

VIEW

"THE COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD IS PURE,
ENLIGHTENING THE EYES." PSALM 19:8

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Young Lady, Marry a Christian

BY BILL HALL

[Young men, too! dp]

Before any young lady marries a non-Christian, she should consider the following problems which so often face the Christian in a mixed marriage.

1. Problems in attending services. She should ask herself, "What will I do when my husband some Lord's day drives away in the car at 9:15, leaving me with no transportation to the service?" "What will I do when my husband announces that his company is moving us to some distant community where no church of the Lord meets?" The husband may not be as co-operative as the young lady thought he would be.

2. Problems in giving. The young lady recognizes that if they are to reap bountifully, they must sow bountifully. She loves the Lord and His work, and wants to give liberally in support of it. Her husband, however, does not share her convictions and interest. He feels that a dollar is plenty to give.

3. Problems in training children. Yes, some have succeeded in bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord without the help of their companions. Eunice succeeded with Timothy. Other good women have succeeded. But the influence of a father is great, and many are the women who have not been able to overcome this influence to see their children become Christians.

4. Problems in overcoming the influence, of one's companion. Marrying with the hopes of reforming one's companion is a dangerous thing. Often the companion is lifted to a higher standard, but seldom to the standard of a Christian. Instead, as the non-Christian's standards are raised, the Christian's standards are lowered, so that the two meet somewhere in between. The young lady

should realize that the man whom she marries will be the greatest earthly influence on her life, and she should ask herself, "Will this man help me to go to heaven?"

5. Emotional problems. The problems faced in life are great, but the emotional problems faced in death may be greater. Recently a godly woman, having just received word of her husband's death in an automobile accident, cried, "Why couldn't it have been me or one of the children, for my husband was not ready to die?"

The young person reading this is probably thinking, however, that she will convert her husband. She may be able to do so, but statistics show that her chances really are not very good. For every one who has been successful in converting her husband, there are several who not only failed in converting their husbands, but were influenced by them to return to the mire of sin and to enter the ranks of the unfaithful. No, the risk is too great. The only safe course is for Christians to marry Christians.

If We Believed What They Believed

BY GARY KERR

One of the reference works I usually keep close at hand when studying any part of the New Testament is the paraphrase translation of J.B. Phillips, *The New Testament In Modern English*. I don't agree with all of Phillips' suggested wording, but I often find his efforts helpful in clarifying some particular passage or point. The translation was originally produced in sections, with the first, *Letters To Young Churches (Romans through Colossians)*, being published in London during World War II (it included a preface and recommendation written by C.S. Lewis).

In his introduction to that book, Phillips writes the following about the New Testament epistles and their authors and recipients:

“Without going into wearisome historical details, we need to remember that these letters were written, and the lives they indicate were led, against a background of paganism ... Slavery, sexual immorality, cruelty, callousness to human suffering, and a low standard of public opinion, were universal; traveling and communications were chancy and perilous; most people were illiterate. Many Christians today talk about the ‘difficulties of our times’ as though we should have to wait for better ones before the Christian religion can take root. It is heartening to remember that this faith took root and flourished amazingly in conditions that would have killed anything less vital in a matter of weeks. These early Christians were on fire with the conviction that they had become, through Christ, literally sons of God — they were pioneers of a new humanity, founders of a new Kingdom. They still speak to us across the centuries. Perhaps if we believed what they believed, we might achieve what they achieved.”

That final sentence is profound and powerful -- “Perhaps if we believed what they believed, we might achieve what they achieved!”

Within a generation of the establishment of the church, the apostle Paul could write of those who carried the gospel message that “their voice has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world” (**Romans 10:18**). Paul wrote about the gospel that it had been preached “in all the world” and that it had been “proclaimed in all creation under heaven” (**Colossians 1:6, 23**). This is an incredible achievement -- to begin with a few comparatively unknown and uneducated people (cf. **Acts 4:13**), and to have a message did not appeal to the “wise”, the “mighty,” or the “noble” according to the flesh (**1 Corinthians 1:26**). But they had strong faith and a zeal born of that faith, that caused them to launch out boldly and sacrificially, to the point of being willing to give up their lives for the cause

they had taken up. And God gave them amazing success. They were “on fire” for the kingdom, for the gospel, and for the souls of their fellow human beings, believing with all their hearts in the sacrifice and promises of Jesus, the Son of God and Savior of men. Being a Christian and going to heaven meant everything to them, and they wanted “all creation under heaven” to share with them in these blessings.

“PERHAPS IF WE BELIEVED WHAT THEY BELIEVED, WE MIGHT ACHIEVE WHAT THEY ACHIEVED.” IF WE DID, I AM CONVINCED THAT GOD WOULD GIVE US SUCCESS, TOO.

Do not be deceived into thinking that their achievements were easily accomplished. Right from the start they were opposed and persecuted. When the first of their number was martyred, such a widespread persecution developed that all except the apos-

ties were driven from their homes and scattered abroad (cf. **Acts 8:1**). But this did not slow them down or dampen their enthusiasm. Wherever they went, they were found “preaching the word” (**Acts 8:4**). They preached it as they had opportunity, not depending on others (i.e., preachers, elders, etc.) to do the work for them. Each Christian considered him/herself both privileged and responsible to win souls for Christ. Their cause was new -- they were pioneers.

I fear that today we do not appreciate our “spiritual blessings” as they did. It is not our life as it was theirs. We are not spending and being spent for it as they were. To some degree, at least, perhaps we do not “believe what they believed.”

“Perhaps if we believed what they believed, we might achieve what they achieved.” If we did, I am convinced that God would give us success, too.