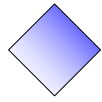


The Voice of Truth



July 13, 2014

Discipleship

By Jimmy Pettigrew

A Christian is God's obedient child: *"as children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in (the time of) your ignorance"* (1 Peter 1:14). The Christian life is a lifelong life. Becoming a Christian is a beginning of one's discipleship to Jesus Christ our Lord. This is what He told the Jews, *"As he spake these things, many believed on him. Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, (then) are ye truly my disciples"* (John 8:30-31). We cannot be the disciples of Jesus, if we do not follow His words. In other words, we must *"abideth in the doctrine of Christ"* (2 John 9)! The doctrine of Christ is that body of teaching which came from the Lord. It is that "form of teaching" which delivers from sin (Romans 6:17).

There are things that must be done if we are going to be disciple of Christ. *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof"* (Matthew 7:21-26). The entering of this gate (Matthew 7:13-14) requires obedience.

Jesus discussed the cost of discipleship, *"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple"* (Luke 14:26-27). Com-

mitment is what separates disciples from church members! In other words, to be Christ's disciple, one would have to put Christ first, before everyone and everything else in life, including life itself. To be a disciple of Jesus we must love Him more than anything in this world. To be His disciple entails and implies a willingness to make all sorts of sacrifices on the behalf of Christ, no matter what. Not once did Jesus lower His demand to appease the crowd or to get a single follower. *"Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"* (Matthew 16:24).

Jehovah made great preparations for the coming of Christ (Galatians 4:4), and He will not tolerate excuses for the rejection of His Son. Obstacles such as the pursuit of material wealth (Luke 18:18), personal ambition (John 12:42-43) or family relations (Luke 14:26), will bring deadly consequences. Many will not be willing to sacrifice families, friends, possessions, and things of the flesh, much less be willing to die for Jesus in order to have a home in heaven. How foolish to start to build a building without knowing how much it costs and whether one has enough to finish the project. Likewise, it is just as foolish to start to live a Christian life without knowing there is a great cross to bear. The cross of sacrifice is heavy, and many don't realize how much of a load it really is. Discipleship demands commitment! Once that commitment is made, there is no turning back (Luke 9:62).

The cross has become the symbol of voluntary, self-giving, sacrificial love of our Lord Jesus. Likewise, the cross becomes the symbol of our discipleship. A disciple becomes like His teacher (Luke 6:40; Matthew 10:24). Our cross is the voluntary acceptance of Christ's way of life as our own. That cross is the willingness to give up everything, even one's own life. This is what separates disciples from church members! Discipleship without total commitment is no discipleship at all. Like the Macedonians of old, we must first give ourselves to the Lord (2 Co-

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

Pages 1 to 2 - Discipleship
 Pages 2 to 3 - "An Extension Of The Pulpit" | TRY THESE EXCUSES

Page 4 - God is in the Room | THINK! THINK! THINK!
 Page 4 - What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Continued from Page One, "Discipleship"

rinthians 8:5). Discipleship demands abandoning all of Christ, it is not easy.

We need to be wise enough to realize that heaven is worth the sacrifice of everything, even life itself. Help us,

God, to focus our lives on the treasure which is eternal life with Thee. Help us to be true followers of the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world (**John 1:29**)! Are you truly a disciple of Christ? ♦

"An Extension Of The Pulpit"

By Jarrod Jacobs

A good friend of mine once talked with me about teaching bulletins such as the one he was writing. As we talked about the value of such teaching tools, he said, "I consider teaching bulletins an extension of the pulpit." I thought that was a fair assessment, for I feel the same way about the bulletin being published here. I hope our dear readers see that this teaching tool is but an extension of the pulpit.

What is meant by that statement? First, let us understand that one of the definitions for "extend" is: "to enlarge the scope of, or make more comprehensive..." (Webster's). Therefore, the point being made is that this bulletin is written with the intent of enlarging the scope, or making more comprehensive, what is being taught in the pulpit on a weekly basis. It is my prayer that this bulletin will always be such.

Yet, as I thought more about my brother's true statement, I realized that the bulletin is just one extension of the pulpit. There are other things that ought to also be considered "extensions of the pulpit." Let us study a few more of these extensions.

Bible Study At Home

When we hear preaching which stresses the need for studying our Bible, and "handling aright the word of truth" (**II Tim. 2:15**), do we take this home with us? Personal Bible study is a necessity if we are to grow and mature spiritually (**Heb. 5:12-14; II Pet. 3:18**). This is why it is stressed often from the pulpit. The preacher cannot do the studying for anyone but himself (**II Tim. 2:15**). While he tries to teach and instruct (**II Tim. 4:2**), he cannot learn "for" anyone, either! Learning involves a personal commitment, and it demands our spending personal time in the study of God's will. Have we "extended" the pulpit to include spending time in God's book at home?

Private Talks With Friends

When we as Christians are encouraged to take God's message to our friends, neighbors, and family who are lost

(**Mk. 16:15; II Tim. 2:2**), do we make the necessary application to ourselves? Sometimes, it is because we have earned the confidence and respect of certain ones, that this opens a door for teaching them the gospel. Others may not be able to enter this "door", but at times, the one who knows them, can!

Think about it: Who brought Simon Peter to Christ (**Jn. 1:40-42**)? Who was it that brought Nathaniel to the Lord (**Jn. 1:45-46**)? When Peter came to Cornelius' house, who was there to greet him, and how did they know Peter was coming (**Acts 10:24**)? Here are three examples which stress, among other things, the spiritual good that can be done when one shows an interest in another's soul. Are we "extending (i.e., enlarging the scope of) the pulpit" in this way?

