

Church of Christ

3361 West State Street, Fremont, OH 43420

Worship Services

Sunday Bible Study	10:00 am
Sunday Worship	10:45 am
Sunday Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 pm

Classes for all ages

Preachers: Ted Bowen and Sean Rizor

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

1. Learn the truth (Hear) (John 8:32; 17:17; Rom 10:14-18)
2. Believe in Christ (John 8:24; 20:31; Heb 11:6)
3. Repent of all sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; Rom 2:4; 2 Cor 7:9,10)
4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom 10:10; Acts 17:30; Matt 16:16)
5. Be baptized into Christ for remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)
6. Live faithfully (Revelation 2:10)

7 THINGS TO REMEMBER DURING THE LORD'S SUPPER!

- 1 LORD. "There is one Lord." (Ephesians 4:5)
- 2 THIEVES. "There were also 2 others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death."
(Luke 23:32)
- 3 CROSSES. (Luke 23:39-43; Ephesians 1:7)
- 4 PARTS of HIS GARMENTS. "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier, a part, and also the tunic." (John 19:23)
- 5 WOUNDS. His head was crowned with thorns. His back was scourged.
His side was cut open. His hands were pierced. His feet were pierced. (John 19-20)
- 6 HOURS of AGONY. Christ was crucified at the 3rd hour and died at the 9th hour.
(Mark 15:25-37)
- 7 SAYINGS of The CROSS. (Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:34, 43-46; John 19:26-30)

June 23, 2019

Order of Worship

AM

Song Leader : Melvin Monroe

Lord's Supper : Sean Rizor

Speaker : Ted Bowen

PM

Song Leader : Chris Frantz

Speaker : Sean Rizor

Wednesday

Song Leader : Greg Monroe

Invitation : Ted Bowen

Birthdays

- 18 Jessie Davis
- 18 Makayla Rizor

Anniversaries

- 20 Chris & Heidi Frantz

Prayer List

Kaitlin Baker
Russell Pannell
Gen Stanley
Nora Wiseman
Charlotte Williams
Mary Feasel
Nick Hall
Zephan Monroe
Isaac Advey
Jean Adkins
Sean Rizor
Jean Hatfield

Sitting Under an Oak

Joe R. Price

Anyone who has worked on a hot summer's day knows the value of an oak tree. The refreshment of its cool, shady respite invites all who have labored in the heat of the day. An escape from smothering heat, its towering branches provide calm relief from the sun's intensity. Slumber comes easily under the oak tree.

Sin and compromise can also come easily – and subtly – as we (figuratively) sit under an oak. The unnamed prophet of God learned this as he sat under an oak when he was returning from a mighty confrontation with Jeroboam, king of the northern tribes of Israel (1 Kings 13:1-10, 11-24). The prophet had boldly spoken the word of the Lord and exposed the sinful, idolatrous calf-worship instituted by Jeroboam in his effort to secure his throne (1 Kings 12:25-33).

The prophet announced God's judgment against Bethel's altar of idolatry; a child named Josiah would destroy it and those who had offered false worship upon it.

The prophet from Judah whom God sent to Bethel gave a confirming sign; the altar split apart and ashes poured out from it (1 Kings 13:3-5). Jeroboam's hand was miraculously withered when he tried to arrest the man, and it was mercifully restored when the man entreated the Lord on his behalf (1 Kings 13:4-6).

Even in the face of God's mercy, Jeroboam showed no signs of change. Instead, he offered the prophet refreshment and reward, which the prophet refused (1 Kings 13:7-8). His reason for refusal was clear: God had commanded him not to stay there, but to return home another way. He would not linger in Bethel and give his presence, his name and his influence to the evil purposes of that place and its king. "For so it was commanded me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'You shall not eat bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came'" (1 Kings 13:9). Having thus stated the Lord's will, he left Bethel and began his journey back to Judah another way (1 Kings 13:10).

Now, an old prophet learned about what the prophet had done in Bethel and what he had said to king Jeroboam (1 Kings 13:11-12). This old prophet had already compromised himself with Bethel's sin, seeing that he did not retreat to Judah when Jeroboam's idolatry was instituted as many others did (2 Chron. 11:13-17). We are not told why this old prophet pursued the man from Judah, but from the lies he told we cannot deduce righteous motives. Now was his opportunity to destroy the influence of this prophet from Judah or at the very least, to diminish the impact of the forceful denunciation of Bethel's sin he had spoken. And so, he pursued him and found him, "sitting under an oak" (1 Kings 13:14).

