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The Minister's Life Was Completely Changed

Study 1: Galatians 1:10-16

—Teacher's Outline and Study Bible™

<p>1. He sought to please God alone, not men</p> <p>2. He proclaimed the gospel</p> <p>A. Not a man-made gospel</p> <p>B. Not a gospel received or taught by man</p> <p>C. A gospel revealed directly by Christ</p> <p>3. He had a radical change</p> <p>II. THE PROOF OF GOD'S MESSENGER & MESSAGE,</p>	<p>1:10-2:21</p> <p>A. The Minister's Life Was Completely Changed, 1:10-16</p> <p>10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.</p> <p>11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.</p> <p>12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond meas-</p>	<p>ure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:</p> <p>14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.</p> <p>15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace.</p> <p>16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:</p> <p>Change of life.</p> <p>a. His former experience</p>	<p>1) An arch-persecutor of the church</p> <p>2) A supreme example of self-righteousness</p> <p>b. His radical change</p> <p>1) Set apart & called by God's grace</p> <p>2) Called as a minister to reveal Christ</p> <p>3) Called to reveal Christ</p> <p>4) Called to seek his gospel from God alone</p>
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Section II
THE PROOF OF GOD'S MESSENGER AND MESSAGE
Galatians 1:10-2:21

Study 1: THE MINISTER'S LIFE WAS COMPLETELY CHANGED

Text: Galatians 1:10-16

Aim: To pursue a radically changed life through Christ.

Memory Verse: "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Ga.1:10).

INTRODUCTION:

One of the greatest political minds in America in the twentieth century belonged to that of Lee Atwater. He was known for his keen political insight and for his questionable political "techniques" that would help his candidate win the election. Atwater considered politics to be war. Obviously, this kind of life was meant to please only his candidate. His gospel was to win at any cost, and enemies made along the way were considered to be trophies collected during the political war.

One day, his world came to a screeching halt. Atwater discovered that he had a malignant brain tumor. All of a sudden he saw life in a different light. In the remaining months of his life, he gave his heart to Christ. Lee Atwater began to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with whoever would listen (and a lot did). He also made it a point to repent for his political sins and went to each of his self-made enemies to ask for their forgiveness. It was not long after Atwater became a Christian that he left this world for a land where the only politician is the Lord Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ.

What lessons can we draw from this example? It is a very easy thing for us to want to please men instead of God. The gospel we proclaim can become tainted with our own personal agenda. And our life-style can offend unless we...

- set our hearts to please God
- proclaim the gospel of Christ
- show that we are different by the example of our lives

Both critics of Paul and false teachers had arisen in the churches of Galatia. They were saying that Paul's call and the gospel he preached were false, that he was not a true minister of God, that he was a self-made minister who was only using the ministry for a livelihood and other greedy purposes.

Paul's answer was direct and forceful: his message and life were of God. His old life and old message had been radically changed.

OUTLINE:

1. He sought to please God alone, not men (v.10).
2. He proclaimed the gospel (vv.11-12).
3. He had a radical change of life (vv.13-16).

1. HE SOUGHT TO PLEASE GOD ALONE, NOT MEN (v.10).

The critics of Paul were saying that he was inconsistent...

- seeking the favor and approval of men instead of God.
- striving to please men instead of God.
- living by the law when he was with the religionists (Jews) and living a looser life when he was with the unsaved and non-religionists (Gentiles).
- saying one thing to one group of people and something else to another group of people.
- living a life of duplicity and deception in order to secure the support of the people.

Paul minced no words; he fired two questions at his critics: "Am I now seeking the favor of men or of God? Do I seek to please men?" As stated, Paul minced no words. He answered his own questions by making a startling statement: he agreed with his critics. **"If I yet [still] pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."**

The point is clear: note the word "yet" or *still*. Paul was saying that there was a time when he was a man-pleaser, a time when he sought the favor and approval of men instead of God. But no more: he was not "still pleasing men." He was now seeking to please God and God alone. Pleasing men, courting their favor, securing their acceptance, approval, and recognition, and gaining honor, position, and wealth—

none of these things mattered to him anymore. He now wanted one thing and one thing alone: the favor and approval of God. For this reason, he was the slave of Jesus Christ.

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

QUESTIONS:

1. How do believers seek to please men instead of God? What kinds of things do they do?
2. Can you think of a time when you sought to please people and not God? What would you do differently if you had another chance?
3. What should be your motivation to please God?

2. HE PROCLAIMED THE GOSPEL (vv.11-12).

Some critics of Paul were saying that he was not a true apostle of the Lord Jesus because he had not been a follower of the Lord when the Lord was upon the earth. Therefore, what he was teaching was a man-made gospel taught by mistaken and misguided men.

Note that the word "certify" is a solemn word, a strong declaration that what follows is of crucial importance and needs to be heard. Paul wants the believers of Galatia to know this fact, know it beyond question.

1. The gospel Paul preached was not a man-made gospel. It was not a gospel created by man's...

The gospel was not a human thing; it did not originate with man.

- mind
- hopes
- imaginations
- ideas
- religions
- science
- rationalizations
- dreams
- energy

The gospel was not the good news *of men*.

