

Just A Matter Of Wanting To!

A man can get out of bed at three o'clock on Saturday morning to go fishing, but when you talk to him about Sunday morning Bible class, he can't get up that early on Sunday!

Why The Difference???

A man can go a hundred miles on Friday night to a ball game, but is too tired to get out for worship on Sunday and Wednesday night?

Why The Difference???

A man can take his family to a circus and spend considerable money, but can't afford to give more than a dollar to the Lord!

Why The Difference???

A man can be on the membership committee at the civil club but cannot make the right approach when asked to do personal work for the Lord!

Why The Difference???

A man can take an aspirin and go to work despite an annoying headache, but a similar headache is considered a good reason for missing the worship!

Why The Difference???

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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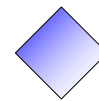


Schedule of Assembly

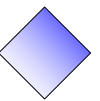
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

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

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The Voice of Truth



November 21, 2010

The Bible Is Clear By Jimmy Pettigrew

Recently, I have been having a discussion with a man (belonging to a denomination) concerning the church. He called me a brother, and I pointed out to him how he could become my brother in Christ. His reply, he asked this question in a sarcastic way, "Do you think our Creator cares about the particular denomination one belongs to? He goes on and says, "No... our Lord and Savior wants our hearts, that's what's important to Him." Then he says, "The church of Christ as the bible refers to it is talking about all followers of Christ regardless of denomination."

First, I want to say the use of mechanical instruments of music in the worship to God is sinful because it is not authorized (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Denominationalism is sinful because it is not authorized by the Bible. Whatever in religion is not authorized by the Bible is sinful. This the Bible plainly teaches. People need to realize that whatever in religion that is not authorized by the Bible is sinful, and will be rooted up (Matthew 15:13). The essential head of every denomination is not Christ, but Satan. There would be no denominations if all men followed the Bible.

The Bible is clear that the church is not a part of the whole; the whole being false religion. We are not to go beyond the things written (1 Corinthians 4:6) and when we do, we do not have God (2 John 9-11). A denomination is a group of people who formulate their own creed not found in the Bible.

God cannot accept denominationalism because He condemns division (1 Corinthians 1:10-17). There is no authority in the Bible for the Lutheran "church," Methodist, or Baptist "church," etc. The man does not live who can prove that the Bible authorizes a man to be baptized into, say the Methodist "church." Such authorization is not in the Bible. The church for which Jesus died (Acts 20:28) is the one body of people who have been saved by His blood (Ephesians 1:7; 2:13-17). The church for which Christ died is neither a denomination nor a part of a de-

nomination.

Remember Jesus said, "If ye abide in my word, (then) are ye truly my disciples" (John 8:31). Then Christ goes on to say, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Truth is from heaven, not from man (John 1:17; 14:6; 16:13). It must be known (John 8:32), believed (2 Thessalonians 2:12), loved (2 Thessalonians 2:10), and obeyed (1 Peter 1:22; Galatians 5:7; Matthew 7:21-23; Hebrews 5:8-9). It sounds to me that there is more than just the Savior wanting our hearts.

Notice please, that denominationalists claim to be faithful servants of Christ while they (1) reject Christ's own plan of salvation and to accept a plan of salvation which has been invented by mere human beings (for example, salvation by grace or faith only), (2) reject the one church which Jesus died and enter a denomination, which also was invented by mere human beings, (3) to reject the way of worship which has been authorized by the New Testament and to engage in worship which has not been authorized by the New Testament. People, denominationalism is sinful because it is not authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ (2 John 9-11; Colossians 3:17).

The Bible teaches that every person who is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ is added by the Lord Himself to the church for which He died (Acts 2:38, 41, 47; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 12:13). Those who have done what the Bible authorizes become members of the church of Christ; Christians, and nothing more. They do not become a hyphenated Christian (Lutheran-Christians, Methodist-Christians, and Baptist-Christians); they become just Christians!

Do you see what this person is saying? He is telling me that the body of Christ doesn't matter. The church is not important. If that be the case, then he is telling me the

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

Pages 1 to 2 - The Bible Is Clear
Page 2 - Hypocrisy

Page 3 - "Straightway"
Page 4 - Just A Matter Of Wanting To! | Why the Difference???

Continued from Page One, "The Bible Is Clear"

blood of Christ doesn't matter (**Acts 20:28**). How could anyone say the church is not important? Who would say that Christ wasted His blood on the cross? You do if you say the church doesn't matter, as long as you give your heart to the Lord. If the church doesn't matter, God's eternal plan doesn't matter (**Ephesians 3:8-11**). His ideas, his attitude is, "I'm okay, and you're okay." His belief is as long as your religious you're alright in the sight of God. Wrong! Tell that to Cain, Nadab and Abihu (**Genesis 4; Leviticus 10**). I want us to notice what this man is saying, notice: The Baptists teach baptism by immersion; the Methodist by sprinkling; Baptists practice a closed communion with the Lord's Supper; The Methodist an open communion; The Baptists teach one can't fall from grace, while the Methodist can fall. According to this man's teaching, he believes both views on these subjects are correct, because it doesn't matter as long as you give your heart to the Lord. He accepts the view that God is the author of both these views on these subjects. Well God is not a God of confusion (**1 Corinthians 14:33**). Our God is ever a God of order. God demands order! He is not the author of confusion. We are to speak the same thing. *"Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing and (that) there be*

no divisions among you; but (that) ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (**1 Corinthians 1:10**). Here it is specified the need to speak the same thing, thus making it possible that there be no divisions. The speaking of the same things would be possible when all proposing to serve the Christ confined their speaking to *"the oracles of God"* (**1 Peter 4:11**), recognizing only the Word as authority (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**). This is impossible under this man's doctrine.

