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men" (1 Cor. 1:18-25).

Not only does the wisdom of God render foolish the wisdom of men, its fruit is righteous whereas the fruit of the wisdom of men is sinful. Consider the inspired words of James who writes, "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good

fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace" (James 3:13-18). This also manifests how we can sin against the wisdom of God, by attributing the fruit of God to the wisdom of men and the fruit of men to the wisdom of God.

While there is much more that is written about wisdom, the basic fact of the matter is that a fool will have no heart for wisdom (Prov. 17:16; 24:7), whereas an understanding man will not only seek it; he will find it, keep it and live by it. "He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; He who keeps understanding will find good" (Prov. 19:8). In another place, the wise man writes, "Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding" (Prov. 23:23). Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

How To Get What You Want

- If you want friends — **be friendly.**
- If you want someone to smile — **smile.**
- If you want courtesy — **be courteous.**
- If you want knowledge — **study.**
- If you want a good name — **live right.**
- If you want to reap well — **sow well.**
- If you want to be a Christian — **obey God's word.**
- If you want to go to heaven — **live a Christian life** ♦

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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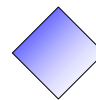


Schedule of Assembly

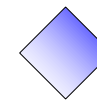
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

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

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The Voice of Truth



January 30, 2011

The Authority Of Christ By Jimmy Pettigrew

The critical issue in religion today is the question of authority. Authority means the right to command and enforce obedience. What men believe and practice today in the name of religion must be authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ (Colossians 3:17). That we must do all "in His name" or by His authority. The teaching of Christ was from God (John 14:23-24), and today God speaks to us through His Son (Hebrews 1:1-2). God has given all things into the hands of Jesus (John 3:35). At Judgment, we will be judged by the words of Christ not Moses (John 12:28). The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17). When the apostle Peter on the Mount of transfiguration desired to build three tabernacles, one for the lawgiver Moses, one for the representative of the prophets, Elijah, and one tabernacle for Christ, God said we should listen to whom (Matthew 17:1-5)? Christ! Did God pronounce a condemnation upon those who refused to hear His Son and thereby disregard divine authority (Acts 3:22-23)? Yes! If we do not abide in the doctrine of Christ, we have not God, that is, a person has no claim on God as being God (2 John 9)! We cannot go beyond the doctrine (teaching) of Christ. If we abide in the doctrine of Christ, we hath both the Father and the Son. And what does it mean to abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9)? It means to be governed by the authority of the New Testament. Christ has the words of eternal life (John 6:68).

What we need to remember is whatever our Lord said on any given subject deserves the careful attention of all people (Colossians 3:17). "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5). The chief priests and elders of the people demanded to know by what power Jesus did the things He did and taught the things He taught. He is credited in the New Testament with having taught with authority and not as the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 7:29). All authority hath been given unto Jesus in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). His authoritative teaching offended the Jewish rulers and they demanded an explanation

(Matthew 21:23).

It is common for people in our time to scoff at what they call authoritative religion. Such religion is said to do injury because it keeps people from feeling good about themselves. They want license to do whatever pleases them and will not put up with any system that makes demands of them, or accuses them. They do not want to hear commands or judgment. They don't want to be told what sin is. They will do their own will; and they tolerate only those who approve and applaud whatever they may choose to do. This is not right!

What we need to understand is that we are living in an age of compromise and there are those who are trying to compromise the Gospel of Christ. What men practice in religion today must be authorized by God's Word and since God speaks to us by His Son (Hebrews 1:1-2), the word of Christ is the authority that must be respected now, and this authority is exercised through the New Testament.

Question: Does James say that there is one lawgiver (James 4:12)? If the Law of Moses is still binding, then Moses is still a lawgiver. If Christ has a law binding on us, then he is a lawgiver. This would make us under two lawgivers and thus married both to Moses and the Christ. Yet James says there is one lawgiver. The New Testament is the law which we are under (Hebrews 10:9; 8:13; 9:15-17), we cannot be justified by the Law of Moses (Acts 13:38-39), we are no longer under the Law (Galatians 3:23-25), but became dead to the law by the body of Christ (Romans 7:6) and by the New Testament we will be judged (John 12:48). Christ is said to be "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9).

There is a great need for authority in all areas of our lives. We will never out grow being under the authority of

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someone regardless of how old or how powerful we become. Christ's authority is in His word, the New Testament. Thus, the Bible's authority is Christ's authority. We must strive to call Bible things by Bible names and to do Bible things in Bible ways. We must do only those things

"The Unity Of The Church"

By Foy E. Wallace, Jr. (1896-1979)

The book of Psalms has been appropriately called the "hymn book of the Bible." There are more than twenty-five hundred verses in its one hundred and fifty chapters, and doubtless that many songs have been composed from them through the centuries and millennia since their sentiments swelled the bosom of Israel's sweet singer. Many of these verses were chanted in the worship of the early Christians, and they will be sung in every generation wherever people are found worshipping God until we learn the "new song" in Heaven, "when all the redeemed singers get home."

