



September 20, 2024

The Good ol' Hokey Pokey

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

One of my favorite memories as a child growing up was when we on occasion went to the roller skating rink and while skating a song would begin to be played as we all stood next to each other in a big circle. I can still hear the lyrics as clear as they were then as I reflect back. The words went like this..."You put your right foot in, you put your right foot out, you put your right foot in and you shake it all about - You do the hokey pokey and you turn yourself around, that's what it's all about..."

No doubt many of you will have this song in your head for a while after you read what I just wrote.

The Hokey Pokey (as it is known in the United States and Canada) or Hokey Cokey (as it is known in the United Kingdom, Ireland, some parts of Australia, and the Caribbean) is a participation dance with a distinctive accompanying tune and lyric structure. It is well-known in English-speaking countries. It originates in a British folk dance, with variants attested as early as 1826. The song and accompanying dance peaked in popularity as a music hall song and novelty dance in the mid-1940s in the UK. The song became a chart hit twice in the 1980s.

Despite several claims of a recent invention, numerous variants of the song exist with similar dances and lyrics dating back to the 19th century. One of the earlier variants, with a very similar dance to the modern one, is found in Robert Chambers' Popular Rhymes of Scotland from 1842. The words there are given as:

Fal de ral la, fal de ral la: Hinkumbooby, round about; Right hands in, and left hands out, Hinkumbooby, round about; Fal de ral la, fal de ral la.

My wife and I enjoyed snow skiing when we were dating, and I also remembered this bit of trivia related to the Hokey Pokey. Larry LaPrise, Charles Macak, and Taffit Baker of the musical group *the Ram Trio*, (better known as the Sun Valley Trio), recorded the song in 1948 and it was released in 1950. They have generally been credited with creating this novelty dance as entertainment for the “ski crowd” at the Sun Valley, Idaho resort.

Okay, so why would I bring this silly song up? Their certainly can’t be a spiritual lesson, or is there?

We are in the final weeks of an election year for the presidency of the United States where I live. Try as I might, it is very hard to get away from all of the bombardment of verbage from every side. (And, yes I purposely spelled the word this way. Verbage is a non-standard word, possibly a portmanteau of the words verbiage and garbage.).

What am I talking about? In the song the Hokey Pokey, you put one part of your body “in”, then you turn and face the other direction and put that same part “out”. Pretty easy right?

In Matthew 5 we read the following: verse 33 *“Again, you have heard that it was said to our ancestors, that You must not break your oath, but you must keep your oaths to the Lord. 34 But I tell you, don’t take an oath at all: either by heaven, because it is God’s throne; 35 or by the earth, because it is His footstool; or by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. 36 Neither should you swear by your head, because you cannot make a single hair white or black. 37 But let your word ‘yes’ be ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no.’ Anything more than this is from the evil one”*.

Also in James 5:12 *“But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by*

heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."

There is also a Proverb that comes to mind. Proverbs 12:22 *"Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight."*

Not a day goes by where one of the multiple leaders in our nation state one thing, and assert that "this is exactly how I believe". With modern technology we have multiple recordings from the not too long ago past where he/she said the exact opposite with conviction.

I recall also the story where Peter, one of Christ's disciples, did something similar. He said he would "never forsake his Lord and Master"...yet at one point vehemently declared the opposite and that he didn't even know Christ!

You see there is a despicable part of our human nature, and with our own human reasoning creates by manifestation what I like to call *the Hokey Pokey effect*.

Yep, we state or put our proverbial right foot in, and then face the other way and put it out. In our mind, either, as with the song, is "right". (no pun intended).

Is it? Why of course we might reason. I depends on how I might feel or think at any given moment. Truth is relative.

As this world quickly morphs from perhaps a time when more people kept their word, told the truth, and didn't waffle or slip slide as to which belief or statements they held as true, what will you and I do?

When Pilate and Christ had one of the greatest conversations recorded in history, the statement arose in John 18: 37 *"You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."* 38 *"What is truth?" retorted Pilate..."*

We represent our Father and His Son. We claim to be Christians. Oh we'll be tested. We will be tried. We will face clearly and be challenged as whether our "yes will be yes, or our no will be no".

Will we base our beliefs and convictions on the truth? The Bible records that many when pressured will succumb and do the Hokey Pokey with their beliefs and even what they say they believe.

So, a child hood song may indeed come to mind to all of us, at some point in the future, as to whether we too like the God we claim to serve will say "Everyone on the side of truth listens to Me..." We listen to Him, and will DO and say what He is, the Truth. John 14:6 *"Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life..."*

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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