2. The gospel Paul preached was not received of man. It was *not a taught message*, not a message which he had learned from any man. The gospel he preached was not a message...
 - handed down to him like tradition
 - learned by him from an educational institution
 - taught to him by men
3. The gospel Paul preached was given to him by a *direct revelation*

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from Jesus Christ. Revelation means a truth that is shared by God to man, a truth that man never knew. It is crucial to note this point, for Paul's call to the ministry and the gospel which he preached rested upon this single fact: did Jesus Christ really reveal Himself and the truth of His death and resurrection to Paul or not? If Paul were lying, then he was not a true minister of the gospel. He would be a fraud, a deceiver, a man who viewed the ministry only as a profession to provide a livelihood and to secure honor and power over people.

However, as Paul plainly declared, he received the gospel by the direct revelation of Jesus Christ. Time and again he declared the fact.

“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery [revelation], even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory” (1 Co.2:7).

“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Ti.2:4).

“But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour” (Tit.1:3).

ILLUSTRATION:

The apostle Paul's gospel was not a figment of his imagination. His gospel was preached in the power of God; consequently, he got results. The lives of people were changed. No man-made gospel can change the hearts of men.

When George Whitefield was shaking England with the thunders of his revival preaching, a certain baronet said to a friend: “This man Whitefield is a truly great man. Surely he will be the founder of a new religion.” “A new religion!” exclaimed the friend. “Yes,” said the baronet, “if it is not a new religion, what do you call it?” “I say of it that it is nothing but the old religion revived and heated with divine energy in a man who really means what he says.”

The old-fashioned Gospel produces old-fashioned conversions when it is preached under the power of the divine Spirit. (Pentecostal Herald. Walter B. Knight. Knight's Master Book of 4,000 Illustrations (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), p.252-253.)

What kind of gospel does your life proclaim? A 'new religion' or the only true gospel of Jesus Christ?

QUESTIONS:

1. What kinds of “man-made” gospels are a part of your culture? Do any of these appeal to you?
2. What distinguishes the gospel of Christ with that of a man-made gospel?
3. If an unbeliever asked you, “What are the basic elements of the gospel of Christ,” how would you respond?

3. HE HAD A RADICAL CHANGE OF LIFE (vv.13-16).

Paul's radical change of life is clearly seen by comparing his former life with his present life.

1. Paul's former life included two terrible things.
- A. Paul had been the first arch-persecutor of the church. He had been an *inflamed* man who struck out more than anyone else against the early believers.

“And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter

against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest....And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me?” (Ac.9:1, 3-4).

Apparently Paul had launched the persecution of the church on the very day of Stephen's death. Saul had wanted to act and act quickly in wiping out the church. The believers were frightened and on the run; therefore, Paul felt that he had to strike immediately in order to catch them before they could escape.

The point to see is that Paul had been bent on violence; he had sought to utterly stamp out the church; to wipe believers off the face of the earth. The word *wasted* means to make havoc; to utterly rack or lay waste; to devastate, destroy, ruin, or wipe out.

“As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison” (Ac.8:3).

“For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God” (1 Co.15:9).

- B. Paul had been the supreme example of self-righteousness. Paul declared that he had “profited” in the Jews' religions above and beyond what others had done. The idea is that he had blazed a path and given well beyond what they had achieved. He had been much more *zealous* than they.

But note where his commitment had laid: in religion and in the traditions of the religious leaders. His focus and fanaticism had been placed upon religion and its traditions, rituals, and ceremonies and not upon God.

“But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” (Mt.15:3).

“For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men” (Mk.7:8).

ILLUSTRATION:

Before his conversion, Paul had done all the right things except for one: in spite of all his zeal, he was missing the mark and heading in the wrong direction. Listen to this account:

The space ship Mariner II made big headlines when it completed its thirtysix- million-mile trip towards Venus. Until then, we did not know very much about our closest neighbor.

Most of us have forgotten that Mariner II had a forerunner. Mariner I, which attempted the same journey through space...What happened that time?

Well, there was nothing wrong with Mariner I. It was just as close to perfect as the scientists could make it. But when it was launched, it went off course and missed Venus by tens of thousands of miles. Why?

It seems that in typing out the electronic instructions to the missile, someone left out a hyphen. That meant that the signals were off by one electronic impulse. And, of course, the missile behaved—or misbehaved—in accordance with the faulty instructions.

Damage? The project was held up for two years—and eighteen million taxpayer's dollars were wasted. That's what a hyphen can cost! (Robert G. Lee. Sourcebook of 500 Illustrations.

(Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970), pp. 157-158.)

In Paul's former life, the thing that threw him off course was his misguided sense of self-righteousness. The *hyphen* that put him back on an accurate course for life was *the cross*. Without the cross, we will be, forever, lost in space.

2. Paul's radical change included four significant points.
 - a. God had set Paul apart and called him by His grace. Paul clearly said...
 - that it was *God's grace* that had saved him from a life of self-righteousness and destruction.
 - that God's grace had separated him to serve Christ "from his mother's womb." The idea is that God had Paul in his mind even before Paul's birth. Paul's call and ministry were not due to Paul but to God and His grace. God had His eye on Paul throughout all eternity.

