

SOUTH HEIGHTS BAPTIST'S WEEKLY

REMINDER

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Number 3



Thee and Thou - and the Great Pronoun Famine

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

- John 17:14-16

Long, long ago, and in a country on the other side of the sea, they made a modern-language translation of the Bible that we call the King James Version or the Authorised Version. Of course, because of the passage of time, it isn't modern any more. Some of the pronouns have become so archaic that many people don't know what they mean or how to use them.

Language changes with time, as you know. When I was little, our teachers used to caution us against saying that things were swell. Shortly after that, swell was replaced by nifty and then by keen. Today, things are neither swell nor nifty nor keen (not even peachy keen), they are neat or cool, or even rad or phat. Most of you can remember such changes, because slang is the part of language that changes the fastest.

Religious language is the slowest to change. The most familiar example of this is in the Roman Catholic church: at one point in its history it switched from Greek to Latin because that was the language of its people, but it continued to use Latin centuries after it ceased to be a spoken language. (When the Roman Church switched to vernacular languages, it paradoxically became more conservative because that was the reason for changing to Latin in the first place!)

Back then, the English language had a full set of personal pronouns, and here they are in a handy table. It shows English personal pronouns as they existed at the time of the King James Bible. The ones that differ from today are darker and in italics.

-----Singular-----				-----Plural-----			
Subject	Object	Possessive	Predicate	Subject	Object	Possessive	Predicate
I	Me	My	Mine	We	Us	Our	Ours
<i>Thou</i>	<i>Thee</i>	<i>Thy</i>	<i>Thine</i>	<i>Ye</i>	<i>You</i>	Your	Yours
He	Him	His	His				
She	Her	Her	Hers	They	Them	Their	Theirs
It	It	<i>His</i>	<i>His</i>				

Why is there only one form for They?

You might be familiar with French or Spanish in which there is a masculine *they* and a feminine *they*. English is a Germanic language in which grammatical gender only applies to singular forms. That is why *they* is the plural of *he*, *she*, and *it* or any combination thereof.

Why did that mean old hymn writer personify the sun?

There is an old hymn that mentions the sun running in "his courses." If the lyricist was trying to personify the sun, or just sound old fashioned, he would have written "her courses," because the word "sun" is historically feminine in Germanic languages. The

(continued inside)

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. *Admit that you are a sinner.*
2. *Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.*
3. *Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.*
4. *You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).*
5. *By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.*



Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!

As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go *up*. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start *today* - OK? Thank you.

Church Directory

Todd W. White ----- Pastor
 Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
 Lois Mae Floyd ----- Pianist/ Organist
 ----- Greeter
 Shayne Hooper, Brian Crawford, Charity Crawford ----- S.S. Teachers
 Larry & Mary Byars, ----- Outreach
 Bertha Segebarrt ----- Custodian
 Flowers ----- Shirley White, Charity Crawford

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Mary Byars
 Cradle Roll 2: Larry Byars
 Sun. Eve. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Kristi Hooper
 Cradle Roll 2: Andrea Hooper
 Wed. Wed. Eve. Service ---- Cradle Roll 1: Shirley White
 Cradle Roll 2: VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of January 10, 2016

Sunday School ----- 18
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 25
 Sunday Evening Service ----- 20
 Wed. Eve. Service, 01/13/16 ----- 17

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of January 10, 2016

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 700.25
 Missionary Dr. Greg Waller ----- \$ 243.11
Total Received for Week of 01/10/16: \$ 943.36

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00

LISTEN TO -



ABIDINGRADIO.COM

PLUMBING REPAIR FUND -

Amount For Entire Project ----- \$6,606.99
 Amount Received So Far ----- \$ 495.00
 Total STILL NEEDED to pay off: \$6,111.99

AUDITORIUM AIR CONDITIONER FUND -

Amount For Entire Project ----- \$5,000.00
 Amount Received So Far ----- \$ 85.00
 Total STILL NEEDED to pay off: \$4,915.00

lyricist used **his** because in those days, the sun was regarded as an inanimate object, and **his** was the possessive form of both **he** and **it**. He couldn't write **its courses** because the word **its** hadn't been invented yet.

