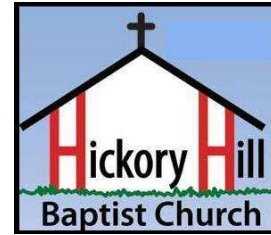


# HHBC Happenings



Newsletter from Hickory Hill Baptist Church

Summer 2008 Issue

**Greetings!** We pray that this newsletter finds you growing in the grace and knowledge of God. You are receiving this because you have had some level of contact with Hickory Hill Baptist Church in the past. Perhaps you are a long-time member. Perhaps you have been a one-time visitor. Perchance, you are somewhere in-between. No matter, we hope to use this media to inform you about the activities, the ministry, the service opportunities, and most importantly, the worship of the church.

## From the Pastor's Pen

When I was a boy, I used to daydream about the days of cowboys and Indians. I was raised around horses and I always thought I was supposed to be born 200 years earlier. I could have been a Wyatt Earp and had a shoot out at the O.K. Corral. I would have worn my cowboy boots 24/7 with my spurs jingling all the while.

I don't dream about being a cowboy much these days. But sometimes, I do think, "Boy, how great it would have been to live as a Jew in the Old Testament." Think of the camaraderie! Think of the fellowship when all of the people of God lived and dwelt and maintained their lives together.

Psalm 133 records a song that Jewish brothers and sisters used to sing to each other as they traveled to Jerusalem from one of three annual pilgrimages (to make the appropriate sacrifices and celebrate the festivals). They sang, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity." They went on singing, "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'" The joy and the privileges that were theirs when all of God's people lived together, observing God's Law, offering sacrifices to him, loving him and raising godly offspring. But the best part, the part I think about most is this one word: together! The people were all *together* in the Promised Land.

But then, during one morning's devotion, I came to Revelation 1. There, the Apostle John refers to Jesus as the one "who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father."

In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel represented God's people. But when Jesus came, he pointed them to something greater, something better! He taught them that the Kingdom of God was no longer just a physical land with a physical temple. After his resurrection, God no longer ruled and revealed himself in the temple. Now, through the indwelling of God's Spirit, believers in Jesus Christ become the temple of God! And his people are no longer those who descend physically from Abraham. Rather, God's people now are those who believe in the death, burial, and physical resurrection of Jesus Christ, and who by the power of the Holy Spirit experience rebirth. *Those* are God's people. That's the kingdom that God is now building.

So you see, all of my day-dreaming is really, in the end rather silly. I *do* have that camaraderie! I am part of a true Kingdom and can have that fellowship, that joy, where "brothers dwelling in unity". Of course, we don't live in the same Promised Land (at least, not on this side of eternity). But as often as we gather together as brothers and sisters in the Lord, lifting up his name in praise and opening up his Word for his revelation, we are coming together as God's people, as God's established Kingdom on earth.

Oh friend, won't you come and be a part of this local manifestation of God's Kingdom at Hickory Hill Baptist Church? If you are a converted brother or sister, come for our sakes and for yours. If you do not savingly know the Lord, we invite you to come as well to enter into his Kingdom, once and for all, by his gracious gift of rebirth. (1 Pet. 1:3)

"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21 Pastor Haider



## **THE BIBLE: GOD'S AUTHORITATIVE WORD AND ABSOLUTE TRUTH**

Ever since Satan, disguised as a serpent, asked Eve, "did God really say", people have been questioning God's word and absolute truth as recorded in the Bible.

The Bible tells of God's greatness, history of the universe, entrance of sin into the world, redemption from sin through God's son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit who guides us and gives us peace and understanding. Additionally, thanks to the Bible, Christians know how the story ends. A glorious eternity in the presence of and worshipping God! It is exciting to be a Christian!

How should we read the Bible? We begin by believing the Bible is the actual word of God. If it is the actual word of God, it carries the authority of God! When we read the Bible, God is talking to us.

What Bible translation should we use? There are many excellent translations / versions available. The King James is probably the most recognized. Other excellent translations are the New King James, New International, American Standard, and English Standard. Additionally there are Internet websites for Bibles. WebBible.net and BibleGateway.com

The Bible should be read in a straightforward way without outside influences. The Bible should be read in a way that allows us to understand the context of what is being said. Many times we allow outside influences to determine the way we want to understand the Bible.

Or, we read into the Bible things that will justify our personal wants. Either way we set ourselves above God. When material or information is read or presented that goes against clear teachings of the Bible, we should question that material or information. We need to prove scripture with scripture. (A Bible with a chain or cross-reference is an excellent help.)

The Bible tells us we are to study to show ourselves approved unto God a workman that need not be ashamed, correctly handling the word of truth. We are to be ready to give a reason for what we believe.

As Christians, God's authoritative word tells us to fear not. When we rest in God's grace through the precious blood of God's son, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit will give us a peace that passes all understanding. Whatever we face, wherever we are, God is always with us.

Enjoy the Bible as God's authoritative word and absolute truth. Ask yourself, what does the Bible say? If you have questions about the Bible ask someone you trust to help and or advise you.

It truly is exciting to be a Christian! Thank you for your time. Tom Hoskins

**ATTENTION: ANYONE INTERESTED IN RECEIVING A FREE MP3 NEW TESTAMENT ON CD, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH VIA EMAIL AT [PASTORHAIDER@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:PASTORHAIDER@HOTMAIL.COM) OR 498-3444. WE HAVE EXTRA COPIES AND WOULD PROVIDE THEM AT NO CHARGE.**

**Vacation Bible School Report**--This year's VBS theme was Outrigger Island - Living God's Unshakeable Truth - Psalm 86:11. It was a huge success and the kids really glorified God all week. We are blessed with a church full of talented people willing to devote their time and talents to God for our children of the church and community. We want to thank the entire congregation for their support and prayers to carry everyone through the week.

Vera Smith, with the help of Tom & Mickey Hoskins fed us fantastic meals to start each day. Michelle Hale and Laura Hoskins had craft time and made them oriented t-shirts for the kids and adults and stepping stones. Stephanie Kirchner helped the kids visit many different islands through the mission stories every day. We collected an offering every evening and the money collected is being donated to the cooperative program that supports these missions.

Kari Hale, Katie Smith, Randy & Johnanna Carrender, Sandy Call, Becky Hale and Elaine Smith all had wonderful bible study time teaching the kids and keeping them on schedule. Haley Smith and Tom Pearson had activity time each evening. Jessica Haider offered the youth class this year and it was wonderful to see so many young adults willing to devote their time to helping and learning the Word of God. Some of the stories taught during this year's VBS were teaching the kids that God is real, God is Jesus Son, Jesus died on the cross for our sins, Moses and the Ten Commandments and Jeremiah.

On the last night we had a parent's night in the auditorium and the kids performed the songs that we practiced all week. We had a great turnout of family and friends to enjoy and support what the kids were studying all week.

**"God does not call the qualified. He qualifies the called."**