

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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GOD TAKES GREAT DELIGHT IN THOSE WHO ARE TRUTHFUL

One is not truthful who claims to love God but refuses to heed His Word for answers regarding spiritual matters. Christ said to His apostles, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). One who does not love the Lord cannot be saved, and one who does not keep the Lord's commandments does not love Him. It is therefore a lie to claim to love the Lord while keeping the commandments of men. A so-called faith without love cannot save one's soul. One who desires to go to Heaven must remember that "in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6). A person seeking to save his soul will also remember that the apostle Paul said "let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4). It is thus nothing more than a lie for one to declare his love for God while steadfastly refusing to obey His Word.

Solomon experienced all this world has to offer. The life he lived enabled him to be acutely aware of both the good and the bad. He knew what would be profitable to a person as well as what would prove to be a detriment to one's peace of mind and true happiness. Thus, the wise man said, "Lying lips [are] abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly [are] his delight" (Prov. 12:22).

Our society, at least in years gone by, thought that lying is that which children should not do. It is true that young folks need to speak the truth, but so do adults. It is utter folly for adults to engage in lying while insisting their children tell the truth.

There is no sin more common today than the sin of lying. Lying has become a way of life in the oval office, the halls of Congress, the school-rooms, and the home. Even in the spiritual realm, most prefer a lie instead of the truth. If people do not have a love for the truth, God will send "them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. 2:10-11). May a study of the subject of lying encourage us to speak and obey the truth!

In the minds of many people nothing comes so easy as lying. Without any thought or effort, lies freely flow from some people's lips. Some children get lots of coaching and practice from an early age. A father goes fishing or golfing but leaves instructions with the children to tell his employer that he is sick and has gone to the doctor. When some parents do not wish to speak to someone on the phone, they tell their children to say they are not at home. Children quickly learn that in certain situations it is preferable to lie rather than tell the truth.

Christians are admonished to speak the truth! It is reasonable to expect that worldly people will lie when it is to their advantage. It is also reasonable to expect a child of God to always speak the truth. Such is not always the case, however, because psychology and worldly wisdom has influenced some folks more than the Holy Bible.

Paul tells Christians to "lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3:9). A child of God is supposed to be a "new creature" in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17). But if the situation warrants it or the circumstances encourage it, many members of the body will not hesitate to lie. The great lesson to be learned is that the "situation ethics" mentality and the "end justifies the means" philosophy are false. God has never been pleased with those who do not speak the truth. A lying tongue has always been that which God hates; and, He declares it an abomination (Prov. 6:16-17).

Lying is an abomination to God because His great enemy is the father of lies! Jesus told the Pharisees of His day, "Ye are of [your] father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). Satan has again and again distinguished himself by wearing the title of liar. Since the devil has been called the "father of lies," the willful liar is testimony of his parentage. One who willfully lies confirms to all humanity that his allegiance is to the devil!

Lying is the exact opposite of God's nature! The Old Testament declares, "God [is] not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do [it]? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good" (Num. 23:19)? The New Testament is also quick to remind us that God cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

Truth comes from God (John 8:40), and Christ testifies that His Word is truth (John 17:17). It is truth that will free one from the bondage of sin (John 8:32), and it is truth (Word of Christ) that will judge all people in that Day (John 12:48).

There will be no liars in Heaven! The apostle John says that all liar's will have their part "in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8). John also notes that outside the gates of the Heavenly city "[are] dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Rev. 22:15). The apostle Paul declares that whoremongers, and them that defile themselves with mankind, liars, and perjured persons are contrary to sound doctrine (1 Tim. 1:10). In regard to heaven, John notes: "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither [whatsoever] worketh abomination, or [maketh] a lie" (Rev. 21:27). The caliber of people that will keep liars company throughout eternal torment shows God's disdain for this sin (cf. Rev. 22:15).

May it be said of those who call themselves children of God that they will not deal falsely with God nor their fellowman (cf. Isa. 63:8).

- Marvin L. Weir

Churches Becoming Social Clubs

There is a great deal of misunderstanding by many as to the purpose of the church. Some think that the church should be a political power to involve itself in the politics of the land. Others feel that the church has the task of educating people with secular knowledge. There are still others that think the church should go into secular business in order to make money. All of these ideas are foreign to the Bible teaching as to why Christ died or built His church.

Nevertheless, one of the most erroneous ideas that people have about the church is that the church is to be some kind of a social club or center. This, too, is foreign to Bible teaching. This erroneous idea has led to "fellowship halls" and kitchens being built, bingo games, parties, and entertainment of every kind. But where is the authority from God's word for the church to be a social club? Where in God's word did Christ ever teach that this is a work of His church? Is this one of the purposes Christ died to build a church?

When Paul wrote to the brethren at Corinth concerning their attitude toward the Lord's supper, he made a comment that we should observe: "Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's supper, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God, and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you" (1

Cor. 11:20-22). They had made the Lord's supper no more important than a common meal, a social gathering. Paul went on to explain what the Lord's supper should mean to the Christian and concluded his argument with these words: "If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you may not come together for judgment 11:34).

Now I do not know any church that uses their "fellowship hall" in their observance of the Lord's supper. But the use that is made by churches with their "fellowship halls" or their kitchens, (neither are even mentioned in the Bible) is the same type of abuse that the Corinthians were guilty of in regards to the Lord's supper. The Lord's supper is an act of worship, which the Corinthian brethren abused by making it of no more importance than a common meal. That same type of abuse is done when people make the church into a social club by having a "fellowship hall" in their buildings.

Jesus intended His church to be a spiritual organization, not a social organization. Peter wrote: "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5). The church is to provide the Gospel of Christ to save a person's soul, (Rom. 1:16-17). This is called evangelism. The church also edifies her members so each member grows in the gospel. The only other thing the church is authorized to do is to relieve the needs of her members if they become in need of such relief. (Eph. 4:12, 1 Cor. 16:1).

Let us let the church be the church and a social club be a social club.

- Tarry L. Cluff, Truth Magazine, 01/06/1977

- > "It's never crowded along the 'second mile'!"
 - > "We are all manufacturers: some make goods; others make trouble; and many make excuses!"
 - > "Any housewife, no matter how large her family, can always get some time alone by doing the dishes!"
 - > "Some people give and forgive; others get and forget!"
 - > "The secret of happiness is to count your blessings, not your birthdays!"
 - > "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, and today is a gift: that's why they call it the present!" - Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962)
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*Seeing The God Who Can't Be Seen!*" (Text: Exodus 24:9-12); Sunday evening: "*Abel: A Man of Integrity and Faith!*" (Heb. 11:1-4).