

# The Amish Voice



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## PART 14—What Is The Church

### The Enemies of the Church (Part 1 of 2)

Need I remind ourselves that there is a violent battle going on, all around us. The battle I speak of, cannot be seen with the physical eye, and yet it rages on, hour after hour, day after day, year after year, and century after century. It is a battle being fought between good and evil, God and Satan, and heaven and hell.

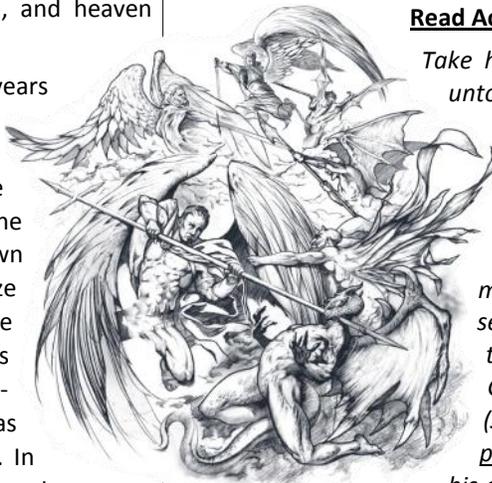
This battle started 6 thousand years ago in the Garden of Eden, and as we draw nearer to the end, it is becoming more and more severe. Most of the time, the church is so busy doing their own thing that they don't even realize what is happening. Even more often than that, the church is ignorant, unaware, and misinformed as to what the Bible has to say about this raging battle. In this article, I would like to take a closer look at this battle.

**The devil is seeking to tear the church down and destroy it, even more so as the end draws near.**

*...the devil, as a roaring LION, walketh about, seeking whom he may DEVOUR:*  
**(1 Peter 5:8)**

The *roaring lion* is a picture of anger, strength, fierceness, and cruelty. Satan is being pictured as angry against God and all believers.

Those who are members of Christ's Church need to be ALERT and WIDE AWAKE. As Christian soldiers we need to understand the enemy so that we can win the battles. Christ has already won the war (John 16:33) and we are over-comers in Him.



#### Read Acts 20:28-31

*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He (Jesus) hath purchased with his own blood. For*

*I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*

*Also of your own selves, shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*

Why was Paul in tears (v-31)? Why did Paul need to warn these believers? Was Paul con-

cerned about the flock (the church)? There are two ways that sheep can be killed. If the Shepherd does not feed the sheep they will die of starvation (v-28). **Bible teaching is needed.** If the Shepherd does not protect the sheep from the WOLVES (v-29) then they will be slaughtered. **A warning ministry is needed.** The Church must be ALERT and WIDE AWAKE!

In this lesson we want to study **FOUR OF THE TEN ENEMIES** that the Church faces today. There are more than ten, but these enemies that we will be looking at are certainly some of the most dangerous ones.

#### **ENEMY NUMBER ONE** **(FALSE TEACHING)**

False teachers and false prophets have always existed. They have always carried on their harmful work. Note what the apostle writes in **(2 Peter 2:1)**

*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privately shall bring in damnable heresies [lies], even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

1. When did the false prophets do their harmful work in the world?
2. When did the false prophets move

among the people and introduce their *damnable heresies* [evil lies]? Note the previous verse along with this verse:

*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

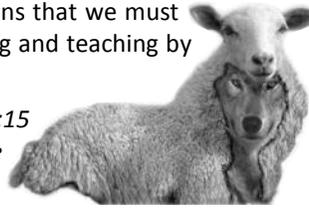
*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [secretly] shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. (2 Peter 1:21-2:1)*

The false prophets were at work while God was giving His Word to men. Imagine! Even while God was speaking and giving His Word to mankind there were some who were denying His Word and teaching lies and misleading people.

The Scriptures are clear: "*there shall be false teachers among you.*" The idea is this: there

will always be false teachers; false teachers will fill every generation of mankind and they will continue to introduce their evil lies until the world ends.

**Consider the Following:** This means there are false teachers among us. We must, therefore, be on the lookout as to what every man is teaching. It means that we must test all preaching and teaching by the Bible.



*Matthew 7:15 says, Beware of false prophets, which come to you in **sheep's clothing**, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

*But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. (Matthew 15:9)*

1. A false teacher is a person who teaches what is false (1 Tim 4:2).
2. A true teacher is one who speaks "the

*TRUTH in love"* (Ephesians 4:15).

Most people are very careful about what they feed their bodies. Great harm can come to a person who eats or drinks the wrong things.

1. Would you drink a glass of GASOLINE?
2. Would you eat a box of RAT POISON?

Some time ago, a wicked person put poison in some pills that people later bought at the store. Some people swallowed these pills, not knowing that they had been laced with poison. Some died because of this. The man who did this was a KILLER!

Just as the body needs to be fed with healthy food, so the soul needs to be fed with healthy teaching. The Bible calls healthy teaching "SOUND DOCTRINE" (see Titus 2:1). A good preacher will teach believers with HEALTHY TEACHING (good, wholesome food from the Word of God). A false teacher will feed people with FALSE TEACHING (poison).

