

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

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Forest Hill

Church of Christ

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VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.
Morning Worship... 10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

HOME 03

MEMPHIS SCHOOL 03 PREACHING

Missions Supported:

Iglesia de Cristo Memphis
Kakinada, India
Manila, Philippines
Murmansk, Russia
Far East/World Evangelism
In Search of the Lord's Way

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FUNDAMENTAL FACTS CONCERNING MARRIAGE

Barry M. Grider

I preface this article with the understanding that our readers realize that marriage is between a man and a woman (Gen. 2:24). Divorce is prevalent in our society today because it seems more attention is given to a wedding ceremony than training young people for the marriage relationship. The following guidelines I pray will be helpful for those contemplating marriage. They comprise a mixture of divine truth and sound advice.

First, marriage is for the mature. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" Gen. 2:24). Many young people, especially teens, who talk about getting married are not mature enough to do so. Therefore the responsibilities that go along with marriage are often overwhelming. One should ask, "Am I emotionally ready to get married?" When a young lady says, "If it does not work out, I can go home to Momma," she is not ready to enter this relationship. If a young man gets upset because his fiancé desires to spend time with him, which time takes him away from his "buddies", he is not ready. Or, if both are too controlling of the other, they are not ready to be married.

Another question to ask, "Are we ready financially to get married?" The idea that a couple can get by on love alone is a myth. Yes, agape love for each other is essential for marriage to last. However, love does not pay the bills. The boy who quits school so he can get married because he has a job making \$200 a week, is likely going to be making the same amount 10 years from now.

The most important question to ask, "Are we ready spiritually to get married?" If a young man cannot get up and get himself ready for worship, he will not be able to prepare his family. A young lady who marries a non-Christian must be prepared to remain strong despite the discouragement that will come from her mate. Someone says, "But Grandma got married when she was fifteen." But Grandma lived in a different world. Grandma probably had already helped raise 6 or 7 siblings. She was not spoiled rotten like many today. She understood what commitment means. In addition, Grandpa was probably significantly older and was already working and prepared to care for a family.

Second, romantic attraction does not guarantee happiness. When a teen boy is drawn or attracted to a teen girl that is a healthy, natural desire. Parents who love their children must, with the Bible and common sense, guide their children to making not only responsible decisions, but also right decisions. While physical intimacy is wonderful, these feelings and desires can only be fully expressed in the beauty of sacred marriage (Heb. 13:4). Thus, marriage is likewise for the mature. Those who engage in sexual relations outside of holy matrimony are selfishly fulfilling the lust of the flesh and taking advantage of the other. In so doing, those who engage in such cannot fully appreciate the beauty of married love, for in marriage,

joy comes more from the giving of one's self to another. Paul wrote:

"Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does" (1 Cor. 7:3,4 NKJV).

Teenagers in the church should understand that the Lord, Paul, the preacher, and godly parents are not trying to keep physical intimacy away from them, but rather are trying to bring it to them in all of its beauty and sacredness in marriage. Only then can such really be enjoyed. While romance is essential to a great marriage, romance essentially is about feelings, and you cannot build a strong marriage on feelings alone. (To be continued).

A PROPER PERSPECTIVE

LETTER TO A MOTHER

A mother enters her daughter's bedroom and sees a letter on the bed. With the worst premonition, she reads it, with trembling hands:

It is with great regret and sorrow that I'm telling you that I have eloped with my new boyfriend; I know how upset you will be but I am truly happy. I have found real passion and he is so nice, with all his piercing and tattoos and his big motorcycle. But it's not only that mom, I'm pregnant and Ahmed said that we will be very happy in his trailer in the woods. He wants to have many more children with me and that's one of my dreams.

I've learned that marijuana doesn't hurt anyone and we'll be growing it to sell to support ourselves and our children. In the meantime, we'll pray for the science to find the AIDS cure, for Ahmed to get better, he deserves it. Don't worry Mom, I'm 15 years old now and I know how to take care of myself. Some day I'll visit for I know you will want to get to know your grandchildren.

