

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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From Chaos to Order

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." (Genesis 1:1-3).

As I write this, I am reflecting this morning on what my wife and I experienced last night. For our anniversary, we attended the Nashville Symphony. Before the music began, we watched as each musician in turn came to the stage and began warming up. Each one was "doing their own thing" for their warmup. The sound was horrible and chaotic. Eventually the light dimmed to let everyone know the conductor was about to enter and the performance begin. The lead violinist arose and the orchestra became silent. A note was struck for all the musicians to imitate to ensure they were in tune. The conductor entered the stage, made some introductory remarks to the audience, and then turned to the orchestra. With a wave of his wand the music began. It was beautiful to hear and see. What a blessing! French-American composer Edgard Varese said "Music is organized sound" (often paraphrased as "organized noise"). Last night I thought, how true. Before the symphony began during the warmup, what one heard was a horrible noise. No one would want to listen to that chaotic sound. It was like a bunch of tom cats squalling in the night. However, the conductor entered and the music began — same musicians, same instruments, and the same notes. The difference was from taking disorder, confusion, and chaos and turning a horrible noise into music. What genius of order and decency! The conductor who commanded the attention of the musicians brought order to the noise.

I thought of the Great Conductor. From nothing came something (ex nihilo). Yet, that something "was without form, and void;" it was disorganized chaos. The Great Conductor spoke, "Let there be light." Creation sat up and came to attention and responded to the order of the Creator. Yes, Paul's words are remarkable: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace," (1 Corinthians 14:33). Oh, there is so much application we can make of this my friend. How many people have there been whose lives were a chaotic mess, but through conversion the Lord brought order and peace? Those who were living

in tumult and with disorder and whose lives were filled with a wretched noise now have peace, harmony, and a quiet resolve to their lives because of the Great Conductor! The same Messiah who stood in a rocking, storm-tossed boat on a chaotic, fearful sea said, "Peace, be still!" The Lord gave order to what had been chaos. His actions caused the disciples to marvel and exclaim, "What manner of man is this?" Yes, He is the Great Conductor!

After the symphony, the crowd left the hall and poured out onto the streets of downtown Nashville. Anyone who knows the area realizes the symphony hall is just a couple of blocks from the bar and night club scene, for which Nashville is famous. We were leaving the symphony around 10:00 p.m., and yet, the place was wall-to-wall people. Folks were headed to the bars, the noise, the confusion and the chaos. How sad. Chaos results in the absence of God.

My friend, your life does not have to be so. Can we help you bring your life in tune and under the direction of the Great Conductor? Please come study God's word with us. Listen as the Great Conductor brings peace to your storm-tossed life; "Peace, be still." — From chaos to order.

- Keith Hamilton

Clippings . . .

"The conscience has been compared to a clock, and the law of God to the sun. The clock is right only when it keeps time with the Sun. And so it is with the conscience. It is a safe guide only when it is directed by the commandments of the Lord."

- F. W. Richardson

The Lord God is Holy!

To say that God is holy brings to the Bible student's mind that God is separate from all sin. Jack Cottrell wrote this about the meaning: "It means that his essence is pure moral goodness and is the very opposite of all evil . . . he is absolute ethical perfection and purity, that he is unconditionally upright in his essence and his actions."¹

There are two significant passages in the Bible which emphasize this glorious characteristic: "And one [Seraphim] called out to another and said, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.'" (Isaiah 6:3). In heaven, "the four living creatures, . . . day and night they do not cease to say, 'HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE

LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME." (Revelation 4:8). Notice that this glorious attribute of the superior God is repeated, like no other, three times in succession, emphasizing His high and exalted universal authority and rule. His complete purity and incorruptible righteousness separates Him from all moral imperfections of man.

Because God's nature is completely good, and He cannot be tempted by evil, we should respond to His rich blessings in superior fashion. Psalms 99 reflects the sentiment of worshippers in Israel:

"The LORD reigns, let the peoples tremble; He is enthroned above the cherubim, let the earth shake! The LORD is great in Zion, And He is exalted above all the peoples. Let them praise Your great and awesome name; Holy is He. The strength of the King loves justice; You have established equity; You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob. Exalt the LORD our God And worship at His footstool; Holy is He. . . . Exalt the LORD our God And worship at His holy hill, For holy is the LORD our God." (Psalms 99:1-5, 9).

Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed to God calling Him "Holy Father" (John 17:11). He is "the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy" (Isaiah 57:15). How should Christians regard the God of heaven?

May we always strive to be holy as He is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16)! This is our goal (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 1 Peter 2:5, 9). May we live worthy lives, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Corinthians 7:1). May we always "Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in holy array." (Psalms 29:2).

- Gary Smalley

¹ Cottrell, Jack. What the Bible Says about God the Creator. Joplin: College Press Pub. Co., 1983.
[All Scriptures quoted are NASB, 1995 © The Lockman Foundation, unless otherwise noted.]

* "It is better to walk along slowly on the right road, than to march confidently along the wrong one!"

* "You cannot keep trouble from coming into your home, but you don't have to give it a chair to sit on!"

* "Great ability without discretion usually comes to a tragic end!"

* "We do not need better methods or more money; we need better people!"

* "The prayer need not be long when faith is strong!"

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)