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LIVING IN THE STRONGHOLD OF DECEPTION

Buy of Me Gold Tried in the Fire

Part 8
of 8

True Healing of the Church

In 1980, I had a dream. In the dream, I was fishing with some people I did not know. We were not catching anything. Finally, we went to a different place to fish. In this place, we caught one huge fish. It was enormous in size. This big fish had a wound that had been healed. After this, we began to catch many small fish. The small fish began to turn into people. There were all kinds of people. Many were of my own people, the Amish.

What is the interpretation of this dream? For years, I debated and wondered what the big fish with the big healed wound represented. Only recently has the dream become more of a reality in my life. The enormous fish with the healed wound represents the Church of Jesus Christ as a whole. The small fish that turned into people are Christians who are living in deception in some form or another. They are wounded and are not operating as they should in the body of Christ. True evangelism must start in the Church.

In the thirty six years since I had this dream, God has been giving me more understanding of the condition of the church today. We are operating in an unhealthy condition because of the wound in our side. As I have said before, the church looks holy and feels holy, but it is not holy. We are operating in our man-made agendas and our carnal opinions. May the Church once again begin to operate in God's order as revealed in Ephesians 4:11-16. It is God's order. Yes, we are going to see health come to God's people if we humble ourselves and pray and believe the heart of God. The gates of hell will NOT keep this from happening. The rulers of the darkness of this world, the spiritual wickedness in high places, will NOT stop the healing of God's people, His bride. AMEN. Revelation, understanding, wisdom, and the mind of Christ belong to the Church. Healing belongs to the Church. Power – holy power – belongs to the Church.

John 19:30: *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and*

gave up the ghost. If we add our self-righteousness or take away from this, our name will be taken out of the Book of Life. John 19:34: *But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.* Through His death, His life became the health and life of the Church.

Brothers and sisters, is there anything else? I believe not. With His wound, the Church's wound is healed. Isaiah 53:5: *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

If we preach the cross of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ Himself will back us up with the power of the Holy Spirit through creative miracles, physical healings of all kinds, families being healed, and signs and wonders. Brothers and sisters, He is coming to the Church in a powerful way once again. Religious people will no longer be able to practice their religious practices. Why is this? Because there are intercessors praying. Since when did God stop answering His people's prayers

when we pray His heart? Never. God hears and answers our prayers. It is in the Bible, God's Word.

As I write this, my flesh, or carnal thinking, is saying it will never happen; but I am overriding my carnal thinking and am prophesying what God is speaking to my spirit, which is the truth. My carnal thinking is not true. *Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts* (Zechariah 4:6).

God is a spirit: and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Yes, God is seeking this from His people. God wants us to hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. This includes every member.

Let's go back to healing. In Luke 17, Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem. Instead of taking the short route, He passes between Samaria and Galilee because there was something He wanted to demonstrate. He entered a certain village and met ten lepers. *They lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us* (Luke 17:13). They all knew with their natural mind that it was Jesus.

Many today know of Jesus with their natural mind and are calling on Him. Without the operation of the cross of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we will not know Him by revelation in our inner man, or by the Spirit of God which is in us. We can find this in 1 Corinthians 2:9-16. May God give us wisdom.

When Jesus saw the ten lepers, He said

unto them, *Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed* (Luke 17:14). They never made it to the priests. This is telling us of what Jesus would accomplish on the cross. He would heal all our sin and diseases and make us whole. It is finished. All things become new. Under the Old Covenant, the priests were to judge the leper according to the stage the leprosy was in, or judge if they were clean.

All ten lepers were made whole, but only the Samaritan knew it. Jesus asked, "Where are the other nine?"

Jesus is asking the same thing today: "Where is My Church?" The invitation still goes out today. Please read Matthew 11:28-30.

The Jews in Jesus' day had eyes but couldn't see. They had ears but couldn't hear. We are like that today. We want our healing, but we don't want the working of the cross that opens our eyes so we can see and opens our ears so we can hear. The Samaritan fell down on his face at the feet of Jesus, giving Him thanks. By revelation of faith, he saw more than just his leprosy being healed. Jesus said, *Thy faith hath made thee whole*. The no-good Samaritan saw and understood God's redemption plan. This speaks of us no-good Gentiles coming into the health of Jesus Christ.

I believe this is why Jesus sometimes withholds healings, as in my own case, that we may learn who Jesus really is and what He did for us on the cross. There have been movements of God in the past where many outward healings took place.

I believe this next movement will also see many healings, attended by understanding and wisdom and true faith, which our natural or carnal minds cannot understand. It will come with much true Holy Spirit teaching, or we will corrupt it once again. No man will get the glory.

Yes, Jesus is coming to the Church. In 2011, my wife and I were having early morning prayers. One morning after prayer, I was sitting on the living room couch. I went to sleep. In this sleep, I began to see visions. In my vision, I got up from the couch and went to the front door and opened it. As I looked, I saw a very strong wind blowing from the east. It was so strong that the trees outside were bent almost level to the ground. Then a clean rain began to fall. I looked across the street to the east. A man was by a piano waving at me to come. I saw a black vehicle parked between our big oak tree and our house. Also, there was a table. All kinds of food were spread on the table, but the food was covered with a cloth. On each side of the table were oil lamps. The lamps were not lit. Then I woke up.

What is the interpretation? I believe the wind is coming and is even at the door. Wind represents the Holy Spirit. Rain represents refreshing. The black vehicle represents ministry. Black represents the Plain People – the Amish and other Anabaptists from Germany and Switzerland. The food on the table, which is the pure Word of God, will be uncovered and served. This will bring health and healing once again. The lamps will be lit. This is very personal to me. I believe it is also for the corporate body of

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Christ, wherever God has placed you.

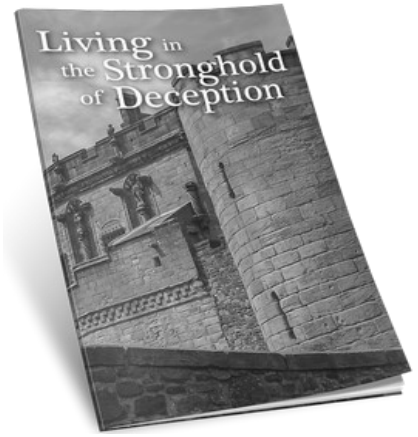
After Peter had failed because he had denied Jesus, Jesus told him to feed the lambs and the sheep, God’s children. Peter was ready and was used mightily after the coming of the Holy Spirit. There will be another outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The gates of hell will not prevail against the rebuilding of the church. Satan has tried to destroy it, but has failed because of the cross. Amen!

