

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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## Have You Ever Wondered Why?

A Readers Digest article titled: "Ever Wonder why?" contained some interesting facts. For instance, have you ever wondered why: "Men 's clothes have buttons on the right while women 's are on the left? It's easier for right-handed people, the majority, to push buttons on the right through holes on the left, and so men's buttons are on the right. When first used, buttons were expensive and worn primarily by the well-to-do. Women in that class were usually dressed by servants. Since a maid would face the woman she was dressing, dressmakers put the buttons on the maid's right the woman's left where they've remained."

Is it not remarkable that such a practice would remain in spite of the practical problems with these "backwards" buttons? Today no one I know has servants to put their clothes on, but still the practice remains.

The same is true in religion. Today churches of men have adopted practices based on their personal convenience and on the decisions of men in the past rather than in the scriptures. Few ask the important question: "Why do we do that?" Jesus said in Matthew 15:8-9: "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

Please do not think that mindless service to God will do any good. Consider a few questions to ask today:

1. Why do men sprinkle babies today and call it baptism? (Romans 6:3-4)
2. Why do churches not take the Lord's Supper on the first day of every week? (Acts 20:7)
3. Why do churches have church creeds and conventions to tell their members what to believe? (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Colossians 2:18-22)

If we call Jesus Lord, then should we not show it by keeping His word over what men desire? (Lk 6:46) You may be surprised at the vicious opposition you will receive when you question the long held traditions of men. Paul warns each of us to choose the cross of Christ over the favor of men. Consider how Paul answered these questions:

1. Who is a real servant of Christ? "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ." (Gal 1:10)
2. What if I give in to men for the sake of "peace?" "As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." (Gal 6:12)
3. If I really know Jesus, will I allow the demands of this world to take priority over the sacrifices Christ expects of me? "But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." (Gal 6:14)

Let each of us go beyond "wondering why" we do things in service to God and begin today to search the scriptures and know why! Be ready for the surprise of learning that many things that are commonly accepted by the masses that are not found in God's word. Also, be ready to stand against the intimidating pressures of men. God will bless you richly, only if you are willing to follow Him (Luke 14:33).

- Larry Rouse

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## Never Again

Never again will I say, "I can't," for "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

Never again will I admit lack, for "my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

Never again will I fear, for "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Timothy 1:7).

Never again will I harbor doubt and lack of faith, for "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" (Psalm. 27:1).

Never again will I allow the supremacy of Satan over my life, for "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4).

Never again will I admit defeat, for “God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place” (II Corinthians 2:14).

Never again will I lack wisdom, for “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).

Never again will I be worried and frustrated, “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (I Peter 5:7).

Never again will I be in bondage for “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (II Corinthians 3:17).

- Author Unknown

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## Be Thankful for God's Authority

God is Creator. Because of Who He is, He has the inherent right to command and expect obedience. He has the right to tell us what to do, how to think, how to live, how to talk, and how to dress. Name it. God has the power to back it up. We, as His creatures have no right to kick back or demand answers from Him. Like it or not, we are under His authority. But now, why wouldn't we like it?

Rather than looking at this as some sort of drudgery, why not be thankful for God's authority? After all, if we wish to glorify God, we can only do so by recognizing the power that only belongs to Him.

“Sing to the Lord, all the earth;  
Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day.  
Tell of His glory among the nations,  
His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.  
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;  
He also is to be feared above all gods.  
For all the gods of the peoples are idols,  
But the Lord made the heavens.  
Splendor and majesty are before Him,  
Strength and joy are in His place.” (1 Chron. 16:23-27)

If we “seek the Lord and His strength” (vs. 11), then we are necessarily seeking Him in all His authority and power. Shall we love the Lord and despise His authority as if it is a burden to us? May it never be!

Here, then, are some reasons we can be thankful for God’s authority:

**1. Because God’s authority means He is the Judge, not me, or you, or anyone else.**

I don’t have to worry about untangling all the sticky questions about eternity. I don’t need to worry about pleasing other people, especially those in the world. I just need to concern myself with pleasing and glorifying Him based on what He has revealed (2 Cor. 5:8-9; John 12:48). Consequently, we may say with Paul, “to me it is a very small thing that I may be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord” (1 Cor. 4:3-4). In the final analysis, each of us as individuals will stand before God. What others think at that point will be irrelevant.

**2. Because God’s authority is what gives power to grace.**

Grace means nothing unless it comes from one who has the power to give it. Sometimes grace is pitted against a stress on authority, but the two go together. It is true that authority can exist without grace, but it is not possible for real grace to exist without authority. Recall Jesus’ healing of the paralytic in Mark 2. When he saw the man’s faith, Jesus told him that his sins were forgiven. The people reacted by saying that only God could forgive sins, to which Jesus responded, “Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven’; or to say, ‘Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk’? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins’—He said to the paralytic, ‘I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home.’” (Mark 2:8-11) Without the authority inherent in Jesus, the man’s sins would have remained. God’s authority means that He can provide the grace needed to forgive sins. Without His authority, our sins would remain.

**3. Because God’s authority means He has the power to fulfill His promises.**

People sometimes promise what they cannot give. Think of the empty promises given by fallible people who strive for political power, or the disappointment we feel when someone promised something without the ability to deliver. This will never happen with God. Because He has all authority, He has complete control over the promises that He has given, and He will not disappoint. Therefore, we may have the same faith as Paul when promised that the ship he was on would not lose anyone: “Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told” (Acts 27:25). Paul began his epistle to Titus with these reassuring words: “Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, in the hope of eternal life, which

God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago" (Titus 1:1-2). Our trust in God's promises is the reason we have hope as an anchor of our soul (Heb. 6:13-20). All of this is possible because of the authority of God.

God's authority should never be seen as a burden. Rather, we have every reason to be thankful for who God is and the authority He possesses and shows. "O Lord God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty Lord? Your faithfulness also surrounds You" (Psa. 89:8).

- Doy Moyer

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> "Exercise daily -- walk with the Lord!"

> "Give God what's right -- not what's left!"

> "Never give the devil a ride -- he will always want to drive!"

> "The best way to move mountains is to begin with molehills and work your way up!"

> "Too many of us complain that our days are few while acting as if they will never end!"

> "We don't change God's message -- His message changes us!"

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**THIS WEEK'S LESSONS:** Sunday morning: "*The Value of Love!*" (Text: 1 Cor. 13:1-13); Sunday evening: "*Working Out Our Salvation in A Perverse Nation!*" (Phil. 2:12-16).