APPLICATION:

The believer's call and ministry is of God not of himself.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Co.1:26-27).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ep.2:8-9).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Tit.3:5-6).

- b. God called Paul as a vessel to reveal Christ. Note the words "in me." God's primary call to Paul was the same as it is for every believer: to reveal His Son Jesus Christ both *to him* and *through him*. God wants the believer both to know Christ and to make Christ known. We are chosen to fellowship and commune with the Lord more and more and to let Him be seen in us more and more. The believer is a mere vessel in and through whom Jesus Christ lives.

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Co.2:9-10).

- c. God called Paul to preach Christ. Believers are not only called to know Christ but also to make Christ known. We must preach and bear witness to Christ.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

- d. God called Paul to seek his gospel from God alone. Paul was not to seek his gospel from men but from God. He alone is the source of the gospel.

APPLICATION:

This does not mean, of course, that ministers (all believers) are not to learn from other people; it means that ministers (all believers) are not to proclaim the gospel of men. God has given us the gospel to study

and preach. It is His message, not man's message, that the world needs.

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Co.2:2).

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you believe that your past life keeps you from changing your life now? Why? How?
2. Have you done anything so bad that God cannot forgive you? What does this section of Scripture tell you about God's promise to you?
3. What is the secret to having a radical change of life? What action can you take to bring this change about?

SUMMARY:

Have you heard the challenge to the Christian believer: "If you were on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" There will be if you follow Paul's example!

1. He sought to please God alone, not men.
2. He proclaimed the gospel.
3. He had a radical change of life.

**PERSONAL JOURNAL NOTES
(Reflection & Response)**

1. The most important thing that I learned from this lesson was:
2. The area that I need to work on the most is:
3. I can apply this lesson to my life by:
4. Closing Statement of Commitment:

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On numerous occasions, I have heard well meaning parents make the statement: “Don’t you know that obeying your parents is the first command in the Bible?” And of course, this question is backed up with Ephesians chapter 6:1-3, where the Apostle Paul wrote:

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. —Eph 6:1-3

If you take a close look at that verse, you will understand that it is not saying that parental obedience is the first commandment. Rather, it is saying “the first commandment *with promise*”. So what does it mean when it says *with promise*?

Answer: It simply means it was the *first of ten commandments* given to Moses in Exodus 20 that had a promise attached to it.

Do you know what that promise was?

Answer: *That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*

So again, rather than say “*parental obedience is the first commandment*”, we should say, “*parental obedience is the first commandment with promise.*”

Secondly, it is important to understand what age group Paul was addressing in chapter 6:1-3. He writes, “children...” which means he is speaking to children—not dads, not moms, not even adults. He is clearly speaking to children.

I understand that some adults look at their offsprings as children, regardless of what age they become. Even at 30, 40, and 50 years of age, they are still considered children who are bound to the first commandment. But let’s consider the context in which this was written.

In chapter 5 (previous chapter), Paul addressed husbands and wives. In chapter 6, he addresses children, fathers, servants and masters. These are all positions which various people are fulfilling at certain time periods in life. In other words, a husband is not a wife, a master is not a child, a child is not a father.

In the New Testament, Jesus repeats an Old Testament statement when said:

For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?
—Matthew 19:5

Notice that the child is in an adult position when it says “For this cause shall a *man* leave father and mother.”

The man is no longer a child. He has grown up and is now expected to act like an adult

and leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife.

This does not mean that adults should stop honoring their parents. In fact, God commands all to honour their parents.

For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. —Matthew 15:4

And so we see, according to the Scriptures, *children* are commanded to *obey* father and mother while *adults* are commanded to *honour* their father and mother.

What is the difference between obeying and honouring? Let’s see how the dictionary defines the two words.

Obey means to submit, follow, observe, conform and mind.

Honour means to respect, admire, esteem, and reverence.

Is it possible to disobey father and mother and yet honour them at the same time? The answer would have to be yes. Let me explain:

Suppose a man and woman want to get married. To do so, they must first leave father and mother and become one flesh. And let’s just suppose that, in time, the man’s parents want to move to another part of the country, but before doing so, they approach their married son and ask their son and his wife to move with them. However, the wife doesn’t want to move.”

In a case like this, the young husband and wife would *first* and *foremost* have to consider their own family, future and lives; even if it meant they reject the father and mother’s desire to move with them.

Let’s take this study of family relationships another step. If we go back to Ephesians 6:1, you will notice that it says: “*Children, obey your parents in the Lord.*”

We live in a world today when children sometimes have to choose between obeying parents and the Lord. If such is the case, the child is required to obey the Lord first. The same is true when it comes to husband and wife. The Lord must be *first* and above all other family relationships.

Consider the words of Jesus, when He said:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a

man’s foes shall be they of his own household.

He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. —Matthew 10:34-37

In conclusion of our study, please allow me to make a point concerning child abuse. It devastates me to tears when I hear of adults who abuse their own children in a sexual or physical way.

