

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Why Some Christians Do Not Advance

A little boy who fell out of bed explained it by saying, "I stayed too close to where I got in."

This is true of a lot of people in the kingdom of God. They stay so close to where they began that growth is never experienced. They want to be fed as babes, not as developing, maturing Christians. They have no desire to go beyond repentance and baptism. They are no more prepared to take a position of leadership now than they were the day they obeyed the gospel.

The writer of Hebrews addresses such persons in the following language: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:12-14).

"Therefore leaving the principles [The American Standard Version has it: "leaving the doctrine of the first principles" - E.B.K.] of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." (Hebrews 6:1). We are not to "leave" the first principles in the sense of abandoning them, but rather in the sense of advancing to a higher knowledge, moving upward to a more mature way of life.

Many who are baptized never get very involved in the church and its work. They come into the kingdom but stay right at the door. How easy it is for them to fall back into the ways of the world!

One should be just as eager to learn after baptism as before. He should be just as zealous to obey as a citizen of the kingdom as he was to become a citizen. He was born into the

family of God that he might grow as a child of God. He came to Christ that he might live for Christ.

- Irvin Himmel, via *The Graphic Evangelist*

Learning the Fear of the Lord

To fear the Lord is to have awe, respect and reverence for God. This fear will prompt the proper actions toward God.

The fear of the Lord is not inherited. It can neither be bought, borrowed nor stolen. However, it can be taught and learned. At Horeb, the Lord said unto Moses: "Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children ... " (Deuteronomy 4:10). At the end of every seven years all Israel were to be assembled and the law read in their hearing "that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, ... And that their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn the fear of the Lord ... " (Deuteronomy 31:12-13). A written copy of the law was to be before the king and he was to read it all the days of his life "that he may learn to fear the Lord his God." (Deuteronomy 17:19).

It is obvious from the reading of the above Scriptures that the fear of the Lord can be taught and learned. In order to truly fear the Lord a person must be taught the word of God. Men, women and children must be taught the fear of the Lord.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. (See Proverbs 8:13). By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil. (See Proverbs 16:6). The fear of the Lord prolongeth days. (See Proverbs 10:27). The psalmist said: "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will TEACH you the fear of the Lord." (Psalms 34:11).

- Carrol R. Sutton, via *The Instructor*, February, 1990

Prayer

Do you pray? If you do, how often? David said in Psalms 55:17, "Evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray." Paul said, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Why should we do this? What will prayer do?

Is there a need, something that is lacking in your life? "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7). Is there a

sickness within you or a loved one? "The prayer of faith shall save the sick" (James 5:15). Is there a sin that has beset you? "Pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22). Is there a blessing you have received? "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Colossians 4:2). Is there a joy in your heart? "Rejoice in hope; ...continuing instant in prayer" (Romans 12:12). Is there time left over from life's busy ways? "Enter into thy closet, and ...pray to the Father which is in secret" (Matthew 6:6).

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint," said Christ in Luke 18:1. Paul told Timothy, "I will therefore, that men pray everywhere" (1 Timothy 2:8). "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). "Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh, what needless pain we bear; All because we do not carry Everything to God in prayer" (Joseph Scriven).

- Wayne S. Walker

Why the Filthy Talk?

Have you ever wondered why people curse, swear and talk in a filthy manner? William E. Wallace offered five reasons why in an article written many years ago entitled, "Why Do You Talk Like That?" They were listed as follows:

1. Those who find it difficult to express themselves will seek to flavor their language with profane and ugly expressions.
 2. Some seek to gain attention, at least temporarily, so they curse, swear and utter obscenities.
 3. Cursing, swearing and vulgarity are merely bad habits to some, well set in their lives by years of usage. Often they hardly realize what they are saying.
 4. Many are depraved in nature, filthy in mind, evil in attitude and express it all in wicked language.
 5. Some feel they must use bad language to be accepted and to "fit in" with their companions and friends.
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What Will You Do With The Holy Name Of God?

Every person knows that society is filled with the use of profanity! Christians find it impossible to feel comfortable in any setting where vile language is habitually used and God's name is so horribly and recklessly disparaged. The Word of God teaches and the mighty arm of the Divine demonstrates that God's name is holy. Psalms 111:9 indicates: "Holy and awesome is His name." God has graciously revealed Himself to man. Those who soberly consider can only respond in treatment that is sacred! His name is awesome, demanding absolute reverence! How should men respond? Sinners should be terrified! Believers utter grateful praises!

People who profane God's name certainly do it out of ignorance, right? Those who do not know Him abuse, desecrate, debase and treat His name with vulgar contempt. But not those who know Him! "Holy and awesome is His name."

His powerful words are "living and active"; they are even "able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12). "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain." (Exodus 20:7).

Truly, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;" (Psalms 111:10). The effective application of wholesome knowledge springs forth only from the heart that shows reverence and honor to the name above all names!

The desperate need among men is awareness! Men need to take up the knowledge of God's revelation. Men need to allow the Holy Scriptures to guide them in all things through life. "From Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way. Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path." (Psalms 119:104-105).

The Lord Jesus Christ 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). Careless words are useless and unproductive. Because of the worthless nature of careless words, they are better left unspoken while great care is maintained to prevent dwelling upon them in thought. Certainly, verbal abuse and slander fit this definition. Pernicious words certainly do, as injurious and destructive words serve no good purpose whatsoever! What good purpose is served by using God's name in a profane manner?

How are you treating the holy name of God?

- Gary Smalley

- * "Nothing lies beyond the reach of prayer except that which lies beyond the will of God!"
 - * "Don't treat God as a lawyer, never calling Him until you are in trouble!"
 - * "If you think you have no fault, that is possibly the worse one!"
 - * "The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist see the opportunity in every difficulty!" - Winston Churchill
 - * "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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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)