—D. Wickey, (602) 448-8528

We hope you have been challenged, as well as encouraged, by this eight-part series of *Living in the Stronghold of Deception*.

You may write or call us for free copies of *Living in the Stronghold of Deception*, by D. Wickey.

The Amish Voice, PO Box 128, Savannah OH 44874. Office: (419) 962-1515.



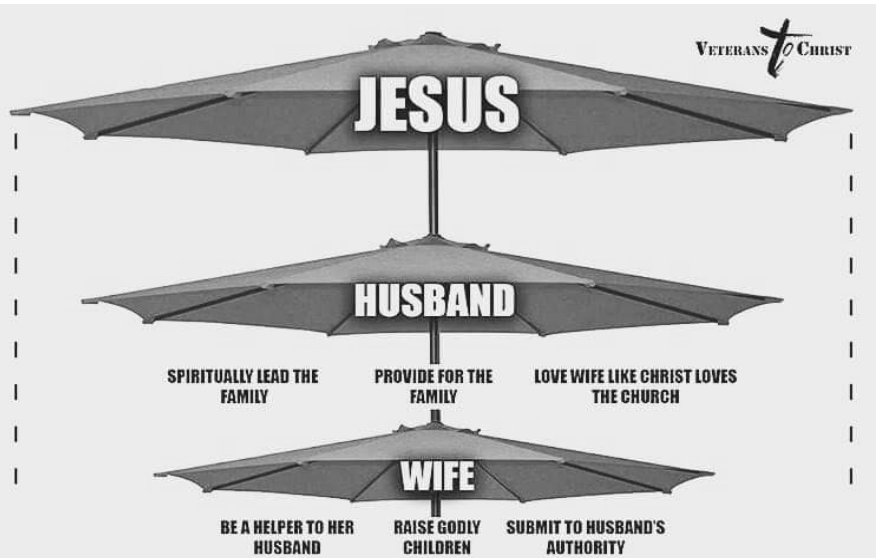
Godliness in the Home

My brethren, be ye like Christ at all times; imitate Him in public. Many of us are called to work before our fellow men every day. We are watched; our words are caught; our lives are examined – taken to pieces. The eagle-eyed world observes everything we do, and sharp critics are upon us. Let us live the life of Christ in public. Let us take care that we exhibit our Master and not ourselves, so that we can say, *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me* (Galatians 2:20).

Carry out the spirit of Christ in your churches, too, wherever you are. Let your fellow members say of you, “He has been with Jesus.”

But most of all, take care to have Christianity in your houses. A Christ-like house is the best proof of true piety. It is the child, the wife, the friend, who can discern most of your real character. A good man will improve his household. Rowland Hill once said he would not believe a man to be a true Christian if his wife, his children, and even the dog and cat, were not the better for it. If your household is not the better for your Christianity, if men cannot say, “This is a better house than others,” then be not deceived; you have nothing of the grace of God. Carry out your godliness in your family. Let everyone say that you have practical religion. Let it be known and read in the house, as well as in the world. Take care of your character there; for what we are there, we really are.

— Charles Spurgeon —



NATURAL ORDER OF THE FAMILY

1 Corinthians 11:3: *But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*

Notice carefully the wording in this verse. The woman’s head is the man. This did not say women’s head is “men.” This is talking specifically about the positions of authority in marriage where the man is the head of the wife.

When God talks about man being the head of the woman, He is not talking about ability, worth, or advantage. God is talking about function and order within an organization. Every organization has to have a head for it to be operated in an efficient and orderly manner. There are no greater organizations than God’s universe, His Church, and His Christian family.

The head of Christ is God. This simply means that when Christ came to earth, He subjected Himself to God the Father. God the Father was the head under whom Christ worked and functioned.

Philippians 2:6-7: *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.*

There are many, many different beliefs in the world. There are even hundreds or thousands of different groups that all claim to be right, and they each say that they are following the Bible. How can this be? How do we know if what we believe is really right? Jesus said that many religious people will find out too late that they were not on the right path, but we never stop to consider if He might have been talking about us.

So, how do we determine whether or not our beliefs are right? We must go to the Scriptures. God's Word is the only right and true and perfect standard that we have. It is not good enough to say that what we believe must be right because I was taught it in church or the preacher said it was right. We must go to the Scriptures and see what God really says.

It is simple to take a few Bible verses and show someone that Jesus is really a man. It is simple to take a few Bible verses and show someone that Jesus is really God. Both of these are correct, of course, even if we do not fully understand it all. We can see from the Bible that Jesus is both man and God.

It is easy to take a few Bible verses and show that salvation is a lifelong process. It is even easier to take a few verses and show that we can be born again now and know that we have salvation and have been saved. There are aspects to both of these that are true. The problem is when we only take one of these and reject or ignore the other one.

There are some groups that only take one side from the Bible and deceive many people. For example, the Mormons say that Jesus is God, but not man. They teach that we can become gods, too. The group that calls themselves Jehovah's Witnesses (JWs) take the other side, that Jesus is man and not God. They are both wrong, for they only teach half the truth. Both groups deceive many people. We must be wise and learn the Scriptures.

Some groups go around and visit others, trying to get them to join their group. They seem like nice people and good family people. However, they believe a lie and so are teaching that lie to others. People who do not search the Scriptures and do not know the truth can easily be deceived.

Some of the groups are so zealous that they even learn the language of the Plain People. The Jehovah's Witnesses, or JWs, are one such group. If we simply listen to what they say, it sounds nice. Who does not want the world to get better and better and become a nice paradise? Mormons are nice family people. They even claim to have another gospel of Jesus! However, when we compare their teachings with the Bible, we see that these people are really leading others to hell.

To help see the difference between what these two groups teach

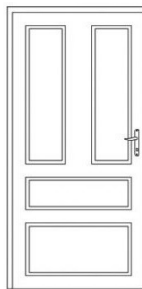
and what the Bible says, the Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry has put together the following Warning tract.

—Paul Miller

WARNING!

There are two cults going door-to-door: Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses. They claim to be Christian religions, but they are not.

Mormonism teaches:



God used to be a man on another planet and Mormon members can become gods of their own worlds.¹

There are many gods.²

The Trinity is three separate gods.³

Entrance into celestial heaven is by the consent of God and the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith.⁴

God has a body of flesh and bones.⁵

God is married and produces spirit babies by having physical relations with his goddess wife.⁶

Jesus, Satan, and all of us are spirit brothers and sisters procreated in a pre-existent spirit life.⁷

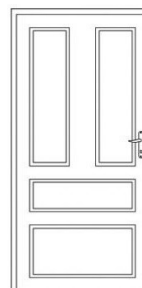
God had relations with Mary to make Jesus' body.⁸

You must shed your own blood for the forgiveness of some sins.⁹

Good works are necessary for the forgiveness of sins.¹⁰

Be careful. Rarely will they mention these "higher" doctrines. Therefore, you really don't know what they are teaching until long after you have joined. Be warned.

