

### 3.1 Shunning Right or Wrong?

In 1947 Jehovah's Witnesses did not agree with the policy of shunning another member, in fact they hypocritically criticize Catholics for doing that very thing, excommunicating its members. See this page from the January 8, 1947 *Awake!* They go as far as saying it has no Biblical support.



## Are You Also Excommunicated?

**I**F YOU are one of the 138,000,000 people in the world that were born and raised as "Protestants", then you are already excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy. This means that you are looked upon with the blackest contempt by the Vatican, being cursed and damned with the Devil and his angels. Says the *Catholic Encyclopedia*:

With the foregoing exceptions [infidels, pagans, Mohammedans, and Jews], all who have been baptized are liable to excommunication, even those [protestants] who have never belonged to the true Church, since by their baptism they are really her subjects, though of course rebellious ones. Moreover, the Church excommunicates not only those who abandon the true faith to embrace [protestant] schism or heresy, but likewise the members of heretical and schismatic communities who have been born therein.

All those belonging to such lodges as the Masonic, Fenians, Independent Order of Good Templars, Odd Fellows, Sons of Temperance, or the Knights of Pythias, are also excommunicated.

This is "canon law" which the Roman Catholic Hierarchy seeks to enforce on the pretext that it is God's law. The authority for excommunication, they claim, is based on the teachings of Christ and the apostles, as found in the following scriptures: Matthew 18: 15-19; 1 Corinthians 5: 3-5; 16: 22; Galatians 1: 8, 9; 1 Timothy 1: 20; Titus 3: 10. But the

Hierarchy's excommunication, as a punishment and "medicinal" remedy (*Catholic Encyclopedia*), finds no support in these scriptures. In fact, it is altogether foreign to Bible teachings.—Hebrews 10: 26-31.

Where, then, did this practice originate? The *Encyclopædia Britannica* says that papal excommunication is not without pagan influence, "and its variations cannot be adequately explained unless account be taken of several non-Christian analogues of excommunication." The superstitious Greeks believed that when an excommunicated person died the Devil entered the body, and therefore, "in order to prevent it, the relatives of the deceased cut his body in pieces and boil them in wine." Even the Druids had a method of expelling those who lost faith in their religious superstitions. It was therefore after Catholicism adopted its pagan practices, A.D. 325, that this new chapter in religious excommunication was written.

Thereafter, as the pretensions of the Hierarchy increased, the weapon of excommunication became the instrument by which the clergy attained a combination of ecclesiastical power and secular tyranny that finds no parallel in history. Princes and potentates that opposed the dictates of the Vatican were speedily impaled on the tines of excommunication and hung over persecution fires. Not

## 6.2 In 1952 they had a change of policy.

However within 5 years they have a change of policy and adopt the same attitude that they had criticised the Catholics for see the following Watchtower.

\*\*\*Watchtower 1952 11/15 pp. 703-704 Questions From Readers \*\*\*

● In the case of where a father or mother or son or daughter is disfellowshipped, how should such person be treated by members of the family in their family relationship?

...The parent must by laws of God and of man fulfill his parental obligations to the child or children as long as they are dependent minors, and the child or children must render filial submission to the parent as long as legally underage or as long as being without parental consent to depart from the home. **Of course, if the children are of age, then there can be a departing and breaking of family ties in a physical way, because the spiritual ties have already snapped.**

If children are of age and continue to associate with a disfellowshipped parent because of receiving material support from him or her, then they must consider how far their spiritual interests are being endangered by continuing under this unequal arrangement, and whether they can arrange to support themselves, living apart from the fallen-away parent. **Their continuing to receive material support should not make them compromise so as to ignore the disfellowshipped state of the parent. If, because of acting according to the disfellowship order of the company of God's people, they become threatened with a withdrawal of the parental support, then they must be willing to take such consequences.**

**Satan's influence through the disfellowshipped member of the family will be to cause the other member or members of the family who are in the truth to join the disfellowshipped member in his course or in his position toward God's organization.** To do this would be disastrous, and so the faithful family member must recognize and conform to the disfellowship order. How would or could this be done while living under the same roof or in personal, physical contact daily with the disfellowshipped? In this way: By refusing to have religious relationship with the disfellowshipped.

The marriage partner would render the marriage dues according to the law of the land and in due payment for all material benefits bestowed and accepted. But to have religious communion with the disfellowshipped person—no, there would be none of that! **The faithful marriage partner would not discuss religion with the apostate or disfellowshipped and would not accompany that one to his (or her) place of religious association and participate in the meetings with that one.** As Jesus said: "If he does not listen even to the congregation [which was obliged to disfellowship him], let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector [to Jehovah's sanctified nation]." (Matt. 18:17, NW) Hurt to such one would not be authorized, but there would be no spiritual or religious fellowshiping. The same rule would apply to those who are in the relation of parent and child or of child and parent. What natural obligation falls upon them according to man's law and God's law the faithful parent or the faithful child will comply with. But as for rendering more than that and having religious fellowship with such one in violation of the congregation's disfellowship order—no, none of that for the faithful one! **If the faithful suffers in some material or other way for the faithful adherence to theocratic law, then he must accept this as suffering for righteousness' sake.**

The purpose of observing the disfellowship order is to make the disfellowshipped one realize the error of his way and to shame him, if possible, so that he may be recovered, and also to safeguard your own salvation to life in the new world in vindication of God. (2 Thess. 3:14, 15; Titus 2:8) Because of being in close, indissoluble natural family ties and being of the same household under the one roof you may have to eat material food and live physically with that one at home, in which case 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 and 2 John 10 could not apply; but do not defeat the purpose of the congregation's disfellowship order by eating spiritual or religious food with such one or receiving such one favorably in a religious way and bidding him farewell with a wish for his prosperity in his apostate course.

## 6.3 - By 1981 this is a full Shunning Policy

In 1981 the Watchtower below shows they have a full shunning policy in place something that still exists today.

\*\*\* Watchtower 1981 9/15 pp. 22-23 par. 12\*\*\*

### **Disfellowshipping—How to View It**

12 Yes, the Bible commands Christians not to keep company or fellowship with a person who has been expelled from the congregation. **Thus “disfellowshipping” is what Jehovah’s Witnesses appropriately call the expelling and subsequent shunning of such an unrepentant wrongdoer.** Their refusal to fellowship with an expelled person on any spiritual or social level reflects loyalty to God’s standards and obedience to his command at