

Continued from Page Three, "Mercy And Not Sacrifice"

This is the point being made in Hosea, Matthew, and the other passages. We need to follow the will of God, serve Him, and the Lord will show mercy to us! Sacrifices and burnt offerings had their place, yes, but if the people would have just done what they were supposed to, there would have been no need for the sacrifices! This is why God said that to "obey" and to "hearken" are better than the sacrifices! This is what Micah declared when he wrote by inspiration, "Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:6-8).

Conclusion

God showed mercy to men through the ultimate act of sacrifice. He gave His only-begotten Son to be the sacrifice for man's sin (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8)! Knowing this is true, how will we respond? Will we follow the Lord's plan of salvation (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38)? In so doing, will we then also be faithful to the Lord (Rev. 2:10)? Now that the offering has been made for man's sin, let us live our lives unselfishly for Him (Rom. 12:1-2).

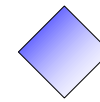
Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

**The Final Judgment
By David Padfield**

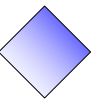
- All of the nations of the earth who have ever lived will be present (Matt. 25:32)
- The Word of God will be the standard of judgment -- not the creed books written by men (John 12:48)
- We will be judged on the basis of our deeds and not just our attitude (Rom. 2:6)
- No "warning signs" will be given prior to the return of Christ (Matt. 24:36)
- Christ will return at an unexpected time, during normal circumstances upon the earth (2 Pet. 3:10)
- When Christ returns "every eye shall see Him," not just the redeemed (Rev. 1:7)
- For some, it will be a day of unspeakable joy (Rev. 21:1-4)
- For others, it will be a day of horror (2 Thes. 1:6-8)
- When Christ returns He will deliver the kingdom back to His Father (1 Cor. 15:24)
- There is no passage in the Bible which states Christ will ever set foot on this earth again -- the Bible teaches that we will "meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thes. 4:17)
- Once Christ receives His own they will "always" be with Him, not just for a 1,000 years as some teach (1 Thes. 4:17)
- While we wait for the Lord to return we have the opportunity to repent (2 Pet. 3:10)
- There is no second chance for men to repent after death (Heb. 9:27)
- Take comfort in the thought of His return (1 Thes. 4:18)

Credit: www.padfield.com ♦

About the Hillcrest church of Christ		
Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew		
How to Contact Us	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com  	1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313 	Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm* <small>*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</small>
www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com		



The Voice of Truth



April 18, 2010

**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 and refuse to obey His 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? ♦

"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward." - Matthew 6:1-2

**The Great Day That Is Coming
By Jimmy Pettigrew**

There are various kinds of days. There are important personal days: birthdays, marriage, anniversaries. There are important days set forth in the Bible. The Israelites had significant days: Passover and Sabbath. The "first day of the week" is a significant day for the Christian (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2). The "Day of the Lord" is the great day that's coming! Men must prepare now for the day of the Lord. Death is not the end of life because there is a great day coming (John 5:28-29). The Lord's return is a sure promise (2 Peter 3:9; John 14:1-3). The "day of the Lord" will come as a "thief," unexpectedly, suddenly (1 Thessalonians 5:1-2; 2 Peter 3:10). There are no "ifs, ands, or buts" about the Lord's second coming. When Jesus comes "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat" (2 Peter 3:10). God by the power of His word brought all material things into existence (Genesis 1:1). When He wills His creation to cease, it shall do so! The physical heavens, at Christ's second coming, along with "... the elements..." and "...the earth..." will, by fire be consumed. The material universe shall be destroyed.

In view of the sure promise of Christ relative to His coming and the end of the world "what manner of persons ought ye to be?" (2 Peter 3:11):

- (1) People of faith (1 Peter 1:5-9).
- (2) Obedient people (1 Peter 1:22-23).
- (3) Holy people (1 Peter 1:15-16).
- (4) Diligent people (2 Peter 1:10).

The wise man wrote, "Where there is no vision, the people perish," Proverbs 29:18. Unless you know where you want to go, you are not likely to get there! We must "watch" (Matthew 24:42), and "be ready" (Matthew 24:44). ♦

"Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming." - Matthew 24:42

In This Issue...	
Page 1 - Hypocrisy The Great Day That Is Coming	Pages 3 to 4 - "Mercy And Not Sacrifice"
Pages 2 to 3 - Religious Titles	Page 4 - The Final Judgment
CONTINUED INSIDE...	

Religious Titles

By Jonathan L. Perz

Pastor John. Reverend Jim. Father Bob. We have all seen titles used in one way or another by many religious leaders of today. Yet, consider this: Is the wearing of such titles authorized or condemned in God's word?

Titles In General

In **Ephesians 4:11-12**, the Bible says, *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ....”*

Here Paul lists several duties or responsibilities authorized within in the church, but where do we see the men who filled these positions wear them as titles? We don't! Such wearing of titles is explicitly forbidden by the Lord Himself. In **Matthew 23:8-12**, the Lord said, *“But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

What we see described here by our Lord is no different than what is taking place today. The clergy/laity concept has been pressed so deeply upon mankind that even in the face of such plain Bible teaching, men still allow and often demand to be titled Pastor, Reverend, Father, etc... They often wear special garb to set themselves apart from the rest of their congregation when no such practice is authorized in scripture. The Lord expressly condemns the use of such pretentiousness.

