



# The Amish Voice

MAP ♦ 575 US Highway 250 ♦ Greenwich, OH 44837 ♦ (419) 962-1515 ♦ March 2019

## Beliefs of Our Fathers: The Holy Spirit

## Chapter 3

This continues a study on the beliefs of our forefathers, based largely on the *Dordrecht Confession of Faith* from 1632. This section tells about Pneumatology, or the study of the Holy Spirit. The article has been edited for space.

### The Holy Spirit

#### Pneumatology

*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.* (John 16:13)

#### Introduction

When learning about the person of the Holy Spirit, it is important to consider what we were taught about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in our upbringing. In some Christian circles, these three are referred to as the Holy Trinity. John wrote, *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one* (1 John 5:7).

#### What the Anabaptists Teach

Growing up, we learned a lot in church

about our Father in heaven, and we learned about Jesus, God's only Son, who died on the cross, was buried, and rose from the grave three days later.

As for the Holy Spirit, He was hardly mentioned at home during prayer times or in church. Sometimes we heard about Him on the day we were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit seemed of little to no value in our everyday lives, maybe because He is most often numbered as the third person in the Trinity.

However, Article 1 of the Mennonite Confession of Faith says, "We believe in the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit: that He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of the judgment; that He indwells and comforts believers, guides them into all truth, empowers them and bestows certain gifts upon them for service as He wills, and enables them to live lives of righteousness."

Although we read our morning and evening prayers from a book, the words were often difficult to understand and were spoken directly to the Father. . . . Later in life, some of us realized that the missing ingredient in our church services

and family prayer times was the Holy Spirit and His power.

Until then, we didn't know that the Holy Spirit took Jesus' place at the end of His ministry. *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you* (John 14:16-17).

We didn't know that the Holy Spirit plays an active role in the second birth. *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit* (John 3:3-6).

We didn't know that the Holy Spirit dwells in the body of the believer, empowers and equips the believer to

overcome sin, and leads him in all truth every day. . . .

### What the Scriptures Teach

Real prayer in the Spirit requires getting together with God and speaking from your heart from the deepest parts of your soul: *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit* (Ephesians 6:18). *Praying in the Holy Ghost* (Jude 20). Real Christians, those born of the Spirit, are given divine and supernatural power from above. It is possible to sense the holy presence of God. Consider the following words from Acts 4:31-33:

*And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. . . . And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*

Today, many church-going people have given up the idea that anything like this could ever happen in our generation. It is not happening because churchgoers do not believe, . . . hindering . . . the Holy Spirit's power and continued revival:

We refrain from talking much about the Holy Spirit and His power to avoid the risk of being mistaken as fanatics. We fail to wait on the Spirit for our needs when we have money to get the job done our way.

Let's consider what took place in Acts 8, where a man named Simon tried to buy Holy-Spirit power: *When Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered*

*them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. (Acts 8:18–21)*

Obviously, Simon had witnessed the working of the Holy Spirit, but when the apostle Paul met with some church members in Ephesus and the conversation turned to the Holy Spirit, they replied, *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost* (Acts 19:2). This statement from the Ephesian disciples concerning the Holy Spirit illustrates the sad and shameful treatment often given Him, even in our day. Far too often, the Holy Spirit's existence has been ignored and His ministry misunderstood. Therefore, we need to shed light on the Holy Spirit—who He is, what He does in our world, and how He fits into our . . . lives.

We must remember that when the Holy Spirit does something, God is at work—creating, speaking, transforming us, living within us, and working in and through us. . . . Whenever the Holy Spirit is involved in our lives, God is working. For example, when Ananias lied, he lied to the Holy Spirit: *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God* (Acts 5:4). Ananias wasn't lying to a representative of God. He was lying to God.

When a lost, hell-bound sinner believes upon the name of the Lord, many wonderful things take place. That person is instantly forgiven of all his sins, translated from death to life, and removed

from the kingdom of Satan and placed into God's kingdom. But here is the most amazing part—the Father and Son, in the person of the Holy Spirit, move in to dwell inside every believer: *As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people* (2 Corinthians 6:16).

The moment we believe, Jesus comes into our lives. We become a living, walking, breathing temple, and the Spirit of God dwells inside us. Jesus said, *Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you* (John 14:17). Later, the apostle Paul wrote, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* (1 Corinthians 3:16).

In the Old Testament, the Spirit of God came upon people and anointed them for service. That is how He inspired the Old Testament prophets to write the Scriptures, but this anointing was temporary. Now the Lord indwells people through the new birth, and they become His permanent abode.

### Appearance of the Holy Spirit

Most people think of the Holy Spirit as being an invisible force. They think of Him as being untouchable and as some type of powerful energy that rules the universe. However, in the Bible the Holy Spirit is referred to as a dove (John 1:32), fire (Acts 2:3), oil (Luke 4:18), cloud (Ex. 33:9), voice (Psalm 95:7; Matt. 10:20), water (John 7:37–39), wind (John 3:8), and breath (John 20:21–23).

### Deity of the Holy Spirit

It is important for true believers to

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recognize that when the Holy Spirit dwells in us, God dwells in us. Consider the fact that when we are born again, the Holy Spirit abides in us, as we saw in John 14:17. Also, Christ is in us: *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory* (Colossians 1:27). God is in us: *No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us* (1 John 4:12). That abiding presence is God Himself, the Three in One, and the source of eternal life. God the Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son and possesses the same characteristics:

**He is everywhere at all times.** David wrote, *Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?* (Psalm 139:7).

**He is all-seeing and all-knowing.** *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God* (1 Corinthians 2:10–11).

