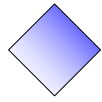


The Voice of Truth



May 25, 2014

“Stand Up For Jesus”

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Jesus is the one we should follow (**Revelation 14:4**); whose steps we should pursue (**1 Peter 2:21**). Jesus is the great pattern for everyone to follow (**Luke 9:43**). We all need to “Stand up for Jesus.” Why? He did no sin (**1 Peter 2:22**); He is the Lamb of God (**John 1:29**); He lives forever (**Revelation 1:18**). Salvation is in His name (**Acts 4:12**)! Eternal life is found in Him (**Romans 6:23**). All spiritual blessings are in Him (**Ephesians 1:3**). He tasted death for all mankind (**Hebrews 2:9**), and gave His life a ransom for many (**Matthew 20:28**). Truly the Lord is gracious (**1 Peter 2:3**). These are some of the reasons why we should stand up for Jesus, the perfect pattern that we should follow. Let us then think of the ways that we may stand up for Jesus.

We stand up for Jesus when we live as we should. We should never bring shame and disgrace upon the Lord’s name. The world points a finger of scorn at us and says that if that represents Christianity then it wants no part of it. We cause the good and honest people to stumble; we have set a bad example for others to follow. All of this hurts the cause of Christ. Remember the words of Paul, “*Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ*” (**1 Corinthians 11:1**). Christ wants us to do all in His name to His glory (**Colossians 3:17**). We need to magnify Christ (**Philippians 1:20**), so others can see Christ living in us (**Galatians 2:20**). The manner of life of the Christian is “becoming” to the gospel (**Philippians 1:27**). The life of the Christian can adorn or beautify the teaching of Christ (**Titus 2:10**). The life of the faithful, dedicated Christian magnifies the doctrine of Christ and glorifies the Father (**Matthew 5:16**).

We stand up for Jesus when we develop and grow as Christians (**2 Peter 3:18**). There s no greater question to the sincere Christian than “Am I Growing?” Have I been growing in the past? Am I growing now? Am I becoming more of what God and Christ would have me to be? Yet, it

is a recognized fact that many Christians are not growing. The Christian grows or dies spiritually. “*For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But solid food is for full-grown men, (even) those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil*” (**Hebrews 5:12-14**). To grow spiritually we must desire spiritual milk of God’s Word (**1 Peter 2:1-3**). To stand up for Jesus we must grow and know the Book, so we will be able to defend it (**Jude 3**).

We stand up for Jesus when we use our talents for the cause of Christ. The Lord has given responsibility to every servant. This responsibility is to use our talent in which God has given us. Therefore, each does not have the same degree of responsibility. We can see this idea in the “Parable of the Talents” (**Matthew 25:13 ff**). We do not have the same degree of responsibility, but each must be faithful (**1 Corinthians 4:2**)! God does not require me to be great, but God does require me to be faithful. Because in this parable these servants were judged on their faithfulness (**Matthew 25:21, 23**). Small ability does not justify a lack of faithfulness! “Will a man rob God?” (**Malachi 3:8**). God always requires the same faithfulness. Some have greater obligation, some lesser, but each must be faithful. God always demands our best. Let us not be like the one talent man, who had the idea of just barely making it, “Woe to them that are at ease in Zion” (**Amos 6:1**).

May the Lord help us to have more faith, love, zeal, courage and determination to take a stand for Jesus Christ and for the truth! Remember God is counting on you!

Continued on Page Two

Don’t think you can ignore the Lord in this life and He will give you a crown in the Life to come. ♦

In This Issue...

**Pages 1 to 2 - “Stand Up For Jesus”
Pages 2 to 3 - “Providing For Our Families”**

**Page 3 - THINK! THINK! THINK!
Page 4 - Prayer, Sin and Righteous Living**

Continued from Page One, "Stand Up For Jesus"

No matter what others are doing, my friend,
or what they are leaving undone,
God's counting on you to keep on with the job
'til the very last battle is won.
He's counting on you to be faithful;
He counting on you to be true.
Yes, others may work, or others may shirk,
but remember - God is counting on you. ♦

"Providing For Our Families"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Paul told Timothy, "*But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever*" (I Tim. 5:8). I believe most Christians are aware of this passage and have an interest in providing the necessities of life for their children financially. Many parents willingly sacrifice in order that their children might not be in want. If necessary, there are many parents who would sacrifice their health in order to provide their children with medicine. Some would go without nourishment in order that their children might eat and not go hungry. In considering the love a parent has for a child, many parents willingly make sacrifices for the physical well-being of their children.