Where and how do false teachers do their work? Some false teachers stand up and

### Heart to Heart with Joe Keim



You know the story. Adam and Eve had sinned by doing what God had specifically told them not to do. But then Genesis 3:8 says... "*they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God*"

Then God uttered three of the saddest words in all history to the man and woman He had created and loved so dearly: "*Where art thou?*" (Gen. 3:9.) Adam and Eve had been accustomed to fellowship with God on a continual basis. He made them, in fact, for the very purpose of such fellowship. And at no time since then have any created human beings on earth had such a perfect fellowship with God. He walked with them. He talked with them. He was a Father to them, lovingly caring for His own.

But then something came between God and the man and woman He had created. That "something" was sin, which is nothing less than disobedience. Sensing their error, Adam and Eve "*hid themselves*" from God because they were "afraid." They just didn't want to face God. Their God-given consciences made them aware for the first time that something had gone terribly wrong in their relationship with their Creator – and they wanted to avoid Him at all costs, fearing what He would do.

You can almost sense the pain and sorrow in God's voice as He called out that day, "*Adam, where art thou?*"

Just like Adam, when we sin, we try to cover it up. Cain killed Abel and buried him to cover up the crime. (Gen. 4:10.) Moses killed the Egyptian

and buried him to hide the crime. (Exodus 2:12.) Why the cover-up? We simply don't want anyone to know what we did because, like Adam and Eve, we're ashamed. And we certainly don't want God to know. (That's pretty foolish, come to think of it, when you're talking about an ALL KNOWING God. Psalms 69:5 reminds us, "*O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee.*"

"Joe, what's that have to do with me?" Well, let me ask you this question which, at first, seems unrelated: "How's your prayer life?"

The first thing that usually happens when a Christian sins or chooses a sinful lifestyle is that his or her prayer life just stops (if it had any life to begin with). Why? Because we're ashamed and, whether or not we admit it to ourselves, we feel guilty. Our God-given consciences are sounding a warning. And we're afraid that if we pray – if we have communication with God – if we actually listen to what He might say to us during our prayer time – He just might bring conviction upon us for that sinful activity that we've chosen. So – why not just avoid the hassle, right?

So, how's your prayer life? How often do you pray? And more to the point, how intensively and earnestly do you pray? Do you pray actually expecting an answer? Prayer – or the lack of it – clearly indicates your spiritual health.

God is waiting to hear from you – anytime, day or night. Have you talked things over with Him today? Or are you hiding, fearful of what He'll say?

Listen. Someone is calling... "Where art thou?"

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teach people in churches. Some false teachers go from house to house and from door to door trying to talk to people and spread their lies. Some false teachers are sincere and they really think that they are helping people, but they are sincerely wrong. They are deceived.

**2 Timothy 3:13** says, *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

Doctors once believed that sick people could be helped by putting leeches (blood suckers) on them. This was done to George Washington and it probably helped to shorten his life. These doctors were sincere but they were sincerely wrong.

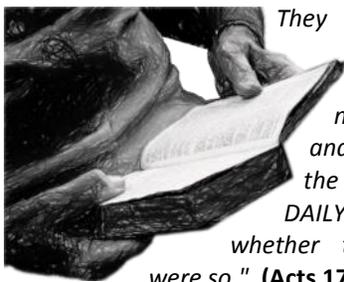
Here are some examples of false teaching:

- 1) All men will someday be saved and will be allowed to enter heaven.
- 2) A loving God would never punish people in hell.
- 3) Jesus Christ is the greatest angel that God ever created.
- 4) To be saved, a person must belong to a certain church denomination or group.
- 5) A person can be saved by his/her own good works.

### Can you think of other examples of false teaching?

Believers need to be ALERT. What should we do when we hear something taught (even by our own preachers or parents)?

The answer is found in Acts 17:11--"



*They received the WORD with all readiness of mind, and SEARCHED the Scriptures DAILY, (to see) whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)*

When you are taught something, you should go to the Bible and see for yourself whether or not this is really what the Bible teaches. A fair question that can always be asked is this: "**Where does it say that in the Bible?**" If you are taught that a person is born again by believing in Jesus Christ, then you can search the Scriptures to see if this is really true. Is it true or false (Acts 16:30-31; John 3:16)?

I have heard well meaning people say, well, if it was good enough for the forefathers, it

must be good enough for me and my family. Dear friend, that is a very troublesome statement! Can I say this: that statement will not be good enough for Jesus when you meet Him face to face in eternity.

Without a doubt, millions have been led astray by a sincere and well meaning parent and/or preacher. We only have ONE standard! That is the Word of God.

Do not be poisoned by false teaching! Beware of anything that is contrary to what is taught in God's Word, the Bible.

## ENEMY NUMBER TWO (Worldliness)

**In John 17:16** Jesus says, *They [saved people] are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

Believers are not of the world, because they belong to the Savior's kingdom. Unsaved people are OF THE WORLD because they belong to Satan's system. The devil wants to draw believers away from the Savior and close to the world.

Consider Romans 12:2.

*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind... (Romans 12:2)*

Jesus wants to TRANSFORM US (change us by working in our hearts) but, Satan wants to CONFORM US (squeeze us into the world's mold). For example, think about the kind of language that some of your friends use. They may use bad language and make fun of others and tell dirty jokes. As a believer and as a member of the Lord's Church, you do not want to CONFORM your language to theirs by allowing the same kind of filth to come out of your mouth. Instead, you want Christ to TRANSFORM your language so that you can enjoy the healthy use of your mind. They will also be able to see that the language that a Christian uses is good and wholesome and different.

