

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Who Am I?

Moses asked God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Exodus 3:11)? Many people today wonder similar things. "Who am I that I should go to worship?" or "Who am I that I should obey the scriptures?" Some may ask, "Who am I that I should preach the gospel?"

1.) YOUNGER PEOPLE

Some younger people may wonder who they are. Some may ask, "Who am I that I should serve the Lord, when few others do?" It can be hard for some young people to resist temptation whether in high school, or in college. It can be hard for some to resist sharing in foolish talk or "corrupt communication" (Ephesians 4:29). Young people should use extra caution in social networking. It can be hard to go against the flow when you are with your peers, but you can do it if you try. The reward is worth it. A person will attain more respect from respectable people if he/she refuses to partake of something evil. The conscience of the one who refuses evil and pursues purity will remain clear and free. Those who compromise will often reflect back with guilt. Solomon once wrote, "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth..." (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Younger Christians should let the world know that they serve a risen Savior! Committing your soul to God early in life will safeguard you from many pits and snares that can affect the rest of your days.

2.) OLDER PEOPLE

Some older people may ask, "Who am I that I should keep laboring in the Kingdom?" The older people who continue to press on with the bedrock principles laid forth in the Bible are highly appreciated. The Lord's church always used older folks to teach the younger. Imagine Timothy and Titus without Paul. Paul addressed them as his sons (1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4). I am sure that Timothy's grandmother and mother, Lois and Eunice, helped greatly with his faith (2 Timothy 1:5). How could the church ever have elders if people are retiring from the duty to our Lord? We need active, older Christians to guide the younger. The Ethiopian eunuch recognized this principle before his baptism,

when he said concerning the ability to understand scripture, “How can I, unless someone guides me” (Acts 8:30-31). Older Christians should continue to display that they are servants of the Most High.

3.) EVERYONE

There are many people, younger and older, who have had to take a stand either for something that is right, or against something that is wicked. We need not concern ourselves with the thoughts of men, but rather, the thoughts of God. Moses had to confront error all his life. He ran from it at first (Exodus 2:15). He tried to make excuses later (Exodus 4:10-17). However, with the Lord’s encouragement, Moses obeyed and became one of the greatest men to walk on earth. Later in life, Moses wrote, “You shall not follow a crowd to do evil...” (Exodus 23:2). This great statement has echoed throughout time to even now. The apostles answered the Jewish council; “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Instead of asking “Who am I” to excuse ourselves from duty, or even like Pharaoh who asked, “Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice...” (Exodus 5:2), we should ask, “Who am I to not serve God?” After all, “Are we stronger than He?” (1 Corinthians 10:22)? We should ask, “What are the consequences of not serving God?” Since we can only serve one master, it is important to know who we serve. Agar [sic] wisely requested, “Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches—Feed me with the food allotted to me; lest I be full and deny You, and say, **‘Who is the LORD?’** Or lest I be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God” (Proverbs 30:8, 9, emp. mine, sjw).

The fact that we can rise up in the morning and provide for ourselves (or be provided for), we have reason enough to honor God with whatever amount of strength we have. The apostle asked, “Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?” (Romans 6:16).

If we are not serving God in righteousness, who are we serving? “Who am I that I should serve sin and die?” The Word of God asks, “...Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14)? “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 5:58). Let us all serve the Lord and attain the reward in heaven.

- Steven J. Wallace (1994)

SOUND DOCTRINE

The New Testament word "doctrine" simply means "teaching." Students of the Scriptures realize very quickly that therein are two very distinct types of "doctrine," the "doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1) and the "sound doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:6) whose originator is Christ (2 John 9). The "doctrines of demons" ("devils" in the KJV) are elsewhere in Scripture described as "varied and strange teachings" (Hebrews 13:9) and as having their origin in the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4). The devil is of course the god of this world, whom the Lord described this way: "... a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44). And the devil's followers will be doing the devil's work relative to doctrine: "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; ..." (2 Peter 2:1-3a).

Concerning the doctrine that is opposed by the devil and those who belong to him, the doctrine of Christ is "sound teaching" (1 Timothy 1:10), "sound doctrine" (2 Timothy 4: 3; Titus 1:9; 2:1). To say that the doctrine is sound is to say that it is free from error, and thus totally reliable as truth. This teaching consisted of words selected by the Spirit of God, who searched the mind of God to reveal spiritual thoughts with spiritual words (1 Corinthians 2:10-13). These were the words that were taught by Christ and His apostles and prophets of the first century, inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 7:16-17; 14:24-26; 16:12-15; Acts 2:42).

All of these faithful teachers of God's pure message ("accurately handling the word of truth" - 2 Timothy 2:15) highlighted the importance of adherence to sound doctrine ("continue in the things you have learned ... knowing from whom you have learned them" - 2 Timothy 3:14). The truth was so precious in its purity that it was to be entrusted "to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Timothy 2:2). Not every man adheres; not every man is faithful. "But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith," (1 Timothy 4:1). Thus, the importance attached to Paul's charge to Timothy, "preach the word." (2 Timothy 4:2), for in time, there would arise some who "will not endure sound doctrine ... and will turn away their ears from the truth" (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

Teaching sound doctrine is essential, being of prime importance among the true people of God. No hit-or-miss, slipshod, wishy-washy, careless approach when it comes to

adhering to it will accomplish faithfulness. Paul further pointed out that the “good servant of Christ Jesus, [is] constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine ...” (1 Timothy 4:6); the “good servant of Christ Jesus” points these things out to the brethren. Paul commanded, “Prescribe and teach these things.” (1 Timothy 4:11), and Timothy was charged, “Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.” (1 Timothy 4:16).

How vitally important it is for every Christian to work toward mastering the doctrine of Christ; it is not solely a task for preachers. Neglecting this emphasis by all the saints will allow the doctrines of demons to creep in and destroy the faith of many. Brethren, think on these things!

- Gary Smalley

THE PARALYSIS OF SIN

1. Sin paralyzes the eye that it cannot see (John 3:3; 2 Peter 1:9).
2. It paralyzes the ear that it cannot hear (John 8:43).
3. It paralyzes the mouth that it cannot speak (Psalm 32:3).
4. It paralyzes the hand that it cannot work (Luke 16:13).
5. It paralyzes the feet that they cannot go (John 8:21).
6. It paralyzes the heart that it cannot love (Hebrews 3:12).
7. It paralyzes the whole man that he cannot please God (Romans 8:8).

NOTE: The blood of Christ is the remedy for sin and can be applied only if one has an obedient faith! (See Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:37-41; Romans 6:1-5; Galatians 3:26-27).

- unknown, via The Instructor, April, 1973

* “Seek Christ and you will find Him, and with Him you will find everything else you’ve been looking for!”

* “A skeptic is a person who, when he sees the handwriting on the wall, claims it is a forgery!”

* “The price of greatness is humble service!”

* “One reason the dog has so many friends: He wags his tail instead of his tongue!”

* “Happiness is the result of circumstances, but joy endures in spite of circumstances!”

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: The sermon for Sunday morning is: *"A Brief Opportunity!"* (Text: Acts 14:1).

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)