

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Attitudes Toward the Bible

A great amount of misunderstanding, confusion, and disunity, both within and without the church, stems from improper attitudes toward the Scriptures. A few examples of each might be helpful.

REGARDING CHRISTIANS:

The need has never been greater than the present for members of the Lord's church to completely BELIEVE IN AND RELY UPON the inspired word to regulate their lives. If God is glorified, it must be through us, His children (1 Corinthians 6:19-20), and His word reveals His mind and will to us. Too many times we reason (?) concerning our lives and activities as follows: (1) "What I'm doing is no worse than others are doing." (2) "We want to be popular." (3) "Other congregations are engaged in it," or (4) "Brother So-and-So says he thinks it is all right!" BUT WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY? Or, have we come to the place that we don't much care what it says? We can always get some good friend to agree with us, but that doesn't make up for an improper and unhealthy attitude toward the Bible. We have always pointed out to others the danger of simply disregarding the Bible when a desired practice fails to harmonize with Bible teaching.

Now, the lesson needs to be learned by us. It is not enough to profess to believe what the Bible teaches about doing good "unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10), which, to be sure, is our individual Christian duty -- BUT WE MUST BE DOING IT!

It is not enough to profess to believe what the New Testament teaches about "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" (Hebrews 10:25) -- we, as CHRISTIANS, SIMPLY MUST NOT BE GUILTY OF THIS SIN. Our attitude toward the Bible many times makes the difference with regard to our being faithful or unfaithful in attendance.

It is not enough to profess faith in the New Testament admonition to "be not conformed to this world" (Romans 12:2), but our attitude toward this teaching should cause us to comply with the rest of the same instruction: "BUT BE YE TRANSFORMED by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

REGARDING THOSE NOT CHRISTIANS:

1. Your attitude toward Christ and His word will cause you to believe in Him as both Lord and Savior, if it is the proper attitude. Jesus says that faith in Him is a must. (John 8:24; 3:16).
2. The proper attitude toward what He has taught will cause the believer to repent of past sins. (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38).
3. The good confession of faith in Christ is made only by those whose attitude toward the Word that teaches confession is as it should be. (Romans 10: 9-10).
4. One's proper attitude toward the Scriptures will cause him, as a penitent believer, to be baptized into Christ. The attitude toward the Scriptures that will bring salvation is that which will cause one to comply with its teaching in order to have its promises. Baptism "washes away sins" (Acts 22:16), puts one who believes "into Christ" (Galatians 3:27), and gives "remission of sins." (Acts 2:38).

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE NEW TESTAMENT?

- Carl Vernon, in *The Impression* (April 27, 1958)

SATAN – Our Adversary!

No one relishes the thought of having enemies. The truth about having enemies is something we disdain even more. As peace loving people, Christians do not enjoy dwelling on the fact that they indeed have enemies. Sometimes, this aversion spawns a lapse of memory. Since we do not like to think about enemies, we at times may forget that we have enemies. Is it possible that we have pushed our knowledge of the supreme enemy, Satan, to the remote recesses of our mind?

We hear a lot today about "raising our consciousness," yet how often do we relegate Satan's existence to our sub-consciousness? We do not like to think about him, so we don't. The church needs to be reminded that it has a foe so formidable, so clever, and so

ruthless, that he will stop at nothing to utterly destroy us! A forgotten enemy is the most dangerous enemy. Therefore Peter declares, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Our foe is restless, fearless, ferocious, hungry, and on the hunt! He is on a deliberate search for Christians. He is always plotting and calculating ways in which to trap us and then devour us. He has already eaten and digested the world, he eyes us, the church, as a sweet and delectable dessert.

Consider these descriptions of Satan recorded by John the revelator. He is called "the great dragon," "that old serpent," and "the devil" (Revelation 12:9). The Scriptures contain other nomenclatures, but these mentioned in Revelation chapter 12 all refer to Satan's vicious manner.

Furthermore, consider just a few of his traits: he is subtle, wily, and deceitful (Genesis 3:1; Ephesians 6:11; Revelation 12:9). He is intelligent, (2 Corinthians 11: 14). He is active, not lazy. He is busy. He is not omnipresent, but he "gets around" (Job 1:7). He gives the term "multi-task" a whole new meaning!

