

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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November 23, 2014

Volume 34, # 48

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO MAKE?

If you want to make Jews, preach Moses and the Levitical law. Moses and the Levitical law never made a Christian, or a Baptist, Methodist, or a Presbyterian.

If you desire to make Methodists, preach Methodist doctrine, officially stated in the Discipline. The Methodist Discipline never made a Baptist, Presbyterian, or a Christian.

If you want to make Baptists, preach Baptist doctrine, officially stated in the New Hampshire Confession of Faith found in Pendleton's Church Manual, for use in Baptist churches. Baptist doctrine does not make Presbyterians, Methodists, or Christians.

If you wish to make Presbyterians, get the Westminster Confession, and preach the official faith of the Presbyterians stated therein. Presbyterian doctrine does not make Baptists, Christians, or Methodists.

(Editor's note: If you want to make so-called Jehovah Witnesses it is necessary to teach the doctrine of The Watch-tower Bible & Tract Society of Brooklyn, N.Y. If you wish to make Mormons, you should preach the doctrine of Mormonism as set forth in "the standard works of the Mormon church." Or if you desire to make members of the "Church of God denomination," you should preach the doctrine that is set forth by their "General Assembly." The publications of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Mormon publications and the official doctrine of the Church of God denomination will NOT make Christians anymore than any other human doctrines mentioned.)

But if you want to make a Christian, get the Christian's only official statement of faith, the New Testament, and preach that only. The New Testament only does not make Methodists, Baptists Presbyterians, or anything else. It simply makes Christians.

When Paul preached, he preached "Christ and him crucified." That was all he determined to know among men. But when Paul preached "Christ and him crucified," he was then persuading men to be "Christians." Agrippa said unto Paul. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

It takes more than Paul preached to persuade men to be anything more than Christians. No man can cite a single passage of Scripture justifying his leading you into a denomination. Why? Simply because the system of denominations is NOT Scriptural, and is therefore wrong.

— via *Just A Moment*, 2/25/1950

THE NATURE AND SIN OF HATRED

Someone has said, "Malice can always find a mark to shoot at, and a pretence to fire." Hatred is the vice of narrow souls; they feed it with all their littleness, and make it the pretext for base tyrannies. It is a low and degrading emotion and is so poisonous that no man is strong enough to use it safely. Booker T. Washington, the great American Negro educator said, "I shall never permit myself to stoop so low as to hate any man." The Holy Spirit, speaking through John said, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (1 John 3:15). Malice and hatred toward others are not only sinful in God's sight, but a curse to all who entertain or possess them. They are very fretting, and make the mind of the hater sore and uneasy. No man can be contented and happy, regardless of his position in life, while harboring in his heart malice and hatred toward his fellow-man. If I wanted to punish an enemy, I could find no more effective method or means of so doing, than that of fastening on him the trouble of constantly hating somebody. We are to hate no one! Hate their vices, but not themselves. Dislike whatever deserves it, but never hate your fellow-man; for that is of the nature of malice, which is applied to persons, not to things. If there is any person whom you dislike, that is the one of whom you should never speak. If you hate, even your enemies, you will contract such a vicious habit of mind as by degrees will break out upon those who are your friends, or those who are indifferent to you.

There are, of course, some things which must be hated, especially by Christians, but persons - never! Hate hypocrisy;

hate intolerance; hate oppression, injustice, Pharisaism; hate them as Christ hated them - with a deep abiding God-like hatred. But the one who hates his fellow-man, thereby insures his own destruction. LOVE is the key to success in every Christian endeavor. No substitute will work in the final test before God, regardless of how it may appear to man. (See 1 Cor. 13). James asks: "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom cometh not down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace." (Jas. 3:13-18). The passion of hate is so durable and so inveterate, that the surest prognostic of death in a sick man is a wish for reconciliation with those whom he may have hated.

Prominent among the "works of the flesh" catalogued by Paul in Gal. 5:19-21 are "hatred", "strife", "envyings." Said he, "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (v. 21).

IMPERFECTIONS

"The church of Christ, though a divine body, is composed of imperfect people - fallible, blundering individuals. None is without fault, not one. Elders, deacons, evangelists, teachers and

members; and yet the amazing thing is that God in all ages, has been able to work such wonders through agency of the imperfect. From Adam on, He has never had a chance with any other kind.

"If any preacher ever finds a perfect congregation, he will have come to a place where there is very little need for him. It is imperfection of the people which create for him his task of preaching, teaching and training.

If any congregation ever finds a perfect preacher, he will seem unreal, without understanding of the difficulties under which imperfect people labor. This will destroy any possibility of his being of any real value.

And so it is the imperfect - working together, trying to understand, trying to lift up one another, wrestling with one another's weaknesses and forgiving one another's faults - this is what makes a congregation as near perfect as anything can be."

- Charles Grover Caldwell, Sr., 1962

Neither Protestant nor Catholic

It's pretty easy to see that this congregation or church is not Catholic. There is no Roman priest in charge of the parish or nuns to serve, no Vatican connection or leader status for the Pope, and no incense or infant baptisms in our worship and work. Since it is obvious we are not Catholics most will say we must be Protestants.

The assumption made is that Christians are either Catholic or Protestant. If you are not one you must be the other. But we are not Protestants either. We are not of the Protestant Reformation that protested the excesses of the Catholic Church and sought to reform it. Beyond Catholic tradition and Protestant theology we are, simply, Christians.

We understand that this sounds strange in a religious world complicated with so many denominations. If you ask a man today what he is religiously he doesn't say "I am a Christian." He says he is a Baptist or a Methodist or a Presbyterian or a Pentecostal. In the New Testament followers of Jesus were content to be, simply, Christians (Acts 11:26).

Christ's people were described by God in several ways in the Scripture, long before Catholics and Protestants existed. To God they were His children (1 John 1:1-3). To Christ they were His disciples (John 8: 31-32). To each other they were brothers (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). And to the world they were, simply, Christians (1 Peter 4:16).

We are not claiming to be the first denomination, the best denomination, the most conservative denomination, the nondenominational denomination, or a denomination at all! We simply follow the New Testament to be Christians, in the unity Christ called for (John 17:21) as an invitation to the world, there for all to see.

- Robert Hines

What You Can Be to Mother

You can be the sword in your mother's heart;
The pain that pierces her soul.
You can be the reason for the tears that she sheds;
The grey in her growing old.

You can be her heartbreak when you're out of sight;
The worry in her uneasy days.
You can be the cause in her sleepless nights;
Her villain, her vagabond, her knave.

Or you can be the pride of your mother's heart;
The joy that fills up her soul;
The rose in her bouquet of family dreams;
The love in her growing old.

You can be the cross or the crown in her life;
You're free to make your own choice
But God has promised you a much longer life,
If you obey her and make her rejoice.

- Dorsey L. Crow

- Nothing will get you in a tight place any quicker than a loose tongue.
 - Criticism should always leave a person with the feeling he has been helped.
 - There is a wonderful difference in a man's changing his position because he learns he is in error, and in his compromising his convictions because he learns he is opposed.
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"Listening to the Word of God!"* (Text: Luke 5:1-3); Sunday evening: *"A Beautiful Spirit of Fairness!"* (Text: Acts 28:16-24).