

# The Old Hickory

## Bulletin

### Old Hickory Church of Christ

841 Old Hickory Blvd.

Jackson, TN 38305

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June 05, 2011

Volume 31, # 23

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## Worthy or Unworthy?

(Acts 13:46)

During the first missionary journey of Paul, he and Barnabas came to Antioch of Pisidia and entered the Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath day. Paul preached a masterful sermon in which he identified Jesus as the promised Saviour of Israel. The message of good news was one of forgiveness of sins through belief in Christ, and that He was the means of justification before God, not the Law of Moses. (Acts 13:16-41).

**Why are *these* people here?** The following Sabbath, almost the entire city came together to “hear the word of God.” Evidently, the Jews had never drawn such a crowd. Outsiders were suddenly coming to share their religious blessings.

**Prejudice is ugly!** The popularity of Paul’s message and the sight of these Gentile crowds filled them with jealousy, and they “began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming.” God’s word dictated no such contradiction, which nastily went to the extreme of blasphemy. Reasoning from the scriptures was useless against such passionate Jewish exclusiveness when it came to the point of God’s salvation now being available to all nations – “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” (Rom. 1:16).

**Opportunity lost!** In Acts 13:46-47, “Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, ‘It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, *‘I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, That You may bring salvation to the end of the earth.’*” It was God’s will for the Jews to hear the gospel first since their nation was selected for the role of bringing the Saviour into the world. As bold advocates of the will of God, Paul and Barnabas had done that. Now they charged the contradicting and blaspheming Jews with repudiating the word of God. In so doing, these Jews had determined themselves unworthy of eternal life.

**Darkness is exposed by light!** Observe carefully that *they repudiated the word of God.* Were they not the people who had been “entrusted with the oracles of God” (Rom. 3:2)? Now they “thrust it” from themselves (ASV), destroying that sacred trust. They did not desire the word of God any longer; they scorned it as if it were nothing. It upset their selfish concerns. They didn’t want it; they pushed it away.

**What people do to themselves!** Also, observe that in so doing, *they judged themselves unworthy of eternal life.* Were these not the people “to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the *temple* service and the promises,” (Rom. 9:4)? These people who sought for life were now acting as judges in their own case; they were passing judgment on themselves that they are not fit to have the eternal life that God gives. They do not want God’s word; it is not first and foremost, above all things. Their judgment, therefore, is that they are undeserving of the grace that God had regarded them as worthy to receive. They took themselves entirely out of consideration for the blessing, and they had only themselves to blame. Not that they closed the synagogue and gave up their religious practices altogether. No such heart indicator would read so obviously the evil that these contradicting and blaspheming Jews had allowed. However, by their rejection of God’s will, they became His enemies (Phil. 3:18)!

**Will clay argue with the potter?** It was God’s plan all along to provide a Savior, not only for Israel, but also for all nations (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:8; Isa. 2:2). Paul’s commission directly from Jesus Christ had now been realized: “to bear My name before the Gentiles” (Acts 9:15). “For so the Lord has commanded us, *‘I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, That You may bring salvation*

*to the end of the earth.*” (Acts 13:47; cf. Isa. 49:6). Jews not wanting that did not make it a reality. Placing their will above God’s will did not make it true.

**Repent or perish!** The gospel was taken to the synagogues first. Wherever the Jews repudiated the word of God and thrust it away the true believers in Christ left the God-rejecters, embraced the word of God and each other, and became “true Israel” (Rom. 9; see Rom. 10:1-4). All that believed were together, just as earlier in Jerusalem (Acts 2:44). Without Israel’s repentance, there would be no forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:31).

### **What is the lesson for me?**

- If I desire the forgiveness of sins, justification before God, it will come through belief in Christ, not the Law of Moses. These spiritual blessings are for all!
- What a very grave danger there is in repudiating the word of God! Any of it! For whatever reason! Rejection of the gospel says, practically speaking, that I despise the truth. I must never allow my personal concerns, desires, wishes, purposes, plans and schemes to EVER take precedence over and above God’s word!
- By opposing God’s word I am self-judged, self-condemned; I am “unworthy of eternal life!” I have only self to blame. Evil attitudes such as pride, arrogance, prejudice, jealousy and self-promotion must be put to death in us if we are to be Christ’s people and God’s true children.
- The only way out of those fatal spiritual consequences is change, repentance, embracing the knowledge of Christ and His will, loving truth.

Friend, may we help you today to be worthy of eternal life?

-GFS

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## **PARENTS BLUNDER WHEN:**

1. They give a child everything he wants.
2. They laugh at a child when he does or says something wrong.
3. They avoid the word “no” and “wrong.”
4. They pick up after their children instead of giving them the responsibility of doing it.

5. They take the side of their children against neighbors, teachers, brethren, preachers, elders and other responsible adults.
  6. They make every decision for their children.
  7. They bail them out of every situation instead of letting them face the consequences of their mistakes.
  8. They are over-protective, and do not allow their children to do normal and healthy things.
  9. They let their children talk back to them.
  10. They criticize others openly in front of their children.
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- > If only closed minds came with closed mouths!
  - > *Prejudices are the chains forged by ignorance to keep men apart.*
  - > Minds are like parachutes. They only function when they are open.
  - > *If a million people say a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing.*
  - > Deal with the faults of others as gently as with your own.
  - > *Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Louis Pasteur, Michaelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein.*
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**SUNDAY'S LESSONS:** Sunday morning: "*Come See A Man ...!*" (text: John 4:5-42); Sunday evening: Jesus Christ: A Closer Look – *Questions Designed for Entrapment!* (Mark 12:13-27).

**SCHEDULE:** Our Vacation Bible School is scheduled for June 20-24, 7:00 PM, with Dwayne Gandy as our guest speaker. Our Fall Gospel Meeting is scheduled for Sept. 18-23, with Eric Reynolds.