

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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“Let Brotherly Love Continue”

It is important to consider the love of God for man. It is important to consider the love of man for God. But it is also important to consider the love man should have for man.

Many fine things are said in the Bible about love. It is called the first commandment (Matt. 22:36-40); it is called the second commandment; it is the great commandment; it is the last commandment (1 Tim. 1:5). All the law is fulfilled in this commandment (Gal. 5:14). It sums up all the commandments (Rom. 13:8-10). He that practices it fulfills the law. It is the royal law (Jas. 2:8): God said above all things be fervent in love (1 Pet. 4:8). It is the last of the Christian graces (2 Pet. 1: 7). It is the first of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). It not only covers a multitude of sins (1 Pet. 4:8), but it also covers all sins (Prov. 10:12). It is greater than faith or hope (1 Cor. 13:13).

God is called love (1 John 4:8,16). If God is love then the amount of love that one has in him is the measure of God that is in him. Too many have more of the devil in them than they have of God. Love must be without hypocrisy (Rom. 12:9). In love of the brethren, be tenderly affectionate one towards another (Rom. 12:10). Love worketh no ill to his neighbor (Rom. 13:10). Because of love one would not eat meat if thereby his brother is grieved (Rom. 14:15). Knowledge puffeth up but love edifies (1 Cor. 8:1). Let all that you do be done in love (1 Cor. 16:14).

We should confirm our love to the weak and fallen (2 Cor. 2:8). Through love we are to be servants one to another (Gal. 5:13). Love caused Jacob to work seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him as but a few days (Gen. 29:20). It makes the unpleasant sweet and the dread easy. It changes one's outlook on life and makes one like the Master who prayed in death for His murderers (Luke 23:34). It caused Stephen to pray for those who stoned him to death (Acts. 7:60).

We are to follow after love (1 Cor. 14:1). We are to walk in love (Eph. 5:2). We are to bear one another in love (Eph. 4:12); Speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). Thus the body edifies itself in love (Eph. 4:16). No wonder that God will see to it that love never faileth (1 Cor. 13:8).

Jesus says that we should love one another, even as He loved us (John 13:34; 15:12). How much did Christ love us? Did you know that the Bible not only says that Christ laid down His life for us, but that we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren (1 John 3:16)? Is that too hard for us to practice? Then it is too hard for us to be Christians. Love your neighbor as yourself is the second commandment. That leaves no room for less love for our brethren, all the brethren -- even the ones we disagree with or ones of a different race. How far from the Bible many are, and yet they wonder if they will go to heaven (Rev. 22: 14-15).

"Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say?" (Lk.5:56). Love will cause us to obey God. It will eliminate gossip, lies, slander and division. Love will cause us to preach the message of love to save the souls of the lost (John 3:16; Rom. 6:3-6; 1 Cor. 15:1-4).

- Richard A. Kruse, via Truth Magazine, December, 1961

Providing Things Honest

In the confused standard of society in which we live, it is apparent, in many respects, that honesty has become a forgotten virtue. On every hand we read of corruption and graft in places of leadership and authority, the very places where great emphasis should be placed upon honesty! With such an environment, it is no wonder that the younger generation is maturing with the perverted conception that to be honest is to be a SQUARE! Perhaps this age is comparable to the time when the ancient philosopher walked about in daylight with a lighted lantern hoping to be able to find an honest man.

The Lord's people must not be lacking in honesty! There may be a gross amount of dishonesty in the world, but let's not overlook the fact that Christians are not to be of this world. The religion that Christ has given represents the highest degree of emphasizing the virtue of honesty. Paul wrote, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." (Rom. 12:18). Again, "providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." (2 Cor. 8:21). Among those things that Christians are to think upon: "...whatsoever things are honest." (Phil. 4:8). We are to pray "...for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." (1 Tim. 2:2). Peter admonished Christians to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul: "having your conversation honest among the Gentiles." (1 Peter 2:11-12). As we contemplate honesty, we need to be honest with everyone and all things. Some may be alert in manifesting honesty to some people and things and at the same time neglect the others.

