

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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December 19, 2021

Volume 41, # 51

Parents Should Teach Their Children ... About Worship!

The purpose of all education is competence. In many fields we may rely on the state. Few Christians, however, would feel comfortable with the state's teaching of the subjects regarding bringing up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Thus parents must fulfill their responsibilities, or the children may never learn.

To worship refers to actions by which one expresses his devotion and reverence to God. Worshiping God consists of specified acts performed with the proper attitude. Thus the first learning will come to the child by the example of the parents. This example will be reinforced and supplemented by Scriptural teaching.

The importance of worshipping God should be seen in the parent's diligence. Those who arrange their schedule to be present for every assembly are showing the necessity of worshipping. Parents who compromise and allow special events to interfere, or who plan vacations where it is impossible to worship, have a hard time finding words to overcome their example. Having established the importance of worshipping by their example, parents must then use the Scriptures to show that faithfulness is based on love for God and Christ (John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25). They can also stress the responsibility they feel toward their brethren (Colossians 3:16).

To worship God in truth, we must worship Him in spirit (John 4:24). If the parents get settled and ready to worship before time to begin, a sense of respect is created. They must establish at an early age a standard for the children to follow. Grandparents also need to be careful how they behave toward the grandchildren. They can undo much of what the parents have sought to impress. At early ages children may need quiet toys to occupy them. This should last only until the children can be expected to participate. Young parents have the most difficult time being able to worship and keep their children from

disturbing. It is when children are young and have to be taken out that some of the most effective lessons on behavior can be made clear.

Praying to God is seen every day by children of Christians. It is there the child learns his first lesson about prayer. It is impossible to teach about prayer without teaching about God, His care and concern for us, His ability and desire to help us; and our need to give Him thanks for all the things he has given us (Ephesians 5:20). When prayers are offered in public, it should be made clear that the man is leading us. Thus we should listen to every word and join our thoughts to his. The power of prayer, public and private, should be made clear (James 5:16).

Most children love to sing. They join in the singing at an early age. Some hymns regularly used are simple enough for children to learn even before they can read. Parents who sing hymns at home can help their little ones learn the songs. When children are able to read, they should be trained to get their books and sing. It should be made clear that singing is "to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). While we should do our best, God's concern is not how loud or how well we sing, but if we are singing with grace in our hearts (Colossians 3:16).

Children must learn that God merits our sacrifice. The work He wants done in the world requires our giving to Him. Since God always gives instructions, he has done so regarding our giving (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8). As soon as children have any money that is considered theirs, they should be instructed and encouraged to begin giving to God.

It seems the Lord's Supper is the most intriguing part of the assembly to little children. It is hard for them to grasp the idea of a remembrance. The wise parents may find an explanation suitable for the age of the child while explaining that the parents are giving reverent thought to Christ for what He has done (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). To children not responsible, it should be made clear that they have no need to eat, but will when they obey the gospel.

Since children mature differently, it is hard to say when each child should be expected to listen to the readings and sermons, but I fear many parents do not begin soon enough to expect their children to listen. To encourage the children, parents may ask specific questions about the lessons. They should always answer the questions children have. The same stress on learning should be given as was given to Timothy (2 Timothy 3:15).

I have seen babies once brought in their mother's arms grow to be leaders in all aspects of the assembly. I have seen little girls grow up to become caring and diligent mothers. Sadly, I have seen little ones grow to be of no value to the Lord. Many factors have

entered into the decisions these children made. Nevertheless, good parents give their children both good examples and good teaching.

- B. G. Echols [edited], via The Preceptor, April 1996

Clippings from the Past!

ONE OF THE DANGERS FACING THE CHURCH

This danger is the growing tendency among churches to compromise the truth in order to win public favor. The desire to win public favor has already compromised the preaching of the truth. Too often people are told what they want to hear rather than what they need to hear (see 2 Timothy 4:3-4).

The modern trend among the nation's preachers is to take the sting out of death, the blood out of the atonement, the inspiration out of the Scriptures, and the fire out of hell! Far too many preach a "social" gospel, changing God-fearing assemblies into little more than "social clubs" and/or tamed rock-and-roll fests, with the preacher gadding about feeding members on more psychology than truth. Much of the spirit is gone from the worship, the truth from teaching, and hope from the soul.

The gospel and the gospel alone is the only hope for the modern world (1 Timothy 4:16) - it does not need the "wisdom" of men (1 Corinthians 2:5) to do just what God intended for it to do!

- Author Unknown

Is Marriage Really Intended to be Permanent?

Bible believers today will not be swayed by the godless and humanistic influences growing in our world that favor making same-sex unions (homosexuality and lesbianism) the legal equivalent of marriage. When Biblical marriage is redefined so as to make sodomy equivalent to it, then holy matrimony is degraded and severely damaged. Society will bear the unpleasant costs of these perversions, and souls will be lost without repentance. And it could be that this challenge in our modern culture has caused many more people to seek the answers they need to arrive at truth from God in His Bible regarding marriage and related subjects.

Bible study has proven true my Grandfather's declaration: "Marriage is for one man and one woman for life!" In the New Testament, Jesus promoted God's original intention for marriage, showing that it was designed to be a permanent relationship of lifelong faithfulness, from which there was to be no divorce. Responding to a question about divorce, Jesus answered: "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." (Matthew 19:4-6).

The marriage relationship was not to be severed! Separation of husband and wife was not to be made by any man because they were joined by God! It was His design. Permanence was His intention. This is what people who wish to marry need to understand and agree to live by.

Will God hold guiltless those who enter same-sex unions, even though legal authorities among men override His design by declaring it legal? When societies of men increase the percentages of marriages that end in divorce, is there a point where God changes His mind and allows divorce for any reason? Is marriage so frivolous that it can be ended at will without dire consequences in Judgment? If marriage were not so seriously restrictive, why did the disciples of Jesus contemplate avoiding marriage altogether (Matthew 19:10)? Is it not true that a lack of respect for God's original design and a general discarding of the Bible has contributed to the modern breakdown of marriages?

Marriage binds the husband and wife to each other for as long as they both shall live. "For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man." (Romans 7:2-3; cf. 1 Corinthians 7:39).

Freedom of the human will to make personal choices makes a world where multiple standards exist, but if people were properly impressed with the seriousness of the marriage relationship as described by our Creator, they would not enter into it lightly. People would be very much more patient and careful in selecting a mate. Being unwilling to trifle with the things of God, they would probably be most diligent to resolve any marriage difficulties and make the marriage work.

When husband and wife are committed to be true to each other for as long as they live, they can depend upon each other. In their fidelity they will find a helpful spouse in every

situation they encounter in life. In such they will find blessings of God, security and permanence. How blessed are those who live in harmony with the sacred precepts of God and bring glory to His name!

- Gary Smalley

- * "In order to increase in faith, you must grow in knowledge of God's word!"
 - * "The Devil is willing for a man to preach the truth as long as he doesn't practice it!"
 - * "You cannot keep your shoes shined if you continually walk in the mud!"
 - * "Easy street and the straight and narrow path do not intersect!"
 - * "People who have 'an ax to grind' don't cut it with the Lord (Romans 12:18-19; Colossians 3:8)!"
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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)