



THE INFORMER

Church of Christ ~ New Albany, Mississippi

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April 16, 2013

Hiding in the Cleft of the Rock

Mike King



On the Gettysburg battlefield, there are two round top hills with a rocky area between known as “Devil’s Den” It became a place of refuge during the fierce battle. Following the battle, many bodies were retrieved of soldiers seeking refuge “in the cleft of the rock.” What was hoped to be protection became a vault by which they were entrapped.

We have been promised refuge during times of threat and harm which cannot be penetrated by the most cunning enemy. David had found refuge in God’s protective custody many times about which he wrote with these words: *“I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies”* (Ps. 18:1-3). God’s glory is seen from the Rock as is expressed by the words of the old song, “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee”. I find comfort in the passage where God told His people of the Exodus that *“There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock”* (Ex. 23:21-23).

There is the story of a little bird that was being chased by a much larger bird of prey. The little bird flew to save its life, darting about while being pursued by the larger bird. The little bird quickly flew into a crevice in a rock face, inside the cleft in the rock. The larger bird gave up. The little bird had found shelter in the rock, out of reach from fearsome claws. Its life was saved. How like the little bird are we!

Keep in mind that *“He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty”* (Ps. 9:1). *“He will cover you with His pinions and under His wings you may seek refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark”* (Ps. 91:1).

The wonderful and warm embrace of our heavenly Father is a place of refuge and not a “Devil’s Den.” When we try to find comfort in the clutches of alcohol, drugs, sex, money or so many other cares of the world by which we are surrounded, they become a prison and not a refuge. We must take confidence and courage in knowing that our God is our protectorate and never a threat!

A Group Mentality

Likely, we have all eaten in restaurants that notify patrons that a certain gratuity will be added to large groups. I have to admit that down through the years I have not been a fan of the mandatory gratuity. Maybe, you have felt the same way.



Personally, I have not liked mandatory gratuities for two reasons. First, I have not liked them because I like to tip according to the service that I receive. Secondly, I have not liked them because I do not like to be told what to tip. Please understand that I am not cheap. They generally lose money when they employ this policy with me.

I suppose that the primary reason that I have not liked the mandatory gratuity policy is because I have been looking at it through the eyes of a patron rather than through the eyes of a waiter or waitress. The more that I think about it, the more I understand the policy. Before you stop reading, hear me out.

The mandatory gratuity is implemented by restaurants because there is a certain mentality that develops within groups. There is the tendency within groups not to do something because it is assumed that someone else within the group will do it. For example, in the situation before us, it is assumed that someone else will get the tip. However, no one does.

Spiritually speaking, we face the same problem that restaurants do. We face the problem of a group mentality. Members of a congregation often fail to do things because they assume that someone else will take care of it. For example, they assume that someone else will make the visit or send the card. They assume that someone else will conduct the Bible study, support the missionary, or teach the class. However, often times, no one does.

There is no disputing the fact that in the spiritual realm we need to correct the mindset that is described above. However, we can't fix it in the way that restaurants do. We can't enact a mandatory gratuity policy for members or worshippers. After all, what we do for the Lord must be done freely and from the heart (Ezra 3:5; Deut. 12:6; 2 Cor. 9:7). However, we can make people aware of the tendency that develops within groups and encourage them not to be guilty of it. We can stress the need for every person to do his or her part (Acts 11:29).

~ Wade Webster

YOUTH NEWS YOUTH NEWS

- Our young men did an excellent job conducting our evening worship services Sunday night. We are blessed to have such talented young people here at New Albany.
- Area Wide Youth Meeting will be April 21st, at Gloster St. Church of Christ.
- There will be a youth devo Sunday night April 28th following services. *Phil & Paige Young* will be hosting.

Gym Renovations Finished!

After just a couple weeks of hard work by several men of the congregation the improvements to the gym are finished. Thanks so much to *Troy Robertson, Bobby White, Harold Russell, Richard Jennings, Gary Turner, Jerry Gibson, Randy Wall, Phil Young, Mike King, Richard Adams* and others that we may not be aware of, for all their hard work. The gym looks great!

A Congregation Grows When.....

- Each member has a deep concern for the lost.
- Each member enters into the worship service with much feeling and enthusiasm.
- Each member is interested in an aggressive Bible School program.
- Each teacher is interested in improving his or her teaching ability.
- Each elder and deacon is dedicated to the work.
- Each member is personally involved in the work.
- Each member is willing to purpose and give as he or she has been prospered.
- Each member lets brotherly love express itself to every other member.
- Each member is willing to truthfully say, "Here am I Lord, send me."

via ~ The Chapman Challenger



PRAYER LIST

Sheila King will have gallbladder surgery Tuesday, April 16th, in Oxford.

Eleta Grimmett, is suffering from gout again.

Tauso Branch is improving and expects to be released from the hospital in the next day or two.