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach:



Their church organization is the prophet of God.¹¹

Jesus returned invisibly in 1914.¹²

Blood transfusions are sinful.¹³

The Holy Spirit is God's impersonal active force.¹⁴

Only their church members will be saved.¹⁵

Jesus was an angel who became a man.¹⁶

Jesus did not rise from the dead physically.¹⁷

There is no Trinity.¹⁸

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Good works are necessary for the forgiveness of sins.¹⁹

Be careful. Jehovah's Witnesses will want to begin a home "Bible study" with you. What they really want is for you to join their religion.

These groups are non-Christian cults because they deny the true biblical doctrines of Jesus and salvation. First, Mormonism says Jesus is the brother of the devil.⁷ JW's teach that he is an angel who became a man.¹⁶ These teachings are not biblical.

Second, both these cults erroneously say that in order to be saved you must cooperate with God by doing good works. The Bible says that salvation is a free gift from God.²¹ The Bible condemns the addition of our works to the finished sacrifice of Jesus.²² Galatians 2:21 says that if salvation comes by works (*if righteousness come by the Law*), then Jesus died needlessly. Salvation comes by God's grace through faith alone, not by our works²¹ which are impure.²⁹ Simply put, both Mormons and JW's preach a false message of salvation.

The Bible teaches that there is only one God;²³ God is spirit;²⁴ Jesus' sacrifice cleanses from all sin;²⁵ Jesus is the only way to God;²⁶ all who receive Jesus as Savior will be saved;²⁷ and Jesus is God in flesh²⁰ who rose from the dead in the same body in which He died.²⁸

These are some of the things the Christian Church has always believed. These two cults distort them and thus lead many into eternal damnation. Why? Because:

Only the Jesus of the Bible saves, not the brother of Satan (Mormonism), and not an angel made into a man (Jehovah's Witnesses). Faith works only when you trust someone who is true.

The Mormons and JW's are good people, and we love them, but they are misled.³⁰ They do not know that the true gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus for our sins, and that we receive His forgiveness by faith alone (faith in the true Jesus). Satan has blinded them.³⁰ Jesus said that if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the pit.³¹ That is why this Christian ministry is exposing these cults, so you won't be deceived.

If you want to be assured of the forgiveness of your sins and have peace with God, then you must realize that you have sinned against God³² and are separated from Him.³³ Then, repent and turn from your sins. Ask Jesus into your life. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins and save you. He will.²⁷ He is Savior and Lord, and He is as close as the call of your heart. Then read your Bible and follow Jesus. At least now you know two groups not to join. Eternity is a long time to be wrong.

DOCUMENTATION FROM MORMON WRITINGS



1. Mormon Doctrine by Bruce McConkie, p. 321. 2. Ibid., p. 163. 3. Ibid., p. 319. 4. Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 7, p. 289. 5. Doctrine and Covenants 130:22. 6. McConkie, p. 516. 7. Ibid., pp. 192; 589. 8. Ibid., pp. 741-742; The Seer, p. 158. 9. Doctrines of Salvation by Joseph Smith, Vol. I, p. 135. 10. Articles of Faith, p. 79.

DOCUMENTATION FROM JW WRITINGS

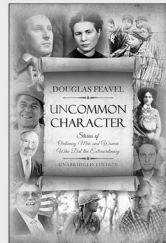


11. The Watchtower, April 1, 1972, pp. 197, 200. 12. You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth, 1982, p. 147. 13. Reasoning from the Scriptures, pp. 70-76. 14. Holy Spirit, 1976, p. 11. 15. Ibid., Feb. 15, 1979, p. 30. 16. Aid to Bible Understanding, p. 1152; New Heavens and New Earth, p. 30. 17. You Can Live Forever . . . pp. 143, 144, 172. 18. Let God be True, p. 101. 19. Studies in the Scriptures, Vol. I, pp. 150, 152.

DOCUMENTATION FROM THE BIBLE (GOD)

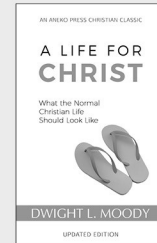


20. Jn. 1:1, 14, 8:58, 10:30; Col. 2:9. 21. Rom. 6:23; 3:28; 4:5. Eph. 2:8-9. 22. Gal. 3:1-2; 5:1-4. 23. Isaiah 43:10; 44:6, 8. 24. Jn. 4:24. 25. 1 Jn. 1:7, 2:2. 26. Jn. 14:6. 27. Jn. 1:12; Rom. 10:9-10. 28. Lk. 24:39; Jn. 2:19-21. 29. Isaiah 64:6. 30. 2 Cor. 4:3-4. 31. Lk. 6:39. 32. Rom. 3:23, 5:12. 33. Isaiah 59:2.

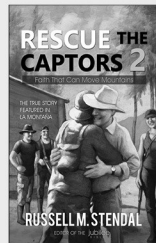


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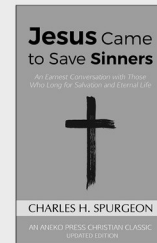


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The Commandments of Jesus (1 of 2)

—Compiled by J. S. McConnell

Jesus said, *If a man love me, he will keep my words* (John 14:23). What are His words, or commands? Many of them are listed below. Read them and see how well you are doing. Do you love Him? Are you keeping His commands?

REPENTANCE

1. "Repent" Mt. 4:17; Rev. 2:5
2. "Come unto Me" Mt. 11:28
3. "Seek first God and His righteousness" Mt. 6:33
4. "Forgive if ye have ought against any" Mk. 11:25
5. "Deny Yourself" Mt. 16:24
6. "Ask...seek...knock" Mt. 7:7
7. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate" Lk. 13:24

BELIEF

1. "Believe the Gospel" Mk. 1:15
2. "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me" Jn. 14:1
3. "Believe on Him who He (God) hath sent" Jn. 6:28-29
4. "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me" Jn. 14:11
5. "Believe the works...I do" Jn. 10:37-38
6. "While ye have light believe in the light" Jn. 12:36
7. "Believe that ye receive" Mk. 11:24

THE NEW BIRTH

1. "Ye must be born again" Jn. 3:7
2. "Cleanse first that which is within" Mt. 23:26
3. "Make the tree good, and his fruit good" Mt. 12:33
4. "Abide in Me and I in you" Jn. 15:4
5. "Have salt in yourselves" Mk. 9:50
6. "Labor...for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" Jn. 6:27
7. "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" Lk. 10:20

RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" Jn. 20:23
2. "Let the children first be filled" Mk. 7:27
3. "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink" Jn. 7:37-39
4. "Keep my commandments and...the Father... shall give you another Comforter" Jn. 14:15-17
5. "Ask...with importunity" Jn. 16:24; Lk.11:5-13
6. "Tarry...until ye be endued with power from on high" Lk. 24:49
7. "When the Comforter is come...He shall testify of Me: and ye also shall bear witness" Jn. 15:26-27

FOLLOWING JESUS

1. "Follow Me" Jn. 12:26
2. "Be baptized" Mt. 3:13-15; 28:19
3. "Take this...(communion) in remembrance of Me" Lk. 22:17-19

4. "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet" Jn. 13:14-15
5. "If any man will come after Me...let him take up his cross daily" Lk. 9:23
6. "Learn of Me" Mt. 11:29
7. "Continue ye in My love" Jn. 15:9

PRAYER

1. "Pray always" Lk. 21:36
2. "Pray that ye enter not into temptation" Lk. 22:40, 46
3. "Pray...the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers" Lk. 10:2
4. "Pray for them which despitefully use you" Lk. 6:28
5. "Pray to the Father...in my name" Mt.6:6; Jn.16:24
6. "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven..." Mt. 6:9-13
7. "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions" Mt. 6:7-8

FAITH

1. "Have faith in God" Mk. 11:22
2. "Be not faithless" Jn. 20:27
3. "Neither be ye of doubtful mind" Lk. 12:29
4. "Take no thought for your life" Mt. 6:25-34
5. "Let not your heart be troubled" Jn. 14:1, 27
6. "Be of good cheer" Mt. 14:27
7. "Be not afraid" Mk. 5:36; Lk. 12:4-7

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

1. "Search the scriptures" Jn. 5:39
2. "Remember the word that I said" Jn. 15:20
3. "Let these sayings sink down into your ears" Lk. 9:44
4. "Take heed therefore how ye hear" Lk. 8:18
5. "Take heed what ye hear" Mk. 4:24
6. "Beware of the leaven (doctrine) of the Pharisees" Mt.16:6, 12
7. "Beware of false prophets" Mt. 7:15-17

LETTING YOUR LIGHT SHINE

1. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works" Mt. 5:16
2. "Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness" Lk. 11:35
3. "Go and bring forth fruit, and ...bear much fruit" Jn. 15:16, 8
4. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father" Lk. 6:36
5. "Tell...how great things the Lord hath done for thee" Mk. 5:19
6. "Lift up you eyes, and look on the fields" Jn. 4:35

7. "Walk while you have the light" Jn. 12:35

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

1. "Hold fast till I come" Rev. 2:25; 3:2-3

2. "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh"

3. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord"

4. "Take heed...lest...your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life" Lk. 21:34

5. "Remember Lot's wife" Lk. 17:31-32

6. "Take heed that ye be not deceived" Lk. 21:8

7. "Watch" Mk. 13:34-37

SUPREME LOVE TO GOD

1. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart...soul...mind...strength" Mk. 12:30

2. "God, and Him only shalt thou serve" Mt. 4:10

3. "Worship the Father in spirit and in truth" Jn. 4:23-24

4. "Call no man your father upon the earth" Mt. 23:9

5. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" Mt. 4:7

6. "Fear Him (God) which...hath power to cast into hell" Lk. 12:5

7. "All men should honor the Son" Jn. 5:22-23

OUR DUTY TO GOD AND MAN

1. "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" Mk. 12:17

2. "Swear not at all" Mt. 5:34-37

3. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"

4. "Agree with thine adversary quickly" Mt. 5:25

5. "We saw one casting out devils in thy name... Forbid him not" Mk. 9:38-40

6. "Eat such things as are set before you" Lk. 10:8

7. "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost" Jn. 6:12

OUR DUTY TO OUR NEIGHBOR

1. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" Mt. 19:17-19

2. "Thou shalt do no murder" Mt. 19:18

3. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" Mt. 19:18

4. "Thou shalt not steal" Mt. 19:18

5. "Thou shalt not bear false witness" Mt. 19:18

6. "Honor thy father and thy mother" Mt. 19:19

7. "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" Lk. 6:31

Grieving God's Heart

Psalm 78:40-42 tells us how often the Israelites provoked God in the wilderness and grieved Him in the desert! Yes, again and again they tempted God and limited the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His power – the day He redeemed them from the enemy. Often when we are in a wilderness experience we doubt and limit God. We forget the things He has done for us and others in the past. We speak many negative things with our mouths.

My experience has been that the way through the wilderness is to keep my eyes fixed on Jesus, reminding myself of how He has come through for me and others in the past, and to continue declaring His Word and His promises. They are just as true in the wilderness as they are on the mountaintop; we just can't see them as well.

The words of our mouth matter a lot! One of the most effective keys I have discovered is to thank God for what I want to see, as if it has already happened – even while it appears that the opposite is happening. This changed things, because thanksgiving is the language of the kingdom, and faith is at the core of it. Our God is able to do exceedingly above all we ask or think, but the greatest limiting factors are the words and negativity that come out of our mouths when we desperately want Him to come through for us! God is good and He is kind, regardless of what we think and speak; but when we keep our eyes on Him and walk forward with Him in faith and gratefulness, we will see those breakthroughs!—Norma Miller

A Slave to God!

1 Corinthians 6:19-20: *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

The apostle Paul often referred to himself as a slave of God! What did he mean? He meant that he was totally possessed by God. God had looked upon Paul and had seen his degraded and needful condition. God had seen Paul in the slave market of the world, held in bondage by sin and death and the troubles and trials of life. God was moved with compassion toward Paul; therefore, God bought and purchased Paul. Paul was now the slave of God – totally possessed by God; but wait: the same is true for you and me. Our body, also the temple of God, fully belongs to God! — Joe Keim

Feedback and Response Section

1

Amish Voice, Please continue with articles based on the Word of God. I very much appreciate your *Feedback and Response Section*, where you try and respond back according to the Word of God.

It seems in our time, a lot of people will approve of something

Paul Miller responds:

SL: Thank you very much for your kind letter. You sound like you are very wise. We love to hear from our readers, and while not all the letters we receive are as nice as yours, our readers have many good things to share with us.

You are very right in that many people often approve or disapprove of something simply because of what they were taught or because of what others do, without knowing what God's Word actually says. We encourage our readers not to just

because other people approve it. Or, they will be opposed to something because other people give a negative report. Instead, let's search the Scripture and study to shew thyself approved unto God, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

—SL from PA

tell us what they believe, but to go to the Word of God and seek God's wisdom and truth.

