

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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"WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD"

If someone were describing you to another person; would they say what Peter said of our Lord unto Cornelius: (Jesus) "went about doing good." (Acts 10:38)? These words have haunted me. I keep asking myself, AM I going about doing enough good? Or am I just barely doing enough? Let us consider the following in reference to this question:

(1) Jesus Did Good When He Was a Child. It is evident that as a child He spent time learning the Word of God as He astonished the doctors with his understanding and answers. He was only 12 years old then. His knowledge was profound for a 12 year old boy. And beloved - I am amazed here when I hear some of our young children repeat bible verses, and answer questions. How about your child?

(2) Jesus Did Good When He Was Baptized. He did God's will. He told John "... it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." (Matthew 3:13-15). We can do good by doing the same, not only being baptized, but by doing the will of God day by day. By doing that which is right, following righteousness.

(3) Jesus Did Good When He Overcame The Devil. By so doing, he kept Himself free from sins and proved Himself to be the pure lamb of God. He also proved Himself qualified to take away the sin of the world. In His victory over Satan, He did good by using the sword of the Spirit to answer the wiles of the Devil. A part of the Gospel Armour is the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

(4) He Did Good When He Taught His Disciples The Great Principles Of Life. By His teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, He gave the basic principles of Serving God. We call these Beatitudes! These are only some of the great principles of moral conduct which Jesus taught His disciples. If a man would but follow these basic principles, it would lift him far above the ordinary human being in his ways of life. Are we doing the same for our friends, love ones, and people in this present world?

(5) Jesus Did Good When He Helped the Sick and Afflicted, When He Fed the Hungry, and When He Comforted the Bereaved. When He was called to the sick, His answer was, "I will come." (Matthew 8:7). What about us? Do we go when called? At least we could send a card, or pick up the phone and call the sick.

Jesus fed the hungry. Are we? Jesus comforted the bereaved. Are we so doing to the best that we can? James 1:25-27 says, "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

(6) Jesus Did Good When He Rebuked the Wayward. He was doing what was best for the scribes and Pharisees when He pointed out to them their hypocrisy, and their need of truth in heart. (Matthew 23). He was doing what was best for Peter by showing him that in following human wisdom he was serving Satan rather than God. (Mark 8:31-31). He was doing good for James and John when He rebuked them for wanting to destroy certain Samaritans by telling them that He had not come to destroy men's lives but to save them. (Luke 9:51-56).

Today, the disciples of Christ can do good by kindly rebuking the wayward to bring them to repentance and a restoration in the service of the Lord. Galatians 6:1-2 says, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." And James 5:19-20 says, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

(7) Jesus Did Good When He Prayed for His Enemies. He taught His disciples to do the same. (Matthew 5:44). Jesus set the example when He prayed for those who were crucifying Him: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34). Do we pray for those who are our enemies? Even the ones who just give us a hard time?

(8) Jesus Did Good When He Died On the Cross! Most certainly! The shedding of His precious blood provided the means by which sinful man (you and I) might be redeemed from sins. Ephesians 1:7 says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." While it is true that we cannot die on the cross for the sins of men, the question is: Do we care enough about the souls of men to teach the gospel unto them?

(9) Jesus Is Doing Good Now! How you may ask? When we, as His disciples do good unto others, and are found seeking to save their souls, He is with us, even to the end of the world.

- Wendell M. Powell, *The Charlotte Lamp*, 07/24/2011 [slightly edited – GFS]

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HONESTY — ERROR — TRUTH

There are many good people in the religious world who are honestly mistaken, but when a man who is honestly mistaken hears the truth, one of two things must happen: **He will cease to be MISTAKEN, or he will cease to be HONEST.**

If he does not obey the truth, he will no longer be honest. If he does obey it, he will no longer be mistaken. Honesty and error must separate when truth comes along. No man can be honestly mistaken if he has heard the truth!

- Eugene Britnell (1924-2013)

A True Worshiper Recognizes God's Desire to be Worshipped!

Following a long day's work, and both are drowsy, a Father is tucking his child in for the night when the helper asks, "Daddy, why don't more people care about God?" Hmmm ... which way do I go with this one?

Earlier in the day we had a talk about worship to the God of the Bible, and how we build *an adoring heart for Him*, expressing it and acknowledging it by praise and thanksgiving. Maybe the question came as a result of recalling the discussion the Lord Jesus had with the woman at the well in Samaria about the long-established place of worship (John 4:20-22), when Jesus indicated to her that knowledge of God is a worship essential.

Leaving further statements about false worshippers, the Lord spoke to her of true worshippers and said of them, "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:23-24).

Too often, many people become content in presenting to God whatever they desire and calling it worship. The words of the Lord Jesus do not support that view. Worshipers of the Most High God must follow His directive: "in spirit and truth."

It is interesting also to notice that, "such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers." The Hebrews writer expressed this in discussing faith in God: "He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." As the Psalmist stated, "The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His mercy." (Psalms 147:11, NKJV). The prayer of these people is His delight (Proverbs 15:8). We may not grasp the full scope of worship, but it is a serious undertaking to God.

The God that is to be worshipped is the "one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4:6). The God who is "Lord of heaven and earth ... gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth." His plan for these, "His children": "that they would seek God." (Acts 17:24-28). Is it the measure of a man in observing the extent to which one is grateful that he has been given life and breath and all things? How is it indicated that one adores, appreciates and is thankful to his Creator? After all, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights," (James 1:17).

It is frightening to realize that "the wrath of God" has always been against people who "did not honor Him as God or give thanks," (Romans 1:18-23). God calls them fools because they have chosen to conduct their lives in suppression of the truth, rejection of the knowledge of God and His righteousness; they possess a foolish, darkened heart. That is not the heart that is fit to adore and worship God. "For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever." (Romans 1:25). These could become true worshippers, but first they must cleanse their hands and purify their hearts (James 4:8).

All are invited to "draw near to God" (Hebrews 7:19; James 4:8), but all who draw near must do so "with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." (Hebrews 10:22). "Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16), not forgetting the reference Jesus made to the Scriptures: "You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only." (Matthew 4:10; cf. Deuteronomy 6:13; Joshua 24:14).

Do you worship God in spirit and in truth? Did you realize that the gracious Giver of all good blessings seeks for people to worship and praise Him in grateful adoration? Are you one of those people?

- Gary Smalley

* "It is never too soon to plan for eternity!"

* "Is God your first thought or your last resort?"

* "God's truth is protection from Satan's lies!"

* "It is hard to stumble when you're down on your knees!"

* "'Is his purse converted?' was frequently a question of one of John Wesley's co-laborers when he heard of a rich man who had become a Christian!"

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)