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"Making" Johnny Go To Church

- by Tom Moody

A newspaper article reported the results of a poll showing various opinions concerning parental force or pressure in seeing that children attend church. The article states: "...many voiced the lament of a New Mexico mother who wrote: 'We forced our son to go to church. As soon as he left the parental roof, he left the church.'"

The logic of this mother and other parents is interesting. You will notice that only *one factor* in this child's life is taken into consideration as to why he might have "left the church" – the fact that he was forced as a child to attend.

It might be revealing to know:

1. Did the mother and father attend church *regularly*?
2. Did they *live* their faith, or were they merely "Sunday morning Christians"?
3. Were they firm, fair and consistent in their teaching and discipline of the child?
4. Did they attend a church where the truth of God's word was taught, or where the Bible is regarded as a spurious book of ancient myths and fairy tales?
5. Did they attend where the Bible was *studied*, or where children (and older folks) played games and learned crafts?

Also, we wonder if this mother "forced" her son to bathe, eat vegetables and go to school. Did he cease to bathe, quit eating and forsake education "as soon as he left the parental roof"?

Parents, your children will probably turn out to be pretty much like you. Therefore, if you want to see your child study the Bible regularly when he grows up, study the Bible with your child now. If you believe that your child should attend church after leaving home, don't send him to church – *take him*.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).



"In Your Light We See Light"

by Heath Rogers

The sun is the ultimate and only source of light in our solar system. I know that fire gives off light. I know about bioluminescent creatures. Today we have electric lights across the globe. However, none of this would be possible without the light constantly given off by the sun. Because of the light given off by the sun, we can see our surroundings and navigate our way through this world.

Man needs to understand that God is the only true source of spiritual enlightenment in this physical universe. Without God's presence, we would be grasping in hopeless darkness. David wrote, "In Your light we see light" (Ps. 36:9). This is the confession of one who realized his utter dependence on God. Blessed is the one who can say, "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jer. 10:23), then turn completely to God for guidance.

We see things clearly and correctly when we see them as God sees them.

Instead of viewing the Bible through the various prisms offered by the world (philosophy, science, history, politics, traditions, personal feelings, etc.), the child of God will view these different things through the lens of the Bible. For example, instead of reinterpreting the Biblical account of creation to accommodate millions of years of evolution, we will view the world around of us having been created around 10,000 years ago. Instead of suggesting Moses borrowed from the religious traditions of his neighbors in writing the creation account, we will realize these traditions were founded on historical events passed down by their ancestors. Instead of allowing everyone to formulate their own version of truth, we will realize and insist there is a universal standard of right and wrong. Things get much clearer when we see with God's light.

God's word is a light to guide us through a world of darkness. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105). With the Bible in hand, we can choose the right path, avoid the pitfalls of life, and find our way to our heavenly home. When one turns away from God's word, he finds darkness.

God gave physical light to this world in the beginning (Gen. 1:3). He gave spiritual light through the revelation of His will. This revelation saw its fullness in Christ. "For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). Jesus knew His mission, and could say with confidence, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12).

The comments made by Albert Barnes on Psalm 36:9 are worth considering. "There is no other source of real light and truth but God; and in the contemplation of himself, and of the light which encompasses him, and in that alone, can we hope to comprehend the great subjects on which we pant so much to be informed. All away from God is dark; all near him is light. If, therefore, we desire light on the subjects which pertain to our salvation, it must be sought by a direct and near approach to him; and the more we can lose ourselves in the splendors of his throne, the more we shall understand of truth" (Notes on the Psalms, vol. 1, p. 315). 

The Power of God's Word

How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. (Psalms 119:9)

My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word. (Psalms 119:28)

This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life. (Psalms 119:50)

My soul faints for Your salvation, But I hope in Your word. (Psalms 119:81)

Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path. (Psalms 119:105)

Your word is very pure; Therefore Your servant loves it. (Psalms 119:140)

The entirety of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever. (Psalms 119:160)

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. (John 17:17)