

The Little Red...Christian?

Introduction:

- I. While at a bookstore a couple of weeks ago, Tonya came upon a book that she remembered reading as a small child. When she showed it to me, I began to remember the story as well: The Little Red Hen.
- II. This story is a very old tale, and like many stories of its time, it was used to teach the lesson of good work ethic to the children who would read it.
 - a. Somehow, it seems that we, the church, have forgotten this book's lesson.
 - b. We tend to think that, just by coming to this building 1-3 times a week, we are pleasing God and are on the fast track to heaven.
 - i. We place the checkmark by "Lord's Supper" and "Went to Church."
 - ii. We make a self-righteous list of "I don't's." I don't curse, do drugs, etc.
 - iii. We inflate those things that we happen to do, as if to make even our small accomplishments seem to be our whole duty for the year.
 - iv. We make our "duty" as a Christian into a boiled-down list of programs and activities.
 1. Adults-Potlucks, Gospel Meeting, Bible class, etc.
 2. Youth-Camp, VBS, Devotionals.
- III. Is it that simple?
 - a. Christianity is a *lifestyle*. It is how we live, day in and day out.
 - i. These programs and activities may *help* us do our job, but we don't need to wait until fellowship meals to fellowship.
 1. We don't need to wait until a Gospel meeting or camp session to spend time every day of the week in study of the Bible.
 2. We don't need to wait for VBS or Sunday school to make sure our children learn the Bible!
 - b. That is our problem today.
 - IV. Let's look at the questions the little red hen asked, and, using the Bible, see where we stand concerning our reward.

Discussion: Who will...

- I. Plant the Wheat Seed? (Teach the Gospel)
 - a. Often used of preaching the gospel: Matt. 13 – the Sower
 - i. Mark 16:15-16.
 - b. We know the expectations that our Master has: Matthew 25:10-31 (24-26).
 - c. We tend to leave this to the Bible class teachers, especially when it regards our own children! (Who sends their child to school without teaching him to talk, walk, etc.?)
 - d. However, this also applies to other seeds we must sow:
 - i. Galatians 5:22-23; 6:6-10 – Notice 6:6 – Share WITH the teacher!

- II. Harvest the Wheat? (Make Disciples)
 - a. This is another (and different) part of teaching.
 - i. Matthew 28:18-20 – “Disciple” = “Learner”
 - b. This is when we take that soil with the planted seed, and it produces the crop that brings salvation! (James 1:21).
 - i. Notice the discussion in I Corinthians 15:36-38
 - 1. One type of seed is sown, and it comes to life by dying (as a seed) and coming to life (as a plant).
 - 2. This coincides with Romans 6:3-5 – “united” = “planted”
 - a. It is a burial—of seed or soul—that leads to the harvest!
 - c. We tend to leave this to the preachers.
- III. Separate the Good from the Bad? (Discern Good/Evil)
 - a. This illustration is used of Jesus (Matthew 3:12).
 - i. We are to do this with moral questions (I Thessalonians 5:21-22).
 - ii. We are to do this with what we are taught (I John 4:1-3).
 - iii. We are to do this with our salvation (II Corinthians 13:5).
 - b. We need to make sure that we keep the evil out of our lives (including our family’s lives!)
 - i. We need to hold fast to the good things in our lives (times of worship, fellowship, prayer, study, family time, etc.)
 - c. We tend to overlook this altogether! What if we did that with physical things in life?
 - i. Don’t worry about breaking the eggs and removing the shells...it’s too much trouble. Just throw the whole egg into the pan and scramble it all together!
 - ii. Yet we refuse to look at the spiritual problems we face, along with the wide array of things our children may be getting into that are inappropriate. We may cover it up now or “make it go away,” but what about Judgment?
- IV. Take the Wheat to the Miller? (Turn It Over to the One Who Makes It Useful)
 - a. We tend to discount this or even forget it. We need God. Without him our best work will be fruitless.
 - i. John 15:5-6
 - ii. Psalm 127:1-2
 - b. This is how we are to overcome temptation – I Peter 5:6-7
 - c. This is how we are to receive forgiveness – James 5:15-16
- V. Prepare the Bread? (Store Up Treasure)
 - a. Matthew 6:19-21 – Where your treasure is, your heart is, your home is.
 - i. Is that heaven for you?
 - b. Luke 12:13-21 – The rich fool who was not rich toward God.
 - c. We are storing up *something*, however.
 - i. Romans 2:4-5 – By continuing to live with sin, or by refusing to get up and do the work necessary to clean your life, you are **STORING UP WRATH** for yourself!

- ii. So it depends on whether or not you will do the work needed to get you ready for judgment. Are you storing wealth or wrath?

Conclusion: Who Will Enjoy the Bread?

- I. We know that the plowman and the thresher will! (I Corinthians 9:10)
- II. Those who bear the fruit (harvest) will! (John 15:2)
- III. Those who turn to God for his help will! (Isaiah 55:1-2)
- IV. Those who have made preparation will! (Matthew 24:44-46)
 - a. Notice that this is referring to *continued* preparation. At NO point can we say, “I’ve done my job—now let someone else take over.”
 - i. “My master is delaying his coming.” = “I’ve worked enough!”
 - b. Also notice the prerequisite for #2 (bearing fruit)
 - i. We must abide (dwell, continue) in Jesus (John 15:5-6).
 - 1. Get in: Galatians 3:27
 - 2. Stay in: I John 1:6-9