

### "WHICH CHURCH SHOULD I ATTEND?"

#### One Where His Name Is Glorified

**Acts 4:12** - No other name whereby we might be saved.  
**Acts 11:26** - God gave the name Christian  
**1 Peter 4:16** - We can glorify God in this name.

#### One Where His Teachings On Salvation Are Followed

**John 14:6** - Only He is the way to heaven.  
**Hebrews 5:9** - All must obey Him to be saved.  
**John 8:24** - He said we must believe on Him.  
**Luke 13:3** - He said we must repent.  
**Matthew 10:32-33** - He said we must confess Him.  
**Mark 16:16** - He said we must be baptized to be saved.

#### One Where His Will Is Followed In Worship

**John 4:24** - Worship must be sincere and proper actions.  
**Acts 20:7** - Lord's Supper on the first day of the week.  
**Colossians 3:16** - Singing praises to God.  
**Acts 2:42** - Prayer and teaching.  
**1 Corinthians 16:1-2** - Giving of our means on the first day of the week.

YOU SHOULD ATTEND THE CHURCH OF CHRIST *"The churches of Christ salute you."* (Romans 16:16) ♦

### 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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#### How to Contact Us

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#### Our Address

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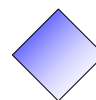


#### Schedule of Assembly

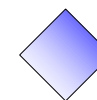
**Bible Study:** Sunday, 9:00am  
**Worship Service:** Sunday, 10:00am  
**Bible Study:** Wednesday, 7:00pm\*

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

[www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com](http://www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com)



# The Voice of Truth



September 11, 2011

## "BE YE SEPARATE"

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Is it right to attend revivals or meetings held by denominations? Is it right for a member of the church to attend the regular meetings of the denominations? Our appeal should not be to human feelings or thought. We need to go to God's Word to find the answer to these questions (**Jeremiah 10:23, Isaiah 55:8-9**). We **MUST** have the attitude of accepting what **GOD** says in His Word, even if that means we must give up our own ideas.

God has always required His people to be separate. *"But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people," Leviticus 20:24.* God expected His people to be separated from the religious practices of other nations. He forbade them to intermarry, realizing that to intermarry with idolaters would be to take the chance of being led away from the one true God unto false worship. (Solomon is good example.) If it could happen to them, would it not be possible for it to happen to us?

We can safely say that idol worship would be a false worship and false doctrine. Further, it may be said that God wants His people to have no part with idol worship. But would that not also be true of any other false religious belief or system? Denominationalism is a false system. It teaches and practices error. What is said in the Bible concerning idolatry, and the fact that God's people should have no part in it must also be said of denominationalism.

I hear, "If I attend a denominational meeting with a friend, then they may attend with me and hear the truth." Is this a valid reason? Are they acceptable to God? *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," Ephesians 5:11.* Fellowship is not open to everyone without limitations or restriction. The language of conditionality is especially clear in **1 John 1:7**. We are not to participate in, or share in the unfruitful works of darkness. This would include the idea that we are

not to encourage, approve, endorse, or support such works, but rather reprove them, expose them (**John 3:20**). *"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple," Romans 16:17-18.* We are commanded to mark them and avoid them that are contrary to the doctrine. We cannot have fellowship with those who walk in darkness. Those who are outside the light of Christ are not my people to have fellowship with!

Another principle we need to recognize is the fact that God never approves of conversions by compromise. Rather than compromising and saying, "If you attend our meeting, we will attend yours," the Bible says, *"Contend earnestly for the faith..." Jude 3.* Not once in the New Testament do we have any example of any New Testament Christian compromising in such a way with God's approval. You simply cannot compromise and contend at the same time. If someone attends our meeting and obeys the gospel as a result of hearing the Word of God, it is not because you compromised and attended with them so that they would attend with you; but, it is in spite of your compromise. God's word is the power to save a soul (**Romans 1:16; John 8:32; James 1:21**). Compromise has never won a soul to Christ. Rather than compromise winning non-Christians to Christ, the Holy Spirit says it is the manner of life that the Christian lives (**1 Peter 3:1-2**).

I hope this will stimulate your thinking and study of God's Word. If we want to make heaven our home, we need to think like God thinks and do those things the way God wants! ♦

### In This Issue...

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## “How Valuable Is The Kingdom?”

By Jarrod Jacobs

We are aware of the fact that Jesus used parables as a primary means of teaching when He was on earth. This was not an arbitrary decision. Rather, Jesus spoke in parables so that He might fulfill Old Testament prophecy. **(Matt. 13:34-35)**. The primary purpose or focus in these parables was the coming kingdom. Jesus therefore, spent time preparing those following Him for the kingdom that was “*at hand*” or near **(Mk. 1:14-15)**. Two parables recorded in Matthew 13 show us just how valuable the kingdom is to Christ and ought to be to us.

Jesus said, “*The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all he had and bought it*” **(Matt. 13:44-46, ESV)**. Notice the similarities in these parables. 1) In both parables, we find men who are willing to sell all they possessed in order to obtain that which they did not have. 2) Both men could see the value in the items purchased (treasure/pearl), and realized that what they sacrificed in order to purchase the items would be worth it. Though the men found their items in different ways, and though the initial motive in each case was different; the response was the same when the item was discovered. The men sacrificed everything in order to obtain the possessions.

