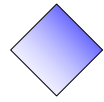


The Voice of Truth



January 20, 2013

Oh, You Offended Me! By Jimmy Pettigrew

In our society people are taught to get along with everybody. Don't rock the boat, don't stir up trouble, we should "agree to disagree." We are told that we shouldn't say anything that might offend someone in some way or another. That we shouldn't preach or teach anything that might offend someone either to our brethren or people in false religious groups. We don't want to hurt anybody's feelings, let us all just get along. Well, that might sound good, but what does the Bible say concerning this subject?

First, the Greek word for offend is *skandalizo*, and it means to stumble or to sin, or cause displeasure. Keep this meaning in mind as we go through this article. Now, let us look what the Bible says on this subject, "Oh, you offended me!"

Question, did Jesus Christ offend those He came in contract with? Yes He did! Why were they offended? Remember that the word offend means to stumble, to sin or cause displeasure. So, why were the people Jesus came in contract with caused displeasure, to sin, or stumble? Well, let us look at some examples.

In **Matthew 13:54ff**, Jesus departed for "His own country," which would have been Nazareth. Here, He taught in the synagogue, and the people were astonished at His abilities and His wisdom (**vs. 54**). He taught them (**from Luke's account 4:21**) that the Scripture which He had quoted was fulfilled in Him. The concept that Jesus might be more than merely one of them was unthinkable to the people of Nazareth. Hence, "they were offended in Him" (**Matt. 13:57**). Now what caused these people to be offended, what caused these people displeasure, to sin or stumble? The Truth! Jesus didn't offend them, cause them displeasure, to sin or to stumble, the Truth did! The Truth caused these people displeasure! The Truth caused these people to harden their hearts, the sin of unbelief! If these people had believed that the Scripture which He quoted was fulfilled in Him, then what would they have done? They would have done everything that Jesus had asked of

them, but they did not believe. The Truth caused these people to stumble! They were pierced with the Truth, rebelled at Truth, and were offended because of Truth! The Truth causes displeasure in one's life because they don't want to change their life, or they don't want to accept the Truth, so they sin, stumble because they don't do Truth (**Jas. 1:22-25**); they are deceiving themselves, fighting against God. So, what happens? They tell the person who told them the truth, "Oh, you offended me!" Well, how did I cause you displeasure, to sin or to stumble? You have displeasure because you won't change; you deny the Truth. You sin because you won't accept the Truth on any given subject. If you were fully convinced that God's Word is just exactly that, there wouldn't be any problem with any subject, you could mold your life to the teaching of the Truth. The sad thing about this is the fact that there are many unbelievers even in the church. You, yourself is where the fault lies. Sadly, when many brethren hear something that offends them (something that causes them to wiggle or whisper in their seats!) they leave! They go to congregations where they can get their ears tickled and won't be offended anymore.

Another example is found in **Matthew 15:1ff**. Jesus was teaching on the inconsistency of the Pharisees. The scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem came to Jesus with a question. "Why do thy disciples transgress the traditions of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread" (**Matt. 15:2**). Jesus said that they "transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition" (**vs. 3**). He called them "hypocrites" (**vs. 7**). He said to them, "In vain they worship Me..." (**vs. 9**). We must realize that the Pharisees were standing there listening to Jesus when He said these things. And notice what the apostles said: "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" (**vs. 12**). What offended these Pharisees? What caused them displeasure, to sin or stumble? The Truth! They were offended by the things He (Jesus) had said to them and about them. He exposed their

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

Pages 1 to 2 - Oh, You Offended Me!
Page 2 - "WHICH CHURCH SHOULD I ATTEND?" | THINK ABOUT IT!

Page 3 - "The Truth"
Page 4 - Fearful or Faithful? | The Nature Of The Kingdom Of God

Continued from Page One, "Oh, You Offended Me!"

disloyalty to God's law, called them "hypocrites" and pronounced their religion vain. Yes, they were offended! The apostles were more concerned with the feelings of a pack of wolves (Pharisees) than with Truth. They were worried more about projecting a favorable "image" in the eyes of the opinion-makers of the day than they were about pleasing God. They were actually suggesting that Jesus "tone down" His message so that it might not offend those men of repute from Jerusalem. Jesus' response to the disciples concerning the offended Pharisees is most instructive. Instead of running to the Pharisees saying, "Oh, I'm sorry for the Truth I had spoken!" "Please come back!" This is what many so-called brethren want us to do. Notice what Jesus said in response to what the apostles said: "*But he answered and said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they*

are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit" (Matt. 15:13-14). If they were going to be offended, then let it be so! "Let them alone," not in the way of ceasing to expose their errors, but in the sense of making no effort to appease them. If people become our enemies when we tell them the Truth (**Gal. 4:16**), it is because they do not love the Truth, they don't want to see the Truth, because they refuse to see it (**John 9:40-41**). Truth is truth; and most don't want to obey it. The reason the Pharisees were offended was because they knew what Jesus said was true. They couldn't deny it, and it made them mad. Truth is more important than hurting someone's feelings! Brethren, you can't stand for the Truth and never offend anyone at the same time. Jesus said, "*And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Matt. 11:6).* ♦

"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.

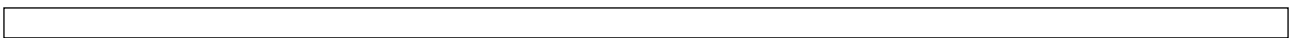
Acts 2:42 - Prayer and teaching.

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) ♦

THINK ABOUT IT!

