

## RESPONSIBILITY!!!

A brief story came across my desk this week that went something like this. A woman stood with a friend in the door to her three year olds bedroom and watched as he struggled to get a shirt over his head, his arms in the sleeves and the whole thing pulled down to somewhere close to right. He was grunting and struggling as his mother just stood there and watched. Her arms were rigidly at her sides, every instinct in her wanted to reach out and do it for her little boy. Finally, her friend turned to her and said in exasperation, "Why don't you help that child?" The mother responded through gritted teeth, "I AM helping him".

The message in that brief story is that children have to learn to do things for themselves. Children that are handed everything, given everything, relieved of all responsibility for themselves, are children that will grow up to be adults that believe all that is owed to them in some way. Our society is currently filled to the brim with such people. It's about time we realized that we have a responsibility toward our own care and needs.

In a like manner, it is time that man realized that he is responsible for his own spiritual care and needs as well. It is true indeed that the Son of God died on the cross for the sins of mankind. The price has been paid. However, God has never made anyone sin and God never has and will never make anyone obey. God has given man the responsibility to accept His supremacy and bow down to Him in obedience if he is to enjoy the eternal rewards offered for those who do.

As the parent that gives everything to their child, the denominational world in general has been and still is advocating that God has, does and will give everything to His children without them taking any responsibility for themselves and includes all mankind as His children. The fact is, no one is a child of the eternal Father in heaven without first becoming such. All those who believe in Christ Jesus has the power to **become** children of God (John 1:12).

Obedience to God and His dear Son is a requirement to have eternal life. "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*" (Matt. 7:21). Jesus is "*the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*" (Heb. 5:9).

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## ARE YOU PECULIAR?

Often we think of one that is said to be peculiar as somewhat an oddball, being weird in some way. However, the dictionary defines the word "peculiar" as "standing apart from others; distinct and particular, exclusive, unique, belonging distinctively or primarily to one person, group, or kind" (American Heritage Dictionary).

The apostle Peter wrote to Christians scattered over Asia Minor and said, "*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people...*" (1 Pet. 2:9). It is indeed true that as Christians we have to live in this world. It is indeed true that we can't help coming in contact with the sins of the world for in order to do so, "*...then must ye needs to out of the world*" (1 Cor. 5:10).

The answer to this problem is that though we must live in this world and be in contact with the sins of this world, we must not allow ourselves to become conformed to this world. The apostle Paul, the prolific penman of the book of Romans said, "*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God*" (Rom. 12:2). True and faithful Christians will stand out as an example of Christ-likeness.

Our minds eye needs to be locked on things eternal with the material things coming only secondarily. "*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth*" (Col. 3:1-2).

Trials, tribulations, temptations and persecutions will come! "*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man...*" (1 Cor. 10:13). "*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*". I heard an old preacher once say, "you can't stop the bird of temptation from landing on your head, but you don't have to let him make a nest there".

It may not be easy to live the faithful Christian life. That's why it's called the "strait" (difficult) way (Matt. 7:13), but it will be worth it all in the end (Rom. 8:18). Go ahead, be peculiar. Be one that stands apart, one that is distinctive, unique and one of the ones belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what God requires of you.

Robert