

The Lakeview Lamp

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

June 15, 2008

"Is He Not Your Father?"

Troy Nicholson

Today serves as the day chosen each year to honor our fathers. As Christians we meet every Sunday to honor our heavenly Father. Moses asked the Israelites, *"Is He not your Father, who bought you? Has He not made you and established you?" (Deut 32:6)*. While spoken to the Israelites, these words apply to us as His children today. Please consider this verse for a moment.

The Father *made* us.

In the beginning God said, *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Gen 1:26)*. Not only did the Father make us, but He did so in His image. The **Hebrew** writer quotes from the **Psalms** when he says to the Father of man, *"You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet" (Heb 2:7-8)*.

The Father *bought* us.

God bought us with the blood of His Son whom He sent as the perfect sacrifice for our sins (**Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 1:17-19**). Due to this fact, God deserves our honor and glory. As Paul says, *"You were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor 6:20)*.

The Father *established* us.

To establish means to make firm or stable. In what way has the Father done this for us? He has established us in Christ through the gospel (**Rom 16:25**). *"Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God" (2 Cor 1:21)*.

While we have many reasons to honor our physical fathers on earth, we have even greater reasons to honor our spiritual Father in Heaven. Praise be to His name!

Bible Teaching "Transformed"

Troy Nicholson

Last Sunday's *Tennessean* (6-8-08) had an article on the front page entitled "Vacation Bible school transformed." It began by talking about a local "Church of Christ" that had The Frog Thing, a 40-foot-long inflatable obstacle course standing 17 feet high and topped with a giant amphibian, filling the church's fellowship hall. There were also kids making green goo in the church's gym, while the church's main auditorium "looked like the set of *Gilligan's Island*." Indeed, at some churches VBS has "evolved into a full-scale production."

The article went on to talk about "transform(ing) the church into something new during vacation Bible school" because of a need "to crank up the energy." If transforming the church into something new is good for one week, then why is that transformation not made permanently? Why is there a need to crank up the energy one week but not every week? Because for some "there is a lot more emphasis on the experience" than on the Bible at VBS. Nickelodeon and the Disney Channel, entertainment TV channels, are viewed as competition because some consider VBS a time for entertainment as much as it is a time for Bible study. The Vacation is emphasized more than the Bible.

One lady said, "You need Bible stories, but you also need excitement." Why not simply bring out the excitement in the Bible stories? You don't need frogs or goo to do that.

While some churches need to seriously consider how they have "transformed" the church, some Christians need to seriously consider how they have simply neglected it. Instead of cranking up the energy in Bible class, they are cranking up something else somewhere else. Too often entertainment wins the competition because Bible study is skipped for some kind of entertainment. As Paul warned, some have become "*lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*" (**2 Timothy 3:4**). They may claim that God comes first, but their actions demonstrate otherwise.

What really needs to be transformed is us (**Romans 12:2b**). We need to quit conforming to the world around us (**:2a**), as both a church and as individuals, and simply stick to the will of God (**:2c**) as He has revealed it to us in His word. Let Bible teaching be what transforms us instead of the other way around.

"Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness, and for His wonders to the sons of men! Let them also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, and tell of His works with joyful singing." – **Psalm 107:21-22**

News and Notes

Mary Burnett had a rough night Friday night. She remains on Hospice care.

Connie Cobern is doing much better after battling pneumonia.

Metty Fain remains in Highland Manor Nursing Home; Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN 37148.

Cotton and Nancy Read are both not doing well. He continues to have problems breathing, and she continues to have problems with her eyes.

Colton Sharp, the Nicholson's cousin, was baptized into Christ Wednesday.

Ame White is going to an orthopedic doctor this Friday.

Out of town, Visiting: Robert and Candy Jenkins (AL), Neighbor family (Memphis).

New Reports from men we support: Allen Malone (Vietnam), Ed Rangel (Puerto Rico).

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