The Lord says we are all brethren in Christ if we are Christians. We make up the body of Christ with only one head – Christ Jesus our Lord. We should not exalt ourselves, but rather serve each other. The servant of God should be characterized by humility and service, not self-exaltation.

Consider three titles that have not only been unscripturally worn by men, but have been misapplied as well.

Pastor

In most denominations, there is one Pastor that over-

sees the local church. The idea of one man overseeing a local congregation is foreign to the New Testament church.

There are three words used to describe the same role within the church – pastor, elder, and bishop. In **Acts 20:17-28**, we see these words used in reference to the same people. They describe different aspects of the work, but one work nonetheless.

In **Titus 1:5**, we read of Titus appointing elders (plurality) in every city. Not one, but more than one. Consult an exhaustive concordance such as Strong's and look up the words elder, bishop, and pastor in both the plural and singular forms. Take note that the first century church always had a plurality of elders. Likewise, we should always have a plurality of elders in every church or not have any elders at all.

Furthermore, elders must also meet certain qualifications. These qualifications are listed in both **Titus 1:6ff** and **I Timothy 3:1ff**. Most of the men in denominations who wear the title of 'Pastor' do not even meet these qualifications. Often people interchange 'Pastor' with evangelist, minister, or preacher. Yet according to God's word, a 'Pastor' is not synonymous with these latter terms.

Reverend

Many men have presumptuously taken the title Reverend. Besides the fact that the Lord explicitly condemned the wearing of any titles, there is another very important reason why no man should bear this title. It is a characteristic that belongs solely to God. It is written in **Psalms 111:9**, *“He sent redemption unto His people: He hath commanded His covenant for ever: holy and reverend is His name.”*

The word reverend is translated as awesome in the NKJV. It means to fear, be afraid; to stand in awe of, be awed; to reverence, honor, respect. No man, save Christ Jesus, when He was in the flesh, even comes close to being able to hold such a title. Yet, even He did not. To call a man by this title is near blasphemy.

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, “Religious Titles”

Father

In the Catholic religion and many of the sects that directly stem from Catholicism, the title Father is applied to priests. This is contrary to the New Testament teaching in two ways.

First, as already indicated, the Lord taught us not to call any man on earth father, for we have one father who is in Heaven. The Lord is obviously referring to calling a man Father in the spiritual sense. Why must man directly disobey the Lord?

Additionally, we are all a priesthood of believers. In **1**

“Mercy And Not Sacrifice”

By Jarrod Jacobs

This statement is found three times in the Bible (**Hos. 6:6; Matt. 9:13, 12:7**). Jesus said on two occasions, *“I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.”* This phrase was originally uttered by God through the prophet **Hosea (6:6)**. There, we read, *“For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.”* Similar words were uttered by **Micah (6:6-8)**. Also, when Samuel condemned King Saul for sparing Agag and the best of the livestock, he said, *“Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (I Sam. 15:22)*. As we can see, God wanting “mercy and not sacrifice” is found often in Scripture.

The Phrase Is Misunderstood

What was God saying? Some have been fooled into thinking that somehow God desires that people be “merciful” even if this means excluding other parts of God's will. This is wrong! **God never placed one aspect of His will in conflict with another part**. Yet, some have the idea that mercy and obedience are exclusive. According to them, if one cries for mercy, then he doesn't have to answer for his disobedience, or what has falsely been called “legalism,” etc. This is false. In fact, this is akin to what the Pharisees tried to do when they tried to place God's will concerning the Temple in conflict with God's will concerning a child's duty to his parents (**Mk. 7:9-13**).

Another example of God not placing one aspect of His will in conflict with another is when Jesus said, *“Woe unto*

Peter 2:9, Christians are referred to as *“an holy priesthood.”* In **Revelation 1:6**, the Bible speaks of Christians as *“kings and priests.”* So in two senses, we see this title Father in direct conflict with the word of God.

Conclusion

There are many titles religious leaders use today to set themselves apart. Why? We are all men, striving to please God. We should all be brethren, under one Lord. We must put away from ourselves these pretentious titles. Let us not practice in word or deed the clergy/laity concept that often goes unchallenged. Let us submit ourselves to the oversight of scriptural elders. Let us hold men in honor for their works' sake. But let us not forsake the commands of God in so doing. *Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com* ♦

*you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: **these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone**” (Matt. 23:23)*. Many have tried to make a distinction between the “weightier matters,” and the “mint, anise, and cummin.” Yet, notice that the Lord said they had a responsibility to do **both**, and **not** to choose one above the other! To put God's word in conflict with itself, or to arbitrarily choose what one will and will not do is to act like the Pharisees. Remember, they made the word of God “vain” by their traditions (**Mk. 7:9**). If such actions did that then in the first century, what do you think it does today?

The True Meaning Of This Phrase

What did Christ mean when He told the Pharisees, *“I will have mercy and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Matt. 9:13)*? Go back and read **Hosea 6:6** again. This passage reveals God's disposition toward man. While certainly we ought to be merciful toward others, in this case, it is God who wishes to show mercy (**Ps. 117:2**). He desires to show mercy rather than accepting burnt offerings over and over again. King Saul missed the point here, and tried to justify his disobedience to God by stating that the animals were saved for the purpose of offering sacrifices to God (**I Sam. 15:21**). Yet, can we not understand that if the people had simply been obedient to the Lord and not left things undone in the first place, there would have been **no need** for the burnt offerings!?!

Continued on Page Four