**He is all-powerful and unstoppable.** *And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters* (Genesis 1:2).

**He has no beginning and no end.** *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* (Hebrews 9:14).

### The Person of the Holy Spirit

It is easy to think of the Holy Spirit as a vague presence if you do not understand that He is a Person in the sense that the Father is a Person and the Son is a Person. The Bible shows us He has feelings. We know the Holy Spirit can be grieved (sorely disappointed), because Paul says, *Grieve not the holy Spirit of*

*God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption* (Ephesians 4:30). We have already seen that He can be lied to (Acts 5:3). Paul also tells us to *quench* [smother] *not the Spirit* (1 Thessalonians 5:19), and Stephen accused the Jews when he said, *Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost* (Acts 7:51). Jesus told the people that *the blasphemy* [denying, cursing] *against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men* (Matthew 12:31). In Hebrews we read of the insults flung at the Son of God: *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?* (Hebrews 10:29). So we see that the Spirit can be grieved, lied to, quenched, resisted, blasphemed, and insulted.

### Author of the Old and New Testaments

In Old Testament times, the Holy Spirit came upon certain people for specific reasons. When that reason was fulfilled, the Holy Spirit departed. *Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul* (1 Samuel 16:13-14). King David recognized this aspect of the Holy Spirit's ministry in the Old Testament and prayed, *Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me* (Psalm 51:11).

Peter explains that the Old Testament was written by men moved by the Holy Spirit: *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost* (2 Peter 1:21). David agreed, saying, *The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue* (2 Samuel 23:2). Jeremiah wrote, *Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me,*

*Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth* (Jeremiah 1:9).

This is also true of the New Testament: *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God* (Revelation 2:7). Paul wrote, *Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual* (1 Corinthians 2:13).

### The Holy Spirit's Ministry

The Person of the Holy Spirit was already present and active in the work of creation *And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters* (Genesis 1:2).

In Numbers 11, the people of Israel were complaining. When Moses turned to God with his problem, God told him to choose seventy men from the elders of Israel and bring them to Him. *And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone* (Numbers 11:17). In verse 25, this was accomplished: *And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.*

In 1 Samuel 11:6, *the Spirit of God came upon Saul* in power, and in 1 Samuel 16:14, *the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him.*

In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit was involved throughout Jesus' life on earth. The Spirit placed Jesus in Mary's womb, and *the angel of the LORD appeared unto* [Joseph] *in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take*

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unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:20). He descended on Jesus at baptism: *The heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him* (Matthew 3:16). *And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness* (Luke 4:1). A most amazing thing happened when Jesus was in the synagogue. He opened the book of Isaiah and said, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel* (Luke 4:18).

It was through the Spirit of God that Jesus drove out demons: *But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you* (Matthew 12:28). By that same Spirit, Jesus was raised from the dead: *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you* (Romans 8:11).

Jesus taught Nicodemus that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5). Jesus also taught, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water* (John 7:37-38). John adds an explanation concerning the rivers of living water: *But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive* (John 7:39).

At age thirty, Jesus went into full-time ministry. People followed Him and listened to His teachings. Many of His followers thought He was the one who would deliver them from the Roman government and be their next king. They were surprised when Jesus said, *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away . . . because I said, I go unto the Father* (John 14:28). Jesus' disciples were astonished.

In one short moment, their whole world turned upside down. They had given up everything and followed Jesus. He had taught them for three years. They knew no other master. Peter said he would give his own life for Him. Thomas asked Jesus to let them go with Him.

In Jesus' final discourse to His disciples, we see numerous promises He would fulfill on their behalf. In John 14:15-26, we find the core of His message. He told them that after His departure, the Holy Spirit would come in His place:

*If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

*Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?*

*Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.*

*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

This brings us to John 16:7, where Jesus

makes a powerful statement about the coming Holy Spirit: *It is expedient for you [to your advantage or for your own good] that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter [Holy Spirit] will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.* These were meant to be words of encouragement to His disciples: "Look, it is for your advantage that I leave, because as soon as I leave, I'll send the Holy Spirit in my place."

Why was it to our advantage that Jesus left and sent the Holy Spirit? Jesus was on earth as a man and could only be at one place at a time. However, the Spirit could be everywhere at the same time. Jesus ministered to people from the outside in, whereas the Holy Spirit ministers to people from the inside out.

When the Spirit showed up in Acts chapter 2, more happened in a few hours than happened in Jesus' three years of ministry. Since that time, tens of thousands of Holy-Spirit-empowered missionaries have been sent throughout the world. As a result, millions of lost souls have been brought into the kingdom of God.

### The Spirit's Role in the New Birth

We are by nature the children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3). In Psalm 51:5 David says, *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.* We enter the world and are bent on being independent from God and running after the things of the world. Something has to happen to us if we are to be saved from the wrath of God (1 Thessalonians 1:10). We must be changed. Therefore, the Holy Spirit will reprove [convict] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8).

The new birth is the result of the work of the Holy Spirit enabling us to see our sin as God sees it and to see our desperate need for a Savior. The Holy Spirit quickens (makes alive) a spiritually dead person. *It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing* (John 6:63). Paul

wrote, *The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life* (2 Corinthians 3:6). When a spiritually dead person is made alive (born again), the Holy Spirit:

#### **Seals the believer**

*In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.* (Ephesians 1:13)

*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* (Ephesians 4:30)

#### **Empowers the believer**

*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.* (Acts 1:8)

*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* (Romans 8:2)

#### **Is the earnest (guarantee) of the believer**

*In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* (Ephesians 1:13-14)

#### **Is promised to reside in us**

*Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.* (John 14:17)

*To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* (Colossians 1:27)

#### **Is the believer's partner in prayer**

*The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.* (Romans 8:26-27)

### **The Holy Spirit as Gift Giver**

Gifts of the Spirit are special abilities given by the Holy Spirit to believers for the purpose of building up the body of Christ. The list of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 includes wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Similar lists appear in Ephesians 4:7-13 and Romans 12:3-8 and include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

The gifts of the Spirit are simply God enabling believers to do what He has called them to do. Ephesians 4:12-14 says He gave those gifts *for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

Regarding the supernatural gifts of the Spirit, we must be aware of two things. First, the supernatural gifts have long been the subject of controversy in Christian circles. They have caused family members to turn against each other and churches to divide. Some Christians believe and teach that certain gifts (speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, healings, and miracles) ceased after we received the New Testament (1 Corinthians 13:10). Others believe and teach that all the gifts are in operation now just like they were in the early church.