*Let no corrupt (filthy) communication proceed out of your mouth... (Eph. 4:29a)*

Don't let garbage come out of your mouth. But speak the kind of language that will encourage and build up others (see verse 29b).

The worldly person is the person who ignores God and who leaves God out of his thinking. He does not consider God in his thoughts and in his plans and in his actions. He does not thank God for his daily bread, nor does he care to read God's Word. He lives as if there were no God in heaven.

The average person does not give God very much thought during the day. The Christian believer must be different! God is the very center of His life, and **he must include God in all of his thinking and plans and actions.** When we live this way we are being a good witness because we are forcing others to realize that there is a God in heaven.

What does God think about WORLDLINESS?

**James 4:4**

*Ye adulterers and adulteresses [German: Ihr Ehebrecher und Ehebrecherinnen], know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*



James uses strong language. He calls the people adulteresses and adulterers. Being an adulteress and adulterer means that a person is guilty of spiritual adultery. Jesus Christ holds His relationship with us in the highest regards. Our relationship with Him is to be so close that it can be described only by the closeness and intimacy of marriage.

In fact, our relationship with Christ can even be closer and more meaningful than marriage. We are to know, believe, and understand Christ just as we are to know, believe, and understand our husbands and wives. But with Christ there is far more of a bond and relationship than what we can have with each other as men and women of earth. Jesus Christ actually lives within our bodies in the person of the Holy Spirit. This is the reason believers are called *the bride of Christ* (2 Cor. 11:1-2; Ephes. 5:24-28; Rev. 19:7; Rev. 21:9). The marriage relationship just comes the closest to describing the bond which Christ has with us.

The point is this: our bond with Christ is so close that when we turn away from Him to

the world, it is like committing spiritual adultery. Spiritual adultery means that we turn away from God to the world—that we break our commitment to God and turn to other things; that we follow after the things of the world instead of following after God, things such as... Houses, Lands, Money, Fame, Position, and Power.

*For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:26)*



The word *soul* is the same word translated "life" (Matthew 16:25). Once a man has lost his soul, it is lost. It cannot be bought back. The man suffers the loss of it forever. Imagine! Even if a man possessed all the wealth of the world, he would not be able to buy back his soul. Why? Because it is gone; it has passed on forever. The man will never return to earth, not even for one day. He is gone forever.

**Danger and duty:** Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by Christ into the kind of person He wants you to be. Don't let the world conform you; let Christ transform you.

## **ENEMY NUMBER THREE** **(Legalism)**

The word is pronounced Le<sup>g</sup>al<sup>iz</sup>m and means: (1) Following a strict set of rules and traditions of men, rather than the spirit. (2) Believing that salvation is gained through good works, rather than believing salvation is a free gift through Christ.

### **1. Legalism puts rules above God, as illustrated in Matthew 12:9-10...**

*And when He [Jesus] was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.*

Their Sabbath rules said that people could be helped on the Sabbath only if their lives were in danger. If Jesus had waited until another day, he would have been submitting to the Pharisees' authority, showing that their petty rules were equal to God's law. If he healed the man on the Sabbath, the Pharisees could claim that because Jesus broke their rules, his power was not from God. But Jesus made it clear how ridiculous and petty their rules were. **God is a God of people, not rules.** The best time to reach out to someone is when he or she needs help.

### **2. Legalism puts rules above human needs.**

The Pharisees in Mat 12, were so concerned about Jesus' breaking one of their rules that they did not care about the man's shriveled hand. Which should cause us to ask ourselves, what is our attitude toward others? If our convictions don't allow us to help certain people, then our convictions may not be in tune with God's Word.

### **3. Legalism kills joy.**

**Galatians 4:8-9:** *...when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly [useless] elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?*

Paul sensed that the Galatians had lost the joy of their salvation because of legalism. Legalism can take away joy because (1) it makes people feel guilty rather than loved; (2) it produces self-hatred rather than humility; (3) it stresses performance over relationship; and (4) it points out how far short we fall rather than how far we've come because of what Christ did for us. If you feel guilty and condemned, check your focus. Are you living by faith in Christ or by trying to live up to the demands and expectations of others?

### **4. Legalism is attractive, but destructive.**

**Colossians 2:23:** *Which things [listed v14—v22] have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.*

Following a long list of religious rules requires strong self-discipline and can make a person appear moral, but religious rules cannot change a person's heart. Only the Holy Spirit can do that.

Legalism is a special kind of false teaching. In Acts 15 we see that legalism crept into the early church:

Acts 15:1 says, *And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren and said, Except ye be CIRCUMCISED after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be SAVED.*

When you think of the word "LEGALISM" you should think of the word "LAW." These people were saying that a person cannot be saved without keeping the law (being circumcised). Is this really true? To be saved, does a person need to be circumcised? According to the next scripture verse, what is the one and only thing that a person must do to be saved?

