

The Oologah Informer

June 1st , 2014

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Service Times

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

The Sermon on the Mount
Lesson 10 (Mt 6:25-34)

PM Sermon:

The power of the Lord
(Eph 6:10-12)

Sunday AM Bible Class:

The Book of Joshua – D. Jackson

Wednesday Bible Class:

Judging - Swearingen

In SEARCH of the Lord's Way

Tulsa KWHB TV 47
Sunday mornings at 7:30am

How's your back?

Brett Petrillo

A preacher was in the middle of his sermon when he turned the focus to Simon of Cyrene, the man who carried the cross of Jesus (Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26). He challenged the congregation to put themselves at the scene and think about how they would have reacted. Before long a nine-year-old boy came walking up the aisle. The preacher stopped and the auditorium fell silent. This boy came from a troubled family. His father was a miner and his mother was an outcast.

The boy spoke up and said, "You asked what I would have done if I had been in the crowd when Jesus fell under the weight of His cross." He looked earnestly up at the preacher. "Sir, I would have helped Him carry it." The preacher reasoned, "Yes, but if you had helped Him carry His cross, the cruel Roman soldiers would have ruthlessly beaten you across your back." Unshaken, the boy replied, "I don't care. I would have helped Him carry it just the same."

A few weeks later the preacher was standing near the door at the end of services. As the boy was passing by the preacher affectionately patted him on the back. The boy painfully pulled away and said, "Please don't do that. My back is sore." Having barely touched the boy, the preacher took him over to the side to figure out what was wrong. As the boy lifted his shirt, he revealed several large crisscrossed welts. The preacher cringed in anger, "Who did this?" The boy responded, "My mother did. She whipped me because I came to church" (Illustration by Travis Brown).

Even at such a young age, this boy showed genuine dedication. Despite taking a beating from his mother, the brave nine-year-old chose to put the Lord first, even above his parents. Had he been there the day Jesus carried his cross, certainly this young boy would have kept his word and run out to help Christ carry His cross.

This boy was willing to take beating just to be able to come worship the Lord. He was willing to put up with a sore back to come to church. So how's our back feeling right about now? Some Christians aren't willing to put up with some traffic or a little bit of bad weather to make it to the assembly, much less a back lashing. Some Christians skip out on worship just if something good is on TV. Sometimes we put the weakest excuses and the most trivial items in front of our relationship with God.

Matthew 10:37-38 says, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me."

The message from this Scripture is bold and clear: the Lord must come first in our lives above everyone and everything. Thankfully, today we are rarely tested with physical violence, but every day we are tested by freedom. We get to choose how dedicated we will be. However, one day we might literally have to face physical violence as Christians. One day we might actually have to deal with a sore back for the sake of Christ. Would we take it? What would our backs look like? Whether in freedom or in pain, what are we willing to endure for the cross of Christ?