

# **The Old Hickory Bulletin**

## **Old Hickory Church of Christ**

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### **Celebrate the New**

We like to celebrate with friends and family when we receive something new. The most precious is, of course, a new baby. We throw baby showers, and want to hold the new beautiful bundle of joy. New cars also attract attention. New car smell is so appealing that it has been manufactured into a scent for old cars to make them smell new. New gizmos of every type flood the market every year. Consumers brave the cold, even camp out in front of stores to be the first to purchase the newest version of the latest product.

We even celebrate the “New Year.” We get together and remember all about the old year, some of it with laughter and some with tears, but we celebrate the new. “Out with the old and in with the new!”

If we are going to celebrate “new,” let us celebrate the new life that has been granted through the gracious gift of forgiveness and reconciliation and eternal life. Let us also resolve to live as light and salt so that reconciliation will spread throughout the world starting here and starting now.

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

- Travis Robertson

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# Faith Healers & Pandemics

While a student at Freed-Hardeman College in 1983, I took my “wife-to-be” on a date to an Oral Roberts “healing service” in Jackson, TN (she still razzes me about our exciting dates). At the conclusion of this “healing service,” Oral Roberts told everyone present that God had completely healed every single person in the assembly, “from the top of our heads to the bottom of our feet.” As the meeting came to an end, and people were exiting, I told my wife-to-be to take note of how many people were still wearing their glasses. Seems that no one in the assembly was healed of that malady.

Fast forward 20 years. The year was 2003 when Richard Roberts, son of Oral Roberts, was scheduled to hold a “healing-meeting” for more than 2,000 followers at the Elmer S. McVety Centre in Toronto, Canada. However, Roberts canceled the event due to a travel advisory for Toronto because of the number of SARS cases reported there. Does it not seem to you that if Roberts had the power he claims to have, rather than canceling the event, that's exactly where he needed to be?

Fast forward nearly another 20 years and we are in the midst of the COVID pandemic. However, Kenneth Copeland, another alleged “faith-healer,” stated that as a prophet of God, he commanded COVID to leave the USA and that it would harm no one else. That statement was made three months ago and more than 100,000 people have died from COVID since this “prophet” banished it from the United States.

Are you seeing a pattern? Friends, if a silver-lining can be found in this terrible pandemic, it might be to trust more in God, and less in men who claim to be his representatives and to spend more time in God's word, and less time listening to the words of men (1 Timothy 4:1-2).

- Steve Higginbotham

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## WHAT ARE YOU EMPHASIZING?

We have sold ourselves on the idea that if we can have a washing machine, a TV set, an electric razor, blanket, refrigerator, an automobile and a host of other gadgets modern ingenuity has developed, our lives will be abundant, happy and free. We have set out to buy ourselves into happiness in spite of our Lord's teaching, "for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions." (Luke 12:15). Many people have swapped God for gadgets and have failed to develop themselves spiritually. But, one day a crisis develops. WHAT THEN?

YOU CAN'T MEET A CRISIS with a Cadillac; you can't heal a broken heart with a refrigerator or clean a guilty conscience with a vacuum cleaner. Neither can you bring peace to a troubled heart with a new piece of furniture!

When vast numbers of people come face to face with deep human need, they've nothing with which to meet it. In our rush to get things money can buy we fail to build into our lives the elements of character that money cannot buy and that alone can survive the crises of life!

- Author Unknown

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## ACCURACY

The word "accuracy" is defined as: "1: freedom from mistake or error. 2a: conformity to truth or to a standard or model; b: degree of conformity of a measure to a standard or a true value." Synonyms include: CORRECTNESS, EXACTNESS, cf. PRECISION (entry 1 sense 2a). [<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/accuracy>, accessed 01/28/2021]

Jesus Christ placed accuracy as the highest of priorities when dealing with the Holy Scriptures. If one is going to be mistaken or in error, don't allow it to be with handling the Scriptures! He chided the religious leaders of His day for their incorrectness of perceiving and conveying the message of God: "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God." (Matthew 22:29). With some, He asked if they had even read the Scriptures (Matthew 21:42). Peter informed his readers, in reference to Paul's letters and the rest of the Scriptures, that there were some people who were untaught and unstable, consequently distorting the Scriptures "to their own destruction" (2 Peter 3:16). In the very next verse, Peter warned: "You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness," (2 Peter 3:17). Notice: "unprincipled men" do this! Thus the Lord made it imperative for all of His followers to handle the Scriptures with the utmost accuracy, precisely arriving at its intended meaning and truthfully conveying God's word to others without distortion or error.

In the first century, specially selected men were given the gift of divine inspiration for the purpose of conveying exactly and precisely heaven's message to men (John 14:26; 16:12-14; cf. 17:8, 14, 17, 20-23). Even the Apostles of Christ, who heard His words with their own ears, were given a miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit, allowing them to recall perfectly and receive additional revelation to impart to people without mistakes and errors (1 Corinthians 2:10-13). Yes, accuracy was the highest of priorities when dealing with the

Holy Scriptures and imparting the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11). John said that to fail in this, one "does not have God" and by condoning error, "participates in ... evil deeds." No changes allowed!

Further, while thinking of the important directive to handle accurately the word of God (2 Corinthians 4:2), it is also very important to handle the words of others with the greatest accuracy, honesty, integrity and truthfulness. Whenever we quote another person, those words must be meticulously exact. Whenever I face anyone, saying, "You said ...", those words had better be correct, accurate and truthful. If they are not, I am at fault (Exodus 20:16). And depending on my motive, my eternal soul could be in jeopardy!

In my life experiences, I have had people to misquote what I said. Realizing that everyone makes mistakes and does so under various circumstances, I am generous with patience and forgiveness in getting along with people. Mostly, this only happens with a minimum of people. Unfortunately, there are a small few people who, evidently, have developed the habit of being careless with the words of others. They seldom quote what was actually said. I could still shrug this off if they were deaf or had severe hearing problems. I am no judge of another's motives, but something is bad wrong when every single time a person states what you said, they alter the words. That is careless to a fault, actually sinful. And those of you who have experienced this extreme behavior by others are not shocked to learn that the words that are substituted are always worse, more negative than the true.

If you operate this way with other people, stop doing it! Your lying testimony jeopardizes the welfare of others. Do not ever change someone's words to suit what you intend to accomplish. Get out of the habit of injustice, portraying others as worse than they actually are in life. Humility builds others up; it does not tear them down. It is dishonest to misrepresent others by substituting their words, and you will answer for the deception! The Lord Jesus said, "But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." (Matthew 12:36-37).

- Gary Smalley

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"Watch your thoughts, they become your words; watch your words, they become your actions; watch your actions, they become your habits; watch your habits, they become your character; watch your character, it becomes your destiny." - Lao Tzu

"Depending on what they are, our habits will either make us or break us. We become what we repeatedly do." — Sean Covey, *The 7 Habits Of Highly Effective Teens*

\* "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again!" - Stephen Grellet

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\* "A man's character is like a fence. It cannot be strengthened by whitewash!"

\* "The greatest pleasure in life is to do a good turn in secret!"

\* "A mistake is the opportunity to begin again!"

\* "A rumor is about as easy to un-spread as butter!"

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## ***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)