

Trends

When asked if there would be more or less kindness in the world if Jesus had never lived, 61% of those surveyed said there would be less kindness.

- via Newsweek, 12/04

Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

Sentence Sermons

"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see." —Mark Twain

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." —Aesop

"Kindness and politeness are not overrated at all. They're underused." —Tommy Lee Jones

Proverbs 31:10, 26: "Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies... 26 And on her tongue is the law of kindness."

News & Notes

Pray for one another: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16)

Please consider donating funds to Zach & Taya Martin. Zach is a medical student and he and his wife Taya are planning to assist Ron Halbrook on one of his preaching trips to the Philippines. The Martins are worthy of our support. You can contact Zach at: zcmartin30@gmail.com.

Please pray for one another! "comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing." 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Please pray for Ryan & Jennifer and the brethren of the Northern Michigan church of Christ. They are now meeting in their newly purchased building in Roscommon, Michigan.

Please keep sisters Virginia Brown and Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Their faithfulness sets a great example and gives encouragement to all! Ditto for Al (our Barnabas!).

Pray for all the lost souls, especially those in the greater Bloomington area. Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

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Words of Life

Westside church of Christ

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"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68

Adultery, It's a Crime!

Craig Thomas

Long ago Job said: "For this [adultery] is an heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges." (Job 31:11) Adultery remains a "heinous crime" and sadly a crime that's more and more common in our society, even among Christians. Adultery is a crime because it is an offense against both God and man. Statistics suggest by the age of 40, 50-65% of husbands and 45-55% of wives will have engaged in at least one adulterous relationship.

1) **Adultery is cruel.** Cruelty intentionally inflicts pain and grief to another. What's more cruel than knowing the companion who vowed to be faithful to you alone has violated your marriage bed? (Heb. 13:4) Adultery produces jealousy and anger in the heart of the offended that cannot be assuaged (Prov. 6:34-35). It's a sin that destroys hopes and dreams and brings untold suffering to everyone involved. There is no greater cruelty we could perpetrate upon our children than to be unfaithful to their mother who we've vowed to "love and cherish," "forsaking all others...keeping yourself unto her, for so long as you both shall live."

2) **Adultery brings self-reproach.** The wise man said, "So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent." (Prov. 6:29) What could be more reproachful than causing another to sin and rob them of their virtue to satisfy one's own selfish lusts? No wonder David said his "sin" was "ever before" him (Psa. 51:3). Adultery is such a "heinous crime" against God and man that one who commits it cannot get it off his/her mind!

3) **Adultery brings shame to one's life.** What a stain adultery brings to one's character, for "A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away." (Prov. 6:33) One who commits adultery brings shame upon their name, for adulterers "give thine honour unto others" (Prov. 5:9). Committing adultery brings shame upon oneself, one's family, one's friends, and the church (1 Cor. 5:1). Would a sane man even contemplate it?

4) **Adultery corrupts one's character.** Adultery destroys one's moral qualities. An adulterer is a flatter and liar (Prov. 7:21; 2:16), is loud and rebellious

(Prov. 7:11), is a covenant breaker (Prov. 2:16), is one who takes advantage of others (Job 31:9), is one who is a “sneak” (Job 24:15). Don’t be deceived! Adultery destroys all who flirt with it, “*Yea, many strong men have been slain by her*” (Prov. 7:26).

5) **Adultery brings impoverishment.** “*For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.*” (Prov. 6:26; cf. 29:3) Many a man/woman has lost family, wealth, jobs, and their good name because of adultery. And ultimately, the greatest loss of all will be one’s soul, for “*he that doeth it [adultery] destroyeth his own soul.*” (Prov. 6:32)

Our society glorifies adultery, condones it, encourages it, and ignores its destructive power. Our society offers ample opportunities to commit this “*heinous crime.*” Adultery promises excitement and pleasure, but delivers heartache, sorrow, and destruction. Why resort to shameful lust when God blesses us with lawful, honorable, and fulfilling love? The wise man describes this type of love between a husband a wife and all the God-approved pleasure it brings (Prov. 5:15-19). True satisfaction and happiness comes only when we follow God’s way and “*drink water from [our] own cistern,*” “*rejoice with the wife of [our] youth,*” and allow only “*her breasts [to] satisfy you at all times.*” Don’t be fooled by adultery! We can no more commit this “*heinous crime*” and not suffer its dire consequences than “*a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned*” (Prov 6:27).

