

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

841 Old Hickory Blvd.
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oldhickorycofc.com

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"THIS IS MY BODY"

On the evening before His death, Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper using elements of the Passover feast. "And He took bread... and gave it to them, saying 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.'" (Luke 22:19-20). It is easy for us to understand why Jesus wanted us to remember His blood, which paid the price for our sins. Have you ever wondered why there is another element? The unleavened bread of the Passover reminded the Israelites of the haste with which they fled Egypt (Exodus 12:15, 17, 20, 39). What does the bread mean to us, and why did Jesus make His body a part of our memorial?

First, remembering Jesus's body reminds us that He was made like us. "Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same.... in all things He had to be made like His brethren" (Hebrews 2:14, 17). Jesus took upon Himself human form, and was subject to our weaknesses and temptations--He was tired, He was hungry, He was sad. If we begin to think that God's expectations are unreasonably high for us, the Lord's Supper reminds us that our High Priest was a man, too. "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses" (Hebrews 4:15, cf. 2:18).

Second, remembering the body of Jesus reminds us of what we will be like someday. The body that we remember is not just the body that was hung on the cross; it is also the body with which Jesus emerged from the tomb (John 20:20, 27). We look to the resurrection of Jesus as a pattern for our own (Romans 8:11), with the understanding that one day we will be as He is (1 John 3:2).

As we wait for "the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:23), the bread of the Lord's Supper encourages us to think about that future time when our bodies will be resurrected or changed into eternal form (1 Corinthians 15:51-53, 2 Corinthians 5:1-4), so that we can be incorruptible like our Savior.

Finally, remembering the body of Jesus reminds us of the "body" which He left behind, of which we are members. "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). God has given us a pattern that the Lord's Supper should be taken in the assembly of the saints and partaking of the bread should promote in us a sense of unity with those with whom we share it. Eating the bread in the assembly reminds us that we are part of the "body of Christ," the church over which He is head (Ephesians 1:22-23), and the lack of leaven symbolizes the purity which we strive to maintain in the church (1 Corinthians 5:7-8).

God prepared a body for Jesus (Hebrews 10:5), a body which He offered on the cross for our sins, and the Lord's Supper is a memorial not only of the blood shed there, but also of the body from which it came. The original observance of the Passover involved both the blood of the sacrifice (Exodus 12:7, 13, 22-23) and its flesh (Exodus 12:8), so it is appropriate that the New Testament fulfillment of that feast also memorializes both elements. Just as it was in Old Testament times, "those who eat of the sacrifices [are] partakers of the altar" (1 Corinthians 10:18). While the cup reminds us of the blood shed for us, the bread of the Lord's Supper should remind us of Jesus's humanity, of the hope of the resurrection of the body, and of the pure unity of the church. As we discern the Lord's body (1 Corinthians 11:29) in His Supper, may the bread always help us remember these things.

- Erin S. Percell, via *The Old Hickory Bulletin*, June 16, 1996

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 White, via *The Auburn Beacon*

Share a Quote ...

"Some people are never able to forget how much they gave up in order to become Christians (or perhaps to preach Christ). But Paul knew what a treasure he had in Christ Jesus his Lord. And he also knew how to estimate the value of all else in this world in which people place confidence. All such things, he would tell you, are a stinking mess fit for the garbage dump; and the loss of such things is certainly not to be mourned if it means one may replace them with Christ." [See Philippians 3:7-8.]

- L.A. Mott, Jr., via *Christianity Magazine*, May, 1987

Persistence in Prayer

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened." (Matthew 7:7-8).

Jesus shows that persistence brings good results from a Father who is eager to bless children who affirm their dependence upon Him. [At all times pray and don't lose heart, Luke 18:1-7.] Christians are to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). He will ask, and his needs will be met. He will seek, indicating earnest desire, and he will find, not despair. He will knock, extending his persistence even to a demanding insistence, much as the friend at midnight (Luke 11:5-8). [Notice the increasing intensity of these actions: ask, seek, and knock.

Further, it must not be assumed that persistence in prayer is required in order to overcome some reluctance or unwillingness on the Father's part to provide good gifts to His children. James indicated that in a request for wisdom, God "gives to all generously and without reproach" (James 1:5). Nor is persistence the key to avoiding the offer of some second-rate substitute, as a lesser benefactor may attempt in order to silence the repeated requests. Just as loving parents want only the best for their children, our loving heavenly Father desires only the best for His children (See Matthew 7:9-11). God could be nothing but perfectly good and generous, fully attuned to the needs and desires of His children. He will supply those needs from His great riches (Philippians 4:19; James 1:17).

"This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him." (1 John 5:14-15). Are you persistent in prayer?

- Gary Smalley

* "We cannot control the wind, but we can adjust our sails!"

* "Most successes follow many failures!"

* "A man of correct insight among those who are duped and deluded resembles one whose watch is right while all the clocks in the town give the wrong time!"

* "Reverence is one of the signs of strength; irreverence one of the surest indications of weakness. No man will rise high who jeers at sacred things!"

* "Bible baptism is immersion in water in the name of Christ for the forgiveness of sins by men and women who have believed the gospel, repented of their sins, and confessed Jesus as the son of God!" – David McPherson

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)