There is a limit to the child’s obedience. When a parent is not acting in the Lord, he is not to be obeyed. The Lord has nothing whatsoever to do with the filth of unrighteousness and abuse of precious children. If a child can break away and free himself from such parental corruption, he has every right to be freed from his parent. The Lord came to set men free from the abuse and the filth of sin, not to enslave men to it, and especially not to enslave children to it.

—Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible Commentary

One of the most severe warnings ever issued in all of history was issued by the Lord Jesus to adults who abuse children:

Mark 9:42-48, says: “*And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.*

And if thy hand offend thee [by abusing a child], cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

And if thy foot offend thee [by abusing a child], cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

And if thine eye offend thee [by lusting after a child], pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”



All over the world the value of blood transfusions is well known and accepted. After an accident, the victim is often rushed to a hospital where one of the most common treatments is a blood transfusion. Blood donor clinics proclaim that the gift of blood is the gift of life. Many of us have in fact donated blood to help those in need. Having a transfusion at the right time can make the difference between life and death. It is indeed a precious gift to a person in need of it.

Throughout the Bible, many times blood is mentioned when a covenant is made. In Genesis, Abel's sacrifice involved a sheep, "a firstling of the flock." In making the sacrifice, the sheep had to be killed, and there was the first mentioned killing of an animal as a sacrifice. And thus the blood was most likely a part of the offering.

When the children of Israel were delivered on that night, known as the Passover, they had applied the blood of a lamb to the doorposts of their houses. This was done at God's command to save the lives of all Israeli firstborn. The awesome power of certain death was stopped by that simple act of applying blood at the doorpost and lintels.

Exodus 12:22, And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

The power of the blood of a lamb was sufficient to stop the destroyer from harming anyone protected by it.

Leviticus 16:13-14: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

The high priest could never approach the presence of God without bringing two things: blood to sprinkle upon the mercy seat, and incense from the golden altar to burn before the Lord.

If he tried to get into the presence of God without either one, he would be struck dead!

The power of the blood of a bullock and the ashes of a heifer made it safe to enter the holiest place in the temple or tabernacle.

Hebrews 9:13-14 says; For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 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?

At the time when the temple stood in its glory in Jerusalem, common people did not get very close to the holiest place. Priests were assigned to make offerings and seek atonement in their place.

The Day of Atonement came only once a

year and the preparation to go into the holiest place was quite intense. Yet if the priest was sanctified by the blood and ashes, he was purified in the flesh and able to make requests for his people.

What Paul says in Hebrews 9 is that if animal blood purified people in the flesh, the blood of Christ is much more powerful, even to purge ourselves in our conscience which relies on works. Because the letter is addressed to Hebrews, the average reader at the time of writing would probably understand that he was referring to works of the Law of Moses.

Notice the difference between flesh and conscience. It is like washing something on the outside and then finding something better that washes right through inside as well. The observance of the Law of Moses and its sacrifices cleaned the outside, but the inside was still the same. When we receive Jesus Christ into our heart and life, the cleansing by that precious blood does a work that includes writing his desires on our hearts.

Are you washed in the blood that washes away every stain of sin? He changed my life and He can change yours too.

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Now I Believe!

—by Angela Duncan



When the woman returned, after going to the well. People gathered, wondering what story she would tell. That Man told me of the many wrongs I have done. I know He told the truth, He is the promised One.

This Man is the Christ just come and you will see.

Look! He's over there, wanting to set us free. Knowing pain from sin, He has taken us to His heart. Mending shattered lives, that sin had torn apart. Villagers came to receive forgiveness throughout that day.

Confusion left behind as hope in Him, showed them the way. How they listened as He told them of their sins both big and small, Lifting the burdens from their hearts, He forgave them one and all.

Faith renewed their hope as love entered the hearts of everyone. Knowing God sent them a Redeemer, in Jesus Christ, His only Son. He didn't come to judge, but offered forgiveness to the lost. His love paid for their salvation, the day He died upon the cross.

In His blood lives the hope of sinners that He alone could save. He claimed the keys, defeating death and rose up from the grave. That's exactly how it happened, and that's just how it is told. It's a free gift for believers as they're welcomed to the fold.

*This was inspired by the women at the well.
Matthew 4:1-42*

Ezra, Chapter 3-6, tell us: When the children of Israel turned their hearts back to the Lord and repented, they began to rebuild the temple that had been destroyed by the Babylonians when King Nebuchadnezzar had exiled them to Babylon.

Jobs were assigned to the correct people. Plans were organized, and everyone was filled with joy and energy.

However, as soon as their enemies realized what was happening, they tried to trick the Israelites into allowing them to *help with the work*. They were told that they could not help; only Israelites could take part in this work.

Since that scheme was ineffective, the enemies then tried to interrupt, to hinder, and to discourage the work in every possible way.

This time of trial for the Israelites lasted during the reign of King Cyrus (the king of Persia) until King Darius took the throne after King Artaxerxes. During King Darius's reign, the work of rebuilding the temple was brought to a screeching halt.

