

# **The Old Hickory**

## **Bulletin**

### **Old Hickory Church of Christ**

841 Old Hickory Blvd.

Jackson, TN 38305

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## ***Heart Like Mine***

Country singer Miranda Lambert's recent hit, *Heart Like Mine*, gets one thing right and several things wrong. The song describes a woman who is as a rebel, the kind you don't "take home to mama." She's not the marrying type, she drinks and smokes. "Christian folks" say she should quit, but she just smiles because, as the chorus goes, "I heard Jesus, he drank wine, and I bet we'd get along just fine."

What is she saying here? Is it not: "I'm kind of a wild child, but Jesus and I would get along great because he drank, too"? This is similar to an false accusation that the Jews made about Jesus:

For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' (Luke 7:33-34 ESV)

Jesus was no drunkard. He NEVER sinned, not once. He was never drunk. Never said a bad word. This was just an evil assumption, the product of corrupt hearts (Matt. 9:4).

Furthermore, his desire in a relationship with us is not that we "get along just fine" with him, like old pals. He demands to be our Lord and Master (John 13:13). To be friends with Jesus is to obey him (John 15:14).

However, as the chorus closes the song does hit on one true statement: "I bet he'd understand a heart like mine." Sinful men and women flocked to Jesus and found someone who loved them and was concerned about them. But it cannot be overlooked that he also changed them. He taught repentance, not acceptance.

Yes, Jesus understands the heart of a sinner; but his plan is to replace the sinful heart with one in submission to him.

And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. (Ezek. 11:19-20 ESV)

Finally, *Heart Like Mine* ends with a dream of flying away one day and hearing her name "called on the roll." We can have that assurance, but it doesn't come from having a feeling that we'll "get along just fine" with Jesus. It comes from totally submitting our will to his.

- Eric Reynolds

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# Welcome, Stranger!

It seems simple enough to walk up to someone and say, "*Hello, my name is John Doe, and I want to welcome you to our meeting.*" But it must have some dreadful effect on brethren, if the few who try it is any indication.

I know many of the regular excuses given. "*They rush out and are gone before we can get to them.*" Right! Now that we know they do this, we can postpone our visits with friends and relatives, and hurry out to foyer and parking lots to intercept them. We are the ones who go the second mile — remember? We do not wear our feelings on our sleeves, but show them what Christianity has done for us.

*“I dislike hypocritical back-slapping and glad-hand tactics.”* Yes, so do I. Hypocrisy has no place in the conduct of saints, so leave it out. Our greetings should be warm and sincere. Or, could we mean we are not happy to see the visitor at the meeting? If this is the case there is need for a completely new attitude. I sometimes suspect that our lack of concern for others is dire to our own failure to understand and appreciate the blessings in Christ. Every true Christian must surely be happy and anxious for others to hear the news.

*“Most of our visitors are members of the church, and as much obligated to come to me as I to them.”* I even heard of one brother who argued that agape love does not necessitate affection. Here is legality gone to seed. The sacrificial selfless nature of agape is far deeper and more meaningful than mere affection, or love of the lovely. But affection, it is the very thing that would make us out-going and eager to cultivate relations we might otherwise ignore. In Rom. 12:9-10 we read, “Let love [agape] be unassumed . . . In brotherly love to one another loving warmly.” (Philos and phileo in last uses: Marshall.)

We are people; we work with people in our efforts to save souls. There is no perversion of the purpose and work of the church necessitated by our being friendly and courteous to all people everywhere. Particularly should we cultivate this attitude toward saints and non-saints who visit our places of assembly.

As a traveling evangelist I often see rank disregard for this simple courtesy during a meeting. I have met strangers, taken them to a local member and introduced them, and soon after leaving them to find others, note that the member has said a perfunctory *“Hello”* and then abandoned the visitor. Many brethren seem to have no feeling of obligation to make the stranger feel at home, obtain his name and address for future use, or even show the courtesy we would display in the business world.

Perhaps some qualified member should be appointed to make such contacts, and go to the exits early for that purpose. But if we wish to avoid mechanical greeters — if we would develop a genuinely warm church — all members need to cultivate this grace.

**Your friendly handshake genuine welcome, and personal concern may be the only things, at this point that can prepare a stranger to hear Christ!**

- Robert F. Turner, via Plain Talk, July, 1972

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## **GOSPEL MEETING:**

Our Gospel Meeting with Eric Reynolds begins today.

## **LESSONS:**

Sunday Class: Why Trust the Scriptures?

Sunday AM: Why Believe in God?

Sunday PM: Creation: A True Story!

Monday: Why Genesis Matters!

Tuesday: Written for Our Learning!

Wednesday: Cyrus, Named by God!

Thursday: Why Believe in Jesus?

Friday: Don't Look Back!