

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Listening to the Experts or God?

Some of you probably watched the television show "20/20" not long ago that called into question the use of corporal punishment for children. I watched with amazement. My amazement was only beginning! Immediately after this production, the local news did a feature story also on physical punishment that called such practice into question. "Physical violence only begets physical violence," they said. There were other "pearls of wisdom" such as "Being physical with a child creates a disdain for those older and bigger." Then there was "How do we teach children violence is wrong when we exhibit such?" By this time I could only shake my head. When the host of the show was asked, "Does this mean the Bible is wrong?" The response was, "According to the experts, the Bible is wrong."

Dear reader, that can be equated with stating that our Creator who made us and knows us stated an untruth or lied (something impossible for God to do, Hebrews 6:17)! God, however, is the expert. He is the expert in all things.

God has commanded the following: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." (Proverbs 13:24). "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." (Proverbs 19:18). "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." (Proverbs 22:15). "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die." (Proverbs 23:13).

Men, however, think they are wiser than Almighty God. They would use little or no discipline at all and certainly not any physical punishment when it comes to correcting children. Certainly as godly parents we are not talking about abuse, but today if you say you beat your child (using the word Solomon did) you may well be reported for abuse! I learned while preaching in Canada recently, they have outlawed any form of corporal punishment. You paddle or take a switch or belt to your child there and you will be fined or imprisoned or both! Our country is not far behind! When the time does come when it is

against man's laws to use corporal punishment, we must stand and say with the apostle Peter, "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29).

What do these people mean when they use the word "violence"? When a child misbehaves or disobeys that's not violence, no more than it is violence to correct such. See how evil works though? Convince someone that corporal punishment is violent and you make the punishing parent look like a beast.

What do we have in our society as a result of following this "Dr. Spock mentality"? We have the prisons and reform schools filled to the brim with young people who grew up being allowed to do whatever they desired and whenever they desired to do it. Worse, the cemeteries are also full. They are filled with the bodies of youngsters who were never taught to respect authority - young people who never had parents who said, "No!" and if necessary, who reinforced their word with "Solomon's rod" of chastisement.

God said that a man who spares the rod of chastisement hates his son. Looks like a lot of folks hate their children.

Admittedly, there were times when I thought my dad was going to "love me to death." When administering the punishment, he would always tell us how he regretted he had to do it. I didn't believe him then. Now I do! For now I find the same regret present when I must spank my children. It didn't take us boys long though to realize that his word was law and he was ready to back it up with a 38. A 38 inch belt that is! By way of this belt, this gentle man stood ready to impress upon us the folly of disobedience, when words failed. Parents, when words fail, listen to God's words, not the "experts."

Our God, who is our heavenly parent, chastens us who are His children. Why does He do it? ". . . for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." (Hebrews 12:10).

Proper discipline, yes even physical discipline, will always "bring forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:11).

- Robert Wayne La Coste, via *Guardian of Truth*, 12/17/1992

Christians in All Denominations?

"There are Christians in all denominations," is a statement almost endlessly repeated by religious people of this age. In view of such assertions and general acceptance of this sentiment, several axiomatic [self-evident – GFS] truths need to be emphasized?

1. Not a single Christian who lived in the days of the apostles was a member of ANY denomination. If for no other reason, this was true for the very sufficient reason that there were no denominations in existence.
2. It is utterly impossible (impossible physically, mentally, morally and spiritually) for any man to become a member of any denomination by simply following the teachings of the New Testament. These teachings will make a man a Christian but he must then do something additional to that to have membership in a denomination.
3. Every denomination will wither and die if ever the religious people of the earth get back to the teachings and practices of New Testament Christianity.
4. If there is a Single Christian holding membership in any denomination in existence, he is there contrary to God's will; and the sooner he gets out, the better it will be.
5. New Testament Christians have a feeling of deep sympathy for those earnest and pious people who have been led astray into denominationalism, but not for one moment do they concede that membership in a denomination is either identical with, or an adequate substitute for, membership in the blood-bought body of Christ. (Read John 17:20-21; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13).

- Yater Tant, via *The Sentinel*, September, 1953

Are you standing with God?

It is certainly no surprise to the Bible student that throughout the history of God's dealings with man, righteous people were always in the minority (Noah, Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, etc.). When these took a stand for and with God few chose to stand with them. It is fundamental for Christians to learn that on this earth we will never be part of the majority. Jesus declared that only the narrow way leads to life and there would be only few who would find it (Matthew 7:13-14). Majority numbers do not matter; being right with God does.

Truth proceeds from God; it is changeless and reliable. Truth is right whether or not anyone believes and obeys it. This was Paul's point in Romans 3:4. The Lord God is always true. Not every physical descendant of Abraham was faithful to God, but that did not stop God from doing what He promised. God continues to be true even when every person is false. If He chose not to bless them because of their sins He was not false to His promises. Their lack of faith did not make void the promises of God and the

truthfulness of them (cf. Jeremiah 17:13). His promises were true and reliable, but they were also conditional upon their faithfulness to Him.

When we make decisions in life as Christians, and those decisions are based upon God's truth and righteousness (the doctrine of Christ, 2 John 9), they will be unpopular with the majority, and we may find ourselves standing alone. If it was right to make the decision in the first place, it remains right. Others may never appreciate what we choose to believe and what standard we adopt to guide our behavior, but we must be courageous in standing for and with God in the righteousness of His word (cf. Psalms 27:14; 31:24).

The Bible is clear in that there will come a great Day of Judgment (Matthew 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36, 41, 42; 13:30, 40-43; 22:11-13; 25:31-46). It is very sad to realize that many people believe that this is the Day wherein they will have an opportunity to plead their case and change God's mind about their spiritually deficient condition (cf. Matthew 7:22-23). The Bible teaches no such concept about Judgment. The truth of God is to be lived in a person's life. Failing this, the sentence of condemnation will be carried out after one dies (Hebrews 9:27). The majority will have no power to change any of this.

John wrote that Jesus declared, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6). If "no one" can be right with God the Father through any avenue other than His Son Jesus Christ, then how many will be saved from condemnation without obeying the gospel of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 5:8-9)? None (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)!

Let us live in accord with truth. Let us obey what our Lord taught us. Let us think and behave righteously, even if we must stand alone in so doing. Take courage, my brother, you are never alone when you stand with God!

- Gary Smalley

* "Man sees your actions; God sees your motives!"

* "The secret to happiness: count your blessings while others are adding up their troubles!"

* "More time in God's house brings better times in your house!"

* "The person who is tactful has the knack of making a point without making an enemy!"

* "Most sins are habit forming!"

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)