Secondly, some believers have become so caught up in the supernatural gifts that they have thrown out the foundational doctrines of the Bible. Additionally, they have made a religion out of the God-given gifts and have become worshippers of the gifts rather than worshipping the Giver of the gifts. For these sad reasons, other believers have chosen to walk in the

opposite direction and have quenched and suffocated the power and the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Both approaches are off balance. Our focus ought to be to desire the best gifts, but in love. For that reason, consider the following Bible passage:

*But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.*

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity (love), I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3).*

### **How the Holy Spirit Speaks**

It is clear from reading the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit is able to speak like a human being, as well as speak in a still, small voice, to our spirit. When He speaks, the Bible commands us to listen to His voice. Consider the following instances when the Holy Spirit showed up and spoke to mankind in the flesh:

*Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.* (Acts 8:29)

*As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed.* (Acts 13:2-4)

*Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate [think about ahead of time]: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.* (Mark 13:11)

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### Walking in the Spirit

Before we were born again, we had only one nature—the fleshly nature. Our decisions and choices were based upon our own flesh and desires. After the new birth, we should have a new nature, being regenerated by the Holy Spirit. This simply means that as born-again believers, we wake up in the morning and have to choose which master we want to obey. If we choose to obey our old fleshly self, we will often appear to others as one who has never been born again. If we choose to obey the Spirit, we will appear as one who has experienced the new birth. *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would* (Gal. 5:16–17).

Walking in the Spirit means walking in harmony with God and others. We must guard our hearts and tongues from continuing in our old ways of bickering,

bitterness, and conflict. We must learn to rest in Him and let Him fight our battles. Resting in God’s power is a sign of true faith. If we truly walk in the Spirit, we will find the following list of “fruit” appearing in our everyday lives: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law* (Galatians 5:22–23).

The fruit spoken of in these verses cannot be faked or manufactured by the believer. Our part is to yield and trust. God’s part is to produce the fruit: *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing* (John 15:4–5).

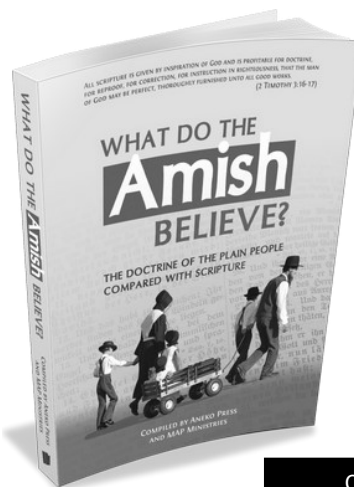
### Prayer

Dear Lord, thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to dwell in our bodies. Thank

You for the many times He has comforted our hearts, led us in all truth, protected us from evil, and empowered us to do the work of the ministry. We stand in awe! My utmost and passionate prayer is that You, O God, would use this study to start a fire in the reader’s soul. Awaken us from our heavy slumber and dead religion and send a Holy Spirit revival. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

### Do your beliefs line up with our Anabaptist forefathers?

In this 160-page book, **What Do the Amish Believe?**, nine authors took the time to go back and study the original beliefs of our forefathers and compare what they believed to what many of us believe today.



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## The Battle —By Dale Schmucker

They tried to destroy and trip me so badly  
 I wouldn't get up anymore,  
 Pushing me down in the mud and the mire  
 Until I was deep in despair.

They called me a failure and good for nothing,  
 And oh, they would laugh me to scorn;  
 Gathering 'round me to tear me to pieces  
 As I lay there, weary and torn.

Chorus:

But Jesus has rescued me.  
 He came and He set me free.  
 When darkness was all that I could see,  
 My Savior did rescue me.

My Savior did rescue me.  
 My Savior did rescue me.

A battle is raging the war of a lifetime  
 Against a foe that's unseen.  
 He's robbing and killing, dividing, destroying  
 The children of the one true King.

Loving each other they follow their Captain  
 Believing the Spirit and Word.  
 We will be triumphant though all hell is raging;  
 Victory has been assured

Chorus:

Victory is assured  
 Triumphant through my Lord  
 Jesus is greater and Jesus is Lord  
 Victory is assured.

Victory is assured.  
 Victory is assured.

**The Christian is supposed to love his neighbor, and since his wife is his nearest neighbor, she should be his deepest love. —Martin Luther**

*Shamefacedness, sobriety, meek and quiet spirit*—these and many other terms are used to describe how Godly women are to conduct themselves.

I fear that these words have been misunderstood and even taken out of context by zealous people who want to follow the letter of the law. Way too many women or sisters are forced to live a life of oppression, becoming much more like a servant than a helper.

Proverbs 31:10 says, *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.* I have not bought any rubies lately, but I have a wife who is far more valuable than any jewelry, regardless of the dollar value put on the gems. There are a great many virtuous women in our midst. Let's treat them as they should be treated, and let's not ever take them for granted.

I have seen women who should have been treasured and greatly appreciated, but instead were "put in their place," so to

speak, by men who themselves were not in their place. Needless to say, this does not turn out well. Homes that should reflect a peaceful atmosphere are instead more like a battleground—or worse.

Far too many sisters are victims of sexual abuse by fathers, brothers, cousins, and others—things that should not be named among us even once (Ephesians 5:3). Going into marriage with that horrible baggage and then to be treated in any way other than to be esteemed very highly in love (1 Thessalonians 5:13) will be disastrous.

A person living under oppression will struggle with depression. Then, instead of going to the root of the problem, many will go to a doctor who will do what doctors do—prescribe something to help them cope. No, no, no!

If women are treated like they should be treated, they will (in the vast majority of cases) in turn create a godly and pleasant atmosphere in the home.

I have often heard about how women are to be silent in the church, not to teach, etc. There are some guidelines in the Bible along these lines, but there are other Bible verses that indicate the opposite such as older women teaching younger women (Titus 2:3–5). We are in the last days.

God said he will pour out His Spirit in these days, and our sons and daughters will prophesy (Joel 2:28).

