

Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2023.03.26

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Sermon recordings

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Speaker-AM: Josh Vinyard

Title: Mercy

Recording:

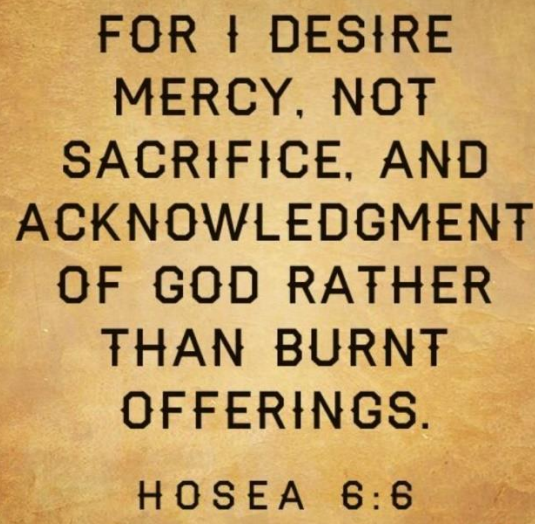
tinyurl.com/JoshMercy

Speaker-PM: Tyler Glidden

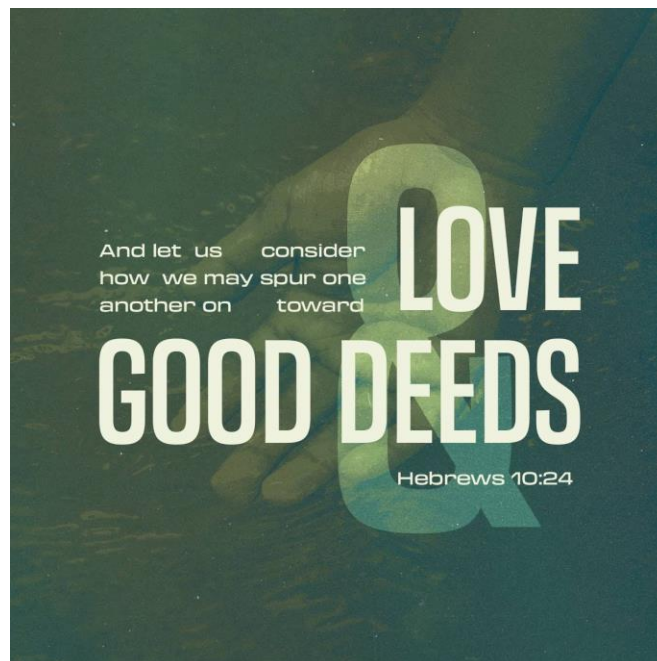
Title: Community

Recording:

tinyurl.com/TylerCommunity



FOR I DESIRE
MERCY, NOT
SACRIFICE, AND
ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF GOD RATHER
THAN BURNT
OFFERINGS.
HOSEA 6:6



And let us consider
how we may spur one
another on toward

**LOVE
GOOD DEEDS**

Hebrews 10:24

Finding Real Happiness, 3/23/2023 by Richard Thetford

Everyone wants a life filled with joy and happiness, but very few find it. One major reason man fails to find the happiness he seeks is that he is trying to obtain it through the wrong means. Millionaires who have houses, yachts, and condominiums often complain in counseling sessions that they're so unhappy they often think about committing suicide. They have everything money can buy, but they're unhappy with their lives! There's a void in their hearts that has never been filled -- a thirst that has never been satisfied.

Those with college degrees are often unhappy. Physicians, lawyers, and educators often admit that they are very unhappy. This proves that higher education in and of itself doesn't bring happiness. Anyone who is trying to find happiness through wealth, position, education, or notoriety is looking in the wrong place.

The void that people have in their hearts can only be filled through a relationship with the Lord Himself. Jesus stated in [John 4:13-14](#), *"Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."*

Only the Lord can fill the deepest longings of the heart. [Proverbs 3:5-8](#) says, *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones."*

The Last Fight, 1/1/1971 By Robert F Turner.

On the ruins of a theater in Ephesus, there is a memorial to an athlete of the 2nd century A.D. which reads:

"He fought three fights, and twice was crowned."

Watch out for that last step! You see, those "athletes" fought to the death. A man's last fight was always fatal.

So, the crown meant only that one changed opponents, and sooner or later the last would slay him. What a difference in this crown, and that of the apostle Paul:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day..." (II Timothy 4:7,8).

Paul did more than fight "unto death" -- he fought unto life, eternal. If his fight of faith cost him his earthly life, it only meant he was now free to claim the crown that counted most ([Revelation 2:10](#), [II Cor. 5:6ff.](#)). How different from those who die without hope.

Paul sought an enduring victory -- one that could not be taken from him. He exhorted Timothy, "*Lay hold on eternal life...*" ([I Timothy 6:12](#)). This called for training, perseverance, and above all, self-control ([I Corinthians 9:24-27](#)). The athlete trained his body only to prolong the day when it would fail him, but Paul trained his that it might better serve the Lord, and thus serve his eternal purposes.

We are all engaged in some sort of battle, and in a very real sense it is "unto death." The fatalist, the fool, resigns himself to shortchange. Though he fights 3,000 times, he can expect but 2,999 temporal crowns, not one of which he can take with him beyond that last fight. The futility of it all is enough to make a man throw in the towel.

The Faith gives purpose to life. The Christian fights, hard and often. But he has submitted himself to God's will, "*strives lawfully*" ([II Timothy 2:5](#)), and his fight is never in vain. Jesus Christ has provided for him a crown, and not for him only, "*but unto all them also that love his appearing.*"