

# **The Old Hickory**

## **Bulletin**

### *Old Hickory Church of Christ*

*841 Old Hickory Blvd.*

Jackson, TN 38305

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## **HARDNESS OF HEART**

The Apostle Paul speaks about people “seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron” (1 Tim. 4:2). Whenever ranchers brand their cattle, the place where the hot iron is applied to the hide becomes rigid and hard, insensitive and void of feeling. Sadly, Paul describes the consciences of false teachers with an example that helps us better understand what happens to people who become insensitive to God’s will. The Old Testament prophet Zechariah described this condition among his fellow-Jews: “They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.” (Zech. 7:12 - NIV). What could possibly harden a person’s heart so that he will not hear the Lord?

**Hardened by the deceitfulness of sin:** Hebrews 3:13 warns, “But encourage one another day after day, ... so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” There are pleasures in sin, but they do not last very long; they are “passing pleasures” (Heb. 11:25). The reality is that “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23; cf.,

Jas. 1:15). But the resulting death is nowhere to be found in sin's advertisement, and the end of thing is seldom considered by man. The desire for happiness or gain that sin promises on the front end is really an illusion, a fantasy (Eph. 4:22). Sin is deceptive. It always promises more than it gives, and then it blinds the mind to the certainty of God's retribution. The one who is deceived and hardened by sin will find disappointment, tears and separation from God (Isa. 59:2).

**Hardened through unbelief:** "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God." (Heb. 3:12). Paul speaks of "those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness." (2 Thess. 2:10-12). God never causes or forces anyone to believe error. He does, however, permit them to believe error if they so choose. If men do not love the truth, what could be more fitting than to allow them to believe the very greatest errors and lies? When one rejects divine truth, there is nothing left except a lie. The more truth one rejects in unbelief, the more he refuses God's word, the more hardened he becomes.

**Hardened through stubbornness:** When people heard Jesus preaching, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," (Matt. 3:2) they were not always moved to repentance. Why? They were stubborn! Jesus described them: "For the heart of this people has become dull, With their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes ..." (Matt. 13:15a). These people deliberately stopped their ears and closed their eyes to His miracles and teaching. This kind of stubbornness results in hardness of heart (John 12:40). Jesus became angry at the Jews for this very thing (Mark 3:5). Stephen described the obstinate, hard-hearted, stubborn Jewish rejecters of Christ in this way: "You men who are stiff-necked and

uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit;" (Acts 7:51). Because of the inevitable retribution of God against such hardness of heart (2 Thess. 1:7-10), people are admonished thusly: "Today, if you would hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts ..." (Psalm 95:7-8).

Friend, what about you? Are you insensitive to God's will? Have you allowed the deceitfulness of sin to harden your heart? Do you love, believe and follow divine truth, God's word (John 17:17), refusing to be hardened by unbelief? Would the Lord regard you as obstinate and stubborn against His word? Please let us help you find repentance today! May we help you?

- GFS

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God set a goal, yet gave the choice  
To mortals how time may be spent,  
Admonishing that worth, not length,  
Values time's accomplishment.

— Mortenson

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## The Washing of Feet

On the night that Jesus ate the Passover with the apostles in the upper room in Jerusalem (John 13), He washed their feet and said, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."

Jesus did not "institute" the washing of feet on this occasion. We find such being practiced as early as Abraham's day. (Gen. 18:4) Our Lord gave a command that called upon His followers to show humility and extend hospitality, being lowly like their Lord and Master.

After the establishment of the church (Acts 2) the washing of feet is mentioned only one time in the Bible. In 1 Tim. 5:10 it is named with good works, the bringing up of children, the lodging of strangers, and relieving of the afflicted. From this we learn that the washing of feet is an act of service performed outside the assembly. There is no example of Christians coming together to wash feet. Those who try to place the washing of feet in the assembly of the saints (like the Lord's supper, for example) have no Bible authority for such practice.

-Irvin Himmel

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> We'll never get others to see the joy of claiming Christ until we get ourselves to see the joy of proclaiming Christ.

> *"The reason you don't like the Bible, you old sinner, is because it knows all about you."* — Billy Sunday

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**SUNDAY'S LESSONS:** Sunday morning: *"Implanting Courage In Our Children!"* (text: Joshua 1:1-9); Sunday evening: Jesus Christ: A Closer Look – *On The Road To Jerusalem!* (Mark 10:32-52).

**SCHEDULE:** Our Vacation Bible School is scheduled for June 20-24, 7:00 PM, with Dwayne Gandy as our guest speaker. Our Fall Gospel Meeting is scheduled for Sept. 18-23, with Eric Reynolds.