

# A Hard Saying

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

**John 6:60**, "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?"

Jesus said many things during his ministry here on earth. Some were sweet words of peace and blessings as he invited men to trust in him for salvation and eternal life. He offered counsel to ease a troubled mind, or a guilty conscience. At other times he gave hard choices for a person to make, choices that called for extreme sacrifice and dedication to serve God. His call for worship was not to just go through the motions of religion, but to serve the Lord from the heart, putting him first above all others.

Have you ever given much thought to the fact that Jesus preached love and dedication to God the Father and for doing so he was persecuted and killed? He offended many who heard him because he spoke absolute truths and didn't play the game of religion that suited the religious leaders of his day. They, the religious leaders, took pride in works and the form of religion, thinking that they were better than anyone else. Even Jesus, the Son

of God, was looked on as a heretic and a nobody in their eyes.

Consider their greed and pride. Jesus drove the buyers and the sellers from the temple which didn't win him any friends from the leaders of Israel. He told them that they were making the house of God into a den of thieves and robbers. I have no doubt that the priests and other leaders were getting a percentage of the money made in the temple. So when Jesus put a stop, at least temporarily, they were in a rage that he dared to do such a thing. They thought that the temple, the law, and all else was in their domain, not realizing that this was the Son of God that they were dealing with. This was a hard saying when he said that it was a den of thieves and robbers and they were not going to bear, or accept it.

If the Lord only said things that were easy and didn't require man to change, then what would have been the need of his coming? Mankind was lost in sin and headed for destruction. That is why God, in his mercy, sent his son to redeem man from sin. This took a serious set of actions for Jesus and required a serious change in the hearts and lives of mankind if they were to be saved. We, mankind, did need to change our ways if we were to escape the damnation of hell. Man has always wanted to rule his own destiny and do as his desires dictated.

However to go to heaven and to live with the Lord man has to change. That is not could, should, might, but has to change, as flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus told the rich young ruler that he needed to sell what he had and give to the poor and then to come and follow him. The man went away sad because this was not what he expected to hear and he was not prepared to obey such an extreme command. A hard saying? To this man this was an impossibly hard saying. To give away all his riches and to become poor, depending on God to take care of him was not something that he could imagine doing. He didn't have that kind of faith, and I wonder how many of us would have it.

If Jesus had told him to do some small act of charity then he would have had no trouble doing it and would have been happy. Jesus knew that this man was trusting in his wealth and position as a rich man. Therefore the Lord put him to the test to see if he had faith and would obey the commands of God. The Lord knows what each of us believes and trusts in and his words put us to the test with some hard sayings. Will we obey and submit to God's authority or will we do what we want and not put ourselves to much trouble? It's our choice to make isn't it?

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This is a dramatized version of facts taken from the Book of Joshua, intending to show some of the customs of these ancient and traditional times

**OTHNIEL'S TRIUMPH**

CONFRONTED BY THE PROBLEM OF SCALING THE HIGH WALLS OF THE GIANTS' CITY, OTHNIEL HAS NOW PICKED CERTAIN MEN FOR A SPECIAL TASK...

ALL OF YE WITH SHIELDS OF BRASS, ATTEND MY WORDS!

TAKE CLOTHS AND POLISH THY SHIELDS TO A HIGH SHINE!

WHAT NOW?! ART THOU TO PARADE FOR THE GIANTS?!

SEE HOW PRETTY THEIR SHIELDS ARE - BUT CAN THEY FIGHT?!

NOW YE BRAZEN SHIELD CARRIERS - FOLLOW ME!

AND OTHNIEL, AT A QUICK PACE, LEADS THE MEN WITH THE POLISHED SHIELDS UP TO THE HEIGHTS OPPOSITE THE CITY!

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MOUNTING THE ATTACK!

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