While we certainly must provide for the physical necessities of our children, let us understand that if we spend our lives merely providing for the financial comfort and security of our children, we will have been negligent in our duties before God. There is more to "providing" than merely providing in a physical sense! To provide food, clothing, and shelter for our children, and not to provide for their spiritual needs is to fail in our duties as parents. Just as our children have physical needs, our children have spiritual needs which must be met if they are going to be the kind of people God wants them to be. Too, if we are the kind of parents God wants us to be, we will not be negligent when it comes to providing for our children's spiritual needs.

Some Mistakes Made Which Result In Not "Providing" As We Should.

In our daily living, we can get our priorities mixed up if we are not careful. We may end up focusing more on the "minors" and less on the "majors" if we do not open our eyes to what is most important. Perhaps by taking some space here to note some mistakes often made today, it will help us in avoiding these mistakes, or repenting of the mistakes already made while there is still time to change! As we begin this study, let us understand that we are talk-

ing about parents who are concerned people and have good intentions toward their children, striving to give them all the "advantages" possible in this life. Yet, they are making some major mistakes when it comes to providing for the spiritual needs of their children. Let us consider four mistakes many parents make.

Mistake #1: "I am going to allow my children to make their own decisions about spiritual matters."

Would these same parents say: "I am going to allow my children to make their own decisions about premarital sex"? Would they say, "I am going to allow my children to make their own decisions about drug use"? How about drinking alcohol, or driving a car on the road before legally allowed, staying out all night, whether or not they will finish high school, etc.? Parents would not allow their children to make those decisions on their own because the children are not able to make such decisions. Yet in spiritual matters, many parents throw away restraints, and allow their children to do as they please! How foolish. Parents must provide children with the necessary training now and show them what is right in preparation for the day when they will make their own decisions in life (Prov. 22:6; Matt. 5:16; Titus 2:2-6; Eph. 6:4)!

Mistake #2: "My child is too young to sit through a sermon, so we won't be coming to church until he/she is older."

The later one starts on his spiritual training, the harder it is to teach him! (Remember: Prov. 22:6) If a young child is not taught that "in this family we assemble with the saints and worship God" (Jn. 4:24; Heb. 10:25) and is not taught to sit still at an early age, what makes us think that an older child will suddenly know how to do it? Yes, small children cry and fuss. A small child that cries is natural. Yes, as they get older, these children need to be taught, and at times, need to be taken out, worn out, and brought back in (Prov. 22:15); but this is the only way they learn! Delaying a child's learning of God and learning how to

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, "Providing For Our Families"

behave during worship times is a detriment. (At times I have seen the "older" ones act just as bad or worse than the babies.) Procrastination lays the groundwork for children (and parents) never assembling with the saints to worship God at all!

Mistake #3: Assuming that all spiritual training begins and ends in attending two Bible classes per week.

This is the opposite extreme of mistake #2. Some among us are faithful to bring our children and grandchildren every time the doors are open. Yet, if we assume this will sufficiently satisfy a child's spiritual needs, we are sadly mistaken! A child's spiritual needs must be satisfied daily (just like the parents!). They need to be taught God's word and trained daily if parents are going to sufficiently provide for their children. Wouldn't **I Peter 3:15** apply to our children? This verse stresses the need for giving an answer to everyone who asks you! This would include our family!

Let's understand that our children need training and instruction on a daily basis. Our Bible class teachers, while they do a great job, cannot teach a week's worth of Bible lessons to our children in two classes a week! Parents, let's get to work (**Eph. 6:4; Titus 2:3-5**; etc.)!

Mistake #4: "I didn't have ____ when I was growing up, and my child will not grow up without _____. He/she will not have it as bad as I did."

Why are we as parents so intent on giving our children things we "didn't have"? Perhaps it is what we "didn't have" that has made us what we are today! Why not start today and give your children what you "had"! The drive for children to have things better/easier than we did is not uncommon, but is that always conducive to their spiritual well-being? Many times, it is not.