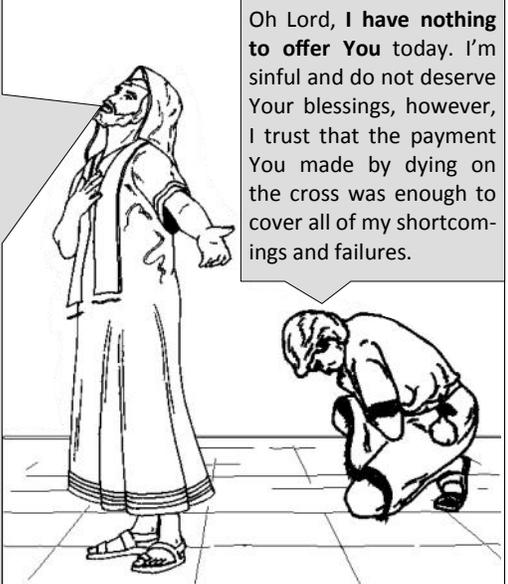
Acts 16:30-31 says, *And [the jailer] brought them out, and said, Sirs, WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED? And they said, BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED, and thy house.*

LEGALISM is dangerous because it gets a person to look away from what Jesus Christ has done on the cross. The person starts looking at what he can do. Legalism says

Lord, I have so much to offer You today. As in the past, I continue to labor away by following a long list of rules and regulations.

Without a doubt, You, and all of heaven must be blessed to know that someone like me is working so hard at looking and acting spiritual.

And when I compare myself with the sinful and un-churched man behind me, I am reminded all over again, how well pleased You must be with me.



that man must DO SOMETHING to get God's blessing and God's salvation. The Bible says that Christ has already done it all (John 19:30).

It is not what I do that counts; it is what Christ has already done! Legalism says, "WHAT CHRIST DID ON THE CROSS IS NOT ENOUGH. THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS WHICH I MUST DO ALSO." The believer says, "JESUS DIED FOR ME! WHAT HE DID IS ENOUGH. IT IS NOT MY ANYTHING THAT SAVES ME, IT IS GOD'S EVERYTHING!"

**Titus 3:5** says, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he saved us...*

There are people today who say, "You cannot be saved unless you are baptized in water." Others say, "You cannot be saved unless you live a good life and try to keep the Ten Commandments."

**Is this trusting what Christ has done or is this man trusting what he can do?**

No one has ever been saved by keeping the law, but multitudes have been saved by trusting Jesus Christ and Him alone.

**Danger: We can not** let anyone get us to take your eyes off Jesus Christ and what He did for us on the cross.

## **ENEMY NUMBER FOUR** **(Formalism)**

Formalism is something that has outward form but no inward content. Formalism is like having a peanut shell without any peanut inside it. It looks like a peanut. It feels like a peanut, BUT SOMETHING VERY IM-

PORTANT IS MISSING. What good is a peanut shell without a nut inside? The peanut shell which has no nut may fool people but it will never satisfy people. The same would be true of a banana peel without the banana. It may look like a banana but it is lacking the most important thing of all: the real and good part of the banana that you can eat!

There are people who are like the peanut shell and like the banana peel.

2 Tim 3:5 says, *Having a FORM of godliness, but denying the POWER thereof.*

These people have an outward form that looks good and even fools many people, but they are missing the most important thing: the INNER LIFE AND POWER THAT ONLY GOD CAN PROVIDE.

Think about what Paul said in Romans 2:28-29. It is possible to be a JEW OUTWARDLY, but if this person is not a Jew INWARDLY, then he is not really a TRUE JEW! The same is true for a Christian. It is possible to be a Christian OUTWARDLY--to go to church, to carry a Bible, to bow the head in prayer, to open the hymnbook and sing, and to go through all the outward motions. This person could be just like the peanut shell--it looks good but there is no nut on the inside.

Do you think that God wants more than just a "Christian shell"? If people could "open you up" and look on the inside, what would they see? Would they find a TRUE CHRISTIAN on the inside also? Would they find a heart that loves the Savior? Would they find that when you sing you sing from the heart and when you pray you pray from the heart with meaning and reality? It is not the shell that is important but the INSIDE! God is con-

cerned about the HEART.

**Psalm 51:6** SAYS, *Behold, thou [God] desirest TRUTH in the INWARD parts.*

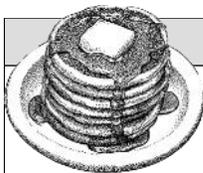
**1 Samuel 16:7** says, *For man looketh on the OUTWARD APPEARANCE but God looketh on the HEART.*

**Mark 7:6** says, *...Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their LIPS, but their HEART is far from me.*

A hypocrite gives lip service while keeping his heart far from God. He acknowledges God and attends church, but this is about all he does. They may even study the Scripture, pray, live plain and simple lifestyles, help the needy, and keep the rules. They would even fight to maintain religious traditions of the church. Yet, Jesus says they are hypocrites. Why? Because their HEART is not God's. They refuse to personally accept Jesus as the Son of God, the Messiah and Savior of the world. They do not know God personally, not in the depths of their heart (John 14:6).

**Danger:** Beware of an outward form of religion without the inner power and reality that only God can give. Let's not just go through the outward motions of being a Christian, but let's make sure our heart is right with the Lord. Let's make sure we are a **real Christian**, not just an **outward Christian**.

