

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Birthday Wishes

(Jerry Fite)

Your mom and I wanted to send you this note with the enclosed birthday card. The card is the most appropriate one we could find for our 25 year old. We hope the card gives you a little chuckle. May your day be a good one!

Normally, your mom and I along with your brothers and sisters would be taking you out to your favorite restaurant for a nice dinner. But this year we will not do so. It is not that we do not care about you, but it is because we love your soul. It broke our heart the day you told us that you no longer desired to be a faithful Christian. We have tried to change your mind by addressing your reasons, but it seems you are determined to forsake your Lord and withdraw yourself from Him and his people.

Your mom and I determined when we became Christians to always follow God's wisdom. God instructs us plainly to not have company with a member of the church who persists in sin. Notice how specific His command is: *“but as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or*

an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat” (1 Corinthians 5:11). We do not believe you have committed fornication or lowered yourself to be an extortioner, but when you strongly desire this world, and turn your back from the faithful service to our good Lord you are practicing a form of idolatry (*Colossians 3:5*). If you had merely refused to work and make a living for your own family, we would have to withdraw our social contact with you so you could see how serious your condition before God really is (*2 Thessalonians 3:14*).

I wish the local church would have cared enough for your soul to withdraw their social intermingling with you. But as Paul had already judged what should be done after hearing of the actions of the unfaithful brother independent of the actions of the local church, do you think he would have continued to eat with the unfaithful brother when he came to Corinth?

We feel that we might be the last barrier in your way unto a certain destiny in Hell. You never desired much to mingle with your brothers and sisters in your local church, but we know how much you enjoy and desire our company. Therefore we must withdraw our social interaction

with you. It hurts deeply to not sit at one table with you and celebrate your birthday over a good meal. But we must put our Lord first, even above our children, and follow his wisdom and instruction (*Matthew 10:37*).

You have been living on your own now for a couple of years, making your own way in life. Being newly married, you now have your own family. Your mom and I are no longer “laying down the law” as we did when you lived under our roof. You are now raised, making your own decisions. We just wish you would let the Lord be the center of that life.

Until you cease from your unfaithfulness, we will trust in God's wisdom and abstain from social meals with you which we have always enjoyed. You will always be one of our children. We will be assessable to you if you ever have any need. God has not commanded us to avoid contact with you, or this note would be wrong for us to send. He is commanding us to take away our social company from you while you persist in sin. We long for the day when we can celebrate your birthday over our favorite meal as faithful children of God.

Love. . . dad and mom.