In summation, Satan is our enemy. His very name means "adversary." He is our top nemesis. Our most hostile and nefarious foe. Christians cannot afford to forget about him for a moment. Satan loves forgetful Christians. A forgotten enemy is the worst kind to have and Satan is the worst of the worst. May we ever be on guard!

- J. D. Conley

ACTS 2:38: IS HERESY

Jesse L. Sewell, who was born in Overton County, Tenn., in 1818, grew up in a Baptist community and became a Baptist preacher of some note in his native county. In the course of time, he learned the truth from reading the New Testament and, beginning to preach it, caused considerable confusion in the Baptist Church. A Baptist preacher by the name of Jenkins Tompkins began to discuss Jesse Sewell's departure from Baptist doctrine, and this resulted in a discussion of the errors taught by the Baptists.

Finally, the association brought charges of heresy against Sewell. He was convicted and excluded from the Baptist Church. The clerk asked how to make the record of the charges in the minutes of the association. The moderator told him to write "for teaching heresy." To this, Sewell replied that that would be recording a falsehood and that they could not make a true record in any other way than by stating that he was excluded for preaching faith, repentance and baptism, for the remission of sins, as taught in Acts 2:38. After some

discussion, it was finally agreed that the record should be made as Bro. Sewell suggested; hence, he was excluded from the Baptist Church for preaching Acts 2:38. Their minutes so record it.

- H. Leo Boles (1874-1946), in *The Christian Journal*

Hate Our Relatives?

In discussing the cost of true discipleship, Luke records that Jesus said, "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple." (Luke 14:26). Enemies of biblical authority are pleased to point to this passage in their derision of Christ and His disciples. Who could serve a Lord who preaches hate? But Christians refuse to be moved by such a shallow criticism.

Just as the love of possessions can come between us and our God (Matthew 19:21-24; cf. 1 Timothy 6:10), so can ties to our nearest and dearest. All disciples are secure in the knowledge that their Lord clearly taught them to love all people (1 Thessalonians 3:12), even their enemies (Matthew 5:43-45). The Christian certainly has been instructed to make sure that he maintains honor toward his father and mother (Matthew 15:4), never detesting them. Whatever the Lord is teaching in Luke 14:26, it cannot be intended to cause us to hate (abhor) our relatives.

When Christians grow in their knowledge they learn that the word "hate" is not always used in the Scriptures to mean malicious animosity; it is not always intense aversion and loathing. "Hate" can mean something like "loving less," but we must be careful not to detract from the strong impact of that word. Its significance is discovered when applying it to one's preference for one over another, holding one of less value when comparison is made with another (for example, the impossibility of serving two masters, Luke 16:13; Matthew 6:24). One is loved, the other is hated. One can also observe this in John 12:25, where disciples are instructed to disregard their own lives relative to the claims of Christ. (For additional example, see Genesis 29:30-33, where Leah was "hated," meaning actually, "loved less.")

The point of the Lord's teaching in Luke 14:26 is that devotion to Christ must be superior to any other devotions in life. There is no one that is dearer to us than our Savior, Jesus Christ. There is no one that we love more! This is certainly total commitment! "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." (Matthew 10:37). If we must choose between

loyalty to Christ or loyalty to family or friends, the Son of God must always be given the superior preference.

Friend, do any of your relationships override whole-hearted devotion to Christ? Have you been carried along by the crowd in giving first place to earthly ties? Is the Lord's claim upon your affection superior to any other? May we so encourage you to put the kingdom of God as the first and foremost priority of your life today (Matthew 6:33)?

- Gary Smalley

* "Don't doubt in the darkness what you knew to be true in the light!"

* "Parents can tell but never teach, until they practice what they preach!"

* "Contentment is produced, not by what is around us, but by that which is within us!"

* "If we will not be ruled by God we will be governed by tyrants; which will it be!"

* "Some people who like to rock the boat don't seem to know how to row it!" – C. Weiss

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)