Continual Prayer :

Pat Reed, Margie Barkley, Linda Griggs, Wendell Cary, Melissa Reed, Darrell Crow, Marie Beard, Rivers Robertson, Noah Judd, Connie Phagan, Ruth Brown, Barry Yancey, Jennie Frohn, Randy Dunnam, Jack Dunlap, Diane Sloan, Rosie Wilson, Tauso Branch, Prebble Foster, Tony Cross, Norman Brown, Al Pless, Shane Crotts, Terry & Betty Young

Shut-Ins:

Jean Drummond, Billy Joe Garner, Teresa Clark

Nursing Home/Assisted Living:

Mattie Golden, Amy Vest, Laura Mae Harris, Louise Holcomb

Military List:

David & Barry Wilhite, Jimmie Stutts, Tiffany Erwin, Aaron Raines, Michelle Hamm, Raegan Cole, Derek Bradley, Jesse Stroud & Christopher Phagan



HAPPY BIRTHDAY



April 19..... Thomas Wall
April 19..... Harold Crowe
April 20..... Lynn Harrison
April 26..... Austin Garrett

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

April 20..... Bill & Nancy Frohn
April 28..... Larry & Linda Ashmore



PM FELLOWSHIP



Our third Sunday night fellowship will be held April 21st, following our evening services. You are asked to bring finger foods and deserts. The adult I class will be in charge of set-up and clean-up of the fellowship building. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

THANK YOU NOTES

Thank you all for the payers, cards, and kindness during my recent surgery. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated. Please continue to keep me in your prayers.

Love,
Melissa Reed & family

Words cannot express the appreciation for all the things you have done and are continually doing for us. It is wonderful to be part of a loving and caring church family.

Love,
Joe & Pat Reed

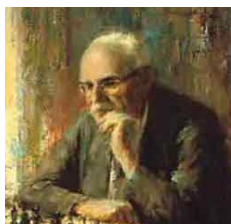
NEW HAVEN FUNDRAISER

New Haven School in New Albany is having its annual **Night Out for New Haven** fundraiser Fri. April 19, at 7:30pm, at the Magnolia Civic Center. Tickets are \$10. Check the bulletin board for more details or contact *Collett Cross @ 316-0808*.

God is like:

DELTA

He's ready when you are.



AREA EVENTS

- **Hwy 178 Annual Ladies Day** April 20th with guest speaker *Rhonda Jones*. Registration 8:30-9:15 with the program beginning at 9:30. Lunch will be served following the program.
- **Six State Singing ~ Church of Christ at Southwind** in Memphis, TN, Saturday, April 20th from 3:00-6:00pm. Check the bulletin board for details.
- **Gospel Meeting** at the **Oak Ridge Church of Christ** in Baldwyn, MS, April 21-24. The guest speaker will be *Darrell Beard*. Mon.-Wed. @ 7pm.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday School.....9:30
 Morning Worship.....10:30
 Evening Worship.....6:00
 Wednesday Bible Study....7:00

MINISTER

Mike King..... 507-0625
 Home 534-6872
 Office..... 534-4649

ELDERS

Richard Jennings534-6671
 Troy Robertson534-3491

DEACONS

Greg Clayton..... 252-9762
 Roger Clayton..... 538-8195
 Harold Russell 534-4648
 Randy Wall 316-9255
 Lonnie Weaver..... 801-8448

TO SERVE

Scripture.....Matt Jennings
 A.M. Prayer.....Greg Clayton
 Closing Prayer....Harold Crowe
 P.M. Prayer.....Jerry Gibson
 Closing.....Jason Jennings
 Wed 4/24..... Anderson Parks
 Wed.4/24.... Jason McCullough
 Usher & Lock... Harold Russell
 Greeter..... G & K Clayton

OUR RECORD

Sunday School..... 131
 Sunday A.M.....146
 Sunday P.M109
 Wednesday.....109
 Contribution.....\$3,689.00
 Budget.....\$3,817.55



PANTRY ITEM

Crackers

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Make Friends, Not Enemies

By: Neil Richey

I have the portrait of three past Presidents hanging in my home office. One of the portraits is of President Abraham Lincoln. I've always been fascinated by him.

This morning I ran across an exchange between the former President and one questioning him about his expressions of kindness toward his enemies.

"Mr. President. I cannot understand you. You treat your enemies with such kindness. It seems that you should want to destroy them." To which the President replied, "I destroy my enemy when I make him my friend."

Now, I'm quite sure the President was not naive enough to think that every enemy could become a friend, but he sure was going to try to make them so.

The Bible teaches that as much as we possibly can, be at peace with all men (Rm. 12:18). Now, for some folks, peace will never be realized. Yet, we have to try.

Here's something else the Bible says, "*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you*" (Mt. 5:44).

Boy, that's hard. And yet, the more we love and pray for our enemies the fewer enemies we will have.

Try to make more friends today, and fewer enemies.