

Church Member Hitchhikers by Bob Dickey

With his thumb, a hitchhiker says, "You furnish the car, gas, attend to the repairs and upkeep, supply the insurance, and I'll ride with you. But you must be going my way, and if you have an accident, I'll sue for the damages." Sounds pretty one-sided, doesn't it?

There are hitchhikers in other places than just along the road ways. Unfortunately, there are sometimes hitchhikers in local churches. These members seem to say "You go to the Bible classes, attend all of the various assemblies, do the visitation and personal work, shoulder the responsibilities, take care of the meeting house and grounds and all of the things that need doing, and I'll go along for the ride. But if things aren't done to suit me, I will complain, criticize, and probably get out and hitchhike to another group."

You've seen them too, haven't you? You've seen professing Christians that seem to just be along for the ride. They frustrate the growth and progress of the local church. Because of indifference or lack of total commitment, they add nothing to the furtherance of the Lord's cause. The only thing they add is more work for the faithful. Preachers and elders are usually at a loss to know how to awaken them to a sense of their personal responsibility. Many times they become so accustomed to riding the coat tails of others that they seem to know of no other way to travel.

What do we say to hitchhiking church members? Shall we let them keep on depending on others without learning to pull their own weight? Shall we stand quietly by while they slip closer to eternity, unprepared to meet the Lord's judgment? No, someone needs to remind these 'thumbing' members that they will never be able to hitch a ride to Heaven. And going along just for the ride hinders and holds back the congregation's work. If you know of a church member hitchhiker like these we have described, why not lovingly talk to him or her about their soul and the need for their help and cooperation.

Hitchhikers are not permitted on the interstate expressways today. Let's remember that they are not allowed on the Lord's highway either. Hitchhikers, please read Matthew 25:1-46!

Will It Be Good Night or Goodbye?

A father on his deathbed called his sons. They gathered around him and to one he said, "Good night, son," and to the other he said, "Good-bye, son." The second boy noticed the difference and asked his father, "Dad, why did you say 'good night' to my brother and 'good-bye' to me?" The dear old man who loved both of them said, "Son your brother is a Christian; I will meet him in the morning of eternity. So it is just 'good night' to him. But you, son, are not a Christian. I will never meet you again unless you change. It is good-bye, son, throughout all eternity." (Author Unknown)

Heaven will be a wonderful place of pleasant associations where the righteous of the ages will sit down and enjoy each other's company. Hell will be a place of outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Jesus said, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able" (Luke 13:24). "And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:11-12).

Save It for the Meeting

Some brethren said to brother J.D. Tant, who was a widely known gospel preacher in the southwest many years ago, "We would like to have a meeting, but just aren't able." He

made them a proposition: "Brethren every time you buy a sack of tobacco or a plug of chew, put the same amount of money in the treasury and save it for the meeting next year. I will take whatever you save up and be satisfied with it." The brethren were elated and said they would let him know. They went off, did some figuring, came back and pointedly informed him that they could not possibly do it with a clear conscience, because, "No preacher is worth that kind of money."

Did You Know That:

Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible?

Psalm 117, before Psalm 118 is the shortest chapter in the Bible?

Psalm 119, after Psalm 118 is the longest chapter in the Bible?

The Bible has 594 chapters before Psalm 118 and 594 chapters after Psalm 118?

If you add up all the chapters except Psalm 118, you get a total of 1188 chapters.

1188 or Psalm 118 verse 8 is the middle verse of the entire Bible?

Should the central verse not have an important message? "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man." Psalm 118:8

I Have No Time!

I have no time to find fault with others;

I have too many faults of my own.

While I, myself, may not know them,

I am sure that to others they're known.

I have no time for idle gossip;

You see, it may be a lie,

And soon the story will die out

If everyone passes it by.

I have no time to listen to those

Who tell something to stir up strife;

Far better to tell of good deeds done

And brighten the journey of life.

I have no time to be moody and lonely,

No time to be gloomy and sad;

It takes all of my spare time planning

How I can make others glad.

--Author Unknown

If I Had Known...

If I had known

What troubles you were bearing,

What griefs were in the silence of your face,

I would have been more gentle and more caring,

And tried to give you gladness for a space.

I would have brought more warmth into the place...

If I had known.

If I had known

What thoughts despairing drew you,

(Why do we never understand?)

I would have lent a little friendship to you,
And slipped my hand within your lovely hand,
And made your stay more pleasant in the land...
If I had known.

Short Course in Human Relations

6. The six most important words in the English language: "I was wrong, please forgive me."
 5. The five most important words: "You did a good job!"
 4. The four most important words: "What do you think?"
 3. The three most important words: "Can I help?"
 2. The two most important words: "Thank you."
 1. The most important word: "You"
- (The least important word in the English language: "I")

Perseverance and Patience

Winston Churchill took 3 years getting through the eighth grade because he had a problem with English. Years later Oxford University asked him to make an address at their commencement exercises. With some of the usual Churchill fanfare (the cigar, cane and top hat) he settled in at the podium. Churchill eyed his adoring crowd and said, "Never give up." After several seconds of silence, he rose up on his toes and repeated, "Never give up." Churchill then reached for his cane and hat. His address had concluded.

Following his childhood dream of drawing comic strips, a young man was advised by an editor in Kansas City to give up drawing. He kept knocking on doors, only to be rejected. Finally, a church hired him to draw publicity material. Working out of an old, rodent infested garage, he made a pet of a mouse that ultimately became famous. The man was Walt Disney and his friend became Mickey Mouse. Perseverance and patience work even better in the faith.

A Moments Wisdom

- Do the best that you can. Those who count will know that about you.
- Truth is seldom at the extremes of human viewpoints.
- If you want something done right, give the task to someone who is already busy.
- When arguing with a fool, be certain he is not similarly engaged.
- Money and power do not change a man. They merely amplify what was already there.
- Some days you get the bear. Other days the bear gets you.