God wants to use our wives and sisters in his kingdom. We men need to encourage them to serve Him and to be active in God's service. There are many opportunities for them to serve God without teaching men.

**Husbands, let's rise to these challenges and love our wives well! Your marriage not only impacts your wife, but your children and future generations. By how you love your wife, you are teaching your sons how to treat women, and you are teaching your daughters what they should expect from men. —Dave Willis**

We men need to draw them out, help them to bloom, and appreciate them. In turn, we will be rewarded many times over. I am saying all this to try to generate an appreciation for the many godly sisters among us. We are blessed to have wives and daughters who fit the Proverbs 31 profile.

Let's esteem and treat them very highly.  
Amen!

## Lemons

—By Grace



Life can throw us lemons, like when you are married and your husband becomes very ill—so much so that he's fighting for his life. He is a very kind man. We

both get tested and tried. He has been a faithful servant of God throughout his life. He got married later in life.

Sometimes the Lord uses such things to see what is on the surface—things like anger or negative responses. It then usually means that there are underlying issues from our past. With me, I've seen issues from my past float to the top, like if decisions are made that make me feel insignificant, like I haven't been informed and I don't feel included. I soon realize that it comes from my past when I

was a child. I was not included in a lot of things, whether it was an outing with my dad when others went fishing and I wasn't allowed to, or later building a house and I could make very few decisions. Even if it came to our room or the flowers my mom planted. At times she included my sister, but never me.

So now I know I need healing in that area. So what area do you have that keeps popping up in your life or marriage or job? Check your past. There might be a hidden hurt lurking.  
—Grace



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### March

#### Finding Clear Guidance, Part 2

You don't have to make major life decisions alone—God wants to give you clear direction. Learn the principles necessary to making right decisions in this message from Charles Stanley.

#### What Fathers Need to Do

How will my son learn to be a man? Dr. Meg Meeker tells Dennis Rainey why it's important for parents to teach their sons about the power of virtues like self-control.

#### Why Are Believers Mad at God? Parts 1 and 2

The apostle Paul tells us that there will be “haters of God” (Romans 1:30). People who believe in God can hate God. You cannot hate someone you do not believe exists. Join Emerson and Jonathan Eggerichs episodes as they examine four reasons someone might hate God.

### April

#### Free from the Power of Sin

Charles Stanley explains how an abundant life is possible only when we recognize all that our Savior did for us at Calvary. Once then will we see it as the power of God to redeem us from our sins and to deliver us from what we were before we met our Savior, Jesus Christ.

#### Respecting Your Son

Emerson Eggerichs explains that one compelling desire of a mother is to connect to her son, and she can do that by what she says and how she says it.

#### Are Husbands Hyper-Sensitive or Just Highly-Sensitive to Disrespect?

Some husbands are hyper-sensitive to anything that strikes them as disrespectful. They overreact to their good-willed wives who do not intend any such disrespect. Sadly, these men read disrespect into her every question, concern, or disagreement.

#### Are Wives Hyper-Sensitive or Just Highly Sensitive to a Husband's Unclear Comments?

Most husbands are assured of their wife's love. Women are virtuous and excellent caregivers. Because of a wife's loving, nurturing nature, few men have an undercurrent of curiosity and insecurity about a wife's love.

### May

#### The Challenge of Forgiving Ourselves

Motivated by His great love, God acted to forgive your sins through the saving work of Jesus Christ. You may know that God has forgiven you, but have you forgiven yourself? Charles Stanley explains that in order to experience full forgiveness, we must experience God's forgiveness, forgive others, and learn to forgive ourselves.

#### Drawing Closer to God and Each Other, Parts 1 and 2

Joining Focus on the Family, author Gary Thomas explains how a husband and wife can foster oneness in their marriage by pursuing God together.

#### Six “Thank You” Statements to Say to Your Spouse

Emerson and Jonathan Eggerichs ask listeners to consider how they might express thankfulness to their spouse.

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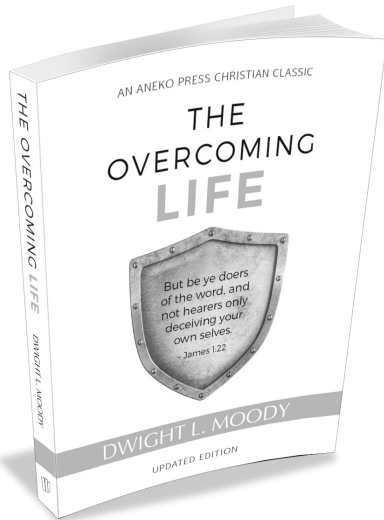
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*Continued from the last issue.*

## Gifts of Grace

*Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart. (Matthew 11:29)*

### Humility

There is no harder lesson to learn than the lesson of humility. It's not taught in the schools of men, but only in the school of Christ. It is the rarest of all the gifts. Very rarely do we find a man or woman who closely follows the footsteps of the Master in meekness and humility. I believe that it is the hardest lesson Jesus Christ taught His disciples while He was here on earth. It almost looked, at first, as though He failed to teach it to the twelve men who had been with Him almost constantly for three years.

I believe that if we are humble enough, we will get a great blessing, and I think that blessing depends more on us than on the Lord. He is always ready to give a blessing and give it freely, but we are not always in a position to receive it. He always blesses the humble. If we can get down in the dust before Him, we won't be disappointed. It was Mary at the feet of Jesus who had chosen the good part.

Did you ever notice the reason Jesus gave for learning of Him? He could have said, "Learn of me, because I am the

most advanced thinker of the age. I have performed miracles that no one else has performed. His reason, though, was that He was meek and lowly in heart.

We read of the three men in Scripture whose faces shone. All three were noted for their meekness and humility. We are told that the face of Christ shone at His transfiguration. Moses, after he had been on the mount for forty days, came down from his communion with God with a shining face. When Stephen stood before the Sanhedrin on the day of his death, his face shone like the face of an angel. If we desire our faces to shine, we must get into the valley of humility and go down in the dust before God.

John Bunyan says that it is hard to get down into the valley of humiliation. The descent is steep and rugged, but it is very fruitful, fertile, and beautiful when we get there. I think that no one will dispute that. Almost everyone, even the ungodly, admires meekness.

