

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Have You Noticed?

Have you noticed that when a person gets new car fever the old car all of a sudden falls apart? The paint looks terrible, it rattles all over and the motor will probably need overhauling. The truth is that the old car is not so bad -- but he wants a new car!

Have you noticed that when a man gets interested in some other woman, his wife suddenly has all kinds of shortcomings? She always complains too much, never cooks or cleans, and he probably "never loved her" anyway. Do you know the real problem? He wants someone new and is looking for justification for his actions.

Have you ever noticed when a man gets dissatisfied with the church, he goes through the same kind of rationalization? All at once "they are not friendly," "they offended my children," and "I never fit in there anyway." Do you know the real problem? He has decided to make a change and is looking for an excuse.

We must acknowledge the fact that the old car does have imperfections, but it is paid for, and if it were cleaned up and tuned up, it would probably be satisfactory. The "old husband" or "old wife" does have imperfections, but if you looked at the good and worked on the problems, the marriage would probably go more smoothly. Likewise, the church does have imperfections, because human beings are imperfect, but if the "problems"

were dealt with in a mature manner, most of them could be resolved quickly.

One more thought, have you noticed that the fellow who gets the new car soon has similar problems with it? Likewise, the man who gets the new wife soon finds imperfections in her, and often the one who looks for a "new church" finds the same problems there. In closing -- though there are exceptions, did you notice where the main problem is all along?

- Frank Jamerson

Try It — You'll Like It

Who has never been urged by friends to do something against our wills, against our own best interests, and in violation of our own consciences? A friend says, "Oh come on try it once, you don't know what you're missing." It may be that we have been introduced to some pretty good things this way, but probably most have been led into some pretty horrible practices.

The reasoning behind such an appeal is faulty to the core. The truth is that you don't have to try something before you know whether you will like it or not. Those who have never been put in jail for a crime don't have to wonder whether they would like the experience or not. If you've never jumped head first with no parachute from a high building to the concrete pavement, I doubt that you wonder what it would be like or what you may have been missing all these years. Don't try it.

The "do your own thing" existentialist view of life is very faulty also. Should you really have to taste the full cup of life before you know what is bad and what is not? Do you really need to participate in the seamy side of life as well as the good life to become a full human being? It is faulty to think that one can experiment with things that endanger the soul and destroy the health of an otherwise intelligent being.

Many things lure all of us into sin. Falling for the stupidity of “Try it, you don’t know what you’re missing,” has led a host of people to take their first “toke” or “joint” of marijuana. That first sip of beer or whiskey could be the result of listening to the same stupidity. Ask a heroin addict how much fun he is having. Ask him if he wishes now he had not been so foolish as to take his first halting steps into the misuse of drugs. Before you fall for such stupidity, remember: “Abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thess. 5:22, NASB).

Think about just how really dumb it is to do anything without first researching the experience. Here are just a couple of good research questions:

1. Would God approve this?
2. Will this be good for me?
3. How will this affect me now and in the future?
4. It is something I want everyone to know that I do?
5. Will it damage my health?
6. Could I recommend it to others?
7. Will it cause me to violate my conscience?
8. Will it cause me to grow in Christ?
9. Will it hurt my reputation with good people?
10. Why should I do it anyway?

- Matt Amos

Bible Tears

The shedding of tears, on the part of many, is about a thing of the past! Even crying at funerals is seldom seen anymore as it is suppose to be a sign of stability not to cry. The Psalmist said, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Psa. 126:5). There are different kinds of tears mentioned in the Bible. Let's take a look at some.

Tears of Warning

Paul shed tears because he knew that brethren would not listen to the truth and would depart from it. He said, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31). Even though the Bible is filled with warnings, most do very little heeding. The purpose of a watchman was to "hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me," (Ezek. 3:17) said God. We would all do well to listen to the warnings of God. One reason Noah was said to have walked with God was that he listened to the warnings of God and "prepared an ark to the saving of his house. . . ." (Heb. 11:7).

Tears of Sadness

The Ephesians wept as Paul bid them goodbye on leaving the work at Ephesus. "And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him" (Acts 20:36-37).

Too many times preachers leave a place of work with malice toward the elders and the elders toward the preacher. My brethren, this ought not to be! A lot of churches have a pre-set time frame in which a preacher is to work and when that time is up, he must go regardless of how good the work is going, and this is sad. Some places just about "eat" the preacher up when he first begins a new work and after he has been there a short while, they wished they had! There just needs to be a better and closer tie between elders and preachers

Tears of Sympathy

"Jesus wept" (Jn. 11:35). Jesus wept because He cared when others were in sorrow. Mary and Martha had just lost their brother to death. Even though Jesus could and did resurrect Lazarus from the dead, He still showed concern. I am afraid that many are too cold and indifferent toward

others who sorrow. Someone says, "I thought we ought not sorrow when a Christian dies." No, you have that wrong! Paul told the Thessalonians "that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:13). Let's not get too proud to cry.

Tears Over Sin

Jeremiah of the Old Testament has often been called the "weeping prophet" because he cried over the sinful condition of God's people. Israel was guilty of backsliding, playing the harlot, and forgetting God; they could not blush and they would not walk in the old paths. Such is enough to make the righteous cry. Jesus wept over the sinful condition of God's people. "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matt. 9:36). Sin in our society is the order of the day and most of us do very little about it. It would do us all good to look at the sinful condition of most people and allow our tears of concern to lead us to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

- Johnie Edwards, via Guardian of Truth, 09/18/1986

About Attendance

No matter how you measure it, attendance is a sign of interest. In the Rotary Club, if you have three unexcused absences, you can be dropped from your classification and dismissed from the club. Why? Because the Rotary Club sees a lack of attendance as a sign of diminished interest. It is no less true of the people of God. We will be held accountable for not properly supporting the functions of a local church (Heb. 10:25). When we elevate things of this life to the point that they have replaced our attendance to worship services, we have shown more interest in those things than in being with His people. Let's take a long, hard look at our

attendance and honestly measure whether or not we are doing what we ought in that regard."

Mr. Meant-To

Mr. Meant-To has a comrade,
And his name is Didn't Do;
Have you ever chanced to meet them?
Did they ever call on you?
These two fellows live together
In the house of Never-Win,
And I am told that it is haunted
By the ghost of Might-Have-Been.

(The Book of Virtues, p 364)

- > "Never grow a wishbone where a backbone ought to be!"
 - > "People are not honored for what they receive, but for what they give!"
 - > "A Christian will arrive at the desired destination only if he stays on the right track!"
 - > "It is better to be great in your littleness than little in your greatness!"
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"ISIS And The Christian!"*
(Text: Matt. 10:16); Sunday evening: *Bi-monthly Singing!*