Why "mine eyes" instead of "my eyes"?

The words **mine** and **thine** were also used as possessive pronouns when the next word began with a spoken vowel, just as our modern usage of **a** and **an**.

This usage survives in the King James Bible and the lyrics to the **Battle Hymn of the Republic**:

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord..."

That is a nose. That is my nose.
That is an eye. That is mine eye.

What's the difference between **Thou** and **You**, and between **You** and **Ye**?

The word **thou** (and its forms **thee**, **thy** and **thine**) were used wherever we would say **you** to indicate only one person, and **ye** and **you** were only plural in meaning. We lost the singular, so we stretched the plural to include the singular, and that makes a lot of stuff ambiguous. It's particularly troublesome if you are upset at a store when you are trying to return defective merchandise. You say, "**Your policy is mean-spirited**," and the employee says, "**I didn't make the policy**," and you say, "**I don't mean 'you' the person, I mean 'you' the store**." Awkward.

You has slipped over into **thou's** position and primarily has singular meaning today.

A king represents not just himself, but everyone in his kingdom, so you would address a king as you rather than thou. Eventually, people used you to address people they wanted to flatter, and from there it showed deference and politeness. This usage worked its way down the social ladder until it included pigs and cows and crowded the word **thou** into extinction.

This almost happened in Swedish, too, but Sweden is a very egalitarian country. In the 1960s, there was a popular campaign to bring back the Swedish word **du**, which corresponds to the English word **thou**. People wore campaign buttons that said, "Call me du." The movement succeeded, so today, the pronoun **du** has been completely rehabilitated, and people even address the king as **du**. The plural pronoun now only applies to groups, so the ambiguity is gone. No one ever thought to do that in English-speaking countries, so we are stuck with an ambiguous pronoun.

If you work in a restaurant and you walk up to a table full of customers, how do you make it clear that you are talking to all of them and not just to the person closest to you? We haven't settled on a solution. My grandmother used to say **you** for one person, and **youse** (rhymes with use) for the plural. To one person, she'd say, "If I had known you was coming, I'd have baked a cake," but if she was talking to a group, she'd say, "If I had known youse was coming, I'd have baked a cake." In restaurants in my area,

they use **you guys** as the plural of **you**. They say, "Are you guys ready for dessert?" even if it's a woman addressing a group of women at a table. The southern states of the United States are famous for using **y'all** as the plural of **you**. People trying to fake a southern accent say "y'all" to an individual, which a true southerner would never do. "You are a person," but "Y'all are a group."

Eventually, English will develop a second-person plural pronoun, but until we reach a consensus, the great pronoun famine continues.

In the King James Bible, when Jesus says **thou** or **thee**, He is talking to **one person**, and when He says **ye** or **you**, He is talking to **a group**. Here is how the second-person pronouns were used in sentences:

Thou wast in the next room. (**one person, subject**)
Ye were in the next room. (**several people, subject**)
I saw thee in the next room. (**one person, object**)
I saw you in the next room. (**several people, object**)
That is thy room. (**one person, possessive**)
That is your room. (**several people, possessive**)
That room is thine. (**one person, predicate possessive**)
That room is yours. (**several people, predicate possessive**)

Notice also that **ye** was used instead of **you** whenever it was the subject of the verb, and that **thou** took an **st** ending on the verb, much like **he**, **she**, or **it** takes an **s** ending today.

Because today the pronoun **thou** and its forms are no longer used, many people misunderstand their meaning and misuse their forms, so when they try to use **thou** in an extemporaneous public prayer, they mangle the grammar badly enough to send knowledgeable people into hysterical giggles. Why do they try to use **thou**? Because they only encounter it in old translations of the Bible and they think it is somehow holy and ethereal to use it. In fact, **thou** was the pronoun that was used to address an adult friend, a spouse, a child, a dog, or a pig, and since it had the connotation of intimacy, it was used to address God.