Someone asked Augustine what was the most important Christian quality. He said, "Humility." They asked him what was the second, and he replied, "Humility." They asked him the third, and he said, "Humility." I think that if we are humble, we have all the graces.

Some years ago I saw what is called a sensitive plant. I happened to breathe on it, and it suddenly drooped its head. I touched it, and it withered away. Humility is as sensitive as that. It cannot safely be brought out on display. A man who flatters himself and believes that he is humble and walking close to the Master is self-deceived. Humility does not consist in thinking poorly of ourselves, but in not thinking of ourselves at all. Moses did not know that his face shone. If humility speaks of itself, it is gone.

Someone said that the grass is an illustration of this lowly quality. It was

created for the lowliest service. Cut it, and it springs up again. The cattle feed upon it, and yet how beautiful it is.

The showers fall upon the mountain peaks and very often leave them barren, because the water rushes down into the meadows and valleys and makes the lowly places fertile. If a man is proud and lifted up, rivers of grace may flow over him and leave him barren and unfruitful. However, they bring blessing to the man who has been brought low by the grace of God.

A person can imitate love, faith, hope, and all the other graces, but it is very difficult to imitate humility. You can soon detect false humility.

There is saying in the East that as the tares and wheat grow, they show which God has blessed. The ears that God has blessed bow their heads and acknowledge every grain. The more fruitful they are, the lower their heads are bowed. The tares that God has sent as a curse, lift their heads erect, high above the wheat, but their only fruit is evil.

I have a pear tree on my farm that is very beautiful. It is one of the prettiest trees on my property. Every branch reaches up to the light and stands almost like a wax candle, but I never get any fruit from it. I have another tree that was so full of fruit last year that the branches almost touched the ground. If we only get down low enough, God will use every one of us for His glory.

As the lark that soars the highest builds her nest the lowest; as the nightingale that sings so sweetly sings in the shade when all things rest; as the branches that are most laden with fruit bend lowest; and as the ship most laden sinks deepest in the water, so the holiest Christians are the humblest.

Some years ago, the London Times told the story of a petition that was

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being circulated for signatures. It was a time of great excitement, and the petition was intended to have great influence in the House of Lords. But there was one word left out. Instead of reading, "We humbly beseech thee," it read, "We beseech thee." So it was ruled out. If we want to make an appeal to the God of heaven, we must humble ourselves. If we humble ourselves before the Lord, we won't be disappointed.

As I studied the lives of those mentioned in the Bible who demonstrated humility, I grew convicted. If you have any regard for me, pray that I may have humility. When I examine my life next to theirs, I say shame on the Christianity of the present day. If you want to get a good idea of yourself, look at some of the people in the Bible who have been clothed with meekness and humility, and note the contrast between their position and yours before God and man.

One of the meekest men in history was John the Baptist. Remember when they asked if he was Elijah, or this prophet, or that prophet? He said, "No."

He could have said some very flattering things about himself. He could have said, "I am the son of the old priest Zacharias. Haven't you heard of my fame as a preacher? I have probably baptized more people than any man living. The world has never seen a preacher like me."

I honestly believe that most men in his position would do that today. Some time ago I heard a man on the train talking so loudly that all the people in the car could hear him. He declared that he had baptized more people than any man in his denomination. He boasted about how many thousands of miles he had traveled and how many sermons he had preached. He carried on until I was so ashamed that I hid my head. This is the age of boasting and arrogance—the day of the great "I."

I recently realized that in all the Psalms you can't find any place where David refers to his victory over Goliath. If David lived today, there would have been an entire book written about it. He would have been in demand as a lecturer, and would have added a title to his name, like G.G.K. for Great Giant Killer. That's how it is today. We have great evangelists, great preachers, great theologians, and great bishops.

They asked John the Baptist who he was. He answered that he was a nobody, but was only a voice to be heard and he was not there to be seen. He didn't have a word to say about himself.

I once heard a little bird faintly singing close by me, but when it got clear out of sight, its notes were even sweeter. The higher it flew, the sweeter its song became. If we can only get self out of sight and learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, we will be lifted up into heavenly places.

Mark tells us that John preached, *There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose* (Mark 1:7). Think of that. Keep in mind that Christ was looked upon as a deceiver and a village carpenter. Yet here's John, the son of an old priest. John had a much higher position in the sight of men than Jesus. Great crowds came to hear him, and even Herod heard him speak.

When John's disciples told him that Jesus was beginning to draw big crowds, he humbly responded, *A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease* (John 3:27–30).

It is easy to read that, but hard for us to live in the power of it. It's very hard for us to be ready to decrease, to grow smaller and smaller, so that Christ may increase. The morning star fades away when the sun rises.

Now let's take a closer look at ourselves. Have we been decreasing? Do we think less of ourselves and of our position than we did a year ago? Are we seeking to obtain some position of dignity? Do we want to hold on to some title, and are we offended because we aren't treated with the respect we think is due us?

Some time ago I heard a man in the pulpit say that he would be offended if he wasn't addressed by his title. Are you going to take that position? Do you believe that you must have a title, and that you must be addressed by that title or be offended? John didn't want any title. When we are right with God, we won't care about titles.

Early in his ministry, Paul called himself *the least of the apostles* (1 Corinthians 15:9). Later on he claimed to be *less than the least of all saints* (Ephesians 3:8). Right before his death, he humbly declared that he was the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). Notice how he seemed to grow smaller and smaller in his own estimation. It was the same with John. I hope and pray that as time passes, we desire to decrease so that He may increase, letting God have all the honor and glory.

Andrew Murray said, "When I look back upon my own religious experience, or round upon the church of Christ in the world, I stand amazed at the thought of how little humility is sought after as the distinguishing feature of the discipleship of Jesus. In preaching and living, in the daily communication of the home and social life, in the more special fellowship with Christians, in the direction and performance of work for Christ, how much proof there is that humility is not much esteemed as the only root from

which the graces can grow, the one indispensable condition of true fellowship with Jesus.”

