

GOD CARES WHEN DIVORCE HAPPENS

David Halbrook

Divorce has been called an “epidemic”—a widespread disease. The destructive power of divorce is no mystery. Even children understand the pain of broken promises, and in all cases of divorce, *someone* has broken their promise(s).

Divorce was a problem in ancient Israel, and the LORD God said *that He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence* and treachery. The guilty denied their sin, and the innocent who were abandoned went to the altar of the LORD weeping and crying. God was angry with the guilty and pitied the suffering (Mal. 2:13-17). Has God changed?

Likewise today, many are guilty and many suffer. If this describes you, have you considered God's thoughts (read Matt. 19:9)? Your guilt should cause you to seek God's mercy (Prov. 28:13). Your pain should cause you to seek the comfort, peace, and strength only available by serving Jesus wholeheartedly (Phil. 4:7, 13). His mercy and peace is only available if you humble yourself (James 4:6). When the guilty or suffering stop blaming others for their own sins and humbly seek and serve God then significant changes will always follow--guaranteed. Can we help you find what God offers?

-- *Editor's Note:* The deplorable morals of our country are neither new nor the worst this world has ever seen. The solutions to these problems remain the same. If this article helps you realize that, then use our article in *Arkansas Weekly* to give others the opportunity to “wake up” and learn the same. Who will teach them if you don't?

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

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CAN A GOOD MAN BE SAVED AND NOT BE A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH?

B. G. Hope

In the title of this article, I'm not using the word “church” in a denominational sense. The Bible knows nothing about a denomination. Our question for discussion is: “Can a man be saved and not a member of the church the Lord had in mind when he said, “Upon this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18)?

I believe the Bible teaches that a man must be a member of the church described in the New Testament. Notice the following reasons:

1. There is an example of a good man having to obey the gospel (Acts 10). In verse 5, it is said that he was a devout man, a God-fearing man. In Acts 11:14, it is said he had to hear words whereby he and his house could be saved. He is an example that a man cannot depend on his moral goodness. He obeyed the commands and was added to the church (Ac.2:47).

2. Redemption is in Christ (Eph.1:7). One can't be in Christ without being in the body of Christ. The church is His body (Eph.1:22-23); so one can't be in Christ without being in the church. A penitent believer is baptized into Christ (Gal.3:26-27). He is also baptized into the body (1 Cor.12:13). This shows that to be in the body is the same as being in Christ. If one is saved out of the body of Christ, he is saved without being connected with the head. Christ is the head (Col.1:18).

3. Reconciliation to God is necessary to be saved. One is reconciled to God in Christ (2 Cor.5:18). It is said that one is reconciled in the body of Christ (Eph.2:16). So if one is saved outside of the body, which is the church, he is saved without being reconciled to God. Who can believe it?

4. Those outside of the body are aliens (Eph.2:12). He is without God, a stranger, no hope and without Christ. Can that kind of person be saved? Paul said that those in the body of Christ are fellow-citizens with the saints (Eph.2:19).

5. Finally, the church, which is His body, is the family of God (1 Tim.3:15). Members of His church are heirs (Rom.8:16-17). They are God's children. Will God save any other than His children? Does God have children outside of His family?
(*The Way of Truth & Life*; Aug. 19, 2012; Church of Christ at St. Leon, IN)

SPANKING: "NO ILL EFFECTS"

Larry Ray Hafley

Of course, no Christian needed a report "from the Institute of Human Development at the University of California" to tell him that spanking his child produces "no ill effects," and that spanking as a form of discipline is "deemed harmless." However, those conclusions recently were presented "at a meeting in San Francisco of the American Psychological Association."

"Occasional, mild spankings of young children are OK and do not cause any lasting harm that carries into adolescence....Such discipline does not hurt youngsters' social or emotional development....'A lot of people out there advocate that any spanking at all is detrimental, and that's not what we found' said study co-author Elizabeth Owens" (Houston Chronicle, 8/25/01, 2A).

As I said, believers knew that all along. In fact, three thousand years ago, one wiser than all those professors and psychologists said:

"He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (while he is young—Prov. 13:24).

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15).

"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell" (Prov. 23:13, 14).

"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame....Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul" (Prov. 29:15, 17).

Cars often come with an "Owners Manual." In it, the manufacturer details the features and recommends proper care of the vehicle. We pay attention to it because we know the maker of that automobile knows what is required to keep it running efficiently. Likewise, God is our "Maker," our Creator. He knows what is best for

man. Accordingly, in his "Guide Book," the Bible, he has given us instructions on a number of matters. One of these is the nurturing, instruction and disciplining of children.

No, not all discipline involves a spanking. In fact, when loving nurturing and instruction is consistently applied, spankings may be a minor part of that discipline (Deut. 6:6, 7; Psa. 78:5-7; 2 Tim. 3:15). It will vary from case to case, from individual to individual, but if spankings are taken out of the discipline process, harm will be done and evil effects will result. The word of God says so!

Our own experience testifies to the same effect. Our society's experiment of children raised with a passive, permissive, "do your own thing, spanking is child abuse" philosophy has raised a generation that requires metal detectors and police in our schools.

Often, in public places, or where little ones are playing together, one can see the difference between a two or three old who is disciplined with love, as per Proverbs 13:24 (see above), and one who is not. Therefore, it is past time that parents, especially those who are children of God, got back to their "Maker's Manual" and began to incorporate spankings as a part of the process of bringing their children up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

EMPTY-HANDED WHEN WE COME & GO

Steven F. Deaton

Paul said, "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim. 6:7). In the context, he is discussing material things, the contentment we should have with what we have, and the pitfalls of desiring to be rich (1 Tim. 6:6-10).

Since we brought nothing into the world and will carry nothing out, then everything in between is basically "white noise," a distraction from what really matters. It is true we are to work to provide materially for our family (1 Tim. 5:8). However, nothing material will leave this world with us or survive into eternity (2 Pet. 3:10-12). So, where should our priorities be?

The only thing we had coming into this world was a soul; the real person. Even our body is a temporary thing. Therefore, our focus must be on the soul. It is what leaves this world with us. It is the one thing that will survive into eternity in a newly given body, not the old one (1 Cor. 15:35-49).
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