

What Makes the church of Christ Different?

June 1996

If you are visiting our worship service today, we extend to you a warm welcome. We appreciate the discomfort of walking into a building of unfamiliar people and we encourage you to be at ease. We also appreciate that there are many other churches in Hueytown that you could have attended today. What, if anything, makes the Hueytown church of Christ different?

The difference is not the building, for our meeting house is fairly typical. It is not in the friendliness of the people (we *hope* you find us friendly!), for you would find a warm reception in many Hueytown churches. Nor is the difference solely in the moral lives in the members of this church. While we do strive for God's approval, we sometimes make mistakes that disappoint God and tarnish us in the eyes of the community. We also acknowledge the good moral lives lived by those in other churches.

Where, then, does the difference lie? Perhaps it lies in a conservative attitude toward the written word of God. Specifically we believe that *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work"* (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

This means that we take the Bible very seriously and consider the words of Jesus and His apostles timeless and authoritative. We do not believe that God's laws are altered by social circumstance, decrees of theologians or church history. In order to please God, we must be obedient and submissive to His will (Heb 5:9; Jn 14:21, 23; 15:10, 14; 2 Thes 3:4, 6, 14).

It is this conviction that may make us seem "nit-picky" about issues which others consider unimportant. But we must not take lightly the teaching of the Scriptures on any subject. What might seem trivial to us may have significance in God's mind. The Bible is our only link with what God expects of us; therefore, we must be careful and diligent students of it.

Sadly, it seems that so few are knowledgeable of the word of God these days – even so-called *Christians*. Many would be challenged, for example, to give the passage that contains Peter's sermon on Pentecost. Such lack of respect for God's word has contributed greatly to religious division.

We hope that you will see a dignified and zealous enthusiasm for God's word among us. Enjoy your visit.