).

The answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ -- " is a broad, all-inclusive reply. It says, "sir, to be saved, you need a Savior;" for mark it well -- salvation is no more purchased by "faith" than it is by "baptism". The jailer must "believe" -- put his trust in -- Jesus. Here is the one on whom he must depend; the one who had died for the sins of the world; the one who had divine authority to tell him "what to do".

Respecting the authority of Christ, the prisoners then "spake unto him the word of the Lord". They gave the jailer the message Christ had sent them forth to proclaim. I see no objection to calling it the plan of salvation as long as we remember that this simply means the instructions we receive from the Savior, in whom we trust. We "rest our case" upon Christ when we are humbly submissive to His will (John 14:23), which obviously means we must know His will and do it. In a sense, Paul and Silas were telling the jailer what it really means to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" when they "spake unto him the word of the Lord". Jesus had said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved -- " and "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:19). Through Peter He had said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). This is the "word of the Lord".

And so the jailer "took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway". This was his way -- and the proper way -- of "believing in God with all his house" (Why not read the whole record for yourself? – Acts 16:23-34).

The prisoners, Paul and Silas, were "tied" to the stocks, but in a far more disastrous way, the jailer was "bound" in his own sins. His was a binding that could damn his soul, while theirs meant only physical discomfort, and that was apparently forgotten in their rejoicing that they could suffer for the cause of Christ. They "prayed, and sang praises unto God" while in this condition.

Please note -- the jailer did not "rejoice" (Acts 16:34) until after he had been loosed from his bonds of sin.

Dear Reader, there is a vital message in this for you. Have you really and truly "believed in Jesus Christ"?

- Robert F. Turner, via Plain Talk, June, 1965

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## Well Spoken Of

References. They are pretty important in our society today. If you are seeking employment, you may put together a resumé and then have a list of references of people who know you, who will speak well of you to that company you want to work for. Therefore, the idea of "Spoken Well Of," is very important to us. Let me suggest that it was important to Paul as well when it came to ministry and to the spread of the Gospel of Jesus.

In Acts 16:1-5, we read that Paul goes to the region of Galatia, and there we are introduced to a young man named Timothy. We learn where Timothy grew up, and we find out some information about his parents. His mother was a Jewess, a believer in God, but his father was a Greek (a Non-Believer).

Now, because his father was a Greek, that may explain why Timothy was not circumcised when he was younger. But according to 2 Timothy 1, Timothy's mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois were very instrumental in teaching him the Holy Scriptures.

Upon Paul's first missionary trip in Acts 14, we learn that he goes to the town of Lystra, which happens to be Timothy's hometown, and it's there that this happened in Acts 14:19, "Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned

Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city."

Did Timothy witness that? Was he converted to Christianity then or sometime after? We don't really know. But what we do know is that in Acts 16, Luke writes describing Timothy as a disciple. He's been converted to Christianity. He's a follower of Jesus Christ. And in Acts 16:2, Luke writes saying, "The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him." They spoke well of Timothy. Don't you like that? Wouldn't you like people to say that about you to others? Especially when it comes to living for Jesus? I think there are two things here for us to learn. First, I think this scripture encourages us to live our lives in such a way for Jesus that others in the church and in the community, should speak well of us. And then I think this scripture should encourage us to speak well of others in the church. I'm sure Timothy wasn't perfect just like you and just like me. But instead of picking out all the negatives about a person, let's try finding the positives and speak about those things to others. And maybe, just maybe, the world will look at the Church and say, those folks have something that I want. I don't know what it is, but what I see is how encouraging and positive they are when they speak of others.

- Jon Schwiethale

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## **"I don't like to read!"**

Occasionally, I have gotten this reply through the years when I have encouraged people to read their Bible: "But I don't like to read!" (Sometimes people have a legitimate difficulty with reading.)

Through my years, there were many things that I did not enjoy reading. In school, many students are forced to read dull or difficult material that has no genuine appeal. It is read in an effort to get by. So it is really not surprising that many do not like to read.

Reading also requires discipline. Gaining knowledge and wisdom requires discipline. Isn't a "disciple" actually a learner? Some things are learned by accident, and some things are learned because they are convenient. Watching television or video clips on the internet is easy and convenient; not very much discipline is required. The disciple of Christ strongly intends to learn His gospel and grow in godliness. People do not become more like Christ accidentally. Such requires a mind that is intentionally set and disciplined to follow through: "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30). "Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature." (1 Corinthians 14:20). Is discipline required for these?

Growing Christians are reading Christians. (Some listen to others who read the Bible aloud.) But, for some people, the reading habit is difficult to develop. Even among those who love reading, the demands of family (small children) and jobs (work load) gobble up their time. Since Christians are required to make "the most of your time" (Ephesians 5:16), we must find time to read some small segment of Holy Scripture every day (maybe a page). If we fail to do this while young, odds are we will not find the time when we are older and have more time. Certainly, God's revelation to man is fascinating! There is much to lose by failing to read God's Word! There is much to gain by reading it!

"Apply your heart to discipline And your ears to words of knowledge." (Proverbs 23:12). Are you reading? What are you reading? Is there something you can stop reading because it does not encourage you to be more like your Lord? Jesus said, "learn from Me" (Matthew 11:29). No person is made right with God unless he learns of Him and His gospel message to the world (2 Timothy 3:14-17; cf. Acts 17:24-31). Can you make a place in your busy life for reading the Bible? Can you commit to one page per day?

At one time, letter-carriers at the Pleasant Ridge, Ohio Post Office realized that twine that had been used in the wrapping of incoming mail was being discarded while new twine was used to wrap outgoing mail. They began saving the incoming twine and using it, in a lesser quantity, for wrapping outgoing mail. Since more twine was used on the incoming mail, it grew and grew, little by little, until it was measured: the ball was twenty-nine inches in diameter and weighed seventy-five pounds. [Technical World Magazine, Vol. XXI, No. 1, March, 1914, p. 265.] Sometimes we fail to realize the cumulative effect of small doses, a little bit at a time!

- Gary Smalley

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- \* "Remember, when you kill time it has no resurrection!"
  - \* "Virtues are learned at Mother's knee – vices at some other joint!"
  - \* "To get maximum attention, it's hard to beat a big mistake!"
  - \* "Crime's story would be shorter if the sentences were longer!"
  - \* "It is not the IQ but the I WILL that is important in serving the Lord!"
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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)