Raising Your Children

The man in the pulpit can only do so much by way of teaching godliness to you and your children. This stems from the fact that the preacher sees your children (perhaps) 2-3 hours per week at most. Yet parents, you have your children the rest of the time. What are they being taught at home? Shouldn't they see godliness in our lives and influence? Paul said, "*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*" (**Eph. 6:4**). Parents, isn't reminding your children of a sermon or lesson learned from the pulpit just one way you could be "*teaching and admonishing*"? Another way to teach our children is simply in the application of what has been taught, so that our children see us changing to make our lives fit into Christ's mold (**Matt. 5:16**).

Radio Programs, Published Material, Websites, etc.

Our radio program continues to do well, I believe. We consistently have folks respond and call us or communicate by e-mail with us about the programs. (We have archived our programs archived on our website so that others can benefit from the Bible programs.) Since some

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, "An Extension Of The Pulpit"

would not "darken the door" of this church building, the radio program helps us to send the gospel message into the community. Certainly, this type of effort helps us to "enlarge the scope of, or make more comprehensive" the teaching we're trying to do in the pulpit.

Furthermore, such efforts as websites which teach the truth, or published articles (in the newspaper, bulletins, etc.) which can be read from time to time, only extend further the type of teaching we're trying to do from the pulpit. Christ told His apostles to go and teach all nations (**Matt. 28:19**), and so long as there is sin in the world, people will need to be taught the truth that they might be made free (**Jn. 8:31-32**). In an effort to preach the gospel to every creature, we ought to remember that such things as radio programs, websites, newspaper articles, bulletins, etc., give many people the opportunity to hear, believe, and obey the truth. Truly, these things are an extension of the pulpit.

Conclusion

There are other "extensions" we could add to this list. Yet, these ought to be enough to impress us with the fact that as Christians, our primary responsibility is to make sure that the teaching going on in the pulpit is extended to those who need to hear it! Sometimes, we "hoard up" the teaching, and do not take the time to let others learn what we have learned. Such an attitude is selfish, not to men-

tion negligent, when we know part of our duty as Christians is to teach others (**II Tim. 2:2**)! Let us not be selfish toward others, nor negligent in our work, but interested in the truth and in saving lost souls. Let us be about our Father's business, and not be slack in our responsibilities.

Christ said long ago, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save the lost." (**Lk. 19:10**). He told His disciples, "We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work" (**Jn. 9:4**). He truly had an urgency in His work; and if we are going to follow in His steps (**I Pet. 2:21**), then we need to be on fire with this same urgency!

"Who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (**Est. 4:14**) Spiritually, could it be because of your invitation to our worship services that someone is saved? Could it be because you handed someone a bulletin, or told them about the radio program or the website, that one's faith was strengthened? Therefore, let us understand that the true "extension of the pulpit" is none other than the Christian who is willing to leave sin and self and live for Christ all his/her life! This person is a living "extension of the pulpit," and is a far greater threat to Satan than we realize sometimes! Therefore, "let us not be weary in well doing," (**Gal. 6:9; II Thess. 3:13**) and let us move forward in an effort to extend the borders of God's kingdom from this place, and be all God wants us to be, shining as lights in a world of darkness (**Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:15**). *Credit: The Old Paths - 5/18/14 ♦*

TRY THESE EXCUSES

The following list of excuses is presented for your use the next time you miss work and need a good reason. These are some of the excuses that brethren have used thousands of times in the past. Obviously, if the Lord will accept them, they should satisfy your boss:

1. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, but some friends came by unexpectedly.
2. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, but we went to visit family and didn't make it back in time.
3. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, but I was with you in spirit.
4. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, but I decided to make my traveling plans during the time I was supposed to be at work and just could not make it.
5. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, but I don't like getting out when it is cold, hot, raining, or snowing.
6. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, I thought I would go work someplace else for a day, you know, just for a change.
7. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, gas prices are just too high to be driving.
8. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, I worked around the house, and I was just too tired to come.
9. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday; I went to Six Flags and a ball game and got home late. I needed to sleep, I was tired.
10. I'm sorry I wasn't at work yesterday, I had to cook dinner.

These excuses won't work with either your boss or with God! ♦

God is in the Room By Jonathan L. Perz

Consider that last obnoxious or profane statement, those disrespectful gestures, that heated and angry argument, those unkind words, or some other sinful activity. Would you have done or said those things if God were in the room?

The fact we often forget is that GOD IS IN THE ROOM!

- *“For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He ponders all his paths” (Prov. 5:21).*
- *“The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good” (Prov. 14:3).*
- *“Does not God see my ways, and count all my steps . . . For His eyes are on the ways of man, and He sees all his steps” (Job. 31:4; 34:21).*
- *“For my eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity hidden from my eyes” (Jer. 16:17).*
- *“And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account” (Heb. 4:13).*

God heard those profane and corrupt words come from your mouth and saw you make those disrespectful gestures (Eph. 4:29; Col. 3:8). God heard every word of that heated and angry argument (Matt. 5:21-26). God witnessed you utter those unkind words (Eph. 4:31-32). God saw that sinful activity (Prov. 5:21). Whether done in fun or anger, God saw your folly. Whether you wanted Him to or not, God witnessed your shame.

If it is any consolation, I doubt that God, in His absolute holiness, stayed around long enough to witness all of your un-Christ-like conduct. I imagine He simply left the room with a tear in His eye over another unregenerate soul who professes to love Him, but in works denies Him. Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

THINK! THINK! THINK!

What sort of church would the
Lord’s church be if every member
were just like me? ♦

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	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
<p>Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">   </div>	<p>1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*</p> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</p>
www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com		