

That's My Teacher!"

As the young child was walking through the shopping mall with his mother, he got very excited and began shouting, "That's my teacher! That's my teacher!" The teacher was accustomed to such salutations from her young students. She waved at the child and gave the embarrassed mother an understanding smile. The child could hardly wait to get home to tell his friends about seeing his teacher at the mall. He just could not imagine his teacher going shopping, just like a "real person".

"Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment. For in many things we all stumble" (James 3:1-2a). Brethren expect some degree of faithfulness and maturity in the man who stands behind the rostrum and teaches the adult Bible class. At the same time, those students in the class well understand the distinction between maturity and sinless perfection. No matter who stands before the class to teach - he is just a man, subject to the same frailties and handicaps as others. If the teacher makes a slip of the tongue, or misses the point in a lesson, or even stumbles in his daily living - mature *Christians* can keep things in perspective while addressing the problem.

But what about the kids? When their Bible class teacher behaves carelessly or indifferently in regard to truth, the implications and consequences are severe. The child does not operate from a basis of spiritual maturity - he is in the process of acquiring it. The faith and zeal of the youngster can be shaken drastically by inconsistent and confusing behavior he sees in his teacher.

Why would a mature man or woman spend several hours preparing to teach the children about the importance of worship - and then the same teacher forsake the assembly on Sunday night? "Mom, where's my teacher tonight?" Why would a teacher emphasize the importance of "our gospel meeting" to a group of eager children, and then miss the meeting himself? And what would the little girl think, if after the Wednesday night lesson on modest apparel, she saw her teacher at the park on Saturday dressed quite immodestly? "Hey Mom, that's my teacher!"

"And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me: but whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:5-6) .

We are certainly blessed with some excellent teachers for the children's Bible classes. Hours and hours are spent in lesson preparation. Let's be mindful, however, that with all the attention given to preparing and delivering a lesson – there are some accompanying responsibilities which are quite significant.

- by David Thomley

Getting 'Used To' Sin

I remember reading about the woman who wanted to get into her bathing suit early in the spring before there were any crowds of people around so she could "get used to" being so scantily clothed.

Folks "get used to" all kinds of sin - which simply shows the need to "take heed ...(and) exhort one another daily ... lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:12,13), Sin wears a mask. It tries to never show itself for what it really is.

It is tragic when people "get used to" that which degrades character and lowers moral standards. Instead of immodesty, however, the Bible commands "shamefacedness" - a word meaning "bound, or controlled by a sense or shame - modesty". A shame-fast person has a built-in sense or right or propriety that "binds" and forbids appearing in public carelessly or improperly clothed (1 Timothy 2:8-10).

Have you a sense of shame? Don't destroy your self-respect standards below God's!

- by Boyd Sellers

Heard From God Lately?

According to a survey, 25% of Americans believe that they have received personal messages from God. This statistic raises several questions:

What is God saying to all of these people anyway? The Bible says that it contains "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1: 3). What more do they need to know? Why is additional revelation necessary?

Why does God show such special favoritism to this select group? Does He love this 25% more than the rest of us? If we are among the 75% that God has not spoken to directly, does it mean that we are less important to Him? Acts 10:34,35 says that "God is no respecter of persons". How can that be if He speaks personally to some folks and not to others?

Isn't it odd that most of the people who are receiving these messages apparently feel no great urge to share them with the rest of us? In the Bible, those who received the word of God were compelled to tell others. For instance, Jeremiah said, "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer. 20:9).

In listening to the claims of these folks, we quickly realize that their stories are contradictory. God has supposedly told one thing to one person) and something totally opposite to another. How can this be? 1 Cor. 14:33 says that "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace."

The Bible is God's full and final revelation to man. Learn IT - Obey IT!

- by Greg Gwin