See what Jesus says about John: *he was a burning and a shining light* (John 5:35). Christ gave him the honor that belonged to him. If you take a humble position, Christ will see it. If you want God to help you, take a low position. I am afraid that if we had been in John’s place, many of us would have said, “What did Christ say? I’m a burning and shining light?” Then we would have had that acknowledgement put in the newspaper and had copies sent to our friends with that part highlighted. Sometimes I receive an envelope just full of newspaper clippings from a man stating how eloquent he is. The man wants me to get him a church. Do you think that a man who has such eloquence would be looking for a church? No, they would all be looking for him.

Isn’t that embarrassing? Sometimes I think it’s a wonder that anyone is converted these days. *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth* (Proverbs 27:2). If we want God to lift us up, let us get down. The lower we get, the higher God will lift us. Christ’s eulogy of John was, *Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist* (Matthew 11:11).

There is a story told of William Carey, the great missionary, that he was invited by the governor-general of India to go to a dinner party. In attendance were some military officers who belonged to the aristocracy and who looked down on missionaries with scorn and contempt. One of those officers said at the table, “I believe Carey was a shoemaker, wasn’t he, before he took up the profession of missionary?”

Let nothing be done  
through strife or vainglory;  
but in lowliness of mind let  
each esteem other better  
than themselves.

Philippians 2:3

Mr. Carey spoke up and said, “Oh no, I was only a cobbler. I could only mend shoes.” He wasn’t ashamed of it.

The one prominent virtue of Christ, next to His obedience, is His humility—and even His obedience grew out of His humility. *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross* (Philippians 2:6–8).

In His lowly birth, His submission to His earthly parents, His seclusion during thirty years, His consorting with the poor and despised, and in His entire submission and dependence upon His Father, this virtue that was consummated in His death on the cross shines out.

One day Jesus was on His way to Capernaum, and He talked about His coming death, suffering, and resurrection. He heard quite a heated discussion going on behind Him. When He got to the house at Capernaum, He turned to His disciples and asked, “What was all that discussion about?”

I can picture John looking at James, and Peter at Andrew, and they all looked ashamed. That discussion of who will be the greatest has wrecked party after party, one society after another.

To teach them humility, Christ placed a little child in their midst and said, *Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great* (Luke 9:48).

To me, one of the saddest things in the life of Jesus Christ was the fact that just before His crucifixion, His disciples argued about who would be the greatest.

The same night, He instituted the Last Supper and they ate the Passover together. It was His last night on earth. They never saw Him as sorrowful before. He knew Judas was going to sell Him for thirty pieces of silver and that Peter would deny Him. In addition to that, when going into the very shadow of the cross, there arose this strife about who would be the greatest. He took a towel and wrapped it around Himself like a slave. Then He took a basin of water, stooped down, and washed their feet. That was another object lesson of humility. *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet* (John 13:13–14).

When the Holy Spirit came, those men were filled. That moment in time marked the difference. Matthew took up his pen to write, and he kept himself out of sight. He tells what Peter and Andrew did, but he calls himself “the publican.” He tells how they left everything to follow Christ, but doesn’t mention the feast he gave.

Jerome says that Mark’s gospel is to be considered Peter’s memoirs and to have been published by his authority. Yet here we constantly find that damaging things are mentioned about Peter, and things to his credit are not referred to. Mark’s gospel omits all reference to Peter’s faith in venturing on the sea, but

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goes into detail about the story of his fall and denial of our Lord. Peter put himself down and lifted others up.

If the gospel of Luke had been written today, it would be signed by the great Dr. Luke, and his picture would be on the cover. But you can't even find Luke's name in that gospel. He keeps himself out of sight. He wrote two books, and his name isn't found in either.

John hid himself under the expression "the disciple whom Jesus loved." None of the four men whom history credits as the authors of the Gospels lay claim to their authorship in their writings. I wish I had the same spirit, that I could just get out of sight and hide myself.

I believe our only hope is to be filled with the Spirit of Christ. May God fill us so that we will be filled with meekness and humility. Let us take the hymn, "Oh, To Be Nothing, Nothing," and make it the language of our hearts. It breathes the spirit of Him who said, *The Son can do nothing of Himself* (John 5:19).

Oh, to be nothing, nothing!  
Only to lie at His feet,  
A broken and emptied vessel—  
For the Master's use made meet!

Emptied that He might fill me  
As forth to His service I go;  
Broken, that so unhindered  
His life through me might flow.

A gentleman came to me once and asked which promise of Christ's I thought was the most precious. I took some time to look them over, but gave up. I found that I couldn't answer his question. It's like a man with a large family of children. He can't tell someone which child he likes best, because he loves them all. But even if it's not the best, this is one of the sweetest promises of all: *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke*

*upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light* (Matthew 11:28-30).

Some promises are given with conditions attached to them. For instance, Psalm 66:18 says, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*. I don't even need to pray as long as I'm cherishing some known sin. He will not hear me, much less answer me.

The Lord says in Psalm 84:11, *For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*. I have no claims under that promise unless I walk uprightly.

Some of the promises were made to certain individuals or nations. For instance, God promised that He would make Abraham's seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, but that is not a promise for you or me. Some promises were made to the Jews and do not apply to the Gentiles.

Then there are promises without conditions. He promised Adam and Eve that He would send a Savior. There was no power that could keep Christ from coming at the appointed time. When Christ left the world, He promised to send us the Holy Spirit. He had only been gone ten days when the Holy Spirit came. You can run right through the Scriptures, and you will find that some of the promises are with, and some without, conditions; and if we don't comply with the conditions, we cannot expect them to be fulfilled.

I believe that every person on the face of the earth will be compelled to testify that their experience proves that if they complied with the conditions, the Lord fulfilled His word to the letter. Joshua, the old Hebrew hero, serves as an illustration. After having tested God forty years in the Egyptian brick kilns, forty years in the desert, and thirty years

in the Promised Land, his dying testimony was that every word of God had been fulfilled: *Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof* (Joshua 23:14).

