

Methodists? Well, Bless Their Hearts.

This Mother's Day I wonder what my Mother, Edith Henderson Bowden (1918-1986), would say about her beloved Methodist Church. She might say, "Methodists? Well bless their hearts, too many of them are lost." Her look, 'The Look', would speak more. Anytime a Southerner says, "Well, bless his heart", substitute the words "That stupid idiot." Or stronger words.

Actually, the sissy Christian Methodists should thank the cross-dressing, inclusive Goddess of their imaging that my Mother isn't around today. She would loom over them – at five foot four – and with that pointed finger raised and aimed, Mama would've set them straight. The apologists for the holiness of anal sex, would learn a new meaning for 'fear of the Lord' and she would've never raised her voice.

Of course, her Methodist worldview wasn't the wimpy, weak, watered-down Christianity of half the church today. I teased her on her death bed that she was the re-incarnation of Jean Calvin. She laughed and said, "Well, bless your heart."

My Mother was the kind of Methodist who taught her kids Sunday School at our breakfast table. She intertwined the Bible and family lore into a single string of life lessons. She held her spatula like a professor and instructed:

You can handle anything in life – no matter what. The Lord will never give you a burden you can't bear.

You can control physical pain. Don't cry, just grit your teeth.

You failed/came in second/were hurt/lost/etc. for a reason. God is preparing you for greater tests ahead.

God has a plan for your life. It's to do for others. It isn't about you.

Moderation in all things.

Life is supposed to be hard. Life is seen through a veil of tears.

Easter is the happiest day of the year.

All good things come from God. Always give thanks.

Better to do without than to have ill-gotten gains.

Be kind and respectful to people who serve you, have less, know less.

It's not what you have, it's who you are. Character counts.

Your name is all you really have in life.

Many things are worse than death, like shaming your name, your family.

This is the day the Lord has made, rejoice in it - every day. No matter what.

The answer to the question is in the Bible. It's the Word of God.

And more...

Apparently, like Mother, a majority of Methodists in their national meeting found an answer to homosexual clergy in the Bible. But, they lack the mechanism to discipline the clueless churches and juries who failed to sanction a lesbian minister. Too bad. Mother loved our homosexual/lesbian relatives as much as anyone. Yet, she never exalted their sexual perversion, just as she never honored adultery, incest, bestiality – as the Bible teaches. The Word of God was clear and convincing in her life.

Her personal closeness to Jesus gave her such courage. The doctors didn't figure out what killed her until the autopsy. Later, they wrote me a letter praising the remarkable grace and courage she showed. My Methodist Mama never complained. Cancer, painful bursitis/arthritis, and stroke never brought a whimper. When we first saw my father's body in the funeral home, she laid hands and said, "This is the house he lived in." Methodist discipline ruled her life as much as joy, joy, joy powered it. I heard her curse twice - when she said, "Hell's bells!" I was shocked and very obedient. Where is such discipline in the Methodist Church?

If Mother was here, instead of alive in Heaven, the Methodist Church would follow her or be split in two, with the greater devotion going with her side. Somewhere, there must be mighty Methodists. It's not my responsibility, since I worship with out-of-the-closet-Calvinists – the Baptists. But, I know how hurt and ashamed she'd be for her beloved Methodists to not see sin, love the sinner and call sin – 'sin'.

She'd explain the errors of their ways to apostate Methodists like Hillary Clinton. Mama's outwardly gorgeous, Southern lady – from such humble but proud circumstances - elegance would compliment her inner beauty to strengthen her message. Like Jesus, the tough love of right over wrong would be bathed in lovingkindness and incredible power. If Hillary and her ilk, insisted on glorifying partial birth abortion, homosexuality, appeasement to Islamists, etc. as Godly goodness, Mother would respond, "Well, bless your heart, honey. I'll pray you get back to God."

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