

# From Faith to Faith

Granbury Street Church of Christ

## Staying in the Fight

Kevin W. Rhodes

The death of any man ought to provoke sadness and tears—even if a Christian's death can also bring thoughts of eternal joy. But when someone's life ends while alienated from the only One who can save and the One by whom he will be judged, that loss cannot receive enough tears, though the person himself chose his own fate. The entertainment industry regularly provides examples of just such an end—talented actors and musicians enjoying all the wealth and notoriety that stardom offers simultaneously caught up in the world of illegal drugs or so overwhelmed by the pressures that life itself becomes surreal. They seek an escape—sometimes temporarily and sometimes permanently—from the life that others admire and long to live. They wanted the fame, the adulation, and the attention, but somehow it never fulfilled them. And so they turned to something else—artificial emotion or selfish despair. Such describes the life and the death of King Saul—a man of humble origins, great potential, and self-destructive flaws. While 1 Samuel contains a narration of Saul's rise to power, early mistakes, obsession with glory and power, and finally his passing, the book of 1 Chronicles, written after the Babylonian captivity, mentions only his sad demise. Retreating from the onslaught of the Philistines, the hopes of a dynasty came to a crushing end as three of Saul's sons died and he himself was wounded in battle. But what followed highlighted the tragic decline of Saul's character. "Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, 'Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and abuse me.' But his armor-bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died" (1 Chr. 10:4-5). The proud king, afraid and almost alone, at the end of his life thought only of himself and never of his God. Feeling despair, he took his own life, and one who had followed and honored him followed suit.

Most people will never have fame and fortune. Many will never know the bravery required to stand in battle against a deadly foe. But plenty of people have had to face unexpected challenges in life. An untold number of people have fought temptation, depression, and despair by turning to God and trusting Him. A growing company of the faithful have learned to endure in the face of tragedy, fight back against adversity, and survive with faith intact despite the attacks of stress and depression. These deserve our admiration, our honor, and our love. They must address daily trials, both without and within, to make it through the day, but they never stop fighting. They do not give up on this life because they are too busy preparing for eternal life. May we rise to support them, and may they continue to have strength as they support us.

### Shepherds

Sid Carruth  
Kenneth Helm  
Clark Lehtinen

### Deacons

Gary Barger  
Jeff Day  
Vince Grinnell  
Justin Hewlett  
Bill Hughes  
Tim Norman

### Preacher

Kevin Rhodes

### Sunday

*Bible Study*  
9:00 am

*AM Worship*  
10:00 am

*PM Worship*  
5:00 pm

### Wednesday

*Ladies Class*  
10:00 am

*Bible Study*  
7:00 pm

Cleburne, Texas

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# Inherent Obedience - Part One

Kevin W. Rhodes

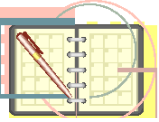
Some religious people act as if submission to God and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ were some strange concept that somehow undermines the beauty of God's grace or the meaning of sincere faith. To the contrary, true obedience exists only in response to God's grace and as the expression of sincere faith, but this does not mean that obedience somehow becomes irrelevant, nor does it exist solely for symbolism and show—far from it. Obedience is inherent in discipleship. Indeed, discipleship does not exist without it. Even the prophets foretold of this foundational principle. Shortly before Jacob's death, he prophesied of the future of each son's family. Beginning with Reuben the oldest and continuing to Benjamin the youngest, by inspiration he explained the role each would have in the nation that would arise from their descendants. To Judah he promised the royal line, fulfilled beginning with David, but the midst of this promise he says something more far-reaching. "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people" (Gen. 49:10). Looking unto the Messiah, the descendant of David to whom the scepter truly belongs, Jacob announced that obedience would be characteristic of the people. This does not predict some other-worldly or post-worldly kingdom but the reign of the risen Messiah characterized by the obedience of His followers. In another prophetic passage promising the reign of the Messiah, this time placing its beginning after the fall of Babylon, Persia, and Greece and during the time of the Roman Empire, Daniel said, "Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Dan. 7:27).

How sad that some would attempt to push this time of service and obedience off to the future instead of recognizing it as the proper expectation of the King of Kings. Therefore, the question for anyone desiring to sit at the feet of Jesus as a disciple does not concern whether or not he will obey but rather how.

