

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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

February 20, 2022

Volume 42, # 08

"Don't Surrender Your Peace!"

In the midst of life's uncertainties, Jesus promises a peace that the world can never take away. Speaking to His disciples on the night of His betrayal, Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). While the peace of Christ cannot be taken away, it can be surrendered through unbelief and disobedience.

True peace is found in Jesus who said, "in Me you may have peace." The Bible's list of things that produce peace is quite different from world's. Material wealth does not make for peace. Neither does power, influence, or sensual gratification. Such pursuits will surely end in frustration as might be best described by Solomon as "striving after the wind." It is only in relationship to the Prince of Peace, that true satisfaction may be found (Isaiah 9:6; cf. Ephesians 2:14).

Such peace is built upon the words of Jesus who said, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace." His words must not be overlooked in our pursuit of peace. In his profession of faith in the Lord, Peter plainly confessed, "You have words of eternal life" (John 6:68). Accepting or rejecting the words of Jesus provides the basis for determining our eternal destiny (John 12:48). In promising the apostles the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, "He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (John 14:26). What follows is Christ's precious promise: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful" (vs. 27).

The peace promised by our Lord cannot be taken from us so long as we are protected by the power of God through faith in Christ (1 Peter 1:5). However, as already stated, we can surrender our peace by abandoning our relationship to Christ. Make sure that you are not pressured in that direction by the uncertainties so prominently highlighted by the world around us.

- Glen Elliott

MANKIND NEEDS FAITH!

God's revelation to man speaks of so very many wonderful blessings given by Him for the betterment of all. His blessings include delightful gifts that He has in store for those who come to Him, believing "that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6). **What is faith?**

This is faith: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1). It is believing in God. It is believing that God desires for man to seek Him. It is believing that God has revealed His will to man so that man can pursue God correctly, in the manner prescribed by Him (2 Peter 1:3; cf. 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Timothy 1:10; 2:5, 15, 25; 3:15-17; 4:7-8). Paul declared, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17). When a person says he has faith but what he believes cannot be found in Scripture, his "faith" is not genuine, and God does not approve. Faith has a source, and that source is God.

Attempts to destroy the word of God throughout history have utterly failed. If any can be trusted is it not our Creator? Through His precepts we get understanding (Psalms 119:104). Therefore, we are to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and turn away from evil." (Proverbs 3:5-7). Would you agree that faith is important?

The Bible clearly shows **the importance of faith**, and mankind needs to possess it. Notice some of the important benefits of faith: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," (Romans 5:1). Without faith, which frees man from any guilt or blame because of sins, we have no access to the grace of God (see verse 2). By faith we have peace with God. Further: "For by grace you have been saved through faith;" (Ephesians 2:8). God's favor provided man with His revelation, the Bible, which teaches him how to receive rescue and safety from harm caused by sins against God. Christians are saved from the horrible consequences of sin through faith in Christ. When Paul's jailor in the city of Philippi inquired: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30-31), he was told: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." The preaching of the apostles in the name of Christ was evidence that God requires men to believe in His Son (John 3:16, 18, 36; Mark 16:16). Faith is required in order to receive forgiveness from God. Maintaining this faith is required in order to receive the future salvation in heaven. In writing to Christians of their inheritance reserved in heaven, Peter said that they were "protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5). Do you appreciate the vital importance of faith?

While we have the opportunity to obey Christ, just as the Philippian Christians did (Philippians 2:12), we also must "work out your salvation with fear and trembling". Searching for God and His blessings fills one with reverence and awe, causing us to tremble at the possibility of failing to properly understand and persistently obey (cf. Isaiah 66:2). To comply with the Father's will as our Lord did, we must "Be diligent to present

yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15). There is an accurate handling and an inaccurate handling. This prompts the question: "how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Hebrews 2:1-3). We must never neglect the things concerning salvation; it causes us to handle His word inaccurately.

Leave it to the forces of evil to obscure the truth in countless possible ways. Neglectful, inaccurate handlers of the word have responded to people who "will not endure sound doctrine" and who desire "to have their ears tickled" (2 Timothy 4:3). Today, whatever one may desire to be true, whether God's will or not, teachers can be found who will teach it. One does not have to look very far to find teachers who inaccurately handle the Scriptures.

Notice the scriptures referred to thus far that mention "work" and "workman." Why is it that when such passages are presented, the charge of trying to earn salvation is thrown in the face of the Bible student? These inaccurate word handlers are attempting to strengthen allegiance to themselves by those who will not endure sound teaching. But let the honest and good hearts come out from among them when they hear them teaching that faith alone saves! They have buried the truth that faith itself is a work; the One who has the words of eternal life said it: "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." (John 6:29). When faith in Christ blooms into obedience, the "fear and trembling" will cause the humble servant to obey the gospel's commands, resulting in divine forgiveness. The grace of God is not cancelled by becoming an obedient servant, nor is the servant attempting to earn anything. Paul said that through Christ Jesus the Lord, they had "received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake," (Romans 1:5). Did you notice God's word there? A component of faith is obedience. The work of the apostles was "to bring about the obedience of faith". All of their work was "according to the commandment of the eternal God," and the purpose behind their making the gospel known to all nations was to lead them "to obedience of faith;" (Romans 16:26). [Note carefully what will happen to those who do not obey the truth (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).] **The faith that saves is obedient faith!**

The Scriptures tell us that even demons believe (James 2:19). Are they saved? They are if faith alone saves! James wrote, "Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself." (James 2:17). It seems as if James was writing directly to the inaccurate word handlers of our day. Consider:

"But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,' and he was called the friend of God. You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone." (James 2:20-24).

In fear and trembling, do you desire for God to save you? Then hear the gospel of Christ (Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17). Do you desire for God to save you?

Then believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6). Do you desire for God to save you? Repent of your sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30). Do you desire for God to save you? Confess Christ before men (Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37). Do you desire for God to save you? Submit to water baptism (immersion) into Christ (Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21). It will "wash away your sins" (Acts 22:16). Do you desire for God to save you after you have been forgiven? Continue faithfully in the teaching of Christ (Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25). Faith that comes from hearing and heeding the word of God is saving faith! We all need it!

- Gary Smalley

* "The best way to get even is to forget!"

* "Feed your faith and your doubts will starve to death!"

* "Some marriages are made in heaven, but they all have to be maintained on earth!"

* "Words are windows to the heart!"

* "Arthritis may limit action, but it does not limit prayer!"

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)