

# THE LEVITE

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## COMMEMORATIVE EDITION



**HODGENVILLE  
PENTECOSTAL  
CHURCH**

*Pentecostal by Experience - Holiness by Choice*

# COMMEMORATIVE EDITION FORWARD

THE LEVITE - Staff  
Hodgenville Pentecostal Church

The Lord often puts a key in our hands to unlock a door that leads to a higher life in Him. His condition of further revelation is that we use and apply that which He has given us at present. American Christians in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are fortunate to have such abundant resources at their fingertips to aid their spiritual life, but that field is crowded with resources that do not speak directly to the Holiness people of God. It is in this atmosphere that we offer *The Levite*, writing for Holiness people by Holiness people. It is our hope that it will serve as a key for you and unlock a door that has thus far remained closed to you and yours.

This publication was originally envisioned several years ago as a newspaper of sorts to be circulated only among the Levites in the Church, a group formed at Hodgenville Pentecostal Church to serve in the Tabernacle as greeters, caretakers, altar workers, and servants. However, The Lord led us to do more with it than to serve as a list of announcements. We endeavor to publish anointed writing—material that flows from the heart as rivers of living water.

This particular issue is a compilation of articles from our first several years gathered together in one issue for your perusal and study. These were selected from feedback given by readers as being those articles that spoke to them in the most needful way. It is in no way a reflection on the quality or content of the vast writing that was not included, only an attempt to give the selected work the opportunity to again have its impact much the same as the preacher brings out that one special message God gave him years ago when the Spirit prompts him because of the special power it had upon the listener.

We invite you join us each quarter. It is our prayer that the words contained in these pages will bless you and instruct you, but mostly our prayer is that it will spark something in you that will bring you closer to God or be something you can use to inspire others to that same worthy goal. Now, if you enjoy *The Levite*, please find the response card contained in these pages and let us know that you would like to receive *The Levite* regularly. Presently, The Lord bears the cost of the publication, and you can take it by mail or by electronic means.

May God bless your walk with Him. May you grow in humility and love toward your fellow man!



ANDREW  
Hodgenville

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## LEADING LIKE A LION - Edition 2015-4

Brother David Webb  
Senior Pastor - Hodgenville Pentecostal Church

**“...but the righteous are bold as a lion.”**

Revelation 5:5 *“And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed...”*

Alexander the Great said, *“An army of sheep, lead by a lion is better than an army of lions lead by a sheep.”*

Winston Churchill said, *“You have enemies? Good. That means you have stood for something in your lifetime.”* When the leader’s mind is weak, the opposition is a problem. When the leader’s mind is simply balanced, the opposition is challenging. When the leader’s mind is strong, the opposition is opportunity. Just knowing what’s right is not good enough; we must do what’s right. We must lead like a Lion.

Napoleon Bonaparte said, *“If you build an army of 100 lions and their leader is a dog, in any fight, the lions will die like a dog. But if you build an army of 100 dogs and their leader is a lion, all dogs will fight as a lion.”*

I believe one of the worst things about leading like a Lion is no one ever asks if you’re ok. I believe that it is imperative that leadership be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not soft; be bold, but not a bully; be thoughtful, but not political; be meek, but not weak; stand proud, but despise arrogance; be able to laugh, but not act as a babbling fool.

Consider these three characteristics of a Lion...

### 1. A Lion is not intimidated

**Proverbs 28:1** *“The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.”*

There is a spirit of intimidation roaming free in our land. Bullies roam the playgrounds of our public schools. Activist judges are no longer interpreting the law but choosing to impose their own agendas on the citizens of this great nation. I am ashamed to say that these tactics are no longer confined to the public arena but has made its way into the church. In some cases, members with money or prominent parishioners are bent on imposing their will upon the church of the living God. Few will stand up to the intimidator for fear of losing tithe or a member moving on to a hireling’s church. WE MUST LEAD LIKE A LION!!! We must not back down. A Lion

does not bow to the opinion of a mouse. Herbert Swope said, *“I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure, which is: Try to please everybody.”*

### 2. A Lion is not inferior

**Proverbs 30:30** *“A lion [which is] strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any;”*

Eleanor Roosevelt said, *“No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”* How many businesses, churches and homes suffer because of inferiority? We must come to grips that there will always be someone better than us. We can either enjoy the talents and abilities of others and count them as a blessing to our lives, or, on the contrary, we can find reason to exclude them from our lives because we can’t stand that they are better than us.

Secure persons are happy for the success of others. They encourage the vision, they stoke the fire, and they offer advice learned from the school of hard knocks to those reaching for the greater. Average leaders raise the bar for themselves; good leaders raise the bar for others; great leaders inspire others to raise their own bar.

As leaders, we can’t afford to be afraid to ask for help. Jeffrey Benjamin said, *“A sign of strength is seen in one who asks for help.”* It has been said, *“Great leaders surround themselves with people who are better than them.”* Many leaders suffer from *Atelophobia* (The fear of not being good enough). If I may, I feel that there are many congregations suffering for lack of help. Consider the cycle: the local church takes an upswing, attendance increases, finances are more readily available but there is a leader at the top who will not relinquish any authority to an Assistant/Youth Pastor/ helper. He may be fearful that the help he brings in will gain favor and split the church. Therefore, many times, unknowingly, the leader slams the lid on the growth and by default the church begins to decline. May I submit to you...A perfect associate/youth pastor does not exist. Quit looking for one. Furthermore, a perfect pastor does not exist. Lead like a lion!

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## ►►► **Leading like a lion** - continued from page 3

### 3. A Lion is not an Isolationist

**Isaiah 11:6-9** *"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;"*

Lions are the only cat group that forms a social group. I believe sometimes in our attempt retain the old time holiness way, we isolate ourselves out of fear of being contaminated. We should be insulated but not isolated. How can we be salt and light as Christ commanded if we are confined between four walls? The condition called isolation can become so acute that we can dis-fellowship everyone until we are the only fellow in our ship! How sad. Abraham Lincoln said, *"Believing everyone is dangerous; believing no one is very dangerous."* We must not mix and mingle with the world and doctrinal issues cannot be compro-

mised but...for us to separate over non-issues means we are practicing the first page in the devil's play book. We need one another. Bro. Ralph Cox said at the Richland's Camp meeting in the 1980's that the Swiss had developed a device that would split the human hair 250 different ways. He said it reminded him of some church people. In the late 1800s there were two deacons in a small Baptist church in Mayfield, KY. The two deacons didn't get along, and they always opposed each other in any decision related to the church. On one particular Sunday, one deacon put up a small wooden peg in the back wall so the minister could hang up his hat. When the other deacon discovered the peg, he was outraged that he had not been consulted. People in the church took sides and eventually there was a split. To this day, they say you can find

in Mayfield, KY the *Anti-Peg Baptist Church*.

Finally, Abe Lincoln said, *"Nearly all men can stand adversity but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."* **Lead like a Lion!**



**Hosea 11:10** *"They shall walk after the LORD: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble ..."*



## **THE NEARNESS, MIRACLES AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF JESUS** - Edition 2015-2

Brother Ryan Ralston  
Savannah Holy Church of God - Savannah, GA



I would like to share three thoughts that are taken from the triumphal entry of Jesus' ascent into Jerusalem as recorded by the gospel writers. The spontaneous outpouring of emotion from the disciples toward Christ is a template of how our hearts should be stirred during our times of worship. There were several factors that led to this momentous time of worship and those factors are still in place today.

First, notice the Nearness of Jesus. The scripture is very illustrative of the fact that Jesus was moving through the crowd of disciples. The anointed pen of the gospel writers shares that Jesus had come "nigh." This is a critical component of our worship services. The closeness of Christ is what inspired this crowd to begin to worship fervently. Only those in the congregation that sense or see the nearness of Jesus will worship Him. John 4:24 states, "we must worship Him in spirit and truth." Truth is foundational to our worship. Truth tells us that Christ is among His church. Truth reminds us of our relationship in Christ and the presence of Christ that is pledged to present himself among a "group of two or three" gathered together in His name.

