

THE FAIR-MINDED BEREANS

In Acts 17:11, after having to sneak out of Thessalonica to avoid a riot, Paul came to Berea where the Holy Spirit says he found *fair-minded* people. When they heard things they had not heard and did not agree with, they daily compared what they heard with the Scriptures. They did not assume that their own beliefs were right but compared them with Scripture. That is part of God's definition of a fair-minded person. By this definition, are you fair-minded?

Do you know that the Bible will help you to know what is right and wrong? Is what your preacher says true? Do not believe it is true because he is a good friend---search the Scriptures. Are these articles accurate? Search the Scriptures and come to our booth at the Independence County Fair and tell us. We will be offering Bible studies on CD and DVD, computer and paper Bible quizzes, short articles on many subjects, and personal Bible studies (*ALL FREE*). We are Christians looking for other fair-minded people who will search the Scriptures and submit to God. We hope that is you and hope to meet you.

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

-- A sign-up sheet is posted in the foyer for our booth at the Independence County Fair, July 16-20. We've lost several workers the past few years, so need new workers.

-- *Summer Bible Series* July 22-26 (7PM)

-- No one has volunteered to post various Scriptures on our signboard, out by the road, for July. People read this sign if we give them something to read!

-- Our fall meeting with Wayne Goff has been scheduled for **September 22-27**.

Please prepare your schedule so we can work and assemble together that week.

Our articles appear in *Arkansas Weekly* July 3, 17, 24, 31 this month. Many past and current articles are available at our website.

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

July 14, 2013

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ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL DISCIPLINE

James Cope

Beginning Early As surely as God's moral and spiritual power is expressed through his written word—the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments—just that certain it is that no other power can wield the moral and spiritual influence over the developing child's moral and spiritual life as can the sacred writings. This assumes, of course, that loving parents care enough about their child's moral and spiritual knowledge and growth that they give early and continuing attention to Biblical influence over the child from the earliest possible point of the child's ability to learn God's word and its personal amenability to the God who gave that word. Happy is that child whose parents expose him early and continuously to the Bible!

Growth is Gradual The discerning parent realizes that just as the developing child crawls before walking and walks before running so he proceeds mentally, morally and spiritually. I heard of a famous educator who, following an address to a group of mothers, opened the meeting for questions from the floor. One anxious mother inquired, "How soon should I begin the training of my child? The lecturer asked, "When do you expect the birth of your child?" To this question the mother glibly responded, "Oh, my little boy is already five years old!" With concern the speaker came back cautiously but pointedly. Said he: "My dear lady, I hope you will not be offended by what may appear to be a pert reply to your question, however, I think that you want me to be frank in my response. In all candor I want to impress you and all others in my audience with the need for an early start in training your children. Don't wait a minute longer. Leave this meeting now. Go home and get started with that precious child. You have already missed the five most important years of its life!"

Parents Must Supply Stimuli Well did the wise man say, "A child left to himself causeth shame to his mother" (Prov. 29: 15). The fact that a little child is impressionable to spiritual stimuli is clearly observable in the usage Jesus made of such an one when he took it in his arms, saying, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein" (Mk. 10: 15). This should challenge every parent.

Children Learn What Parents Teach Someone has observed that the time to being training a child is "two generations back" i. e., with its grandparents! Certainly there is evidence that one of the most famous New Testament characters received a "double portion" of spiritual attention, i. e., from grandmother as well as mother. Paul reminded Timothy of his earliest training when he wrote him about "the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother, Lois, and thy mother Eunice" and later exhorted him, "Abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1: 5; 3: 14, 15). After thinking through these statements, who can successfully deny that the prevention of juvenile delinquency begins not in the church house, school house, court house or White House but in the child's own house at parental knees!

Children Won't Wait Seldom does a baseball team come to bat in the last half of the ninth inning when the score is 10-0 against it and yet win the game. So it is with the parent who waits till the child is in its teens before starting the disciplinary process. The game is already lost at that point. Children won't wait. Constant alertness to the mental ability, habits, likes and dislikes, strengths, weaknesses and its aptitudes are "musts" for the parent who succeeds in the awesome responsibility of rearing the child to maturity!

Searching the Scriptures, May 1985

SHIFTING RESPONSIBILITY (James Hahn)

When God questioned Adam as to whether he had eaten of the forbidden fruit his first response was to blame Eve (and even God) for his disobedience. His reply was, "*The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat*" (Genesis 3:12).

Eve does the same thing when she is questioned. She said, "*The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat*" (Genesis 3:13). Even though both of their statements were true it did not change the fact that they had disobeyed God and were responsible for their actions.

One of the greatest needs in our society today is getting men and women to accept responsibility for their actions. Someone commits a horrible crime and the explanation is that he was influenced by some movie or TV show he had seen. While that may be true it does not justify his action.

The person who truly repents is one who recognizes that he is responsible for his action and, being moved by godly sorrow, repents of that sin (2 Corinthians 7:10). He will not try to justify himself by blaming others.

Another way that some refuse to accept responsibility is to reject the one who exposes their sin. When John condemned Herod and Herodias for their sinful relationship Herodias had John beheaded. However, John's death did not change the fact that they were still guilty.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians he said, "*For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you*" (1 Corinthians 1:11). Note, Paul does not condemn those of the house of Chloe for telling him of the problems at Corinth. Had there been no contentions then there would have been no contentions to report to Paul. Paul deals with the real problem, i.e., the contentions among them. Can you imagine the Corinthians defending themselves by saying that Chloe and those in his house had no business saying anything to Paul about what they were doing? The wrong involved was not Chloe's reporting of the contentions. The wrong was the contentions among them.

I knew of an incident where it was necessary for brethren to withdraw from a member because they were walking disorderly. This is exactly what the Bible teaches should be done (2 Thessalonians 3:6). When the action was taken the guilty individual condemned the brethren for "the way they handled the situation" instead of dealing with the thing that brought about the "situation," i.e. their unfaithfulness. We need to learn that our obedience to God is not dependent upon what someone else does or does not do. I have heard people who may be involved in some dispute with another person make the statement, "I'll repent if he will." If the person is truly penitent he will repent and do what is right regardless of what someone else may do or not do. He can repent of his sin and be right with God whether the other person does or not.

All of these situations demonstrate what pride does to an individual. It demands humility for one to say, "I have sinned" and accept responsibility for that sin (See Luke 15:18-21), however, if we desire to please God and gain that wonderful home in heaven this is exactly what we will do. We will not try to justify ourselves by blaming someone else.

(The Belleville (IN) Messenger, 7-7-13)