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quickly. "Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (Ephesians 4:26). If not taken care of promptly, problems between brethren will grow like a cancer.

4) Matthew 18 does not deal with public sin, but private disagreements between brethren. Some mistakenly believe all rebuke of sin must be done in private first. Such an attitude is not in harmony with apostolic examples.

When Peter stopped associating with the Gentiles, Paul publicly rebuked him in the presence of many brethren. Paul said he "rebuked him to the face, because he was to be blamed" (Gal. 2:11). Peter's public hypocrisy was a blight on the name of the church and cried out for a public rebuke.

The fornicator at Corinth was publicly rebuked by Paul without the benefit of a private meeting first (1 Corinthians

5:1-13). Everyone at the church in Corinth already knew of his sin, and instead of mourning, they were "puffed up." Paul, "absent in body but present in spirit," commanded the church to "deliver such a one to Satan." According to some, Paul should have gone to this man privately before writing the letter.

John warned "beloved" Gaius about Diotrephes in 3 John 1:9. Diotrephes "loved to have the pre-eminence" among brethren. John said, "if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church" (3 John 1:10). It is obvious that John had not talked with Diotrephes before he wrote to Gaius. Public sin needs to be dealt with in public.

The children of God are not immune from sin. If our sins become public knowledge, let us have the courage to make public correction. Credit: www.padfield.com ♦

Seven Steps to Humility (Philippians 2:1-11)

1. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit.
2. Count others better than yourselves.
3. Look not only to your own interests.
4. Look also to the interests of others.
5. Empty yourselves.
6. Take the form of a servant.
7. Become obedient unto death. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
 Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
 Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
 Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
 Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
 Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

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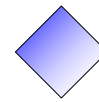


Schedule of Assembly

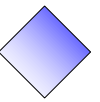
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
 Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
 Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

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The Voice of Truth



October 24, 2010

God Is Watching By Jimmy Pettigrew

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Peter 3:12). The "righteous" are the ones over whom God watches in tender care. God is ever watching to bless them. They are here contrasted with "them that do evil." God's protection, guardianship, and care are so meaningful for the Christian. God sees all that happens on the earth. We are prone to accept only that which is visible; and, since we cannot see God watching, we are unmindful of His constant surveillance!

So, it is difficult for any of us to remember always that there is an all seeing eyes watching our every act at all times. Yet, we're told, "The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth" (Psalm 33:13-14). God sees and knows all that takes place in the world. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3). There is no possible way to escape this all seeing eye of God! Job says, "For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21).

Since God knows all our goings, we should be aware of this, and live accordingly! We should have the same conviction as Hagar in saying, "Thou God seest me" (Genesis 16:13). Are you conscious of this as you plan and proceed in your daily affairs? God sees and reads us constantly! "Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?" (Proverbs 15:11). Man becomes utterly foolish in thinking that he can fool God, and hide his sinful behavior! "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Isaiah 29:15). ". . . and be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23). "But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the out-

ward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). Though many of these passages are so well known, yet, how much have they really influenced our personal lives? Are we conscious throughout every day that God is silently observing our deeds and hearing our speech?

We can no more hide from God than could Adam and Eve in the garden. God knew why the prophet (Elijah) was hiding in the cave. Jonah was not hidden from God on the ship, nor yet in the belly of the great fish. Man cannot escape from Him. There is nothing that can hide from God! "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13). When Christians are aware that they cannot escape from Him, we should ". . . walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1-3). Consciously walking under the surveillance of Almighty God will help:

- 1) A Christian to be an obedient child.
- 2) A Christian to be holy.
- 3) A Christian to be a walking sermon.
- 4) A Christian to be right in God's sight.
- 5) A Christian to be a good steward.
- 6) A Christian to be active in righteousness.
- 7) A Christian to be present at every service.
- 8) A Christian to be one who resists the Devil.
- 9) A Christian to be one who prays
- 10) A Christian to be one who abstains from all appearance of evil.
- 11) A Christian to be servant.
- 12) A Christian to be giver to the church according to what he makes rather than the amount he has left over.
- 13) A Christian to be present at Sunday morning Bible

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other fellows.

class than staying home to sleep.

14) A Christian to put the Lord's business above any other business.

15) A Christian to see his own faults and not just the

God is observing all we do, and hearing all we say. Possibly no thought would add more zest to life and give it better direction than knowing that God is near and cares for us. Just remember that God is really watching! ♦

"The Blood Of Christ"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Our Lord shed His blood on the cross over 2000 years ago. Yet, it is still as powerful as ever. It has cleansing power, the likes of which has not been equaled by man. In fact in this study, we will see that there is nothing man can do to cleanse himself from sin, but Christ's blood can cleanse man from every sin! Let us study about our Lord's shed blood and its meaning and purpose in the lives of people today. Certainly this is a subject worthy of our study.

Christ's Blood Remitted Our Sins.

