

Keep Out the Sinners

By Jack Hall

www.sundayschooldropouts.com

CHARACTERS

Morty- A lecturer

Morty takes the podium to speak to the audience.

MORTY: Good evening, pastors. Tonight, in how to manage your church, we're going to talk about one of the most difficult tasks a pastor faces. No, I am not talking about preaching on the subject of money. I'm talking about how to keep your church healthy, happy, and holy. I'm talking about how to keep those pesky sinners out.

"But wait a minute! Aren't we supposed to be saving sinners?" Yes, the wording of the Bible is a little fuzzy on this, isn't it? The truth is a sinner can't be saved unless they're willing to save themselves. And it's our job to let them know, up front, that they're not welcome unless they're willing to do the work required to be saved.

Now we can't just come right out and say, "Sinners not welcome." As the bookworms in this class will tell you, the Bible does make it sound like all sinners are welcome. Our approach to sinners has to be subtle, but firm. In other words, "You wanna be one of His? You gotta act like me!"

One simple way to lay down the law is the unspoken dress code. This has kept thousands of sinners at bay, and it is highly effective when rigidly kept. Make sure your people know that jeans, shorts, T-shirts, and short skirts are taboo. This allows you to not only identify sinners at the door, but to give them the old "long eye," if you know what I mean? Nothing convicts a sinner faster than a little awkward staring.

Another effective tactic is to lay down the law. I'm not talking about the Ten Commandments, mind you, but the laws that aren't in the gospel but we all know should be. No cussing, no drinking, no smoking, no drugs, no gambling, and no rock and roll. Anybody wants to be a child of God better burn their rock and roll records. They also better not work for a casino, and they better never vote pro-choice!

You'll want to hit these issues especially hard twice a year - at Christmas and Easter. Lots of sinners show up on these high holidays, and we want to lay down the law with them. Otherwise, they might actually come back!

The job of keeping sinners out of the church is not just a Sunday job. Sinners can be on your doorstep any day of the week. Take for example when a church member goes on to the Lord. No doubt Brother Bill has relatives that haven't set foot in a church in years, if ever. This is a dangerous time, because the reality of death gets a man thinking hard about where he's gonna go when his time comes.

If you want to keep them from coming to your church in the mean time, there are little ways to tell them without actually telling them. When you get the call from the hospital that Brother Bill's at death's door, don't go. Let him slip out the back door to glory without you there to remind everyone where he's headed. Make sure your fellow staff and church members stay out of that hospital room, and don't let anyone drop in at the visitation either. Make yourself as scarce as you can, and the relatives will get the hint.

I realize my words may sound a little harsh, especially to those of you who were once sinners yourselves. But remember, the call to ministry is not an easy one. You have been appointed leader, in the tradition of Moses and Joshua. And we all remember what the Lord commanded them to do with sinners.

Yes, it's a shame we can't just go out and slaughter them like the old days - especially those wacky Hollywood sinners. But we can keep those sinners out of the church, and keep the church a safe place for God's chosen people. Thank you, and God bless.