We hope that our readers spend time every day alone with God in prayer and in Bible reading, and even that they spend time as families praying, reading the Bible, and singing hymns together.

I hope we all live by the verse that you mentioned: *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth* (2 Timothy 2:15). —Paul Miller

2

In a recent issue, we received a letter from one of our readers. We had many responses to this letter. The letter from W.S. is reprinted here, with some of the responses below:

Amish Voice: Why do you call your paper the Amish Voice? You know that some of the things you are trying to preach aren't in the Old Order Amish beliefs! The main thing I have an issue with is this new belief of knowing one is saved! We read a

lot of die Hoffnung and know that we have to "Keep on in die Hoffnung (hope)!"

I don't think this is the way you were taught either. Stay in the way you were taught, we read. Why is it that when people want to be worldly and have worldly stuff, they think they can have it and still serve God? So many think they finally found the right faith. It just doesn't all measure up in the Testament.

—Mrs. W. S.

J. S. responds:

I wish that every Christian would know the joy and confidence that comes from knowing for sure that Christ's work on the cross was sufficient, but it can be presented in such an offensive way that no one is persuaded.

It is not a "new belief" (neue Glabe). It is as old as 1 Jn. 5:13: *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.*

It is also as old as the early Anabaptists. When I was at my cousin's funeral, the preacher quoted from her dad's Ausbund. He had been a preacher in this same church. He quoted from verse 34 of song

125 (page 744), sung to the tune of, "Es Sind Zween Weg":

"Das WISSEN alle Gottes Kind
Daß sie von Gott gebohren sind,"

("Every child of God KNOWS
That he is born of God.")

He read this verse as he preached, and then he looked up and simply said, "Maybe our forefathers had more assurance than we give them credit for."

Having assurance of salvation according to the Bible changed my life. —J.S.

D. L. responds:

Have we as Anabaptists become so steeped in tradition that we have forgotten what it is to live by faith? One of the first

Anabaptists wrote about what it means to live "our faith." If you find any truth at all in the following, you cannot remain totally apart from the world. You must live to go out into the world and help others to find "their faith."

"True evangelical faith is of such a nature it cannot lie dormant, but spreads itself out in all kinds of righteousness and fruits of love;

1. it dies to flesh and blood;
2. it destroys all lusts and forbidden desires;
3. it seeks, serves, and fears God in its inmost soul;
4. it clothes the naked;
5. it feeds the hungry;
6. it comforts the sorrowful;

Cont.

7. it shelters the destitute;
8. it aids and consoles the sad;
9. it does good to those who do it harm;
10. it serves those that harm it;
11. it prays for those who persecute it;
12. it teaches, admonishes, and judges us with the Word of the Lord;

13. it seeks those who are lost;
14. it binds up what is wounded;
15. it heals the sick;
16. it saves what is strong (sound);
17. it becomes all things to all people.

The persecution, suffering, and anguish that come to it for the sake of the Lord's

truth have become a glorious joy and comfort to it."

I hope that we will not just look to our forefathers and learn from their words, but I hope that we will even more look to our Father in heaven and live according to His Word. —D. L.

Forgiveness

—D. Wilkerson

Here is a powerful weapon for every follower of Jesus: Cry! Cry out with all of your heart as David did (see Psalm 34:6). Go to the Lord and confess your sin and appeal to his lovingkindness, saying, "Lord, I know you love me and are ready to forgive me. I repent before you right now."

At the very moment you confess, you are clear with God. It is futile to think you can repay any amount for your sin. God loves you so much that he gave His Son, Jesus, who has already made all payment. Your merciful, loving Advocate is yearning to help and deliver you: "*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*" (1 John 2:1).

Strolling alongside my young granddaughter, Tiffany, as she walked atop a low concrete wall. I held her from behind to keep her from falling, but she tried to knock my hand away.

Eventually I let go, and she toppled over, though without hurting herself. When she fell, I did not desert her, of course. I didn't say, "Look what you did. You're not mine anymore!" No loving grandparent would do that.

The Lord showed me through that experience, "David, you allow yourself such love for this child; but at times you don't allow Me to love you in the same way. You swell with pride over your children, but at times you won't allow Me to take pride in you."

I heard the Lord speak a tender word to my heart. He said, "Son, you bless Me. You bless My heart!" No one has ever said anything better to me in my life, and I know this particular word is true. God takes pleasure in His children (Psalm 147:11).

~ D. Wilkerson

Garment of Praise

—Dale Schmucker

This morning I felt as though I had a cloud of heaviness hanging over me. Everything looked dark and futile. My past sins and mistakes seemed to be all I could see, and I heard the enemy whisper, "This is who you will always be and know." I knew it wasn't true, but the heaviness was far too strong for me.

By faith I began to praise God. It was a sacrifice of praise. I thanked God for His love, for salvation, for His blood, and for all the good things I could think of. Then I began thanking Him for all the good things He was going to do in the future. By faith. Needless to say, it wasn't long before my praise wasn't a sacrifice anymore. I was full of God's joy again.

God has given us the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness (Isaiah 61:3). It is through the high praises of God that we can bind the powers of darkness and execute judgement on the spiritual principalities of evil (Psalm 149). God inhabits the praise of His people. It is often through thanksgiving and praise that our own perspective changes.

If you struggle with the spirit of heaviness and you feel like "singing the blues" because of circumstances in your life, let me recommend you try singing a "new song" to God (Ps. 40:3; 98:1). Offer to God a sacrifice of praise. He is always worthy; and it will change you in the process. —Dale Schmucker

Life and Death

—Joe Keim

Okay – so you just died and burst full speed into eternity. Next stop: appear before God your maker to give an account of your life on earth.

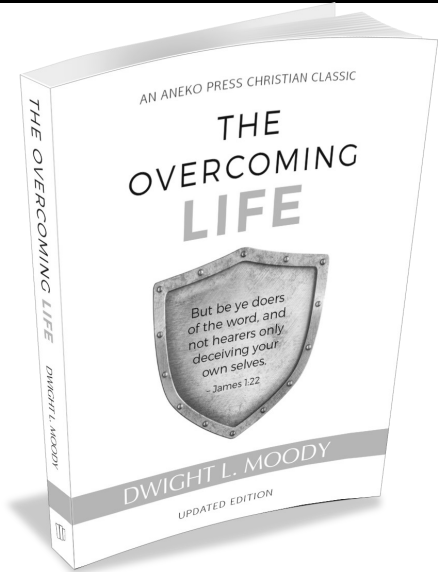
So, I have a few questions:

Are you glad you wasted so much of your time working long hours, stashing money in your bank accounts, and living life for yourself? Before you died, you had a million reasons why church was old fashioned and a thing of the past. You would've

rather stayed angry and held grudges in your heart; it made you feel like you were in control.

