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Teaching Old Dogs New Tricks

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There is an old saying that suggests you cannot teach an old dog a new trick. When it comes to old hound dogs it may be quite difficult to train them anew as you can a young pup. Old dogs get set in their ways and sometimes their minds just can't accept a new change. They would rather accept life as it is and let life go by in whatever hurried pace it wants. Inactivity is the best activity for the whole day in the midst of a cool breeze and a spot of sunlight. Old dogs just act that way. This affliction of old dogs can sometimes be found in the human breed of animals when a certain age is attained and the desire to learn something new is viewed with disinterest. Retirement goes beyond a secular world to include most things in life. Often children of God decide at a certain age their work is done and the Lord has nothing more for them to do. It is easier to let the younger folk do the work and the older group will take up their place on the side-lines of life.

Noah was 500 years old when he built the ark and with seven other souls saved the human race from extinction (Genesis 6). Abraham was 75 years old when the Lord put him to work. Imagine being told at that age to move and go to a place that I will show you; and take your 65 year old wife with you (Genesis 12). Moses was 80 years old when he led the people of Israel out of Egypt and for the next forty years guided them through the wilderness (Acts 7:23,30). Did you notice that God called these men because they were busy at the time? David writes in Psalm 71:18, *"Now also when I am old and gray headed, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to everyone who is to come."* Psalm 92:14 exhorts those in "old age" to *"still bear fruit."*

The Lord said the *"silver-haired head is a crown of glory, if it is found in the way of righteousness"* (Proverbs 16:31).

In the New Testament the apostle Paul urged Titus to exhort the older men and the old women to be an example of faith and to share their faith with young people. *"That the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things-that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed"* (Titus 2:2-5). There is much work for older men and women to be doing with the younger men and women. Older Christians need to realize the potential of wisdom to impart to others. David reflected in his old age, *"I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread"* (Psalms 37:25). Young people need to hear this type of wisdom to help build their faith and secure the blessings of God. It is vital to teach young people to show respect and honor to the older. *"You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the Lord"* (Leviticus 19:32). Learning from older Christians should help them make better decisions in life. You may not be able to teach old dogs new tricks but thankfully we are not dogs and we can learn even till the day we die. 2 Peter 3:18 is not age restricted. This is where Peter said, *"but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."*

Was Jonah REALLY There?

by David McPherson

It is amazing the number of people who still question whether or not Jonah was in the belly of the “great fish.” Those who doubt are like those Sadducees who questioned the resurrection. Jesus said of them, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God” (Mt. 22:29).

The Bible plainly tells us “now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights” (Jonah 1:17). The Bible says that Jonah was there. Man says he wasn’t. Who are we to believe?

To deny Jonah’s being in the belly of the fish is to deny the resurrection of Christ. Jesus said, “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Mt. 12:40). Notice: “For as...”, “...so will.” The two stand or fall together. Just as sure as the first event happened, so would the other event take place. No three days and three nights for Jonah in the belly of the fish, no three days and three nights for Jesus in the heart of the earth.

Some defend Jonah by citing modern accounts where a man was swallowed by a fish and survived. But our faith rests on the power of God and the integrity of the Bible. Was Jesus really there? Then so was Jonah.

The Scriptures and Gossip

- by Louis Sharp

The gossipers oft’ begin their tales of woe with well-worn phrases, such as, “They say.” or “Have you heard?” or apologetically, “I hate to tell you this, but...” And thus, the tale unfolds. One might think that the Bible is silent on this subject, as gossip is so widespread. Yet, the very opposite is true. Here are a few of the many passages.

“Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him” (Lev 19:16-17).

“He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool” (Prov. 10:18). “A fool’s mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul. The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly” (Prov. 18:7-8)

“It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling” (Prov. 20:3). “He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips” (Prov. 20:19). “Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth” (Proverbs 26:20).

Concerning the listener, we are reminded that “a wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue” (Proverbs 17:4).

Tattlers and gossipers are meddlers in other men’s affairs. God will judge. Our blessed Lord taught, “A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (Matt. 12:35-36).

Let us carefully and prayerfully guard our speech!