

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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### EARLY MORNING MUSINGS: The Danger of Normalizing Sin!

Synopsis: In these musings, sin is portrayed as ugly and destructive, illustrated through the example of Jonah and the tragedy of adultery to show its degradation of individuals and society. Modern fashion and digital culture normalize lust and immoral behavior. Brother Weaks urges readers to reject excuses, confront these evils, and live disciplined, gospel-centered lives that uphold marriage, purity, and dignity amid modern pressures.

#### The Visceral Reality of Sin

Jonah found himself in the belly of a great fish for three days and three nights because of his rebellion against God (Jonah 1:17). Could anything be more horrible than having to wallow for three days in the digestive juices of another living creature? Jonah's head was wrapped in seaweed (2:5). His body must have ached due to the changes in water pressure at varying depths as the fish swam down to the moorings of the mountains (2:6). He had been cast out from God's sight, and his only hope was divine forgiveness (2:4). No wonder Jonah cried out so passionately to God in prayer (chapter three)! This graphic and real event is clearly intended to remind us of the awfulness of sin. Jonah was a real human being, and because of his sin, he was no better than a wad of stink bait in the gullet of an old muddy catfish.

Other Bible texts give us variations on this theme. Judas hanged himself, and his body fell to the ground and burst open (Matthew 27:5; Acts 1:18). Note God's estimation of Christians who return to sin: "It has happened to them according to the true proverb: 'A dog returns to his own vomit and a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire'." (Proverbs 26:11; 2 Peter 2:22). Jesus used language that made the ugliness of sin very clear. He said the scribes and Pharisees were like "whited sepulchers" that were full of dead men's bones (Matthew 23:27).

Jonah was not a flannel-graph character in a children's story. He was a flesh-and-blood man who paid a heavy price for his sin. God preserved his story so that we get the picture

that sin is ugly and repulsive to God, and that it brings absolute loss to those who commit it. The Lord never whitewashes sin.

### **The Sight of Bare Flesh Fuels Lust**

Clothing styles in our day are hardly in line with Bible teaching. Women who want to dress with "shamefastness and propriety" (1 Timothy 2:9) struggle to find clothes "off the rack." Those women who want to adorn the "hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God," often have to make their own clothes (1 Peter 3:3-4). Godly, modest women cover up because they recognize, as Adam did, that some clothing does nothing to cover one's nakedness (Genesis 3:10).

David committed adultery with Bathsheba after his lust was inflamed: ". . . he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold" (2 Kings 11:2). King David was responsible for his own sin—he could have, and should have, looked away (Job 31:1). However, the story proves that the sight of bare flesh fuels lust.

Solomon warned young men to avoid the tactics of an immoral woman: "Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids" (Proverbs 6:25). Carelessly clothed women can incite impure desires in men, and immoral women display as much of physical beauty as they can for public viewing. Solomon described a sad scene in which a young man was seduced and ensnared by an immoral woman. She was loud and rebellious, and she wore the attire of a harlot (Proverbs 7:10-11). She chose revealing clothing that would appeal to the lust of her young victim.

We must not presume that women and girls are immune from the lust of the eyes and flesh. Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce young Joseph because he was "handsome in form and appearance," and she cast longing eyes on him and demanded that he lie with her (Genesis 39:6-7).

Sadly, many Christians claim they are within the bounds of "fashion" while wearing revealing clothes, and they appeal to the comfort of such garments. However, we must ask: How could a Christian ever be comfortable in clothing that is sexually revealing? Also, since when have the standards of society ever determined what God allows or forbids?

Modest clothing adequately covers the body and is plenty fashionable for a child of God, and it is also plenty comfortable for one with a gentle and quiet spirit.

## Why It's Called "Adultery"

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus contrasted true righteousness with the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20). In the course of that discussion Jesus said, "Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery" (5:31-32). The scribes and Pharisees held this tidbit of information in reserve, hoping to spring it on Jesus later (Matthew 19:3-ff).

The devil is very good at his job. He is the father of lies (John 8:44). He is the deceiver (2 Corinthians 11:3). He presents himself and his evil wares as "light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). He normalizes sin (Isaiah 5:20). This consummate liar wants you and me to believe that the battle against adultery and ruined marriages is hopeless because he claims adultery is merely normal human behavior. No, it is not! Not everyone does it. Godly people hold marriage in honor, and they preserve the purity of the marriage bed (Hebrews 13:4).