I believe it would be easier to lift the ocean than to break one of God's promises. So when we come to a promise like the one we have before us now, we cannot rightly disregard it or think that God does not mean what He says: *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (Matthew 11:28).

You might say, "I hope Mr. Moody is not going to talk about this familiar text." Yes, I am. When I pick up a photo album, it does not interest me if all the photographs are new; but if I know any of the faces, I stop to look at them at once. So it is with these old, well-known texts. They have quenched our thirst before, but the water is still bubbling up, and we cannot drink it dry.

If you probe the human heart, you'll find a need. That need is rest. The cry of the world today is, "Where can rest be found?" Why are theaters and places of entertainment and amusement so crowded? Why do so many spend time on Sundays driving around? Why do many seek out immorality or alcohol? Some people think they will find rest in pleasure, or in wealth, or in literature. They are seeking and finding no rest.

—D. L. Moody

Where can rest be found? Find out in the next issue!

This article was taken from the book *The Overcoming Life* — by D. L. Moody. To order this book, send \$7.00 and your address to Aneko Press, PO Box 652, Abbotsford, WI 54405.

There was a day, nearly eight years ago, that I came to a startling realization: I no longer cared about being modest.

I was tired of trying to camouflage my body. I was tired of trying to be Miss Invisible. I wondered what the point of modesty was because it certainly hadn't provided protection. No matter how plain I was dressed, there still were wandering eyes...and sometimes hands. The only logical explanation I could come up with was that the female body was inherently evil, and therefore, needed to be covered.

I shudder now. I was so close to throwing modesty out the window. Honestly, it's only the mercy of God that kept me from doing so. Though I am not sure how I got the idea, I grew up thinking that modesty was to protect me from evil. I thought that modesty was to, more or less, "keep men from lusting." If something bad happened to me, it was my fault – I must have dressed provocatively.

Thank God, I was wrong.

I began looking into what the Bible says about modesty and lust, and what I found unnerved me. The verses that speak on modesty and sobriety say nothing about

the need to do so because of a lustful eye. On the contrary, when Jesus spoke about lust, He said "that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:28) Funny how the clothing of the woman (or lack thereof) is not mentioned.

Why is that? It's because lust is a matter of the heart. "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. **For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man**" (Mark 7:20-23).

Because lust is a heart issue, my modesty does not solve a man's lust problem.

The idea that modesty is the cure for lust degrades both men and women. Think about it: it gives the connotation that men are sexual beasts who have no control over themselves. That's a very warped view of male sexuality.

Likewise, it portrays women as sexual objects, created for the pleasure of men

and to be used at male discretion. How perverse! If the female body is the problem, why is the book of Song of Solomon in the Bible?

Please hear me clearly. Ladies, I am not suggesting that it's okay for us to flaunt our bodies. Immodesty is always wrong. However, I am suggesting we take a step back and ask ourselves why modesty is important to us.

**I value modesty because God clearly commands it – not because it protects me or because it keeps a man from lusting after my body.** I could wear a "tent" and there'd still be a few perverted-minded men who'd want what's underneath. And while I strive to be modest, I now understand that my modesty doesn't cure a lustful heart.

You see, the value I place on modesty hasn't changed. But why I do it, has changed.

So, ask yourself: "Why is modesty important to me?"

Sometimes why you do what you do is just as important as what you do.



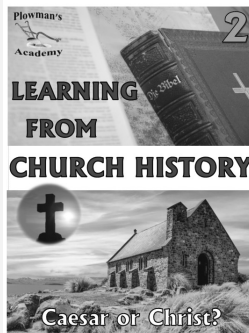
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**JW, continued from back cover**

as the Bible and an examination of our own hearts show us. Nor do they teach that we can't have hope of ever being restored to God unless we are born again through Christ.

*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23); As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one (Romans 3:10).* I have more than once been told by my neighbor that I am a good person, which, of course, is not true. The Bible says I am wretched, sinful, and wicked if I am outside of Christ. No human being is truly good; only God is good. We are made good only through His righteousness that we take on if we are in Christ.

**Do JWs Think People Need to Be Born Again?**

If asked this question directly, they will likely not answer directly with a yes or no. But the simple answer is—no. Instead, the JWs teach that you must be members of the Watchtower Society and that you must work in order to be saved. The “work” JWs are to do is mainly door--to-door “evangelism,” and submission to every rule and regulation coming from the Watchtower Society is also considered their “work.”

*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3).* All true Christians must rely on what Scripture says about salvation. *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8).*

**Can Those Who Are Not JW Go to Heaven?**

I asked my neighbor this question, and he said he personally wrestled with this for several months before concluding that, though unlikely, a few outside the JW organization might be saved if they are “good” people. To them, it's all about being good, and since the Watchtower Society is the only organization that they think knows how to read the Bible, they think they are also the only ones who can teach people how to be good. My neighbor concluded that I could almost accidentally fall into what is good, and from his earlier comments, it must seem to him that I am one of those “accidental saints.” But unlike my neighbor, the Watchtower Society does not teach that you can be saved unless you are an active member of their organization.

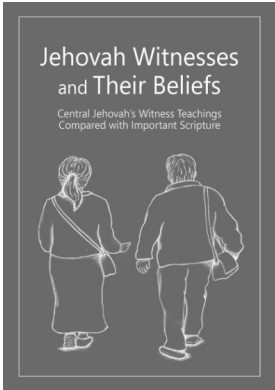
*Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and*

*I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? (1 Corinthians 1:12-13).* Is the body of Christ divided? Not at all; there is only one body of Christ and many members (individuals). Anyone who is in Christ is part of the body, regardless of where they live or what they look like or what church they attend or don't attend.

It is a warning sign of a cult when any organization says that you must be part of their organization in order to be saved. This means they are teaching a false gospel, something other than the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is what Jesus says: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door [Jesus is the door] into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber (John 10:1).*

*Free booklet—the Amish Voice, 575 US Highway 250, Greenwich, OH 44837, or call us at (419) 962-1515*



**Continued Next Issue**

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# Feedback and Response Section

1

Dear Friend, Greetings in Jesus' holy name.