Your daughter,
Judith

PS: Mom, it's not true. I'm over at Sarah's house. I just wanted to show you that there are worse things in life than the school's report card that's in my desk drawer...I love you!

What If Preachers Preached What You Practice?

David Sain

"Practice what you preach" is an old, familiar saying. It remains a timely encouragement for everyone, and it is Biblical. "...You who preach that man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, Do not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?"...(Rom. 2:21-22, NKJV).

Notwithstanding this teaching, there is a "practice gap" in the church. Our actions are not in harmony with our words. Many of us do not practice what we preach. And the world sees the difference!

Well, I wonder how the church might react if preachers closed the "Practice gap," by changing what we preach. What if we were to preach what most people practice?

- (1) Think how you might react if preachers said, "Now we want you to worship Sunday, but if company comes in, or if you don't get enough rest Saturday night, just stay home."
- (2) How would it sound if preachers began to tell you that reading the Bible daily is not important?
- (3) How would you feel if preachers told you that it is all right to skip Bible class when you are sleepy?
- (4) Imagine the preacher proclaiming, "Now, God wants you to talk to your friends about Jesus, but you might offend someone, so, just keep the gospel to yourself."
- (5) And how would it sound if the preacher told you that drinking, gambling, pornography, etc. are all right if you do them in moderation?

How long would the church permit preachers to preach what the church practices? Brethren, remember that what we practice is "heard" a lot more than what we preach!

(David Sain is the evangelist of the Wood Avenue congregation in Florence, Alabama).

Congratulations Sunshine

We extend our congratulations to Sunshine Carter, daughter of Marv and Sabrena Sowell, who will soon graduate from Olive Branch High School. A good number of our members enjoyed a finger food fellowship in Sunshine's honor, this past Sunday evening. As her name implies, she has spread much sunshine to many of us and we pray that God will bless her future endeavors.

ARE THERE CHRISTIANS IN DENOMINATIONS?

Dustin Forthun

In the New Testament, the Greek word translated “church” is *ekklesia*, which means “called out.” Christians are called out of the world (Romans 12:1-2) and denominations (John 4:23-24), and Christians are called to the pure service of God (1 Peter 1:16). Christians are not members of a denomination because the church of Christ is not a denomination; the church of Christ is the 2,000 year old church that Jesus Himself came to earth to build (Matthew 16:16-18). In everything from doctrine to daily living, faithful churches of Christ conform to the Bible –given pattern for the New Testament church, making the church of Christ just that –the New Testament church and not a denomination. It is therefore impossible for there to be Christians in denominations.

Ephesians Explains

The book of *Ephesians* is an inspired, eloquent essay exalting the church. That there are no Christians in denominations can be easily proven from just the first chapter of *Ephesians*. No fewer than 11 times, chapter one describes the place of spiritual security; it is **in Christ** (verses 1,3,4,7,10,11,12,13,20). The message is clear—anyone that is **in Christ** is saved, while everyone of accountable age who is **outside** of Christ is lost. ALL spiritual blessings are **in Christ** (verse 3). Some of these spiritual blessings include, but are not limited to, redemption (verse 7), the forgiveness of sins (verse 7), an inheritance (verse 11), and salvation (2 Timothy 2:10). These and many more are the blessings that are in Christ. All who are in Christ [having been baptized into Him (Galatians 3:27) and added to His spiritual body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4)] enjoy these blessings. All, including devout denominationalists, who are outside of Christ—His body, the church—do not enjoy these blessings.

No, there can be no Christians in denominations. All Christians, and the only Christians, are in Christ’s church enjoying the blessings of being those called out. (*Brother Forthun preaches for the Phillips Street congregation in Dyersburg, Tennessee.*)

**“The churches of Christ salute you”
(Romans 16:16).**

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