

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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April 02, 2023

Volume 43, # 14

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### TRUTH

TRUTH is a big word though it has but five letters, "big things come in little packages" is a time honored expression which fits well just here. Nothing in this world is quite as valuable as TRUTH; nothing is quite as powerful! This fact is realized by most people throughout the world. It is presently being vividly demonstrated by the people of our nation in their liberal donations of millions of dollars per year to broadcast TRUTH to the nations behind the "Iron Curtain." The Crusade for Freedom is a living demonstration of how much confidence the American people have in the power of truth. They feel that getting the truth about us and our way of life to these people will avert war.

When we say that most people throughout the world know the power of truth we don't mean that they always act in accordance with such knowledge, for they don't. The majority of the people who send their dollars to the Crusade for Freedom are a bit double minded concerning truth. By their very contributions to this cause they indicate that they believe the Communist way of life to be error, and the American way of life the TRUTH. They are persuaded that two systems so contradictory can't both be right; they are determined that the Communist political hoax shall be exposed in the light of truth! Yet, these same people turn right around and embrace and endorse two or three hundred contradictory systems of religious belief. They will argue at length that every man has the right to believe as he pleases and it isn't anyone else's business. And they will consider anyone who tries to change another's religious belief to truth a most dangerous and vicious character! If this be true in the spiritual realm, why not in the political? Why the difference? If conflicting religious beliefs can all be the truth, why is the same not true of conflicting political beliefs?

Some people get so worked up over political beliefs which differ from their own that they are willing to sacrifice their sons, and see them buried on foreign soil in an effort to change or destroy them, and yet, these same people are not even willing to discuss the points in which they differ from others religiously, saying, "One belief is just as good as another, and what I believe is my business." Strange, isn't it?

Why are people willing to shed blood over political beliefs, but refuse even to discuss religious beliefs which are, by far, more important? One can live, die and go to heaven believing that 2 plus 2 equals 5, or that the state has the right to own all the property in the nation, and the citizens have only the right to be slaves of the state, but no man can go to heaven without believing the spiritual truths of God's revelation. Yet, people will die trying to change the former, but will not even discuss the latter, saying, "We don't believe in arguing about religion, or knocking other faiths." Then why do they knock other political faiths?

Jesus said the word of God is truth (John 17:17). He ascribed tremendous power to this truth, saying, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.) Truth and freedom are inseparable in all fields, whether political or religious. No man can be bound by error in any field if he has the truth and is determined to hold to it.

God's people should, of all people, love the truth. They should not preach it to others, then refuse to accept it themselves! They should not preach the New Testament as the standard of truth in our day, then be content to be guided by human opinions or time honored traditions. They should not preach the New Testament as the only creed of Christians, then turn around and accept a human creed, unwritten though it may be! They should not preach that truth has nothing to fear before the bar of justice and open minded investigation, then close their minds to anything and everything that does not harmonize with what they believe. They should not contend that no danger is near when truth has free course, then exert efforts to suppress the voices of any and all who do not believe as they do on every point.

The following poem should be memorized by every person who reads it:

"Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;  
The eternal years of God are hers;  
But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,  
And dies among his worshippers."

William C. Bryant

All Christians need to learn the difference between accepting the truth theoretically, and actually. It is one thing to give lip-service to a wholehearted acceptance of the truth, then refuse to be corrected when it is plainly shown that our words, thoughts or actions are out of harmony therewith. It is one thing to have the TRUTH, and quite something else to have the SPIRIT OF THE TRUTH. No man who closes his eyes, stops his ears and bars the doors of his heart to the truth on any subject has the spirit of truth, though he may have "accepted" the truth in theory. One who has learned enough to be a true Christian should have learned that he never reaches the point of infallibility in the application of truth, and hence should count as his friend all who would call error in his life to his

attention. All sorely need to realize that any violation of truth or any principles thereof, whether we think it large or small, is a stab at the health of the Spiritual body of our Lord. May we all grow to love the truth more and more.

- James P. Needham, via Gospel Guardian, 09/05/1957

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## The Faith That Comes Through an Open Bible

An inspired writer found it needful to exhort Christians to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." (Jude 3). "The faith" refers to the gospel or the New Testament, the way of salvation. "Once delivered" suggests complete action, the faith or gospel has already been completely delivered. There are no more revelations in our day, for we are completely furnished to every good work by the Scriptures. (2 Timothy 3:17). The New Testament forbids that we add to the Word of God (Revelation 22:18-19). We are restrained from preaching any gospel other than that preached by the apostles (Galatians 1:8-9). Since we are limited to "the faith once delivered," we need to open the Bible and let our faith be based thereon.

When we open the Bible, what do we find regarding faith? How many faiths are there? From the many conflicting views held in our day one would think there are many faiths. But does the Bible sanction these conflicting views? No, the Bible declares, "there is one Lord, one faith" (Ephesians 4:4-5). If our faith is based on the Bible then we teach there is "one faith," not many faiths.

When we open the Bible we find that this one faith comes from the word of God. "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ." (John 20:31). Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). We should not accept anything unless it is clearly taught in the Word of God. To do so is to walk by opinion and not by faith.

With an open Bible we learn that we must "all speak the same thing," (1 Corinthians 1:10). But do all speak the same thing today? Do you urge people to agree on the Scriptures, to be of the same mind, or do you rejoice in the denominations that divide the professed followers of Christ? If our faith is based on the Bible we must teach as Jesus prayed, that all must be one (John 17:20-21).

The Faith that comes from an open Bible recognizes that all we need to believe and do in salvation has been revealed in the Scriptures. The faith has been "once delivered." The faith that comes from an open Bible is a faith of unity. There is one faith. The faith that comes from an open Bible is an obedient faith. Christ is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:8-9).

- Gussie Lambert, via The Instructor, May, 1967

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## Will You Confess Christ?

"Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32-33).

The story is told of a man in his old age who finally embraced Christianity. He visited a notable Christian of the community and whispered in his ear: "I am a Christian." But this faithful man answered, "I will not believe it, nor regard you as such, until I see you worshipping among the Christians in the assembly of the church." Laughter was his reply as he said, "Does an assembly make a Christian? Cannot I be a Christian except I openly profess it, and let the world know of it?" His remark was based on immaturity in the faith and fear of others. Many months later, upon seriously considering if he should continue as one ashamed of Christ, learning that Christ would be ashamed of him at the judgment, he changed the purpose of his heart and confessed: "I will now in earnest be a Christian." In the assembly of the saints he made an open confession, observing that he had resolved to be afraid no longer. He had counted the cost and now his life belonged to Christ. "Today I am a Christian with my whole heart!"

"He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it." (Matthew 10:39).

- Gary Smalley

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- \* "Patience is a virtue which carries a lot of wait!"
  - \* "One cannot build the Lord's church with stumbling blocks!"
  - \* "Praise like sunlight helps all things grow!"
  - \* "Prayer is oil for the daily grind!"
  - \* "Support groups are great but the support of God is best!"
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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)