Why?

You partied, swore, and turned a cold cheek toward God and those who reminded you of Jesus the Christ and the great love and price He paid for your soul. Clearly, the scriptures teach: *it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment* (Hebrews 9:27). — Joe Keim



Continued from the last issue.

Conviction

When a person is not deeply convicted of sin, it is a pretty sure sign that he has not truly repented. Experience has taught me that people who have very little conviction of sin sooner or later lapse back into their old lives. For the last few years, I have been much more concerned for a deep and true growth in professing converts than for impressive numbers. If people profess to be converted without realizing the awfulness of their sins, they are likely to be those stony-ground hearers who don't amount to anything (Matthew 13:5-6). The first indication of opposition, or the first wave of persecution or ridicule, will suck them back into the world again.

I believe we are making a woeful mistake when we allow so many people to join the church who have never truly been convicted of sin. Sin is just as black in man's heart today as it ever was. I sometimes think it is blacker. The more understanding a man has, the greater his responsibility, and therefore

the greater his need for deep conviction.

William Dawson once told this story to illustrate how humble the soul must be before it can find peace:

At a revival meeting, a little lad who was used to Methodist ways went home to his mother and said, "Mother, John So-and-so is under conviction and seeking peace, but he won't find it tonight, Mother."

"Why, William?" she asked.

"Because he is only down on one knee, Mother, and he will never get peace until he is down on both knees."

Until conviction of sin brings us down on both knees, until we are completely humbled, until we have no hope left in ourselves, we cannot find the Savior.

Conscience, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit lead a person to conviction. All three are used by God.

Long before we had the Scriptures, God dealt with men through the conscience. That is what made Adam and Eve hide themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden of Eden. That is what convicted Joseph's brothers when they acknowledged their guilt twenty years after they sold him into slavery. *And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us* (Genesis 42:21). We must appeal to the conscience of our children before they are old enough to understand about the Scriptures and the Spirit of God. The conscience is what accuses or excuses the heathen.

Conscience is a divinely implanted ability in man telling him that he ought

to do right. Someone once said it was born when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, when their eyes were opened and they knew good and evil (Genesis 3:22). It passes judgment without being invited. It approves or condemns our thoughts, words, and actions, and judges them to be right or wrong. A man cannot violate his conscience without being self-condemned.

However, conscience is not a safe guide, because often it won't tell you a thing is wrong until you've already done it. It needs God's influence, because it's a partner with our fallen nature. Many people do things that are wrong without being condemned by conscience. *I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth* (Acts 26:9). Conscience itself needs to be educated.

Again, conscience is too often like an alarm clock. It awakens and arouses at first, but after time the man becomes used to it, and it loses its effect. Conscience can be smothered. I think we make a mistake by not preaching more to the conscience.

Over the course of time, conscience was replaced by the law of God, which was fulfilled in Christ.

Now, the masses have access to Bibles, and this is the instrument by which God produces conviction. The Word of God tells you what is right and wrong before you commit sin. It is critical that we learn and embrace its teachings, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Conscience compared with the Bible is like a flashlight compared with the sun in the heavens.

The truth convicted those Jews on the

day of Pentecost. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, preached that *God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ*. Then, when they heard Peter, *they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?* (Acts 2:36-37).

Finally, the Holy Spirit convicts. And *when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me* (John 16:8-9).

I once heard the late Dr. A. J. Gordon teach on this passage. He said, “Some commentators say there was no real conviction of sin in the world until the Holy Spirit came. I think that foreign missionaries will disagree. A heathen who never heard of Christ may have a tremendous conviction of sin. Notice that God gave conscience first and gave the Comforter afterward. Conscience bears witness to the law. The Comforter bears witness to Christ. Conscience brings legal conviction. The Comforter brings scriptural conviction. Conscience brings conviction to the point of condemnation, and the Comforter brings conviction unto salvation. He shall convict the world of sin, because they don’t believe in Me. That’s the sin about which He convicts. It does not say that He convicts men of sin because they have stolen or lied or committed adultery. The Holy Spirit is to convict men of sin because they have not believed in Jesus Christ. The coming of Jesus Christ into the world made a sin possible that was not possible before. Light reveals darkness. It takes whiteness to bring conviction concerning blackness. There are natives in Central Africa who never dreamed

that they were dark-skinned until they saw the face of a white man. A great many people in this world never knew they were sinful until they saw the face of Jesus Christ in all its purity.

Jesus Christ now stands between us and the law. He has fulfilled the law for us and settled all claims it had on us. Whatever claim it had on us has been transferred to Him. It is no longer the sin question, but the Son question, that confronts us. The first thing Peter does when he begins to preach after the Holy Spirit has been sent down is proclaim Christ. *Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain* (Acts 2:23). It doesn’t say a word about any other kind of sin. That’s the sin that runs all through Peter’s teaching. As he preached, the Holy Spirit came down and convicted them, and they cried out, *What shall we do to be saved?*

Well, we had no part in crucifying Christ, so what is our sin? It is the same sin in another form. They were convicted of crucifying Christ. We are convicted because we have not believed in Christ crucified. They were convicted because they despised and rejected God’s Son. The Holy Spirit convicts us because we have not believed in the Despised and Rejected One. It is really the same sin in both cases – the sin of unbelief in Christ.”

Some of the most powerful meetings I’ve ever been in were those in which there came a sort of hush over the people, and it seemed like an unseen power gripped their consciences. I remember a man who came to one meeting, and the moment he entered, he felt that God was there. A sense of awe came upon him, and that very hour he was convicted and converted.

Contrition

Contrition is a deep, godly sorrow and humiliation of heart because of sin. If there isn’t true contrition, a man will turn right back to his old sin. That’s the trouble with many Christians.

A man may get angry, and if there isn’t contrition, the next day he will get angry again. A daughter may say mean, cutting things to her mother. Then her conscience troubles her, and she says, “Mother, I am sorry. Please forgive me.”

But soon there is another outburst of temper, because the contrition is not deep and real. A husband speaks sharp words to his wife. Then to ease his conscience, he goes and buys her a bouquet of flowers. He will not go like a man and admit his behavior was wrong.

What God wants is contrition. If there isn’t contrition, there isn’t full repentance. *The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit* (Psalm 34:18). *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise* (Psalm 51:17). Many sinners are sorry for their sins – sorry that they cannot continue in them. They repent only with hearts that are not broken. I don’t think we know how to repent today.

We need a modern-day John the Baptist wandering through the land, crying, “Repent! Repent!”

