

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

January 14

2018

Those Hurt By One's Unfaithfulness

Sadly, there are many people today who are not faithfully serving the Lord. Unfortunately, it seems like there are more and more people who are choosing to neglect serving the Lord and His will than there are those who are willing to faithfully serve the Lord. However, have you ever considered those who become hurt by one's unfaithfulness? You see, there are some who do become hurt because of one's unfaithfulness. So, with that thought in mind, let's take a look at some who are hurt by one's unfaithfulness, beginning with...

1) Self.

Folks, when one chooses not to be a faithful servant of the Lord, they are simply hurting themselves (Romans 14:11-12). In Romans 8:13, Paul informed, *"For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."* You see, we are all responsible for ourselves (Galatians 6:5) and we must all work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). Therefore, may we all consider the value of our soul (Matthew 16:26) and may we all strive to be faithful and wise servants of the Lord (Matthew 24:45-47). For, if one chooses to remain unfaithful they will pay the consequence for their decision to be unfaithful (Revelation 21:8) and will ultimately cause eternal anguish for themselves.

2) Loved Ones.

Not only does one hurt themselves by being unfaithful, but also the

unfaithful cause their loved ones to hurt and grieve. Why? Well, if one was to die in a state of unfaithfulness, all hope for the eternal salvation of that one's soul would be lost (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). You see, it is natural for loved ones to be concerned about the salvation of their loved ones (Job 1:5; Luke 16:27-28). Therefore, strive to be one who faithfully serves the Lord unto death, not only so that you may have the assurance of spending eternity in heaven (Revelation 2:10), but also so that your loved ones may have the comfort of knowing that you will always be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

3) Faithful Christians.

Ladies and gentlemen, faithful Christians have an interest in the salvation of the souls of others (1 Corinthians 9:19-22). Therefore, faithful Christians are likewise grieved by one's unfaithfulness (Romans 9:1-2). Now, although some don't even care about or consider the salvation of their own soul we as Christians do. So, may we as faithful Christians never give up hope on the erring, but rather may we continue to reach out to them, in hopes that a sinner will be turned from the error of his way, and that a soul will be saved from death (James 5:20).

4) God.

Last, but certainly not least, God is hurt by one's unfaithfulness. You see, God desires for all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth (1 Timothy 2:4), and He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). So, always remember unfaithfulness is not only hurtful for oneself, loved ones, faithful Christians, but also unfaithfulness is hurtful to God. For the fact of the matter is, the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23) and God takes pleasure in the death of no one (Ezekiel 18:32).

Someday, we will all either hear, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34) or "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). Now, the question is, which one will you hear?

✍️ Brad Phillips

DON'T CALL ME "REVEREND"

A very common practice in the religious world today is that of calling preachers or religious leaders by titles such as "Reverend," "Doctor," etc. Most people think they are showing honor and respect by the use of such titles, however an understanding of God's word will cause one to realize that such is not pleasing to God.

Jesus said, *"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ"* (Matthew 23:8-10). Jesus plainly condemns the practice of making a distinction among brethren by the use of titles given to certain men. Any title, whether it be "Reverend," "Doctor," "Father," or even "Brother," given for the purpose of making distinctions among the disciples of the Lord is without Bible authority.

The practice of giving such titles comes from the idea that there is to be a distinction among disciples. This is commonly expressed as the "clergy-laity" distinction. Preachers and other religious leaders are called the "clergy" and the other members are called the "laity." Even though such distinctions are very common today, we need to realize that such distinctions are not to be found in the word of God.

Any man who wears such titles or desires to wear such is NOT a preacher of the gospel. Any religious group that makes a distinction between the "clergy" and the "laity" is not the church we can read of in the New Testament.

I hope these thoughts will help all to understand why no gospel preacher wishes to be referred to by the title "Reverend" or any other title that would set him apart from any other Christian. We are all brethren and should do nothing that would seek to exalt one above another.

✍ James Hahn



DOING THE WILL OF THE FATHER

Jesus said, *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven"* (Matthew 7:21). This statement is

in direct contrast to the things we hear taught by many today. Some would tell us that just so long as one believes that Jesus is Lord then you have done all that is necessary to please the Lord; however, Jesus very plainly refutes this idea as we see from the passage quoted above. In fact, the idea that one must "DO" anything to be saved is scoffed at by many. You do not hear denominational preachers telling people what they must "do" to be saved, nor do you hear them telling men and women that they need to "obey the gospel." Why is this so? Why do so many men who claim to be preachers of the Word fail to tell people what that Word so plainly teaches? The answer is simple. What the Bible teaches and what is taught by denominational preachers are entirely different messages. You cannot follow the teaching of God's word and become a member of ANY denomination. Following the teaching of God's word can only make one a child of God and a member of the Lord's body or church (Acts 2:36-47; Ephesians 4:4-6; 1:22,23). In reply to the question *"What shall we do?"*, Peter told the people to *"repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"* (Acts 2:37,38). We need to be preaching the same message to lost men and women today. We must not think that we can change God's word and still please God. It simply cannot be done. Those who obeyed were added by the Lord to the church (Acts 2:47). This was the Lord's church; not some human denomination. Will you obey the Lord's teaching and become a member of His body?

✍ James Hahn

Belleville church of Christ

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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

James Hahn (317) 745-1507