



he wanted to be. We make it our ambition, Paul said, to please the Lord. Wayland, too, is with the Lord, whom he loved and adored.

Jump Start #1996b (Dec. 14, 2017)

Comfort comes from a God who loves. May friends, family, and dear family help at this difficult time. May the church get stronger because of this. May we think more seriously about what is truly important. May we touch lives and make a difference. May we realize the value of leaving spiritual legacies.

Stephen was buried, but we know that he's with the Lord. He's where

Faithful Sayings Issue 19.51 December 17, 2017

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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.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Wayland Melton was an elder for the Decker Prairie church of Christ in Magnolia, Texas (a suburb of Houston). Last month I had the privilege of preaching a gospel meeting for these brethren. During my time there I shared many meals with brother Melton and came to love his encouraging spirit and enthusiasm for serving the Lord. Roger's article does an excellent job of calling us to appreciate bro. Melton's life and learn some lessons from his untimely death.

~ Kyle Pope

ISSUE

19.51

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

December 17
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



"His Name Was Wayland..."

By Roger Shouse

"And some devout men buried Stephen, and made loud lamentation over him" (Acts 8:2)

His name was Wayland. I never got the chance to meet him on this side of life. He was a good, faithful and godly. He served with honor as a shepherd for a church in Texas. Those that knew him, loved him. He was one of the good ones. He was leaving the church building Monday, having spent some time with the other two shepherds, discussing the growing church that he helped lead. His truck was T-boned by a drunk. Wayland never made it. The other driver ended up in the yard of the church building. A family lost a husband and a dad, right before the holidays. A church lost an amazing leader. A believer went home to the God he loved and we are left wondering why. Why did the drunk live and the righteous one die? None of this is good, fair nor right. Anger fills the heart, as tears flood



our eyes. Even though I never knew him, I knew of him. His name was spoken to me by preachers that loved him. His kind I have seen. Compassionate. Focused. Dedicated. Good to the core.

There are lessons we draw from this. Our verse today, following the death of Stephen, one of God's preachers, is full of parallels. Why did God allow Stephen to die? Why did he have to die that way? Why were those evil Jews allowed to execute a good man? Why are the good ones taken?



In the next few days, devout men will bury Wayland. There will be tears. No one expected this. No one could have seen this coming. It will be hard on many families. It will be hard on a congregation of believers.

First, God always reminds us to be prepared. Death doesn't wait for us to be ready. Death doesn't care how close we are to anniversaries or holidays. Death doesn't care what our passing will do to families or the church. Death doesn't care. We are just a vapor, James tells us. It is appointed unto man to die once, Hebrews tells us. We all would like to live to 95 and be surrounded by generations of family as we make our exit here. It doesn't always happen that way. It wasn't that way for Stephen. It wasn't that way for Wayland. It's not so much how we die, but rather, how we have lived that matters.

Second, poor choices too often hurt good and innocent people. Someone chose to get drunk. He decided to drive. Those wrong, sinful, and stupid choices resulted in the death of a godly man. Innocent children suffer when a mom and dad get a divorce. Wrong choices hurt. They often hurt the innocent. This is not Heaven and it never will be. Our hope is for the world in which there will never be wrong choices. Our hope is in a Savior that saves.

Third, will society ever realize that the nation is a bunch of drunks? We cannot do anything without alcohol. It's a problem, a real problem that no one will touch. A person can't go to the ball game without a drink. A concert, and there is drinking. A symphony, and there is booze. Weddings, booze. Now, funeral homes in my area are

getting liquor licenses. Why? Can't we even have a funeral without drinking? Has drinking done any good for this country? And, more and more, brethren are saying ignorantly, "There's nothing wrong with social drinking?" The man who killed Wayland would not have done that had he not been drinking. One drink leads to the next. The TV ads declare, "Drink responsibly." That's like saying, "Curse nicely." Those words do not fit together. To drink is to be irresponsible. It is to be thoughtless to others. It is selfish. And now, because of someone's drinking, a good man has left us.

Fourth, as we know and as we believe, death isn't the end. There is no "The End" to our story. Wayland rests safely in the arms of Jesus. His journey here is finished, but he leaves footprints and a legacy of goodness and service. How wrong and how tragic all of this would be if that was it. It's not it. Our journey takes us to the Lord. Two lives intersected last Monday. Both filled with choices. One, chose to walk with the Lord. Forgiven, his character was shaped by the Savior. The other, chose to ignore Jesus. He lived to self. A cross, an empty tomb, the testimony of witnesses, that's all that was needed to fill our hearts with hope and love. The angels carried Lazarus. I expect that the angels carried Stephen. And, I expect that angels carried Wayland.

Fifth, as hard as it is, forgiveness is the banner which we must stand under. As we have been forgiven so we must. Our hope and our desire is for the salvation of the man who drove drunk. We hope he chang-

es. We hope he is baptized. We hope his voice is used to turn family and friends to Jesus. We hope good comes from this enormous tragedy. We hope that this man becomes an obedient worshipper of God. For him to continue on his sinful ways only makes this even worse. What good is adversity if nothing is gained or learned from it?

Sixth, it is our hope that others who know of this tragic story, will look into their own lives. Are each of us ready for today to be our last day? Are there things that need to be done? Do we need to forgive? Do we need to apologize? Do we need to get closer to the Lord? What are we waiting for? This event, signals to all of us, the great importance of today. Today is what we have. Today is a gift. We may not have a tomorrow here. Use it well. Use it in God's honor.