

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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The Proper Attitude

It is not every person who thinks himself to be religious who is really interested in knowing the truth. Many people have the same attitude in religion that others have in matters social, political and moral, that is, they feel under no obligation to hear and learn or believe anything different from what they have already accepted. Unless they agree with what is being taught, they have no time or consideration to give it, but close their minds complacently and firmly against it. This is a tragic attitude. It is prejudice and keeps us from giving the truth a fair hearing.

If a man in a jury box were to make up his mind before all the testimony or evidence was in, and refuse to give consideration to any further evidence, it would evidently be a mistrial and a miscarriage of justice. When a man is placed on a jury, he puts himself, by law, under obligation to listen carefully to all the testimony and to give due credit to all the evidence, and the preponderance of the evidence, admissible under law, and to render a true and just verdict on that basis alone. If he does not, he has acted dishonestly and inflicted an injury upon a fellow man.

When we allow prejudice of any kind to prevent us from giving proper consideration to the truth, we mistreat the Word of God, injure our own souls, and evidence that we value something more highly than we do the truth and the favor of the Lord. If we are not careful, we will shut out of our minds everything that is not in harmony with what we already think is right. That is the same attitude religiously that is demonstrated by those who tell us that the only moral standard is what the individual decides for himself to be right.

This attitude was demonstrated by many who were following Jesus according to the story in John, chapter 6. They actually were following the Lord for the loaves and the fishes, for physical healing, for political rewards, etc., and when he first taught something that they had not heard, that was not in harmony with what they already had accepted, they turned back to walk with him no more. Jesus asked his inner circle of disciples, "Would ye also

go away?" Peter replied, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou has the words of eternal life." We need to realize with Peter that when we turn away from what the Lord says we have abandoned the hope of eternal life.

No one knows all the truth; and the person is a fool who does not admit to himself that since he does not know everything, the very thing that he does not know may be the very thing that he needs to learn. If he closes his mind to everything that is not in agreement with what he has already learned, he will never know any more than he already knows; and that means that wherever he may be wrong, he will continue to be wrong until he changes his attitude toward both himself and the truth.

Concerning people of this disposition the Lord said, "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, by hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear" (Matt. 13:14-16). We need to examine our own hearts and see if we really do want to understand the truth. Are we willing to hear and see that we might understand and learn the truth? Will we investigate and study that we might know?

- Roy E. Cogdill

Psalm 119:89-94 -- Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.

⁹⁰Your faithfulness *continues* throughout all generations; You established the earth, and it stands.

⁹¹They stand this day according to Your ordinances, For all things are Your servants.

⁹²If Your law had not been my delight, Then I would have perished in my affliction.

⁹³I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have revived me.

⁹⁴I am Yours, save me; For I have sought Your precepts.

Is It Narrow Minded?

I don't know about you, but I get a little weary of hearing the word 'narrow' used as a slur against preachers who adhere to the Bible in their preaching. Sure they are 'narrow,' but so are factory workers, surgeons, druggists, and teachers.

The factory worker is so 'narrow' that he uses micrometers and measures to the thousandth of an inch the bores and pistons of engines, electronic components and balancing wheels in mechanical time pieces.

The surgeon is so 'narrow' that he insists on ultra-technical laboratory analysis and meticulously sterilized instruments of special design. Why, he is so 'picky' and 'narrow' that he makes his assistant wear facial masks during surgical procedures!

The druggist is so 'narrow' that he just has to have a prescription before he will let you have certain drugs. He says he has to be 'narrow' because of standards and government regulations are narrow, and even thinks it is for the common good!

As you think about it, it's a blessing that somebody is 'narrow-minded.' And however much we need to be narrow about vital material matters, we must be infinitely more careful and exact about spiritual laws. God will not be mocked!

- Jere Frost

“It Doesn’t Say Not To ...”

Imagine this: you walk into a fast food restaurant and order a hamburger, fries, and a coke - the all-American meal! But then, you notice that it seems to take an unusually long time to get your food. Finally, the gal at the counter brings up your order - piles of food on three separate trays! "What's all of this?" you ask. "Well", answers the waitress, "it's one of every item on our menu. Your bill comes to \$85.68". You protest: "I didn't tell you to bring me all of that food!" "But", she replies, "you didn't tell me not to".

Could this happen? Of course not! We all know that when you specify what you want, you automatically eliminate other options. We operate with this understanding every day. In fact, this logic is so standard, that we don't even think about it. When you order something from a catalog, or call in a pizza, or write a grocery list, you naturally assume that it is understood that you want only what is specified, and nothing else.

What's the point of all this? Simply that in religious matters we ought to employ the same logic. God has perfectly revealed through His word what He wants us to do in His service. We should naturally assume that since He has told us what He wants, other things ought to be left out.

For instance: What about music in worship? The New Testament specifies singing - there is no mention of instrumental music in New Testament worship. Since God has told us to

sing, and nothing else, we ought to do just that. Someone answers, "But it doesn't say not to play instruments". The Scriptures don't have to say not to - that's the whole point!

- Greg Gwin

A Sad Diary

FIRST CALL: We are going to start attending as soon as the baby is old enough to bring.

ONE YEAR LATER: Yes, we are coming when our toddler stops squirming and crying.

THREE YEARS LATER: I know you think we are awful about church attendance, but Jane has trouble in her little Bible classes. She is just different from the other children, we guess. It is bad to force a child to go. We'll come later when Jane wants to.

ELEVEN YEARS LATER: The reason I telephoned is that I want you or the elders to see if you can help us with Jane. She is running around with the wrong crowd and continually gets into trouble. She won't even listen to us anymore.

SEVERAL YEARS LATER: Yes, Jane is married. They ran away from home. Oh, definitely they are both too young, but she stopped minding us a long time ago. He promised not to stand in her way if she wanted to attend church services.

TEN MORE YEARS LATER: Well Jane finally married a man that can give her the best things in life. Yes, she had to divorce the other two fellows. Jane is upset about something though. The preacher preached a sermon on marriage and divorce last Sunday, and Jane says she will never go to church again.

Oh, yes, one other thing, could you tell us where we went wrong with Jane?

- unknown

> "Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off the goal!"

> "Never to go to a place where there is not room for your Master as well as yourself!"

> "The right train of thought can take you to a better station in life!"

➤ "People who fly into a rage always make a bad landing!"

➤ "Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see!"

THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*The Incredible Book of God!*" (Text: Jer. 29:11-13); Sunday evening: "*John's Framework: A Bold Declaration!*" (Text: John 1:1-5).