

The King's Highway

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An Unlighted Church

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The story is told of a community in the mountains of Switzerland where a new church building was erected. It was a beautiful little chapel. Everything to make it an attractive place of worship was included except for one thing: No provision was made for lighting. When asked why this was omitted, the pastor replied, "The people are to bring their own lights. Every person who comes brings a candle. The more people, the more light." If no congregation, no light.

To me, the darkest thing in our American villages is the unlighted church. Many of our towns have no Sunday evening service, while the night clubs and movies are ablaze with lights, luring the people to a Sunday evening of frolic. Someone says, "That can never happen to our churches." Yes, it can. Each one of us is individually responsible for the success or failure of our Sunday evening service. When we allow the radio, television, or Sunday visits to keep us from the place of worship we are helping to darken our church. We are not referring to those who have legitimate reasons for staying away, but to the many who are gradually but thoughtlessly helping to kill our Sunday evening services.

A prominent business man, converted in middle life, gave as the reason for his conviction the faithfulness of an old lady who passed his house with her lantern on her way to church, evening after evening, rain or shine. Would our neighbors be convicted by our faithfulness to the evening service?

There is a great need in these days of spiritual ambition and consistency. The greatest light and encouragement that can come to a pastor is to have the faces of his people beaming with interest for the welfare of their church. These lights shine, in memory, through time and eternity.

May I suggest how to keep the church full of light on Sunday evening:

1. Plan and expect to be there, and on time.
2. During the week invite, and make arrangements to bring, if possible, someone along.
3. Sit with your guests and pray for their good during the service.
4. Take part in the service in some way. Smile, sing, pray, shake hands with others — especially with strangers who are present. Endorse the pastor's effort.
5. To pastors: Have something worth hearing in the service, and when it is time to start, go ahead; when it is closing time, close.

What Are You Reading?

I wanted to buy a newspaper and as I made my purchase I looked over the display of magazines on the stand. Prominently displayed were eight different magazines dealing with astrology, four of five special booklets dealing with the atom bomb, four on crossword puzzles, two on fishing and a hundred or so with lurid covers which advertised the idea that sin is still attractive.

I watched for awhile as small boys fingered the "comics". Several of them settled down on the floor to read those which they could not afford to buy. I saw well-dressed men furtively select "sex books" and eager house wives grasp the racing forms and the various predictions of the future.

I said to myself, this is the end product of modern education. We have achieved the highest per centage of literacy ever known in the world, but to what purpose? More books and magazines are published than ever before; more people are buying them than ever before. But what are they reading.

Well, I got the answer to that last question when I inquired of the clerk as to what magazines were the most popular. Horror crime and sex lead the list, she said.

What are you reading? There was a time when literature was supposed to uplift. Popular books were those which dealt with life as it should be lived. In the reaction against such unreality as it was called, writers began to delve into the depths of immorality in search of "realism".

But life is neither entirely good nor bad. The Victorian novelists who pictured scenes of sweetness and light were at least lifting our sights for us. The modern "realists" have lowered them into the gutter.

"Give attention to reading, said Paul, and it is well that we do that. Give attention to what your children are reading, and make sure that their intellectual diet contains some of the vitamins of faith.

—R. P. Marshall, War Cry.

6. Ask God to give you a spirit of prayer and expectancy and a deep concern to see souls saved.

No church will ever become dark when such well-lighted people support it. Sunday evenings with Jesus, in His house, are far better than loitering in our homes.

—American Holiness Journal.

Shifting Responsibility

F. E. Terry

Your attention is called to at least three responsibilities and the way that some try to shift those responsibilities.

1. There is the responsibility of our own life.

Our life is a wonderful thing—a material body infused with a soul and spirit—making us a living being capable of glorifying our Creator-God. Yet, there are many who choose not to glorify God, but rather yield themselves servants to the enemy of God, Satan, the result of which will be unhappiness now and destruction in the end.

Unhappiness is a fruit of sin! But many who are unhappy are trying to shift the responsibility of their unhappiness. They say that because they are not responsible for their being born, therefore, they are not responsible for their lives of sin which bring them their unhappiness; so they try to shift the responsibility onto God for their wickedness.

There are others who say that because of their environment they are victims of circumstances and therefore are not responsible for their lives, trying to shift the responsibility that is theirs. But many will tell you when you speak to them about their lives, "I'm doing the best I can"; yet there is no evidence of repentance or obedience to God. Yes, we are responsible for our lives!

2. There is the responsibility to God's Word.

The instrument that God uses is His Word. The power that God uses is His Spirit. The agency that God uses is man. Jesus Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, defeat Satan and restore the kingdom. Before He returned to the Father He said, "... As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." But notice how this personal responsibility is shifted. There are those who, when faced with such responsibility, will say, "I'm too busy," "I'm not interested" or "I tried to, but they ... " and on and on trying to shift responsibility. But we shall face our record before God in regard to our responsibility to His Word.

3. There is the responsibility to others.

God, in His Word says, "... Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Once again we find the shifting of responsibility in this matter of OTHERS. As to the going they say, "It is not my job"; as to the praying they reply, "I do not have any burden"; or to the paying they say, "I can not afford it." God does not ask any of us to do great things, but rather to do what we can.

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