This article was taken from the book, ***The Overcoming Life* — by D. L. Moody**. To get a free copy of *The Overcoming Life*, contact the Amish Voice, PO Box 128, Savannah, OH 44874 or call (419) 962-1515.

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July

Eternal Life — Ours Now

Throughout his ministry, **Vance Havner** lived and preached that a Christian should exhibit faithfulness to Jesus in all areas of life. Listen to this country preacher explain from the Bible how we can have eternal life now.

Biblical Assurance Parts 1 and 2

Paul Washer asks how you know you are born again. The only way is to examine your life in the light of what the Bible reveals about genuine faith, he asserts; and the best place to get a Biblical assurance instead of an emotional one is in First John.

Ancient Revival

L. E. Maxwell speaks on the main hindrance to revival in the Scripture, and the main hindrance today: our own sin. The reason we don't see God move is that we think that someone else besides us is blocking the moving of the Spirit.

August

Which Direction - Parts 1 and 2

In this message, **Dr. Charles Stanley** identifies how to change the direction of your life to align with God's will. Do you feel lost? Is your life at a crossroads? Or are you in constant motion, not sure if your life is moving in the right direction?

Knowing Who You are In Christ

Speaker **Michele Cushatt** joins Focus on the Family and

discusses the struggles she endured through three bouts with cancer and how her faith in Jesus Christ brought her to a place of peace with herself and with God.

Thanks vs. Being Grateful

Emerson and Jonathan Eggerichs explain that we can say "thanks," but not be grateful. We can mouth words, but our hearts are elsewhere. We are fixated on ourselves. We have probably all seen this in ourselves. 2 Timothy 3:2 says that people can be "lovers of their own selves . . . unthankful."

September

The Call of Faith, Parts 1 and 2

Charles Stanley explains that Abraham's life was characterized by his faith. When God called Abraham, he left his home and stepped out into the unknown without hesitation. Discover how Abraham's lifestyle of faith shows us how to trust God for everything.

Exploring Your Love Styles

In a discussion based on their book *How We Love*, counselors **Milan and Kay Yerkovich** join Focus on the Family to outline five primary love styles and explain how each shapes behaviors, beliefs, and expectations in marriage.

How to Deal with Difficult People, Parts 1-2

Chip Ingram discusses ten keys to experiencing life in a supernatural community.

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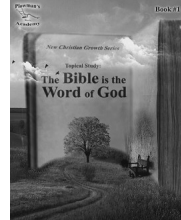
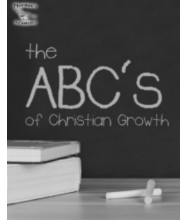


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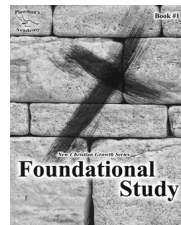
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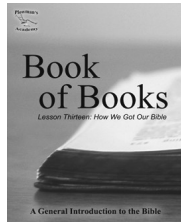
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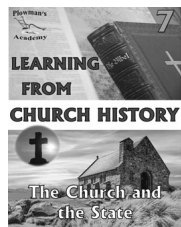
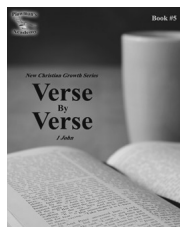
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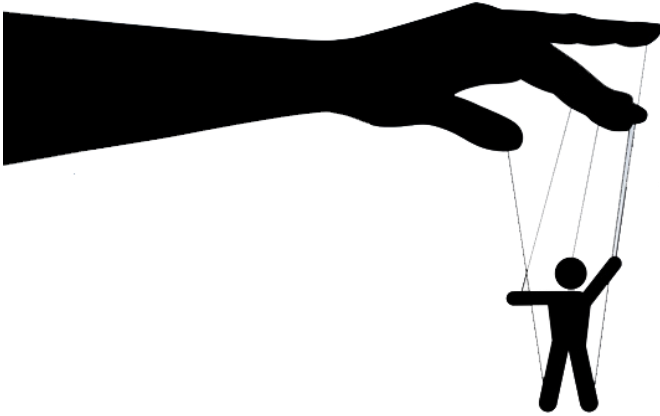
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Some things are impossible to forget.

I can still hear the sound of his boots on the wood as he raced up the stairs after me. I can hear the door slam. But the loud beats of my heart nearly stopped when he grabbed me and I looked into his eyes.

They were the eyes of evil.

There are very few words to describe the horror that followed. I was stripped of all dignity and control. I couldn't get away. I was trapped.

In the semi-darkness, I instinctively cried out to the only One I, in my little girl heart, believed could rescue me. To this day, I'm not sure if the words were audible or not, but my spirit cried, "Help me, Jesus! Help me!"

As my body was being ravished and my spirit broken, I begged Jesus to save me.

But He didn't come.

I was completely alone. Alone with evil.

For years, I didn't have any words for the terror I felt. I just knew I was scared. Very, very, very scared. I lived in fear – fear that that terrible feeling of terror would eat me alive – next time.

Recently, I was able to name it. Its name is Powerlessness.

In those horrific minutes as a little girl on the cold, hard floor, I experienced complete loss of control. I could not get away. I could not make it stop. I could not even control my body. I was completely powerless.

To top it all off, I felt abandoned by God. Because He didn't answer my prayer in the way I was expecting, it felt like He, too, was powerless against that kind of evil.

I blamed myself for years. I deceived myself into thinking that everything bad that happens is my fault. I knew in my head that what happened to me as a little girl wasn't my fault, but I couldn't seem to shake the blame and guilt I subjected myself to on a daily basis.

It got worse as the years went by. I blamed myself for the wreck my family had when I was thirteen. I blamed myself when the alarm clock failed to go off and my husband was late for work. I blamed myself every time the children were disobedient. I blamed myself for anything and everything. I apologized frequently for the stupidest stuff.

Why?

Because if I could convince myself in powerless situations that "it is my fault," I didn't have to experience the awful feelings of terror that reminded me of the little girl at the hands of evil. It was my self-defense against feeling powerless.

It wasn't until I came face-to-face with the reality of the scope of the powerlessness I faced as a child that I was able to truly believe in my heart that the abuse was not my fault.

Does Jesus understand powerlessness? Does He know what it feels like to be stripped of control?

Yes. **He chose to experience powerlessness.** He wouldn't have had to subject Himself to the limitations of a human body and allow His creation to crucify Him on the cross. He could have stepped off that cross at any point; but He didn't.

He loved you and me too much to do that.

It is not wrong to feel powerless; it is part of being created. After all, we are, in and of ourselves, powerless.

God is in control; not you, and not me. Do I understand why He sometimes allows evil things to happen? No, I don't. I can't – because I'm not God.

