

WHEN THE “POPE” RESIGNS...

David Halbrook

The Catholic Pope has decided to resign on February 28, but a new leader will not be chosen until several days later. Therefore, the day he resigns...

The Catholic Body Will Have No Head The Catholic Encyclopedia identifies the pope as “a supreme head” of the church, so on February 28 the Catholic body will be headless. Christ is the one and only head of His saved people, His body, His church (Colossians 1:18).

Their “Holy Father” is no longer their “Holy Father” The Catholic Church calls their pope “Holy Father,” even though Jesus said *Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven* (Matthew 23:9; Jesus spoke of religious titles, not family relationships). When Jesus prayed, He called God “Holy Father” (John 17:11). It is shameful for a man to wear the same title as God!

Catholic Sheep Have No Shepherd Catholics refer to their pope as “the chief shepherd,” so soon those sheep will have no shepherd. Peter called Jesus, not himself, the chief shepherd (1 Peter 5:4).

God said there is one body, one Father, and one Shepherd (Ephesians 4:4, 6; John 10:16).

-- *Editor's Note:* You might offend someone if you cut this article out of *Arkansas Weekly* and hand it out to someone... or you might help them to think about something they have no thought about before. Is it worth “the risk”? Only when we try to teach our neighbor do we truly love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 7:12). Free CDs are available of a sermon on this subject (ask David Halbrook). Our spring gospel meeting is March 10-15. Larry Osborne will be preaching that week. He is preparing—are you?

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

February 24, 2013

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WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD BRETHREN WHOSE CHILDREN GO WRONG? (PART 1)

Peter Wilson

Some of the poorest attitudes I have found among God’s people relate to the attitudes many have toward brethren whose children go astray. One of the heaviest burdens many bear in trying to live the Christian life is to have one or more of their children depart from the faith when they reach high school or college age and bring heartache and despair to their parents.

The rearing of children in any age is a fearful responsibility. God entrusts into our care a soul (worth more than the whole world) wrapped in a tiny body. While that child is a gift from God (Ps. 127:3; Gen. 33:5), we are really stewards of that which belongs to another. God said: “All souls are mine” (Ezek. 18:4). God intends that we nurture, feed, protect, and provide for that child until his body is full grown and his soul is developed to where he can fulfill his God-given purpose to honor and glorify him with his life. In the earlier years, his physical health is our major concern. The sleepless nights, the fervent prayers, the concern as he goes through childhood illnesses and accidents are part of the price we pay for enjoying that gift. But as he reaches his teens we become doubly aware of that grave responsibility. Knowing that children face a society where 100,000s of them will be criminals before the age of 20, and where 100,000s of them will be dope addicts, alcoholics, prostitutes, or bear illegitimate children before the age of 20, and knowing that mass media communication, morally corrupt teachers, and peer pressure will initiate them into all of the sophistries and clichés of a promiscuous society at an early age parents often “run scared” during those critical years. Yet the power of the gospel and value of godly training and example is seen in the fact that throughout this country there are multiplied thousands of young people who refused to surrender to Satan, who have remained true to their God, and who bring continual joy and honor to their parents.

Solomon said: “The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy in him” (Prov. 23:24).

But what about the other side of the coin? What about children raised in Christian homes, taught the truth from an early age, faithful in church and Bible class attendance, who at some point in their teens become involved with drugs, or alcohol, or promiscuous sex, or crime, etc.? Parents, heartbroken and shattered, are quick to take the blame. Their anguished cry is: “Where did we fail?” I talked to a couple whose boy had been shot to death during a robbery and they raised that question. In the same week I tried to console a Christian family whose 17-year-old girl had committed suicide and they raised that question. I have sat with dozens of close friends, preachers, elders, deacons, faithful Christians, and with tear filled eyes have asked: “Where did we fail?” It is a logical and legitimate question that we ought to raise with ourselves in such circumstances. If we did fail in teaching them the truth, or living that truth before them, we need to repent and pray God for forgiveness, and if we have done that we ought to forget about it! There is no more logic in continuing to grieve over and bear the guilt of that sin than there is to bear the guilt of any sin that the God of Heaven has forgiven and forgotten. Why destroy our usefulness and health, why rob ourselves of the joy and opportunities of the Christian life by dwelling in the past that cannot be changed? (Read Paul’s advice in Phil. 3:13, 14.)

The Forgotten Option

But is parent failure the only cause that could produce an errant child? Is it a necessary inference that if children have gone wrong, the parents are at fault? Many express that attitude openly and vociferously. At one of the most critical times in their lives when parents are heart sick, disillusioned, and in desperate need of understanding brethren who can “weep with those that weep” and “bear one another’s burdens,” the last thing they need is the smug, self-righteous comments of brethren who can readily quote Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he shall not depart from it.” All that this attitude says to this grieving parent is: “You blew it!” or “You are responsible for the loss of your children’s souls,” or “I told you so,” or even, “Look at me, look at what a great job I’ve done with mine.” The one essential doctrine that the Calvinists have overlooked with their emphasis on a Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit, and that most of the psychiatrists and psychologists of our day have ignored is the personal, moral choice and responsibility of every individual. They have man in a passive state molded by his environment, heredity, or some external force by God. The Bible teaches that, being created in the image of God, we have a personal choice to make between good and

evil and will be held responsible for that choice. “So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12). The 18th chapter of Ezekiel has some information pertinent to our study. In verses 5-9, he pictures a man who is “just” and does that “which is lawful and right.” But in verses 10-13, he describes the man’s son as a robber, a murderer, a fornicator, and an idolater. The question is . . . who is to blame? Verse 20, “the soul that sinneth it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.” We often quote the first part of that to combat the doctrine of hereditary total depravity. We need to use the latter to combat the current error that young people are not responsible for their actions and to teach some brethren that a righteous father can have an unrighteous son. (See also Deut. 24:16 and 2 Chron. 25:4.) [see Part 2 next week]

SET YOUR MIND ON THINGS ABOVE

Stan Cox

In Colossians 3:1-2, the apostle Paul wrote, “*If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*” In light of the corruption that is present in our own society, such words are certainly needed.

The call is for Christians to comport themselves differently because of their relationship with their Savior. We have been raised with Christ. As Paul put it in Romans 6:4, “*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.*” While not explicitly stated in the text, our leaving the waters of baptism, dead to sin and alive to Christ, is a raising that parallels the resurrection of our Lord. It is a new birth, a renewal, a conversion. We should not longer be as the world, but rather “*transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*” (Romans 12:2).

The call is accomplished in the mind. We set our minds on things above. Our focus is not on the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, but on our eternal abode and the things of God.

Why do we do this? Back to Colossians 3:4, “*For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*” The old man (the man of sin) is dead. Because of this, the new man is to “*put to death [his] members which are on the earth*” (vs. 5). This is not optional. It is what it means to belong to Him.

<http://soundteaching.org/2013/02/03/from-the-preachers-pen-set-your-mind-on-things-above/>