

Trends

"Would you say you are a Christian as an adult because of a person you grew up with in your household?"

- ☛ 59% "Yes, someone passed their faith down to me."
- ☛ 23% "I'm a Christian despite the sort of Christianity I saw in my household growing up."
- ☛ 15% "No, my Christianity as an adult is not because of a person in my childhood household."

- via Barna Research

Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Sentence Sermons

"I didn't go to religion to make me happy. I always knew a bottle of Port would do that. If you want a religion to make you feel really comfortable, I certainly don't recommend Christianity." —C.S. Lewis

Luke 14:33: "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."

News & Notes

Please pray for Zachary Wallace. He is not faithfully attending services as he should (Heb. 10:24-25). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16)

Please keep sister Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. She is an encouragement to all of us!

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to encourage them!

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.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help? Let me know.

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

John 6:68

Two Choices

R. J. Evans



The first Psalm (one) has six verses. The first three verses speak of the right way with all the blessings and advantages God provides. The last three verses set forth the way of destruction and tell of the terrible consequences contained therein. Which will it be? The way of blessings or the way of destruction—"the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (v. 6)?

The prophet Jeremiah was instructed to say to the people, "Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death'" (Jer. 21:8). If a person remained in the city of Jerusalem, he would die. If he left the city with the Chaldeans, he would live (v. 9). The reason God gave the people this choice is stated in Jer. 21:10: "For I have set My face against this city for adversity and not for good," says the LORD. "It shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire."

In Proverbs 10:9 we read, "He who walks with integrity walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will become known." He is telling of the right way that will bring blessings and the wrong way that only brings trouble. Basically, this is what is presented throughout the entire book of Proverbs. We are on a pathway for wisdom and blessings when we travel the "good" way. Even a young child can read these wise sayings and know which way to go. Yet, unfortunately, the majority of people seem to ignore and miss it.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke of the world's way which has the wide gate and broad way that leads to everlasting "destruction." He also spoke of His difficult way with the narrow gate which leads to everlasting "life." The majority of people are traveling the way that leads to destruction. Thus, our Lord is admonishing His listeners to travel the narrow way which leads to life, for "there are few who find it" (v. 14).

In studying the history of God's dealings with mankind, we see the need to be like Joshua. Again, the people of his day had a choice. He told them to

"choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Josh. 24:15). When the Israelites chose God, they enjoyed peace, prosperity, and victory over their enemies. When they turned their backs on God and went after the ways of the world, they had trouble, famine, and were carried away into captivity by their enemies.

As Christians, if we have carelessly chosen the way of spiritual death and evil, we need to repent and come back to God in faithful obedience. We can change from the way of death and begin traveling on the way that leads to eternal life. Please consider the words found in Isaiah 55:6-7: *"Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon."*

"...choose you this day whom ye will serve ...but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

Joshua 24:15

Will it be "everlasting punishment"- Hell? Or, "eternal life" - Heaven? (Matt. 25:46) The choice is ours!

SWORD TIPS #1750

JULY 10, 2019

Joe R. Price

15 *"You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. 16 You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I am the LORD.* (Leviticus 19:15-16, NKJV)

Both the Law of Moses and the gospel of Christ warn against the sin of talebearing. We are more accustomed to the word "gossip" (1 Tim. 5:13). It has been normalized, as millions flock to rumormongering as part of their usual, information-gathering process. (Witness TV shows like *Entertainment Tonight*, *TMZ*, and *Page 6*, and publications like *People Magazine* and *National Enquirer*, whose website tag is, "Hottest Celebrity Gossip & Entertainment News.") Society is saturated with talebearing – juicy gossip that tingles the ears with baseless assumptions, groundless speculations, and false accusations against others. Israel was told not to be talebearers precisely because it is unrighteous judgment against others. You see, talebearing is about

having power over others. It draws people into its snare, leading them to abandon reason and fairness, causing some to even *"stand against the life"* of the innocent on nothing more than hearsay. The talebearer is an untrustworthy liar. Wisdom teaches us not to associate with such folks, because talebearing causes wounds and strife (Prov. 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20-22). The best way to put out the fire of talebearing is not to receive it. (And, don't be the one who starts that flame, either!)

Teaching Children Evil

Joe R. Price

The *Central Park School for Children* in Durham, North Carolina recently invited "two drag queens to talk to middle school students about the LGBTQ community and what it's like to be transgender" (*"Middle School Celebrates Drag Queens: 'We Hope the Children Listen,'"* cbn.com). "The school collaborated with social activists to create the *Pride and Liberation Event*, which included drag queens Vivica C. Coxx and Stormie Daie as special guests" (Ibid). According to the two teachers involved in arranging this event, it was an answer to an LGBTQ bullying problem they believed existed on campus. "Daie also led a *Drag Queen Story Hour* with students in Kindergarten through fourth grade. Students were allowed to opt out of the program if they wanted to. The *Drag Queen Story Hour* has been a source of controversy at schools and libraries across the country" (*"North Carolina Charter School Hosts Drag Queen Pride and Liberation Event,"* christianheadlines.com). Teacher Taylor Schmidt, one of the organizers of this event, commented, "Public school educators ultimately teach for liberation-that's the job" (Ibid).

Christians deplore bullying (Matt. 22:39). We also deplore immorality offered up as "normal" and acceptable. Sinful choices are not made acceptable because people identify themselves with and through those sins.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Proverbs 22:6

evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter" (Isa. 5:20). Gender is male and female, not whatever one believes about themselves (Gen. 1:27).

Parents have a tremendously important and difficult job of training their children to be kind to everyone while not accepting as good everything people say and do (Eph. 6:4). God loves everyone, but He hates evil (Jno. 3:16). So must we (Psa. 26:5; 97:10). This training will cause you and your children to be hated (Lk. 6:22). But, remain faithful to the Lord, and rejoice in your heavenly reward (Lk. 6:23).