

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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Because I Live

Hebron Lane Article

Before His arrest, trial, and crucifixion, Jesus strove to prepare His disciples. He conveyed to them a powerful lesson by washing their feet (Jn. 13:1-17). He also sought to comfort and reassure them (Jn. 14:1-6). During this time of reassurance, He said, "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. **Because I live, you will live also**" (Jn. 14:19). Jesus would soon be betrayed and killed on the cross, yet that would not be the end of Him, He would live.

Jesus was raised from the dead and thereby proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that He is the Son of God (Rom. 1:4). His life after death is key to everything. It is because He lives, that we live also. His resurrection ensures our resurrection from the dead. Paul made an extensive argument on this very point in 1 Corinthians 15. Some will be raised to the resurrection of life, others to the resurrection of condemnation (Jn. 5:28, 29). However, we also know that since Jesus lives, we may also live—spiritually.

Without the resurrection of Christ, there would be no hope for salvation. Because He lives, we may also live eternally. We have the forgiveness of sins now by obeying that form of doctrine like unto His death, burial, and resurrection. Paul said, "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Those who have done this have gone from death to life (Eph. 2:1-7). We look forward to a home in heaven. Peter said,

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Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Pet. 1:3-5).

A home in heaven would not be possible without the living Lord Jesus. If He was still in the grave, all hope would be lost. Thankfully, He is alive and because He lives, we may live also.

Atheism: The Church's Fault?

A Selected Article

The following two paragraphs are from an article addressing the failure of churches to adequately address questions of some young people. Our comments follow.

[Anthony] Horvath, who has taught religion to middle school and high school students, explained that some of the recurring questions young adults struggle with but churches often fail to address include the formation and development of the Bible, the presence of evil and suffering in the world, and the question of inspiration and inerrancy.

In large part, it happens when the church leadership is completely unaware that their members – and not necessarily just the young members – have questions at all," explained Horvath to The Christian Post. "And [they] continue merrily along thinking that to retain the youth they just need to be entertained. (Christianpost.com, full article).

Mr. Horvath is viewing this issue from the perspective of a denominationalist. Still, his points are valid. Young people have questions that need to be addressed. Old people too.

We cannot assume that because someone grows up going to church every Sunday and Wednesday that they automatically have an unshakable believe that God created the world, Jesus is the Christ, there is a heaven and hell, the Bible is true, etc. (Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:29; Matt. 25:46; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17). They need to be

thoroughly instructed in such issues, including learning arguments against the truth so they can weigh the evidence, come to their own conclusion, and answer challenges (Deut. 6:6-9; Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15). If this does not happen, they will not have their own faith, but that of their parents or others. No one will get to heaven on someone else's faith.

The bottom line: If we fail to address these issues in the pulpit and classes, then, yes, the church is guilty of making atheists by default.

Further, Mr. Horvath is right about churches seeking to keep young people by entertaining them. This is a major problem in denominations and liberal churches of Christ. Sadly, it is becoming more of a problem among conservative churches too.

Entertainment does not build faith. The Word does (Rom. 10:17).

When entertainment is used, people eventually tire of it or find something better. It is an emotional high, but spiritually shallow. We recently read an article about a Baptist church in Hot Springs, AR, that sponsored a Pro-Fishing event to draw men in (read the article). Why have many men stopped attending denominations and need to be brought back with bait? Because they were raised on entertainment religion that became boring. Now something more "relevant" and "interesting" needs to be offered. The thing is, the bait comes with a hook.

Let us stick with the Bible. Allow the message of the cross be that which draws men (Jn. 6:44, 45; 12:32), if we do not, we will dishonor God and do a disservice to man.

Hated By All – By Steven Deaton

When Jesus prepared His disciples to go to Israel preaching, He said, "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake" (Matt. 10:22). Why?

The reason they were hated is because they taught the truth. The Jews generally did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. They rejected teaching on the kingdom; it was heavenly and spiritual, not earthly and physical. Their hypocrisy concerning the Law was exposed too. Thus, they hated the disciples.

If we teach in the name of Jesus, we should expect no less today. Men and sin have not changed. Corrupt religious practices still

exist. Men continue to reject the true Jesus and His Kingdom. If we are not hated, facing resistance, opposition, and rejection, then we are probably not teaching the truth (2 Tim. 3:12).

Though rejected and despised by men, the faithful will be accepted by the Lord. He made this promise: "But he who endures to the end will be saved" (Matt. 10:22).