Second, notice the Miracles of Jesus. This is another aspect that is critical to our worship of Christ. The writer instructs us as

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## THE ALTAR - *Edition 2015-2*

Sister Genell Webb  
*Hodgenville Pentecostal Church*

As a pastors wife, there are times when I find myself alone in an empty dark sanctuary. During these times I can't help but stop and reflect on my surroundings. While some do not relish the idea of

being inside a vacant church, for me it is a place of peace. One particular time while walking down the center aisle I reflected on what was the most important part of the church to me.

After thoughtful contemplation I had to say it would be the altar. It is sad to think this piece of furniture is oftentimes removed from houses of worship nowadays. If they only realized what they are missing. I can still recollect the feel of the grain and distinct smell of the finish of the altars in the church I attended as a child. What precious memories that altar holds for me. I was saved and filled with the Holy Ghost at that altar. I consecrated myself again and again standing or kneeling there at the altar. I have my first remembrances of taking communion with the gathered congregation standing at the altar. I said my vows and knelt for prayer in a lovely white wedding gown at that altar. A few years later, my two oldest children were dedicated to the Lord at that same altar.

Life now finds me serving in a different church with its own



set of altars. I have thanked the Lord more than once that we are blessed to be in a church, serving a group of people that cherish the importance of the altar. I have been here long enough to establish yet another set of memories. My younger two children were dedicated to the Lord at this altar. I'm also older and with age and experience, I have come to learn that the altar isn't just for events in my life, but is the sustaining strength in my life. I have rejoiced and grieved at the altars in the front of our church. I have prayed for healing and direction at the altar. I have been chastised and comforted at the altar, but the final product after every trip to the altar is that I have grown. Thank God for the gift I have; that at every service I can come to the altar and pour my heart out to Him. The altar - what a special place in our sanctuary. It isn't a place of reproach, but by definition a place of sacrifice. If I am willing to surrender what He asks, He is faithful to accept my sacrifice. He is faithful to meet me there, at the altar.



## THE CHURCH AND CULTURE - *Edition 2017-2*

Brother Jon Curtis Isaacs  
*Grace Fellowship Holiness Church - Elba, AL*

The church is a ship, either at sail or adrift in the sea of culture which surrounds it. Drifting is the easier option as it requires no real personal or corporate effort. However, we would do well to

consider the direction of the undertow. All societies before us who have given themselves over to the currents of their culture have eventually met the rocks of societal ruin. Sailing against the current demands diligence and attention. One cannot simply hoist a sail of religious expectations and expect positive progress. The direction of the wind must be constantly and properly discerned and adapted, too. The unfamiliar waters must be studied and understood. And then there are the storms. Many who have gone before us have

grown weary with the rigors of proper spiritual navigation and given up on the endeavor, but it is only by being driven by the wind of truth that the church can navigate with safety and success.

Currently our culture is experiencing tumultuous storms of change. As we pitch and roll through the threatening waves, there are times when the outward list is terrifying, and then it seems as if we may be righting ourselves and stabilizing. This back and forth has been ongoing for many decades now in our nation. What may go unnoticed to most, however, is how much of the culture the church is taking on while we are listing in that direction. While it may be comforting when we

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## ►►► ***The nearness, miracles and encouragement of Jesus*** - continued from page 4

**...while He blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.  
(Luke 24:51)**

to the motive or genesis of their worship. The disciples were praising Christ for what “they had seen.” The evident displays of Christ’s power were the motivating emotions that caused an eruption of praise toward Christ. The lame feet that had been healed, the blinded eyes that had been opened, the lifeless bodies that had been brought back to life, and a host of other miracles were all signposts for these disciples to magnify Christ to the highest. How many people do we know that worship Christ only when they are trying to gain favor or a blessing from the Master? Worship is not a negotiating technique the church employs to gain access with Christ. Worship is not reserved only when we are in a crisis and need something from heaven. Part of our worship energy comes from the things that God has already done in our lives.

**When I see the finished work of Calvary,**  
I want to praise Him.

**When I remember the night He saved me,**  
I want to praise Him.

**When I remember how He healed my body,**  
I want to praise Him.

**When I remember the gift of the Holy Ghost,**  
I want to praise Him.

**When I see all He has done for others,**  
I want to praise Him.

Finally, notice the Encouragement of Jesus. The final aspect of this story is how Jesus enlightened His disciples as to the importance of their praise. Christ did not discourage the outpouring of emotion shown by the crowd. Many in our churches feel we should not show emotion during our worship. They don’t want to become too demonstrative, emotional, or passionate about Christ. Passivity has paralyzed them in the pew. They defend their emotionless worship by touting their past accomplishments or the number of years they had served Christ, yet the factor remains that they are absolutely quiet and lukewarm in their worship of Christ. This should not be so! Christ instructed the disciples the “rocks would cry out” if their praise was not shared. Christ did not try to dissuade the disciples from their acts or worship; much to the contrary, He encouraged, and even suggested, that there may be a greater demonstration than had already occurred. The disciples praised Christ in a very energetic, spontaneous, and sincere manner and Christ approved. He did not attempt to water down their emotional exuberance; He enflamed their passion. Think about that! Don’t worry you are worshipping Him too much, too loudly, or too passionately! Ask yourself, am I praising Him enough? Does my praise show I appreciate who Christ is and what He has done? Would you have enjoyed being in this crowded worship service with Christ as the center of attraction? Let’s purpose in our hearts to praise Him passionately, fervently, and consistently.





## MORTIFICATION: THE DEATH OF THE OLD MAN - *Edition 2016-2*

Brother David Whelan  
Hodgenville Pentecostal Church

**Romans 8:13 - "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."**

I recently read a piece about Mortification (my life really isn't that dull) and realized how important that word is to the Christian.

The author, Bill Muhlenberg, points out in a recent article how the word Mortification has fallen out of use. Modern Christians who use the NIV and other texts will not encounter this word as used in the Bible. There are synonyms and euphemisms in place of the word mortification. It's root is the same as the words mortician and mortuary. Mort...refers to death in this context.

I think Bro Jeremy Spurlock was the first man I heard utter the phrase to me in reference to daily living "we have to crucify the flesh daily". He was talking about himself and me.....not Paul the apostle. I realize those words are not his entirely, but I appreciate the impact they had on me. You see, I had been raised to believe that we are sinners, that we could not help ourselves but sin often, and that since we were forgiven (saved), that forgiveness was a blanket justification for anything I might say or do. This almost inevitably leads to a pattern of sin and wrong thinking, and eventually to being backslidden, exactly where it got me.

Now anyone with any sense of justice that is thinking would know that I was just accepting an excuse and taking what someone else said for gospel. I would not have murdered someone and expected blanket forgiveness, but "small" things like impure thought and low grade living were just to be expected and OK, they fell under the blanket of forgiveness, after all, I could not help that. That makes no sense and does not line up with the nature of God or with scripture that says that NO sin will enter into heaven. Later, Bro Andrew Astor introduced me to the old axiom that says; "if you can take one step without sinning", and goes on to instruct,....."just keep taking that step and you will live sin free".

Unfortunately, there are a whole lot of professing and genuine Christians that live under this deception. It is a product of Calvinist thinking and is extremely common. In fact, there is a joint work that you and the Holy Ghost must work on after you are saved....that is sanctification. Your flesh must be mortified...it must die out. Some folks will use the expression..."let the old man die". This is not works salvation. This is the part of your salvation where you demonstrate that you can stay in line with the commandments God has given us. It is your responsibility as a Christian to do your part. God did not force you to be saved, and when he did save you, he did not change you fundamentally so that it would not require some effort on your part to get closer to him and stay out of trouble. He gave you some measure of the Holy Ghost to convict you (kind of like the cricket and Pinocchio) and he cleansed you with the Blood of Jesus, but left your free will intact. Not only that, mortification, and hence sanctification open up a whole new world of Christian experience that most "Christians" have never heard of, let alone experienced. I did not have knowledge of anyone that was filled with the Holy Ghost until I was an adult and someone told me about it. As a matter of fact, being introduced to the idea that one "must crucify the flesh" was a new concept to me that ultimately led me to being filled.