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### **Pancakes for Dad and Mom**

Six-year-old Mary decided one Saturday morning to fix her parents some pancakes. She found a big bowl and spoon, pulled a chair to the counter, opened the cupboard and pulled out the heavy flour canister, spilling it on the floor.

She scooped some of the flour into the bowl with her hands, mixed in most of a cup of milk and added some sugar, leaving a floury trail on the floor which by now had a few tracks left by her kitten.

Mary was covered with flour and getting frustrated. She wanted this to be something very good for Mom and Dad, but it was getting very bad.

She didn't know what to do next, whether to put it all into the oven or on the stove and she didn't know how the stove worked! Suddenly she saw her kitten licking from the bowl of mix and reached to push her away, knocking the egg carton to the floor. Frantically Mary tried to clean up the mess but slipped on the eggs, getting her clothes white and sticky.

And just then, she saw Mom standing at the door. Big crocodile tears welled up in Mary's eyes. All she'd wanted to do was something good, but she'd made a terrible mess. She was sure a scolding was coming, maybe even a spanking. But her mother just watched her.

Then, walking through the mess, she picked up her crying daughter, hugged her and loved her,

getting her own clothes white and sticky in the process!

My friend, that's how God deals with us. We try to do something good in life, but it turns into a mess. Our marriage gets all sticky or we insult a friend, or we can't stand our job, or our health goes sour.

Sometimes we just stand there in tears because we can't think of anything else to do. That's when God picks us up and loves us and forgives us, even though some of our mess gets all over Him.

But just because we might mess up, we can't stop trying to "make pancakes" for God or for others. Sooner or later we'll get it right, and then they'll be glad we tried.

Matthew 5:30, "And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee. For it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast in to hell."

Perhaps you, like me, have often wondered at the severity of some of the comments Jesus made during His ministry. They seem to stand in stark contrast to the loving, gracious, caring, compassionate God as He is often represented. I believe this is because of a concept that has been eroded from the mindset of our culture. The concept is respect; in this case, respect for the Life of God.

From the very beginning of God's dealing with His people, He expressed great concern that people would respect His Being and Life. When God came down on Mount Sinai, He instructed Moses that anyone who approached the mountain or touched it should be put to death. When He gave Moses the Ten Commandments written in stone, the first one stated that He would not tolerate competition. Many of the Old Testament prophets' writings reflect God's attitude when either God, His life, or His Law are disrespected. Much of the judgment levied against God's people was because of this disrespect.

Jesus continued this theme throughout His ministry. Comments like, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God," and "Whoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" show that this concept was a conscious part of His mindset. Many of the parables, such as *The Parable of the Sower*, also demonstrate the importance Jesus placed on respecting that life.

The life and ministry of Jesus, ushered in a new era - an era in which the Life of God indwells a body of common flesh. The commonness of Jesus' humanity veiled the reality that in Him was the Life of God, an Eternal LIFE. Very few people understood this. The unsaved minds of natural men focused continually on the actions of Jesus, while completely missing the Life inside. Jesus marveled, applauded, and thanked God when those closest to Him began to recognize the eternal Life within Him.

*I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven*

*and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. (Mat 11:25)*

*Blessed are thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (Mat 16:17)*

The Bible goes on to confirm that our respect for the Life of God, or lack thereof, will play a large part on the final Judgment Day.

*For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. (Rom 14:11)*

Jesus indicates in Matthew 25 that we will become responsible for how we treated His Life, whether we recognized it in other individuals or not.

*Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. (Mat 25:40)*

**Which brings me to the focal point of this article: if God today, puts His life in our human flesh, we become intensely responsible for how we treat and respect that Life.**

Christians in ages past have perhaps understood this more clearly than we do today. The question asked to a believer just before he was burned to death at the stake would be to the effect, "Will you renounce this life inside?" This LIFE was highly prized, valued and sought after. It was also respected, fed, and listened to. Even though someone was destitute, the possession of this LIFE constituted him as wealthy, and though sad, constituted him as joyful.

*As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. (2 Cor 6:10)*

The many things we deal with on a day to day basis take on a different color when

viewed in this light. The questions we ask change. Instead of saying "Do I have time for my devotions today," we realize the real question is "Do I respect this LIFE inside me enough to feed it?" Sin becomes not so much an issue of "What's wrong with that?" as an issue of "What does that do to the LIFE inside?" Even transgression in our life is not so much about the action as about the cry "Against Thee and Thee only have I sinned..."

Relationships with others are directly affected also. Each person we meet fits one of two perimeters - they **either ARE** the Temple of the Holy Ghost, or they **could be**. Immediately our spirit reaches out to theirs to see if that Life is present. **We respect them**, not for their actions, but for

**the image they were created in and the LIFE they were intended to bear.**

If that LIFE is indeed present with the individual, we become extra careful how we treat them: if they have needs we reach out to those needs as if they were us; we bless the Life in them as we find it;

we encourage; we exhort; we speak life to them. If we find we have differences with them, as we always will, we choose to deal with those

