

ISSUE

19.4

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

January 22,
2017

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter

Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Steve Dixon

Ryan Ferguson

Arend Gressley

Ben Hight

Blake McAlister

Brady McAlister

Walker McAnear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Rusty Scott

Justin Smiley

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope



“Not Now”

By Kyle Pope

The fifth-century theologian Augustine, in his famous work entitled *Confessions* described his own attitude as a young man. He candidly admitted that once he had prayed to God, “Give me purity of body and self-control—but not now” (8.7, Pope). Few may bare their souls as openly as Augustine, but I wonder how many may have the same attitude though it remains unspoken.

We want to be the kind of person Scripture teaches we should be. We want to be one who “**does not stumble in word,**” but in self-control is able to “bridle the whole body” (Jas. 3:2). One day we want to see ourselves as one who is “pure in heart” (Matt. 5:8), that our “**whole spirit, soul, and body**”



might **“be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (1 Thess. 5:23, NKJV). But then we look at the world around us. Like the Psalmist we “become envious of workers of iniquity” (Psa. 37:1) or **“envious of the boastful”** when we see **“the prosperity of the wicked”** (Psa. 73:3). Like the wise man we become **“envious of evil men”** and **“desire to be with them”** (Prov. 24:1). Or we forget that rebellion against God offers only “the passing pleasures of sin” (Heb.

11:25)—it will not last. **“For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it”** (1 John 2:16-17a).

So like Augustine we envision a time when we will be what God would have us to be, but we tell ourselves, “I’m not quite ready!” Perhaps we assume, like Felix one day we will have, “a convenient time” (Acts 24:25), but convenience is an illusion. For everything we ought to do there are always distractions and other responsibilities that could keep us from acting. It is only when we decide to do what we should in spite of these hindrances that we consider something *convenient*. Perhaps we delay because we imagine one day the temptations that draw us to the world will lose their hold on us. But that’s like imagining the bug will be drawn less to the light of the “bug zapper” if it flies just a little longer! Solomon said, **“The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing”** (Ecc. 1:8).

Temptations that control us today won’t leave us if we continue in them tomorrow.

Some delay because they aren’t ready to turn away from sin. They want to “sew their wild oats” while they are young—“There will be time to turn from sin when I am older,” they say to themselves. The preacher of Ecclesiastes taught to, **“Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, ‘I have**





no pleasure in them” (Ecc. 12:1). Youth is wasted in sin, not preserved. The young person who surrenders innocence to a life of sin quickly becomes an older man or woman hardened to sin. They become **“past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness”** (Eph. 4:19) with a “conscience seared with a hot iron” (1 Tim. 4:2). Peter tells souls who would truly turn from sin we have **“spent enough of our past lifetime”** in such wickedness (1 Pet. 4:3).

Jesus taught that those who would follow Him should “count the cost” and recognize what being a disciple truly demands (Luke 14:28-33). Some may say “not now,” because they fear they have not truly committed to follow Christ. Doubts may fill their minds. Is there really a God? Is being a Christian really worth it? We must resolve our doubts if we are truly to follow Christ. It may be our bond to family and friends that holds us firmly to the world. If I obey

the gospel am I condemning my unbelieving family? Do I have the courage to stand alone? Jesus taught in the same passage, **“whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple”** (Luke 14:33). Following Christ is a serious commitment. It will demand sacrifice. It may compromise relationships with family and friends, but delay won’t take any of this away—it only makes our ultimate choices even more difficult.

The most serious problem with Augustine’s fool-



ish prayer was the assumption it made. Like many young people, he assumed he still had time to be able to change. Do any of us have that assurance? Jesus warned of the foolish builder who was not “rich toward God”—he assumed he had, “many goods laid up for many years” and could take his “ease; eat,

drink, and be merry.” Little did he know the night he spoke he would die (Luke 12:6-21). Could it be true of you, as it was of this man, “**This night your soul will be required of you**”?

Recently the employer of one of our members began his workday just like any other day. In the blink of an eye, an automobile accident took his life with no warning. It is not being an alarmist to recognize that could happen to any one of us. Are we ready? If you have allowed yourself to delay obeying the gospel thinking, “one day, but not now!”—If you have obeyed the gospel, but are not growing in Christ in faithful service to God saying, “I will, but not now!” Delay no longer. There is no better time than now. Heed the words of Paul, “**Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation**” (2 Cor. 6:2b).



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Welcome Visitors

**We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.**

● Let us know if you have any questions.