

I Was Lost and You Were in a Hurry

Author Unknown

I attended your services Sunday evening. You wouldn't remember me. I was there looking for something - I think I would have found it if you had not been in such a hurry. You sang hymns about a loving Lord. I felt a tight choking sensation, and my heart beat faster. Your preacher's message was thrilling. I realized I was lost and from the way he spoke, it seemed important to have a Savior.

The preacher finished his appeal and asked you to stand and sing another of those beautiful songs you know so well. I swallowed a lump in my throat and wished I knew the joy of which you sang. I was about to answer the call of the Gospel, when I heard a buzzing beside me. When I looked around, you were picking up toys and telling your children to get ready to leave. In front of me were whisperers and gig-

glers. A couple had already headed for the door. The ushers rushed about stacking chairs and opening doors. Beside me, you were frowning at your watch as if time were running out.

Seeing what I saw, I didn't want to look anymore. My eyes burned, my throat hurt, my feet wouldn't walk down the aisle. I could see that you really didn't care. This salvation the preacher had been telling about was not as important to you as getting out "on time." I only wanted to get away. I waited until services were over and walked out among you - alone unnoticed - and lost. Lost, because you were in a hurry. Lost, because it appeared you didn't really care if I was saved.



News and Notes

The University church of Christ, Auburn, Alabama

University church of Christ
449 North Gay St., Auburn, AL 36830
Email: larryrouse@aubeacon.com
Internet: www.aubeacon.com

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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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How to "Fire" the Preacher

By Forrest D. Moyer



As Christians we never reach the point where we are completely satisfied with the accomplishments of the past. However, when the whole congregation is working together as it should, we can feel that we are making much progress. Many times a congregation realizes that it is not accomplishing nearly so much as it is capable of doing. Eight times out of ten the preacher is blamed for the lack of progress. (And sometimes it is his fault). Elders and members often think that the best thing to do in such a case is to "fire" the preacher. I will agree with them that such should be done. "How should it be done?" It is the purpose of this article to point out how to "fire" your preacher. But when I use the term "fire," I do not mean "to get rid of." Many times the need is to "fire" the preacher INSTEAD of getting rid of him. "Fire" him with new zeal and determination to do more for the cause of Christ. Engender within him the desire to work harder and more profitably in the

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saving of souls. How can this be done?

The first thing I suggest is this: "Sit in the preacher's place." Look at the work from the preacher's point of view. Try to realize the great and solemn charge that is given him. "Preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2). Remember that if he should fail to warn the wicked of his way, his blood would be required, Ezek. 3:18. Or should he fail to warn a righteous man who turns to iniquity, it would also be required, Ezek. 3:20. By under-

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LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

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Larry Rouse
Evangelist & Editor

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standing these principles, you can see why it is necessary that a preacher teach on certain things. Too many times all of us (preachers included) look at things only from our own point of view. Each of us needs to sit in the other fellow's place and see things as he sees them. In the words of Ezekiel, "I sat where they sat." By applying this principle in the work of the church, we can understand and appreciate one another's place and work in life. So, look at the Lord's work from the preacher's viewpoint. It will help you to "fire" him.

When a preacher teaches something that is false or when he is failing to preach the whole counsel of God, he certainly should be corrected by the church. Firm discipline should be applied. On the other hand, when he is preaching the gospel, the church should stand squarely behind him, giving him all the help and encouragement possible. This is sure to help and "fire" him with more zeal and determination. You can show that you are backing him by bringing your friends and neighbors to hear the gospel proclaimed. The church member who never brings others to hear the gospel preached is hindering the cause. However, this person is not hindering the cause so much as the one who apologizes to the visitors for the truth's being preached. When a preacher tells his audience what the Bible teaches, you should never be guilty of saying, "I don't think he should have preached that." Remember, anything other than the truth is error; the person who does not obey the truth is lost. So, "fire" your preacher by standing firmly behind him.

