

Consistency Thou Art A Jewel!

By Keith Greer

Suppose you wake up one day and decide you've had enough of your family, so you just leave for a month. Things are closing in, and you need a break. Let your wife mind the children, pay the bills, and run the house for a while. She can worry about paying the rent and the bills, and buying enough food for the family. After all, for many years, you have worried about these matters. Now it's her turn.

Then suddenly one evening, you walk into the house at dinner time, and expect a place to be set for you! You offer your wife and children no explanation or apology. Would you feel shame or remorse about your conduct? Let me honestly ask you, how many wives, or for that matter, husbands would put up with such conduct from their spouses? Could you just continue on as though nothing had happened?

What about a person who just walks away from the job and misses work for a couple weeks. The company receives no communication about, or explanation for, this brief vacation. Then, one day the employee shows up for the regular shift and begins work as though nothing had happened. How long would it take the boss to send such a fellow packing? Could he expect a glowing recommendation to take to his next job interview? I think not.

Yet, how many times do church members take multi-week sabbaticals from worshipping with the saints. They show no concern for the Lord's work; their support is just missing. When they come back, they "pick up where they left off" as if they hadn't missed a beat! No repentance, no remorse, no sorrow for their conduct, and they expect God to accept them and their service. They sing, pray, and commune just like those who are faithful.

Let's consider some scriptures. "And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God."{2 Corinthians 8:5} Can a person who sets such an example truly say he/she is given to the Lord? "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to

you."{Matthew 6:33} Could this person convince God, you, or anyone else that God has first place in his/her life?

"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."{Hebrews 10:24,25} Could a person who sets such an inconsistent example provoke the brethren to love and good works? How could such a brother ever encourage others to serve God faithfully? I would say they probably have stirred brethren up, but to what!

Members who conduct themselves in such fashion are inconsistent. Who do they think they are fooling? No man or woman would treat his/her spouse, family, or employer in such an irresponsible way and expect to get away with it. Yet, the actions of many brethren, convince me that they are trying to "put one over on the Lord and the brethren." No right-thinking person could believe that God is pleased with such conduct.

Sadly, I'm afraid they think they are getting away with it. I strongly disagree. How much stronger and closer would the Lord's church be if all its members gave God the same concern, zeal, diligence, devotion, and loyalty they give their families and jobs? What truly should be first in our lives? Our service to God! How difficult it is in this fast-paced world to keep our priorities where they should be. Christianity is a lifetime occupation--seven days a week, 365 days a year, with no retirement. Do our lives show this type of commitment? "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."{Matthew 5:16} Is your light shining, dimming, or flickering?

Brethren do not think for a moment that people don't notice the examples we set in our lives. What are we teaching them? "Consistency thou art a jewel!" God is watching also. Do you really believe you can get to heaven by living an inconsistent Christian life? Think soberly on these things!!