We plead with everyone to realize that he can be just a Christian, not some so-called "hyphenated-Christian" – a member of some denomination. There never has been a need for any denomination. There is no present need for anyone to be a member of a denomination. All one needs to do is obey the gospel of Christ, the seed, which is His word (**Luke 8:11; 1 Peter 1:20-25**), as a penitent believer being baptized unto the remission of your sins (**Acts 2:38; 22:16**), and you have the assurance of God, as set out in His word, that you will be a member of the church for which Jesus died (**Acts 20:28**), in which Christ is a Savior of (**Ephesians 5:23**), you will be just a Christian. Obedience to the Bible makes nothing but Christians. And there is no way to become a Christian except by believing and obeying the Bible. ♦

Hypocrisy

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Nothing is more repulsive to sensitive souls than hypocrisy: Pretending to be what one is not. Our English word is traceable to the Greek *"hypokrisis,"* which refers to the playing of a part on the stage. In the Greek theater, a hypocrite was one who wore a mask and played a part on the stage, imitating the speech, mannerisms, and conduct of the character portrayed.

One of the places where hypocrisy is mainly found is religion. Throughout His ministry, Jesus vigorously exposed and denounced the hypocrisy of many who opposed Him, especially the scribes and Pharisees. They paraded their charitable deeds, praying and fasting as a theatrical display to win the praise of men (**Matthew 6:1-2, 5, 16**). They sought to give the appearance of being godly, but they

were actually blind to the truth of God (**Luke 20:19-20**).

A lot of people say they believe in and love Jesus but refuse to obey commandments. He once challenged some people by asking, *"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* (**Luke 6:46**). He was saying, in effect, that their actions belied their testimony. He was accusing them of hypocrisy.

It is highly probable that you know some people who go to church services on Sunday, yet these same people live very sinful lives on the other six days of the week. These people are hypocrites! They have a very shallow type of religion which makes no real difference in their lives! True religion does make a difference in one's life. Has it made a difference in your life? Or are you playing a part? ♦

"The Voice of Truth" Is Available Online!

We offer downloads of the current issue, as well as back issues, on our website. Please check us out at: www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com

The Voice of Truth is available through e-mail. If you are interested in receiving it, please contact us at: hillcrestcofc@live.com

"Straightway"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Last week, I had the pleasure and privilege of baptizing a dear lady into Christ. In our study together, we talked about **Acts 16:25-34**, where it says among other things, that when the Philippian jailor heard the truth preached, *"he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway"* (**Acts 16:33**).

The word "straightway" in the KJV is an important word because it denotes the speed with which an event happened. Other Bible versions use the terms "immediately", "at once", "right away", "without delay", and "presently" in this text. All of these words denote the speed of the action taken. What does this teach us?

Our Soul's Salvation Depends Upon Our Action.

We understand Christ's blood was shed for everyone (**Matt. 20:28; Titus 2:11-12; Rom. 5:8**; etc.) At the same time, our salvation depends upon our response to the Lord's sacrifice. In the case of the Philippian jailor, he asked Paul and Silas, *"What must I do to be saved?"* (**Acts 16:30**).

Notice that the jailor recognized he had something to do. He asked, *"What must I do ...?"* He was not the only one to ask such a question, either. On more than one occasion, folks in the New Testament recognized that they had to take action if they wished to be saved (**Acts 2:37, 9:6**, etc.).

It is the same for us today. If we expect to be saved, we must take action (Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21)!

Our Soul's Salvation Must Not Be Delayed.

The Philippian jailor not only acted, but he also saw the need for taking immediate action when it came to his soul. In our study, we find in **Acts 16:25** that the apostle Paul and Silas were praying and singing at *"midnight"* before the earthquake occurred. After the earthquake, the jailor entered and took advantage of the gospel plan of salvation.

Therefore, this man, after hearing the truth at midnight, determined he needed to be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins, and did so "immediately"! They did not wait until a later time, but went right then! What was necessary in finding a body of water big enough to baptize the

jailor and his family, I do not know. What I know is that he did not use the lateness of the hour and inconvenience as an excuse for disobedience. Once he learned the truth (**Acts 16:31-32**), he responded "straightway", "immediately," "without delay" (**v. 33**).

Had this man waited or put off his salvation for a day, a year, or just when he felt it *"convenient"* (**Acts 24:25**), he might have never been saved from sin! The New Testament clearly states: *"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"* (**II Cor. 6:2**). The reason for such urgency is because we do not have a lease on life (**Prov. 27:1; Jas. 4:13-14**). The jailor didn't know if or when another earthquake was coming, and we don't know what might happen in a day that would forever keep us from making our lives right with God. Friend, what is keeping you from being saved "straightway"??

Our Soul's Salvation Should Be Our Greatest Concern

The reason why folks like the Philippian jailor and our new sister in Christ took action "straightway", "at once", "without delay" is because there is no greater concern in life than the concern for our soul. At one point in His preaching, Jesus asked two questions: *"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (**Matt. 16:26**). If this does not tell us something about a soul's value, then what would? Jesus, by using these comparisons, shows us that one's soul is worth more than anything in this world. Since this is true, why wouldn't we respond to the gospel "straightway", "presently", "right away"? To put it off is to take a great risk by assuming we will have yet another week, or another day, even another minute! (**Prov. 27:1**)

Conclusion

To borrow a phrase, what is hindering you from obeying the gospel (**Acts 8:36**)? Your soul is your most valuable possession. It is eternal (**II Cor. 4:16**)! Therefore, prepare your soul for eternity, and do so now, today, "immediately," "straightway", before it is everlastingly too late (**Jn. 9:4; Ps. 90:8-10**)! Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