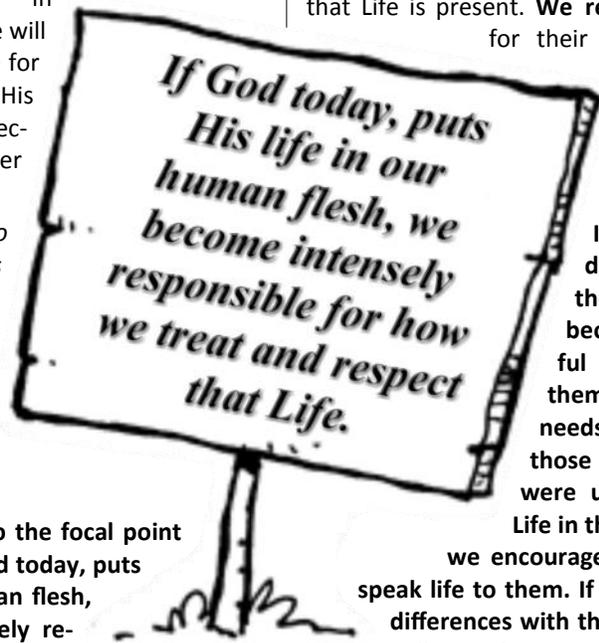
**differences in a way that does not offend or bring grief to that LIFE inside them.**

**Severe consequence tend to follow a disrespect for God's life.** Hebrews is clear that the age of grace accentuates this reality, not dampens it.

*For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; (Heb 2:2-3)*

Much of counseling consists of finding areas in life where we have disrespected that precious LIFE given to us by Jesus Christ, and going to Him in sincere repentance for this offense. The consequences of not cleansing the Temple of the Living God can be disastrous, as many of us experienced in our lives.

—cont on next page



*If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. (1 Cor. 3: 17)*

Respecting the Life of God in heaven, respecting it in others, and respecting it in ourselves is the whole duty of man.

*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Mat 22:37-39)*

Jesus said that on these two commandments hang all the law and prophets. However, the culture we find ourselves in increasingly denies all three levels of respect. More disheartening to me is the amount of Christians I see that are more concerned with respecting the demands of our godless culture than they are about respecting God's Divine Life within.

*"Christ in me the hope of glory"* cries out from within us that He would have the preeminence in all things, including our mind, will and emotions.. Let the cry coming out of our life be not so much one of "what do I want to

do, and what can I get by with", but rather **"what does the LIFE inside of me desire?"** The price He paid to make possible that ETERNAL LIFE in me calls for unquestioned allegiance to Him as Lord. May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of His suffering.

Sincerely,

Steve Stutzman, Teacher/Counselor

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### Did God create evil?

**Answer:** At first it might seem that if God created ALL things, then evil must have been created by God. However, evil is not a "thing" like a rock or a vitamin. You cannot have a jar of evil. Evil has no existence of its own; it is really the absence of good. For example, holes are real but they only exist in something else. For instance, when we look at a block of swiss cheese, we see all those holes that run through the cheese, but as you know, the hole cannot be separated from the cheese.

So when God finished His creation, it is true that all He created was good. One of the good things God made was creatures who had the freedom to choose good. In order to have a real choice, God had to allow something other than good to choose from. So, God allowed the angels and humans to choose good or reject good (evil). When a bad relationship exists between two good things we call that evil, but it does not become a "thing" that required God to create.

Perhaps a further illustration will help. If a person is asked, "Does cold exist?" the answer would likely be "yes." However, this is incorrect. Cold does not exist. Cold is the absence of heat. Similarly, darkness does not exist; it is the absence of light. Evil is the absence of good and better; evil is the absence of God. God did not have to create evil, but rather only allow for the absence of good.

God did not create evil, but He does allow evil. If God had not allowed for the possibility of evil, both mankind and angels would be serving God out of obligation, not choice. He did not want "robots" that simply did what He wanted them to do because of their "programming." God allowed for the possibility of evil so that we could genuinely have a free will and choose whether or not we wanted to serve Him.

As limited human beings, we can never fully understand an unlimited God (Romans 11:33-34). Sometimes we think we understand why God is doing something, only to find out later that it was for a different purpose than we originally thought. God looks at things from a Holy and eternal viewpoint. We look at things from a sinful, earthly, and temporal viewpoint. Why did God put man on earth knowing that Adam and Eve would sin and therefore bring evil, death, and suffering on all mankind? Why didn't He just create us all and leave us in heaven where we would be perfect and without suffering? These questions cannot be effectively answered on this side of eternity. What we can know is this, whatever God does is Holy and perfect and will ultimately glorify Him. God allowed for the possibility of evil in order to give us a true choice in regards to whether we worship Him. God did not create evil, but He allowed it. If He had not allowed evil, we would be worshipping Him out of obligation, not by a choice of our own will.

### Tongue Twisters

A skunk sat on a stump.  
The stump thought the skunk stunk,  
and the skunk thought the stump stunk.  
Which stunk the skunk or the stump?

A flea and a fly flew up in a flue.  
Said the flea "let us fly."  
Said the fly "let us flee."  
So they flew through a flaw in the flue.

A Tudor who tooted a flute  
tried to tutor two tooters to toot.  
Said the two to their tutor,  
"Is it harder to toot  
or to tutor two tooters to toot?"

Once a fella met a fella with a bag of  
beens. Said the fella to the fella can the  
fella tell the fella what the fella means?

Betty Botter had some butter,  
"But," she said, "this butter's bitter.  
If I bake this bitter butter,  
it would make my batter bitter.  
But a bit of better butter--  
that would make my batter better."

