



The Tri-Cities Edifier

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Parents, You Are The Teachers

- by Mark W. White

Every congregation with whom I have been associated utilizes Bible classes for all ages among them as a means of preaching the Gospel and edifying the church. Well-ordered and systematic Bible teaching is a must for growing Christians and every family needs Bible instruction. No one doubts these congregational efforts CAN be a blessing to the church. Without attention and dedication, however, these classes can also be a waste of time and resources. A congregation's Bible classes are only as beneficial as we intend for them to be. They are a cooperative effort between teachers, parents and students. Everyone has a role to play in the success of these efforts, and all share responsibility for the success or failure of such arrangements.

It is concerning, however, when parents see the church's Bible classes as the sum total of Bible instruction our children receive. The Bible is clear that parents are to teach their own children about the faith. Particularly, fathers are commanded concerning their children to "bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Eunice and Lois, mother and grandmother of Timothy taught him "from childhood ... the sacred writings" (2 Tim. 3:15). Timothy's faith first dwelt in these women (2 Tim. 1:5) and he obediently received their instruction. Parental involvement and ownership of instruction in our children's faith is the Scriptural standard. This responsibility cannot be shifted to anyone else— not even to the church. If we parents depend only on the congregation's Bible classes to teach our children, we are falling short of what is needed by our kids and expected by our God.

Think about it. Twice-weekly church Bible classes are about an hour and a half of instruction in matters of the faith. Is that an adequate amount of time for spiritual learning? School Math and English classes receive far more time each week. Rather than seeing Bible classes at church as the main spiritual instruction experience for our kids, we should see them as supplemental to what our children need to know about God and His Word. These congregational classes are merely an aid to parents (and by extension to the church as a whole) in passing the faith to the next generation. Coupled with sermons, Bible readings, prayers, hymn singing and personal conversations — our children need all the exposure to the Word of the Lord they can receive. The work we do with children in the church can never replace what fathers or mothers must do at home. 

Storm-Tossed or Storm-Tested?

Jason Hardin

The wicked of this world have loud megaphones and a multitude of eager listeners. Don't walk in cadence with their advice.

The way of sinners is popular, downhill, and full of shiny promises. Don't stop and stand in that way.

If you're looking for attention, society always has room for another mocker. Joining the chorus will probably result in a bump of LIKES and followers. But that's not where you ought to be sitting.

There are some crowds we have no business joining, some paths we shouldn't be taking, and some seats in which we should never sit. **Listen:** "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night." (Psa 1:1-2)

On what will you meditate this week? What will fill your downtime attention? What will occupy your mind and percolate in your heart? If you want to be “like chaff that the wind drives away” (1:4), listen to the advice of the wicked, stand in the pathway of sinners, and pull up a chair with the crowd of mockers.

But if you want to be more than wind-blown, aimless chaff, God is willing to make you “like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season” (1:3). How? Delight in his law. Meditate on his word. Think about God, day and night.

We’re glad you’re here today and we hope you’ll join us in praising this awesome God. But what about this week? Will you be more like storm-tossed chaff or a storm-tested cedar? It depends upon the source of your delight and the meditations of your heart. 

Face Reality

Dan Lankford

Here’s a piece of practical advice straight from the Bible: It’s healthy to attend a funeral once in a while (Ecclesiastes 7:2). That’s not to say that it’s pleasant, but it is healthy for the young, the middle-aged, and the aged to face the reality that it presents us with. Namely, that life is finite. Everyone dies, and knowing that increases our consciousness of how we live (see Psalm 90:9-12).

It’s often not very fun to face reality, but God calls us to do it. He wants us to live with a firm intellectual grasp on the hard facts of existence. And there are plenty of areas where it’s necessary for believers.

- Authentic confession and repentance of sin requires a hard look at what we’ve actually done with our hands and thought in our hearts.
- Godly family life requires a hard look at our own habits toward our spouses and our children, and it also occasionally demands that we face the reality of their lives (e.g. not making excuses for our kids, etc).
- Biblical money management calls us to face the reality of how we use our money. Are we living beyond our means? Are we slaves to debt? Are we using money mainly for our fulfillment or for God’s things?

The list could go on for a long time, but our job would be the same for each item on it: to face the realities of life, the Bible, God, and ourselves and determine whether they match up as they should. It’s always easier to let life pass us by in a haze of half-awareness, but it’s always healthier to face reality and adjust to live a better life as a result.

Church or Social Club?

by David McPherson

The church is not a social club. The church was purchased with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). The Son of God did not die for a social organization, but for a "spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2:5). We are not a glorified social center in competition with country clubs and the YMCA. We are the church. We worship God *“in spirit and in truth”* (Jn. 4:24), not in food, fun, and frolic.

Let the YMCA be the YMCA. Let the Country Club be the Country Club. Let the boy scouts and girl scouts be the boy scouts and girl scouts. And please, let the church be the church! -