

The Old Hickory

Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

841 Old Hickory Blvd.

Jackson, TN 38305

February 13, 2011

Volume 31, # 07

What do you do with the Word of God?

Luke recorded that Jesus spoke this parable: "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up. Other *seed* fell on rocky *soil*, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. Other *seed* fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. Other *seed* fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great. As He said these things, He would call out, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear.'" (Luke 8:5-8).

Luke then recorded that Jesus explained the spiritual truth illustrated by such a common story: "Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. Those on the rocky *soil are* those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no *firm* root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. The *seed* which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the *seed* in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit

with perseverance.” (Luke 8:11-15). Shortly following the explanation, Jesus spoke this word of warning: "So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him *more* shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him." (Luke 8:18).

Jesus Christ taught only the truth that came to Him directly from God (John 8:26-28). The doctrine or teaching of Jesus Christ is authoritative beyond any question that man can entertain! John quoted Jesus: “For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment *as to* what to say and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.” (John 12:49-50).

God has spoken in His word! God created man and His ability to successfully communicate to him is questioned only by the foolish man. Some will not hear it. Some will hear it, but they will choose not to believe it. Some will hear it and believe it for a while, but for various reasons will not grow in it toward spiritual maturity. Others receive it and cling to it securely with determination to persevere to spiritual maturity. The ones who bear fruit are the ones who have been careful to hear it being honest with it and determined to pursue the goodness that comes by spiritual growth. We can see from the Lord’s lesson that the good eternal blessings that God has in store for man are only to be obtained by those who allow the seed, the word of God, to be planted in their properly prepared soil, the honest and good heart, and expend the necessary efforts to ward off the problems and difficulties that would hinder or prevent fruit from being harvested. It requires a strongly deliberate purpose to avoid fruitless self-deception.

“Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.” (2 John 9-11). Those who teach what is not in the doctrine of Christ are evil workers, and are not to be supported in any way by the Lord’s fruit bearers. Jesus Christ **never** taught that the Scriptures are filled with contradictions! He **never** taught that the Scriptures

were not worthy of man's trust and obedience. On the contrary, He directed men to the Scriptures (John 5:39; Luke 10:25-28; Matt. 12:3, 5; 19:4; 22:31; Mark 12:10, 26). He taught that obedience to God is required (Matt. 7:21).

Will God tolerate men who teach error? No! Are men at liberty to meet in religious councils, synods and seminaries and formulate their own doctrines by which they attempt to worship and serve God? No! Jesus stated in Matt. 15:9, "*But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.*" When Christ's disciples told Jesus that the Pharisees were offended by this statement, the Lord's response was **not**, "*it makes no difference what you believe!*" He did **not** say that "*every person was entitled to his own belief!*" Hear what He did say: "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted." (Matt. 15:13). Did the Lord teach that "one faith is as good as another?" No! Acts 6:7 states, "The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith." (cf. Acts 13:8; 14:22; 16:5). Notice that they were "obedient to **the** faith," (cf. Rom. 1:5) and notice that there is only **one faith** that God accepts (Eph. 4:5, 13; Phil. 1:27; Col. 1:23; 2:7). Believers are admonished to "stand firm in the faith" (1 Cor. 16:13), and Paul said, "I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7). Believers must "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints" (Jude 3). Warnings abound to beware of those who depart from **the** faith (1 Tim. 4:1; 5:8; 6:10, 20-21; 2 Tim. 3:8; Titus 1:13)! The concept of "many faiths" that are acceptable to God originated with men, not God!

Friend, the Word of God is where man must place his trust! Deception is the tool of God's adversary (John 8:44). Do you believe the Scriptures? Are you associating with people who have no respect for what Christ taught? Are you obeying the Scriptures? Can we help you?

- GFS

The Anvil Of God's Word

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;

When looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter these hammers so?"
"Just one," said he; then with a twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, I thought, the anvil of God's Word,
For ages, skeptics blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed - the hammers gone.

- John Clifford

"We Just Don't Go To Church"

A young couple who had not been to church services for a number of years asked, "*What have we done wrong besides not going to church?*"

They had robbed God of thousands of dollars (1 Cor. 16:1,2); they had forsaken the Lord's own memorial supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26); for years their voices were unheard in the praises of the saints, their petitions and thanksgivings absent from the prayers of the saints, and their knowledge of God's word stifled and fading, while their spiritual growth was completely neglected – to say nothing of the bad example set and the wrong influence exerted upon others around them! Indeed, their souls had become dead to God, and yet they ask: "*What have we done wrong besides not going to church?*"
May God help us to see ourselves as He sees us!

– Bill Crews

A student's chances of passing final exams are almost non-existent if he has no knowledge of the material upon which he will be tested. How will a man fare in the final judgment without the knowledge of what will examine him? "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day." (John 12:48).

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"Implanting Chastity in Our Children!"* (text: 1 Thess. 4:1-8); Sunday evening: Jesus Christ: A Closer Look – *At The Mountain of Transfiguration!* (Mark 9:1-29).