Perhaps we are already aware of this fact, but it does good to consider some pertinent passages on this subject. First, Jesus Himself said His blood would be shed "for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). The word "remission" means, "freedom; (fig.) pardon: - deliverance, forgiveness, liberty" (Strong's). Can we think of anything more wonderful than liberty? More important than political liberty, we can have liberty or freedom from sin because of the shed blood of Christ! This is truly a gift from God.

Read the apostle Paul's words as he stated the importance of Christ and His shed blood. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:21-26).

Put simply, there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for "all have sinned." This being true, our Lord justified all and became the "propitiation" (sin offering) for all mankind through the shedding of His blood. Therefore, as we believe in Jesus Christ, doing what He has said to

do in order to be saved (repent of our sins and be baptized, (Rom. 10:16; Acts 2:36-38), we can have forgiveness of sins (liberty) because He shed His blood for us! What a wonderful thing for men to consider! Without the blood of Christ, there is no salvation. In addition to the statements in the book of Romans, study the books of Ephesians and Colossians. In those letters, the apostle Paul again made it clear that Christ's blood brought about the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14).

The apostle Peter wrote the "strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia" and told them that they "were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Pet. 1:18-19). This same truth applies today. Our redemption did not come through physical power or prowess; nor can we "earn" our way into Heaven. Rather, Christ's shed blood made it possible for us to one day see Heaven!

Another text worthy of our study is the apostle John's words in the book of Revelation. This apostle was banished to the island of Patmos, and was allowed to pen the following: "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:4-5). Truly, we cannot say enough about what the blood of Christ means to every man and woman!

Christ's Blood Purchased The Church.

We know that Christ promised to build His church in Matthew 16:18. Yet, in addition to this promise, Christ also paid the purchase-price for the church! The apostle Paul declares that Christ's church was purchased when

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He shed His blood on the cross. This fact is recorded in the book of Acts when this dear brother met with the Ephesian elders at Miletus for the last time. He told them, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). He later wrote a letter to to the Ephesian Christians and told them that Christ "loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).

After learning this, how can anyone belittle the importance of the Lord's church with a clear conscience? Jesus Christ thought the church was so important He died and shed His blood to purchase it (Jn. 19:33-34)! If it was that important to Christ, it must be that important to me! If the Lord saw the church as a prized possession, I am not going to belittle her! Let us make sure that we hold the Lord's church in high regard. Something that is this precious, this valuable, deserves our honor and our respect!

Seeing that these things are true, I see it as no coincidence that when one becomes a Christian, and is washed in the blood of the Lamb, that he is also added to the Lord's church at the same time (Rev. 1:5; Acts 2:47)!

Christ's Blood Can Be Counted Unholy.

After Christ has done so much for us, we see that there are some who would count Christ's blood as "unholy" or common (Heb. 10:29). Who are these people? They are the ones who would "sin wilfully" after receiving "the

knowledge of the truth" (Heb. 10:26). The word "wilfully" in that text is defined as "voluntarily; willingly" (Strong's). Therefore, when one will voluntarily forsake God's laws, whether it be in forsaking the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25, this is in the context); in using filthy language (Eph. 5:4); in lascivious actions (Gal. 5:19-21); etc., then we are leaving the commands and precepts of God! Therefore, we are guilty of counting Christ's blood as unholy or common.

This is why we need to be reminded daily to stay faithful to the Lord God (Rev. 2:10). We need to be "steadfast and unmovable" (I Cor. 15:58). We need to continue to "walk in the light, as he is in the light" (I Jn. 1:7). One way we do this is by remembering who we are, and remembering where we once were. The Ephesians were reminded of this when they were told they were once "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). At one time they were "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, ... having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12). Yet, it was the blood of Christ that made them "nigh" to God (v. 13)!

Conclusion

Since we were once in the same position as the Ephesians, let us never consider Christ's blood unholy or common through willful sin; but let us live according to the will of God as Christ did (Jn. 12:49-50) so that one day we can be with our Lord in Heaven for eternity! How wonderful is the power of the blood of Christ! Let us thank God for His wonderful sacrifice (I Cor. 15:57, II Cor. 2:14, 8:16, 9:15)!

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

Problems Between Brethren

By David Padfield

Problems between brethren are nothing new. Paul and Barnabas disagreed over whether or not to take John Mark with them on their second journey. Luke said, "the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another" (Acts 15:39). Paul would later write that John Mark was "useful to me for ministry" (2 Timothy 4:11).

What should you do when a brother in Christ sins against you? Jesus said to "go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear you, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen

and a tax collector" (Matt. 18:15-17).

A few observations about this much abused passage:

- 1) Jesus goes from the private, to the semi-private, to the public. If the one in error listens to his brother in private that should be the end of the matter; no one else should ever know of the "sin."
- 2) This passage does not deal with "church discipline." The church is not commanded to do anything in this passage. The Bible has much to say about church discipline, but not in this passage.
- 3) Problems between brethren need to be dealt with

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