Before long, the word **you** crowded out **thou** altogether, and people started addressing even pigs and cows and chickens with the word **you**, which would have caused great mirth among our ancestors. You might say to your pet dog, "Hey, dog; do you want to go out?" but to our ancestors that would sound like "Mr. Dog, Sir, would you like to go out?" They would have said, "Dog, dost thou want to go out?" which is appropriately informal.

The use of **thou** and its forms in the King James Bible seem to us to be formal, sublime, ethereal, and holy; but to the translators and original readers, if it had any connotation at all, it connoted a cozy familiarity. After all, formality ill-befits a Saviour who addresses God as Daddy (Abba), and encourages us to do the same.

The first edition of the New American Standard Bible retained **thou** and its forms as the pronoun used in addressing God. It does this because you expect holy language to contain **thees** and **thous**.

But in doing so, they give you a completely wrong impression about the tone of many passages, including the one I quoted above. In Greek, Jesus is not using any special religious pronoun, just the normal, familiar form of address. That is why the latest edition of the New American Standard Bible no longer uses **thou**.

Should you use **thee** and **thou** in prayer? In my opinion, only if you know how. If you feel the need to speak in ungrammatical, stilted, and archaic English to God, then I would reexamine the relationship. How would you like to have a friend who only speaks to you in archaic, flowery language, and gets so tangled up in it that they never pull it off, and ended up forgetting what they were trying to say? To paraphrase Paul, I'd rather say five words that make sense than a thousand words that are fancy, because I might end up saying something I didn't mean.

Take this test to see if you should use **thou**. Change the emphasized words as needed. Then compare your answers with the answer.

Modern English Usage

Yesterday, I saw you and your friend John getting into a car. You didn't wave at me, because I saw you from behind. Were you going somewhere with him? I saw you sitting behind the wheel, so I thought you were the driver. Was the car his or yours? I didn't know you had your license.

Proper Use of **Thee** and **Thou**

Yesterday, I saw thee and thy friend John getting into a car. Ye didn't wave at me, because I saw you from behind. Wast thou going somewhere with him? I saw thee sitting behind the wheel, so I thought thou wert (or thou wast) the driver. Was the car his or thine? I didn't know thou hadst thy license.

Special Note:

In order to show that all people were equal before God, Quakers continued to use the informal pronouns **thee** and **thou** longer than anyone else. Actually, they stopped using **thou** and used **thee** as if it were a subject form, and they combined it with the third person singular of the verb, which is ungrammatical. So what would be "thou findest the truth" in historical usage became "thee finds the truth" in Quakerese.

- Kenneth W. Collins



CELL PHONE verses the BIBLE



I wonder what would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our cell phone?

- What if we carried it around in our purses or pockets?
- What if we flipped through it several times a day?
- What if we turned back to go get it if we forgot it?

- What if we used it to receive messages from the text?
- What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?
- What if we gave it to Kids as gifts?
- What if we used it when we traveled?
- What if we used it in case of emergency?
(This is something to make you go..hmm?) -
- Where is my Bible?
- Oh, and one more thing - Unlike our cell phone, we don't have to worry about our Bible being disconnected because Jesus already paid the bill.

Makes you stop and think "**where are my priorities?**"

- NO REJECTED calls!**
 - NO DEAD BATTERY!!!!**
 - NO "pls call me's" coz He will call on you ALL THE TIME!!!!**
- copied

Before The Throne Of God Above

*Before the throne of God above
I have a strong, a perfect plea:
A great High Priest,
Whose name is Love,
Who ever lives and pleads for me.
My name is graven on His hands,
My name is written on His heart;
I know that while
in heaven He stands
No tongue can bid me thence depart.
When Satan tempts me to despair,
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look, and see Him there
Who made an end of all my sin.
Because a sinless Saviour died,
My sinful soul is counted free;
For God, the Just, is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me!
Behold Him there, the risen Lamb
My perfect, spotless righteousness,
The great unchangeable I am,
The King of glory and of grace!
One in Himself, I cannot die
My soul is purchased by His blood
My life is hid with Christ on high,
With Christ
my Saviour and my God!*