

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” - Psalm 119:105

May 13, 2007

I Hate My Mother

Rick Lanning

It's true. I do hate my mother. In fact, I hate my father too. And that's not all, I hate my wife. And just so you will know what kind of despicable man I am, I hate my children too. I also have one brother and three sisters. Yes, I hate them too.

You might wonder if I have “gone postal” (a modern phrase that implies going crazy and shooting people). I assure you I have not. In fact, I deliberately and calmly sat down, with a prayer on my heart, and determined I would abhor all those nearest and dearest to me. I reasoned it out cautiously that I would hold my family in contempt. They would become a hiss and a byword to me. And you know something? I hope and trust you have done the same thing.

In an age when teenage mothers put their newborn babies in trash dumps, and kids shoot their parents, and husbands beat their wives and children, you might wonder why I would say I hate my family. Because Jesus told me to.

“And great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it? So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:25-33).

That original crowd was stunned beyond words. They marveled and were astonished. That amazement has not dwindled in 2000 years. I still find it hard to fully grasp. The cost of discipleship is deep. Jesus came to bring war, not peace, when He “*set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a man's foes will be those of his own household.*” He then made clear exactly what He meant when He said, “*He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And He who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me*” (Matthew 10:34-37).

While Matthew used the word “love,” Luke used the word “hate.” I must love Jesus so much more than my family that I can actually use the word hate to show the comparison. That is strong language. It would be as if a Jew in the Auschwitz death camp during the Holocaust of World War II were asked to give his opinion of Adolph Hitler. My commitment to Jesus as Lord and Master is to be so strong that I would hate my parents, wife, children, and siblings to the same degree – if it came to a choice between the two! To many, that is asking the impossible.

In making the good confession that “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,” I am counting the cost and choosing sides. I will forsake the family traditions, the family religion, the family love, the family authority, and even the family fellowship in order to obey Jesus’ every command. As Jesus said in another sermon in Luke’s gospel, “*My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it*” (**Luke 8:21**). Even Jesus told His own mother and father, “*Did you not know I must be about My Father’s business?*” (**Luke 2:49**). When Mary tried to force Jesus’ hand early in His ministry, He told her in no uncertain terms His Father’s will took precedence over hers. “*Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come*” (John 2:4). Jesus’ own family did not believe in Him (**John 7:1-5**) and called Him “mad” (**Mark 3:21**). That did not move Jesus to change His loyalty.

Paul forsook his father’s Pharisaic traditions, counting it as “dung” to follow Christ (**Philippians 3:4-8**). Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea did the same. The 3000 Jews on Pentecost forsook family to be baptized (**Acts 2**). Consider also “*the great many of the priests were obedient to the faith*” and what family problems must have come from those conversions (**Acts 6:7**). Cornelius must have been thought mad by his Roman family (**Acts 10**). Timothy and Eunice had to forsake the authority of their Greek father and husband to follow Christ (**Acts 16:1-3; 2 Timothy 1:5**). Am I to do less?

Mom, if you read this, be assured that I do love you. But I also know you would be proud of me for saying I would hate you if it came to a choice between you and Jesus. That is how you raised me. And that is how I hope to raise my children after me. “Family first” is not our motto, but “Jesus first.” Thanks mom.

Diligent Prayer Needed

Allen Malone, edited

My visa has NOT been issued as usual. The up-side is that my visa application has not been rejected. The down-side is that unless the approval is granted by this Wednesday (May 16), I will have to cancel my next trip to Vietnam. Please join the brethren in Vietnam in fervently praying that God will take note of this situation, and will help the Security Police realize that I am a help and not a hurt to their country, its people, and its government.

Please pray fervently, repeatedly, and thankfully! Whatever His plans are for me, He is sure to respond when the prayers of thousands reach His throne on behalf of His people and work in Vietnam.

(See complete request in back for more details.)

Family News

Betty Chapman has been in a lot of pain, as well as being sick and weak. She goes back for a scan in July.

Connie Cobern has a small infection, but her bronchitis is doing better.

Elmo Ferrell fell Friday and broke his right arm. He will have surgery when he gets some medication out of his system. He is at Hendersonville Medical Center in room 353.

Jerry Jenkins and family will soon have a new address. It is 1071 Gadwall Circle. Please make the change in your directory.

Bruce Jones, Karen Moore's dad, is getting more alert and responsive but still has a long way to go. He is still in CCU.

Laura Moore graduated from Western yesterday in biology with Summa Cum Laude (3.8-4.0) status.

The **Nicholson's** have a new addition to their family, Macy Anna. She was born April 11. Her adoption will become final in six months.

Cotton and Nancy Read didn't get much news from their doctor visit last week.

Laura Reed is having problems with allergies.

Neal Williams, Randy Williams' dad, needs ongoing help.

Robert Wray returns to the eye doctor on June 5.

New Reports: Ron Chaffin.

Out of town, traveling, or visiting: **Michael Gillihan** (Hong Kong, business), **Jerry Jenkins and family** (staying and worshipping with Brittney for a while), **Fran Pickens** (at daughter Linda's for the weekend), **White's** (VA till 15th to visit Bill's parents).

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"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).