

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

841 Old Hickory Blvd.  
Jackson, TN 38305  
*oldhickorycofc.com*

---

February 23, 2020

Volume 40, # 08

---

### God Expects People to Understand

In Matthew's account of the Great Commission, Jesus said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." Why would Jesus, the Son of God, tell his apostles to go and teach people if what they were going to teach could not be understood? Did not Jesus, in the command, necessarily imply that the material to be taught was simple enough to be understood and that those to be taught were capable of understanding?

One of the answers to our present-day situation was given by Jesus a long time ago in Matthew 13:15:

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Jesus placed the blame for not understanding squarely at the feet of those who heard the teaching. They closed their own eyes, stopped their own ears, and hardened their own hearts so that they did not understand!

Incidentally, had you thought about the fact that if a thing is understood by two individuals, they necessarily will understand it alike? If two people disagree on something, one or the other (or both) did not understand!

If one person "understands" baptism to be sprinkling, and another "understands" it to be pouring, then neither of the two really understands what the New Testament teaches. Even the Greek word for baptism means "immersion."

In other words, it is impossible to "understand" baptism incorrectly. So if you and I disagree over something the Bible teaches, we both need to keep studying. When we both really understand we will agree.

- Aude McKee

---

## **The Christian and the World**

Do you know what you look like when you dress like the world? The world.

Do you know what you sound like when you speak like the world? The world.

Do you know what you "smell" like when you commune with the world? The world.

Do you know what you become like when you act like the world? The world.

Note the following combined verses from the Bible concerning the Christian's relationship to the world and worldly things, and consider the way you dress, speak, associate, and act:

"Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God...Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him...And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever...For whatever is born of God overcomes the world...But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world...Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this:...to keep oneself unspotted from the world...that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." (Verses in order of wording: Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15, 17; 1 John 5:4; Gal. 6:14; Jas. 1:27; Phil. 2:15).

Christians are to be separate from the world and her lost ways. "Therefore 'Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.'" (1 Cor. 6:17).

Yes, we are in the world, but we should never be of the world.

- Edd Sterchi

---

## **Searching for the Runaways**

Throughout this country, thousands of children are "on the streets", having left their homes in search of "freedom" from the restraints of parents, teachers, rules and regulations. Many of them are quite young, celebrating an eleventh or twelfth birthday "on their own." Parents and friends live in anguish not knowing the whereabouts of these children.

Unsure whether their children are living or dead, these parents and friends endure tremendous agony as they seek them out and bring these children back home. Many of the children leave home because they feel unloved and unwanted. Others run away because they actually are not welcome at home, for one reason or another.

Throughout the kingdom of God, thousands of God's children have turned back into the world, leaving the fold of God in search of "freedom" from God's demands. They are also running from the watchful eye of elders and other members of the family of God. These are spiritual runaways who have disassociated themselves from the body of Christ.

It is nothing less than a terrible tragedy that so many members of the church have gone astray. Like sheep wandering away from the fold, they have placed themselves in great spiritual danger. 2 Peter 2:21-22 declares that a Christian who migrates back into the world is in an ugly predicament. "...the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: 'The dog returns to his own vomit', and 'The sow, that had washed to her wallowing in the mire.'" The Hebrews writer explains that those who do not endure, but draw back, do so to the condemnation of their own souls (Hebrews 10:26-39).

Most every church has members who have "run away" from duty. They no longer attend, and if we are not careful, we may even forget they exist. Too often, we fail in our duty to "round up the strays." In some cases, a "runaway" might not even be missed for quite some time. Even after a year or more, someone may inquire "I wonder what ever happened John and Mary Doe? I never see them at a Bible class or worship anymore." What a shame! How pitiful when some of the sheep have jumped the fence and we are so busy we don't even take notice!

Elders, as shepherds, do have primary responsibility to watch out for souls (Hebrews 13:17). But every faithful Christian is charged to "restore" those "overtaken in a fault" (Galatians 6:1).

Perhaps a runaway is reading these lines. If so, please know that God still loves and cares for you. So do your brothers and sisters. We all want you to come home and take your place with the family.

- Mark White

---

## How to See "Eye To Eye" Religiously

Why do some people not see religious things the way we see them? Why is there so much difference between what we teach and what the denominations profess? Do we not all have the same Bible? Are we not all trying to serve the same God? Do we not all believe in the same Savior? These are perplexing questions, and they are not easily answered to everyone's satisfaction.

Basically, our understanding of the Scriptures differs from the majority of the religious world because we operate on a different principle of interpretation. To most religious people "truth" is relative, adjusting freely to different times and circumstances. For us, however, truth is truth. It is unalterable, unchangeable, and everlasting. But did "we" just arbitrarily decide this would be our regard for truth? Not at all. God's own word boldly claims "thy word is truth" (John 17:17) and "the word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth." (Psalm 33:4) While there are scoffers at the idea of absolute truth, we accept Bible teaching that such does exist, and we are determined to know it. Pilate's piercing question, "What is truth?" (John 18:38) was prompted by these words from Jesus: "I have come into the world that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

This then, is the basis upon which we may come to see religious matters alike. There must be a commitment to the same standard of truth. No one would ever attempt to use differing standards of measurement if building a house, marking off a football field, or sewing a garment. This would guarantee error and disaster. Twelve inches must equal one foot on all our rulers if we desire uniformity. There must be a healthy regard and respect for the Bible on the part of every religious person in order for understanding to occur. Without this common devotion to God's word, all efforts to see things the same will fail. In order to come to agreement on matters essential to salvation, we must begin where we agree. From this point we must study the Scriptures, resolving differences as we go along. Major problems of difference are solved in small steps, and then we can be united in Christ. But we will never see things the same if we cannot agree on the existence, necessity, and location of the truth.

No Bible discussion is profitable unless every participant is a truth seeker. If everyone concerned really wants the truth, then coming to an agreement and an understanding of truth will be achievable. Believe it or not, it is possible to discuss religious differences without becoming rude or creating hurt feelings. People who love the truth are not concerned with who is right, but with what is right. Every truth seeker is willing to surrender any position if it is false. There is no other honorable course for an honest man. An honest

man will seek the truth, and when he finds it he will believe it. "Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding." (Proverbs 23:23).

- Mark W. White

---

- > Ask your preacher where the Bible says husbands and wives can divorce and remarry for any cause if they will be happier. Compare his answer with Matthew 19:9!
  - > "Every minute of life that is lost is gone forever. Use your time wisely!"
  - > "Clean living takes a lot more than soap and detergents!"
  - > "The Bible will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from the Bible!"
  - > "Do not regret growing old; it is a privilege many do not have!"
- 

**THIS WEEK'S LESSONS:** Sunday morning: *"Shall Not the Judge of All the Earth Deal Justly!"* (Text: Genesis 18:23-25); Sunday evening: *Bi-monthly Singing!*

---

## ***What Must I Do To Be Saved?***

### **HEAR THE GOSPEL**

(Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17)

### **BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST**

(Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6)

### **REPENT OF PAST SINS**

(Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30)

### **CONFESS CHRIST**

(Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

### **BE BAPTIZED**

(Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21)

### **LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE**

(Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25)