When the Fire Flickers

Robert F. Turner

Conversations with students and young preachers frequently reveal discouragement with what they find in many churches. “These people couldn’t care less-they are not on fire for the Lord’s work.”

My first thought is “How long have you cared - when did you catch fire?” The newly enthused likely fall into three groups: (1) new converts (perhaps starry-eyed, but we need their freshness as much as they need our experience); (2) new preachers, elders, deacons, teachers, etc., where new responsibility has awakened eyes to see brethren in a different light; and, (3) brethren shaken out of complacency by the influence of the faithful few who plug on regardless of what others do.

The new converts may “burn out” or line up with the majority, as many of them do; the new teacher may quit in frustration, and the young preacher “move on” looking for Utopia. But none will have served his Lord with honor. The cause of Christ depends on those who stay on fire, lighting others; whose flame is not the flaring rocket of a celebration, but the glow and warmth of the home hearth-feeding the family, welcoming strangers. They make the converts and shake the complacent-and with their help continue the work others quit in disgust.

One can be realistic without being a pessimist: can work with the status quo without accepting it as final. We must recognize our problems in

order to work on them. Saying the church consists of imperfect people is another way of saying we have a job to do-on ourselves, and others.

The teacher must not quit because the pupils lack interest. It is his job to create interest in the subject matter. The zealous young preacher, with maturity enough to control himself and put his talents to work, is just what that dead church needs. By example we can teach those new converts that all of us are striving for perfection. There are yet “*seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal*” (Rom. 11:4); and the Lord is counting on us to find them and join hands with them, to salt and light the world in which we live.

Let Us Build Three Tabernacles

Larry Ray Hafley

“*And Peter answered, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, I will make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah*” (Matt. 17:4). This was the proposal of the apostle Peter on the mount of transfiguration. Often, we fail to note that Peter prefaced his plan with, “*if thou wilt.*” That is, of course, important. We can do nothing except it be the Lord’s will (Matt. 28:20; Col. 3:17).

As we all know, it was *not* the Lord’s will that “*three tabernacles*” be constructed. “*While (Peter) was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him*” (Matt. 17:5). Yes, God once spoke “*unto the fathers by the prophets,*” but, today, he speaks unto us “*by his Son*” (Heb. 1:1, 2). He neither speaks through Moses, the lawgiver, nor through Elijah, the prophet. Rather, he speaks unto us through Christ (Cf. Heb. 12:25; Matt. 16:13-18).

Men often have suggested that additional tabernacles be built, and they have built them! Despite the fact that the Lord has pitched “*the true tabernacle,*” the church which he has purchased with his own blood, men have not been content therewith (Heb. 8:2). Moses built his house, but, now, Christ has built his. He reigns “*over his own house,*” the church, “*whose house are we*” (Cf. 1 Pet. 2:5).

Despite that, Joseph Smith built his Mormon tabernacle or church. Others, disregarding the objections of Martin Luther, set up the Lutheran denomination. Earlier, others had erected Baptist churches. Later, some would assemble the Methodist system of faith. Without divine permission, men raised up their tabernacles. Unlike Peter, they did not stop to say, “*Lord, if thou wilt.*” However, the response is the same today as it was when Peter asked permission, “*This is my beloved Son...hear ye him.*”

Let us be satisfied with the Lord’s tabernacle, with the Lord’s church. Let us be content with its appointments and arrangements, with its order of work, worship, and organization. Let us “hear” that same beloved Son of God and follow the blueprint, the pattern of the word of God, and build upon it only what God has commended and commanded (1 Cor. 3:10, 11; 4:17; 11:2; Phil. 3:16, 17; Heb. 8:5).