



December 26, 2010

*Freelancers*

In the 1960's, at the height of the Hippy era, the free love movement reached it's zenith as the idea of "traditional" marriage and values were challenged and cast aside. During the 1970's, and later, men were stereotyped for the most part as being afraid of commitment when it came to long term relationships such as marriage. During that period the idea of trial marriages, living together or simply considering oneself as married without the "piece of paper" emerged as a practice that many engaged in. In the late 1990's and early part of the new millennium there has been a counter movement, based in part on the failure of these practices to provide for stable environments. The number of children and single mothers who depend on public support has been so overwhelming that the system could not continue to provide the care and nurturing the family was designed to provide when God created man. Human ideas, from a practical standpoint, do not work and the burden this has placed on society is overwhelming. The idea that came out of all this is that one may define one's life without making a commitment to any organized or pre-set agenda of values. The same idea made it's way into the area of religion as well. Many, disillusioned with "organized" religion, but still having a desire to have a relationship with God, seek to do so on their own terms without becoming part of an organized group. These freelancers, for lack of a better description, fail to realize the true meaning of being a child of God. We can sympathize with the unwillingness to attach oneself to the chaotic swirl of mainstream "Christianity", but we must emphasize what a Christian is and what it means to be a child of God. First of all we know that God sent Christ into the world to save all of mankind (**John 3.16**). Christ commanded his disciples, the apostles, to go and teach the world to observe the things that he had commanded (**Matt 28.18-20**). The apostles received the power of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 2**) for the purpose of confirming the word (**Heb 2.3-4**) and receiving the revelation God desired (**John 14.26**). In order to become a Christian it is necessary that we have the facts at hand in order to come to an informed conclusion about what we believe. Paul indicates this in his address to the Romans (**Rom 10.13-15**). When we reach the point that we believe in Christ and the promise of God to save us through obedience we acknowledge this (**Rom 10.9-10**) and we are baptized into Christ (**Acts 2.38, 1 Pet 3.20-21**). This process places us in a relationship with God and He adds us to the church (**Acts 2.47**). But that is not all. We can't just walk away and feel the glow of salvation confident that we are going to Heaven without doing anything else. This is just the beginning. One of the things that God commands is that we assemble with one another. In the first century the Christians met on the first day of the week in order to remember the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (**Acts 20.7**). The writer of Hebrews makes it very clear that assembling is not to be neglected. "***Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.***" (**Heb 10.23-25**). There's no such thing as a free range Christian. Once we have rendered obedience we have to realize that assembling meets several obligations. First of all, it unifies believers in the common remembrance of the sacrifice that made salvation possible. Secondly it has merit because there is strength in numbers. As we assemble we develop a bond with other Christians and find that we can provide support as well as receiving it. We learn from one another and grow stronger and more capable of teaching others. Finally, God commanded it. To fail to assemble with the saints is neglect of the wishes of God. We call that sin. God doesn't recognize freelancers.

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