

The **Brantley Beacon**

"...BE YE STEADFAST, UNMOVEABLE,"
ALWAYS ABOUNDING
IN THE WORK OF THE LORD..."
I CORINTHIANS 15:58

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST MEETING IN HOBOKEN, GA

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Two Men View Strictness By Bill Hall

Two men determine to obey the scriptures strictly. Neither wants to turn "*to the right hand or*

to the left," even in the least matter. But the attitudes behind the determination of these two men vary tremendously.

The first man views strictness in obeying God's law as the primary means of salvation. While he speaks academically of the grace of God, practically he gives little thought to his continual need for God's grace. He determines to attend every service, give liberally, live by a rigorous code of conduct in his daily life, maintain control of his family; in short he is really going to live his religion." While preaching that a man cannot be saved by meritorious works, he unconsciously sets out to do the very thing that he preaches one cannot do.

The second man recognizes God's grace as the primary means of salvation. He speaks frequently of divine mercy that could extend even to himself. He is just as strict in obeying God's word as the first man. He, too, attends every service, gives liberally, etc., but his careful obedience to every command is a manifestation of his love for God (John 14:15), his faith in God's promises (James 2:20), and his realization that God's grace is extended only to those who do obey Him (Matthew 7:21). Knowing how far short of God's perfection he will fall, however, he determines to turn constantly to God for forgiveness and mercy. His only boast will be that of the cross.

One of two things will happen to the first man. Either he will convince himself that he really is succeeding in living up to that standard which he has set for himself – in which case he will, in his self-righteousness, despise the struggling weak ones who can't live up to his supposed level of righteousness ("Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" Luke 18:9); or, he will grow discouraged as he honestly recognizes his failures, and throw up his hands in despair. "I tried," he will say, "but I just couldn't live it." Either way, the man is doomed, for his thinking is wrong. The second man will find real joy in the Lord and peace which passeth all understanding. He will live in constant hope, a hope built not on his own perfection, but on the assurance of God's forgiveness. He will be longsuffering to the weak and immature, for he will be well aware of his own unworthiness before God. He will not seek to put on some hypocritical front, for he will never claim to be anything but a sinner saved by grace. Our two men will appear to be very similar on the outside in their strictness toward the scriptures (both will probably be called "legalists"), but there will be a marked difference on the inside, and we are quite sure that there will be considerable difference in the ultimate direction and outcome of their lives.

**The (Real) Difference
Encouragement Makes
By Gary Henry**

If you needed encouragement and someone encouraged you, how would you be different? Having been

encouraged, what would be the difference between the "before" and "after"?

Unfortunately, most people would say that being "encouraged" mainly means they "feel better" emotionally. In an age of subjective individualism, where human feelings are the ultimate value and highest authority, nothing is more significant than how we feel. So problems like discouragement are defined primarily in terms of feelings. To be discouraged means to feel "down," while to be encouraged means to feel "up." And in this cultural milieu,

“encouraging preaching” usually amounts to some variation of “Don’t worry, be happy.”

Now, feelings of defeat and depression are certainly unpleasant, and we like to avoid them whenever we can. But these feelings, which often accompany discouragement, should not be confused with the problem itself. The real problem lies deeper and has to do with our will rather than our emotions. *What we need is to be jolted into action.*

Look at the word “encourage.” You can see the root word “courage.” The basic meaning, then, is “to impart courage to.” And as any soldier can tell you, courage is more than a feeling; it’s an action.

So test yourself. Did you find last Sunday’s sermon “encouraging”? Was it “encouraging” to have that heart-to-heart talk with a friend? Be careful how you answer. If you say yes, but all you mean is that you feel better, I would suggest that you have not been truly (or at least fully) encouraged. In the deepest sense, you will have been encouraged when you do what is right — and you keep on doing it.

There is no more encouraging book in the New Testament than Hebrews. Written to Christians whose faith was wavering, this powerful treatise says one thing: *don’t give up*. I read the entirety of Hebrews to a church one time as my last “sermon” to them. I wanted to encourage them, and I could think of no better way to do it than to read Hebrews. “Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith” (Hebrews 12:1,2).

So to those of us who teach, preach, and write, let’s be careful in our definition of “encouragement.” If the result of our work is that people simply feel better but they are still too afraid to jump that dangerous chasm in front of them, we have not really “imparted courage” to them. So let’s be truly — and deeply — encouraging. Let’s embolden people

to take those scary steps that faith would take, even if their hearts are quaking. Courage, as has been said, is not the absence of fear; it is going ahead and doing the right thing even when our feelings are failing us. – WordPoints.com

**The church of Christ meeting in the
city of Hoboken, Georgia**

5101 Main Street

Hoboken, Georgia

Our Meeting Times

Sunday Morning

Bible Study 9:30a.m.

Worship 10:30a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:00p.m.

Upcoming Spiritual Opportunities

Bob Myhan's Final Lesson

10-21-2018 - 5:00p.m.

Song Service

10-28-2018 - 5:00 p.m.

**In Need of Our Prayers and
Encouragement:**

- Rex + Frankie Hadley and family
- Jeannie's brother & sister in-law - Harold and Penny Blitchington
- Jeannie's Uncle - Bob Ross
- Micah's Parents - Perry & Kay Byars
- Micah's Aunt - Thelma Harmon
- Thelma Stewart – Jesup Congregation
- Leanne Wiser – Jennings/Oak Grove
- Pete Newsome – Oak Grove Congregation
- Tom Edwards – Tebeau Street Congregation
- Our New Christians
- The Spiritually wayward and weak
- Our Lord's work in Hoboken & Brantley County
- Our fellow Christians around the world