

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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We Are Having A Gospel Meeting!

We want people to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ! No person can be saved without faith. Jesus said, "...I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins." (John 8:24). Just prior to His ascension into heaven, Jesus commissioned His chosen apostles: "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.'" (Mark 16:15-16). By faith those who hear the gospel can be saved. Without faith they will be lost. One important purpose of our Gospel Meeting is to win the lost.

We preach the gospel today in order to create and stimulate faith in those who hear. That is God's ordained purpose for having men preach. "How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14). The only means which God has of reaching the hearts of men is through the preaching of the gospel.

Notice also that it is the gospel that must be preached, not some other message. Paul declared, "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe." (1 Cor. 1:21). The "message" is the gospel, the word of Christ. That very message produces, builds and strengthens saving faith. Notice: "So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:17). It is this message that will be preached in our Gospel Meeting, as well as any other time we assemble. Faith in Christ is the result we desire.

We want sinners to come to our Gospel Meeting. If they do, God will be calling them to salvation through the message preached. We want erring Christians to come to our Gospel Meeting. The truth will be taught, and they will be encouraged at every meeting to repent and be restored to fellowship with God. Many are caught in trespasses (Gal. 6:1), and many stray from the truth (Jas. 5:19). We preach for the purpose of turning them back, turning them from the error of their way, saving their souls from death and restoring them to the Lord by covering a multitude of sins (Jas. 5:20).

We want Christians to come to our Gospel Meeting. To the elders at Ephesus upon his departure, Paul declared, "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified." (Acts 20:32). Many Christians have been built up by the preaching of the gospel. That's what strengthens faith

and fidelity to the Lord. Marriages have been strengthened by hearing and heeding gospel instruction of the family. The discouraged have been encouraged to stronger faith and lasting hope. Prayers are offered and answered by God in the strengthening of Christians in the inner man. We can know the hope of His calling and the greatness of His power (Eph. 1:18-19) through the preaching that will be done in our Gospel Meeting.

Are you interested? Will you attend our Gospel Meeting? Will you ask others to come to our Gospel Meeting?

- GFS

The Sin of Murmuring

The word “murmur” is defined as “low [half-suppressed – *gs*], muttered complaints; grumbling.” (Webster). It is condemned by God as being sinful. We are commended to “do all things without murmurings and disputings.” (Philippians 2:14). The apostle Paul warned Christians against this sin in his letter to the Corinthians: “Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer” (1 Corinthians 10:10). The sinfulness of murmuring is vividly illustrated by God's severity of punishment toward the guilty Jews, as shown in the following account.

Korah, Dathan, Ahiram, fifty princes of the congregation and others rebelled and murmured against God's servants Moses and Aaron (Numbers 16:1-11). “And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that

appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.” (verses 32-33). “And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense” (verse 35). When the Jews murmured that Moses and Aaron were responsible for the deaths, God killed fourteen thousand, seven hundred of them by a plague (verses 41-49). This is written for our admonition and should cause all murmurers in the church to repent and reform, lest they suffer a “sorer punishment” (Hebrews 10:28-29).

A murmurer can do great harm and irreparable damage in a congregation by creating discontent, discouragement and apathy among members, by sowing discord among the brethren (which God hates - Proverbs 6:19), by undermining the work of preachers, teachers, deacons, and the rule of elders. This many times creates a general attitude of dissatisfaction and loss of interest, enthusiasm and zeal, resulting in decreased attendance, contribution and impairment of all work in general. The murmurer may then be the first to criticize the lack of growth, and may use the preacher or someone else as the scapegoat to bear the blame, not realizing or ignoring the fact that his own sin is responsible.

The murmurer does not truly love God and is not really interested in the welfare and growth of the church, but in his own selfish desires and opinions. He is either woefully ignorant of or willfully disregards God's word regarding his sin, and is a dangerous threat to the cause of Christ. He can and does destroy or greatly

lessen the influence and work of those who happen to be the object of his disgruntled attack. It is difficult to deal with such a situation because often times the murmurer does not have the courage or character to honorably discuss his complaints with the proper ones, but whispers them in secret to others. Christians should not lend receptive ears, nor endorsement to murmuring, but exhort the guilty one to cease his sin. Remember, if one will murmur to you, he may murmur about you, because many times he is a pharisaical faultfinder, a chronic complainer with a hypercritical attitude who is usually never satisfied very long with any arrangement.

We earnestly exhort all murmurers everywhere in the name of Christ to repent of this sin, to cease and desist in tearing down the work of God, and to get busy in the kingdom to build it up. Those who truly love God and his church have no desire to be hypercritical faultfinders, wandering about murmuring to all who will listen. If anyone should persist in this sin after proper warnings and efforts to restore, then scriptural discipline should be brought about to protect the flock of God and its work. The work of our Lord is too important to allow murmurers to run and ruin the church.

- Earl Fly

The Joy of Worship

David said, "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." (Psalm 16:11).

Somewhere some of us have gotten the idea that worship is not a thing to be enjoyed; but an act to be performed solely through the sense of duty, and the fear of judgment; hence, a grievous burden. Some feel that if they worship Sunday morning, they have done all the Lord expects of them and they can get to heaven on it. But, others are searching for a deeper spiritual life, a greater love for God, and they enjoy worshipping Him at every opportunity. What a joy it is for them to sing the hymns of Zion, to bow in humble prayer God; and to feast upon the bread of life Sunday night and Wednesday night, as well as Sunday morning.

If one does not develop the proper attitude toward spiritual and heavenly things, while living in the church, he will be unfit for those things in eternity. Yes, in the presence of God there is joy! Worship is drawing near to God, hence it is a joyful thing. At His right hand there are pleasures. And the Lord has promised to be with us when we are gathered together in His name. This is not to say that worship is amusing or entertaining, but there is pleasure and joy in it for him who has set his love on heavenly things. It is a matter of the things in which you find pleasure.

- unknown

Which Do You Do?

When a person is taught that he is wrong in some action or teaching, he can:

1. Become angry and take it out on the teacher.
2. Become angry and take it out on the Lord.

3. Stir up trouble by creating a faction.
 4. Run off to some other church.
 5. Or, he can obey the Lord and be right in God's sight, having a hope of eternal life.
- Which do you do?
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- "Chains of habits are usually too small to be felt until they become too strong to be easily broken!"
 - "Instead of praying for lighter loads, Christians should pray for greater strength!"
 - "After all is said and done, more is said than done!"
 - "As scarce as TRUTH is, the supply has always exceeded the demand!"
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OUR GOSPEL MEETING BEGINS NEXT SUNDAY! Will you be here to hear the gospel of Christ preached by Jerry Crolus, of Conway, Arkansas?

THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"Marriage Like Christ and the Church!"* (Text: Eph. 5:22-33); Sunday evening: *"How to Respond to God's Blessings!"* (Luke 17:11-19).