

# The Bulletin

## Meeks St. Church of Christ

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### ***“I Have Fought A Good Fight”***

By J.D. Tant (1861-1941)

Sixty years have come and gone. I hope and pray that long after I cross the great divide, hundreds will read my sermons, be taught the way of life, and take up their cross and follow Jesus. I am leaving this bit of history that others may know that life was no flowery bed for me but fraught with many hardships all along the way.

If Paul could tell his experiences and troubles for the benefit of those who would live after him, I see no reason why my readers should not know something of my past life that it may encourage the poor boy or girl who seeks a higher plane in life, to know that all difficulties can be overcome by the one who will not give up the fight.

I was born in Paulding County, Georgia, in 1861. I was only eight days old when my father started to the war and was four years old when he returned, and I was taught that he was my father and that I must respect him. Our home was on the New Hope Church battleground.

After the battle, nothing was left on the farm but some oak trees. My dear mother and oldest brother walked twenty-two miles to where they heard of a wheat field outside of the army's march and pulled up two bushels of wheat, beat it out on a rail the next day, brought it home and for three months we lived under an oak tree, with nothing to eat except boiled wheat and salted water put in it. The salt was obtained by mother's digging up the ground where the smokehouse had stood and boiling the dirt to get the salt from it.

At the age of fourteen, I joined the Methodist church. At fifteen years of age, with my parents, I moved from Georgia to Texas. About this time I became interested in an education, and fortunately, we located near a high school, but unfortunately, I had only one dollar to supply all my earthly needs. I invested that in three yards of cloth, from which my mother made me a pair of pants. I did not have a single school book. My teacher agreed that he would leave one window unfastened each night and for me to come and get all books containing my lessons for the next day, learn my lessons, and put the books back the next morning before school.

About this time I thought I was up on vocal music and began to teach in different communities. I stood high with the Methodist and passed my examination for a preacher at nineteen. I then went to southwest Texas, and was teaching music, and breaking wild horses to ride, for a living, and preaching Methodist doctrine to help the people. About this time I heard old Brother W.H.D. Carrington preach the gospel, and I was shaken into a congregation of Christians on my Methodist baptism when twenty-one years of age.

After trying to preach the gospel, and ease my conscience for three years on Methodist baptism, I made up my mind by studying the Bible that the Lord knew nothing of sect baptism. I then got on a Texas pony and rode one hundred and twenty-seven miles and had John Durst to baptize me into Christ.

The church of Christ at Holland told me to go out and preach and they would guarantee me \$50 per month, provided the people would give it to me. Some subscribed liberally. One old brother, worth \$80,000 promised \$10 to the work and never did pay it. Another brother worth \$40,000 promised \$10 and paid it. One sister worth \$600,000 was glad I was in the work, was anxious to help, but on account of a large herd of cattle she had bought was unable to pay anything.

It was J.D. Tant who held the first meeting at Killeen, Bell County, Texas, bought candles to light the house, stayed at a third-class hotel, and bought my horse feed at a wagon yard from Wednesday till Sunday before a single member out of the five families who lived there invited me to their homes.

Yet I formed a congregation of eleven members and put them to work. Killeen now has a good house and two hundred members, yet I do not suppose they want me to preach the gospel there. I labored five months under Holland at \$50 per month as they had promised. They then called me in and heard my report. I had baptized fifty-three and done much good, but they feared they would have a drought. They were pleased with my work but did not feel able to support me longer for the work. They paid me \$96 of the \$250 they owed me, and let me go. I guess they will pay me at the judgment day.

During September 1886, I got up my first debate. I did not have sense enough to get up the proposition so I rode one hundred and forty miles horseback to get McGary and Hansbrough to help me word propositions for debate. Since then I have had experience in debating in seventeen states with thirteen denominations. I have held over two hundred debates and think I know more about debating than I did then.

It was during the year 1886 that I attended the Austin state meeting where the church of Christ divided when a small faction pulled off and organized a human society and introduced instrumental music in worship.

