

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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### "Addicted"

The very mention of this word often times sends chills down a person. In our society when we hear that someone is addicted to something, or someone, it immediately brings to our minds certain words. Helplessness, lack of self-control. Webster even defines the word "addict" as such: "to give oneself up (to some strong habit) a person addicted to some habit, esp. to the use of a narcotic drug."

My point is that this word often carries with it a negative meaning in our society. I believe that although it is true that some folks can and do become addicted to things that are harmful and that are certainly contrary to God's teaching it is possible to be addicted to good things! By good things I mean something that is not wrong according to God's holy word, something that violates no Bible principles. Yes I believe that if I want to be pleasing to God I had better be "addicted" to certain things.

Let me share with you some addictions all Christians need:

1. Study (2 Timothy 2:15). If I'm a Christian I should be addicted to the study of God's word.
2. Prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17). If I'm a Christian I should be addicted to prayer. I should be talking to my God on a daily basis.
3. Truth (John 17:7). If I'm a Christian I should be addicted to the truth. It is truth that will set us free. "Thy word is truth."
4. Self-control (Romans 6:12). If I'm a Christian I should be addicted to controlling my flesh. I must not live after the flesh.
5. Souls of Others (Ezekiel 3:18). If I'm a Christian I should be addicted to teaching others the gospel. For one day I will give an account of my love for or my lack of love for the souls of others.

Perhaps you can think of more things for which a Christian should be addicted. I believe you get the idea of what I am saying about the word addiction. It can and does carry with it a negative idea concerning some things in our society but I hope you can see the positive side of being addicted to certain things. Paul (1 Corinthians 16:15) makes the following statement: "I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)" [KJV].

This word addicted here is the Greek word tasso which means "have set themselves." The NIV uses the word "devoted." The American Standard uses the word "set." They were addicted or devoted or set to the ministry of the saints. Are we?

Just think of the parallels that can be made between an addict in our society and their addiction, versus a Christian that is addicted to God: (1.) Can't live without it. (2.) Must have it. (3.) Need it. (4.) The will and desire to do whatever it takes to be near or have that for which they are addicted. (5.) The changes that an addiction can cause in one's life.

Yes, if you're a Christian, I hope you are addicted to Jesus and his word. If you are not, let me be the first to tell you just what you are missing.

There is no high that can take you higher than Jesus! There is no drink that can pick you up or do as much for you, like drinking from God's holy word! Are you addicted to the gospel? If not, open up the Bible and read for yourself about the love God has for you and the provisions He's made that you and I might have eternal life.

Just remember being addicted to God is not only good for your body, but it's good for your soul too. Yes, like all addictions it's going to cost you. But don't all addictions?

- Rufus Clifford, III, via Truth Magazine, 10/21/1999

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## **How Simple Is Life?**

It is the simple things in life that bring the most joy. The simple things came nearest expressing perfection. The complicated affairs bring sorrow and morose as dividends.

The Jerusalem church came nearest reaching perfection of any congregation ever established, for it was guided by inspiration. Theirs was a simple way. It is written, "And every day in the temple and at home they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ." (Acts 5:42).

There are no complicated formulas to learn, no catechisms to teach, no specific wording to remember - just teach the gospel. The outstanding point of their lives is the fact that they taught the gospel daily. It was not some chance question, but a planned program that led them from house to house and in the temple daily, teaching and preaching.

We know too that their spirit of sacrifice commended the message they taught. Following the time they suffered the beating from the Jewish Sanhedrin, they rejoiced to be worthy of suffering dishonor for His name. This was their strong point as Paul said, "For the sake of Christ, then I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12:10).

What would have been the accomplishments of the apostles had they been able to use the telephone, radio, automobile, and press to further the gospel? They did not think themselves handicapped without them. We are not handicapped with them - our handicap is fear of preaching the gospel!

Their simple method was to go from one home to another preaching the gospel. Our methods should be copied from them. Their zeal and love was to preach and teach daily both publicly and privately. Our enthusiasm should catch from theirs.