Another sure way to "fire" your preacher is to do personal work teaching yourselves. To see members of the church doing personal

work is one of the most encouraging things there is to the preacher. Also, why not invite the preacher into your home to talk with your friends about the Bible? You can "fire" the preacher immensely by introducing him to people who are capable of being taught the gospel. We often hear it said that comparatively few will hear the gospel today. The preacher works hard preparing lessons to present, yet but few attend. Many times this is the fault of the congregation instead of the preacher. Yes, you can fire" him by doing personal work.

One of the most discouraging sights to any gospel preacher is to see members of the church indifferent in regard to spiritual things. These brethren are not interested in the church's growth. They care so little for the services that they seldom attend. They become worldly minded and sinful. Elders and faithful members can often do more to wake up and restore such members than the preacher can do. You can help "fire" your preacher by waking up the church.

The Scriptures teach plainly in regard to the preacher's right to material support. "What soldier ever serves at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" (1 Cor. 9:7). "Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). As suggested at the beginning of the article, you need to sit in the preacher's place. By doing so you will see what his financial needs are. Then, make sure that he has them. Brethren, it will "fire" the preacher when you pay him. After all, the important thing is cooperation between the church and preacher. Preachers, do your part by preaching the word. Brethren, cooperate with the preacher in every way possible. Pray for him. Instead of "getting rid of" your preacher, why not "fire" him?



Family Time Together is Essential

By W. Frank Walton

In creating a strong family life centered on God, there must be shared time together. Moses commanded Israel: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up" (Deut 6:5-8).

Moses' timeless advice is the foundation for Biblical spirituality in the home. Time together is the bonding mortar that brings us together before God in love. You never know when you are making a memory.

For God to be first in our lives, His will must be regularly discussed and applied in our daily home life. With this, we must spend time together. The daily "family hour" needs to be kept in homes. Family traditions and shared activities need to be instituted and kept. Working at such togetherness can be memorable and enjoyable!

"When you lie down" refers to bedtime. Kiss your children goodnight. Read to them or listen to them read from the Bible or a Bible devotional. Ask them, "How did things go today?"

"When you rise up" is beginning the day with God. Besides giving thanks at breakfast, give your child a Bible verse for the day, like from Proverbs: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov 9:10).

The family meal time is a good way to be together "when you sit in your house." We thank God for our blessings (1 Tim 4:4-5). We pray for our needs and cares (Phil 4:6). By family prayer, it affirms that God is most important in our lives and central to our family's purpose. Turn the TV off! We can read the Bible together and discuss its meaning and application to our lives. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge Hear my son, your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching; Indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head and ornaments about

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your neck" (Prov 1:7-9). Proverbs are pithy and memorable sound bits that children can remember.

Despite Americans' hectic schedules, a recent article, "The Importance of Family Dinners," reports: "The number of teens who have regular family dinners drops by 50 percent as their substance abuse risk increases sevenfold, according to a survey of 12 to 17 year olds released by Columbia University.

"The survey finds that the more often children have dinner with their parents, the less likely they

are to smoke, drink or use illegal drugs," said Joseph A. Califano, Jr., President of The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia. "It is a tragedy that family dinners decline as teens get older."

"It is vital that frequent family dinners become a permanent fixture for children, not only when they are young, but throughout their teenage years," said Dr. Wade Horn, Assistant Secretary for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "The frequency of family dinners decreases significantly as children enter and go through high school- and that's just when the benefits of family dinners may be needed most." A survey showed: Compared to teens that have family dinners twice a week or less, teens that have dinner with their families five or more nights in a week are:

- 32 percent likelier never to have tried cigarettes.
- 45 percent likelier never to have tried alcohol.
- 24 percent likelier never to have smoked pot.

Parents will wisely invest time to be with their children to positively influence them. "Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes delight in my ways" (Prov 23:26). So, it is important for children to know that the family has to spend some time together. If they know this is required to enjoy other privileges, they can grow to accept it and even like it.

