

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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December 22, 2019

Volume 39, # 52

IS OUR LOVE GENUINE?

It is difficult for me to understand how some individuals could be so hard-hearted and ungrateful as to fail to acknowledge appreciation for those that love them. For example, I know many parents who have patterned their entire lives so that the maximum benefit of their lives would flow to their children. I know many parents that do things for no other reason than their children will profit by it. I know parents that make tremendous sacrifices so that their children can gain. I am referring not only to financial blessings, but also in terms of time, effort, energy, patience, etc. that is put forth in order to aid the ones they love physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc. Those that love and manifest their love in ways like this should come to know the appreciation of the one who is on the receiving end, don't you think? One might ask, "Well, how do you know that someone loves you?"

The love of another is recognizable because it is expressed in his behavior. It is evidenced by one's conduct, by one's actions. I know that my parents love me because they not only tell me that they do, they show me that they do. They supply that which is needed for my well-being (food, clothing, shelter, security, time, trust, gratitude, responsibility, teaching, relationships, etc.). We readily admit that it is the parent's responsibility to provide these things (1 Tim. 5:8), but we are also trying to demonstrate that we ought to be thankful for the actions of those that love us, to the extent that we manifest our gratitude. We need to react to the actions of those that love us in a way that acknowledges the love shown to us and offers love in return. Why have we said all of this?

It is difficult for me to understand how some individuals could be so hard-hearted and ungrateful as to fail to acknowledge appreciation for the one that loves them like no other ever could: God! He created us after His own image (Gen. 1:27); He gives us a habitat in which to survive (Ps. 115:16); He gives us fruitful seasons (Acts 14:17); He provides the necessities of life (Luke 12:22-31); He provides every spiritual blessing that man needs (Eph. 1:3). We could form an endless list of all that God has done for man, which reveals the love that He has for man. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16). Need we say more? Because God loves man and has evidenced His love in an undeniable manner, He should see evidence of the appreciation of the ones who are on the receiving end, don't you think?

We ought to be thankful unto God to the extent that we *manifest* our gratitude. "... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." (Luke 10:27). How may we give evidence of our thankfulness? How can our appreciation be genuine? "Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you: abide ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." (John 15:9-10). Read also John 14:15, 21-24. Our love for God can best be demonstrated by our doing His commandments. We need to react to the actions of God in a way that acknowledges the love shown to us and offers love in return. When we love God we will do what He has commanded us to do, we will desire to be with Him now (worship services) and also in the life to come (heaven), we will want to use our time for prayer and the advancement of His cause.

My friend, do you love God? "My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth." (1 John 3:18). Do you love God?

- Gary Smalley, via *The Edifier* (Rogersville, AL), 12/7/1980

Unknown Voices from the Past:

A man was walking down a little hill in the woods when he stepped on a little twig. The twig rolled and he fell down. As he got up and went on his way, he thought to himself, "If that had been a big log, I would have seen it and climbed over it. There would have been no danger of falling, for I would have been aware of the danger." The fact that the twig was small was what made it dangerous.

In our spiritual pathway, the devil places little temptations to defeat us. His little traps or obstructions are more effective than the big ones, partly because if people do notice them they may think they are too small to make a difference.

Beware of little things!! It was only a "little thing" — a bit of forbidden fruit — that brought sin and its curse into the world.

- Unknown

The recent issue of Christian Woman magazine reported a study of 2,400 teens that revealed that early dating leads to early sex. Of the girls who started dating at age 12, 91% had sex before graduating from high school, compared to 20% who started dating at age 16.

Are we giving our young people the proper biblical teaching on this topic? Are we putting them in difficult situations too soon? Are we exposing them to too much promiscuity in the movies and television programs they are allowed to watch? “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God” (1 Thess. 4:3-5).

- Unknown

A Voice from the Past: Robertson L. Whiteside

Sons of God and Daughters of Men

Q. Please explain Genesis 6:1-2. Who were the sons of God and who were the daughters of men?

A. None but servants of God are called sons of God; at least that is general Bible usage. From the contrast in the verses referred to we would naturally conclude that the daughters of men were the daughters of men who did not serve God. Sons were born to these sons of God and daughters of men (6:4). It seems that the marriage of the righteous with the wicked resulted in great corruption.

- Robertson L. Whiteside

A Sordid Biblical Picture of Modern America

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet (Rom. 1:26-27).

Paul is not indulging in a lot of fanciful speculations nor presenting baseless theories. He is showing how the heathen nations had reached the lowest degree of moral degradation. When people cease to respect God, they will not long respect their own bodies. They give themselves up to passions of dishonor. Their women become abusers of their own bodies. The men indulged in the debasing practice of sodomy. We are told that this was

a common practice among the prominent men of Greece, and also the Romans. When the greatest men of a nation descend to the lowest conceivable form of immorality, it shows how powerless education and philosophy are to save men from the deepest depths of moral pollution.

- Robertson L. Whiteside

QUOTE WITHOUT COMMENT

Much is said about preaching the truth in love, and so it should be preached. But in love of what? The preacher should so love the truth that he will not sacrifice any of it nor pervert it, and he should so love people that he will not withhold from them even an unpleasant truth. He that does either of these things loves neither the truth nor the people. We frequently fool ourselves; we think we do thus and so to spare the feelings of others, when it is our own feelings that prompt us. "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Tim. 4:2).

- Robertson L. Whiteside

Progress

Recently I heard a man, a Baptist preacher, make a short talk over the radio on progress. He spoke of what some people called progress — always going on, advancing. But he said that to make real progress we sometimes had to go back; and he used the prodigal son as an illustration. He did not say so, but he could have said that all the time the boy was away from home he was slipping — losing his money, worse than wasting his time, and destroying his self-respect and his manhood. Yes, to make any progress he had to go back.

Some years ago some brethren decided to be "progressive." When they went out from us they soon spent what Christianity they started off with in riotous indulgences in all sorts of innovations. Now some no longer believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. With them the religion of Christ is just one of the religions of the world. They are now in the condition of the prodigal son when he hired himself out to feed hogs; but they are not as wise as that boy — they are feeding on husks and think it is good eating. Progressive? They will never make any real progress till they return to the Father's house.

- Robertson L. Whiteside, via "Doctrinal Discourses"

> "Ask your preacher where the Bible says that baptism is not essential to salvation. Compare his answer with I Peter 3:21!"

- > "If you don't know where you are going, you will not like the place you finally reach!"
 - > "Some people are more concerned about being politically correct than being biblically correct!"
 - > "Too busy for all that is holy on earth beneath the sky, Too busy to serve the Master, but — not too busy to die!"
 - > "A nominal Christian (if such a term may be rightfully employed) is one who follows Jesus so long as the Master's teachings do not infringe upon his life's practices!"
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*Quitting: Why It Matters!*" (Text: Gal. 6:9-10); Sunday evening: "*Principles of Counseling for the Christian!*" (Rom. 15:14).