The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Don't Sell Out!

By Curtis Pope

In 1st Kings 21 we find Ahab and Jezebel ready to jump on the opportunity to purchase Naboth's vineyard. Ahab attempted to buy and barter his way into possession of Naboth's cherished family property, but Naboth declined to sell. After Jezebel noticed the pouting and complaining of her husband, she had Naboth taken out of the picture through a plot of deception, corruption, and murder. Now Ahab got what he wanted, a beautiful vineyard right next to his palace, and he didn't even have to pay for it… or did he?

Many would say Ahab got a great deal, but this is not how the scriptures record it. *"Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife incited him."* (1 Kings 21:25).

In gaining Naboth's vineyard Ahab spent more than he even realized; he had clearly sold himself to evil. Today we are faced with decisions like Ahab's. What does Satan use to draw us away from serving the Everlasting God? He may use possessions or something entirely different, but in the end is it really a good deal?

In Mark 8:36 Jesus reminds His followers never to sell out: *"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?"* He reminds us that to give in to Satan is to forfeit our eternal souls for temporary pleasures. Don't let Satan fool you into thinking he has a good deal. Don't sell for so little! Place your trust, your hope, and your very soul in the hands of our living Father in heaven who has promised and proven that He will richly reward His servants.

Some questions to ask yourself:

1. Am I so critical that I see only a person's failures and not his good points?
2. Am I so childish that people must handle me gently lest I be offended?
3. Am I mature enough to handle hurts and disappointments without feeling mistreated and making everyone else miserable?
4. Do I hurt people while boasting, "I believe in saying what I think?"
5. Can I be completely trusted with confidential information?
6. Am I guilty of making sarcastic remarks about the success of others?
7. Am I big enough to admit when I am wrong, or do I seek to excuse myself by blaming others?
8. Do I excuse my sins while self-righteously condemning those of others?
9. Are others uplifted and encouraged through their association with me?
10. Do I follow after peace, or do my words and actions promote strife?
11. When the good name of an outstanding person is undermined, do I silently rejoice, "That is what I thought all the time"?
12. When a discourtesy is shown me, do I brood over it and determine to get even?

If you answered "Yes" to any of these questions, you still have some room for growth in your Christian life!

Needed – A Clean Heart

By John Beckloff

During our Christian walk we sometimes feel emptiness, shame and guilt. Why? Sometimes in our selfishness we neglect to do what we know is right and commit what we know is not right. This can make us feel emptiness, shame and guilt. It can even make us feel like scoundrels. We wonder – how can God put up with us? How can God accept back into His fellowship such a self-centered and rebellious sinner like you and me? According to our human reasoning there seems no way. Time after time we know we have failed Him. We make promises and then ignore them. When we became Christians, we promised to live right, tell others about Christ, and

to start living another way, but because of our inconsistency we feel wretched, guilty and miserable. The joy of salvation has ebbed and we feel so burdened. We find it hard to pray when we feel so wretched. Deep within ourselves we want a clean heart. We want happiness restored.

There was a man in scripture who had those same longings for a relationship with the personal God. In his heart of hearts, he desired peace and joy that comes from walking with the loving Fathers. But misery and feelings of wretchedness came one evening when he walked out on his roof and walked out on God and took Bathsheba.

It took a wise old prophet's story to help David see his wretchedness. David's heart was touched and in reflection he records his repentance in one of his psalms.

In Psalm 51, David's desire for a clean heart compels him to pour his inner most feelings to our God, *"Oh God, against thee I have sinned and done what is evil in thy sight"* (vs. 4). David knows too keenly his vileness and feels his disgust. He prays for spiritual cleansing; to be as white as snow (vs. 7). Verses 9-12 are beautiful to those of us who also desire to be a people after God's own heart.

God can and will give us a new heart and a right attitude that brings refreshing joy (vs. 12) and praise to God (vs. 15).

"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit." Psalm 51:9-12

On Saying *"I was wrong"*

The TRW Company, a leader in electronics and builder of the first spacecraft to leave the solar system, placed a newspaper advertisement recently in which outstanding authorities of years past were quoted. Their statements were matters of public record. Each was wrong. Here are their bold assertions:

"Heavier than air flying machines are impossible." - Lord Kelvin, President Royal Society, 1895)

"There is no likelihood man can ever tap the power of the atom." - Robert Millikan, Nobel prize winner in physics, 1923.

"Babe Ruth made a big mistake when he gave up pitching." - Tris Speaker, 1921

Each of these men was eminently qualified in his field. Each was dead wrong regarding a matter about which he possessed considerable knowledge. We have been unable to find any statements these worthies may have made later on the same subjects.

An honest mistake, or even a dishonest one, can be a starting place for future judicious comment and accomplishment. The words with which to begin are, "I was wrong."

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)

Let your speech always be with Grace – Colossians 4:6