When a farmer stops plowing his land, stops planting seed, and stops harvesting his crops, he has stopped doing those things that identify him as being a farmer. When a Christian stops attending worship services regularly, stops studying, stops giving as he has been prospered, and has stopped working for the Lord, he has stopped being a Christian because he has stopped doing those things that identify him as a Christian. "*By their fruits ye shall know them," (Matthew 7:20).* ♦



“The Truth”

By Jarrod Jacobs

Last week, we asked the question “What will you do with the truth?” This question caused me to think about the truth itself. The Bible has much to say about truth and contrasts it with error. We can also go to the Bible to see the source of all truth. For example, in **John 17:17**, our Lord spoke to the Father in prayer and said, “*Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*” This is a bold statement, for in saying this, Jesus was not only saying that what has originated with God is truth, but He was also inferring that the words which originate with anyone else are false! Let us turn to the Bible and see some characteristics of this truth that has originated with God.

“Teachable”

It is possible, and yes, necessary to teach God’s word to others (**II Tim. 2:2**). This is not to say there are not some difficult places (**II Pet. 3:16a**), but the Bible was written in such a way so as to provide men with knowledge of God’s way and lead them to salvation (**Rom. 1:16**). The Bible reveals that it is not an option, but a command, to teach the teachable truth!

“Revealed”

The truth of God has been revealed to men (**Titus 2:11; I Pet. 4:11; II Pet. 1:20-21**). We do not have to search in far-flung areas of the world to find “bits-and-pieces” of the truth, for it has been revealed to us through Christ (**Heb. 1:2**). Today, we have this written word in its completed form (**Jude 3**), so that lost people can be saved.

“Understandable”

God’s revealed truth is also understandable! In fact, it is written that we need to read so that we may understand the mystery of Christ (**Eph. 3:4**). The apostle Paul also wrote, “*Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is*” (**Eph. 5:17**). It is something wonderful when we think about how God’s truth is understandable to man! Yes, some claim the Bible cannot be understood. Such a position not only contradicts plain statements in Scripture, but it also reflects negatively upon God. When someone says that the Bible cannot be understood, they have said God is at fault for giving us His word, expecting us to hear, believe, and obey it, but then wrote it in such a way that we cannot understand it! Such a posi-

tion is false. The Bible is understandable!

“Thorough”

What is meant by this? Put simply, God’s word, the truth, is thorough enough to provide us with “*all things that pertain to life and godliness*” (**II Pet. 1:3**). Notice, God has not given us just “some things,” or “most things,” but “all things”! That is significant. In another letter, we find it said, “*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work*” (**II Tim. 3:16-17**). In these two verses, we again see that God’s truth is comprehensive in nature, and profitable for all areas of life. The world wishes to deny this fact and tries to belittle the power and comprehensive nature of God’s truth. When they do this, they are robbing themselves of true blessings. What will we do? Will we fall in line with the world, or will we examine the evidence for ourselves (**I Thess. 5:21**)?

“Heavenly”

The truth of God is heavenly truth! In other words, it originated with God. When speaking about this fact to various Christians, the apostle Peter wrote. “*And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man: but men spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Ghost*” (**II Pet. 1:19-21**).

Conclusion

Did you see the hidden word in the points above? If not, look again and see it: T-R-U-T-H! The very word “truth” teaches us some lessons, does it not? God’s word is truth and we need to respect it. Let us render our full obedience, “obeying from the heart” (**Rom. 16:17**) God’s truth that we might see Heaven one day. Are you obedient to the truth? If not, what is stopping you? The truth will set us free (**Jn. 8:32**), and leads us on the path toward Heaven. Let us get on that road today! Credit: The Old Paths - 12/23/12 ♦

*It seems a lot of people use religion as they do the city bus;
They ride on it only as long as it is going the way they want to go.*

*Don’t think you can ignore the Lord in this life and
He will give you a crown in the Life to come.*

Fearful or Faithful?

By Jonathan L. Perz

Just as faith has the power to overcome fear, one of the most powerful suppressors of faith is fear. Fear as a reverential awe for God is not the antithesis for faith, but fearful thoughts that terrify and scare us. One fear is healthy and commanded (**Matthew 10:28**), the other is cowardly and condemnable (**Revelation 21:8**). One motivates us toward great and noble feats while the other cripples us in base and selfish acts.

There are several instances where the Bible demonstrates these critical differences. Before Jesus stilled the storm-tossed sea, the disciples were terrified thinking they were perishing. Jesus, in response to their fear, asked, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" (**Matthew 8:25-26**). Fear paralyzed them, where faith would have comforted and encouraged them.

The Hebrew writer tells us of the faith of Noah. "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved

with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (**Hebrews 11:7**). Noah chose to let faith govern his actions, moving with a reverential awe for God, ultimately saving his house and mankind.

In like fashion, the same context tells us of Moses and how "by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible" (**Hebrews 11:27**). Because Moses chose to act by faith, rather than fear, he endured and delivered Israel.

As in these instances, the question remains for us, will we choose to live our lives in the flesh by fear or will we let faith govern our actions despite the possible imagined outcomes? Fearful or faithful—the choice is ours!

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

The Nature Of The Kingdom Of God

IS NOT

1. Of This World (**John 18:36**).
2. Eating and Drinking (**Rom. 14:17**).
3. In Word (**1 Cor. 4:20**).
4. With Observation (**Luke 17:20**).

IS

1. In Power (**1 Cor. 4:20**).
2. Righteousness (**Rom. 14:17**).
3. Peace (**Rom. 14:17**).
4. Joy (**Rom. 14:17**).
5. Within You (**Luke 17:21**).
6. Unshakable (**Heb. 12:28**). ♦

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

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

How to Contact Us

Telephone: (920)499-5677
E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com



Our Address

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313



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