

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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THE TRUE MEASURE

A young boy came running into the house very excited shouting, "Mother, Mother, I am nine feet tall!" His mother reminded him that he was exaggerating and was talking nonsense. He responded that he knew for a fact that he was nine feet tall.

"What makes you think so?" she asked. "Because I measured myself," he replied.

"How did you measure yourself?" the mother inquired.

"I took off my shoe," said the boy, "and measured myself with that. It is just the same size of my foot, and I really am nine feet tall."

This little lad was very sincere in believing he was nine feet tall, but he was using the wrong measure. Man is also prone to measure himself by his own ruler, especially when it comes to his religion. Let us consider some of these false measures.

Many people use their emotions and their "feelings" as their measure. Emotionalism is a false standard and proves nothing to be right or wrong. Feelings depend on what we believe (look at the example in Genesis 37) while faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Many honest and sincere people wouldn't give their "feelings" for all the Bibles in the world. A frequently used statement is, "I know that I am saved because I can feel it in my heart." The Bible says, "He that trusts in his own heart is a fool" (Prov. 28:26). God did not say that you can know that you are saved by the way you feel. This is a false measure.

Many people will also use their parents and grand-parents as the measure for right and wrong. Many say, "They were members of the same church that I am, and what was good enough for them is good enough for me." Most people are what they are,

religiously, on the basis of what their parents were. I am not trying to "run down" your ancestry, but they could have been wrong. You are following tradition and Jesus said, "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition" (Matt. 15:6). Perhaps you have had an opportunity to study, learn and develop more than your parents. We think nothing of changing politics or of buying a Chevrolet when Dad always bought a Ford. We make many decisions and do many things against the will of our parents. The reason, possibly, that we hold back on the question of religion is because it is the most important decision in our life. Friend, a love for Jesus must be greater love than a love for parents. Jesus said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:37). Can you read in the Bible of the church to which your parents are a member? If not, leave that church. Use the Bible as your measure.

The testimony of great men is often used instead of the Bible. Denominational people often quote some great religious leader to prove their point. Some honest people will read from Albert Barnes, Clarke, or some other great scholar, and take the word of these commentaries over the Word of God. All men are fallible and we cannot have so much confidence in them, but we can remain faithful to God even if these men depart from the faith. Our faith must not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (I Cor. 2: 5).

Several people use manuals and creed books as their measure. These books are written by men. Decisions are made in conferences. The conferences write what that denomination is to believe and practice. How do these conferences know what God wants? They don't! Paul said, "... even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:11). Bible writers wrote by inspiration. They knew the will of God. Creed writers are uninspired. Their creeds are the wrong measure.

Let us use the Bible for our measure. It is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3: 16,17). Let us speak where the Bible speaks, be silent where the Bible is silent; do Bible things in Bible ways and give them Bible names. This is the true measure.

– Bob Buchanon

(From The Sower, Volume 21, Number 8, August 1976)

Did You Know? . . .

- § That the apostles never used food, games or social activities to draw a crowd so they could preach to them?
Yet in many churches today, even some calling themselves "Church of Christ," the social programs are so extensive that a social director or a "youth minister" must be hired to oversee the social planning.
- § Although schools existed in the first century, and the apostle Paul even taught in one for 2 years (Acts 19:9,10), no churches ever supported them financially?
Yet in many churches today, even some calling themselves "Church of Christ," the financial supporting of "Christian schools" or "Colleges" is a regular part of the budget.
- § That the apostle Paul illustrated many of his epistles with analogies from sporting events (1 Cor. 9:24,25). Yet no church sponsored or had sporting teams?
Yet in many churches today, even some calling themselves "Church of Christ," the sporting activities are so much a part of the work that full scale gyms have been built.

If these things mentioned above were not a part of the early church and we do not find them in the Bible, WHY are churches doing them today? And who gave them the RIGHT to do it? These things ought not to be! "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17).

- Roger Shouse

Can We See The Bible Alike?

Moses said we could (Deut. 29:29). David said we could (Ps. 119:104). John said we could (Jn. 20:30,31). Jesus prayed that we might (Jn. 17:20). All of these spokesmen for God have declared that through study of the Scriptures we are enabled to see them alike.

There are some things that **HINDER** a clear understanding of the Bible:

- § Relatives (Matt. 19:29; 10:34-37)
- § Pride (Prov. 14:12; 16:18; Rev. 3:17-18)
- § Majority opinion (Ex. 23:2; Matt. 7:13-14,21)

§ False doctrines (Matt. 13:14-15; 2 Thess. 2:9-12)

§ Satan (2 Cor. 4:3-4)

If we will accept only the word of God (1 Pet. 4:11), we would not only see the Bible alike, but understand and practice it alike (1 Cor. 1:10).

- Johnny Polk

> He who permits himself to tell a lie once, finds it much easier to do it a second and third time, till at length it becomes habitual: he tells lies without attending to it, and truths without the world's believing him. - Thomas Jefferson

> There is a tendency for people to credit themselves with their own successes, but to blame God for their failures.

> You won't find many rules for success that work unless you do.

> I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else. - C.S. Lewis

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*Is There A Balm In Gilead?*" (text: Jeremiah 8:21-22); Sunday evening: Jesus Christ: A Closer Look – *In The Hour of Need!* (Mark 5:21-43).