

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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### That's Not My Thing

This is a phrase that we often hear and even find ourselves using on occasions. It would appear to be a slang expression stating that we do not relate to certain situations and actually do not desire to have any part of them. In many respects, it may be uttered to say that we are closing the door of our involvement in certain undertakings or pursuits. I suppose all of us can relate to this evaluation and on occasions have honestly and sincerely made this statement. When I think of this loud rap music that seems so common in our communities I have no problem in saying, "that's not my thing." The disturbance that rap music makes even causes me to wish that it were pronounced a violation of our civil law. However, such must be "the thing" of others for they persist in engaging in it. When I behold men wearing necklaces and earrings, I find myself saying once again "that's not my thing." I am content to leave that with the women, but it is obvious, to wear necklaces and earrings, is "the thing" of many males in our society.

We could continue to relate numerous other observations that might be classified as "that's not my thing." They might often fall into the category of indifference and personal preference of the individual. However, the thing that becomes alarming and has dire ramifications is when this is the sentiment of individuals involving matters of their souls. When trying to encourage some to continue attending the worship services and eventually obeying the gospel, their explanation for not doing so was, "That's not my thing." It is not my purpose to degrade those who have made such a statement. I am not questioning their honesty or sincerity! They probably meant what they said, but think about what is involved in what they said.

#### They Have Said ...

**It Is Not My Thing To Please God.** God would have every man to do His will. When one does as God directs, he is pleasing Him. Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). So many seem intent upon pleasing themselves and doing "their thing" rather than pleasing God in obeying His will. Jesus pleased His Father when he prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless

not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39). If we have any hope of living with God in eternity, we must learn to be pleasing to Him while we sojourn on this earth. This view is definitely "the thing" of those who have any hope of heaven.

**It Is Not My Thing To Truly Follow Jesus.** Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). There is self-denial and a cross to bear when one follows the Lord. This does not come easy and it certainly is not "the thing" that attracts the average religionist. They want to talk about believing in Christ in their own way that does not involve any element of sacrifice. It is not "their thing" to obey the gospel and dedicate their lives to the Lord. There used to be a hair creme commercial on TV that featured the thought that a little dab would do you. This sentiment has been incorporated into religion with people thinking that a little dab will do them. They are far removed from the spirit manifested by Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). It might be said that so many do not want to be void of religion, but they certainly do not want to be overloaded with it. It is not "their thing" to really get involved in faithfulness to the Lord.

**It Is Not My Thing to Be Stedfast in True Worship.** Worship to them is a matter of their own design. They do what comes natural with them and resent anyone telling them to the contrary. The present evil world holds such fascination for them, that the worship of God finds little significance. Perhaps some of the special days that men have originated for worship appeal to them, such as Christmas, Easter, and other "holy" days that have been created in man's imagination. But it is not "their thing" to obey Christ and be faithful in worshiping God in His appointed way. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24). This is what happened when the Lord's church came into existence, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Here were people concerned with what the Lord would have them do rather than saying, "that's not my thing." It is a sad thing when individuals view God's word and say "that's not my thing"! In essence, they are saying heaven is not for me and eternal punishment will be my fate.

- Bobby K. Thompson (1925-2022)

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# Clippings . . .

## THE CHURCH

The church is not a refrigerator for the preserving of perishable piety. It is a dynamo for charging human wills with power. The object of the church is not to tell men how to dodge difficulties, but to furnish strength and courage to meet them. The business of the church isn't to furnish hammocks for the lazy; it is rather to offer well-fitting yokes for drawing life's loads. The man who does not support the church practically casts a vote for its abolition.

- Unknown

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## Some Parents Say . . .

"We will not influence our children in making choices and decisions in matters of religion. "Why not? The advertisements will. The press will. Their business will. The radio will. Television will. Their neighbors will. Their politicians will. We use our influence over flowers, vegetables, cattle — do you think we should avoid or ignore our children?"

- Unknown

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## ENVY

Envy is defined as "the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others" (- W.E. Vine); "painful or resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another joined with a desire to possess the same advantage" (Webster's Seventh New Collegiate); "Uneasiness, mortification, or discontent at the sight of another's superiority or success, accompanied with some degree of hatred or malignity, and often or usually with a desire or an effort to depreciate the person envied" (Webster's Twentieth Century).

In Galatians 5 envy is listed as a work of the flesh (vss. 19-21), among such things as fornication, idolatry and drunkenness, and is contrary to the "fruit of the Spirit" (vss. 22-23). It is sinful in every form. Did you catch that? Envy is sinful in every form! In Romans 1:29-31, envy is listed among such things as wickedness, murder, and deceit. These sins were characteristic of the pagan world, people who refused to have God in their knowledge, people who had a "depraved mind" (Romans 1:28). In Paul's epistle to Titus he expressed, "For we also once were . . . spending our life in . . . envy" (Titus 3:3), but the Scriptures instruct those who would obtain mercy to put away envy (1 Peter 2:1). Envy is characteristic of people who walk in darkness, who are not the people of God, and who have not obtained mercy (1 Peter 2: 9-10). In Philippians 1:15, Paul stated that

"Some . . . are preaching Christ even from envy and strife," because they thought it would add to Paul's affliction (1:17).

Envy, being sinful in itself, also brings about and promotes other sinful actions. In Mark 15:10, Pilate "was aware that the chief priests had handed Him over because of envy." Their envy motivated them to crucify Jesus. In Genesis 37:11, we are told of the envy that Joseph's brothers had for him, which caused them to sell him into slavery.

Envy is not written on the faces of people to be discerned easily, thereby giving the spiritually-minded an opportunity to restore the envious one who has been overtaken by this sin (Galatians 6:1). Envy is a sinful attitude of heart that must first be recognized by the guilty one if he will but look in the "mirror" of the "perfect law" (James 1:23-25). If envy continues in a brother's heart, he has deceived himself, his religion is vain (cf. James 1:26). Brethren who learn the true "rotteness" (Proverbs 14:30) of envy will not only realize what it may lead to, but will also perceive other sins which produce this malignant evil. A brother who feels pain or resentment at the advantages or prosperity of others, is likely to take pleasure in their setbacks and reversals. Many times envy is brought about by covetousness. Our lust for things promotes resentment of those who have the things we desire, that we have not possessed. Often we let envy destroy our ambition to reach greater excellencies that others possess. We childishly refuse to cultivate our talents, grow in knowledge, serve more faithfully in the kingdom because of our envy of those who have many talents, more knowledge, and greater faith. There are some brethren who could be teaching classes, leading singing, or serving Christ in other ways, who are not, because of envy. Others will praise and encourage only those brethren that they view as below their level of attainment because of envy. An envious person will depreciate, belittle and backbite the one envied.

If envy is not sinful and shameful, why will the guilty never dare acknowledge it? The cure for envy is found in Mark 12:29-31. Brethren, "love does not envy" (1 Corinthians 13:4, NKJV).

- Gary Smalley

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\* "If your religion leaves your life unchanged, you had better change your religion!"

\* "True Christians are like tea; their real strength is evident when they get into hot water!"

\* "Drunkness does not 'drown sorrow' as some claim; it only 'irrigates' it!"

\* "Think before you speak, because you may have nothing to say!"

\* "The person who has a sound reason never needs an alibi!"

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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)