

# **The Old Hickory Bulletin**

## **Old Hickory Church of Christ**

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## **USE YOUR BIBLE (Lesson #2)**

CONTEXT. This is the magic word -- the most necessary ingredient of all interpretation. Your purpose is to determine what the text says, i.e., what ideas it carries -- what it means. Application, and consequent benefit, cannot be yours until you know the message.

But the message must be regarded as a whole. Before any of its parts can be understood, we must grasp the general theme of the writer -- be able to follow his general argument, and see the particular verse as a piece of that argument. This is CONTEXT.

Some books of the Bible are more closely knit than others (Ex.: Romans vs. James) but none can be properly studied verse at the time, with the exception of portions of proverbs, or other compilations of materials. Yet we frequently are in Bible classes where a single verse is read, and the class is expected to "get something" out of that. They do, too; but often it is a bit of "sermonizing" wholly unrelated to the text considered.

WHO is writing? To WHOM written? WHY? These are the usual questions that should be answered in order to grasp the context. But there is more than this to context. We must seek the mood and "feel" of the material.

PECULIAR USE OF WORDS. John establishes a special use of "ho logos" --"The Word" (John 1:1-f) which can be seen even in the English. This affects several of his arguments. In Romans, Paul is contrasting a system of -law with a system of faith; as can be seen by carefully studying his first three or four chapters. This affects his use of "faith" "works" "law" and other terms; and a verse taken out of context may be almost impossible to correctly understand.

The ability to "find another passage" to explain the first is greatly abused, even though wide familiarity with the Bible must be admired. Until we carefully establish our subject, by immediate context, we will surely add confusion by bringing up another verse whose only kinship is use of some of the same words as our text.

ANALYZE AND OUTLINE. Don't be frightened by this suggestion. After rereading the section containing the verse in question — and several rereadings are in order -- try to write down: (1) the general subject (What is he talking about -- trying to prove?) (2) a list of "points" (How does he prove his contention?). If the material is history (Acts) or biography (in a sense, Mark, etc.) just list the order of happenings. By writing these things, trying to see the "order" in the author's mind, you will open new avenues of thought.

Work? Certainly it is work! Where did you get the idea it was all easy? BUT THE REWARD MAKES ALL WORTHWHILE.

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## **THE GUINEA PROBLEM**

In 1 Kings 13:18 an old prophet lied to a young prophet and as a result the young prophet was killed by a lion. The young prophet heard a lie, believed a lie and acted on a lie, and this led to his demise.

Several years ago I had the need to drive down a dirt road. A certain farmer raised guineas. They would frequently cross the road and I would slow down to let them pass. A friend of mine heard of this and informed me that I was mistaken about the guinea problem. He said, "Ward, a guinea is quick and you couldn't hit one if you tried so keep up your regular speed." I heard a lie, I believed a lie and I acted upon a lie! The next time I saw the guineas crossing, I kept the hammer down. I heard a thumping noise under my old ford and when I looked back I had wiped out five of the farmer's guineas!

Kind friend, you cannot believe what some folks tell you. If a preacher from the pulpit tells you a lie and you believe and act upon that lie it can be catastrophic!

- Ward Hogland

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## I Am Debtor

In Romans 1:14 Paul wrote, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise." Paul did not mean that the Greeks and Barbarians had done anything for him personally that placed him under obligation to them. But God had done something for him that had placed him under obligation to all men-to men of all nations.

We have sometimes heard a fellow referred to as a "self-made man." This is a gross exaggeration. Some have to work harder than others to achieve their goals. But no one is the product, solely, of his own making. If he were, he would be an inferior product. Since Dr. Steele gave me my first spanking and started me breathing that good Texas air, I have both needed and received help. And there are many people, both living and dead, to whom I am debtor.

