

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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What Would You Call Them?

It is reported that during World War I, in the hills of Kentucky, two denominational preachers, a Baptist and a Methodist, decided to conduct a Union Meeting. They agreed that no denominational doctrine would be preached at all, just the simple gospel according to the great commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16).

The meeting was well attended, interest was high, and many were baptized in obedience to the gospel. About 300 responded. Therefore, there was great interest the last night of the meeting to see these new born Christians "join the church of his choice." (May we insert a question here? All agree that these 300, who obeyed the Lord, were Christians. They were born again, blood-bought and were in Christ. To what church did they belong? They had joined no denomination as yet, therefore they were still united — a group of Christians undivided by denominational name, creed or practice.) That unity was short lived, however, for the

meeting of the last evening was to see them divided and "join" one group or another. If they had only known Jesus' prayer for the unity of his followers in John 17:20-21. One hundred chose the Methodist denomination. Another hundred chose the Baptist denomination. But the rest refused to join either. They said they would continue as the Lord directed, worshipping and working together as Christians, being just members of the church of Christ. WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THEM?

If all would do what the last group did, the prayer of Jesus would be answered. His followers would all be one. We would be of the same mind and judgment, and would speak the same thing. We would be simply Christians. (Acts 11:26; 1 Peter 4:16). There would be no division! Wouldn't that be worth our every effort?

- Eugene Britnell

Options That Married People Do NOT Have

When two people are married legally (according to the civil laws they live under, (Rom. 13:1-7), and in the eyes of God (according to the law of God who originated marriage, Gen. 2:18-24; Rom. 7:2-3; Matt. 5:32; 19:3-6, 9 -- and the law of God supersedes the ordinances of men), they often vow to love, honor, and cherish one another for better or worse, in sickness and in health, and in prosperity and in adversity until death parts them. In fact, whether such vows are made a part of the wedding ceremony or not, such obligations inhere in the marriage relationship, and husbands and wives are expected by God to live up to them.

So many couples, both young and old, think they just have to get married (and they are in such an emotional romantic mood that hardly anyone can talk them out of it), but they (either both of them or one of them) soon decide that they don't have to (or should that be "want to") stay married. But God has given them no such option! Jesus said, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

Some decide that they want a divorce from a mate because they are "no longer in love" with that mate. They should have been certain about their love before the marriage. And they need to know that God commands husbands and wives to love one another, Eph. 5:25, 28, 33; Titus 2:4 (and these passages were written during a time that in many cultures parents arranged the marriages of their children). Husbands and wives do not have the option of deciding to stop loving one another.

Some decide that they want a divorce because a mate has contracted a debilitating disease or has been paralyzed by an accident. They don't want to be tied down by "a cripple," but God has not given them that option. The unfortunate mate needs them more than ever, and they need to show the nobility of their love, their character, and their commitment.

Some decide that they want a divorce because they have found someone else that they "truly love" (or like better), someone who also shows greater love for them (their perception) than their mate. But what kind of person would become romantically involved with another man's wife or another woman's husband?

Could such a person ever be trusted as a husband or a wife? (And could they be trusted?) But, again, God did not give them any such option.

Marriage is for life, and not "until you find someone you like better." Some decide that they want a divorce because they "just don't get along well" with their mate, or they "really weren't ready for such a commitment," or they have found that "they are no longer compatible" with their mate, or they "don't feel loved and important," or they "argue all the time," etc., but God has given them no such option. Grow up, mature, get help, but work out your problems. The majority of divorced and remarried people admit that they were better off in their first marriage than they realized.

Marriage is of God; He who originated it has a right to regulate it. He has done so in the Bible, the revelation of Himself and His will for mankind. God's plan is one man and one woman for life with one exception. That one exception is fornication (sexual immorality). The innocent and faithful mate has been given the right (not the duty) to divorce the guilty mate [and] marry another. The guilty mate has been given no such right. When two people marry, they have entered a serious relationship. Both need to be sure that they are both ready for such a commitment. People may change their minds and go back on their promises, but God's law does not change.

- Bill Crews

Will Your Children Go To Heaven?

Church leaders all over the nation are concerned about the drop-out rate of young people. And well they should be. It is a tragic thing to see these precious boys and girls, who are so thrilled with Bible Study as little people, grow cold and uninterested in the Lord's work as they grow older.

Lately, several congregations have made in-depth studies of the factors leading to youth leaving the church, with an eye to learning what might be done to help solve this problem. What do we need? More youth programs? More rallies? Special teachers?

A great central truth has begun to emerge from these studies. Their faithfulness to Jesus doesn't have anything to do with special programs or teachers. It is not dependent on whether they are members of a large congregation or a small one. The single most important factor is their own immediate family.

One congregation found that when both parents were faithful to the Lord, and that includes active interest in the local congregation's programs, 93 percent of the children remained faithful. On the other hand, if only one parent was faithful, the figure dropped to 73 percent. Where both parents were only marginally active, it fell to 53 percent. Now comes the shocker: when both parents attended infrequently, 6 percent of their children remained faithful to the Lord.

Do you want your children to go to heaven? Then make certain you are leading them. The likelihood is they'll go no other way!

- Ron Readhimer

IN CHRIST WE HAVE:

A love that can never be fathomed,
A life that can never die,
A righteousness that can never be tarnished,
A peace that can never be understood,
A rest that can never be disturbed,
A joy that can never be diminished,
A hope that can never be disappointed,
A glory that can never be clouded,
A light that can never be darkened,
A happiness that can never be interrupted,
A strength that can never be enfeebled,
A purity that can never be defiled,
A beauty that can never be marred,
A wisdom that can never be baffled,
A patience that can never be exhausted,
A GOD Who is more than enough!!

- Georgy

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- Some people say they don't want to break *God's* laws, but don't hesitate to try to bend them to fit their situation; however, you can't bend them without breaking them.
 - If you are picky and judgmental of others, expect others to be judgmental of you.
 - If people have not counted the cost of discipleship (Luke 14:25-33), it is hard to count on them to be a disciple.
 - It is hard for some people to go the second mile because they have never gone the first.

THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*Two Men!*" (Text: Luke 18:9-14); Sunday evening: "*Nicodemus!*" (Text: John 3:1-10).