Some years ago we were working at a place, and one evening on the way home, the driver asked the boy up front if he was saved, and he said he hopes to be. The man stopped and said, "Let's pray for this boy. Nobody will be saved on hopes. We have to know we are saved." Well, a few years later the man divorced his wife and went back to Maine—and was still saved; does that measure up to God's Word? Let God be the judge, but let us warn each other in these last times.

Yes, we are all sinners, and I know I'll never get to heaven

through good works; it is only through the grace of God, and I know Jesus has fulfilled His mission so all of us can be saved. But has any of us ever gone anywhere and knew that we were going to get there? God promised the Israelites that He would take them to a land of milk and honey, but only if they walked in His ways. How many of the older ones got there?

I know that Jesus paid the way for my sins if I walk in His ways, but I have many faults, so it will certainly take the grace of our dear Lord to save a sinner like me.

Sincerely,

PM, NY

Dear PM,

Thank you for your letter. About the man who got divorced and went back to Maine—I suppose we can find people who do wrong anywhere we go. Whether among the Amish or the English, there are people who can be labeled hypocrites. That is why we must look to God and to His Word for our standard and source of truth instead of relying solely on churches or man's teachings. People can and do disappoint us, but Jesus never will.

You ask if any of us have ever gone anywhere and knew that we would get there. Of course, none of us can ever know for certain that we will arrive at our earthly destination, for we do not know what a day may bring.

As you mentioned, God kept most of the Israelites out of the Promised Land. *Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles . . . and have not hearkened to my voice; surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto*

*their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: but my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went* (Numbers 14:22-24).

Even in this, though, the people could be certain. God promised that none would enter the land except Caleb and Joshua. Caleb could be certain that he was going to enter the Promised Land—not because of his works, but because of God's promise. In the same way, the rest of the Israelites could be certain that they would not enter the Promised Land no matter how good they would be for the rest of their lives. This, too, was based upon God's promise.

If no one can know that they will go to heaven based upon God's promises, then how can some be told that they will go to hell if they do not do certain things or if they do not return to their church? If you cannot be certain of heaven, then how can you be certain of hell?

You answered your own question, though. Jesus paid the way for your sins, and it will take the grace of God to save us sinners. If someone makes you a promise, there is always a chance that he will not keep his word; but when God makes a promise, you can be 100 percent certain what He says will happen.

That is how it is with eternal life. If a person tells you that you must join a certain church or follow certain rules in order to go to heaven, he could be wrong and you can only hope; but when God makes a promise, it is 100 percent certain—and God says that we can know: *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God* (1 John 5:13).

Trusting in our works, we should doubt. Trusting in God's Word and in Jesus, we can be fully confident, for Jesus paid the price for our sins. He is our righteousness. —Paul Miller

We want to hear from you! We would love to hear your testimonies of how you have been changed by Jesus! We would love to hear how the *Amish Voice* is helping you grow closer to God. We would even love to hear from you if you do not fully agree with one of our articles. Let us know why you disagree and what the Bible says about it. Take a few minutes and write to us and tell us your thoughts, ideas, suggestions, your testimony of how God is working in your life, or anything else you want to say.

You can write to us at the: Amish Voice, 575 US Highway 250, Greenwich, OH 44837



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## What Do Jehovah's Witnesses Actually Believe? Part 2

—Jeremiah Zeiset

This is part two of a three-part article on the beliefs of the religious group that refers to themselves as Jehovah's Witnesses.

### The Watchtower Organization—A Mind-Control Attempt?

The Watchtower Society teaches that God has chosen to use one organization to communicate all truth to man. They claim that only the Watchtower Society knows what is true. If the Watchtower Society comes up with a "new revelation" that contradicts something they taught before, the "new revelation" must be accepted by everyone as the new truth.

The Watchtower Society also teaches that the Bible is not literally true, that it was written by men who had divinely inspired ideas but were not writing by divine guidance; as a result, everything must be interpreted through what their organization teaches instead of what the Bible actually says. This is very convenient for them, as they can then tell JWs that Scripture means whatever they want it to say. JWs are forbidden from reading any literature except what the Watchtower Society produces, and they are not allowed to question anything the Watchtower Society says. The Watchtower Society is very controlling, which is yet another warning sign.

*Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you* (Luke 17:21). Basically, this verse is saying that if anyone is telling us to go here or to go there for Christ, we should be very concerned. We do not get Christ by going somewhere, but by Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith (Ephesians 3:17). By teaching people that only the Watchtower Society can figure out what is true, people are kept from personally reading the Bible and are kept from the real truth. Despite what they may tell you, JWs do not actually read the Bible without at the same time reading Watchtower Society literature. Sadly, what happens is that the twisted Watchtower Society literature keeps them from understanding what the Bible really says.

### Who Is Jesus to the JWs?

The JWs teach that Jesus was only a man, not God, and that Jesus didn't know that He was sent here to die until He reached the age of thirty. They teach that Jesus died for the sin nature we received from Adam, but that He did not die for the personal sins we commit. Instead, they teach that our good works can outweigh our bad deeds, and if we fulfill our duties as part of their organization, we can be saved. This is perhaps their worst false

teaching, and it clearly tells us that the JW organization is a heretical religion.

*But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed* (Galatians 1:8). *Let him be accursed* is what the Bible says, and it is true. The Watchtower Society must be avoided at all costs. There is no hope outside of Jesus Christ, and as such, the gospel of Jesus Christ is what is most under attack by our enemy, Satan. Underneath their smiling faces, there is a sad side of the JWs. It is obvious to us from having spent time with our JW neighbors that they do not have real peace in their hearts. They truly have no hope.

### Are People Good or Bad?

Because the Watchtower Society teaches that Jesus died to take away Adam's sin, they have to figure out what to do with each individual's personal sins. Their solution is to teach that people are born good, and while JWs can fail in certain things, these things do not keep them from being saved in the end as long as they do good works and fulfill their duties as JWs. They do not teach that people are bad to the core. They do not teach that people are corrupted with sin,

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