

# The BEACON



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## *A Godly Man In A Wicked World*

Elijah was a man who attained great things in his service to God. He was a prophet who stood alone when others needed to stand. He did not let the lack of a following hinder him from doing the Right thing and from trying to rally and encourage others to do as he did. He was ready to go wherever God needed him (1 Ki.18:11 19:15). He was willing to pray whenever pray was needed and he prayed in faith (1 Ki. 17:20, 21; 18:36, 37). He was also a man who had no patience with wickedness and with people compromising. He asks Israel- "how long halt ye between two Opinions...? He was willing to step up and confront wrong and not just talk about how bad things were (1 Ki. 18:17-24; 21:17-19). He was translated without seeing death and he and Moses were chosen to appear with the Lord on the mount of transfiguration.

Elijah attained his greatness as a servant of the Lord while living in a wicked and hostile environment. He lived in Israel during the reign of Ahab. He was subjected to the cruelty of Jezebel and was under constant harassment and

threat of death from her and Ahab. He became so discouraged at one point that he asked to die, but he never denied his God.

In this wicked environment Elijah was able to influence others. The widow of Zarephath was blessed through Elijah (1 Ki. 17:8-24). The multitudes after the debate at Mt Carmel, were led to cry, "The Lord,

He is God" through his bravery in standing up against the enemy. Elisha was greatly influenced by him and even Ahab was humbled one time clothing himself in sackcloth as a result of Elijah's rebuke (1 Ki. 21:27ff).

Elijah shows us that a person can live godly and influence others for good in a wicked environment.

When one hears the excuses of the today, it is obvious Elijah's message is sorely needed. Many excuse their failures to teach others with, "People are so prejudiced they just won't listen." Whether or not they will listen it is still our job to sow the Seed. If someone is approached about their ungodly conduct they excuse themselves by saying, "you just don't know how terrible the people are that I have to work with everyday." Such statements repeated often enough, Become a license to many to do wrong and salve and sooth their troubled consciences. Once we make up our minds to do right, we will. We will not offer petty excuses; we will not compromise with sin in our life. Our lives as Christian can be lived and we can be pleasing to God no matter what the obstacles. Elijah did it and so can we. ----Slightly adapted from article by Bill Hall---

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Website:  
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# **What Might Have Been**

John Greenleaf Whittier expressed a very painful thought when he said, “for all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: ‘it might have been!’”

Many a person has thrown away their life in drug addiction or other addictions and sins. Numerous are those who have thrown away their marriages by becoming involved in adultery and also through neglect and selfishness. Parents have often lost their children by neglecting them, granting them excessive freedoms, failing to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and a host of other reasons. Many are those who have thrown away a good name by some ungodly behavior. Do you suppose the vast majority of these, later in life have shed tears of bitter remorse as they have thought of “what might have been”? However, the damage done cannot be undone, although any sin involved can be repented of. Sin has consequences.

This bitter lament is not original with Whittier. It is found in Jer. 8:20 as the “weeping prophet” Jeremiah sadly said, “the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.” God had given His people ample time to repent and turn from their idolatrous immoral ways. They had not shown any inclination to respond appropriately to His offers of mercy. That generation through their disobedience, would bring hardship on another generation as God brought on the Babylonian captivity to teach His people (whom He loved) a 70 year lesson. No doubt there were times in Babylon when they mourned and wept over “what might have been” if they had only heeded the voices of the prophets who had warned them. Instead of seeing their loving concern they went their own ways and did their will instead of God’s.

Such a lesson as this should not fall on deaf ears today. That individual who has stopped serving the Lord faithfully will one day realize what he has given up. It may be too late then to do anything about it. I am reminded of a brother who was unfaithful during the formative years of his two sons. While their mother got them dressed and made sure they went to services he would get on his bike and go hang out with his buddies. After being brought to his knees years later by a heart attack he returned to the Lord and tried the rest of his life to get his sons to obey the gospel. He cried and lamented the poor example he had been to them when it would have really counted.

Dear wayward prodigal, before the “harvest is past” and the “summer is ended,” you ought to take advantage of the abundant mercy of God’s offer of pardon by repentance, confession and prayer. Better that, by far, than to stand condemned in the judgment and have to think for all eternity of “what might have been.” Do not throw your life away through a selfish insistence on your way and a resistance to God’s way.

To those who have never obeyed the gospel ponder seriously the prospect of missing heaven? Throw down your foolish pride and obey the Lord through faith, repentance, confession and baptism for remission of sins and faithful service in the Lord’s church until death. This is far better than to be separated from God eternally and think of “what might have been.” ---adapted from article by Barney Keith---

<p>Sunday Bible Study - 9:30 AM Worship – 11:00 AM</p> <p>Wednesday Bible Study – 7:00 PM</p>	<p>Phone: (828) 465-3009</p> <p>The Newton church of Christ P.O. Box 893 Newton, 28658</p>
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