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evening services (if they still have them) or canceled Sunday services altogether. On the day when they say we should “celebrate” Christ’s birth, they were at home opening gifts for themselves—not giving the Lord a gift of praise! We may also consider Super Bowl Sunday. For many years denominations have had Super Bowl parties interrupted by a “devotional” at half time. Now we see that a great “Easter Celebration” cannot interfere with sleep time. It used to be denominations would reach the zenith of holiness at sunrise on Easter Sunday. Evidently, people were too tired for the Trinity at the crack of dawn. Now, you can “catch brunch” and worship at the “crack of noon.”

Let us not follow in this path. We should not structure worship services to be purposefully burdensome—like meeting at 2 a.m. or 11 p.m.—but neither are we to put other activities in life ahead of the Lord. Remember, the cares of this life can choke us to death (Lk. 8:14).

- Steven F. Deaton

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Sunday Morning 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday 7:30 p.m.

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“Catch Brunch”

A recent “Easter Sunday” invitation advertised three service times. One highlighted box said, “Not an early bird? Catch brunch, then come to our 12:30pm service!” There is much we could write about “Easter Sunday” and the spiritual adultery being committed in the name of “celebrating” the day. However, we want to consider the idea of “Catch brunch, then come...”

First, there is nothing wrong with eating before attending a worship service. I do it every Sunday morning and night. Other wise I would not make it through the long-winded sermons preached by myself or the other evangelist who shall remain unnamed.

Second, there is nothing wrong with a congregation seeking to arrange services so the maximum number of members can attend. Churches of Christ have long had two Sunday services to give Christians an opportunity to make it in the evening if something hinders them from being there in the morning (child is sick, unavoidable work schedule, not well in the AM, etc.).

Though we would not knit-pick at everything about the message “Not an early bird? Catch brunch, then come to our 12:30pm service,” we do want to point out a thing or two.

The denominational world has long compromised on a number of things in order to draw in a crowd. Churches have compromised on the atmosphere of worship services; it must be “lively” and “energetic.” They have compromised on the dress; it must be “casual” and “come-as-you-are”—even if it means immodest. They have compromised on the time, it must not interfere with life.

For an example of this last one, a compromise on time, we need only think about last December 25 which fell on a Sunday. A number of denominations either canceled

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David's Dreadful Damage

When David was chosen to be king, he was a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22). His behavior was exemplary, respecting King Saul and trusting in God. There came a day, however, when David's heart was not so God-like.

The story is familiar to us, David committed adultery with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11: 1-5). In an attempt to cover it up, because she was with child, David ended up killing her husband by proxy and taking her as his own wife (2 Sam. 11:6-27). God did not let this go. He sent Nathan to confront David and expose his sin (2 Sam. 12:1-7). David's heart of righteousness returned and he repented (2 Sam. 12:13). Though he was forgiven, there were still consequences to face. As Nathan put it:

Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. Thus says the Lord: "Behold I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun" (2 Sam. 12:10-12).

David's life was filled with one hardship after another from this point on. In 2 Samuel 13 we read of his son Amnon raping his daughter (by another wife) Tamar. Absalom, her full brother, and evidently David's favored son, killed Amnon two years later. After Amnon returned from exile, he pestered David, eventually making an attempt on the throne (2 Sam. 14, 15). David had to go to war with Absalom, but did not want him harmed. However, Joab, David's commander, did not share the King's feelings. So, Joab killed Absalom (2 Sam. 18:1-15).

After passing through more troubles, when David was old and about to die—a time when men look forward to peace and rest—he had to deal with another family problem. His son, Adonijah, was determined to be king instead of Solomon (1 Kgs. 1:1-10). Nathan and Bathsheba headed this off, but no doubt it still troubled the King.

Why was there so much trouble in the house of David? Because he committed sin. There is no house that will escape the damages of sin. Men and women may be forgiven

and stand pure before God, but the temporal consequences will come.

Moms and dads, think about what you are doing.

The sin in the life of the parents not only affects them, but also their children. The sin may not be known to the church or public at large. However, it is known to God and He has made the universe in such a way that your sins will find you out (cf. Num. 32:23). Paul said,

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life (Gal. 6: 7, 8).

This is a fundamental law of God.

If David could have intellectually known and emotionally felt the consequences of his sin before he committed it, would he have done it anyway? Perhaps, but not likely. Yet, you and I can see the dreadful damage of David's sin. So, why would we even entertain the thought of allowing sin into our lives? By the way, we are not just discussing adultery. Included in the things that can wreak havoc on a family are anger, wrath, malice, bitterness, gossip, slander, covetousness, drunkenness, hatred, envy, lies, filthy language, etc. (Gal. 5: 19-21; Col. 3:5-9).

Mom and dad consider your ways, the children are watching. They will not answer to God for your sins, but you may for theirs. No, we are not personally guilty of the sin of others, but we will give an account for causing others to stumble (Mk. 9:42-48). Too, the pain and suffering you endure as you watch your children nearly crushed under the consequences of your sin will torment you day and night. If it does not, then your heart is not right; it is not after God's own heart.

Learn a lesson from David and heed the words of his son, "Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it" (Psa. 127:1). Build your house on truth and righteousness; and if need be, repent now.

- Steven F. Deaton