

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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“EUNICE’S FAMILY: WHAT CAN BE DONE?”

Marriage is life's most intimate relationship. No one will affect you more than your mate. *"An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who shames him is as rottenness in his bones"* (**Proverbs 12:4**).

For many reasons, Christians should marry Christians. Only in that case can you share what is most important in life — your service to Christ — with your closest companion. An unbelieving mate may influence you away from the Lord. If that does not happen, he or she will hold you back in some way, or at least make things more awkward or difficult. Two people dedicated to doing God's will have a common basis for solving problems that come to the relationship. If God blesses the marriage with children, your parental obligation is much easier if both parents are Christians. And when death ends your marriage, how much better to face the loss of a companion knowing that he or she died in the Lord.

We need to emphasize these practical realities to people contemplating marriage. Nevertheless, some choose to marry those who are not Christians. Also, it is not uncommon among those already married for one spouse to become a Christian but the other does not. Such families should consider Eunice and take heart. She shows what can be done in that situation.

Acts 16 tells of Paul coming to Lystra on his second preaching trip. "*And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek*" (vs. 1). Timothy's mother was Eunice (**2 Timothy 1:5**). His father was evidently not a Christian, and he was sufficiently opposed to Eunice's beliefs that Timothy had not been circumcised (vs. 3).

What did Eunice do? Two things. First, she lived by her convictions, despite her husband. **2 Timothy 1:5** speaks of her sincere faith, which also characterized her mother, Lois. Second, she taught her son. Paul reminded Timothy that "*from childhood you have known the sacred writings*" (**2 Timothy 3:15**). It was surely more difficult for Eunice to have to do this training without a husband's help, but she did it. Doubtless Lois also contributed. If Eunice did it, so can you. It will require persistent instruction and a consistent example.

Something else about Eunice is noteworthy. It was at Lystra where Paul was stoned and left for dead on his first preaching trip (**Acts 14:19**). Now, this same apostle wanted her young son to go with him to destinations unknown to assist him in preaching. What would be in store for Timothy? How would he fare? Surely she had concerns. But the text reveals no hesitation on her part or his, and this faithful mother's beloved son proved to be a valuable worker in the Lord's cause. If you will be a Eunice, your son may be a Timothy.

- Frank Himmel

There is ONE Hope

When the Jehovah's Witnesses come knocking at your door, they will almost certainly discuss their peculiar doctrine of the 144,000. They claim that this number – exactly this number, not one more or one less – will be taken to Heaven to live with the Lord. According to them, the rest of the righteous will spend

eternity here on the earth. Rather than destroying the earth (and the entire physical universe), the Jehovah's Witnesses teach that God will restore the planet to its perfect 'Garden of Eden' condition, and this will provide a wonderful existence for those who are not among the 144,000 that will go to Heaven.

Where did they get this strange doctrine of the 144,000? The only reference to such a number is in the Book of Revelation (7:4-10 & 14:3-4). In these passages, the Jehovah's Witness insist on an absolutely literal interpretation. When studying with them, it is interesting to ask them if all of the 144,000 will be Jewish (chapter 7 says so) and male virgins (chapter 14 says so). Their answer will be an emphatic NO. The devastating follow up question is this: If the number is literal, why isn't the description of that number also literal? They have no answer!

The Jehovah's Witnesses are also at a loss to explain how planet Earth will serve as the eternal abode of the majority of righteous souls, when the Scripture plainly teaches that the entire universe will be destroyed. Peter wrote: *"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up"* (2 Peter 3:10).

Finally, this doctrine of the 144,000 fails because it contradicts the statement of Paul in Ephesians 4:4 when he said there is "one hope of your calling." Do you see it? They argue for two hopes (one for the 144,000 and another for the rest of the righteous) – but Paul says this is one common hope. Who do you think is right: Paul, or the Jehovah's Witnesses?

- Greg Gwin

Young People . . .

Why Should You Remember God In Your Youth?

- He is your creator — He knows more about you than you will ever know about yourself (Jer. 10:23).
- It will increase your chances of a long life (Eph. 6:3; Deut. 5:16).
- Those who remember God in their youth seldom forget Him in their old age (Eccl. 12:1; Prov. 22:6).
- Your life will be happier (Prov. 3:24-26).
- Through your good example, others will be brought to Christ (1 Tim. 4:12-16).

- David A. Padfield

> "It's not too hard to make decisions when you are fully committed to what your values and priorities are."

> "You must have long-range goals to keep you from being frustrated by short-term failures."

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"The Plague of Perversion!"*
(text: Rom. 1:24-32); Sunday evening: *"Questions from the Question Box!"*

SCHEDULE: Our Fall Gospel Meeting will be July 29-Aug. 3, with Aaron Andrews.