A Christian that I very much respect once told my wife that a relative had died. The person that had passed almost undoubtedly split hell wide open. The person was a reprobate. I know that is not popular to say, but maybe if we said it more, it might mean something. He scoffed at God, and cursed Him. He was a smoker, drinker, curser of God, unrepentant, and a lot of other things. However, this Christian was consoling himself because the man who passed had professed to be saved years ago. I have no idea what happened then, but it makes little difference in terms of the disposition of the man's soul. The Bible is very clear about sin and heaven...they don't go together. I wish I could get this person to see this

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## ►►► **Mortification** - continued from page 7



error. I am looking for opportunities to present this idea of mortification and sanctification.

We often think of witnessing as talking to lost people about our faith. Have you ever considered how many of our friends and neighbors who are saved folk are kept from the deeper things of God by this deception? Your professing friends and family are hungry for a greater touch from God that is prevented by their lack of sanctification. Bro Zane Estis once pointed out to me that in reaching for people to help, often we reach right past the decent fruit and to the fruit that is the worst because we have conditioned ourselves to want to see the person is the most lost helped first. Perhaps he has something there. What if we testify about what the Holy Ghost has done in our life, the healings we have seen, etc...? Folks, even the driest of our Holiness

Churches are amazing places to any nominal Christian that will come with an open mind. I promise you most of them have no clue what it means to feel the Holy Ghost, you will be doing them a favor. They, no doubt, hold negative opinions of you and The Holiness Way, but hearing your testimony, seeing your joy and peace, and witnessing there is something more to be had than what they have seen themselves may be the key. Brothers and Sisters, people we encounter are not generally Bible Readers (even if they profess to be Christian), you have to tell them this stuff.

My Grandmother recently passed away and I am glad to say that I was able to convince her before she died that she was not a sinner (in the sense that we cannot help ourselves but sin). She would refer to herself as a "sinner". I was able to help her see that she had lived her life daily in avoidance of sin, that if she sinned, the Holy Ghost would immediately convict her and she would repent, that either before hand or during the act of sin, she would have to actively suppress the feeling of conviction. It was a new idea to her too, she had been saved 87 years when she passed. It is a shame that she served Him so well, but missed so much of what could have been. Maybe you will have opportunity with someone to talk about how the Holy Ghost has sanctified you and how your flesh has been mortified.



## WHAT IS A LEVITE?

*1 Chronicles 28-32*

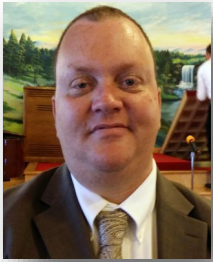
- To wait on the Man of God
- To provide supplies for the Tabernacle
- To daily thank and praise the Lord

**A SERVANT**

- To work the altar
- To keep the Tabernacle

***To be called to be a servant is to be called to be humble and to have the privilege to partake in the Spirit of Christ***





## DON'T MISS OUT! - Edition 2015-3

Brother Danny Compton  
Hodgenville Pentecostal Church

For many years Sunday School was literally school. In the 1780's, the

industrial revolution resulted in many children having to join the workforce, and some would spend six days per week working in factories. Entire families would work day after day just to survive.

The children of these families were bound to a life of illiteracy. The hours children worked were long. In fact, in 1802 legislative restrictions came resulting in the number of hours children could work being reduced to 12 hours per day! For the next 42 years this remained unchanged. Saturday was part of the work week leaving no time for education. The Sunday School movement began in Britain, and its key promoter was an English Anglican evangelical named Robert Raikes. The Sunday School movement soon spread to America, and religious organization across the board began creating Sunday Schools.

Sunday Schools taught the children of working class families how to read, write, and, of course, religious education was a core component.

Children were

taught to read using the Bible as the textbook, and they learned to write by copying passages from the scripture.

Spiritual practices such as prayer and hymn singing were taught, and Christian morality and virtues were also goals of Sunday School.

Sunday School became very popular, and prize day and picnics were looked forward to. Sunday School had become a normal aspect of childhood, and even parents who did not attend church insisted that their children go to Sunday School.

In the 1870s, compulsory education was established, and reading, writing, and arithmetic were learned thru the week. Sunday School then became focused on religious education. Parents continued to insist that their children attend Sunday School for the next 80 to 90 years. However, in the 1960's and 70's parents stopped insisting on Sunday School attendance and adopted a permissive style of parenting which we are still paying the price for today.

I am not saying that Sunday School alone is the answer, but I do believe it is crucial to use every tool at our disposal to make sure that children, parents and grandparents are equipped to live victorious lives. The Lord has pro-

vided for us here at HPC IN A GREAT WAY!

### WE HAVE

- The Holy Ghost
- Anointed singing and music
- Loving elders
- Children's church
- Youth group
- Pastor

Just to name a few! All of these things are cooperating together with the help of the Lord.

- Sunday School

Our Sunday School department is one of the tools the Lord has provided.

\*Every class is designed for a specific age group.

\*Every teacher is prayerfully placed by leadership.

\*Curriculum and subject matter are continually worked on and evaluated.

### **DON'T MISS OUT**

Sunday School is a wonderful opportunity for children, parents and grandparents to grow closer to the Lord and one another.

**Church begins at 10**





## UNITY - EPHESIANS 4:1-16 - Edition 2016-3

Brother Jeremy Spurlock  
Calvary Pentecostal Tabernacle - West Plains, MO

### Unity is paramount in the church of the living God; it is vital to the health and strength of the church

The enemy is constantly attacking the unity of the body of Christ because he knows that without unity the work of the Lord is hindered; without unity it is impossible to see progress – Nehemiah 4:6

When we look at the world today and see groups such as the homosexual liberal movement, it is plain to see that there is unity among the enemy. They will stick together for their “cause” no matter how much they differ personally. It is very often that they do not have the majority, but they have the greatest unity; therefore, their agenda and propaganda are passed!

You can see this marvel all through the scriptures. In Joshua 9:2 all the kings came out to fight against Israel with “one accord” – which means to be of **ONE MIND**.

The murderers of the Martyr Stephen were unified in Acts 7:57, and again in Acts 18:12 with one accord making insurrection against the Apostle Paul. We see a host of people in Acts 19:34 crying out for hours with “**ONE VOICE**” to Diana of the Ephesians.

If our enemy is unified against us, how much more should we unite against our adversary?

Jesus even said that the World LOVES its own in John 15:19 *“If ye were of the world, **the world would love his own**: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”*

#### Can we say the same thing about the church?

I was talking with a convert who has not been in church for very long, and he said something that broke my heart. He said that when you are out in the world you always have your guard up. You know to put up that wall because you are expecting to get hurt by people. However, when he got saved and joined the family of God, he lowered all of his walls because he thought he was in a safe and secure place among friends only to find that it is possible to be wounded in the house of the brethren.

Many have been damaged by friendly fire. We can all think of casualties who have fallen to the pain of two words that should never go together but very often do – CHURCH TROUBLE.

Paul deals with this in his first chapter of his first letter to the Corinthian church – “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren...that there are contentions among you.” – *Contentions* literally means “heated disagreements”.

It takes a church family working together to promote a unified atmosphere in the church so that when sinners come in they feel the Love of God and the Spirit of Christ working in the body of believers.

Studies have found that honeybees work together in a tremendously unified way. They selflessly work one with another having all things common, living closely together in the hive without any strife. When temperatures get heated in the hive they will all with one accord flap their wings in perfect unison to cool off the atmosphere of the hive. They do this to keep the honeycombs from melting, and to prevent the fruit of their labors from wasting away in the heat of the moment.



I believe there is a lesson to be learned here for all of us. When disagreements arise in the church of the living God and things get a little “heated”, let us work together to create an atmosphere of unity so that we can preserve this precious gift of abundant life that has been given to us to share one with another.



## ►►► *The church and culture* - continued from page 5

roll back from a dangerous lean towards the wrong, we would be naïve to think that changes in our culture are not affecting the church. With every pitch and roll, more and more culture finds its way below decks in the church. Whether it be the pulpit, the music, or the prayer meeting, we are affected.