So she bought a bit of butter,  
better than her bitter butter,  
and she baked it in her batter,  
and the batter was not bitter.  
So 'twas better Betty Botter  
bought a bit of better butter.

*Try to say the following lines three times in a row as fast as possible.*

-----  
**Mrs. Smith's Fish  
Sauce Shop.**

-----  
**Three free throws.**

-----  
**Knapsack straps.**

-----  
**Lesser leather never  
weathered wetter  
weather better.**

-----  
**Tim, the thin twin  
tinsmith**

-----  
**Butler better butter  
Betty's bread better.**

-----  
**She sifted thistles  
through her thistle-  
sifter.**

-----  
**I thought a thought.  
But the thought I  
thought wasn't the  
thought I thought I  
thought.**

-----  
**Freshly fried fresh  
flying fish.**

-----  
**Six thick thistle sticks.**

Mr. See owned a saw and Mr. Soar owned a seesaw. Now See's saw sawed Soar's seesaw before Soar saw See. Which made Soar sore. Had Soar seen See's saw before See sawed Soar's seesaw, See's saw would not have sawed Soar's seesaw. So See's saw sawed Soar's seesaw. But it was sad to see Soar so sore just because See's saw sawed Soar's seesaw!

Few people in the Bible have caught the attention of many of us, as does the apostle Peter. There were twelve apostles, yet none dominate the New Testament as much as Peter. Matthew chapter four tells us of Peter and Andrew's call from Jesus as they were fishing. They were all simple people who made a living working with their hands. As we go through this story, we will see Peter experience some steps that could affect the way we see our own importance. At this time, they were simply disciples. It would be later on in chapter ten, that the twelve were chosen for their special service.

In all of our lives, none of us have ever walked on water. Yet that is what Peter experienced:



Matthew 14: 28-29 says: *And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.*

As we know, if we continue to read, Peter took a look at the waves and began to sink. In spite of all that we may say about Peter's doubt, none of the other apostles even tried walking on the water. So we know Peter was a man who was not afraid to try something new. If any of you have ever walked on water, please let me know about it.

In several passages, we read of Jesus taking Peter, James and John places where the other apostles were not along. Matthew 17 says six days after the teaching at Caesarea Philippi (Luke says about eight), that the four of them went to the top of what is now called the Mount of Transfiguration:

Matthew 17:2-3 says: *And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.*

This is another step to remember in Peter's life. Can you imagine the conversation after they returned? It might go like this: "We were on this mountaintop and heard Jesus talking with Moses and Elijah!" That would certainly impress the rest of the disciples. But as we know, Peter was yet to undergo some serious testing. And eventually it came:

Matthew 26:34-35 says: *Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.*



Well, we know how that turned out. Peter did, indeed, deny knowing Jesus three times. So much for all the tremendous experiences! If a powerful supernatural experience could make us strong believers, then it should have worked for Peter. But it did not work for him and it won't work for us. However, God was not yet through with Peter.

After the resurrection, John records the event of Jesus bringing about reconciliation with Peter.



John 21:27 says: *He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved be-*

*cause he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*

History records a lot of what Peter did in the book of Acts. The earlier failures were not terrible failures as much as they were times to weed out the weaknesses.

I say all the above to point out what eventually was considered important by Peter. Writing later on, near the end of his life, we read in 2 Peter 1:17-20:

(verse 17-18) *For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

Peter writes of what are, indeed, more powerful experiences than any of us have ever experienced, yet he writes in the next verses...

(verse 19-20) *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: What is more sure? He says in verse Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*

He is saying scripture is more sure than hearing God directly as he did in the two incidents. Shouldn't we also place the highest emphasis on what is written in scripture?

Eli Stutzman — Ontario Canada

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### Eli Weaver Sentenced: 15 years to Life in Prison



Continued from back cover

Eli Weaver pleaded guilty August 17 to complicity to commit murder as part of his plea agreement to testify against Raber. Barbara Raber was convicted of aggravated murder on Tuesday following a three-day trial.

Andy Hyde, Weaver's attorney, said

Weaver wanted to take responsibility for his actions. He made note of his client's cooperation with law enforcement officials. Mr. Hyde said "it would have been a tough trial to convict Mr. Weaver."

According to Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor, Edna Boyle, Weaver provided new details to detectives, including a first attempt to kill Barbara Weaver three weeks before the June 2 murder.

Boyle said Weaver told detectives that on the failed first attempt, Raber, 39, had driven to the house to kill his wife, but had backed out because she became scared. [continued next page](#)

Boyle acknowledged that Weaver's cooperation does not excuse his actions. "Five children are without a mother and father. Fannie Troyer is without a sister. Mr. Miller is without a daughter," she said.

Wayne County Sherriff's detectives testified during the trial that Weaver and Raber exchanged text messages regarding the facilitation of the murder of Barbara Weaver, including blowing up the

house, poisoning her food, or giving her medication to "make her sleep". One text message was from Weaver, the morning of his wife's death, telling Raber, "take a light with you, hon."

Weaver and Raber were arrested June 10. They were both initially charged with aggravated murder with a gun specification. Barbara Raber will be sentenced Wednesday, September 30.

