

The Oak Grove Oracle

(Family News & Views of the Oak Grove Church of Christ)

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Guest Editorial: Do Not Be Afraid Of Being Old (Scripture: Psalm 71)

(Editor's Note: Coming up in early **August (5-8)**, brother **Mike Price**, from MS & LA will be here at **Oak Grove** to share with us a series of lessons on : "**What Jesus Taught.**" We are beginning **NOW** to dream, plan, work and pray for a great Gospel effort, which will stir this congregation up to be more evangelistic, in order to grow both spiritually and numerically for the glory of God! Start **TODAY** to make a list of relatives, friends, neighbors and associates, whom **YOU** can bring to meet Jesus {Jn. 1:40-42}. When your list is complete, begin to pray for those souls every single day between now and our Gospel Meeting, that you might be able to influence them to obey Jesus to the saving of their soul.)

"My mouth is filled with your praise, and with your glory all the day. Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent. O God, be not far from me; O my God, make haste to help me!" (Psalm 71:8, 9, 12).

Life can bring over the years joy, broken hearts, bitterness, success and failure. Satan can use a combination of these things to create fear in our lives and cheat us of our hope. Failed expectations are his biggest tool to defeat the heart and destroy hope and any faith we might possess. This can cause us to limp through the end of our lives and even move some to die inside before death takes the body.

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 1 Peter 5:8

Remember when we were children there were ghosts and monsters in our closets or maybe under our beds or in the woods just outside our window, especially at night. It is interesting how our imaginations can cause us to perceive things that are not real bringing fear into our lives. These imaginary things that people fear can begin to overpower or rule how they actually deal with the reality of each day.

Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. Matthew 6:34

Christians must not let things that might happen or will happen in the future take away from what today can bring. Today needs something from us as we live by faith giving ourselves to God. Uneasiness about the future can weaken our faith and leave us doubting or alone and confused. There is no need to let the fear of imagined difficulties or disasters cripple us or overpower the moment. Being afraid of what might happen can paralyze us and steal today from God's purpose and those who need us.

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Do Not Be Afraid... (Continued)

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Mt. 6:33

Here is the key to overcoming the fear of being useless, alone, without strength and motivation to continue. Jesus said, “seek first the kingdom and his righteousness.” Did you notice he said “HIS” kingdom and “HIS” righteousness, not our righteousness but “HIS”! That alone should relieve us of any doubt or fear.

***O God, from my youth you have taught me,
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.
So even to old age and gray hairs,
O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim
your might to another generation,
your power to all those to come. Ps. 71:17-18***

The Psalmist has expressed clearly what our mission in the latter part of our lives should be. It is to proclaim and declare the truth about God’s marvelous deeds accomplished in Jesus Christ at Calvary. Our task as mature Christians is to teach the next generation. We hold a unique perspective, because of the time spent on our journey with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as we held on to our faith.

We are to engage life as believers and not lie down, withdraw, retire or give up because we find ourselves tired and tested. Yes, our faith has been tested many times and that is why we must continue. It has been said that an old warrior will pick the right time to engage the enemy in battle and knows how to win. Many times a young warrior will be impatient and will prematurely charge the field and end up defeated due to a lack of maturity and understanding of the circumstances.

**Why should we not be afraid and continue in
our faith and hope?**

**You who have made me see many troubles
and calamities will revive me again;
from the depths of the earth
you will bring me up again.
You will increase my greatness
and comfort me again. Psalm 71:20-21**

Why Continue? So we can be in the resurrection when Jesus comes. This alone is all the reason we need to carry on in God’s work. We must not be afraid in this life or allow our imaginations to run wild with what might happen when we have been promised what will happen. As older Christians, we do not give up as we continue to declare the wonders of our God to the next generation.

But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls. Hebrews 10:39

HERE IS A SHORT PRAYER: Dear Father who art in heaven, who has delivered us by the offering of your son, Jesus Christ; please strengthen us in our faith and in our resolve to finish the battle. Help us to overcome the struggles in this life with the hope you have given us. Provide our hearts with the courage necessary to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and keep us faithful until death, in Jesus name. Amen!

A PARTING SCRIPTURE: *But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death...* Phil. 3:7-10

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