

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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The Truth Sometimes Hurts

How much do you appreciate the truth? The truth is easy to hear when it is flattering, encouraging, and uplifting. However the truth can sometimes hurt. Do you always desire the truth from those around you, regardless of whether it is favorable or not? Do you always demand the truth from those who preach and teach the gospel of Christ?

The truth pleased the rich young ruler until Jesus told him the one thing he lacked (Mark 10:17-22). Some would call such a declaration of truth unloving, but the Spirit called it love (note vs. 21). How do we feel when someone courageously and honestly points out our shortcomings (Prov 27:6)?

Many of the Jews who heard Peter on Pentecost appreciated the truth, though it indicted them. They chose repentance and baptism (Acts 2:36-40). Whereas, those Jews who heard Stephen speak that same truth hated what was spoken. They responded by stoning Stephen to death (Acts 7:54-60). How do we respond to the truth?

The Galatians loved the apostle Paul – so much that at one point they were willing to pluck out their own eyes and give them to help Paul. However, in the very next verse Paul was compelled to ask if he had become their enemy because he told them the truth (Gal 4:14-16). Do we despise those who tell us what we need to hear?

A few reminders should help us to realize the value of truth:

1. Jesus is the truth (John 14:6).
2. God's word is truth (John 7:17).
3. Knowing and abiding in the truth can set us free (John 8:31-32).
4. Those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness will face the wrath of God (Romans 1:18).
5. We must always speak the truth with our neighbors (Eph 4:25).
6. Love rejoices in truth (1 Cor 13:6).

Simply stated, unless we have a love of the truth, we will never appreciate the truth that hurts (2 Thes 2:10-12). Unless we are willing to accept painful truths, we cannot know the sanctifying power of truth (John 17:17). Unless we obey the truth, we will be condemned (Rom 2:8).

How much do you appreciate truth? The answer is painfully obvious when we are confronted with agonizing truths that require change in our lives. Change hurts, but the truth saves. How will you respond the next time you are confronted with the truth?

- By Jonathan Perz

Reacting to the Charge of “Antiism”

If one dares to ask for scriptural authority for some practice within the church he risks being called an “anti.” That term has been applied through the ages, sometimes in a tone that sounds hostile. Some have hesitated to question innovations for fear they will receive that “branding.”

For some reason I have never considered it an insult to be called “anti.” Even though I know it was not meant as such, I after considering the source, I choose to view it as a compliment. Usually those who use that term do so simply because they don’t have good scriptural arguments to offer. However, I suspect that if we look hard enough, we will find something they oppose – if nothing else, they are against what they call “antiism,” making them “anti-antiism.”

Another reason not to recoil when so branded is the company we keep. When we look into the Bible we see a lot of “antis” who pleased God – and that should be our goal, not seeking to please men (see Gal 1:10). There was Elijah who was “anti-idolatry;” John the Baptist who was “anti-adultery” (Mark 6:18); Jesus who was “anti-defiling of the temple” (John 2:14-16); and the apostle Paul who was “anti-women preachers” (1 Cor 14:34), just to name a few. That puts us in pretty good company!

I suppose, if I had a choice, I would prefer that brethren would discuss their differences instead of resorting to name-calling. There was a time when there was at least an attempt to justify by the Bible what is practiced in the churches. The motto, “We speak where the Bible speaks, and are silent where the Bible is silent” (a response to 1 Peter 4:11) has evolved into hollow words for many of our brethren.

The only real difference between the Lord’s church and the churches of men is our dogmatic insistence on proving all that we teach and do, using

the revealed will of God. When we blur that distinction it is no wonder that others view us as just another denomination among many.

by Al Diestelkamp

Sentence Sermons

We don't change God's message, His message changes us.

The church is prayer-conditioned.

When God ordains, He sustains.

WARNING: Exposure to the Son may prevent burning.

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)