Ah, the rest the prophet from Judah must have needed! The trip had been long and the battle great, but victory had been won. But now, how comfortable was the shade of the oak and the rest its outstretched branches gave as the leaves broke the heat, offering rest following the conflict.

And who can blame him? If anyone deserved rest, he did. He had come through a great confrontation with error. He had stood alone against the sins of Bethel. By the grace of God, he had stood for truth against king Jeroboam, the very one who could have destroyed him.

And yet, it was in his time of rest that his greatest temptation of yielding to sin was to come. We must always be vigilant; our adversary is always stalking us. We must constantly resist him by remaining steadfast in the faith (1 Pet. 5:8-9).

Please consider with me that, if the unnamed prophet had continued on his journey home instead of stopping to rest along the way, the lying old prophet might never have reached him. The lie would have been left unspoken; the enticement of rest, refreshment, and fellowship with the compromiser left unheard and unanswered. But as it was, at the moment of rest after victory, the man of God believed a lie, compromised his influence, and lost his life in judgment for his sin (1 Kings 13:15-23).

Lessons from Sitting under an Oak

There are vitally important lessons to learn from this event that we must use to thoroughly examine ourselves and by doing so be careful not to sit under an oak when we should be active in the Lord's work.

1. Every man of God will be tempted to rest when there is work to be done. Every soldier longs for the day when the war ends. Every laborer anticipates the shade of the oak to escape, if even for a few moments, from the heat of the day. But the battle between truth and error has not ended. The warfare for souls rages around us. While we rejoice in every victory the Lord gives us, we must not stop fighting! No soldier in the Lord's army is above the temptation of being lulled into contentment or even complacency after a day of battle. Did the unnamed prophet, having once successfully resisted the temptation to stay in Bethel to be refreshed at the king's table and rewarded from the king's treasure, think that he would no longer be tempted? Did he think he could not be persuaded to compromise his faith and devotion to the Lord and His truth?

If so, he made a tragic mistake. Pride goes before destruction (Prov. 16:18). When anyone who has engaged the enemies of the faith and, by God's grace, seen truth stand victorious against error and sin thinks he is above temptation, the temptation has already begun (Luke 22:31-34).

We must remember the Lord's exhortation to work "while it is day" (John 9:4). Even when the day is hot and the task is difficult, we must work the works of God. There will be time enough to rest from our labors beyond this life (Rev. 14:13).

2. The victories of the past do not insure faithfulness in the present or in the future. If history teaches us anything it is that "once saved" does not mean "always saved." Unfortunately, God's own people can live as if we believe it is so (Gal. 5:7; Heb. 6:11-12). The word of God says, "For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end" (Heb. 3:14).

Some who stood against the encroachment of the missionary society would later sit under the oak and welcome the use of instrumental music into worship. Some who stood against the innovations of institutionalism would later sit under the oak and yield to the allurements of the social gospel. Others, who had fought valiantly and faithfully against institutional liberalism, would succumb to the deceptive invitation of the grace-fellowship movement, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness (Jude 3-4). Some once sound in the faith were turned; their influences for truth destroyed, and their souls lost in a deluge of compromise with denominational error.

Some who once stood solidly against the errors of liberalism, and paid a severe price for their conviction to truth would, in later years, believe the lie that we can have fellowship with brethren in spite of doctrinal disagreements. The battle over "the issues" had been fought. Now, sitting under the oak, perhaps other "issues" seemed less threatening. A new generation was coming on that had not fought those battles. Others failed to keep traveling home; they stopped under an oak. Rest from battle can be addicting; it is easier to sit under an oak than to lift the shield of faith and wield the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:13-17).

False teachings on marriage, divorce, and remarriage are among the errors that came to the forefront of the battle for truth and souls. The sincerity of the person and the clarity of the subject became markers used by some brethren to stake out positions of unity in doctrinal diversity. Romans 14 was offered as a reason why we should continue to use one with whom we have even doctrinal disagreement. It became noble and "positive" to continue to have fellowship with those who teach error on marriage, divorce and remarriage, while marking those who rebuked such error as "watchdogs" and "guardians of the orthodoxy." Such appellations were and are unholy epithets, unworthy of those who believe and know the truth.