When King Darius took the throne, two prophets of Israel began to prophesy in the Lord's name to the children of Israel. With some encouragement, several strong leaders again began to rebuild the temple, and the prophets helped them. However, the enemy was not going to give up that easily. Their officials approached the builders and asked by what authority they rebuilt the temple. They said in King Cyrus's authority.

God was watching out for them, and thus the

labor was not hindered. King Darius checked the records to see if the information they had given him was true, and he discovered that King Cyrus had, in fact, decreed that the temple should be rebuilt. So king Darius gave his full support and favor and commanded government officials to help. The temple was finally finished and dedicated because God had caused the King's favor to be on His children.



Is it surprising that when good things happen and God's will is being performed that



there would be opposition? We fool ourselves if we think the enemy of our souls will give up without a fight! Have you ever noticed this in your life when you made a decision to walk in obedience to God, or made a choice to follow Him more fully?

Our family has experienced this frequently in the last several years. If you are serious about God, you WILL have opposition! Sadly, this

opposition often comes from those closest to us. It is during these times we must not give up. It can be very difficult and challenging, but if we are assured of being in God's will, He will be behind us, leading the way even when the going is difficult.

Notice that even though it was God's perfect will that the temple be rebuilt, the Jews still had a season of severe opposition and a time when they were forced to stop.

Don't you think they were discouraged and questioned whether it was God's will?

Do you think they asked if it was even worth it?

Judging by some of my natural reactions, I am sure they had doubts. I am sure there were those who did give up. But when God sent His prophets to speak His word, there were men who were ready and willing, and rose to the challenge once again. This time God removed the roadblocks for them. He was behind them the entire time even when the work was opposed and stopped.

Opposition gives us strength. Sometimes we may need a time of rest. There are probably many reasons why God allows obstacles. We can be sure if we follow God's plan, we will have obstacles because Satan will not be pleased. God may also test us to see how serious we are about Him.

Continued on next page
Expect Opposition cont. from previous page

As I mentioned earlier, our family has experienced obstacles and opposition several times and especially in the last few years. It really didn't begin, interestingly enough,

Pennsylvania Deitsh Testament



If you would like to obtain a New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs in Pennsylvania Deitsh, they are available for \$13.95 postpaid from the **Committee for Translation, 3864 Township Road 162, Sugarcreek, OH 44681. Phone 330-852-4663.**

You do not need to send money ahead of time; they will bill you with your order. Your local Christian bookstore may also have them available.

In making this translation, the committee's purpose was two-fold: 1) to

adhere as closely as possible to the Textus Receptus Greek text, which is closely associated with Luther's (German) and the Authorized (English) version, the two versions most commonly in use by the Amish, and 2) to make the translation in fluent everyday Pennsylvania Deitsh as it is spoken in the home.

The translation procedures and principles used in this translation are basically those employed by the Wycliffe Bible Translators, and the exegesis closely follows their series of in-house "Exegetical Helps". The final manuscript was checked for exegetical accuracy by New Testament Greek specialists from the Translation Department of the Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Even when everyone has abandoned you... I am here.

Even when it feels like you are praying to the ceiling... I am listening.

Even when you don't have enough money to pay the bills... I am still providing.

Even when you can't see the end of this dark time... I am still the light of the world.

Even when you feel like I am not there... I am all around you.

Even when it seems like you don't need me... I hold all things together.

Even when you are lost in the pit of sin and destruction... I am the One who seeks and saves the lost.

Even when you have no hope on this earth... I have eternal hope for you.

Even when you walk away from me... I am still waiting for you.

Even when you don't think anything good is happening... I am God and I am at work.

I am God at work in your life.

Romans 9:20-21: *Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*

until we made the decision to be obedient no matter what the cost.

My husband has had to do quite a bit of travelling for business in the last year or so. I do not enjoy being alone, especially with the issues that can come up with four children, some with special needs. I would much rather have my husband at home all the time. I do not feel I am one of those strong women, or “super moms,” who seem to gracefully and energetically run the household no matter what. I have often (to my shame) begged my husband to “please stay home.” If he felt he was supposed to travel at that time, he had to be strong and tell me he understands. I know he wishes he could stay, but he needs to do what he feels is right. In this way, we wives can make it hard for our husbands to follow God’s leading and hinder blessings that could otherwise come to us.

It is difficult when my husband is gone. Many times as soon as my husband is gone, one of the children gets sick, usually with a flu bug that will pass on to the others.

It is not easy, as you moms well know, to have a bunch of fevered, vomiting children, especially without your husband there for encouragement and moral support. Satan knew exactly what would be the most frustrating for me. (Trust me, my friends, vomit-

ing children is exactly that!) Often I am exhausted upon his return and look forward to Daddy being home to be strong, and to relieve my load a little. However, often my husband is also very exhausted when he returns. Needless to say, it can be very frustrating for both of us! When you are so very tired, it can be easy to look at each other and think, “And now what reason would you have to be tired?” Sometimes we get our eyes off what God is trying to do in the grand scheme of things and look at each other as arch-enemies! But remember, Satan will oppose in any way he can, especially getting our focus on each other, so we forget that “...we wrestle not against flesh and blood.”

