

Tardiness: Time to “Kick the Habit”

by Bob Young

This is not an article about smoking [although any time is a good time to consider eliminating the smoking habit]. I am writing about the “tardy habit.”

I ask you to think about and pray about tardiness. We are lax, even sloppy, in arriving at Bible classes and worship on time. We leave the house when it is time to be there. Visitors come to a Bible class and we must admit with embarrassment that the teacher is late. We say, “The teacher will be here soon.” But we cannot mask the fact that the teacher is late, and visitors do not want to leave their children unattended in a classroom. There is no exact way to measure the impact of the experience, but when visitors with young children do not return, one has to wonder if this is one of the reasons.

I learned this week about a family that recently moved to our community. They share our religious heritage. They belong here. They should be here. They are not. They are attending elsewhere. Why? There may be many reasons, but the reason they give has to do with our classes for children and their experience with a teacher who was late on the Sunday they visited.

Our own students are late. Families are late. Classes are disrupted. Students miss the advantage of learning and sharing. Why? In most cases, it is a matter of priorities. We are not late to the hunting stand—we are there at daybreak, ready as soon as it is legal to shoot. We are not late to the concert when we go to hear our favorite singer or group. We are not late to work. We are not late to appointments with doctors or other professionals. Our children are not late to school Monday through Friday, only on Sunday. We insist that our children be punctual when they practice or play sports—the coach might bench them!

I ask you to think and pray about this matter. One of my mother’s favorite phrases is sufficient: “If the shoe fits, wear it.”