But if Jesus loved me enough to choose *POWERLESSNESS OVER POWERFULNESS*, then I believe I can trust Him with my life. And I can rest in the fact that He is good, even when I don't understand His ways. —Ann Detweiler

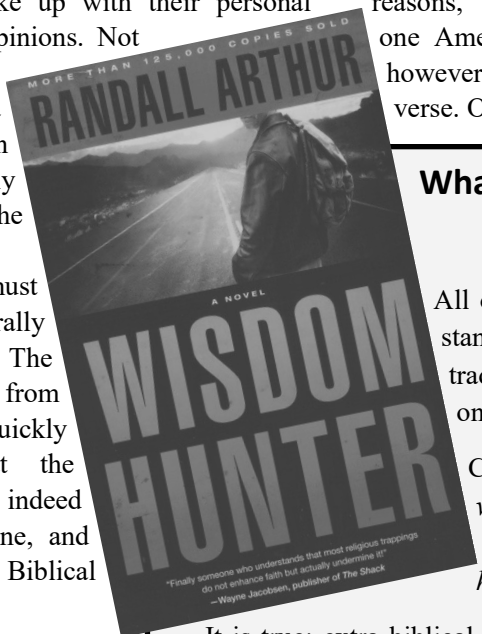
And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. —Mark 9:42-44

The exercise backfired on me.

When everyone had finished their list, I asked several people to read aloud what they had written. When the reading was completed, a husband and father from Australia promptly raised his hand. With utter sincerity – displaying absolutely no signs of divisiveness or argumentativeness – he said, “I don’t know if anyone else caught this, but I noticed it immediately. Every American in the room, and only the Americans, shared that the ideal Christian on the outside should be clean, well-groomed, neatly dressed, and should always look professional. Not one European expressed that concept. Now I’ve only been a believer for a few months, but the greatest desire of my life right now is to please God; yet I’ve never been a well-groomed or neatly dressed person. It’s just not a practice of mine. But if God expects me to be clean and nicely dressed, then I want to know. I want to make the necessary changes. I need to be taught. So, where in the Bible does God spell out this expectation?”

An American lady with a southern accent responded first. “Well, I can’t pinpoint the exact Scripture for you, but it must be there. Every church in America teaches it.” Several other Americans spoke up with their personal reasons, feelings, and opinions. Not one American could present a verse. One of the American men finally conceded that the “clean-cut” expectation must be culturally influenced. The Christians from Europe quickly confirmed that the expectation was indeed an American one, and clearly not a Biblical one.

I ultimately learned during this season of my ministry that when Christianity thrives in a particular culture for many generations, the Christianity becomes so tightly intertwined with the culture that at some point it becomes difficult



to cleanly divide the Christianity from the culture, and we end up preaching the mores of our culture in the name of God, ignorantly believing that we are preaching Christianity.

It became clear to me that many of the beliefs, practices, and traditions of my denomination were held to be valuable, not because there was any inherent biblical value in them, but because the former generations and the lauded “heroes of our faith” held them to be valuable. Careful observation reveals this is true in many denominations.

The truth is, we should give these passed-down traditions a lesser place, if any place at all. We definitely should not be guilty of equating these cultural and provincial traditions with the teachings of Scripture. And we certainly should not be guilty of preaching them in the name of God and punishing people if they refuse to conform. Jesus, it should be pointed out, refused to tolerate this gross error among the Pharisees (See Mark 7:7-9, for example).

We must all remind ourselves that the premise of the Christian faith is the Bible, and not passed-down cultural and provincial preferences and traditions.

My bestselling novel *Wisdom Hunter* was birthed out of the pain of learning this great lesson. It is a true-to-life drama that attempts to illustrate the destructiveness of legalism, plain and simple.

—Randall Arthur, Rdhus@aol.com

What does it take to soften a heart so entrenched in law that it never truly loves?

All of us struggle with some level of legalism – known as extra-biblical standards. We do not often realize how much man-made rules and traditions, passed down through the generations, distract us from God’s only and final truth – His unconditional love, grace, and forgiveness.

Colossians 2:14-15: *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

It is true: extra-biblical standards do make the outside of a person look good, and they do a good job of helping a person deceive others into thinking they have it all together. However, on the inside you may feel as if you are dying a slow death.

Randall Arthur, in his best selling novel *Wisdom Hunter*, helps the reader to see the devastating affects of legalism. Today, we are making *Wisdom Hunter* available to you for \$12 (includes shipping). Here’s how you can order your very own copy of *Wisdom Hunter*.

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Extra-Biblical Standards

—Randall Arthur

I had been living and working in Norway for three years as a young church-planting missionary when I discovered I had been misled by my teachers and mentors in the USA during all my years of Christian training. I began to see that my leaders had taught me falsely that the extra-biblical standards that ruled our denomination were more important than anything else.

These extra-biblical standards were preached almost weekly by our pastors. They were not taught in the name of “culture,” “denomination,” “tradition,” or “personal preference.” They were taught in the name of God.

These standards were used as a measuring stick to judge everyone’s spirituality. There was no grace offered among the believers in our denomination regarding adherence to these rules. There was only judgement. If anyone inside our church failed to measure up to these external do’s and don’ts, they were publicly condemned in the name of church discipline and blacklisted. Period.

Shortly after my conversion to Christ at the age of 13, I became a staunch crusader for these extra-biblical rules, and I continued to be a crusader even when moving to Norway years later at the age of 23. I honestly believed these extra-biblical standards represented the heart of God and the heart of Christianity.

It was my congregation in Norway – made up of people from over 30 different nations and as many different denominations – that helped me eventually understand I had been misled.

It began when I asked a man from India to teach a Bible class one Sunday morning. He taught on “God’s Chain of Authority.” “God, men, women, children,” he stressed. Upon reaching the last point, he reminded us that children are instructed by God to respect, honor, and obey their parents. He progressively stretched his final point, declaring that “*even if a child is forty years old, is married, and has children of his own, he is still obligated under God to obey his aging parents. If he is planning to change jobs, for example, and is told by his parent to not do it, he must obey.*”

It was obvious to all the Americans, Europeans, Africans, and Hispanics in the room that the man was mixing his Indian culture with his Christianity. He was allowing his Indian culture to skew his interpretation of the Scriptures.

I could easily see this phenomena in others. The revelation gradually provoked initial introspection into my own heart.

Shortly thereafter, I distributed blank sheets of paper to everyone in a mid-week Bible study. I asked them to draw a line down the center of the paper, giving them two columns. I asked them to label one of the columns “external,” and the other column “internal.” “Take the image of the ideal Christian that is in your head,” I instructed, “and describe that image in written words. In your opinion, what does the ideal Christian look like on the outside? What does he look like on the inside?”

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