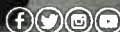


TRUTH & RIGHT

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BROTHER JOHNSON'S SINGING

Years ago, the elders and deacons had met about brother Johnson's singing. He was loud and off-key most of the time. They didn't want to discourage brother Johnson, but some of the brethren had complained that his singing was sometimes distracting. Brothers Smith and Buford were elected to talk to Johnson and see if they could teach him how to sing more appropriately.

When they pulled up, brother Johnson was working in his field, plowing behind his mule. They pulled up in a cloud of dust and walked out on to the field. They could hear Johnson's singing broken by various commands to the mule. Buford, who had drawn the short straw, started to speak, "Brother Johnson, we don't want to discourage you, but we have had some complaints about your singing..."

Johnson cut in, hanging his head, saying "I know, brethren. I

sing too loud. I never had no training, so I'm off key. I can't carry a tune in a bucket. I tell myself each assembly that I'm not gonna sing that loud 'cause I know it bothers people."

But I'll tell you brothers, every day I come out here and work this land. I see the sun rise over those mountains over there. I hear the birds singing in the trees and see the fish jumping in the creek. At night I watch the stars sparkling down on me and the moon shining. I just can't stop thinking about this great world God has made. And how He lets me live in it and work it.

Then I think about heaven and how great it must be if it is better than all that. I think about my parents, who died a couple years ago, singing around God's throne. I think about the voice I will have there. I think about

how much I want to go.

Then I think about how bad I have messed everything up and how Jesus left heaven to come down to this world. I can hear those Jews shouting, “Crucify Him!” I can see those Romans beating Him with that scourge. I know He did that for me.

Well, then I just can’t help it. I have to sing. I want God to know how much I love Him. I want my brothers to know how much God loves them. In fact, just thinking about it now makes me want to sing right now. Could you hold these reins for me? I just gotta let God know how great He is.”

With his tear-filled eyes looking skyward and his hands lifted up, Johnson began to sing “How Great Thou Art” as if his only audience were God Himself. He was loud and off-key. But Smith and Buford had never heard anything more beautiful. They couldn’t help but join in. When they finished, they thanked Johnson, hugged him and left.

At the next elders and deacons meeting, they reported they thought it might be a better idea if they had Johnson teach the complainers how to sing more appropriately.

- Edwin Crozier

GOT ANY CHAIRS?

I am reminded of a story in which a preacher and his large family, who were new to a congregation, went to visit a deacon on his farm. After all the greetings and pleasantries were exchanged, there was an awkward silence as the family just stood there, looking for a place to sit down, since the room only had two chairs. After a couple of silent seconds had gone by, the preacher remarked, “Brother, I don’t think you have enough chairs!” However, the man responded, “That ain’t it, I got plenty of chairs—just too much company!” You can imagine the shock of hearing that come from a member of the Lord’s church. Yet, this kind of action is actually rather prevalent in the Lord’s church today.

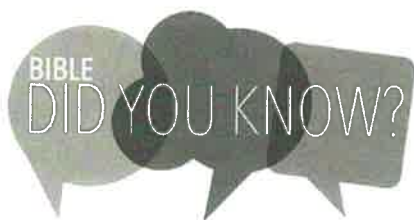
I know of Christians who have made it abundantly clear they want nothing to do with each other outside of services. This is confirmed when it’s time to get-together and they aren’t there. Rather than supporting the time Christians have with each other, they would rather sit at home or associate with worldly friends. It really is a sad commentary when Christians can’t stand to be around each other.

As Christians, we should understand just how important it is for us to spend quality time with each other. The only way for us to “get to know” each other and to know what is going on with each other is to spend time with each other. In Acts 2:44-47, we see a model of what we’re supposed to be. In verse 46 Luke wrote, *“Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,”* Every day those Christians ate meals together. Granted, it was a new time and there was an electric feeling in the air, but they all had the desire to spend time with each other. The point is, they made the time to be with each other. Now, I’m not saying we should eat every meal together or be with each other every day. But we do need to make sure we are making time to spend with one another, so we can know what’s going on in each other’s lives. Perhaps the easiest way to do this is to invite someone into our homes. Peter said, “Be hospitable to one another without complaint.” (1 Peter 4:9). Whether it’s for supper (dinner where I’m from), dessert, or even for just a cup of coffee, invite them in and get to

know them.

We need each other more than ever today. We are “in the world” for the majority of our week and let’s face it—we need all the help we can get to escape the clutches of Satan. There is a great deal of strength we can draw from being in each other’s presence. So, let’s make sure we are setting aside time right now to get to know one another better. Just make sure you have enough chairs!

- Kipp Campbell



There are more than 168,000 Bibles either sold or given away per day in the United States according to the Gideons, Wycliffe International and the International Bible Societies.

The Bible has been translated into more than 1,200 languages.

BIBLE TRIVIA

C H A L L E N G E

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. This woman married Moses?

- a) Zipporah
- b) Rahab
- c) Jezebel
- d) Michal

2. This woman tempted Samson to reveal the secret to his massive strength, which she used to betray him to the Philistines?

- a) Deborah
- b) Jezebel
- c) Delilah
- d) Rebekah

3. This brave Israelite woman became queen of Persia and used her influence to protect her people, the Jews.

- a) Naomi
- b) Esther
- c) Rachel
- d) Ruth

4. This wicked queen wanted to kill the prophet Elijah.

- a) Jezebel
- b) Michal
- c) Zipporah
- d) Hagar

5. This woman gave birth to Moses.

- a) Jochebed
- b) Orpah
- c) Keturah
- d) Merab

6. This Egyptian woman was Sarah's handmaiden and bore Ishmael through Abraham.

- a) Gomer
- b) Hagar
- c) Jezebel
- d) Zipporah

7. This woman was Ruth's sister-in-law.

- a) Naomi
- b) Ishmael's wife
- c) Noah's wife
- d) Moses' wife

8. The prophet Hosea was commanded to marry this woman, even though she was a harlot.

- a) Rahab
- b) Deborah
- c) Gomer
- d) Bathsheba

9. This woman was turned into a pillar of salt because she looked back as Sodom and Gomorrah were being destroyed.

- a) Lot's wife
- b) Ishmael's wife
- c) Noah's wife
- d) Moses' wife

10. This woman was given to Jacob as a wife deceitfully before he could marry her younger sister, who he loved.

- a) Dinah
- b) Rachel
- c) Michal
- d) Leah

LAST MONTH'S ANSWERS & VERSES:

- 1) B, Reference: Genesis 3:20
- 2) B, Reference: Genesis 17:15
- 3) B, Reference: Genesis 24:67
- 4) C, Reference: Genesis 29:28
- 5) C, Reference: I Samuel 1:20
- 6) B, Reference: I Samuel 18:26

- 7) A, Reference: Ruth 1:16
- 8) A, Reference: Genesis 39:14
- 9) B, Reference: Joshua 2:1
- 10) B, Reference: II Samuel 11:2