Consider how what were at one time viewed as fundamental truths have in recent years become lightly held beliefs and are now in danger of becoming relics of our cultural past. Strong convictions no longer make one an example to be followed, but rather an obstacle to be overcome. Truth has become “relevant” in our society, and relevance has replaced righteousness as the keyword in our pulpits. In the past, new congregations were born out of a work of God. People would begin to seek God, God would respond by sending revival, and a church would be established to continue seeking. In our day, when a new church is opened, polls are taken from the community to decide the direction the church will take. Clothing fads, music trends, and various forms of entertainment are incorporated to make us more acceptable to our surrounding society; all in the name of being relevant. Is it wrong to adapt to society to at least some degree to make a connection? If we have no common ground, how can we interact, and, thereby, influence our surrounding society? Well, it is certainly wrong if it requires us to compromise the gospel or if it creates an atmosphere where an emphasis on relevance trumps an encouragement toward righteousness. However, being relevant is not wrong in every case. One could even argue that being culturally relevant is an undeniably Pauline approach to ministry— “...I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you” (1Co 9:22-23 KJV). This passage however, can easily be taken out of context. Warren Wiersbe carefully explains this text:

It is unfortunate that the phrase “all things to all men” has been used and abused by the world and made to mean what Paul did not intend for it to mean. Paul was not a chameleon who changed his message and methods with each new situation. Nor was Paul a compromiser who adjusted his message to please his audience. He was an ambassador, not a politician! He simply adapted his approach to different groups. It takes tact to have contact (Wiersbe 2007).

Apostle Paul knew what many of us in the ministry seem to have forgotten: the Word of God is relevant to all times, to all people, and to all cultures; the ink may change, the message must not. While some things do go out of style, even in the church, we must maintain our trust in the simplicity of the gospel to transform lives. Our modern marketing techniques will never be sufficient to answer the problems of our society. Jesus does not need savvy salesmen. He seeks ambassadors who trust in the gospel and who know the power of God from personal experience.

As to our present situation, we are not the first generation of believers to experience times of dramatic cultural change. Throughout the history of the church, Christians have successfully lived their faith through periods of dramatic cultural confusion, much more pronounced even than what we are presently experiencing. We are the church of Jesus Christ. He is much more than the founder of our religion; He is the “author and the finisher of our faith.” He is our provider and our provision. Our surrounding culture will inevitably influence us, but it need not swamp us. Giving ourselves to our culture and drifting where it takes us is nothing more than a drawn-out corporate suicide. Drifting with the whims of the sea is the first step in assimilation, which is just a fancy word for sinking. What is revival if it is not an emptying of the church of all that threatens to sink or slow us and a hoisting of the sails for the Holy Ghost to fill? Therefore, there is but one viable answer to the question, “How can the church survive its culture?” Revival.

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## FROM A PRISON TO A PALACE - Edition 2016-3

Sister Joanna Rich  
Wife of Derek Rich and Daughter of Rev. James Martin

**Acts 16:25 - And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.**

Many a time during a trial, we have drawn encouragement from the choice of these men to praise God in the middle of their captivity. We have seen their faith in God rise above the circumstance, their gratitude above the pain, and their praise above the imprisonment. You may say, "Well, that was in the Bible times. How could anyone do that now?" By firsthand experience, I can tell you of someone who did.

In a MRI room awaiting further news of her condition, a lady whom I knew very well chose to praise God in what seemed like prison walls to her. It was her testimony that God transformed those prison walls into a palace through praise. You can have the same testimony that my momma did. Are you willing to lift your eyes above the circumstance to the one who is holding your hand? Isaiah 41:13 says, *For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.* The reason our faith can arise even in the midst of such a desperate situation is knowing who our God is. He is the Creator of all things. (Gen. 1:1) He is Holy. (Rev. 4:8) He is Faithful (Hebrews 13:5). He is our Healer. (Ex. 15:26) He is our Joy. (Ps.16:11) He is our Hope. (Rom. 15:13) He is our Peace. (Phil. 4:7) He is our Help. (Ps. 46:1) He is our Rock. (Ps.18:2) He is our Refuge. (Ps. 46:1) Oh, brothers and sisters, He is EVERYTHING we need! When you really get a glimpse of who He is, you won't be able to stay in that prison of despair. The prison will be transformed into a palace through praise!

There was a song we used to sing a long time ago, "What he does not keep you from, He'll keep you through." God could

have protected Paul and Silas from the beating and imprisonment, but could it have been that the Philippian Jailor wouldn't have been saved? We aren't told who of the prisoners were converted by their faith in God, but we do see that the prisoners heard them. What a testimony Paul and Silas were to this whole prison of what God can do in answer to prayer! So we see that our prison, whatever the situation is, can be transformed into a place of victory and purpose. Romans 8:28 still says, ***"All things work together for good to them that love God to them who are the called according to his purpose."*** When one totally embraces this truth, he will be able to praise even in the midnight of the situation for he realizes that God is working it for good. I encourage you, my dear brothers and sisters: take on this challenge to praise God for who He is and what He is going to do even in the midnight. For it's then that you will see your prison being transformed into a palace.





## WHO IS CARRYING THE COUCH - Edition 2015-3

Brother Davy Boggs  
Waynesville, OH / [www.davykellyandodie.com](http://www.davykellyandodie.com)

Mark 2:4-5 *4And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had*

*broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.*

*5When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.*

The goal of the church must be to get folks saved and healed. In this dark and sinful world, we must get them into the presence of Christ whatever it takes, even if we must carry them! Carrying men and women to Jesus has never been and never will be easy. It requires someone on all four corners of the couch.

Luke the physician said this man was **taken** with a palsy. *Luke 5:18.* Life has been cruel to him. Through a sudden accident, a terrible disease, a fever or through some awful twist of life, he was taken with a palsy. Paralyzed, he could not help himself. He could not get to Jesus on his own.

### •There Is A Couch to Be Carried Today

We are dealing with a world of paralyzed people. For the most part, they are still up walking around but inwardly they are palsied. Their mind is affected, their heart is bound, and their soul is captive. They have been wounded, bruised, mistreated, beaten emotionally and left for dead. People right on your street live in fear and torment because of the trauma of sin, and they cannot overcome it on their own. They have enjoyed sin, but the pleasure that seemed to bring such liberty has left them in bondage. They need someone to carry their couch! We want them to get the help they need, right?

### •The Pastor Must Carry the Couch

You say the pastor must carry the couch. Yes, the Pastor has a special anointing to carry folks to Jesus. He knows exactly what to say and just when to say it. The Pastor must carry the couch. Thank God for the man of God that is willing to carry his share of the load! However, the Pas-

tor is only able to carry one corner of the couch at a time! The ministry needs help in getting folks to Jesus.

### •The People Must Carry the Couch

There is a job for each one to do. All four corners must be covered. If someone is not doing their part then the paralyzed man is dumped in the street and is worse off than before. If we are ever going to get the palsied to Jesus we must work together. Prayer is essential to carrying people to Jesus. This is spiritual and cannot be completed purely by physical effort.

*2 Corinthians 10:3-4 3For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)*

Work like success depends on us, and pray because all the success depends on God!

### PRAYER

We need intercessory prayer warriors. I am saved today because folks would not quit praying. You are saved today because somebody would not quit praying. We must hold up our corner of the couch through prayer.

### PROVISION

We need people to hold up the couch through provision of their time, talent and treasure. We expect those that have more to give more, but are we willing to carry our corner when it comes to giving? If we are ever going to reach the folks, it will cost us something, but it will be worth it! We spend our money on so many things that have no eternal significance at all. Shouldn't we be willing to spend another portion of our resources to bring eternal life to a lost soul? It will be worth it both here and in eternity! Thank God for the churches, pastors, teachers, singers, and all of His saints.

God has provided a wonderful place for people to get saved, worship, be blessed, and learn. However, there are people who have made up their minds they are never coming into our churches. If they refuse to come to us, then we will take the Gospel to them! God has opened the door for us to set up a Gospel tent and sing and preach to

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## ►►► Who is carrying the couch - continued from page 13

folks that have never been inside of our church. We are taking the tent into larger metropolitan areas to try to carry people to Jesus.

