

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

Church of Christ
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Living a Story

By Jake Shaffner

Everyday like it or not, we are living a story. Yes, it could be a boring story of running errands, reading a book, and taking naps, but nonetheless we are living a story. In no way is that a BAD story. What matters is if we can in good conscience sign our name on the story we are living every day.

Living a good story is far more important and better than any story we could ever read. I want to encourage you, whatever you want your story to be, jump into it head first. After Paul heard the voice of God and was baptized (Acts 9), he went out immediately and started doing God's work. Paul immersed himself in what he wanted and was called upon to do. He started living a brand new story. In Acts 16, Timothy, as a young teen, leaves home to go on a missionary journey with Paul. If I were put into Timothy's

position, I would have been terrified to leave home not knowing what to expect, but Timothy jumps right in and started living his new story.

In no way am I trying to state that it was easy for Paul to do a 180 degree turn and start working for the LORD. Nor am I stating that Timothy probably had no doubts about leaving his community to travel with a once known murderer. They each had to have their struggles, but those things didn't hinder them from living a good story. We should not be hindered either. James 2: 2-3 states "My brothers and sisters, consider it nothing but joy when you fall into all sorts of trials, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance." In essence, a good story always needs a twist, some sort of misdirection. The best part is that God will always find a way for us. He will always provide. I personally love the phrase "If a door closes, then a back window will open." We should count it as a joy that our

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story has a chance to become better for the future.

Our life is the most important story because it tells us where we are going to end up. If God finds our life and our story unsuitable, we will not be able to stay with Him in heaven. This week I want to encourage you to live the story God wants you to live.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: A big thanks to Jake for his good article. We encourage our members to submit articles for approval to appear in our bulletin).

The Nature of the church of Christ

By Forrest D. Moyer
(Article written in 1962)

The church that Jesus built is a divine institution. It is His bride bearing His name. The Lord's church is not dependent upon the schemes of man to carry forward her work. The Lord equipped her for every spiritual task giving her the armor, the food, and the perfect organization.

In the Lord's church there are no missionary societies, clubs, Greek letter societies, benevolent societies or other organizations. The

church needs no human attachments or "lean-to's."

The purpose of the church is not to entertain people. If it were, we should stop preaching the gospel and go into the world and entertain well.

The church was built that people might obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory (**2 Tim. 2:10**). It was purchased by divine blood (**Acts 20:28**). Christ is her head and is "over all things to the church" (**Eph. 1:22**). Christ is coming back to receive the church to Himself (**Eph. 5:27**).

The mission of the church is preaching the gospel to the nations of the earth (**Mark 16:15**). We have a living message for a dying world. This message brings salvation to the lost (**Rom. 1:16**), strength to the Christian (**Acts 20:32**), and heaven to the faithful.

If you would be saved, then obey the gospel and let God add you to the church (**Acts 2:41, 47**). If you would be stronger, receive the edification that comes by faithfully attending the services of the church. If you would go to heaven, you must be in the church and walk in the way that Jesus has prescribed.

This is our offer to you: "Come thou with us and we will

do thee good." We shall be more than willing to help you become a Christian and then strengthen you in the way to heaven.

Hope is to be Found in Christ

By Bill Hall

"I wish I could think that I have come just a short distance toward being as prepared as he was," a woman said to me recently concerning a man who had died. Her statement was intended to be an expression of confidence in the deceased, and I shared her confidence, but the truth is: if that lady is living a faithful life in Christ, she is fully as prepared as any other person in Christ.

Entrance into heaven will not be based upon a long list of credentials built up accumulatively through the years (so many new converts, so many passages memorized, so many lives influenced, so many years in the service of the Lord, so many sermons preached, etc.), the person's chances of going to heaven being enhanced with each new credential. Entrance into heaven will be based on the merit of Christ's blood. One

prepares for heaven by entering into Christ through faith, repentance, and baptism (**Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3**); living a faithful life in Christ; and dying in Christ. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord" (**Rev. 14:13**). This is the true basis for one's hope, whether he has been a faithful Christian for fifty years or is just rising from baptism in newness of life.

Now if the lady had said, "I wish I could think that I have come just a short distance toward being as Godlike as I believe he was," that would have been different. Here is the prevailing purpose of every Christian, to become more like God every day. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (**1 John 3:3**). Regular worship, liberal giving, unceasing prayer, concerned benevolence, unfeigned love of the brethren, self-control, etc.--all of which are commanded of God--are a means to the end of becoming like Him, or as stated by Jesus, "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (**Matt. 5:45**). One who ignores these commands shows his contempt for God, becomes unfaithful, ceases to be like God, and loses his hope of

heaven. On the other hand, one who does conscientiously obey the commands of God becomes more Godlike, and the person who has done so for fifty years will obviously have attained a greater degree of Godlikeness than one who has just begun the Christian life. But while we recognize different levels in attainment toward becoming like God, all who are faithful, and are thus purifying themselves as He is pure, share equally the hope of heaven. None has earned his way to heaven. All are dependent on God's grace, and His grace is extended to all the faithful.

Let not the young in the faith, then, be intimidated by the attainments of the more mature in the faith. Let not the mature become proud and overconfident. All must be faithful. All must be growing. All must become more and more like God. And all must die in the Lord. And to all who do so, the Lord will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Feb. 12th & 13th

You should have your calendars marked to attend the workshop

starting at 9:00 A.M. on the 12th. Dan Barker will be here to assist us in our efforts of personal evangelism. It will be a 3 hour session on the 12th. He will then speak at both services on the 13th.