When King Hezekiah called for a restoration of the keeping of the Passover, the people of Judah had a choice not simply whether to do as the king required but also, once they determined to obey, how much effort to give. In this case, they responded in exemplary fashion. For "the hand of God was on Judah to give them singleness of heart to obey the command of the king and the leaders, at the word of the LORD" (2 Chr 30:12). Such behavior well describes the heart of a disciple, obeying Jesus with complete devotion and focus that all options besides God's will might as well not exist. A disciple obeys the LORD as if there is nothing else to do.

More than that, a disciple does not obey selectively but obeys all that the LORD has commanded. Indeed the LORD always expected this from his people. As He reminded Judah through the prophet Jeremiah, obedience produced the bond that made them truly His people (Jer. 11:4). Abraham himself obeyed the LORD even when given limited information about what God required of him (Heb. 11:8). Thus, a disciple's pledge of obedience does not stem from some approving examination of all that the LORD sets forth but from a trust that the LORD always knows best. The gospel does not consist of a series of amendments waiting on our personal ratification. It stands as a whole—to accept the blessings of salvation and the responsibilities of discipleship or reject them, but any attempt at finding some middle ground understands neither the call of discipleship nor the Master who gave it.

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# News and Notes

## **Among our sick**

- Jamie Burris, Krista Lehtinen's brother, has an elevated white blood cell count and a growing mass in his chest but is having to wait for an ultrasound machine to become available. He is in Canada.
- Mary Fogarty has been in the local hospital.
- R. B. Kirby, Don's brother, has been diagnosed with cancer of the colon and stomach. Please keep him in your prayers.
- Kidron Lehtinen had an MRI on Wednesday.
- Helen Threadgill had outpatient surgery on her knee Wednesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> at Baylor All Saints in Fort Worth.
- Paul Wilkinson will have more tests. Please keep him in your prayers.

## *Sympathy*

- We extend our sympathy to John and Carol McGilvray in the passing of Carol's cousin, Louis Nabors.
- We extend our sympathy to Caleb and Sharon Owens and family in the passing of Sharon's father, Stanley Westbrook.

## *Baptisms*

We rejoice that Wesley Hackler and Conner Hackler were immersed into Christ Sunday morning. We are so proud of their decision to follow Christ. May God bless them and their faithful parents, Jason and Amy. Please keep their family in your prayers.

## *New Member*

Kevin Hackler placed membership Sunday evening. He also asked for prayers for him to be stronger. He and his wife Shelley live at 1217 Hemphill Drive; Cleburne, 76033. Please keep them both in your prayers. Welcome to our family!

## **Please Note**

- Family Day will be on Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, in the annex. Ezra 8 will be the topic of study. Please see Darla Grinnell about lunch plans.
- There is still time to get your recipes to Jeri Allen for the cookbook.

## Those who Serve Lords' Supper: 2/16

### Front South

Doug Jones  
Daniel Hughes  
Bill Hughes

### Back South

Kenneth Helm  
Patrick Kaiser  
Jim Hudgins

### Front North

Perry Elkins  
Joshua Haynes  
Jason Hackler

### Back North

Cody Grinnell  
Justin Hewlett  
Royce Gorman

## Leading prayers:

Sunday AM

Ryan Cowan  
Andrew Collins

Sunday PM

Gary Barger  
Cody Grinnell

Wednesday PM

Luke Norman

## Announcements:

Sunday AM-PM:

Tim Norman

Wednesday

Tim Norman

## Song leaders:

Sunday AM

Jeff Day

Sunday PM

Jeff Day

Wednesday PM

Russ Jones

## Foyer Personnel:

Sunday & Wednesday

Wayne Gentry

## Collection Counting

Paul Murphy / Jeff Day / Kyle Day

## Wed. PM Devotional (2/19)

Clark Lehtinen



## Sermons for Sunday

AM

Reaping the Whirlwind  
Hosea 8:1-14

PM

Filling the Earth (But with What?)  
Genesis 9:28-10:32



## Listen to the Gospel!

### Luis and Mike in the Mornings

(Monday - Friday) from 7:00 am - 9:00 am cst on  
[KnowTheTruthRadio.org](http://KnowTheTruthRadio.org)

### Biblical Foundations with Pat McIntosh

(Tuesday - Thursday) 7:00 am or 11:00 am  
[btradio.net](http://btradio.net)



## Our Records

Bible Class .....	137
AM Worship.....	220
PM Worship .....	152
Wednesday Bible Class 2/9.....	130
Contribution .....	\$6,041

## Granbury Street Church of Christ

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