

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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IT'S A SMART GIRL WHO KNOWS THAT THERE'S A HOOK ON THAT BAITED LINE!

"I CAN'T say no!" made sparkling lyrics for the musical "Oklahoma!" but any girl who doesn't have a sturdy *"No!"* somewhere in her vocabulary today is liable to be headed for trouble.

Under the influence of an attractive "line" she may find herself floundering in dangerous waters before she knows it.

It's a smart fish who knows there's a hook under the bait and doesn't bite.

How many of these "lines" might draw you in? -----

EVERYBODY DOES IT! This is generalizing a few cases to make it seem as if you're the only one out of step. If there is a tussle between going along with the crowd and your conscience, better listen to your conscience. No one ever became a really valuable or extraordinary person without being willing to take a few steps above the crowd.

YOU'RE CHICKEN! Calling you a name doesn't make you that thing. You show more mettle by standing up for your convictions than by giving in to practices that could harm your health or reputation.

NOBODY WILL KNOW! Don't you believe it! Even if a body doesn't brag about his conquest (and most of them do), if a girl gets into trouble, everyone will know. And practices such as smoking and drinking eventually become evident both physically and mentally. The results of these habits cannot remain well hidden for very long. Never forget, you will know first of all---then everyone can see.

YOU WILL IF YOU LOVE ME! This is the oldest gambit in the book. Smoking, drinking, or petting are not signs of love or friendship. All you are doing is satisfying the passions of an uncontrolled youth or giving in to the childish thrills of the gang. If they really loved you or wanted to be true friends, they would not ask you to do anything that would hurt your health or lower your moral standards.

NOBODY UNDERSTANDS ME! Here is where the fellow cries on your shoulder to make you feel sorry for him since his parents “don't love him” and he's “so alone.” Don't give in to his desires. In the long run, this wouldn't solve his problem. What he really needs is interest, understanding, and someone to whom to talk about his troubles.

YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL! Beware! There isn't a girl alive who isn't attracted by this bait, but the girl who lacks self-assurance is in the most danger. She may look for compliments by wearing wild hairdos and too much makeup and sporting a long cigarette holder she fancies gives her a sophisticated look. When an experienced “angler” dangles his line, she may be all too eager to snap at the bait. Remember, if the fellow really

means it, you won't need cigarettes or tight dresses to draw his compliments.

YOU WON'T GET HURT! Oh, no? Just bone up on the statistics. The correlation between smoking and cancer is not debatable anymore. The suffering and grief caused by even “social drinking” is measured in terms of highway deaths, unwed mothers, unstable homes, and sudden acts of violence. Drinkers' damage to themselves, their relatives, and their community is inestimable.

YOU'LL BE POPULAR! Popular with whom? The less desirable crowd, that's who! You cannot win true popularity merely by popping a bottle or fag into your mouth.

ONLY A LITTLE! Come-ons such as “try it once,” or, “let's go a little way,” seldom stop early. You may find it as easy to halt halfway down an ice slide. Before you know it you've gone the whole way without intending to. An alcoholic starts with the first little drink and later finds he can't stop.

"SO-AND-SO" DOES IT, WHY NOT YOU? Go slow! Because others may do it is no valid reason why you should. Too, this reasoning could be turned around to say since you do not do it, they should not do it either. Do you want to imitate anything that makes you less attractive and healthy?

WE'LL SHOW THEM! Wait! When you behave rebelliously merely to get back at your parents, or a boyfriend, you usually end up hurting yourself far more than you do them. Revenge is not a good motive for doing anything. The consequences will still fall on your own head.

YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH! Think it over! This is another way of telling you not to listen to your conscience, or your parents, or your church. You may be old enough by the calendar, but are you old enough emotionally, socially, and intellectually, to consider the price you pay for uncertain privileges? The price may be higher than you bargained for!

YOU'LL BE RELAXED AND HAPPY! This is one of the chief promises liquor holds out. Unfortunately, when a drinker feels he is the most dazzling, other people are usually laughing at him, not with him. There are better ways to relax that do not lead to slurred speech, sloppy posture, and a lessening of your critical faculties.

IT'S ONLY HARMLESS FUN! Easy! This line of talk is to lure you into a sense of innocence and false security. You may start out to a “little party” at a friend's house and wind up at something entirely unexpected. Many a traffic fatality started out as “one little drink.”

IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH! This line comes from colleges and other sophisticated sources, where people would know better, and tries to make certain dangerous actions seem helpful to one's mental and emotional stability by eliminating frustrations. Such pseudo-doctors can sound convincing when they use medical or psychological terminology. Give in to this line and you're on the way to more physical and emotional problems than you knew existed.

YOU LIVE ONLY ONCE! Red light! Is mere pleasure our only goal in life, so we must live it up today, for tomorrow we die? People who think this way do not see the results of what they do. Right now counts,

not later, not tomorrow. One wrong act for fun today can lead to many miserable tomorrows. You not only live once; you live day by day. Don't discount tomorrow.

YOU THINK YOU'RE TOO GOOD FOR US? Other ways of saying this are, "Who do you think you are?" or "I'm not good enough for you, huh?" or, "Come off your high horse." When you refuse to lower your standards of conduct, you place the other person in a position of feeling guilty and jealous of the high ideals you are maintaining. He feels frustrated at not getting his way. So he will try to strike back. Be mature enough to withstand a little name calling.

I hope that none of these shopworn baits ever hook you. Don't be, a victim of false thinking and wrong logic. Be on guard when anyone, young or old, tries these baited lines to hook you into doing what he wants you to do.

It's a smart girl or boy who knows there's a hook under that bait!

- Robert C. Niss

The Encourager is Encouraged

“For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established — that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me” (Romans 1:11,12).

The process of encouragement is rarely a one-way street. Almost without exception, the encourager is encouraged in the very act of trying to encourage someone else. And the reverse is also true. By neglecting to encourage others, we deprive ourselves of much-needed encouragement that we might otherwise receive.

Paul's relationship with the Christians in Rome is interesting. He expected, when he got to Rome, to encourage their faith, but he also expected to be encouraged by them as well. Great apostle though he was, he needed the mutual strengthening that would come from their association. He needed their strength hardly any less than they needed his. But his encouragement would come from helping them — not by saying, “What can you do for me?”

Perhaps the mutual nature of encouragement is one reason that so many of us spend so much time in the dark valleys of discouragement. We spend so little time trying to encourage anyone else, it is little surprise that we find ourselves so downhearted. Epidemics of discouragement should be expected in societies that are as self-centered as ours. One of the most disheartening things in the world is to be focused on whether others are lifting us up and brightening our spirits as they “ought” to be doing.

But even when we're encouraging others, we won't be encouraged if we don't LISTEN to ourselves. When we're figuring out what the other person needs to hear, we usually discover things that WE need to hear, but those lessons will be lost on us if we don't listen to our own instruction. And really, why should our friends take our advice if we're not willing to

take it ourselves? “Physician,” our friends might say, “heal yourself!” (Luke 4:23).

But teaching — whether by instruction, exhortation, or encouragement — can be a wonderfully beneficial exercise. It can help both parties, the giver no less than the recipient. So look for somebody to encourage. Find out what truth **THEY** need to hear, and then listen to that truth **YOURSELF**. You’ll be encouraged.

“We cannot hold a torch to light another’s path without brightening our own” (Ben Sweetland).

- Gary Henry

THIS WEEK’S LESSONS: Sunday morning: “*A Wise Son!*” (text: Prov. 10:1); Sunday evening: “*Seven Things to Remember About Fighting Giants!*” (1 Sam. 17).