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Q&A Forum - Review

Switching Denominations, 2005-07

Fellow Q&Aers,

Today we welcome John, Erik, Paul, Vicki, Matt and Ed to our Q&A list.

I have recently added an article on our website in the "Waiting Room" section on Adult ADHD. In the next couple of weeks there will also be articles up on Alzheimer's Warning Signs and on 7 Tips for a Great Marriage.

I want to let you know that the Rebuilding Group I had designed for people going through or recently been through divorce did not get up and running. I sent out a lot of emails and over 30 brochures to family attorneys. If anyone has any ideas why I only had one person show any serious interest in it, please let me know.

For the parents on the Q&A list, here's a website I recently came across that may prove beneficial to you in your parenting tasks: www.themindfulparent.org.

Thank you for our bonuses today to Lynda, Gwen and Nancy - some of them go back to 2002! Now to our Q&A:

Q: Suppose someone switched denominations, and then sometime later realized they made a mistake, and no longer wanted to be affiliated with this church. What is the proper thing to do? Should the person write to the church leaders, or simply walk away?

A: I think this question goes to the heart of the difference between religion and spirituality. Religion (i.e. denomination) is a human made institution/organization that is intended to facilitate a person's relationship with God/Higher Power. Frequently, this happens; sometimes it does not. Spirituality is about the relationship a person has with his/her God/Higher Power.

I would encourage one to answer the following questions as they explored this issue in greater detail: 1) What were the reasons for the original switch? 2) At the time, was the switch effective in facilitating their personal relationship with God/Higher Power? 3) What present dissatisfactions exist with the new denomination? 4) Has the church changed since the switch or has the person changed? 5) What is missing in the person's spiritual life right now? 6) Can this church or denomination fulfill that? Why or why not? 7) Have you simply outgrown this church and are looking for more spiritual challenges in your worship/prayer/service life?

After these questions have been considered in detail, then discuss yourself, your spiritual journey and your answers to these questions at length with church leaders from both denominations, in person. Most church leaders are willing to set up an appointment with you to discuss these matters. You may also want to talk to leaders from different churches but from the same denomination. Often there are variations and personalities do make a difference.

I do not advocate simply walking away, unless you have made a firm decision and know what direction you are headed. Your spiritual life is important to God, to you and to your fellow brothers and sisters.

I once saw on a person's desk a plaque which read: "If God seems distant, who moved?"

Please approach these matters seriously and I pray that you and God continue to partner as He guides your journey.

Peace, John

quote: "Happiness and love are just a choice away" - Anonymous

>>>>>bonus 1

These great questions and answers are from the days when game show responses were spontaneous and clever, not scripted and dull as they are now. Peter Marshall was the host asking the questions, of course.

Q. Do female frogs croak?

A. Paul Lynde: If you hold their little heads under water long enough.

Q. If you're going to make a parachute jump, at least how high should you be?

A. Charley Weaver: Three days of steady drinking should do it.

Q. You've been having trouble going to sleep. Are you probably a man or a woman?

A. Don Knotts: That's what's been keeping me awake.

Q. Which of your five senses tends to diminish as you get older?

A. Charley Weaver: My sense of decency.

Q. As you grow older, do you tend to gesture more or less with your hands while talking?

A. Rose Marie: You ask me one more growing old question Peter, and I'll give you a gesture you'll never forget.

Q. Paul, why do Hell's Angels wear leather?

A. Because chiffon wrinkles too easily.

Q. When you pat a dog on its head he will wag his tail. What will a goose do?

A. Paul Lynde: Make him bark?

Q. If you were pregnant for two years, what would you give birth to?

A. Paul Lynde: Whatever it is, it would never be afraid of the dark.

Q. According to Ann Landers, is there anything wrong with getting into the habit of kissing a lot of people?

A. Charley Weaver: It got me out of the army.

Q. While visiting China, your tour guide starts shouting "Poo! Poo! Poo!," what does this mean?

A. George Gobel: Cattle crossing.

Q. Back in the old days, when Great Grandpa put horseradish on his head, what was he trying to do?

A. George Gobel: Get it in his mouth.

Q. Who stays pregnant for a longer period of time, your wife or your elephant?

A. Paul Lynde: Who told you about my elephant?

Q. Jackie Gleason recently revealed that he firmly believes in them and has actually seen them on at least

two occasions. What are they?