Is something similar happening now to those who have stood firmly against unity in moral and doctrinal diversity? Have we found an oak tree under which to sit? Are we tired of fighting for the truth? Are we ready for another generation to take over the battle? Are we ready to go in and eat and drink with those who have compromised the truth in spite of there being no evidence they have repented and are now standing in the truth? I pray it is not so. Yet, we must not deceive ourselves. It is possible that we have found an oak tree to sit under instead of continuing our journey home. Instead of having no fellowship with sin, but rather even reproving it, are we ready to accept the invitation to come in and rest, eat, drink, and share together with those who have already compromised themselves with error and sin (Eph. 5:11; 2 John 10-11)?

Today, churches of Christ are having preachers hold gospel meetings in spite of the error they teach on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, on unity in moral and doctrinal diversity, on the days of Genesis 1, the A.D. 70 doctrine or any number of other topics. Sitting under an oak, some have rationalized that they can have fellowship with those who do not preach the whole counsel of God. This confidence does not come from the word of the truth of the gospel, but from the wisdom and will of men (Col. 1:5-6; 2:4, 8).

3. Be sure you are believing and following God's word instead of accepting and following the word of any man. The unnamed prophet believed a lie because he did not trust the truth that God had already commanded him. And, he did not examine the old prophet's words to see if they were true. There was no confirming sign to validate the old prophet's

assertion that an angel had spoken to him (1 Kings 13:18). In contrast, the man of Judah was given confirming signs to demonstrate the truth he spoke against Bethel (1 Kings 13:3-5). Yet now, when he needed to test the word spoken to him, he failed to do so.

We who have once examined the Scriptures to be sure what we have been taught is from God, must continue to do so (Acts 17:11). If there is no evidence from the word of God that “these things are so” we must not rely on any man’s word that they are, lest we are deceived by believing a lie because we have not loved the truth (2 Thess. 2:10-12).

4. Do not compromise with those who compromise the word of God. It would do the prophet from Judah no good to say, “I know what the truth is” and then proceed to violate it. The fact is, he compromised the truth of God, believed a lie, and had fellowship with error. God forthrightly condemned his action: “Thus says the Lord: ‘Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment which the Lord your God commanded you, but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the place of which the LORD said to you, “Eat no bread and drink no water,” your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers”’ (1 Kings 13:21-22).

We cannot expect God to be pleased with us if we sit under an oak and, by doing so, have fellowship with sin and error. There is no such area of fellowship defined in God’s word (2 Cor. 6:14-16; Eph. 5:11). God will not accept us agreeing to disagree over revealed truth (2 John 9-11). His command is to “come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch when is unclean, and I will receive you” (2 Cor. 6:17).

We must investigate a man and his teaching before inviting him to work with a congregation as the evangelist on a permanent basis. Does he preach the whole counsel of God, or is he conspicuously silent on issues where the voice of truth should be heard? He may be “great with the young people,” but is he great in the word of God (2 Tim. 4:2-5)? With whom do you wish to have fellowship--the Lord and His faithful servants, or those who appear to be with God, but whose teaching does not “hold fast the pattern of sound words” (2 Tim. 1:13)?

We must investigate a man and his teaching before inviting him to preach a gospel meeting or to speak in a lectureship. Does he preach the whole counsel of God, or is he conspicuously silent on issues where the voice of truth should be heard? He may have a wide reputation, be a great orator, and draw large crowds, but is he bringing the doctrine of Christ or destructive heresies (2 John 9-11; 2 Pet. 2:1)? With whom do you wish to have fellowship--the Lord and His faithful servants or those who appear to be with God but whose teaching does not “hold fast the pattern of sound words” (2 Tim. 1:13)?

The Lord Jesus expects us to “judge righteous judgment” and not by appearance (John 7:24). It is possible to “judge what is right” concerning the faithfulness of a man’s teachings (Luke 12:54-57). It is accomplished by using the word of God “in knowledge and all discernment” (Phil. 1:9-11).

5. Do not stop until your journey is completed. The prophet of Judah never made it home in part, because he decided to stop on the way and sit under an oak. We must not rest; the road home stretches out before us. New Jerusalem is on the horizon, but there are miles yet to travel. There will be obstacles on the road--hazards to our faith and trials to endure (Heb. 12:1). The way will be hot and tiresome, yet we travel it in diligent hope, because Christ has gone before us and shows us the way home (Heb. 12:2). “And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Heb. 6:11-12).

Conclusion

Brethren, do not linger; do not tarry. Do not be lulled into a false sense of security by past victories. Do not sit under an oak. Instead, each one of us must “watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong” (1 Cor. 16:13). Eternity is before us, where we may sit under the tree of life and there rest forever (Rev. 22:2). But not yet; when our journey is complete and we have overcome (Rev. 2:7; 2 Tim. 4:6-8).