

January 30, 2022

## “Hold to God’s Unchanging Hand”

By Michael Hickox

# Olney Church of Christ

220 North Van Street  
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## Services

### Sunday

Bible Study	9:30 am
A.M. Worship	10:20 am
P.M. Worship	2:00 pm

### Wednesday

Bible Class	7:00 pm
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**Elders:** Mike Gerber, Travis Hall

**Deacons:** John Frost, Dave Goff,  
Roger Sholders

*Visitors are welcome*

*We offer Bible classes for all ages*

*We also offer in-home Bible studies*

We have Bible lessons on the radio  
(92.9 FM) Sundays from 8:00-8:30 a.m.

The hymn *Hold to God’s Unchanging Hand* contrasts the fleeting and uncertain nature of temporal things with the constancy and dependability of God.

The hymn begins with the words, “Time is filled with swift transition.” Among other things, these words might apply to the ever-evolving moral standards of society. Thankfully, God gives us a steady, reliable guide to direct us. Instead of being tossed to and fro by society’s ever-changing standards, the faithful Christian holds steadfastly to “**the Lord’s word**,” which “**endures forever**” (1 Pet. 1:25).

The opening words of the hymn might also bring to mind the brevity and uncertainty of our time on earth. The “swift transition” of one’s physical life could be likened to “**a vapor that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away**” (Jas. 4:14b). The Spirit tells us, “**you don’t know what your life will be like tomorrow**” (Jas. 4:14a).

While such brevity and uncertainty are applied to our physical lives, our *spiritual* lives need not be filled with uncertainty at all. Those who are right with God can lean on His steady hand, even when life on earth is at its shakiest.

Not only do we not know how much longer each of us has on earth, but none of us even know how much longer the earth and temporal things in it will continue to exist. This principle is alluded

# “Hold to God’s Unchanging Hand”

(Continued)

to in the second phrase of the hymn’s opening verse, which says, “Naught of earth unmoved can stand.”

In **2 Peter 3:10**, the Holy Spirit through Peter gives part of God’s answer to those who scoff at the idea of the Lord returning on the Day of Judgment. He says, “***But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.***”

The contrast between God’s eternal power and what **2 Peter 3:10** says about the earth shows the foolishness of building our hope on temporal things and the *wisdom* of basing our hope on *eternal* things (**Matt. 6:19-20**). This principle is well-expressed with the final words in the first verse of the hymn, “Build your hope on things eternal, Hold to God’s unchanging hand.”

The second verse of the hymn says, “Trust in Him who will not leave you, Whatsoever years may bring...” Though future temporal circumstances are unsure, God promises His children that He will never leave us nor forsake us (**Heb. 13:5**).

God’s faithful children can count on Him to *know* all that we face (**Rev. 2:9**), to *care* for us (**1 Pet 5:7**), and to ensure that we always have what is needed to serve Him faithfully (**1 Cor. 10:13**), no matter the trial faced.

A particular trial that highlights God’s trustworthy hand is alluded to in the latter part of the verse’s second hymn. There the song says, “If by earthly friends forsaken, Still more closely to Him cling.” While behavior of others can be unpredictable, God is steady. God’s faithfulness is especially precious to consider when we are forsaken by others (cf. **2 Tim. 4:16-17**).

The third verse of the song (omitted in *Hymns for Worship*) says, “Covet not this world’s vain riches, That so rapidly decay, Seek to gain the heav’nly treasures, They will never pass away!” This compares the value of fleeting earthly riches with lasting spiritual riches (cf. **Luke 12:13-21**).

The hymn’s final verse digs deeper into the lasting value of being spiritually “rich.” The verse says, “When your journey is completed, If to God you have been true, Fair and bright the home in glory Your enraptured soul will view.”

This home is a guarantee for the righteous because of the constancy and dependability of God, who promises it (**Titus 1:2**). God’s faithfulness thus gives us a sure foundation on which to build a hope that steadfastly anchors the soul.

This gets at the underlying theme of this thoughtful hymn. While life on earth has much uncertainty, God is ever-reliable. May we hold steadfastly to *Him*.

## Area Gospel Meetings

Hazel Dell Church of Christ:  
Jan. 28-30 (with Jason Hosfield)  
*Concludes at 5:00 this evening*

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### God’s Plan for Saving Man

God’s Grace	Ephesians 2:8
Christ’s Blood	Romans 5:9
The Holy Spirit’s Gospel	Romans 1:16
Sinner’s Faith	Acts 16:31
Sinner’s Repentance	Luke 13:3
Sinner’s Confession	Romans 10:10
Sinner’s Baptism	1 Peter 3:21
Christian’s Work	James 2:24
Christian’s Hope	Romans 8:24
Christian’s Endurance	Revelation 2:10

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### Words to Consider

***“He said to them, ‘Beware! Keep yourselves from covetousness, for a man’s life doesn’t consist of the abundance of the things which he possesses.’” – Luke 12:15 (WEB)***

## Prayer List

Holly G  
Jerry & Sandy S  
Cheryl S  
Norma C  
Raymond B  
Barbara G (Cancer)  
Robert C  
Sharon G (Cancer)  
Doans’ Grandson, Wilson  
Carlyle B  
Ken & Christine F  
Devin D (Cancer)  
Vicki S (Cancer)  
Linda C

### Daily Bible Reading

January 30 – Exodus 23-24; Matt. 20:1-16  
January 31 – Exodus 25-26; Matt. 20:17-34  
February 1 – Exodus 27-28; Matt. 21:1-22  
February 2 – Exodus 29-30; Matt. 21:23-46  
February 3 – Exodus 31-33; Matt. 22:1-22  
February 4 – Exodus 34-35; Matt. 22:23-46  
February 5 – Exodus 36-38; Matt. 23:1-22

***“For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” – 1 Corinthians 1:18 (ESV)***

### **Prayer Leaders**

Sunday, January 30, 2022

Bible Study: Dan H

Worship: Larry

Evening: Dan D

Wednesday, February 2, 2022

Larry

### **Assignments**

Sunday, February 6, 2022

Reading: Jim

Announcements: Mark

Table: Dave

Serve: Steve

Darrell

Dan H

Roger

Wednesday, February 9, 2022

Invitation:

### **Clean Building**

Patty (Jan) / Halls (Feb)

### **Prepare Communion**

Patty (Jan) / Halls (Feb)

### **Upcoming Reminders**

**Wednesday (2<sup>nd</sup>) adult class:**

*James 2:1ff*

**Next Sunday (6<sup>th</sup>) adult class:**

*The Crucifixion of Jesus &*

*The Resurrection of Jesus*

### **Anniversaries**

### **Birthdays**

February 2 – Travis

February 13 – Darrell

February 15 – Dan D

February 20 – Jeff

February 23 – Larry

February 28 – Donna G

February 28 – Sandy