Tent revivals may not be your "thing", and that is ok. Maybe you need to minister in a nursing home or within the prisons. I know a woman in her 90s that loves to minister one-on-one through the glass partition to men and women in her county jail. Visit the hospital or the sick in your town. Plan a Bible class for all the kids that are constantly running through your yard. The point is there are paralyzed people and they need somebody to help carry them to Christ! There is something for you to do!

### PERSEVERANCE

There is a bit of information that is critical to know if we are going to carry folks to Jesus. It takes perseverance! Perseverance is the "continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition." (www.merriam-webster.com)

**Reality says**, "There is no room at the door. The crowd is too great."

**Perseverance says**, "Come on, brother! We can do it!"

**Reality says**, "The opposition is too large. Jesus is out of reach. We gave it a good try. We will try another day."

**Perseverance says**, "We cannot take him back home still paralyzed. There must be something we can do. Hey!"

What about the roof? Yes, that's it! Take him up on the roof!"

**Reality says**, "What? Did you say take him on the roof? That is crazy!"

**Perseverance says**, "Yes, but it is better than leaving him paralyzed. Come on, let's do it!"

With a man on every corner, up on the roof the palsied man goes. Down through the hole in the roof. Borne of four and let down into the presence of Christ.

*Mark 2 v.5 "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." And then, Mark 2 v.11 "I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed and go thy way into thine house."*

He is healed and forgiven because some one cared enough to carry him!

- This man's **triumph** is in their **team** work.
- His **destiny** was dependent on their **determination**.
- His **forgiveness** was in their **faith**.
- His **salvation** was in their **single** mindedness.
- His **healing** was in their **help**.

They carried the couch. They each carried their corner. The paralyzed man went home saved and healed!

There is no telling what God is going to do right here if we all willingly grab a corner of the couch!



## SPIRITUAL ENTITLEMENT - Edition 2017-1

Brother Andrew Astor  
Youth Pastor - Hodgenville Pentecostal Church



I was born October 17<sup>th</sup>, 1988; therefore, I am part of what is known as "Generation Y" or Gen-Yers (someone who is born between 1980 – mid 1990s). Most people would be more familiar with another description of my age group—"The Millennial Generation" or Millennials. Much has been written about us, as well as, vast research and money spent trying to figure out who we are. In that research you will find some positives like: we are fast learners and very good with technology. Along with that you will also find many negatives, for example: we are generally lazy, we *hate* criticism, we are likely to move back in with our parents because we are unable to live on our own, and we believe strongly in entitlements. While all of these character traits are disturbing, becoming a generation that feels entitled is the most dangerous to me.

You don't have to be a scholar to see that we have become a people that feel we deserve more than what we actually do de-

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## ►►► **Spiritual Entitlement** - continued from page 14

serve. I am thankful to have lived in a home that taught me principles about work ethics and Godly values. I can remember getting my license and needing (wanting...) a truck to drive. My father could have went out and bought me the truck I wanted— a 4-door Chevy Z71 with mud tires and a lift kit so high that you needed an elevator to get in. Instead, he got me a 1920 (it felt that old anyway) red S10 that had real AC (rust holes that allowed air flow) and over 300k miles. It may seem odd now, but I don't remember throwing a fit or being ungrateful for that old hunk of junk. I was just glad to have something to drive.

Fast forward to 2017. We live in a time when we are being cheated somehow if we don't have the latest iPhone, or we are being punished if somehow we aren't able to buy everything that we want. Large movements are based solely on the promise of giving what is not earned and getting what is not deserved. I feel this is a major pitfall for today's society, but there is something that is more concerning to me, and that is when I see these same ideas and behaviors manifesting themselves inside the church.

Do you ever stop to think about the possibility that your church could be different than the way it is right now? Follow me for a moment...you nor I have a monopoly on either God or His Spirit. We cannot make Him save

someone, we cannot make Him heal someone, we cannot make Him fill someone with the Holy Ghost; yet, service after service we act like we are entitled to these divine miracles. James 1:17 says: *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* He blesses us with gifts because He loves us, not because we deserve any of it. I wonder if God sometimes ponders the thought of withholding the Holy Spirit from a congregation just to see if they appreciate it when He returns.



Ask yourself this question: Do you expect others to carry you into the presence of God? I am sure you answered a resounding, "NO," but let's look honestly at this. Do you actually contribute to the song service, or are you just someone that reads the words in a hymnal while your mind is elsewhere? When is the last time that you volunteered to stand and give God glory for the blessings that He daily bestows upon you and your family in a testimo-

ny service? What about in the altar service after the preacher has delivered his heart; do you respond, or do you make a motion towards the front only to find a corner where you can hide away from those pesky altar workers. The sad reality is that about 10% of most congregations bring 100% of the power into a service....i.e., Spiritual Entitlement. We have become lazy and lethargic in our approach to spiritual matters. Sure we are glad when a singer is prayed up and sings us into the presence of God or a preacher is able to become that Holy conduit from the throne room of heaven, but

don't dare ask me to lead or push a service in any way. Pardon me for being so plain, but we have become the same spoiled brats that we hate seeing in the world. We despise the very thought of someone getting something that he or she has not worked for, and yet, Sunday after Sunday, thousands will gather to ride the prayers and praise that someone else offers.

I challenge you to act like your church depends on you for a move of the Holy Ghost. Elevate your church's spiritual meter instead of being the liability that most are. Shock your pastor this coming service and be on time. Do something crazy like being the first one in the altar.

Remember, we don't deserve any of the benefits God gives us.





## WHEN I GROW UP..... - Edition 2015-4

Brother Don and Sister Debbie Woolett  
Hodgenville Pentecostal Church

I Corinthians 13:11

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

We hear children say this all the time, "When I grow up I want to be a \_\_\_\_\_." Just fill in the blank. The truth is we have all probably said this at some time as a child. A healthy child is always looking to reach the next level of "Maturity". As a young child they may not even know what the word maturity means, but it is a natural as well as healthy ambition. A baby or child that never makes an effort to sit up, stand, walk, talk, and the list could go on, has a serious handicap.

In many ways the life of a Christian is the same as a child growing up. We are always looking for ways to be a better Christian. Another way to express this is to say that we are always striving to become a "Mature" Christian. Let's take a few minutes to explore a few ways to recognize a "Mature" Christian.

First of all, we need to understand that a Christian that has been saved for 40 years should not be on the same level of maturity as a new Christian. If a veteran Christian has not spiritually matured at all there is a serious problem. We cannot stand still in our walk with the Lord. When an individual does not strive to grow in the Lord they WILL spiritually die! A lot could be said here, but this is not the topic at hand, so we'll move along.

In our HPC Kidz Church we have an age span of 3 - 12. Children develop and mature at different levels; therefore, some 3 year olds are very ready to attend Kidz Church while others are not quite as ready. Adult Christians mature at different levels as well, but they WILL mature or grow (up) in the Lord.

### We need to know:

Spiritual maturity is not about age. Some people get saved at a very young age while others may not become a Christian until they are in their 50's, 60's, 70's, or older.

Spiritual maturity is not about achievements. One man said, "I've read through the Bible 25 times! I've memorized the entire book of James! I can say the books of the Bible in 12 languages...backwards! I have a Ph.D. in Religion from Harvard!" These accomplishments are impressive, but they are not marks of a spiritually mature person. Remember, the Pharisees knew a lot of Scripture and were very religious people, but were still far from God.

Spiritual maturity is not proven totally by appearance.

I can put on a Police Officer's uniform, but that does not make me a Policeman. A Christian will want to dress properly to please the Lord, but spiritual maturity goes much deeper than the surface. Anyone can dress the part, but miss the heart!

Here are just a few areas of spiritual maturity we all need to consider.

### We need to hold to that childlike sense of wonder and awe.

If not careful, as adults we can lose that childlike amazement to our spiritual surroundings. Church can become just an obligation and true worship can become boring. Now we all understand you don't have to stand on your head to show excitement, but our heart will reveal itself in time. Ever notice how children can even find joy in just eating Cheerios underneath the couch! :o) Could it be that Matthew 18:3 is telling us the importance of never losing sight of the wonder and awe ever present in the Lord? "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." If we lose sight of the Lord's glory and majesty we will lose spiritual maturity. Let us never lose our sense of wonder and awe toward the things of the Lord.