We must wake people up from their reverie with unflinching and militant gospel preaching. We must call things what they are. Sin and evil need to be exposed in clear, powerful language. People need to hear that when they divorce for a cause other than fornication and marry again, they commit adultery (Matthew 19:9). Adultery takes place when a married individual has a sexual relationship with a person other than their lawful spouse. Adulterers will be judged (Revelation 21:8; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21).

Consider this spiritual comparison from the book of James: Christians are bound to Christ, and to abandon Him for the world is adultery (James 4:4). Similarly, while one's mate is alive, and there has been no adultery, he or she is bound to that mate, and a sexual relationship with anyone else is adultery (Romans 7:1-3).

We need to call sin what it is. People need to be shocked by its ugliness. They also need to hear that God hates sin and will hold those who commit it accountable (2 Corinthians 5:10). Those who drink alcohol are sinners; they are not victims (Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; Galatians 5:21; 1 Peter 4:3). Abortion is not a "right;" it is murder (Exodus 21:22-25; 1 Peter 4:15). An "affair" is adultery and evil; it is never romantic, it is always ugly, destructive, and vile. Adultery will always condemn those who commit it to eternal hell (Revelation 21:8).

## Cell Phone Sins

Sin did not start with the invention of smartphones, but those little microcomputers with big screens have certainly contributed to the spread of sin.

**Pornography.** A survey in 2023 by Common Sense Media reported that many teens as young as twelve had viewed pornography on their smartphones. Fifteen percent of youngsters said they were ten years old the first time they saw internet pornography. Seventy-one percent of those teens said they continue to view pornography at least weekly. Folks, let that sink in. Children in their young teens are viewing graphic and violent sexual matter on the phone given to them by their parents!

**Homosexual evangelism by cell phone.** The same survey in Common Sense Media also reported that homosexual and "transgender" teens spend most of their time online reading material that feeds a warped view of themselves and their sexuality: "In our digital world, teens use the internet to explore and learn about their identities, preferences, and desires, including when it comes to sex and sexuality." Later in the article, this statistic was reported: "Pornography exposure was reported to be higher among LGBTQ+ teens (89%) than non-LGBTQ+ teens (70%) . . ."

What this means is pretty clear: the internet is pumping children's minds full of "vile passions" which are "against nature" (Romans 1:26). Where does a child come up with a belief in multiple genders and the need for special pronouns to describe himself? Not from the Bible! This filth is being taught on the internet, and children are accessing it on the cell phones they were given on their tenth birthday!

The devil is the "father of lies" and he will use anything at his disposal to spread his cancerous doctrines (Mark 9:44; 2 Corinthians 2:11). Cell phones and the internet are the perfect technologies to fill impressionable minds with the belief that they are abnormal and need fixing by perverse means. Wicked people use this technology to destroy the purity of young people.

**Bullying by cell phone.** Bullies have always been around, but cell phones and social media embolden bullies to become faceless assassins. Bullying among teenagers is nonstop online and is crueler than ever. All too often, the nightly news carries a report about a teen who committed suicide after being bullied online. A Christian's words should be with grace, seasoned with salt (Colossians 4:6), and they ought to be wholesome and should impart grace to the hearers (Ephesians 4:29). Biting and devouring one another with our words is evil (Galatians 5:15).

**Vanity and the "selfie" obsession.** Here is a uniquely modern problem that is almost entirely cell-phone centric; not to mention, it is mostly a problem with young people (teens to thirty-somethings). The selfie craze is the definition of selfish ambition and conceit (Philippians 2:3). Can you imagine Sarah, Dorcas, or Martha pausing every few seconds to take a picture of themselves in seductive poses?

Cell phones are here to stay, but we need to use them for good and not evil. If one is inclined to use his phone for any evil purpose, he would be better to "cut it off and throw it from him" rather than to enter into hell (Matthew 5:29-30).

- David Weaks, via Truth Magazine, March, 2026

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\* "If as a Christian, you are too busy to pray, you are too busy!"

\* "To be angry with a weak man is proof you are not very strong yourself!"

\* "Some people want religion simply as a kind of fire escape!"

\* "Blessed is the man who refrains from speaking until he knows what he is talking about!"

\* "A weak mind is like a microscope which magnifies trifling things, but cannot receive great things!"

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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)