- J. Hollis Roberson (1922-1998)

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## *Clippings . . .*

### **Are We The Only Ones Saved?**

Frequently, the question is asked, do you think that just the members of your church will be saved? The accusation is leveled that Christians teach that one must be in "our denomination" to be saved. What is the answer?

No, definitely no, one does not have to be a member of "our denomination" to be saved. Furthermore, one cannot be saved in any denomination on earth — ours, if we had one, or anyone else's. There is no salvation in any denomination. On the other hand, everyone who obeys the gospel of Christ and lives pleasing to God will be saved.

"WE" have no denomination, and if we did, men would not have to be in it to be saved. No one that we know is so blind that he thinks that being in a denomination can ever take one to heaven.

We do believe that only those who obey the gospel of Christ and live Christian lives will go to heaven. Our concern should be to obey the Lord. We could fail in that endeavor. The saved are added to the church by the Lord (Acts 2:47). We need not worry about which church in which to select membership. If we obey the gospel of Christ as presented by His apostles, the Lord will add us (the saved) to the right one: HIS (cf. Matthew 16:18).

- Elmer A. L'Roy (1919-2016) [edited – GFS]

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## **God Prevails in His Purpose!**

When the Son of God came to earth, an angel of the Lord announced His birth to "some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night." (Luke 2:8-11). It was "good news of great joy which will be for all the people." These were the "days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken" (Luke 2:1), which had the effect of bringing Joseph and Mary from their current residence in Nazareth of Galilee to Bethlehem of Judah, Joseph's ancestral city and the place where family records were kept. "While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son;" (Luke 2:6-7a).

Recall that there was a prophecy centuries before revealing that the Christ, who was a descendant of King David, would be born in this "little" place, the same place of David's origin: "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity." (Micah 5:2; cf. Matthew 2:1, 5).

Reading these things brings these thoughts to mind: there are things that are regarded as "too little," too insignificant, too young, too old, too frail, or too something else to accomplish any great thing. But these are the thoughts of the worldly-wise person. Success stories abound illustrating that "little" people, thought by many to be inferior in some way, can indeed accomplish great things! Do we not see it throughout the Bible (cf. Philippians 4:13)? King David and King Jesus both came from this little place, not a royal palace. And no person accomplished what Jesus did!

Further, the Lord God works in His own way, often through the devices and actions of men and governments to bring about His plan and His will in the lives of people. Joseph and Mary did not live in Bethlehem, but their firstborn was delivered there (in fulfillment of prophecy). Mary was a humble bondservant of the Lord God, who, upon hearing the plans of God for her from an angel sent from God, replied, "may it be done to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38). The righteous priest Zacharias performed "his priestly service before God" and "was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense"

when he was visited by an angel to inform him that he would have a son who would be the "forerunner" of Christ. Men can never thwart the plans of the Most High (cf. Matthew 2:13-18)! He brings His plans to fruition in ways that cause men to marvel! Notice: "For nothing will be impossible with God." (Luke 1:37).

The Lord God put people where he wanted them to be, according to HIS purpose (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:18; Acts 8:26; Acts 16:6-10). He plans things for those who are righteous, who walk "blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord." (Luke 1:6).

Of first consideration is, are you righteous, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord? Then contemplate: do you regard yourself as too insignificant to accomplish great things for the Lord? You should not. Are you serving God wherever you find yourself? Has God placed you where you are so that you can bring glory to Him in your service? What can the Most High accomplish through you?

- Gary Smalley

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- \* "Satan laughs at our toiling, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray!"
  - \* "Life is tragic to one who has plenty to live on and nothing to live for!"
  - \* "Any doctrine that will not bear investigation is not a fit tenant for the mind of an honest man!"
  - \* "Anyone who tells you what is wrong, and helps make it right, is your friend!"
  - \* "When a man uses profanity to support an argument, it indicates that either the man or the argument is weak — probably both!"

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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)