

The Old Hickory

Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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THE FINALITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus PROMISED that ALL truth would be given to His Apostles: “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you **all** things, and bring to your remembrance **all** that I said to you.” (John 14:26, emphasis mine). Jesus further promised: “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into **all** the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.” (John 16:13, emphasis mine). Think carefully about the inclusiveness of the word “**all**” in these verses. Jesus was intending to include the stated extremes of the totality of the whole truth. Jesus did not promise His Apostles only a partial revelation, a limited amount, a part or a share of truth, but **all truth!**

The Apostles RECEIVED ALL truth. Speaking of the truth which God revealed to them, Peter said: “seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.” (2 Pet. 1:3). Since “everything pertaining

to life and godliness” was “granted,” that left nothing “pertaining to life and godliness” that was not. Paul spoke of the words of revelation that were made known to him: “which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;” (Eph. 3:5). Paul spoke of this “testimony of God” in this way: “For to us God revealed *them* through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.” (1 Cor. 2:10). He went on to say that these things were “freely given to us by God” (1 Cor. 2:12). Just as surely as Jesus promised, the Apostles received all truth!

The Apostles DELIVERED ALL truth. (see Jude 3). “The faith” that was “handed down” to Christians was to be delivered faithfully: “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Tim. 2:2). “The faith” was to be “handed down” by those who maintained their faithfulness to the message. “The faith” was clearly a permanent standard of authority. The Apostles were promised all truth, they received all truth and they delivered all truth to others who faithfully delivered it to still others.

The apostles and prophets were specially chosen by God to be the recipients of **all truth**. The revelation they received in the first century was written down and comprises the New Testament. In order to know all truth today we look to the New Testament. After the New Testament was completed there was no additional truth that would be revealed later. There was no additional truth that awaited the coming of any “Pope” of the Roman Catholic Church. There was no additional truth that awaited the coming of Joseph Smith or any other Mormon. There was no additional truth that awaited the coming of Judge Rutherford or anyone in the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. There was no additional truth that awaited the coming of anyone claiming continuous revelation from God. To advocate this is to deny the truth that God revealed to the Apostles. Would you deny

that The Apostles of Christ were given “**all** the truth?” Friend, would you deny “that His divine power has granted to [the Apostles and prophets of the first century] everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence?” Friend, would you believe not the truth?

- GFS

Good Teachers

It would be impossible to place too much emphasis upon proper teaching of God's word. The importance of teaching is emphasized by Christ when He said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44,45). Jesus clearly shows that the Father "draws" men as they are taught and hear and learn of the Father. This is the only way men can come to Christ. However, in order for this teaching, hearing and learning to take place there must be good teachers. What does it take to be a good teacher?

Good teachers will teach the truth. We need to follow the example of Ezekiel of old as he said, "Thus saith the Lord God" (Eze. 5:5). Time and again in his writing he says he is speaking that which the Lord spoke unto him. Paul told Timothy to "preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2). The teaching of personal opinions or simply those things the people wish to hear is not good teaching. Paul told the Ephesian elders he "...kept back nothing that was profitable unto you" (Acts 20:20) and that he had "not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). One who refuses to teach all the truth, whatever the reason may be, is not a good teacher.

The apostle Paul told the young evangelist Timothy "...the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). Note, he said these things should be committed to "faithful" men. No one can be effective in teaching others if he is not going to demonstrate faithfulness in his own life. He told this same Timothy to "be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12). Those who would be good teachers need to talk and act in such a way as to reflect the word they are seeking to teach. I have known those who had a great deal of

knowledge of God's word and could verbally present the word in an excellent way, however their effectiveness as teachers was destroyed by unfaithfulness in their own lives. If your speech, manner of dress or service to the Lord is not in harmony with God's word you cannot be a good teacher.

Paul also said these men would be "able" to teach others. To have the ability to teach demands a knowledge of the word. One cannot teach that which he does not know. To gain this knowledge one must be willing to make the sacrifice of time and effort necessary to study and learn the word of God. Many will acknowledge the truth of what I am saying but they will not devote the time or energy necessary to gain a knowledge of the Bible. Some will not even put forth the effort to attend the regular periods of Bible study available to them. These are neither "faithful" or "able."

Every Christian should have a desire to teach others. Paul expressed the attitude every Christian should have toward teaching others when he said to the Romans, "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also" (Rom. 1:15). Yes, we need good teachers but let us realize that, as Christians, being a good teacher is just another way of saying that I am faithfully serving the Lord for I cannot faithfully serve Him if I do not seek to teach others. In doing so, as Paul told Timothy, we "shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4:16).

- James Hahn

> "Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man." - *Benjamin Franklin*

> "For eleven months and about twenty days each year, we concentrate upon the shortcomings of others, but for a few days at the turn of the New Year we look at our own. We should do more of the latter, and less of the former."

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*Evidence of Pardon!*" (text: Isa. 55:6-11); Sunday evening: Jesus Christ: A Closer Look – *A Walk on the Sea & A Healing of Many!* (Mark 6:45-56).