

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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AN UNDECLARED WAR

The doctors and other concerned citizens of our country are trying to arouse the public with the fact that child abuse is very brutal and very widespread. Thousands of children are killed or maimed for life by angry parents who do not love them. The details of this war are not reported daily because no one knows the complete story, and the casualties are not lying along the street of some city or camp that was the point of the attack. The dead and wounded are scattered from coast to coast, and almost all of them are kept out of sight.

The victims of this war are unarmed, and they have no bomb shelter where they can hide and be in relative safety. Those destroyed by this insane slaughter are the innocent children of the land, and they suffer generally at the hands of drunk, atheistic parents who have been told since they were children that they are products of blind evolution rather than descendants of parents who were created in the image of a loving heavenly Father who would have all men come to repentance and live by the wonderful wisdom of His counsel. They are without hope and without God in this world (Eph. 2:12).

The frustrated parents were never taught to love children (Titus 2:3-5). They may have learned to look for pleasure in that which is contrary to nature rather than that which is in fellowship with God and His family. They are to be pitied as well as the unwelcomed children that come to live with them. If there were some way to convert these parents to Christ so that His example and teaching could have free course in their lives, the homes would immediately turn toward the "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance" (Gal. 5:22, 23). There is no law against these traits, and people who have them would harm no one. Conversion would bring about a change which is beyond description, and this change would enrich the lives of those converted and all whose lives they touch. The children would be loved and protected rather than neglected, starved, and beaten.

"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8). The unselfish and faithful followers of Christ shall receive now in this time an hundredfold, with persecution, and in the world to come eternal life (Mark 10:28-30). The helpless children cannot teach their parents. They are destined to

die early or become the vicious criminals and animal-like people of the next generation. They will learn only hate from their environment.

There are wonderful people who would delight to have these children when they first come into the world, but the children are carried into the "war zone" without their choice and beyond the knowledge and reach of those who would love them. It is amazing how soon such little ones learn rebellion, hate, and ugly attitudes in the dirty homes into which they are born. It is almost impossible to remove the evil scars of such unholy environment and treatment that they receive early in life even if the courts find them and make them available to wise and loving couples who desire children. The effort to help them is worthy. The physical scars are less serious than the spiritual scars of these unfortunate abused children.

It is also very difficult to get the cruel, animal-like parents with the gospel which is God's power to change them into saints and heirs of heaven. It is very much in order for the courts to mete out severe punishment to the guilty parents when they learn of their heartless treatment of their own children, and it is proper for the neighbors to report such criminals to the authorities because this may deter some from such conduct. The ideal is for the gospel to reach them, but they are not listening for the truth, not searching the Scriptures. These murderers of children are the products of the atheism and modernism that is taught in textbooks, on television, and even in the pulpits of some of the older denominations.

Neglect of children is often found in more respectable homes. Parents are too busy in their search for money and pleasure to notice the little ones who are so hungry for attention and affection. Children from such homes may become the drug addicts, thieves, and abusers of their children in the next generation. Time spent in teaching and showing affection for children is well used. It pays great dividends.

The feminists who seek to destroy the home, the university professors who scoff at the Bible, modern vulgar entertainers who destroy the sense of moral values, and the modernistic preachers who undermine respect for the Scriptures are the productive engineers who train the soldiers in this cruel army that is engaged in this undeclared war on innocent children. If active precious faith could be instilled in the heart of every American, child abuse would stop at once. Let the truth of God be sent out in all directions to all people with all haste. Some will listen with reverence, and when they do they will glorify God and befriend the innocent. Such is the influence of the Bible. The more abundant life is for the faithful servant of God and not for the servant of the devil. These Christians find happiness and share it with others. The unbelievers who think they are animals are without hope, and they tend to understand only the rule of force.

Those who are guilty of child abuse are the very people who show no respect for the lives and property of adults about them. They are a selfish people with no respect for the law of God or man. Sin grows in clusters, and when one heinous crime comes to the surface it is usually accompanied by many other evidences of rebellion against the God of heaven.

Let all who have obeyed the gospel realize that their great mission in life is to encourage others to do the same. We need not expect some political party to stop the crime wave. If it is done, it will be accomplished by those who understand and obey the gospel and teach it to others. Let us be as the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

- Irven Lee, via *The Edifier*, Rogersville, AL, 10/30/1983

APATHY AND IGNORANCE

While listening to a political analyst, he told of a man being asked what could be done about the general ignorance and apathy in this country. The response was, "I don't know ... and I don't care."

Sometimes I wonder if this is not a very real problem in the church. There are too many who claim to be children of God who seem to be indifferent to the real problems that face us, especially the problem of sin. They are very interested in their jobs, their recreation (spectator and otherwise) and all the other things that have to do with this life, but seem little concerned about the spiritual. No amount of encouragement can get them to really study God's word. There is definitely a problem in finding people who are willing to give of themselves to teach others. Their chief complaints are about the entertaining character and length of the sermon, the comfort of the building, whether they have been spoken to or otherwise overlooked. They know little about any collective programs involving the members and rarely respond when called upon (unless it is their friend); and on and on we could go.

Ignorance has always been a problem with God's people. Hosea (4:6) described Israel in these words, "My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge." A lack of knowledge is not that bad, because that can be overcome, but indifference to that ignorance is devastating. We are all ignorant on many things, but we can learn, if we care. Hosea goes on to say, "Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee." Ignorance is bad enough, but if we don't care that we are ignorant, we are lost.

Indifference was the problem with the Laodiceans. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot, I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:15, 16). They were comfortable in what they had, felt they had need of nothing. They knew not their true state: wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. They were counseled to turn to the Lord for their wealth

and clothing to cover their nakedness, and for eye salve that they could see. "Be zealous therefore, and repent."

Jeremiah in his Lamentation (1:12) cried, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" Judah had gone into captivity and Jerusalem had fallen. There was little lament over the condition that had brought it all to pass. They mourned for their own state, for their personal condition; but not for sin that had brought it about. They seemed to be ignorant of the unrighteousness of the nation and equally indifferent about it all. If we are not careful we will be as they were: ignorant of spiritual realities and indifferent as to the remedy.

I suppose that those who need this article will not read it because they don't care. The only solution is for those who are aware, and do care, to seek for means to wake them from their sleep to be the children of day.

- Morris D. Norman

In the art of marriage, the little things are big things

- It is never being too old to hold hands.
- It is remembering to say "I love you" at least once each day.
- It is never going to sleep angry.
- It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.
- It is standing together, facing the world.
- It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.
- It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.
- It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.
- It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.
- It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.
- It is not only marrying the right partner, but also being the right partner.

- Unknown

- > "Many people with money to burn will eventually burn with their money!"
- > "When your out-go exceeds your income, your upkeep will be your downfall!"
- > "I find more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history whatsoever!" - Sir Isaac Newton
- > "If you fear the fire of persecution, think about the fire of hell!"
- > "It's hard to believe life evolved into higher forms when I see my neglected garden overcome with weeds!"

THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"What More Are You Doing Than Others?"* (Text: Matt. 5:43-48); Sunday evening: Sunday night sessions will be used to complete the second quarter study of Authority, then we will resume the study of John. Tonight: Lesson #25, Authority and Benevolence (part 2), pp. 85-87.