

# Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2023.11.05

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## Sermon recordings

Click or type the short URL, or visit oakgrovecofc.org/Sermons.

**Speaker-AM:** Patrick Hite

**Title:** Diligently Seeking God

**Recording:**

[oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/diligently-seeking-god](http://oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/diligently-seeking-god)

**Speaker-PM:** Brad Bunyard

**Title:** Pharisee And Tax Collector

**Recording:**

[oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/pharisee-and-tax-collector](http://oakgrovecofc.org/sermons/pharisee-and-tax-collector)





## Articles

### One Last Verse, 11/1/2023 by Matthew W. Bassford

*Note: This article was written by Matt, who had ALS and passed away on Oct 25. He had this article ready to post before he passed away.*

Throughout my life, there was a series of verses that I identified as “my verse”. These were verses that, in some way, exemplified me or what I needed to become. I kept II Timothy 2:24-25 on my bathroom mirror for years because I needed the reminder. Later, I took great encouragement from the promise of Matthew 5:6.

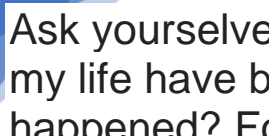
Now that my life is over, one last verse has become mine, though really it is not my verse but yours. It is Hebrews 13:7. My work under the sun has ceased. I no longer speak the word of God to you or anyone else.

However, the Hebrews writer, himself long since departed, imposes three obligations on you. The first is to remember. This is not a matter of sentimentality. Rather, just as there were important spiritual lessons in the word I spoke, so too there are important spiritual lessons in the word I lived.

Do not forget them! Otherwise, you will be like the forgetful hearer of James 1:23-24. If you do not carry the memory of my life within you, you will gain no lasting benefit from having known me.

Second, you must carefully observe my conduct. You must carefully consider it. In this, you must use discernment, just as you use discernment in evaluating any of the flawed heroes of faith in Scripture. At times, you have seen me behave foolishly and even wickedly. My failings certainly are not worthy of imitation!

Despite these stumbles, though, you know that I was a man who walked by faith. Now that my course is finished, consider the outcome of that walk. My path was not always easy. I battled chronic depression throughout the time that you knew me, and my last year at Jackson Heights was dominated by a devastating terminal diagnosis.



Ask yourselves, then, if it mattered to me that I lived by faith. What would my life have been like if I had been an atheist to whom these things happened? For that matter, what would have become of me if I had been a weak, uncommitted Christian?

You know the answer. Indeed, many of you have known the answer since you were small children. Those who wisely build on the rock can withstand the flood, but those who build on sand are swept away.

I was not swept away. ALS invariably destroys unbelievers, but I was not destroyed. Rather, my faith grew stronger throughout my trials, and I finished my race with joy and hope. The presence of God in my life made all the difference.

Finally, the Hebrews writer urges you to imitate my faith. Don't imitate my imperfections; imitate my loyalty to Christ. It is nearly certain that at some point in your life, you will face trials that are beyond your strength too. It is absolutely certain that your life will end as mine has. The flood is coming for you too, and only the Lord can keep you safe. Build on Him, and you will never regret it.

I believe that the spirits of the departed remain aware of earthly events. That is why we are encouraged to run our race before a great cloud of witnesses. If so, then right now I am cheering for every one of you! Run with endurance. Lay hold of the prize. When you cross the finish line, my beloved, I'll be waiting to welcome you in.