

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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

---

February 04, 2024

Volume 44, # 06

---

### Are Non-Christians Accountable? Why Are Heathens Condemned?

1. I hear this statement occasionally: "Those young people are in the devil's kingdom. It does not make any difference what they do. They are not accountable under the gospel." What do you think of this?

2. Are the heathen in foreign lands to be condemned in the final day for not obeying the command to be baptized when they never heard of it? -A. T. Harris.

1. It would be hard to conceive of a more hurtful doctrine than the doctrine that unbaptized people are not accountable for what they do. If it does not make any difference what a person out of Christ does, if such a person is not accountable for what he does, then he might as well be an infidel, a drunkard, a whoremonger, robber, and killer of men. Bring that doctrine close home to the man that advocates it, and he will repudiate it! Would he say to his unbaptized son or daughter, "Go the limit while you are not a Christian. So long as you are not baptized, it makes no difference if you are a drunken sot, an immoral wretch, a sneak thief, or a bold robber and killer" - would he say such things to his own child? Is there a man so warped in his thinking that he is devoid of all the finer instincts? This is not the first time I have met with that notion. If these unbaptized people are not accountable for what they do, then they are not sinners. If they are not sinners, then there is no such thing as an alien sinner and no such thing now as baptism for the remission of sins. If the doctrine is true, then the only people who were ever baptized for the remission of sins were the Jewish converts who had sinned while they were under the old covenant. Or will the advocate of this doctrine say that unbaptized people are sinners by inheritance? They cannot be sinners on their own account if they are not accountable. Read such passages as John 1:29; Acts 7:60; 26:16-18; Romans 1:18-32; 3:9; 5:8; Galatians 2:15; and many others too numerous to mention. Let us not forget that there are certain moral laws, and that all people are under these laws, even though they have never heard of the Bible. The uprightness of Cornelius commended him to God. It is astonishing that we should now be told that Cornelius might as well have been murdering

the poor as giving them alms, and might as well have been cursing God as praying to him! And, remember, the gospel is God's power to save sinners, not to make sinners.

2. The second question is somewhat akin to the first, and raises this question: What makes a man a sinner - disobedience to the gospel of Christ? If so, he is not a sinner till he hears and disobeys the gospel. And if that is so, then he was in a state of safety till he heard the gospel; and if that be so, then the gospel makes sinners by the wholesale and saves no one, for it could not save that which was already safe. Jesus came to save sinners, not to make sinners. The gospel is God's power to save sinners, not to make sinners. Men are lost because they are sinners, and not because they are not baptized; baptism is one of the conditions of salvation. Are men lost because they do not obey the gospel? Before answering, think. A man is in a deep whirlpool, and is about to drown. You throw a rope to him, and tell him to take hold and you will pull him out. He refuses to grasp the rope, and is drowned. Why did he drown? One answers: "Because he would not take hold of the rope." Wrong; the rope had nothing to do with his drowning - he drowned because he was in the water, and he would have drowned if there had never been a rope. The gospel is God's rope thrown out to a world sinking in sin; if men do not take hold of it, they simply remain in sin, and they are lost eternally because they are sinners. Of course, refusing to obey the gospel intensifies their guilt, for they have refused God's offered mercy and have trampled underfoot the blood of Christ. They have shown contempt for God's effort to save them. The command to be baptized does not make sinners - it was issued to men who are guilty of sins. The heathen are lost because they are sinners - lost even if they never hear of baptism. If people will keep in mind the great truth that Jesus came to save sinners and that the gospel is the power by which men are saved, they will not have any trouble in settling both questions presented by Brother Harris. But whatever we do, let us not turn the gospel around and make it an engine of destruction instead of salvation.

- R. L. Whiteside, Queries and Answers Department, Gospel Advocate, May 14, 1936, p. 465.

---

## **Giving Thanks for All Things**

A thief broke into a modest dwelling of Matthew Henry, the celebrated Bible scholar, and stole his purse, but the busy, cheerful old gentleman, far from being downcast, turned to his diary and entered this cheerful observation; "Let me be thankful first, because he never robbed me before; second, because although he took my purse, he did not take my life; third, because although he took all I possessed, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed."

- via The Instructor, February, 1966

---

## *Share a Quote ...*

Brethren, the gospel alone will build a strong church and it needs no props under it to hold it up. Sectarian churches must bolster their doctrines with feasts, fairs, fun and foolishness, but the church of the Lord has something that will stand alone. Churches that seek crowds by offering entertainment and suppers admit that they do not think that the gospel is enough; and this is an admission that they themselves are not converted to Christ. When we learn the book and get to work for the Lord we will find that the church has no basement [dining halls], that showers are home shows, that fellowship should be built around the Apostles' doctrine, and that "cake days" are among the ones that Paul condemned in Galatians 4:10-11.

- L. L. Geiger, via Truth Magazine, November, 1956

---

## **The Faith of Abraham**

Abraham was a great man of faith. He is first introduced to the Bible-reader in Genesis 11 (Abram was his original name.) He is called "the father of all who believe" and the father of all those who "follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham" (Romans 4:11-12). Abraham is not the father of just any person who merely professes to believe in God. He is the father of all who have the same type and strength of faith as Abraham, for which God declared him righteous. What do we know about his faith?

Abraham's faith caused him to obey God when He called him to leave his home and go to a place where he had never been. He followed the call of God, "not knowing where he was going." (Hebrews 11:8). His walk of faith caused him to build sacrificial altars and worship God (Genesis 12:8; 13:4,18). His great faith prepared him to endure a most severe and difficult test of his reliance upon God — after giving him a descendant upon whom all of God's promises to him depended, He commanded Abraham to offer him as a sacrifice (Genesis 22). However, Abraham's faith was so sure of God's word to him that he considered the only way for a son to create descendants: God would raise him from the dead (even though God's record said nothing of that possibility, as far as we may determine; cf. Hebrews 11:17-19)! What great faith!

Abraham did not hesitate nor question any command God made upon him, even though his faith was tested many times. One can only be astonished at the degree of faith which Abraham possessed. This is the kind of faith we must have. Do we feel ashamed of ourselves when we realize how easily our faith falters under our light afflictions?

Abraham proved his faith by works (James 2:21-23), but those works earned him nothing. He was imperfect, just as all men are, and depended upon the forgiveness of God (having his sins covered, not taken into account, Romans 4:1-8). Do you have the faith of Abraham? If you do, you will prove it by your complete obedience to God's commandments (James 2:26). If you have listened to others telling you that you can be saved by faith without obeying the Lord, you should continue reading Romans: "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness." (Romans 6:17-18). "But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life." (Romans 6:22).

Will you submit to God's plan for making men righteous (Romans 10:3)? Will you demonstrate the type and strength of Abraham's faith by being baptized into Christ's death so His blood can wash away your sins (Romans 6:3-7; 3:25; 5:9; Acts 22:16; Revelation 1:5)? Follow in the steps of the faith of Abraham! (See John 8:39.) You will be a faithful Christian.

- Gary Smalley

---

\* "We need not fear the darkness if we are holding to the Light!"

\* "When a fellow is kicking, he has only one leg to stand on!"

\* "The supreme Judge asks you to do some cross examining!"

\* "Things that are not eternal are already out of date!"

\* "Sin is not hurtful because it is forbidden; it is forbidden because it is hurtful!"

---

## ***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)