Now, please remember the focus of the parable. It was not instruction on how to buy land or how to buy pearls. Rather, it was to show men the true value of the kingdom of God! The kingdom was worth the sacrifice of everything in order to obtain it. Friend, what is our estimation of the Lord’s kingdom? Unlike Christ who preached the kingdom was “*at hand*” or near **(Mk. 1:14-15)**, we today preach the truth that the kingdom of God exists and is present among men **(Col. 1:13, 4:11; Rom. 14:17; Acts 14:22, 8:12; etc.)!**

The kingdom of God of which we speak is not yet to come in a future time, but came with power **(Mk. 9:1)** when the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles **(Acts 1:8)** in **Acts 2:4**. Thus, the kingdom of God has been in existence since **Acts 2**. The promise of a kingdom spoken by the prophet Isaiah **(2:2-4)** was fulfilled in **Acts 2** when the gospel was preached and men and women were converted and added to the church **(Acts 2:36-47)**. This church was purchased with the blood of Christ **(Acts 20:28)** and will see no end. **I Corinthians 15:24** promises that this same

kingdom will one day be “*delivered up*” to God at the end of time.

Now, what value do we place upon the kingdom? In the parables, Jesus said belonging to the kingdom meant sacrificing all in order to obtain this relationship. Yet, what value do we place upon it? Am I willing to sacrifice:

- “ **Family relations in order to be in the kingdom?** Jesus said, “*Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me*” **(Matt. 10:37)**.
- “ **What I consider “important” in order to be in the kingdom?** Can we agree with what the apostle Paul wrote? “*But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ*” **(Phil. 3:7-8)**. Can we agree with what Jesus said and “cut off” even those things closest to us if it means eternity with Him and avoiding Hell **(Matt. 5:29-30, 18:8)**?
- “ **Possessions in order to be in the kingdom?** “*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things (the things mentioned in v. 25, 28, 31, JJ) will be added to you*” **(Matt. 6:33)**. Look again at the parables in **Matthew 13:44-46**. These men willingly sold ALL THEY HAD in order to obtain the one thing that was of the greatest importance! What would we do?

What are we willing to sacrifice? Do we say, “This far, and no further” when it comes to sacrifices for the Lord **(I Pet. 2:5)**? Are we only willing to sacrifice the things we are willing to give up anyway? Are we like the Jews in Malachi who gave the Lord the blind, lame, and sick for “sacrifices” **(Mal. 1:8)**? How we need to have the attitude of David who said, “*I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God that cost me nothing*” **(II Sam. 24:24)**. Some may think this attitude is “crazy”, or that I am being a “fanatic.” Let them contend with the Lord on this matter, for it is His word we speak.

How much value do we place upon the Lord’s kingdom? The answer to this question influences future decisions we make as children of God. Let us place the same value upon the kingdom that Christ did. In so doing, we

*Continued on Page Three*

*Continued from Page Two, “How Valuable Is The Kingdom?”*

for an eternity with God. *Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com* ♦

will be focusing on the right things and preparing our souls

## Fooling God By Gene Taylor

Scripture warns us not to be deceived **(1 Cor. 6:9; 15:33)**. We can be deceived in many ways, but one of the major sources of deception is self. We find ways to avoid facing unpleasant truth and rationalize away personal guilt.

It is foolish to try to deceive ourselves. **Galatians 6:7-9** touches on some common illusions among those who profess to be Christians. Sadly, those who try to deceive themselves and others by these things somehow think that God will likewise be deceived by them.

### God Cannot Be Mocked

To mock is "to turn up the nose at, sneer at, treat with contempt, is used in the Passive Voice ... does not mean that men do not mock Him; the Apostle vividly contrasts the essential difference between God and man. It is impossible to impose upon Him who discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart" (W.E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 760).

God is not mocked in that His law cannot be ignored without punishment **(Rom. 2:6-9)**. Adam and Eve tried it to their sorrow **(Gen. 2:15-17; 3:6, 24)**. Ananias and Sapphira tried it to their death **(Acts 5:1-11)**.

God is not mocked in that He cannot be deceived **(Heb. 4:12-13)**. Achan concealed his sin from others but God was not mocked **(Josh. 7)**. Gehazi, Elisha's servant, tried to gain a personal profit by lying but God was not mocked **(2 Kings 5:20-27)**. Jonah tried to run from Him but God would not be mocked.

### God's Law of Harvest Cannot Be Broken

If one sows to the spirit, he has real hope of eternal life **(2 Tim. 4:6-8)**. If one is sowing to the flesh, he had better be ready to reap corruption **(Rom. 3:8; 6:23)**. One cannot neglect God's law without consequences **(Heb. 2:2-3)**. One

cannot sow the "works of the flesh" and reap heaven **(Gal. 5:17-21)**. One cannot engage in such things as "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like" because "those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." One cannot sow "wild oats" and expect to reap that which is good.

### All The Fruits Of Our Behavior Are Not Immediate

As a matter of fact, we must look primarily beyond the present for reward. Paul said, "*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*" **(Rom. 8:18)**. He added, "*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*" **(1 Cor. 4:17)**. One should never mistake God's present tolerance for a full harvest. Some were erroneously thinking that way in New Testament times. The apostle Peter corrected them by saying, "*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up*" **(2 Pet. 3:9-10)**. The young may escape the wrath of their parents, the law and society but they will not escape God's judgment. The worldly may think they have "gotten away with sin" if they receive no immediate penalty or if their sin is condoned by brethren – but such is not the case.

### Conclusion

All of us must realize that God will not be mocked – neither in this life nor in eternity. He is not fooled by our clever deceptions. We will reap what we sow. Therefore, we must obey God. *Credit: www.padfield.com* ♦

## Can You Imagine?

- 1. Paul saying:** “You don’t have to obey the gospel to be saved?” Read **2 Thessalonians 1:7-9**.
- 2. Paul saying:** “We are sprinkled with him in baptism?” Read **Romans 6:4**.
- 3. Jude saying:** “I don’t think it is right to argue the scriptures?” Read **Jude 3**. ♦