Some Pointed Questions Concerning Providing For Our Children

- ♦ When children are brought up thinking that all they want and desire will be handed to them, how can they appreciate the necessity of work (**Lam. 3:27; Eph. 4:28**)?
- ♦ When children are not taught to obey mother and father, nor taught to respect the authority of their father, how can we expect them to respect the authority of God and obey

our Father in Heaven (**Eph. 6:1-3; Heb. 12:9**)?

- ♦ When children are not corrected, how can they learn that there are consequences to their actions when they deliberately disobey and flaunt the rules that have been laid down by God (**Prov. 19:18, 13:24, 22:15, 29:15, 17; Heb. 12:5-11**)?
- ♦ When children are brought up without responsibilities, are not held accountable around the house, and in other ways, how can they be taught to take responsibility for their soul, realizing they will one day be held accountable before God (**Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 14:11-12; II Cor. 5:10; Jn. 5:28-29**)?
- ♦ When children do not see their parents reading the Bible, praying, speaking kindly to one another, and interested in spiritual matters in other ways, why should they feel compelled to take an interest in spiritual matters themselves (**Matt. 5:14-16**)?

Conclusion

I realize one could point to several people in this world who, despite their parents and despite their surroundings have obeyed the Lord and are serving Him faithfully today. Yet, these are the exceptions, and not the rule! Further, why bring up a child in such a way that he already has two strikes against him before he even reaches the plate?

Let us as parents consider well our influence, and what exactly we are "providing" for our children (**I Tim. 5:8**)! If we have done nothing but feed, clothe, keep them in good physical health, and educate them in men's wisdom, we haven't done a thing for them, seeing as the outward man is passing away (**II Cor. 4:16; Matt. 16:26**)! They need to be taught the ways of God, to respect His will, and serve and live for Him all the days of their lives! Parents, please heed this warning, because for some, I'm afraid reality will not hit them until the day they see their children cast into Hell!

May God help us all to not be negligent in our duties as parents, but get busy in the Lord's work providing for our children while there is still time and hope for them (**I Tim. 5:8**)! *Credit: The Old Paths - 4/20/14* ♦

THINK! THINK! THINK!

What sort of church would the
Lord's church be if every member
were just like me? ♦

Prayer, Sin and Righteous Living

By Jonathan L. Perz

Peter wrote, as a motive to righteous living, *“For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil” (1 Peter 3:12)*. This passage, which we originally find in the Old Testament (**Psalms 34:15-16**), clearly manifests a fact about God and prayer that is often overlooked—the lives we live have direct bearing on the effectiveness of our prayers.

There are many other verses that teach this same principle. For example, **1 Peter 3:7** tells husbands that their prayers can be hindered by the relationship they maintain with their spouses. This obviously applies to the wife as well.

In **James 5**, starting in **verse 15**, we read of the fact that we are to pray for one another. In **verse 16**, the Bible says, *“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”* The negative inference here, especially in light of the whole counsel of God, is that the prayers of an unrighteous man do not avail.

If we would turn through the pages of the Old Testament, we would find example upon example of the Lord refusing the sacrifices of the Israelites because of sin in their lives. One of the strongest of such statements is made beginning in **Isaiah 1:11**. The Bible says...

“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?” says the Lord. “I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs or goats. When you come to appear before Me, Who has required this from your hand, to trample My courts? Bring no more futile sacrifices; in-

cense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies — I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.”

This is indeed strong language. Notice especially that it was because of their sins that God says that He will not hear their prayers, though they make many of them.

What does this tell us today? The truth is that our sins are the great separator between God and man. **Isaiah 59:1-2** says, *“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you.”* It should be clear to all that we cannot lead an impenitent sinful life and expect God to fulfill all of the requests we make in prayer (**Matthew 7:21; Luke 6:46**). We cannot expect God to be at our beck and call, and yet live a life contrary to everything our God is. Sin is a nasty, wicked thing and its consequences are everywhere. Let us never forget that the first consequence we will suffer is the loss of our communion with God—until we confess and forsake those sins (**1 Peter 3:12; Proverbs 28:13**).

The next time we pray, let us seriously consider what kind of lives we are living. If we have sin in our lives, let us be certain that we *“confess our sins to Him, because He is faithful and just to forgive us all sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9)*.

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

**Either the Bible will keep you from sin . . .
Or sin will keep you from the Bible. ♦**

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

How to Contact Us

Telephone: (920)499-5677
E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com



Our Address

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313



Schedule of Assembly

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com