I am debtor to my parents first of all, and for many reasons. It was through them, of course, that God gave me this earthly life. My parents have long since departed this life, but to some extent parents continue to live in their children, long after they are gone. There are only two of us left now: My brother Hollis, who lives in Houston, and I. Our parents were of the old school that thought children should not only respect their parents, but any older person. I cannot remember having answered either of my parents, when they called me, with "what!" I said Sir, when Papa called me, and Ma'am, when Mamma called. It may sound trivial to some, but it was just one of those rules that taught me and the other children to respect authority beginning with our parents. Pardon me if I seem presumptuous, but I feel certain that if such rules had been laid down and enforced by the parents of this generation, there would be at least a minimum of "loud-mouths", and "vulgar -show-offs" on the streets and campuses now.

I am debtor to my school-teachers. Due to circumstances in my family, I had to quit school in the ninth grade. My father became semi invalid. But, even so, I had several school teachers. They likewise taught us respect for others, and particularly for school teachers, who were not only older than we, but who, in their position, should have the respect of the students. And they enforced these rules. When they could not enforce them, there was somebody who could. I have seen big, husky boys, almost grown, grab the switch out of the teacher's hand, when she started to whip him, break it in pieces and throw it down. But it didn't end there. The father of Mr. Big Shot then came into the picture, and sonny boy had to stand and let that little girl school teacher whip him until she was ready to quit. But a goodly number of these boys grew up to be responsible men at Bald Prairie, Texas where all this took place. After I started preaching I went there for meetings two consecutive years, and baptized 58 people. Some of them were boys who had felt the teacher's switch and had to say "ma'am" instead of "what."

I do not think that there is a great deal wrong in this country today that could not have been prevented if the Casper-Milquetoast law makers and law enforcers, and parents whose children can hardly do anything bad, had

imbibed a little more of the spirit of the old fashioned parents and school-teachers.

The greatest debt that I or anyone else owes however is that which we owe to God our Creator and to Christ our Redeemer. If we fail in everything we undertake to accomplish in this life, except to live and die in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall have been eminently successful. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt. 16:26)

- Luther Blackmon, via TRUTH MAGAZINE, XVI: 24, p. 2, April 20, 1972

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## *The Devil's Beatitudes*

If the devil were to write his beatitudes, they would probably go something like this:

1. Blessed are those who are too tired, too busy, too distracted to spend an hour once a week with their fellow Christians – they are my best workers.
2. Blessed are those Christians who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked - I can use them.
3. Blessed are the touchy who stop going to church - they are my missionaries.
4. Blessed are the trouble makers - they shall be called my children.
5. Blessed are the complainers - I'm all ears to them.
6. Blessed are those who are bored with the minister's mannerisms and mistakes - for they get nothing out of his sermons.
7. Blessed is the church member who expects to be invited to his own church - for he is a part of the problem instead of the solution.
8. Blessed are those who gossip - for they shall cause strife and divisions that please me.
9. Blessed are those who are easily offended — for they will soon get angry and quit.

10. Blessed are those who do not give their offering to carry on God's work  
- for they are my helpers.
11. Blessed is he who professes to love God but hates his brother and  
sister - for he shall be with me forever.
12. Blessed are you who, when you read this think it is about other people  
and not yourself - I've got you too!

SHARE THIS WITH OTHERS. WE ALL NEED TO BE REMINDED THAT THIS  
CAN HAPPEN TO ANY CHRISTIAN, INCLUDING YOU AND ME.

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*Elders: Gregg Needham,  
Gordon Percell & Gary Smalley*

*Evangelist: Gary Smalley*

**Sunday AM: 9:30 & 10:30**

**Sunday PM: 5:00**

**Wednesday PM: 7:00**



***What Must I Do To Be Saved?***

**HEAR THE GOSPEL**

(Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17)

**BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST**

(Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6)

**REPENT OF PAST SINS**

(Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30)

**CONFESS CHRIST**

(Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

**BE BAPTIZED**

(Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21)

**LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE**

(Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25)