This passage in Ezra was like God’s personal Word to me this morning and was very encouraging. Basically the long and the short of it was, “Lynn, don’t be surprised that you have opposition and challenges! Expect them! If you learn to expect opposition, you won’t be taken off guard and stopped by it. Instead, you can trust God to overcome the obstacles.”

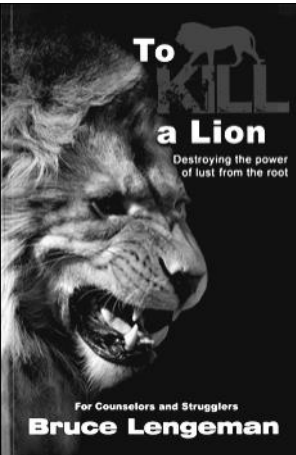
We continually need to remind ourselves that these seasons of trial will not last forever. It sure seems like they do. These times can be exhausting. Sometimes I long for nights of uninterrupted sleep and for lots of energy. Neither of these is likely to happen very soon

since I have a toddler who is teething very late at night, and I suffer from extreme fatigue when I’m pregnant.

I have done my share of questioning God’s wisdom (not a good idea, by the way) in all these things, but He is in control, and I am slowly learning that fighting God only wears me out and lengthens the whole process.

So I go onward today, knowing that the way will not always be easy. (In fact, if you don’t face opposition you may do well to examine if you are on the right track.) If I expect that I will have obstacles, I can, with God’s help, overcome them and experience the blessings God wants to send my way.

—Lynn Miller, Kentucky



To Kill a Lion

Destroying the Power of Lust From the Root

This is a new book by Bruce Lengeman designed to help men find the roots of their sexual addiction. The theme is “Men cry out, I know it is wrong, but why can’t I stop!”

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To order, either call (419) 962-1515 or mail a check to “The Amish Voice, P.O. Box 128, Savannah OH 44874

The price of the book is \$17 (includes S&H)

My Daddy

—by Jonathan Helmuth

My Daddy

I remember when in days gone by
When in childhood tenderly
A little boy in his daddy’s lap
Would hear the old story
The story of old Abraham
And Peter, James and John
But most of all I remember when,
You would hold your little son.

I remember when my daddy dear
Would take my little hand
You’d guide my little footsteps
And help me understand
Life is short and death is sure
Don’t build upon the sand
But most of all I remember when
You’d hold my little hand

This little boy loved being with
His daddy as he talked
Of Jesus and the lame man
Who got up and he walked
You talked about a blind man
Whom Jesus healed one day
But most of all I remember when
We knelt, and you would pray

Now years have come and years have
gone
And I have children too
And I do pray and talk with them
About Jesus, just like you
I hold them and I take them
By their little hand
And lead them to their Daddy
Who reigns in glory land

Someday up there on streets of gold
My Daddy I will see
I’ll run into his warm embrace
Of love so tenderly
I’ll listen to his beating heart
And gaze upon his face
Cause Daddy told me about Him
And his amazing grace

*By Jonathan Helmuth (Father’s Day 2007)
4199 Old Rt. 14
Dundee, NY 14837
(607) 351-1593*



Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

—Psalm 23:4

The shepherd's rod is used to protect the sheep; the staff to correct them. The sheep finds comfort in both these instruments. The sheep needs both protection from his enemies and correction in the way.

There is hardly a creature more defenseless than a sheep. Our Lord sends us forth as sheep in the midst of wolves instructing us to be as wise as serpents, but as harmless as doves. (Matthew 10:16)

We are instructed that when smitten on the right cheek to turn to the aggressor our left cheek as well. (Matthew 5:39)

In such a dangerous world, it is only His promise to never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5) that makes possible the Christian's life and ministry. Yea, we may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man shall do unto me."—Heb 13:6

We are blessed with religious liberty in America. This American experiment has

lasted little more than 200 years. Even today in this world Christians are suffering for their faith. Many are imprisoned; others are tortured; some are even dying for refusal to renounce their faith in Christ. Thank God for the liberty we enjoy in our country. Let us not take it for granted. Let us pray that the liberty we enjoy may soon become the experience of men and women, boys and girls in every land.

We are not to fear those who can kill the body, but who are not able to kill the soul. (Matthew 10:28) "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."—2 Cor 4:16

Not only does our Lord provide His rod to ward off our enemies, but He provides His staff as well to guide and to correct us. We are often our own worst enemies. Just as a sheep is a defenseless creature, he is a rather silly creature as well. Left to himself he will soon be lost. Once lost, he is not like a dog or a cat which can find its way home. He is quite helpless and must depend on His shepherd to lead him home.

The Word of God, the Holy Spirit of God, and faithful ministers of the Word are used by our Lord and Savior to guide us gently home. If we know but where to look and how to read the map, there is to be found in the Bible a way home.

Assess your situation.

Acknowledge you have lost your way.

Seek guidance from the Shepherd.