Our Relationship with the Lord should not be driven by the highs and lows in life. Mature Christians do not ride a spiritual roller coaster. They are consistent. We will have sad times as well as happy times, but when our whole life, mood, and dedication to the Lord depends on the day we had we may not be as spiritually mature as we should. Ma-

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## ►►► *When I grow up* - continued from page 16

ture Christians do not allow the highs and lows of life to impact their walk with God. Oh, yes, they celebrate the mountaintop moments, but they do not rely on those moments to sustain their faith. Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Our peace should not depend upon the world around us. We are living in dark days that no doubt will grow darker. But mature Christians don't allow the latest buzz on the news to derail their lives. God is sovereign over everything. That includes ISIS and the apparent downfall of America, or anything else with which the media tries to bombard us. Acts 20:24 says, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with

joy,..."

Our spiritual disciplines should never take a back seat.

Prayer, bible study, worship, family and church attendance are all of utmost importance. People who struggle with consistency and intimacy in their walk with God are the ones that constantly place everything ahead of God. We need to make whatever sacrifices necessary to live a spiritually disciplined life. Luke 10:27 says, "... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself."

Our Christian Values/Life does not have an ON/Off Switch. Living our life for the Lord is 24/7/365. Spiritually

mature Christians do not find ways to compartmentalize God because He is not part of their life...He is their life! Romans 12:1-2 says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Now this is by no means an exhausted list of ways to measure spiritual maturity, but we must continue to grow in the Lord. There is no time to be idle. Philippians 3:14 says, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."



## WHERE HAVE ALL THE HEROES GONE? - Edition 2014-3

Brother Zane Estis  
AIM Missions - Hodgenville Pentecostal Church

2Kings 6:15 "And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots.

And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?" 2Kings 6:16 "And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." 2Kings 6:17a "And Elisha prayed,..."

In July of 2006, Sister Estis and I were preaching in Maryland and went to Washington D.C. on an off day. If there ever was a city that remembered its heroes, it would be D.C. We went by Arlington National Cemetery and saw the changing of the guard for the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. They've guarded it non-stop, even in the midst of hurricanes, because that tomb represents just some of our nation's heroes.

I wonder if we have lost our ability to have heroes? I wonder

what would happen if we truly had "Spiritual Heroes" in our lives and families again?

I picked up this quote some time back. I hope you enjoy it. Fred Smith - "We cannot live fully without heroes; for they are the stars to guide us upward. They are the peaks of our human mountains. Not only do they personify what we can be, but they also urge us to be. Heroes are who we can become if we diligently pursue our ideals in the furnace of our opportunities. Heroes are those who have changed history for the better. They are not always the men and women of highest potential, but those who have exploited their potential to society's behalf. Their deeds are done, not for honor, but for duty. Through our studies of heroes, we enter the realities of greatness."

How many of you, when you were a kid, had a hero?

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Who were your heroes when you were young?

You can tell a lot about a person's values by who their heroes are.

Even being called into the ministry I had heroes. I can remember, as a young preacher, the number of heroes I had. I would listen to one of their sermons and would do everything I could to preach just like them. (If you knew my heroes, you would say that I still have portions of their disciplines and idiosyncrasies inextricably woven into my life.)

### Observations Concerning Heroes:

**First observation:** I wanted to be like them. Something I've noticed about my heroes in the past is that I wanted to be just like them...right or wrong. The good news is they caused me to stretch. The bad news is, if we take it too far, we can lose our own uniqueness.

**Second observation:** They changed as I changed. Some of them ceased to be heroes after a while. I was growing, and, as I grew, I grew out of some of them.

**Third observation:** I changed as they changed. Some of those heroes grew away from me. As I watched and looked at their life, some of them were no longer my heroes. I can think of one especially who was a hero of mine, and, as I grew, I saw some major dents in the armor. Because of that, I lost some of the intrigue and esteem for that person. I had changed and found they were no longer a hero.

**Fourth observation:** Our interests are the same. If you're going to have a

hero, it's because they're doing something you are usually interested in.

**Fifth observation:** My greatest joy was their approval.

Sixth observation: I receive inner strength when I reflect on them. Tell me your heroes, and I will tell you your values. Here is a very probing question: If you could have dinner with anyone in the world, who would it be? Believe me—this is true of young people and adults alike: Show me your heroes, and I will show you your future.

Socrates said, "Talk of your heroes that I might not only know who you are, but who you will become."

That's why I am concerned with a culture that idolizes sports stars and props up politicians. We emulate who we want to be like, for better or worse. So let me ask you, are there any Biblical heroes in your life? Are there any missionary all-stars on your walls?

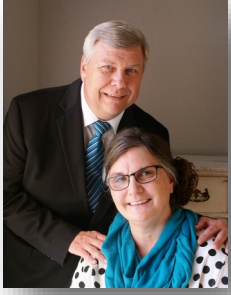
My Bible hero, as of late, is Elisha. He is a picture of Godly-ambition. (Not self-ambition, as pictured in the life of Abner.) He is well noted for his life of fire. He's a wealthy man, as shown by his abundance of oxen, yet at the thought of following the Prophet Elijah, he burns his form of income and calls for a town barbeque to eat those oxen. Elijah tries to shake him all along the trail, but the young preacher won't budge! He has lid-lifting moments when he sees chariots of fire, and, therefore, does not bat-an-eye when surrounded by the iron chariots of Syria. You can almost hear the preacher as he says under his breath, "Syria...that's the best you got?" He prays for his servant's eyes to be open so the under-

study can see "they that be with us are more than they that be with them". And in turn prays that his enemy's eyes would be blinded. Wow!!! God uses him to save a city! What a bold preacher! What an example of faith! What a man of prayer and fire. That's a hero in my book!! I know who I want to have the fire just like....it's Elisha....he's a hero of mine.

In my office, I keep a small picture of J. W. Tucker (some of you that have come by on Sunday mornings before service have seen it.) He's truly a silent hero of mine. He was a Pentecostal missionary to Africa who gave his life, much like that of Jim Elliot in South America. He continually reminds me of the ultimate cost some of us may have to make for our faith. His steady countenance strengthens me and his indirect yet penetrating stare compels me. I often think to myself, "What would he say if he were in this room?" We all have a way of following someone, and, if we do, then I want that someone to influence me to be more like the Ultimate Hero: Jesus Christ.

The Wycliffe Missions, that have done such a great job translating the Bible into so many foreign languages, did an ad years ago that was the most successful recruiting ad in their history. It's a picture of a strong young man who is wading through a swift moving jungle river. He's got a canteen by his side and sweat has filled his shirt. He's still got the remnants of dirt on his face. The caption said, "Jim was voted most likely to succeed; now look at him." And below that it has this paragraph: "It's too bad, Jim had it made.

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## THE LIONS OF LATER LIFE - Edition 2017-3

Brother Dwain Galiher

Junction Hill Pentecostal Church - West Plains, MO

Notice in Daniel 1 that Daniel was taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar; this took place in approximately 605 BC. We read about him purposing in his heart that he would not defile himself with the

king's meat and wine, about his promotion in the kingdom, about God using him to interpret dreams, and about some of the visions he received concerning Israel's future.

By the time Daniel was conspired against and put into the lion's den, he was NOT a YOUNG man anymore! Historians say that Babylon was overcome in 539 BC, so let's do a little math. If Daniel was 15 when taken captive in 605 BC, then he was 65 when the Medes and Persians took over the kingdom. The point is this — He faced the lions in later life.

We usually preach our strongest messages of warning to our young folks. We preach passionately about various ways the devil can get a foot hold in their lives and bring them to ruin. However, not all the lions we face in life come to us when we are young folks.

Daniel had already been faithful to the Lord for 50 years! He had received amazing prophetic visions. STILL, he faced these lions in later life.

Let me talk to you about some of the Lions of Later Life that people in the Bible faced. Some overcame them in victory, but sadly some were overcome by them.

