

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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September 27, 2020

Volume 40, # 39

Teenager, Go Home!

Judge Phillip Gilliam of Denver recently gave some advice to the young people of his community in response to the cry of many teenagers. "What can we do ... where can we go?"

"Go home!" says the judge. "Hang the storm windows, paint the woodwork, rake the leaves, mow the lawn, wash the car, learn to cook, scrub the floors, repair the swing, build a boat, get a job, help the poor, study your lessons -- and when you are through and not too tired, read a good book."

"Your parents do not owe you entertainment. Your city or town does not owe you any recreational facilities. The world does not owe you a living - you owe the world something."

"You owe it your time, and, energy so that no one will be at war, or in poverty, or sick and lonely again."

"In plain, simple words - grow up! Quit being like a cry baby. Get out of your dream world and develop a backbone - not a wishbone - and start acting like a man or lady. You have no right to expect your parents to buy your every whim and fancy, just because selfish ego instead of common sense dominates your personality, thinking, and request. In heaven's name ... grow up ... and go home!"

Teenagers today have problems that many of us did not have in our youth. (Of course we had "problems" which they know nothing about: like getting up in the winter in a cold house, going to the barn to milk the cows and feed the livestock, then back for breakfast, getting dressed for school and walking a mile to catch the bus by sunrise! Then in the afternoons this was repeated, plus whatever time was left for picking cotton and corn, hauling hay, mending the fences, and cutting wood for the cook stove and fireplaces.)

When teenagers today complain about "nothing to do" I cannot relate to that. My daddy always had that figured out.

Teenagers today have more to do than they realize or want to do. Judge Gilliam has given them some good suggestions, but he omitted the most important one of all - studying the Bible and Bible lessons.

- Eugene Britnell, via The Sower, November/December, 1992 [Edited]

From Generation to Generation

Herein is the history of man: The Bible says, "A generation goes and a generation comes, ..." (Ecclesiastes 1:4). It will not be long before you and I are gone, replaced by another generation. Not only must the people of God work out their own salvation by their obedience to His word (Philippians 2:12; cf. Hebrews 5:8-9), but they must actively influence those who will follow them. Serving God has always involved teaching, learning, remembering, and with the word of God in the heart, acting. No longer do we inherit our places in the family of God, but we take those places by receiving knowledge through teaching (Hebrews 8:10-11; cf. John 6:44-45).

To the descendants of Israel God said, "Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today? Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons. Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.'" (Deuteronomy 4:8-10). Later, He said, "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons ..." (Deuteronomy 6:6-7a). "For He established a testimony in Jacob And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers That they should teach them to their children, That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, That they may arise and tell them to their children," (Psalm 78:5-6).

History has proven that it is much easier to blend in with the environment, go with the flow, and follow the crowd down the path of least resistance than it is to diligently teach, sacrifice to learn and courageously stand with the Lord and His way. Abraham Lincoln said that the philosophy of the schools in one generation becomes the philosophy of

government in the next. We are seeing that concept realized in America right now, and the same applies spiritually to God's people.

Recall that after the death of Moses, Joshua became the leader of God's people (Deuteronomy 34:9), and at the close of his life he admonished them to be faithful to God, offering them a clear choice in that regard (Joshua 24:15). The people replied, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods." They added, "We will serve the LORD our God and we will obey His voice." (Joshua 24:16, 24).

Following the death of Joshua, inspired history contains this sad report: "The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the LORD which He had done for Israel. Then Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died ... All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel." (Judges 2:7-8a, 10).

Weren't these the people who had vowed to serve God and obey His voice? Yes! What happened? They failed to teach the children and grandchildren about God and His mighty works. And what did the people do? What would you expect? "they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them; ... " (Judges 2:12).

As the apostle Paul said, when people are ignorant of God's righteousness, they "establish their own" (Romans 10:3). History proves that God's people always stand only one generation away from apostasy. The word of God must be taught and practiced from generation to generation!

- Gary Smalley

Backsliding

The following tale illustrates the subtle nature of backsliding...

A foolish old farmer, so the story goes, concluded one day that the oats he had fed his mule for years were simply costing him too much. So he hatched a plan: he mixed a little sawdust in with the feed, and then a little more the next day, and even more the next, each time reducing the amount of oats in the mix. The mule didn't seem to notice the gradual change, so the farmer thought things were fine and kept decreasing the proportion of oats. But weeks later, on the day he finally fed the poor beast nothing but

sawdust, the mule finished the meal and fell over dead. A silly tale, perhaps, but it serves as a parable of the backslider—the Christian who slips further and further away from God through unrepented sin or neglect. Though we know our souls cannot survive on spiritual sawdust, we may well convince ourselves that a little won't hurt too much, and a little less real spiritual food won't be missed. Then, over time, the proportion of sawdust increases while the oats gradually disappear. Before long, the change is complete, and our starved, sawdust-stuffed spiritual life has collapsed.

- J C Ryle (1816-1900)

“With deep repentance and sincere faith, find your way back from your backsliding. It is your duty, for you have turned away from Him Whom you professed to serve. It is your wisdom, for you cannot strive against Him and prosper. It is your immediate necessity, for what He has done is nothing compared to what He may do in the way of chastisement, since He is Almighty to punish.”

- C H Spurgeon (1834-1892)

“In every Christian's heart there is a cross and a throne, and the Christian is on the throne till he puts himself on the cross; if he refuses the cross, he remains on the throne. Perhaps this is at the bottom of the backsliding and worldliness among Gospel believers today. We want to be saved, but we insist that Christ do all the dying. No cross for us, no dethronement, no dying. We remain king within the little kingdom of Mansoul and wear our tinsel crown with all the pride of a Caesar; but we doom ourselves to shadows and weakness and spiritual sterility.”

- A W Tozer (1897-1963)

ABC's of Acts

Ascension of Christ	Chapter 1
Beginning of the church	Chapter 2
Crippled Cured	Chapter 3
Determined Disciples	Chapter 4
Empty Cells	Chapter 5
First Deacons	Chapter 6
Great Sermon by Stephen	Chapter 7
How to Become a Christian	Chapter 8
Into Damascus	Chapter 9
Journey to Joppa	Chapter 10

Kingdom Includes Gentiles	Chapter 11
Led by an Angel	Chapter 12
Missionaries Sent	Chapter 13
Not gods but Men	Chapter 14
Old Law Not Binding	Chapter 15
Philippians Converted	Chapter 16
Questions on Mars Hill	Chapter 17
Reasoning with Appollos	Chapter 18
Seven Sons of Sceva	Chapter 19
Troas on the Lord's Day	Chapter 20
Uproar in Jerusalem	Chapter 21
Valiant Defense	Chapter 22
Waiting to Kill Paul	Chapter 23
Xcuses of Felix	Chapter 24
Yet Untried by Caesar	Chapter 25
Zealous Toward God	Chapters 26-28

* "It is not what is poured into the child that counts, but what is planted!"

* "Coming together is a beginning ... keeping together is progress ... working together is success!"

* "By the time a man realizes that maybe his father was right, he usually has a son who thinks he's wrong!"

* "A sharp tongue has severed many a good friendship!"

* "When you meet temptation, turn to the Right!"

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: The sermon for Sunday morning is: "*They Wanted Change!*" (Text: 2 Timothy 4:3-4).

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

HEAR THE GOSPEL

(Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17)

BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST

(Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6)

REPENT OF PAST SINS

(Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30)

CONFESS CHRIST

(Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

BE BAPTIZED

(Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21)

LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE

(Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25)