



America's Heartland

Roger Alford
RogerAlford1@GMail.Com

You may have heard about the fellow who was visiting with a friend one day when the friend asked: "Is your marriage a happy one?"

"We've been married a long time now," Bubba said, "and we've never had a fight in our house."

"That's wonderful."

"Yep," the fellow said, "we always go outside."

One of the most famous fights of the Old Testament was between a young fellow named David and a giant known as Goliath. The Bible gives us a blow-by-blow account of their encounter, including how David, armed only with a sling, defeated the Philistine warrior with one small, well aimed stone.

Quarrels should remain between enemies ... not families

But you have given little thought to an unfortunate encounter between David and his oldest brother Eliab. You may recall that David's father, Jesse, had sent David on an errand to deliver food to his brothers who were serving as soldiers. When David got to the front lines, he couldn't believe what he was seeing. Goliath was talking trash, calling for the Israelites to send a soldier to fight him. No one dared.

David said, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the Living God. And Eliab, his eldest brother, heard when he spake unto the men, and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? And with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the naughtiness in thine heart, for thou art come down that thou mightiest see the battle."

You see, at a time when Eliab should have had his focus squarely on Goliath and the Philistine army, he was caught up in infighting with his own brother. Have you noticed how easily that can happen even today in the churches where we

worship? You might see some fellow who should be fighting against our great enemy, the devil, but who instead is quarreling and criticizing a brother. That's always a huge waste of time and energy. Aren't you glad that David didn't lose sight of his real enemy? He didn't strike back at his brother. Instead, David focused on Goliath, his real enemy, and defeated him to become a hero of the faith.

It would have been tragic if David had focused on Eliab's petty accusations, allowing them to get in the way of his battle with the true enemy of God's people. And it would be just as tragic for any of us to focus on some trifling conflict within our husbands, wives, children, siblings or church brothers and sisters and lose sight of the fact that we have a greater enemy who wants to do us harm.

So, when someone asks how we're getting along with our spouses, I hope we can say we've never had a fight in our house, and leave out the part about always taking our fights outside.

Roger Alford is pastor of South Fork Baptist Church. Reach him at rogeralford1@gmail.com or by calling 502-514-6857.

Unmerited Grace

Sunday, May 17th, 2020 Morning Message
Bro. Warren Rogers, Ivory Hill Baptist Church

"John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. ¹⁶And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

-- John 1:15-17

What is Grace? It is the unmerited/undeserved favor of God. **Romans 3:23** says "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" None of us are worthy by our own merits. It is favor, that's what makes it so wonderful. **Titus 2:11** says, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Think about how many people there are in the world. There are 195 different self-governed countries in the world. It took until about two hundred years ago (for the world population) to reach the one billion mark; it has taken only 200 years to reach 8 billion.

Let's look at three points of God's grace:

#1 Your Position: our position physically is we are living in the grace -- or church age if you prefer. We are all in that stage. The only difference is that some have accepted Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9) and some have not (Hebrews 10:26)

#2 The Purpose of Grace: (A) To save us - Titus 2:14; (B) to seal us - Titus 3:7; (C) to show us - Titus 2:12.

Also to teach us to be working to the glory of God (Titus 3:8)

Titus 2:13-14, "... Jesus Christ; ¹⁴Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Christ gave himself for us. We cannot work out our salvation -- to seek to earn or purchase our salvation is an insult to God who gave it. If someone asks you to come to their house and have meal and when you got ready to leave you offered to pay for the food, it would be an insult to their hospitality. It's the same way with our Lord. He so lovingly gave us a way to Heaven through grace that it is an insult to try and live good enough so that he will save us. I have had a lot of funerals, and the saddest ones are the people that were good moral people but they had not accepted God's wonderful grace. It sure makes it hard to comfort their family. We cannot live good enough or do enough good deeds to merit God's wonderful gift of grace. Grace is free. All we have to do is confess our sins and ask forgiveness to obtain this grace.

Our faith is evidenced by our works (James 2:18).

Lack of work testifies against us (Titus 1:16).

Grace teaches us to look (Titus 2:13).

#3 The Promise of Grace: Grace teaches us to look (Titus 2:13) for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of Jesus.

Grace teaches us to be ready for that promise, to be ever watching, to be ever looking, to be ever working to His glory. **Matthew 24:42** says, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." **Verse 44** tells us "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

To whom ever might be reading this I ask, **'Are you ready for the Lord's return?'** If you realize that you have not accepted God's wonderful grace, please call me, 606-481-0444

Until next week, God be with you!
Bro. Warren Rogers

The Furnaces of Estill County by Frank B. Russell

Publisher's Note:

The following is the second of a 3-part history of the furnaces of this area written by Frank B. Russell who was one of the last owners of the Estill County furnaces. He wrote this history on July 26 and 27, 1944 in letters to the late historian Ellen Rogers of Estill County and this was originally printed in The Estill County Tribune on September 15, 1982.

"From a deposition given by Samuel Vaughn in September, 1871, the information was given that Estill Furnace was built by Jackson, Wheeler and Mason and went into blast in the fall of 1830. Mr. Vaughn when a young man worked at the Forge and later became a land agent for Jackson who was selling land from his large holdings to settlers coming into the new and growing county.