**1) Lions of Carelessness** - Noah fits in this category, and this is my opinion. I don't believe that Noah deliberately became drunken and naked in his tent, although that is a possibility. I think the change of nature after the flood caused the wine to ferment when it had not done so before the flood. However, Noah certainly was at least a victim of carelessness. After being one of the heroes of the faith by finding grace in the eyes of God and by obeying God in the building an ark to the saving of his house, he became careless and allowed drunkenness to make him less of a man. What terrible repercussions come to those who are destroyed by the Lions of Carelessness in later life.

Hezekiah had been greatly blessed by God with peace for Israel and even with longer life! Then, when the king of Assyria sent diplomats, Hezekiah took them in like old friends and showed them all his kingdom. Such carelessness caused him terrible consequences, and he ended up giving the Assyrians all the treasures from the house of God and his own personal treasures as well.

**2) Lions of Tolerance** - Eli was a priest of God for Israel. He was in charge of worship in the tabernacle and responsible for the spiritual leadership of God's people, BUT when his sons were grown he faced the Lions of Tolerance. His sons did not follow God. Eli wanted them to be priests in the family tradition so much that he was willing to tolerate wrong behavior, sin, and wickedness in their lives rather than reprimand them.

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## ➤ ➤ ➤ Heroes - continued from page 18

Personality, initiative, a college degree with honors, success and the good life was his for the asking.

But now look at him: backpacking across some jungle river. Giving his life to a preliterate people barely out of the Stone Age, painstakingly creating a written alphabet from a previously unrecorded babel of sounds. Working night and day translating the pages of the New Testament, exposing the senselessness of superstition and ignorance, relieving pain and introducing the possibility of health, building a bridge of love and un-

derstanding to a neglected people—and to think, Jim could have been a success."

When they ran that add, they had more young people than ever sign up. Why?

Because they gave them something bigger than themselves and showed them what all true heroes show people; that success does not hold a candle to significance!

That's what real heroes do....they influence me to take the long look and remember that a life of significance keeps its focus on the Kingdom to come!

So let me ask again—who are your heroes? Are they Godly men (or women)? Is your assessment based on fame, skill, notoriety, talent, money or a host of other things that worldly heroes are brought to the forefront over? Or do men that pull down heaven and cast out hell still catch your attention?

For better or worse—we will slowly be etched into the characteristics of the silent heroes our hearts consider worthy enough to muse upon.



mand them and put them out of the priesthood.

How many good Christian people have you known who lived faithfully for the Lord from their teens, into their marriage, and through the years when their children were young only to face the Lions of Tolerance when their children became teens and began to exert their own will? Many faithful moms and dads begin to tolerate immodesty in their children, to tolerate their sons to growing their hair too long, to tolerate ungodly music in the home, to tolerate ungodly videos and movies, and to tolerate ungodly dating practices. Lions of Tolerance have destroyed numbers of faithful Christian marriages, homes, and families.

**3) Lions of Doubt** - Sarah was the wife of Abraham, the great man of faith. She had left her homeland to go with Abram to the land God had promised them and had seen the hand of God in their lives over the years. She knew that God had promised to bless them with a child; YET in her later life the Lions of Doubt attacked her. She decided she must take matters into her own hands. She gave Hagar to Abram to help God provide the promised son and heir, and you know the story from there — nothing but frustration and friction from then on.

John the Baptist was a mighty prophet of God, the fore-runner of the Messiah. His coming was prophesied in the OT, and his birth was miraculous. He declared that there was One coming after him who was greater than he; that he was not even worthy to unloose his shoes. He cried out on Jordan's banks, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world!" and was regarded as a prophet by the entire nation of Israel. THEN, in later life, he

was attacked by the Lions of Doubt — doubting what he had KNOWN to be true.

It is not uncommon for us to face the Lions of Doubt in later life. There are things that at one time were settled and sure, that NOW are unsettled and unsure. Now there is not just a shadow of doubt, but a cloud of doubt. Never doubt in the night what God told you in the light.

**4) Lions of Compromise** - Aaron was the high priest chosen by God himself. He served as Moses's assistant and witnessed the mighty power of God in delivering Israel from Egypt. STILL, when the people began to clamor about Moses's absence and wanted idols made for them to worship, Aaron gave in to the Lions of Compromise and formed the golden calf. What a tragic sin for a man in his later life who knew the glory and power of God.


**5) Lions of Covetousness** - Achan was a man with a wife, children, and extended family. He was a man who had experienced the mighty hand of God in bringing them through the wilderness, across the Jordan River, and into the promised land. God declared that they would live in great plenty but had decreed that the spoils of Jericho were accursed and that no one in Israel was to take any of the spoil for themselves. Achan took of the spoil when he knew it was wrong. He hid it in his tent but was found out by the Spirit of God, and his sin caused not only his own death but the deaths of all those in his family. How tragic to be destroyed by the Lions of Covetousness in later life! God has been faithful through those teenage years and through those young family years. Why allow the Lions of Covetousness to choke your spiritual life; to change your priorities; to domi-

nate your time and your life; to hinder your spiritual life, your walk with God, and even your Ministry!

I have preached to young people through the years about not allowing a job to keep them from God's house and God's work and about not getting in debt for new cars and trucks so that they cannot effectively live for or serve the Lord. NOW, oftentimes, it's we adults who should know better who are falling prey to the Lions of Covetousness.

**6) Lions of Lust and Immorality** - David was a real man of God who had been brought from being a shepherd to being the king in the palace. He already had wives that loved him, children that respected him, and a fulfilled life. HOWEVER, the Lions of Lust and Immorality are no respecter of persons. Why would David be so susceptible to lust? The only reason is because he was not really doing what he should have been doing at the time. He was at home idle when he should have been doing God's work as the king out leading the armies of Israel. When those Lions of Lust and Immorality attacked him, he went down in defeat. What a tragedy it was for him, for Bathsheba, for her husband, Uriah, for the baby that was conceived, and for David's other family members.

Older folks are certainly not immune to the Lions of Lust and Immorality. People who have been married for 20 or 30 years, and often times saved for just as long, are sometimes overcome by these lions. Technology has released the Lions of Lust and Immorality into the lives of older saints (who really do know better) through the internet, videos, YouTube, and through the smart phone (which is not so smart at times).

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## ►►► Lions - continued from page 20

You had better be on guard against the Lions of Lust and Immorality.

**7) Lions of Peer Pressure** - I know that sounds like something to preach to teens about, but what about a man later in life like Peter? Peter was not an impressionable teenager when he faced the Lions of Peer Pressure. When he was recognized as a disciple of Jesus, he felt tremendous pressure to deny it. Jesus was not popular at that moment, and disciples of Jesus were not popular right then either. There was a chance that he would also be taken by a mob, arrested, accuse, tried, and sentenced. SO, he gave in to the pressure and denied the Lord!

In later life we face tremendous pressure from co-workers, our families, folks in our social circle, even from other "Christians". We that are in our later life need to stand up for truth just as much as teens need to. We must stand for Jesus and stand for righteousness even if we stand alone.

**8) Lions of Rebellion** - Again, I hear you saying, "This one is for teens." I say we in later life are not immune to the attack of Lions of Rebellion and self-will.

Jonah was not a teenager when he deliberately rebelled against God's command to go to Nineveh. He did not want to go, and figured he was old enough to make his own decision. He was also old enough to realize that if he didn't repent, he was going to drown in the sea. Thank God he repented and got back on the right track.

Sadly, Uzziah rebelled in later life and never got his life back. He took it upon himself to offer incense before the altar of God. Even when the priests of God withstood him and tried to reason with him, he persisted in his rebellion and self-will. He left the temple and died as a leper isolated from the rest of the world.

I have been told by more than one older person who had been a faithful Christian but now was going off into sin and rebellion that they KNEW it was wrong! Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft for it opens up your life to satanic influence and demonic spirits.

Time and space fail to go into detail about others who faced lions in later life like:

- Miriam, who was overcome by Lions of Jealousy;
- Elijah, who suffered from the Lions of Depression;
- Isaac, who fell to Lions of Deception;
- David and Michal, whose marriage was destroyed by Lions of Disrespect and Ridicule.

