

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## *Old Hickory Church of Christ*

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February 24, 2013

Volume 33, # 09

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## Six Steps to a Broken Home

A home is seldom destroyed ``overnight." Its destruction is usually the result of certain fatal steps taken over a lengthy period of time. In these days, when so many homes are crumbling, we would do well to examine our own marital relationships, to see if we have begun to travel the road to inevitable breakup. The following steps lead down that road.

**1. Selfishness.** This may be the number one enemy of a happy life. Each person is doing his own thing. Neither is willing to give up what he wants to do, that wholesome activities may be enjoyed together. Each is seeking his own satisfaction in material realms, in sexual activities, or in time spent with relatives, with little concern for the partner's satisfaction in these matters. The long road is begun.

**2. Intolerance.** Faults in one's partner begin to show up that somehow had been hidden during the courtship period. Or, if the faults were evident, they become far more irritating in a day to day, living together, relationship. Gradually those faults are

magnified. Nagging begins. Each decides that he has made a terrible mistake in his marriage. Disillusionment sets in.

**3. Resignation.** Both parties become resigned to their situation. ``We've made our bed; we will just have to lie in it," they think. No further effort is made to build a happy home. Communication virtually ceases. Love begins to fade, and in many cases gives way to bitterness.

**4. End of sexual relations.** The communication barrier soon affects the sexual relationship, and the couple find themselves no longer enjoying and fulfilling this God-given purpose in marriage. They have allowed their marriage to deteriorate into a mere housekeeping relationship. Such people may be easy pushovers for the next step.

**5. Adultery.** Temptation can arise so unexpectedly, and many a person whose physical needs are not being met at home may yield to the temptation. Rationalization comes easy in such cases: the person feels he has never gotten a ``fair shake" at home; he deserves this new-found attention; this true love (?); he is sure someone understands him for the first time. How deceptive sin is! Considerable time has passed since our couple took those first steps toward a broken home, but now their journey is completed. Only one other step remains.

**6. Separation.** The thing that has obviously destroyed this home is sin, but not just the sin of adultery. For selfishness, intolerance, lack of love, bitterness, and failure to satisfy physical needs (whenever possible) all constitute sin. We can come to but one conclusion. Sin is the cause of broken homes. It

may be sin on the part of both parties, or on the part of only one, but a home is broken because of sin.

Consider your own marriage. If repentance is needed, repent.  
``What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."`

- Bill Hall

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## **Are You Sure It Doesn't Matter?**

Imagine yourself walking into a drug store to have a prescription filled. You hand the pharmacist the form from your doctor, and then watch in amazement as he throws it in the wastebasket without even reading it. Then, without reading the label, he hands you a bottle of pills. By now you've gotten your nerve up, and you ask, "Man, what are you doing?"

"Well he answers, "I'm giving you some medicine."

"But you didn't read the prescription, and you didn't even look at the label on these pills."

"It doesn't matter," he says. "Medicine is medicine - one pill is as good as another."

"No sir!" you object, "I want the pills that my doctor prescribed, and no others."

There's very little chance that you will ever visit that drug store again. Common sense says that this is no way to handle the important business of our physical health.

Why not allow the same kind of common sense to help us in the far more important realm of spiritual things? For some reason folks have

decided that "anything goes" in religion. "Join the church of your choice" has become more than a mere slogan - it is the rule that most people live by. "One church is just as good as another", we are told. How can this possibly be so?

Jesus said, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9). Note that the Lord says that some worship is "vain", meaning worthless or good for nothing. He explains why it is worthless - because it follows the commandments of men rather than the will of God (Col. 3:17). Are you sure that one church is as good as another? Think!

- Greg Gwin

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## **Songs by Don Alexander**

One day a neighbor came to our door with a Bible in hand which his mother had given him. He had been crying. He told me that he had just learned that his mother had died. He said that his mother had wanted him to start going to church, that he didn't know much about it, but his mother had given him the Bible shortly before she died. This neighbor was a very worldly man, having a rough background which included drugs, alcohol, and immoral lifestyle. I had tried previously to get him to go to church with us and to have a Bible class. He had previously refused. But on this day he was ready to try. We began to study the Bible and after a few sessions and his attendance at church, he was baptized. As he came up out of the water, he had tears in his eyes and said, "I don't know much about this. You will have to treat me like a baby." I reassured him by telling him that the Lord now considers him a babe in Christ, a child of God – his child. He got a large grin on his face and said "I am his child. That's great!" In the days after his baptism, we studied the Bible and prayed together. He and I did not have the same

background but now we had Jesus in common. I began to write "I Am His Child" shortly afterward.

However, some grow weary and pursue sin. About four months later, this new brother slipped back into sin for a moment's reckless folly. One afternoon he became intoxicated, grabbed his truck keys, drove one mile to a shopping center to purchase some liquor. When he came out of the liquor store, he got into an argument with a man over how he had parked. The man, claiming to be afraid, drove to his home, got his gun, came back and shot my new brother three times as he sat in his truck. He died instantly. I was asked to identify the body at the morgue, an experience I will never forget. The thought occurred to me that here was a man broken by sinful living who, for a short time, was mended and whole. I wrote "Mended and Whole" after performing a memorial service for one who had not learned to follow the Savior in the control of his anger and paid dearly for it.

My father died on the Lord's day in 1980. My mother died ten years later. They had lived most of their years in Mt. Pleasant, Tennessee. Dad had served as a deacon and later as an elder during a difficult time in middle Tennessee, 1940s-1950s. He was a quiet man who became vocal when the situation called for a stand for truth. He was known as a song leader, often leading singing at gospel meetings. Our home was a gathering place for preachers and others who discussed "issues," My mother taught Bible classes and insisted that we study our Bible lessons on Saturdays before going out to play. She also would sing hymns throughout the day and at bedtime.

I believe the first time I became aware that Jesus would be coming back for his people was from her singing, "When He Cometh." Both Dad and Mom "went about doing good" in humble, quiet service. Dad often prayed, "Wear us out in thy service, and when thou art done with us here, give us a home with thee in heaven." After Dad died, I began to think about his attitude to work while he waited in the kingdom of

Christ. Over the next decade I worked on the lyrics which then became, “When The King Comes to Claim Even Me.”

A good personal, family friend, Tommy Hagewood, who preached at the Locust Street church of Christ in Mr. Pleasant, performed Morn’s funeral and graveside service. After the funeral Tommy asked me if I had ever thought about writing a song about Christian families. I said I hadn’t, but on the plane back from Tennessee, I penned the words to “Led By The Savior’s Hand.” While others will sometimes be critical of those of us who were “born and raised in the church,” I praise and thank my God for such a blessing!

- Don Alexander, 1996

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**THIS WEEK’S LESSONS:** Sunday morning: “*Are You In Love?*” (text: 2 Thess. 2:7-12); Sunday evening: *Bimonthly Singing!*

**SCHEDULE:** Our Fall Gospel Meeting will be July 28 – Aug. 2, Sun. regular times, M-F at 7:00 p.m., with Tanner Campbell, of Piggott, AR.