## Memory Verse of the Week:

### Hebrews 3:12 (NKJB)

“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;”



I did not go there to attend the meeting but to hunt for a wife. I found the girl I wanted and told her my business. Four years later we were married. She became the mother of two children. Both of them are now dead. She was called home in 1894. A grander woman for a preacher's wife never lived. I count on seeing her with the redeemed in the city of our God.

In 1896, I married Miss Nannie Yater, who now stands by my side and helps me fight the battles of life. She is the mother of six children.

I write this bit of history only for the benefit of the young who may come after me so they will not think a preacher's life is all flowers and sunshine. If I had to live life again I know of but few changes I would make. I learned forty years ago that to become a Christian, a man must hear Christ ([Matthew 7:24](#)); have faith in him ([John 20:30-31](#)); repent of his sins ([Luke 24:47](#)); confess Christ ([Matthew 20:32](#)); and be baptized for the remission of sins ([Acts 2:38](#)). I have never had occasion to change but still preach it that way today.

As I come nearer the river's brink, I am fighting harder and trying to do more, that God may welcome me, than ever before. Only a few more miles and I shall rejoice to see the other side. If God accepts me, all will be well with me.

"J.D. Tant died at 4:30 o'clock, Sunday afternoon, June 1, 1941. He was buried in the Cleburne Memorial Cemetery, Cleburne, TX. A simple stone marks the spot, bearing the legend: "Jefferson Davis Tant, 1861-1941, "I have fought a good fight." (From the book of J. D. Tant's sermons, *The Gospel X-Ray*, published by the Firm Foundation in 1933.)" [*Guardian of Truth*, November 20, 1986].

The biography of my grandfather, titled *J. D. Tant, Texas Preacher*, was written by my father, Yater Tant about 1958, and is still in print, and I have been told it has sold more copies than the biography of any other gospel preacher. And my grandmother's biography, *Nannie Yater Tant*, is also still in print. They are fascinating stories.

[Jefferson David Tant]

## Visit our YouTube Channel:

Meeks Street Church of Christ [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgiXjxZC1oraOugO9qIfBtw?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgiXjxZC1oraOugO9qIfBtw?view_as=subscriber)

## And Our Facebook Page.

For sermon videos, articles, and announcements.



**News and Notes:** Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Linda Hunt, David Taylor, Randy Beaty, Sam Johnson, Sherry Doles, Mrs. Jennie Daniel (Dan and Lynlie's neighbor), Anna Hearn, Randy Ferrell, J F Dancer, & Earl Mitchell.

Kevin Hays (Ky friend who asked for prayers), and for President Biden.

Clois and Estell Wright both are in Booneville Hospital with Covid.

Patty Case (Ky friend diagnosed with cancer).

**Those Who Serve:**

**Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:**

<b>Opening Prayer:</b>	Fred Johnson
<b>Preaching:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Sermon #1:</b>	<i>"Let Us.... Part One"</i>
<b><u>Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:</u></b>	Fred Johnson
	1 Corinthians (Mike Willis)
	<i>Next Lesson, Question #1</i>

**Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:**

<b>Announcements:</b>	Russell Briggs
<b>Opening Prayer &amp; Scripture Reading:</b>	Doug George
	<i>Mark 11:12-14</i>
<b>Song Leader:</b>	Lee Busby
<b>Lord's Supper:</b>	Paul Busby
<b>Assisting:</b>	— —
<b>Preaching:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Sermon #2:</b>	<i>"Nothing But Leaves"</i>
<b>Closing Prayer:</b>	Tim Harris Sr.

**Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.**

**September 1st:**

<b>Auditorium Bible Class:</b>	Russell Briggs
	Ecclesiastes & Song of Solomon (Mike Willis)
	<i>Page #21, Question #15</i>
<b>Invitation:</b>	Paul Busby
<b>Song Leader:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Closing Prayer:</b>	Nathan Meade

# **“Let Us.... Part One”**

- 1. Hebrews 4:1**, *“Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.”*
  - “Therefore” What is it there for? To draw on action based on what has been said....
  - The Promise of entering God’s rest- **4:4-10**.
  - The Need of Fear- “a state of severe distress, aroused by intense concern for impending pain, danger, evil, etc., or possibly by the illusion of such circumstances – ‘fear.” (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996).
  - Lest we come short of it- A REAL Possibility of it happening to Christians.
  