Let me finish on a better note by reminding you of some

who faced lions but were not destroyed by them.

- Daniel, after all, faced lions in later life but was not destroyed by them. God gave him a great deliverance.
- Abraham faced the lions of a severe trial when he was commanded to offer up his only son Isaac. His obedience brought great blessing from God and provided a wonderful picture of the glorious salvation provided by God the Father and his willing Son Jesus.
- Samuel faced the lions of offense when he was set aside by the people of Israel after a lifetime of faithful service while they clamored for a king to be like the other nations around them. Still, he refused to become bitter and vowed that he would not cease to pray for them. It also seems that Samuel started the school of the prophets and provided its leadership after his "forced retirement" as the prophet and judge of Israel.
- Paul faced many lions in his later life: he lived without the companionship of a wife; was persecuted in city after city; suffered physically and emotionally; forsaken by close friends; abandoned by other ministers of the gospel; and slandered by people who were jealous of him. Still, he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. He wept, preached, taught, and ministered in the worst of conditions and wrote most of the NT.
- Job faced lions of affliction in later life, and even though he THOUGHT he was being punished by God, he still held true to his integrity and would not curse God. He endured the personal attacks of his friends and the misunderstanding of his wife and came out blessed by God with a double portion. John the Apostle faced lions in later life. He was terribly persecuted. Tradition says that authorities tried a number of times to execute him including by boiling him in oil! Finally, he was exiled to Isle of Patmos — that desolate, rocky island where pitiful prisoners labored in the rock quarries. Still, while there in life's worst circumstances he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day and received a startling vision of the Glorified Christ. He was given the majestic Revelation of Jesus Christ and his coming kingdom (which we are all still trying to figure out).

You and I do not have to be overcome by the lions we face in later life. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah is more than able to deliver us from Satan and his lions who roam about seeking whom they may devour.





## THE WORLD NEEDS WHAT IT HATES - Edition 2016-4

Brother Douglas Meadow  
Bristow Holiness Church - Bristow, OK

The very thing that the world says it hates is the very thing it needs. If you would listen to the media, the very church the world says it hates is the very church we need

to be. The world in which we live is becoming increasingly anti-Christ. It should come as no surprise because we are marching ever so closely to the arrival of the one whom the Bible describes as the son of perdition, the Anti-Christ. I marvel at what has become of this world. Christian values, Christian thoughts, Christian perspectives are becoming more and more foreign to our culture. As Bible believing, conservative Christians, we are becoming more and more alone in our day.

Large religious groups have embraced immorality. The majority of our day is completely anti-Christ. Our courts have advanced agendas which are anti-Christ. We've sanctioned a new definition of marriage which is anti-Christ. We have approved and funded the slaughter of babies and the sale of their body parts for profit which is anti-Christ. Then we wonder at the state of our country

I can explain it to you in one verse. Proverbs 14:34...*Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.* That's where we are. This world is anti-Christ.

This world hates our Christ; therefore, it should be no shock that they hate His Word, His principles, and His people. Christians and Christianity are under assault. We are the only religious group that you are allowed to speak evil of in this country. We have witnessed the horror in the middle east where ISIS has butchered Christians who do not convert to Islam. It's not just happening thousands of miles across the sea; it is now happening here in America.

High school cross country runner, John Green, was disqualified from a state championship meet because there was a Bible verse embroidered on his headband. A few months ago a crazed shooter walked into a college in Oregon and asked the students if they were Christians. If they said yes, they were executed. You can say it was an isolated instance, that it will never happen here, and I am not saying you're going to be confronted with a "deny Christ or be executed tomorrow" situation. However, I am saying that I am seeing things that I never dreamed I would see. The old time preachers

would tell us about things to come that I thought we would never see happen, but they are happening. All because this world hates Christ. And yet, this world that hates Christ needs Christ. This world that hates the church needs the church. This world that hates the Gospel has only one hope and that is the message of the Gospel. There is no hope for our world but Jesus!!

Romans 5:20...*But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.*

I know it's dark in America, and I know we are living in a messed up culture, but Christ is still the answer. There are people all around us that are desperate for an answer to their dilemma. I know they say they don't want anything to do with Christ. They took him out of schools, state buildings, the capitol, and even Washington D.C. Yet, while they say they hate him, while they curse His name, while they do things contrary to His Word, they still need Him!!

If the Muslims and ISIS are telling this world they need Allah, then we as Christians need to tell this world they need Christ. Tell the atheist, the agnostic, the Muslim, the bound, the bruised, the battered—you need what you hate. You need Christ!!!

This world needs to get a vision like Isaiah got. A vision of the Lord high and lifted up. A lot of people are turning their vision toward Washington, but Washington doesn't have the answers. They are turning their vision toward Politicians, but politicians don't have solutions. A lot of people put their trust in our economy, but the economy will let you down. Many people are getting sidetracked in these last days because they've got their eyes fixed on people or problems that's around them. The only way this world is going to get out of the mess that it's in is to get their vision fixed upon Someone who is higher than their problems.

It is vital in these least days that we stop looking at everything that's going on around us and start looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I understand that we can't live with our head in the sand and ignore the problems in our nation, but if you'll have a different attitude, a different outlook, and a different perspective, you've got to get your eyes on JESUS!!

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## ►►► **What the world needs** - continued from page 22

This world doesn't need casual church. It can't be business as usual. This world needs a Revival. We are in the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. When Jesus spoke of end time prophecy, the thing that He talked about over and over is deception. He would kept saying, "Be not deceived." One of the greatest sins in America today is the sin of spiritual deception. More people will be lost thinking they are saved. Jesus said that there are going to be many who say, Lord we did this, Lord we went here; and Jesus is going to answer, "Depart from me. I never knew you."

Why do people hate the church? Because it points out their sin. It would be better for people not to go to church than to go to a church that doesn't point out their sin. The Compromising Church deceives people that are lost into thinking that they are saved. They live any way they want, and they are deceived into thinking that they are still saved. Those are the hardest people to reach. However, when they are at the bottom, spending their paychecks on booze and drugs, losing everything they have worked for that week down at the casino, and their life is broken and twisted, they don't need somebody that will tell them that it's ok and that God understands their sins. They need somebody that will point them to Calvary. They need somebody that will tell them there is a way out. They need somebody that will tell them that there is a God that can deliver them. They don't need a pat on the back; they need a push to the altar. They need to know that there is power in the Blood. They need a preacher that will tell them the truth

The world hates that. This world hates to hear preaching about the Blood. They hate the message of repentance. They don't want to hear about the supernatural power of God that can drive the devil out of their life. They don't want to talk about the conviction and power of the Holy Ghost. That's exactly what they need though! They need a church that believes in the Blood and in the moving of the

Holy Ghost; a church that believes in divine healing; a church that believes that if you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart that Jesus died and rose from the dead you shall be saved. They may not want to hear it, but that's exactly what this world needs!!

They don't want to hear anything about the horrors of hell. They don't want to hear that there is a Judgment day coming, but that's what they need to hear!!

In these wicked last days when a lot of preachers and churches are presenting a watered down Gospel, I want to point people to the Power of God. I want to point them to the Power of the Gospel. I want to point them to the truth of His Word.



I want to have a church where truth is proclaimed and where Jesus is worshipped. I want to preach to every sinner that Jesus can take you out of sin, change your life, and make you a new Creature. I want to proclaim that the blood of Jesus can deliver you from not just one sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from

ALL sin.

Too many folks are playing church. They want a nice comfortable church to go to on Sundays so they can ease their conscience and make themselves feel good. They don't really want church—they just want to be entertained. That's not what they need. They don't need to just have just a good time, and they certainly don't need to just be entertained. They need to be changed! What the world needs is a church on fire, burning with the power of the Holy Ghost! They need to see Old Time Pentecost. I think we do our communities and cities a disservice when we are not the Pentecostal church that was described in the book of Acts. I want to challenge all who read this article—Let's be that church. The world may say they don't like it, but it's exactly what they need!





# OUR CONTRIBUTORS

