

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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I Wonder

Sometimes I wonder. Do you ever wonder? By wonder I mean to question and think or ponder a matter. I sometimes wonder about many things. Quite often it is about the church, about what we are doing and what the future holds. I think of the past and contrast it to the present. I sometimes wonder how we got to where we are.

I wonder whether we fully appreciate the God we serve. I wonder if we have the same concept that Nehemiah had who thought of God as the "great and awesome God" (Nehemiah 1:5; 4:11). I wonder if we think often enough about His great power and might. I wonder if we stop to realize that He is the Almighty (Revelation 4:8). I wonder if we truly appreciate His work in creation (Genesis 1-2; Psalms 33:6-9), His wonders shown in the exodus (Exodus 11-13), His power demonstrated at Sinai (Exodus 19), and His victory displayed at Mount Carmel (1 Kings 17). I wonder if we had a better appreciation of who God is how different our lives and attitudes would be. Oh, how I do wonder at times.

I wonder if we really understand the implications of the golden rule. It says, "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12). I wonder if we try as often or as much as we could to truly treat others the way we want to be treated. I wonder how often we reverse our thinking process. That is, I wonder if many of us ever look at how we are treating others and ask if that is the way we want to be treated. I wonder how different life would be if we tried harder to live by this principle. I wonder how different marriages would be if each mate treated the other the way they would want to be treated.

I wonder about the homes (families) among God's people. I don't have to wonder what the Bible says about families. Husbands are to love their wives like they love no other (Ephesians 5:25-28). Wives are to love and reverence their husbands (Ephesians 5:33; Titus 2:3-5). Husbands are to be leaders in the home (Ephesians 5; 1 Timothy 3:4), leading with honor and esteem for the wife (1 Peter 3:1-7). Wives are to willingly obey their husbands because of their fear of God (1 Peter 3:1-6). But, now I wonder how many homes among God's people are not what they ought to be. How many homes are really

led by the wife? How many families have love and consideration to the level of what they ought to be? How many families are not what they appear on the surface?

I wonder about our gospel meetings. I wonder how much more effective they could be if we tried. I wonder if we don't think that all that needs to be done is plan a meeting, invite a preacher, and show up at most of the services and we will consequently reach the lost in the community. I wonder if we spent as much time thinking about who we could get to come and trying to get them there as we do in planning meals for the visiting preacher and who we will have with him, if we wouldn't reach more of the lost. I wonder if we have lost focus of what a meeting is about? Don't misunderstand. I'm not saying that having a meal, getting several together for lunch, and playing golf with the visiting preacher are wrong. In fact, I did all three of these during our recent meeting. I just wonder if we worked as hard at getting others to the meeting as in those areas how different it might be.

I wonder why we don't accomplish more with all the tools we have. I think of the good that was done by the previous generations in preaching the gospel. I think about the hundreds and hundreds who were converted by men like A.C. Grider, W. Curtis Porter, Roy Cogdill, and others. They didn't have computers, the Internet, e-mail, web pages, Power Point, desk-top publishing, or air conditioned buildings, etc. Brother Porter used a crayon (his word for chalk). Brother Grider used many hand painted cloth charts. Wow! Think of the tools we have today. I wonder why we don't accomplish more. I wonder if it could be that we put too much trust in the tools and less in the gospel and in the work of just getting it done.

I wonder if the church were a business how it would survive. A great number of small businesses fail because of a lack of attention or they are not run properly. I have often wondered if we were a business, if we would sink. I wonder if any business could make it with the amount of attention we give to the local work. I wonder how many business could make it with the kind of planning and direction we often give to the church.

I wonder about those who are sick and cannot make the service. I wonder if all those who miss services because they are "sick" are always so sick that they can't come to services. I don't mean that people should attend when they are so sick they couldn't work or do anything else. If one is contagious, certainly it would be inconsiderate to others to come. I wonder if some are merely tired or have a headache or have a few pains. I wonder if those who hardly miss a service don't have the same problems and still attend. I wonder if those who are sick a lot on Sunday and Wednesday miss a lot of work or school on the days between.

I wonder what happened to using wisdom and good judgment. If wisdom or judgment were a person, I wonder if we should report him as a missing person at times. Some of the decisions we make, things we do and what we say shows that wisdom is not always with us. If we were to use wisdom we would think things through a little better. We would think about how things appear. We would think about how our statements might come across and be interpreted. We would reconsider how we are being perceived.

I wonder about the many cases of traipsing in and out during services. I know that we all have occasions where we need to go out to the restroom. We all know that parents have to take children out to see to their needs. I also know that some have medical problems that they cannot help. What I wonder about is whether all those who make their way in and out during worship really have those problems. I wonder how many of those kids who repeatedly do that are just getting a drink of water. I wonder if some help from parents could reduce the number of such cases. I wonder if there would be a better time to go out or come back in than during the invitation song. One of the most serious times of a service is when we are hoping someone may respond to the invitation. Just as we make an appeal for obedience or correction and stand to sing some youngster will make his way out to the restroom (or water fountain) and make his way all the way down the aisle - sometimes to the very front row. I wonder if that is the best time for that.

I also wonder what people will think about this article. Sometimes I wonder about a lot of things. Do you ever wonder?

- Donnie V. Rader

* "Although sin is sugar-coated, it is always bitter!"

* "The strong should bear - not bare - the infirmities of the weak!"

* "Don't stay so busy laying up for a rainy day that you can't enjoy the sunshine!"

* "What your conscience says is more important than what your neighbors say!"

* "Many people want to learn 'the tricks of the trade' without the trouble of learning the trade!"

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)