To rob our modern productions of the sentiments and psalms of David would be, indeed, to impoverish our worship of praise.

A Song Of Unity

Psalm 133 is a song of unity. *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"* There is nothing more stifling and stultifying to the emotions of the soul than strife and division. There is nothing more soothing and benefacious to the spirit than peace and unity.

Unity among brethren is like, *"the precious ointment upon the head"* in the psalmist's refrain. The Easterns perfumed with fragrant oil. Unity perfumes the church and sweetens the atmosphere like the precious oil, *"that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments"* (v. 2).

The Unity Of The Spirit

Exhorting the brethren to *"keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* Paul outlines, in **Ephesians 4:4-6**, the basis of unity. *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."* The "unity of the Spirit" is the unity the Spirit teaches, or results when the

which the Bible authorizes and not feel free to do anything we want, or feel to do. We cannot believe error and live rightly before God. Make the scriptures your standard of right and wrong in religion. We must respect what the Bible says on any given subject. It is time for us to do that which is exactly right (**Ezra 7:23**). It is time we defend the authority of Christ, and the church. ♦

Spirit's word is obeyed.

There is one God -- unity in worship. A divided worship cannot be rendered *"in spirit and in truth"* (**Jn. 4:24**). Wherever and whenever rendered, true worship must have the two elements -- the right spirit and the right act; for God is one, and "seeketh us to be his worshippers" (**Cf. Jn. 4:23**).

There is one Lord -- unity in authority. Human authority in religion is wrong (**Jer. 10:23**). Christ is Lord and His word only is authority (**Col. 3:17**).

There is one faith -- unity in message. The Spirit, which guides "into all truth" does not impart conflicting messages. The gospel promotes unity; and where there is division, something else has been preached.

There is one baptism -- unity in practice. "Modes of baptism"?? We might as well talk about shades of white. There is no such thing.

There is one body -- unity in organization. The church is one body. It is impossible to have "spiritual" unity and "organic" division. Unity is both spiritual and organic.

There is one Spirit and one hope -- unity in life, in desire and expectation.

Thus Paul outlines the only basis of unity. Let the world cease their efforts toward amalgamations, federations, alliances, and unions, and adopt the divine standard and basis of unity -- oneness in Christ.

The Prayer For Unity

The Lord's prayer in **John 17:1-21** was an ardent petition for unity. *"May they all be one."* Jesus praying for the unity of believers! Yet, it has not touched the heart of those who are promoting denominationalism in the world,

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nor even of brethren who sow discord and factions in the church. Denominationalism is the misrepresentation of Christianity -- a horrid caricature -- and the authors of perversions in religion are enemies of Christ; professing and even honestly thinking themselves to be his friends.

But *"charity begins at home"* (**Cf. I Tim. 5:4**). We cannot, with good grace, preach unity and practice division. *"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord*

Sinning Against Wisdom

By Jonathan L. Perz

Using the literary device of personification, Solomon describes wisdom in some of the strongest terms possible—he speaks of wisdom in terms of life and death. He writes, *"For whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord; but he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; all those who hate me love death"* (**Proverbs 8:35-36**).

Ensconed within this life and death concept of the importance of wisdom. Solomon also sets forth the idea of "sinning against" wisdom as a wrong against our own soul. Have you ever imagined wisdom in those terms? Have you ever considered whether or not you have sinned against wisdom? Do you wrong your own soul?

If any man could speak of the value of wisdom, Solomon could. The annals of Israel's history say this of Solomon: *"And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men..."* (**1 Kings 4:29-31a**).

This, of course, adds all the more significance to his evaluation of wisdom. So important is wisdom, that the language he uses almost makes you think that he is speaking of finding or hating God, and not merely wisdom. Yet, he is eloquently exalting the value of wisdom.

How is it that one sins against wisdom? In the simplest of terms, to sin is to transgress, or to fall short of or go beyond. It means to miss the mark (cf. **1 John 3:4**—KJV). To sin against wisdom suggests the idea of wandering from the way of wisdom.

When it comes to wisdom, one of the greatest con-

Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10). Paul's beseechment should not only be our preachment, but also our practice. The unity of Christians is the only hope of bringing the world to Christ. Jesus knew it, and therefore prayed that, *"they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us"* (**Jn. 17:21**).

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

trasts we must learn as Christians is the difference between the wisdom of God, which Solomon extols, and the wisdom of men, which is often shed in a foolish light in comparison. One consistently leads to eternal life, whereas the other is rooted in the ways of this world, which are despised and condemned by God.

The Holy Spirit tells us through the apostle Paul, *"Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God"* (**1 Cor. 3:18**). This suggests that those who are so enamored with the wisdom of this world will inevitably be blind to the wisdom of God. By failing to see the difference, they sin against wisdom. The only remedy is for one to become a fool in the ways of this world so that he may become wise in the ways of God.

This same sin against wisdom can be seen in those who reject, or even mock, the cross of Jesus. Earlier in the same epistle Paul wrote, *"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.' Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those of us who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than*

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