

## The Hands of Jesus

By Kent Heaton

The hands of a new-born child are a most wonderful thing to behold. Ten little fingers with tiny fingernails reaching forth with innocent purity. One can only imagine how Mary and Joseph must have felt as their first newborn reached up and touched their face. They were literally looking into the face of God (John 1:14). As Jesus grew he learned how to hold things and reach out for things. Jesus waddled around their home in Nazareth, learning to pull himself up, pick up sticks, grasp at his food and inspect a carpenter's tool. In time, he would share his home with his four brothers and sisters and his hands would find time to help them and play with them.

Following in the footsteps of Joseph, Jesus would have learned the carpenter's trade. The Creator of the world (Col. 1:16) would use his hands to create things on the earth. He would help his mother and help their neighbors. His diligence would lend itself to be held in favor with men (Luke 2:52).

Like Daniel of old, the hands of Jesus learned early to pray (Daniel 6:10). He would spend untold hours talking with his heavenly Father in prayer. As a young man growing up in a morally corrupt world of Roman dominance, the hands of Jesus learned early to spend time with the ancient words of Moses, the prophets and the poets of Israel. He filled himself with the wisdom that comes from above. As early as twelve years Jesus was in the temple "sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions" (Luke 2:46); his hands gesturing with truth and righteousness.

At the age of thirty, the hands of Jesus went to task for the mission his Father had sent him to do. His hands became wet with water as he arose from baptism and immediately gathered in prayer (Luke 3:21). Satan sought to destroy Jesus in the temptation but the hands of Jesus kept the devil at bay with the word of God (Mark 4:1-13). He took hold of the book of Isaiah and showed the people he was the fulfillment of the prophecy (Luke 4:16-30). His hands drove out "those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves" (Matt. 21:12). His hands were powerful.

Jesus laid his hands on the sick and afflicted. He touched the leper and made him whole (Matt. 8:3). Many others he healed with his touch (Mark 5:23; Luke 4:40). The Lord reached out with his hands and saved Peter from drowning from little faith (Matt. 14:22-33). "Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray" (Matt. 19:13).

At the Passover feast the hand of Jesus and the hand of Judas found themselves together in the betrayal. "He who dipped his hand with me in the dish will betray me" (Matt. 26:23). His hands were later bound as the Roman soldiers led him out of Gethsemane to be tried, convicted and executed. The final act of the hands of Jesus was to spread them forth before all mankind in a simple sacrifice of love, mercy, justice and compassion for a lost world (John 19:17-18). The hands of Jesus lay folded in death as Joseph and Nicodemus prepared the body for burial (John 19:38-42).

A person's life can be traced by their hands. The hands of Jesus tell the story of his life and his purpose. His hands were always serving his Father. What do your hands

say? Do they serve only your interest and your desires or do your hands show the wear of diligent service to the cause of Jesus Christ?

The Lord's Church...

a READING church is an informed church  
an INFORMED church is an interested church  
an INTERESTED church is an active church  
an ACTIVE church is a serving church  
a SERVING church is a saving church  
a SAVING church is the Lord's church

Don't Stay Away From Church Because

You are a poor. There is no admission charge.  
It rains. Most of us go to work when it rains; our building doesn't leak.  
It is hot. Our building has air conditioning.  
No one invited you. We go to other places we're not invited.  
You have little children. We have classes for all ages.  
You don't like the preacher. He's human just as you are. You might not like another either.  
There are hypocrites in the church. You associate with hypocrites everyday.  
You have guests in your home. They will admire you for your loyalty if you go anyway.  
You need a weekend vacation. No one can escape from God.  
Your clothes are not expensive. You aren't coming to a fashion show. Consider John the Baptist.  
Church standards are too high. Are they any higher than the Biblical standards for the church? (Author Unknown)

Loaves in the Church

"Jesus answered them and said, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him'" (John 6:26-27).

"The early church prayed in the upper room; the twentieth century church cooks in the supper room. Today, the supper room has taken place of the upper room, play has taken the place of prayer, and feasting the place of fasting. There are more full stomachs than there are bended knees and broken hearts. There is more fire in the range in the kitchen than there is in the pulpit. When you build a fire in the church kitchen, it often puts out the fire in the pulpit. Ice cream chills the fever of spiritual life" (From Gospel Advocate, May 30, 1935).

Someone has rightly said, "When people are offered ice cream, tea, and fried chicken as enticement to attend worship services, you will find that those people are as cold as the ice cream, weak as the tea, and as dead as the chicken!"

## The Ship Builder By Spiros Zodhiates

A ship builder steps out into his yard and looks around him. There are vast skeletons of ships just commenced; others are advancing to completion, but there is nothing in the scene to satisfy.

The big hulls are at present good for nothing. A thousand hammers are tapping in annoying discord. The miry ground is strewn with wood and metal, yet the owner stands content amid the imperfection. He never thinks of even doubting the process he be-holds. In his mind, he carries the ideal of a perfect, completed ship, and he justifies the imperfect ships by imputing to them that idea.

God is like that great ship builder. The ideal man exists in His mind and perfect plan. He has the blueprint; man is like the ship being built. When God looks at it, He does not despair, because He knows what He can do with the imperfect yet unfinished man.

### A House or a Home

A HOUSE is built of logs and stones,  
Of tiles and posts and tiers;  
A HOME is built of loving deeds  
That stand a thousand years.

### A Moments Wisdom

A house is built by human hands...but a home is built by human hearts.  
He is happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds peace in his home.  
Fads come and go, but good sense goes on forever.  
Right living is better than high living, and cheaper, too.  
Christ is not properly valued unless He is valued above all.  
The recipients of God's grace should become messengers of God's grace.  
Many a gossip has opened his mouth and got his foot into it.  
The man who drinks a little, drinks too much.