A. Charley Weaver: His feet.

There's something to be said for the old days. Hope you enjoyed this bit of spontaneous humor.

>>>>>bonus 2

Little Leroy came into the kitchen where his mother was making dinner. His birthday was coming up and he thought this was a good time to tell his Mother what he wanted.

"Mom, I want a bike for my birthday."

Little Leroy was a bit of a troublemaker. He had gotten into trouble at school and at home. Leroy's mother asked him if he thought he deserved to get a bike for his birthday. "Of course", he said.

Leroy's mother, being a Christian woman, wanted him to reflect on his behavior over the last year. "Go to your room , Leroy, and think about how you have behaved this year. Then write a letter to God and tell him why you deserve a bike for your birthday." Little Leroy stomped up the steps to his room and sat down to write God a letter.

Letter 1-- Dear God, I have been a very good boy this year and I would like a bike for my birthday. I want a red one. Your friend, Leroy

Leroy knew that it was not true. He had not been a good boy this year, so he tore it up and started over.

Letter 2-- Dear God, I have been an OK boy this year. I still would like a bike for my birthday. Leroy

Leroy knew he could not send this letter to God either. So, Leroy wrote a third letter.

Letter 3-- Dear God, I know I haven't been a good boy this year. I am very sorry. I will be a good boy if you just send me a bike for my birthday. Please! Thank you, Leroy

Leroy knew that it was not true. By now he was very upset. He went downstairs and told his mother that he needed to go to church. She thought her plan had worked. "Just be home for dinner," she told him.

Leroy walked down the street to the church on the corner. He went to the altar. Leroy looked around to see if anyone was looking as he bent down and picked up a statue of the Virgin Mary. He slipped it up under his shirt and ran out the church going back home. He ran to his room and shut the door. Leroy began to write his letter to God.

Letter 4-- Dear God, I got your Mama. If you want to see her again.....send the bike! Signed, You know who.

>>>>>bonus 3

A frail old man went to live with his son, daughter-in-law, and four-year grandson. The old man's hands trembled, his eyesight was blurred, and his step faltered. The

family ate together at the table. But the elderly grandfather's shaky hands and failing sight made eating difficult. Peas rolled off his spoon onto the floor. When he grasped the glass, milk spilled on the tablecloth. The son and daughter-in-law became irritated with the mess. "We must do something about Grandfather," said the son. "I've had enough of his spilled milk, noisy eating, and food on the floor."

So the husband and wife set a small table in the corner. There, Grandfather ate alone while the rest of the family enjoyed dinner. Since Grandfather had broken a dish or two, his food was served in a wooden bowl. When the family glanced in Grandfather's direction, sometimes he had a tear in his eye as he sat alone. Still, the only words the couple had for him were sharp admonitions when he dropped a fork or spilled food.

The four-year-old watched it all in silence.

One evening before supper, the father noticed his son playing with wood scraps on the floor. He asked the child sweetly, "What are you making?" Just as sweetly, the boy responded, "Oh, I am making a little bowl for you and Mama to eat your food when I grow up." The four-year-old smiled and went back to work.

The words so struck the parents that they were speechless. Then tears started to stream down their cheeks. Though no word was spoken, both knew what must be done. That evening the husband took Grandfather's hand and gently led him back to the family table. For the remainder of his days he ate every meal with the family. And for some reason, neither husband nor wife seemed to care any longer when a fork was dropped, milk spilled, or the tablecloth soiled.

Children are remarkably perceptive. Their eyes ever observe, their ears ever listen, and their minds ever process the messages they absorb. If they see us patiently provide a happy home atmosphere for family members, they will imitate that attitude for the rest of their lives. The wise parent realizes that every day the building blocks are being laid for the child's future. Let's be wise builders and role models.

>>>>> a mini extra bonus:

I've learned that, no matter what happens how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow.

I've learned that, regardless of your relationship with your parents, you'll miss them when they're gone from your life.

I've learned that making a "living" is not the same thing as making a "life."

I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance.

I've learned that if you pursue happiness, it will elude you. But, if you focus on your family, your friends, the needs of others, your work and doing the very best you can, happiness will find you.

I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one.

I've learned that every day, you should reach out and touch someone. People love that human touch - holding hands, a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back.

I've learned that I still have a lot to learn.

People will forget what you said ... people will forget what you did ... but people will never forget how you made them feel.

end of bonuses

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