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THE SURE WORD By Jonnie Hutchison

ARE YOU HONEST?

In studying the Word of God, one must be honest in order to benefit from what he/she learns. The Word of God is given to man to guide us through this life to an eternity in heaven. If one is not honest in applying what the scriptures teach, he/she will not be in heaven. James 1:22 reads, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." As we study God's Word we must be "rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15b), which is not possible without being honest.

In the Lord's parable of the Sower in Luke 8, Jesus pictures the Word of God as seed which is sown in different types of soil representing the hearts (minds) of people. Only one of the soils produced fruit. As Jesus explained His parable He said, "But that on the good ground are they, which in an **honest and good heart**, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15). Note what Jesus said is necessary to bringing forth spiritual fruit. One must hear the Word but hearing alone is not sufficient. One must both hear and keep (obey) what he has heard. Only then will spiritual fruit be produced. However, this will never happen unless one first possesses an "honest and good heart."

Dear reader, when you learn something from your study of the Bible that you did not previously know or believe how do you respond? For those with a good and honest heart there is only one possible response, and that is, one accepts what he/she has learned as divine truth and makes the necessary changes in his/her life to conform to it even if it contradicts what one has always believed. To ignore or reject what one has learned from God's Word is an expression of a **dishonest** heart.

One example of those with honest and good hearts is found in Acts 17:11 which speaks of the Bereans. "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so." The term "fair minded" indicates an honest heart. An honest heart will compare what he/she hears others teach with the scriptures and thereby make an informed decision as to the validity of the message heard. Are you honest?

Thanks for reading. Visit us at the Green Plain church of Christ 3980 Murray Paris Rd, Hazel, KY 42049. Sunday services are at 10 am, 10:45 am and 6 pm. Question or comments may be addressed to the above address or email greenplaincoc@gmail.com. Visit us online at <http://greenplainchurchofchrist.org>.