- 2. Hebrews 4:11**, *“Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.”*
  - **Diligent**- to do something with intense effort and motivation— ‘to work hard, to do one’s best, to endeavor. (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). **2 Peter 1:10**.
  - “Lest anyone fall” A reoccurring message to the Hebrews, much needed today!
  
- 3. Hebrews 4:14**, *“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.”*
  - Jesus the High Priest- **5:1-4; 7:226-28; 4:15**.
  - “Let us hold fast our confession” **“steadfast adherence to faith, or the faith,** Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Vol. 2, p. 306).  
**Hebrews 3:9; 2 Timothy 1:13; Hebrews 3:1; 1 Timothy 6:12.**
  
- 4. Hebrews 4:16**, *“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*
  - “Come boldly” As opposed to fear & trembling due to rejection- **Esther 4:10-17**.
  - “The throne of grace” God’s throne! The source of all grace/help in time of need.
  
- 5. Hebrews 6:1**, *“Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,”*
  - “Leaving... elementary principles” implies growth and greater responsibility.
  - **1 Peter 2:2-3; 5:12-14; 2 Peter 3:18**.
  
- 6. Hebrews 10:22**, *“let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”*
  - “Draw near” A common expression in the O.T. **1 Sam. 14:36; Psalm 73:28; Eccl. 5:1**.
  
- 7. Hebrews 10:23**, *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering for He who promised is faithful.”*
  - See **Hebrews 4:14**- Repeated to show the dire need of...
  - “Without wavering” “pertaining to being without change or wavering in one’s faith – ‘without wavering, firmly.’ ‘let us hold on without wavering to the hope which we profess’ Hebrews 10:23.” (Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996).
  - Faithful- **1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 3:1-2; Revelation 2:10**.

# “Nothing But Leaves”

Lesson Text: **Mark 11:12-14.**

**Fruit**— *peri* (6529 , פֵּרִי), “fruit; reward; price; earnings; product; result.”  
(*Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Vol. 1, p. 88).

## I. What Jesus Sought And Seeks.

- A. Of the Fig Tree— Fruit.
  - He had the right to expect it.
- B. Of the Jewish Nation— Fruit.
  - He had the right to expect it (**Deuteronomy 7:6**).
  - **Luke 13:6-9; Matthew 3:5-12.**
- C. Of Christians Today— Fruit. (**John 15:1-8**).
  - Christ should expect to see Fruit in us of:
    - \* Righteousness- **Romans 6:20-23.**
    - \* Of the Spirit- **Galatians 5:22-23.**
    - \* Good Works- **Colossians 1:10; Philippians 4:17.**

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_.

## II. What Christ Found And Finds.

- A. In the Fig Tree— “*Nothing but leaves.*”
- B. In the Jewish Nation— “*Nothing but leaves.*”
  - “*Hypocrites-Blind Guides*”— **Matthew 23:1-7; Vs. 14; Vs. 23-28; Vs. 33-36.**
  - Those who caused others to blaspheme- **Romans 2:17-24.**
- C. In Christians Today, In Some He Still Finds— “*Nothing but leaves.*”
  - What would nothing but leaves look like?
    - \* Just going through the motions- **John 4:24.**
    - \* Hypocrisy- **1 John 2:9.**
    - \* Indifference- **Revelation 3:14-16.**
    - \* Not Growing, Not Bearing Fruit- **Matthew 13:23; 2 Peter 1:8-9.**

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_.

## III. What Christ Did And Will Do.

- A. To the Fig Tree— He cursed it and it withered away and bore no fruit forever thereafter- **Mark 11:20-24.**
- B. To the Jewish Nation— **1 Kings 9:6-9; Luke 13:9; Matthew 21:42-44.**
- C. To Christians— **John 15:2 and 6; Matthew 25:41-45.**

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_.

## Conclusion:

- What about your life? Is it fruitful, or empty, or barren?
- Should Christ come into our worship today would He find more than leaves?
- Christ knows our true condition!