In the course of events, Josiah A. Jackson became the owner of Estill Furnace and the Forge property and operated it at intervals until his death about 1862. Through a court proceedings in Estill County Court, his whole estate was ordered sold for the benefit of creditors and heirs. The Estill Furnace and Forge proper with large acreage attached were bought by the Red River Iron Mfg. Co., incorporated by Eastern capitalists, Morris K. Jesup of New York City and one Blackston, and one or more Chandlers of Boston. They secured title to the properties from Isaac N. Cardwell, special commissioner of the Estill County Court, October 19, 1869. The price paid was fifty-nine thousand dollars. The new company had been previously chartered by an act of the legislature with an authorized capital of one million dollars, succeeding the close of the war 1863-65 and began to do business due to railroad building and the subsequent demand for car wheels, rails, bridges and locomotives. Steel, heretofore made only in England, was now being made in the states. Mr. Quincy Bent, Vice-President of Bethlehem Steel Co., in a paper written in 1939, tells of the "importation in 1862 of one hundred tons of steel rails for trial in the Penn Railroad tracks at a cost of \$150.00 per ton. The rails weighed 40 to 60 pounds per yard as compared with our standards of 130-150 per yard products.

To make steel, pig iron must be had for resmelting and producing



The is a view of the Estill Steam Furnace while it was still standing. The ruins are located alongside KY-213 at Furnace, Kentucky.

for rolling rails.

He further says that the first steel rails ever made in this country on a commercial order, were rolled at Johnstown, Pa., in 1857." Cold blast charcoal pig iron like the Estill County product was bringing \$90.00 per ton f.o.b. Louisville in 1870 for the making of car wheels.

The Louisville Car Wheel Co. had a plant where the Bourbon Stock Yards now stands at the south end of Jefferson Street and was a ready buyer of Estill County iron which was brought down the Kentucky River in barges and landed at the head of First Street, thence by two-wheel carts.

Hence the ambition of the management of the Red River Iron Mfg. Co. was to expand production to the building of the two large and modern furnaces on the Furnace Fork of Miller's Creek three miles from Estill Furnace and six miles from the Kentucky River.

Building was started in 1868 and finished in 1870, both furnaces going into blast that year.

It was a gigantic task. The machinery was contracted for and built in Pittsburgh and brought down the Ohio and up the Kentucky in smaller flat bottom boats, transferred in part to train cars for movement to the site. The large stack containing the two furnaces was up. Mechanics came along to set the two engines in place, boilermakers to rivet the boilers together. Brick for the engine room and smoke stack were made on the spot.

Some 125 houses were needed for workmen and families. A sawmill was built to furnish the lumber required.

Carpenter shops, blacksmith shops, a slaughter house, school house, a three story hotel, a store and office building three high. Barns for the horses and mules, train road for bringing ore in and the iron to the river to inclines up the mountain where ore banks were to be found along the limestone strata.

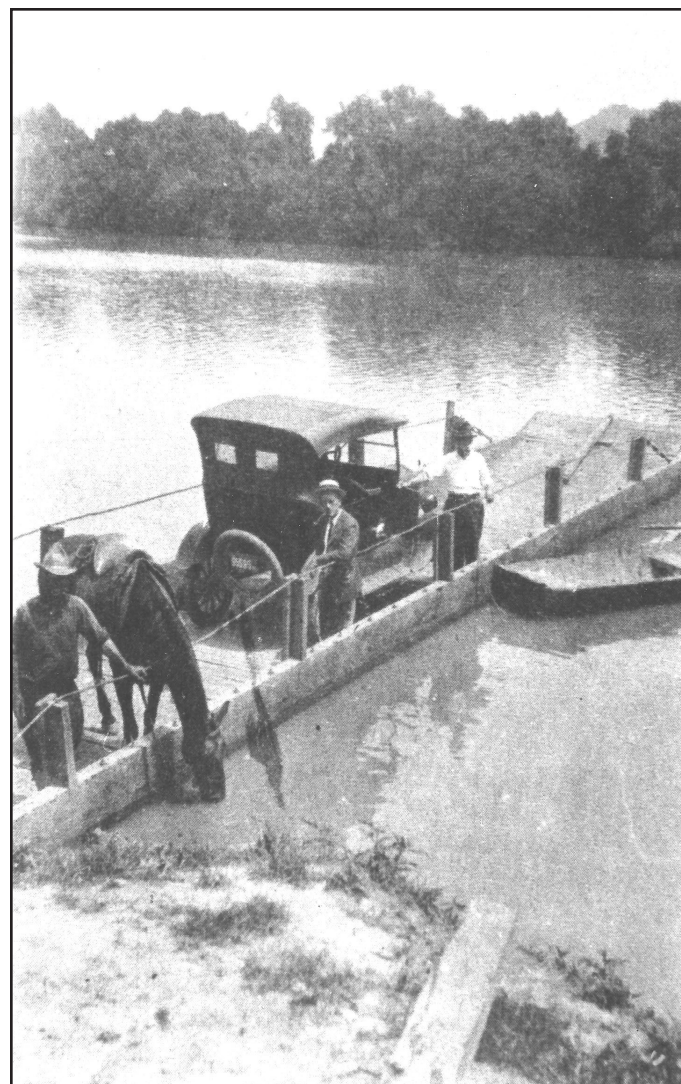
Rush, push, hurry was the order with much unavoidable confusion and lost motion. It was all accomplished mechanically.

Of the original construction, nothing remains except the furnace stack. The only house built then (1868-9) is the building now and since about 1873 occupied by the Masonic Lodge. Tom Stafford, a blacksmith in the employ of the Iron Company was instrumental in the organization of the Lodge and when chartered it took his name "Stafford Lodge No. 562 F. & A.M.," now some 71 years old (in 1944).

Originally the first floor was used for a church and Sunday School. The Masons used the second floor.

It was at the lower end of the town, with the sawmill up the spring branch back of it and the incline ascending the mountains in the front. Other buildings have disappeared. A few, maybe one-half dozen houses have been rebuilt by people owning and farming in the vicinity.

Continued Next Week!



This is a view of the old Irvine ferry. Photo is from an unknown source but mountains in the background could help identify the exact location.