

# Pleasant View Proclaimer

**Pleasant View church of Christ**

## Spiritual Direction

**October 25, 2015**

**Issue 235**

The story of Jonah is a familiar one to Bible students. We learn of Jonah's rebellion, Ninevah's repentance, and God's unfathomable grace. But we also learn about spiritual direction. Notice in the text how Jonah's life spiraled downward once he set his mind against God's will. He went down to Joppa, down into the ship, down into the sea, down into the belly of the great fish, and down into the depths of the sea. Physically and spiritually, Jonah could not have been lower. And Jonah knew it: "I cried for help from the depth of Sheol"; "Water encompassed me to the point of death"; and "I descended to the roots of the moun-

tains" (2:2, 5-6). So Jonah turned to God, and God raised him up: "But You have brought my life up from the pit, O Lord my God...Salvation is from the Lord" (2:6,9).

Man is constantly trying to raise himself up, to no avail. He tries to raise his social stature, his bank account, and his popularity by using all of the worldly schemes, but he is left wanting. When he first seeks the kingdom of God and His righteousness, he finds great contentment.

Jesus' half-brother wrote, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble...Draw near to God and He will draw near

to you...Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you" (James 4:6,8,10).

When confronted with God's commands, our first instinct is often to take the path of least resistance, the path of compromise, or the path blatant rebellion. All three paths lead downward, far further than Jonah went: All three paths lead to hell. And once man finds himself there, there is no path to relief. He cannot be lifted up.

"Fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person" (Eccl. 12:13).

James Hayes

### Items of Note:

- Sympathy is extended to Kristine Garrett on the loss of her father, Bill Johnson. Visitation is Tuesday 2-4 and 6-8. The funeral is at 11 on Wednesday, with visitation beginning at 10. All services will be at the Austin & Bell funeral home in Pleasant View.
- We'll eat together Saturday at 4. Trunk or Treat at 5.
- Bring clean coats with hangers for coat drive on put them on pew in back.

## We'll Take Goodie Bags To Hillcrest Residents In December Sign Up On Back Wall To Bring Supplies

THOSE WHO WILL SERVE THE CONGREGATION

Sunday School

Read: J. Buchanan

Pray: Hovis

Morning Worship

Wait on the Table: Reed

Serve: E. Simpkins, Brown, Billingsley

Pray: JL Shelton

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Pleasant View church of Christ  
2500 Highway 49 East  
P.O. Box 189  
Pleasant View, TN 37146

Sunday School: 9:30  
A.M. Worship: 10:30  
P.M. Worship: 6:00  
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 pm  
Phone: 924-9714

Galatians 5:1

“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.”

*“A blank piece of paper is God’s way of telling us how hard it is to be God.”*

*Sidney Sheldon*

*“I would rather be what God chose to make me than the most glorious creature that I could think of; for to have been thought about, born in God’s thought, and then made by God, is the dearest, grandest and most precious thing in all mankind.”*

*George MacDonald*

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## Misguided Praise

Picture a town surrounded by hills. On the top of one hill is a large reservoir that supplies clean water to the town below. In order for the water to reach the sinks, bathtubs, and dishwashers in the town, an engineer had to design the intricate plumbing system. Construction workers labored for months to build the system to exact specifications. Special pipes were used to be sure that the water was not contaminated on its way to the town. Lots of blood, sweat, and tears were invested just so the town could have life-sustaining water.

Now imagine if the engineers, construction crews, and the pipes themselves were the object of worship in

the town. What if once a week the citizens assembled to praise the men who did the work to bring the water into the town? Would that seem strange? Of course it would. The people should be primarily thankful for the water itself, not everything surrounding the water.

Christians have a tendency to act the same way on Sunday mornings. The center of our praise should be on God, His Son, and His Spirit. But some Christians focus their attention on the preacher, the song leader, the order of worship, or the cute baby in front of them. Others worship the worship service itself. They love the way worship makes them feel. Worship is weekly emo-

tional therapy for them. That’s why many churches have begun using choirs, bands, soloists, etc.—anything to lift the spirits of the crowd. Disgruntled members are encouraged to display their talents on stage (regardless of biblical restrictions), believing the theory that worship is an exercise in talent demonstration. Worship in some places has become a miniature version of The Voice or American Idol.

The audience in worship is not the people in the pews; it’s God. When churches understand that fact, their worship will focus on God, not the people or the things in the room.

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