WE NEED TO BE HONEST:

TOWARD GOD

Some folks never think about being honest toward God. They actually have no conception of what honesty toward God involves. Honesty toward

God means that we place Him first. His commandments are not to be neglected. We are not to rob Him. (Mal. 3:8-9). Some men would never think about robbing or lying in reference to men. They are honest with men and yet have no hesitation in withholding from the Lord that which is rightfully His. Are we truly obeying His commandments? (1 John 5:3). Are we giving as we should? (Matthew 6:33; I Cor. 16:1-2). Examination may reveal that we have become cheats as far as responding wholeheartedly to the will of the Lord.

TOWARD THE CHURCH

The local church of which I am a member has the right to expect certain things of me. Faithfulness to God necessitates my being a part of a faithful congregation. That congregation has a right to expect that I live a clean, pure life; that support of the work is borne of me, and that I cooperate with others who are endeavoring to do the will of the Lord in that local church. The principle of honesty demands that I do so. How can I be honest with myself, God and man and not endeavor to bear my responsibilities as a member of the church of the Lord? What if every member of the church were like me? Would the cause of the Lord be flourishing? We have nothing to hide or conceal. Nothing has been done in a corner! Honesty does not hide or conceal the facts. Are you being honest toward the congregation?

TOWARD SELF

One of the most miserable of people is the character who knows that he has not been honest with himself. He cannot be right in heart and be dishonest with himself. When we deceive ourselves we are actually being dishonest with self. Paul wrote: "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden." (Gal. 6:3-5). Men are prone to blame others for their situations and attempt to justify themselves when the root of their problem lies in the fact that they have been dishonest. They

have done what they know to be wrong. The only way to correct it is to repent and return to God in God's appointed way.

TOWARD OTHERS

"Provide things honest in the sight of all men." (Romans 12:17). "...that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that we may have lack of nothing." (1 Thess. 4:12). How can we ever expect to influence anyone for good and not be honest in our words and deeds? "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for is the law and the prophets." (Matt. 7:12). Let's all be honest with one another...that is certainly what we desire of others!!

The following story is a good example of what effect dishonesty can have upon one's influence: "After attending a church service a dentist said to the preacher, 'I cannot attend this church again.' When the preacher asked why, the dentist said, 'One of your members was singing praises to God through teeth, she refused to pay for.' Unpaid bills can bring shame to God and His work." Heaven is for honest people...just how honest are you?

- Bobby K. Thompson

My name is Pride

My name is pride. I am a cheater.

I cheat you of your God given destiny because you demand your own way.

I cheat you of contentment because "you deserve better than this."

I cheat you of knowledge because you already know it all.

I cheat you of healing, because you're too full of me to forgive.

I cheat you of holiness, because you refuse to admit when you're wrong.

I cheat you of vision, because you'd rather look in the mirror than out a window.

I cheat you of genuine friendship, because nobody's going to know the real you.

I cheat you of love, because real romance demands sacrifice.

I cheat you of greatness in heaven, because you refuse to wash another's feet on earth.

I cheat you of God's glory because I convince you to seek your own.

My name is Pride. I am a cheater.

You like me because you think I'm always looking out for you. Untrue.

I'm looking to make a fool of you.

God has so much for you, I admit, but don't worry,

If you stick with me, You'll never know.

- by Beth Moore, in Living Free

- > "Blowing out the light of another will make one's own light shine no brighter!"
 - > "Many people are in debt because they spend what their friends think they make!"
 - > "God often digs wells of joy with spades of sorrow!"
 - > "He who talks to you about others, will talk to others about you!"
 - > "You can be content and happy if God's will is more important than your wants!"
 - > "The trouble with doing nothing is that you can't stop and rest!"
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