The answer may come in church on Sunday morning. It may come as you visit with a friend. You may be upon your bed at night, when suddenly light springs forth in the darkness. The Lord Jesus Christ leads His dear children along:

"Some through the waters, some through the flood,

"Some through the fire, but all through the blood;

"Some through great sorrow, but God gives a song,

In the night season and all the day long."

—George Young, 1903

Jesus said: To him the Porter openeth; and the sheep hear His voice: and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice. —John 10:3-4

25 Changes That Take Place the Moment a Person is Born Again

—by Joe Keim

1. The believer is translated from the power of darkness:

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: —Col 1:13

2. The believer SHALL not come into condemnation but is PASSED from DEATH unto LIFE:

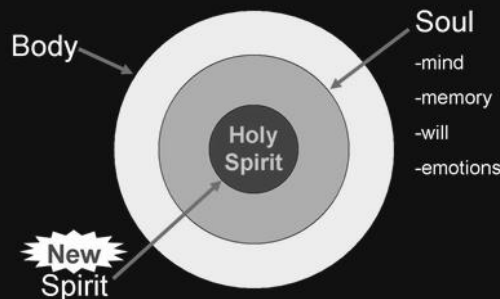
Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. —John 5:24

3. The believer is SEALED with the Holy Spirit:

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. —Ephesians 1:13

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

The "Born Again" Person



A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. —Ezekiel 36:26

4. The believer has eternal life and shall never perish:

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. —John 10:28

5. The believer is kept by the power of God:

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. —Peter 1:5

6. The believer is born of God:

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. —John 1:12,13

7. The believer has been saved:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. —Ephesians 2:8,9

—Continued on Page 10—

—Continued from Page 9—

8. The believer is in the Father's hand:

My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to

pluck them out of my Father's hand. —
John 10:29

9. The believer continues with God:

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. (The proof of the believer is his continuance. False professors fall out by the way. Had they been true believers they would have continued) —I John 2:19

10. The believer liveth and abideth forever:

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. —I Peter 1:23

11. The believer will appear with Christ in glory:

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear then shall ye also appear with him in glory. —Colossians 3:4

12. The believer's hope is incorruptible, undefiled, and reserved (set aside) in Heaven for him; it is kept by the power of God:

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. —I Peter 1:4-5

13. The believer will in no wise be cast out.

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. —John 6:37

14. Christ will not lose a single believer:

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. —John 6:39

15. Christ will complete salvation until the end:

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. —Philippians 1:6

16. The believer is to be like Christ:

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. —I John 3:2

17. The believer is perfected forever:

For by one offering he hath perfected

forever them that are sanctified. —
Hebrews 10:14

18. The believer is made righteous through Christ's obedience:

Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. —Romans 5:18, 19

19. The Holy Spirit abides in the believer forever:

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; 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



20. The believer is preserved unto the heavenly kingdom:

And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. —II Timothy 4:18

21. Salvation is obtained, not attained:

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. —Heb 9:12

22. Christ will raise every believer up at the last day:

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. —John 6:44-47

23. We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all:

By the which will we are sanctified

through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. —Hebrews 10:10

24. The believer has already been redeemed.

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. —I Peter 1:18,19

25. Salvation is by grace and not by any mixture of grace and works:

And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. —Romans 11:6

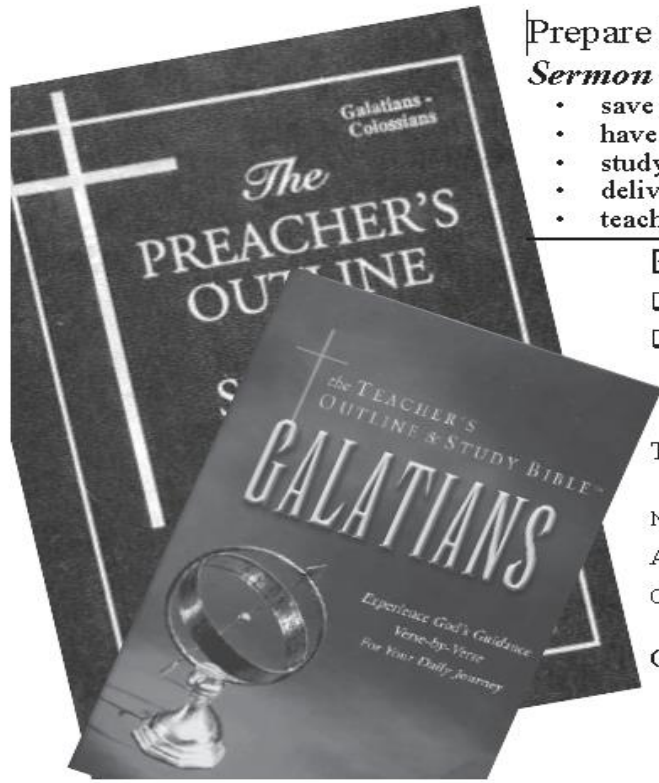
In conclusion, let's revisit a previous Bible verse that will shed some light on those who say they had a spiritual experience but later turned their back on God.

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. —I John 2:19

Please don't misinterpret this Scripture as saying "they left one church label (denomination) and joined another, therefore, they most not have been born again.

