

The Lakeview Lamp

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

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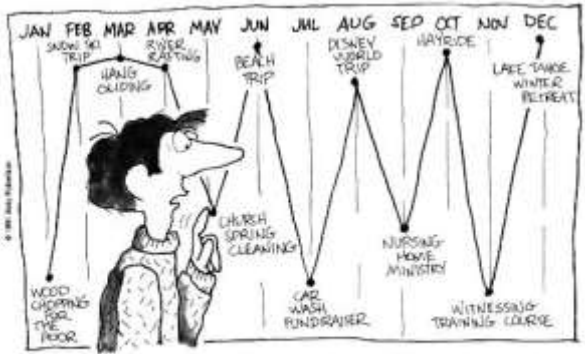
“Should we be concerned about sponsoring hayrides at our church?”

Troy Nicholson

Someone submitted the above question to a lawyer associated with *Church Law and Tax Report* magazine. His answer appeared in a recent e-mail version of it. He began his answer by saying, “Hayrides are inherently risky activities that have resulted in injuries and deaths to many persons. Many courts have found the sponsors of these events, including churches, liable for any deaths or injuries that may occur,... Churches should not authorize or schedule such events (for minors or adults) without stringent safeguards to protect against injury and death.”

Why would a church *want* to sponsor a hayride? An e-mail “comic” I received a few days later from a sister publication, “Weekly Church Laughs,” explains why.

Hayrides – along with other forms of entertainment and recreation – appeal to the fleshly side of people and draw crowds. Yet that is all it does. A church’s responsibility lies in appealing to people’s spiritual side. A church is to be “*the pillar and support of the truth*” (1



It wasn't until Max Simmons charted his youth group's attendance that he noticed the pattern.

Tim 3:15), not the provider and sponsor of the trivial.

While the lawyer was partially correct in his answer, he was off in his reasoning. Hayrides *are* inherently risky activities for churches because they are not the work of churches. Churches should *not* authorize or schedule such events without authority from God.

Yes, anyone should be concerned about sponsoring a hayride at “their” church. Doing so could result in death – a death much worse than what the lawyer has in mind. The best safeguard against spiritual death is only doing what God has authorized – no more and no less.

Marriage

Lawrence O. Richards, edited

In these days of “living together” and quick divorce, many young adults question the meaning of marriage. Many question the value of a marriage ceremony. After all, marriage is just a license for sex, some will say, and sex is a private thing. Why involve everyone in an expensive show when the marriage may not even last?

Biblical roots. To understand marriage we have to go back to the ideal established in Scripture. The story told in **Genesis 2** is the foundation for our understanding. God created man. Adam had all of Eden to explore, and he delighted in his garden, observing the birds and animals, which he named. But he became increasingly aware of an emptiness, for in all of Eden “no suitable helper was found.” But God took a rib from Adam and from it shaped Eve. The message was not lost on Adam. He recognized when he first saw Eve, that though she differed in form, she was his equal in every way, sharing an identity as one who is made in the image of God. This message echoes in Adam’s words: *“This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (Gen 2:23).* **Genesis** goes on to say, *“for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (:24).*

This passage instituting marriage establishes the ideal. Marriage is a relationship between two individuals who share a common identity, rooted in an equal share of the image of God. Marriage is a helping relationship, designed for the growth and enrichment of each person. Marriage is a “we” relationship, in which the couple learns to live life as a unit (as “one flesh”). Marriage is a relationship between equals, for only equals can become “one.”

Our problem today with marriage has to do with distortion; we think of marriage as nothing more than licensed sex or as a bondage to keep women as slaves to men. Marriage is far more than a license to enjoy sex without guilt, and it is something very different from a way to enslave. Marriage is a lifelong commitment in which each person, as an equal, commits himself or herself to being a helper to the other.

The marriage ceremony. Marriage is obviously more than an announcement that two people are going to have sex. Marriage is a public commitment: an announcement to the community that from now on the issue of life will be met by “us,” not just by “me.” Marriage is a promise that whatever the future may hold – sickness or health, better or

News and Notes

Members:

- * Margie Frizzell is suffering from diverticulitis in addition to back pain.
- * Thelbert Frizzell continues to recover from his knee surgery.
- * Ame White is having cataract surgery on Wednesday.

Friends and Family:

- * Andy Hayes, **a soccer coach friend of the Nicholson's, had a heart attack last Monday.** He is still in critical care at Centennial Hospital.

Absent: John Moore (GA), Nicholson family (Cookeville).

New Reports: None known.

worse – the future will be met together, with each individual there to help and support, to love and respect the other. The “I dos” spoken in solemn vows before God, in public, in the light of day, certainly mean far more than any “I love you” whispered in the dark in the back seat of a car. The ceremony is an affirmation of trust.

Finally, the ceremony is important to the community because it means that another couple has stood to testify that life holds more than personal gratification, that “we” truly is more important than “me.” The wedding affirms that God’s plan for meeting our deepest needs is the best plan after all.



“Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law and keep it with all my heart.” – **Psalm 119:34**