

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

841 Old Hickory Blvd.

Jackson, TN 38305

oldhickorycofc.com

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"Dear Baptist Friends ---"

Hiscox's "Standard Manual for Baptist Churches" contains, with a few verbal changes, The New Hampshire Confession of Faith. Here, Article V, on "Justification", says that justification is bestowed "solely through faith in Christ; by means of which faith" -- "every other blessing needful for time and eternity" is secured.

Note -- "solely" through faith, i.e. by faith alone -- every other blessing needful for time and eternity is secured (p. 62).

But on page 20, note 8, we read: "Baptism is not essential to salvation, for our churches utterly repudiate the dogma of "baptismal regeneration"; but it is essential to obedience, since Christ has commanded it. It is also essential to a public confession of Christ before the world, and to membership in the church which is his body. And no true lover of his Lord will refuse these acts of obedience and tokens of affection."

It seems our Baptist friends have such an aversion to "water salvation" -- which need we equally advocate -- that they meet themselves in violent contradiction.

They say Baptism is essential to: (1) Obedience to Christ; (2) public confession of Christ; (3) membership in His body, the church; (4) to be a true lover of the Lord. If this be true -- and the scriptures prove it to be so -- then how can faith only (solely) secure all blessings needful for time and eternity?

Truth of the matter is that the scriptures do not teach salvation by merit. The "works" repudiated in Rom. 4:1-8 refers to a system of law, whereby one seeks justification by a claim to such perfectness that no sin can be charged. Since "all sin" (Rom. 3:23), to plead such a case is to lose it (study Gal. 3:10-14).

Our only hope is to put our trust (faith) in Christ, who will forgive all who obey Him (Heb. 5:9). Our hope lies not in a system of works wherein there was no permanent forgiveness; (cf. Heb.10:1-4) but in the system of faith where forgiveness is possible through the sacrifice of Christ (Rom. 4:6-8). This system of faith (trust) and "faith only," or "solely through faith", are poles apart.

There is no saving power in the act of baptism, per se; nor, in this sense is there saving power in faith. Faith is as much a "work" as baptism (John 6:28-29); for no amount of quibbling can remove the fact that man does the believing. We are saved by faith (Eph. 2:8) and we are saved by baptism; (1 Pet. 3:21) but both acts must look to Christ as the efficacious means of our redemption.

Our Baptist friends can't get into the body of Christ, of which He is Saviour (Eph. 5:23) without baptism. They can't publicly confess Christ without it (see Matt.10:32-33). They can't obey Christ, or truly love Him without baptism -- all by their own admission. Isn't it

time to acknowledge that baptism is a part of the faith that saves??

- Robert F. Turner, *Plain Talk*, April, 1965, p. 3.

SPEAKING OF THE BIBLE ...

"Our laws and our institutions must necessarily be based upon the teachings of the Redeemer of Mankind. It is impossible that it should be otherwise; and in this sense and to this extent, our civilization and our institutions are emphatically Christian." - *US Supreme Court, 1892*

"It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the Providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and to humbly implore His protection and favor." - *George Washington, 1789*

"It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible. . . He is worse than an infidel who does not read his Bible and acknowledge his obligation to God." - *George Washington*

"I have always said and always will say that the studious perusal of the Sacred Volume will make better citizens, better fathers, better husbands. . . the Bible makes the best people in the world."
- *Thomas Jefferson*

"I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible...take all of this book upon reason you can, and the balance by faith, and you will live and die a better person before God." - *Abraham Lincoln*

"All the good from the Saviour of the World is communicated through this Book; but for this book we could not know right from wrong. All the things desirable to man are contained in it." -

Abraham Lincoln

"The Bible is the one supreme source of revelation of the meaning of life, the nature of God and the spiritual nature and need of men. It is the only guide of life which really leads the spirit in the way of peace and salvation." - *Woodrow Wilson*

"The harvests have been abundant, and those who work...are prospering greatly. Reward has waited upon honest effort. We have been enabled to do our duty to ourselves and to others. Never has there been a time when religious and charitable effort has been more evident. Much has been given to us and much will be expected from us. We speak of what has been done by this nation in no spirit of boastfulness or vainglory, but with full and reverent realization that our strength is as nothing unless we are helped from above." - *President Theodore Roosevelt in his 1904 Thanksgiving Day Proclamation*

"Without morals a republic cannot subsist any length of time; they therefore who are decrying the Christian religion, whose morality is so sublime & pure, [and] which denounces against the wicked eternal misery, and [which] insured to the good eternal happiness, are undermining the solid foundation of morals, the best security

for the duration of free governments." - *Charles Carroll, Signer of the Declaration of Independence*

"Our government rests on religion. It is from that source that we derive our reverence for truth and justice, for equality and liberty, and for the rights of mankind. unless the people believe in these principles, they cannot believe in our Government." - *Calvin Coolidge*

"I find more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history whatsoever." - *Sir Isaac Newton*

That Familiar Ring of Truth

The preacher's topic: "The Conversion of Saul." But why that topic? Aren't most of us familiar with that? Shouldn't the preacher choose something new and more challenging?

Why preach what is familiar?

1. It confirms convictions we have formed through the years. Most of us have strong beliefs concerning what a sinner needs to do to be saved, what constitutes the pattern set by the apostles for each local church, what the Lord wants of us on a daily basis, and on many other issues. When we hear sermons confirming these convictions, it builds our confidence that we are indeed doing the Lord's will and strengthens our hope of eternal life.

2. It conforms our teaching to the example of the apostles. Peter wrote that he was reminding his readers of certain things, that he would continue to do so, and that he would see to it that they would continue to "have a

reminder of these things after my decease" (2 Peter 1:12-15). Peter knew that Christians need to hear the truth - familiar truth - again and again.

3. It builds convictions in those who are young and those who are new in the faith. There are reasons why we who have been Christians for many years are familiar with these scriptures. It is because of the preaching we have heard since our youth. Today's young people and newer converts need this same opportunity.

4. It thrills listeners to hear again that which has brought joy to them in the past. A sports fan views a rerun of an exciting game his team has won. He knows exactly the moment when the running back scoots through the defense and scores a touchdown. He knows when that moment is near, and he can't wait to see it again. It never gets old to him. So it is when we love the scriptures. We rejoice to hear the message. It never grows old. We anticipate certain scriptures and points that are about to be presented. We never tire of the old, old story.

Catherine Hankey said it this way:

I love to tell the story, For those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting To hear it like the rest;
And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,
Twill be the old, old story That I have loved so long.

Our purpose is not "to tell or to hear some new thing," as seems to be the trend. Our purpose is to preach truth. If we are bored with that message, something is wrong with us spiritually. If we need to apologize anytime we preach it, something is wrong with our audience. The ring of truth! The familiar ring of truth! Preach it, Brother! We thank God for the joy of hearing it again and again.

- Bill Hall, via *Biblical Insights*, April, 2015

- > "It's hard to believe life evolved into higher forms when I see my neglected garden overcome with weeds."
 - > "A man who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered." Prov. 28:26
 - > "To look is one thing, to see what you look at is another, to understand what you see is a third, to learn from what you understand is still something else, but to ACT on what you learn is all that really matters."
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*First Things First!*" (Text: Mark 3:27); Sunday evening: "*The Greater Glory of Zion!*" (Heb. 12:18-24).

GOSPEL MEETING 2015: Our Gospel Meeting is scheduled for July 19-24, with Jerry Crolius, of Conway, AR, preaching.