The proof of the believer lies in the fact that he or she continues to walk after and serve their Savior and Lord Jesus Christ; that they love the brethren, study their Bible, spend time in prayer and discussing their passion for Jesus unashamedly.

Lastly, we are forbidden to judge ones salvation, however, Jesus did give us the right to be fruit inspectors, when he said: "ye shall know them by their fruits"



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He is my Salvation:

Who leads me home to Heaven when my work on earth is done!

Who breaks the bonds of sin and death so that I can live forever just the way He intended His creation to be!

Who heals my body and my mind when I call to Him in desperate times!

He is the Alpha and the Omega...the Beginning and the End!

Exodus 15:1-2: Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.

Exodus 15:11-13: Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.

Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

—Dee Yoder

The New Me!

—by Lynn Miller

2 Cor. 5:17 Says: *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things have become new.*

When you realized you were a sinner and had no hope of a relationship with God without accepting the fact that His Son Jesus had to suffer and die to pay the price for your sin, you surrendered your His control, confessed sins and repented—did have a hard time believin you really are a new creation? Or did you feel like the same old person, especially when temptations came along a succumbed to them?

From my own experience and from what I've heard from others, it is quite common for us to struggle with this. It is very hard to wrap our minds around the fact that things truly have changed and we are a new person with a new identity.

When a caterpillar goes through its metamorphosis and becomes a butterfly, does it still believe it is a caterpillar and continue to crawl around? No, it realizes something is different, and tries out its new wings.

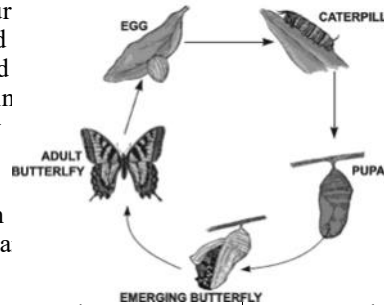
So must we when we have truly seen our sin, our helplessness before God, received the gift of His dear Son, and repented, and

turned our lives over to Him.

We must look at ourselves, at our 'new wings' and realize, "I am not the same person I was!

I am a new creature because Jesus saved me!

I can now walk in the newness of life Jesus gave me!



I have a new identity. My old identity, who I thought I was, is left back at the cross, and the new me, the person God created me to be is what is left.

I found it helpful to actually pray, and tell God, "I bring myself to Your altar; put to death Lynn that I know, and raise to life the Lynn that You created

me to be." He knows how to do this, and we are safe in His hands.

He is our Creator, and since He started a good work in us, we can know He will be faithful to complete it.

Philippians 1:6 says: *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

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Current Resident

The Power of a Clean and Blameless Life

—by David Wilkerson

When you set your heart to walk blameless before God—living in a way that is pleasing to the Lord—you will be feared and despised by those who have lost the favor and blessing of God. Lukewarm or compromised Christians will be absolutely disturbed and repelled by your life!

We see this illustrated vividly in 1 Samuel:

1 Samuel 18:12-15: *And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul...And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him. Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.*

David's blameless behavior struck fear in Saul's heart! Whenever Saul was around David, he remembered the time he had enjoyed the favor of God and the high esteem of men. But disobedience, envy, pride and self-will had cost Saul every bit of power with God. And it robbed him of all respect of the people.

Now, Saul had come face to face with a younger man—a less experienced, probably less articulate, man—who exuded the power and integrity of holiness. He was pure in heart, full of the Holy Spirit and Saul was afraid of him!

Keep in mind that this was no idolatrous pagan who was afraid of David. No, Saul was a man who had known the power of the Holy Spirit! He had once been God's anointed, a mighty man chosen of God!

David was simply living a clean life and God was pouring out favor upon him!

1 Samuel 18:16: *But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.*

Saul did not want to be around David. Scripture says:

1 Samuel 18:13: *Therefore Saul removed him from him.*

Sadly, Saul represents the compromised church of today, those Christians who have compromised and lost the anointing of God. He is a type of the believer who once was full of the Holy Spirit, baptized, on fire for God, but has been robbed of everything they once knew of God by their disobedience, pride and lust.

There is nothing scarier to a compromised Christian than a holy blameless life. And the more your life lines up with the Lord's will and His holiness, the more repelling you will become to backslidden believers.

Who Is My God

—by Dee Yoder

He is the Loving Father I Run to, When:

I'm weeping either from sorrow, or sadness, or pain, and He wipes away every tear from my eye.

I'm feeling insecure and don't know which way to turn.

I need a touch of His gentle hand on my soul to remind me Who is in control of all things in my life.

He is the Great I Am:

Who takes my breath away when I view His magnificent creations!

Who causes the winds and the seas and the sun to do His bidding!

Who makes the rocks cry out in praise to Him!

He is the Potter:

Who lovingly molds my heart, and my life, and my soul into just the right vessel to reach my world.

Who burns out the dross of ambition, jealousy, selfishness, and ambivalence from my heart.

Who brings me forth as gold, and then polishes and crafts the talents He has placed within me.

—Continued on the inside

—Continued from back cover (Who is my God?)