

The Lakeview Lamp

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

July 27, 2008

Do You Know Where Your Children Are?

J.R. Bronger

The announcer would ask: *“It’s eleven o’clock, do you know where your children are?”* When my three children were small and safely tucked into bed, upon hearing that public service announcement, I would always look in on each one before I turned in for the night. Satisfied they were safe, I peacefully fell asleep.

It has been a long time since I was able to look in on my children, or since I heard that question on television, but it still is relevant, perhaps more so than ever before. The age in which we live is very challenging for our young people. There is more for them to do and experience than was available just a few years ago when mine were still at home. The wiles of Satan are many.

“When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel. Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals; and they forsook the LORD God of their fathers . . .” (Judg 2:10-12). These verses carry with them the same sad message that is being heard today. Many of our young have departed from God. Many are doing evil in His sight, and the reasons are the same.

Far too many of our young people, who were raised *“in the church”* (a term that I almost deplore), have grown up, have left the faith of their parents, and plunged headlong into the domain of the devil, losing their futures and their souls. Why? Who is to blame for this? Perhaps we can lay blame at the *“church house door.”* Many do! Some heartbroken parents decry that there were not enough good Bible classes; not enough solid old time gospel preaching; these are often cited as reasons that young are leaving the faith.

Looking at the reason why so many young Hebrews turned from Jehovah to serve the Baals should serve as a warning for us. The reason these young Hebrew men and women departed from God and served the Baals was a direct result of teaching, or the lack thereof. Frankly, as the text tells us, it was because they ***“did not know the LORD nor the work which He had done for Israel.”***

Who was responsible for teaching those Hebrew children about the Lord? Hold on to your seat – it was their PARENTS! ***“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates,”*** (Deut 6:6-9).

There is only so much that can be done to augment parental teaching. Bible teachers, preachers, and even elders can merely provide opportunities for spiritual instructions. But the foundation of all Bible knowledge and developing saving faith must come from home. Mothers and fathers must dedicate their lives to instructing children in the ways of God. They must instill within their minds and inspire their hearts to want to serve God. They must be taught and shown that loving the Lord is what gives meaning to life. This must come from home!

May I challenge you to face the question posed by the title of this article? Do you know where your children are? Where are they in their spiritual development? In Judges we see these ***“did not know the Lord.”*** This is tragic! There is a generation of young people who know much about much, but little about the Lord. They know computers, sports, styles, and celebrities; but when it comes to the Bible and the things of God, they are clueless. The writer of Proverbs warned: ***“There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, yet is not washed from its filthiness,”*** (Prov 30:12).

Our young people must begin to give attention to the needs of the soul. They must learn early in life that sin damns the soul, hell awaits the sinner, and the only answer for them is obedient faith in Jesus Christ. They must know that “church attendance” is but a small part of their spiritual development. Morality, modesty, purity, holiness, and reverence must abide with them throughout their lives. They must know that loving God is something they do 24/7/365, not just on Sundays. They need to be taught to put more time into Bible reading and study at home than they put into sports or even secular school activities.

There are far too many who grow up to experiment with alcohol, promiscuity, drugs, and other allurements of the devil because they simply do not know the Lord. They may have known some things about Him, but they do not know Him.

My advice to parents is to be diligent in your Bible studies with your children. Paul reminded Timothy of the tremendous job his mother did in raising him to know Christ. ***“From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus,”*** (2 Tim 3:15).

Instead of enhancing children’s understanding, some parents are actually “dumbing down” their children’s Bible knowledge. I recently read about a man who graduated high school and college, and then taught school for fifteen years. What made the story amazing is that the man could not read. His teachers simply passed him without requiring him to read. How many parents are simply allowing their children to grow up without coming to know the will of God? They went to Bible study, filled in the blanks, and crammed before class so they could recite their “memory verses” but were not learning the will of God. Later they go off to college, the military, or move across town and begin serving the Baals, because they did not know the Lord. Perhaps they were allowed to complain that the Bible teacher was too hard, they had too much homework to do their lesson, or perhaps their parents just did not take an interest. Whatever, their Bible knowledge was “dumbed down” sufficiently so as to allow them to grow up not knowing the Lord.

Parents, if you are unsure where your children are, find out. Find out what they are doing, who their friends are, what they view on the Internet, who they IM, and the music they have on their iPods. Do not let them grow up and move out without a strong biblical foundation.

“Oh give us help against the adversary, for deliverance by man is in vain. Through God we will do valiantly, and it is He who shall tread down our adversaries.” – Psalm 108:12-13

News and Notes

Rough drafts for an **updated 2008 directory** are on the credenza in the back. Please make any needed changes in one of them.

Flyers for the meeting are still available in the back. It begins **today!**

Mary Burnett remains at home on Hospice care.

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

Bo Waldrep, Jennifer Nicholson's father, injured his shoulder and is out of work for 6-8 weeks.

The family of Josh Walmsley, friends of the Nicholson family, requests prayers as they deal with his recent suicide. He was 32 years old.

Ame White had knee surgery Thursday and is doing as well as can be expected.

Absent: None known.

New Reports: **Bob Nichols** (Japan).

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