### The Difference Between Religion and Christianity

**Many** are GOING TO CHURCH but **few** are GOING DOWN THE ROAD WHICH LEADS TO LIFE (Matthew 7:13-14).  
**Many** name the Name of Christ (2 Tim. 2:19) and claim to be Christians but few understand what a Christian really is.  
**Many** are RELIGIOUS but few are **RIGHT WITH GOD**.

#### RELIGION

#### CHRISTIANITY

Religion is summed up in one word: **DO!** Man trying to DO different things to please God and earn His favor.

Christianity is summed up in one word: **DONE**--Christ dying on the cross to save sinful man (John 19:30).

#### TRYING

#### TRUSTING (Acts 16:31)

**A Work to Do which is never done** (How can anyone work well enough and hard enough to earn salvation?)

**A Word to Believe** (1 Pet. 1:25) **about a Work that is Done** (1 Pet 1:18-19)

Man hoping to save himself

God saving hopeless man (1 Tim. 1:15)

**RELIGION** is man trying to BRING HIMSELF TO GOD (by human effort, good works, etc.)

**CHRISTIANITY** is Christ BRINGING US TO GOD on the basis of what He did for us on the cross (1 Peter 3:18)

Religion is man trusting his own good works (Titus 3:5)

Salvation is man trusting the good work which the Lord Jesus did on the cross (Rom. 3:22-26)

Following rules

Enjoying life (John 6:47; 10:10)

#### Doing Something

#### Knowing Someone (John 17:3)

Seeking to earn God's favor by works

Receiving God's favor by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8 and Eph. 1:6)

"I can work my way to heaven and earn my salvation" (Rom 6:23 teaches that we have earned our way to hell: "the wages of sin is death")

"I could never live well enough to earn my way to heaven. Christ had to pay the price for my salvation (1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Pet. 1:18-19)

"Salvation is something that a person must earn."

"Salvation is a free gift" (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 4:10).

The religious man compares himself with others (Luke 18:11)

The saved man sees himself as God sees him (1 Samuel 16:7; Psalm 53:1-3; Rom. 3:10-12)

"I have kept the law! I have done that which God has required" (Matthew 19:16-20)

"I have broken the law but I am trusting the One who came into this world to save guilty lawbreakers" (1 Tim. 1:15)

A religious man trying to earn his way to heaven by works may be likened to a man trying to swim from New York to London by his own efforts and energy and strength. He will never make it!

The person who is saved by faith is likened to a man getting on a ship in New York and trusting that ship to bring him safely to London. This man simply rests upon the ship and lets the ship do all the work.

The religious man is seeking to establish his own righteousness (Rom 10:3)

The saved man is satisfied with the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:21)

Religion teaches that good works are the **cause** of salvation.

The Bible teaches that good works are the **result** of salvation.

"I **hope** I will be saved."  
 "I **think** I will be saved."  
 "I **feel** that I will be saved, maybe."

"I **KNOW** I am saved right now" (1 John 5:13 "These things have I written unto you that believe on to name of the Son of God; that ye may **KNOW** that ye have eternal life").

## God's Lovely Gift of Marriage

—Joy Knepp



Greetings,  
sisters in  
Christ!

My heart feels heavy to think that some of you may be experiencing difficulties in your marriages. It's only when we've traveled the valley ourselves that we can understand and sympathize with another. Sometimes we think "there are no answers to MY problems"! But that is far from the truth. There are answers in the Bible to every problem we could possibly have. Sometimes, especially when we are yet babes in Christ.

1 Cor. 3:1-2 tells us that we need to go to someone we trust and ask them to help us find Biblical solutions. But be very careful when seeking advice. Make sure that it is from someone who has Christ-like love for both you and your husband and advises you with pure, undiluted, life-giving scripture. Sometimes well-meaning people have all kinds of solutions that actually sound very good, but we need to be very cautious and make sure it lines up with the Bible. It is ever so right to disregard advice that SOUNDS good but just isn't what God says.

God loves us so much, and He is the author of the idea of marriage. Just think of it, my friends, the excitement God must've felt when He thought about giving His beloved children (us) the lovely gift of marriage! It makes my heart skip a beat with joy that I may partake of this beautiful gift, and it makes a determination rise up within me to polish it and cherish it. How sad it must

make God feel when His gift brings us misery instead of joy!

The ONLY way for our marriages to grow and bloom is if we do it God's way. Then we will be blessed beyond imagination! But don't think for a minute that we won't ever experience any problems if we do it God's way, because the devil likes nothing better than to wreck homes! He will try you from every side. The Bible says...

*The thief (devil) cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I (Jesus) am come that they (we) might have life, and that they (we) might have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)*

Don't expect the devil to play fair! And don't be afraid to punch him in the face with God's Words. Some days, when it seems he is everywhere, messing with every area of my life, I keep saying out loud "Devil, get behind me, I am a child of God and you have NO place in my life!" The biggest threat to him is when we RECOGNIZE him!

Another thing that we must practice faithfully is to let the Holy Spirit guide us. It breaks my heart how many years I proclaimed to be serving God, but wasn't heeding the Holy Spirit at all. The Bible says the Holy Spirit is One in Three (the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost), so when we quench the Spirit we have NO business pretending to serve God and accept Jesus' cleansing blood!

*Quench not the Spirit. (1 Thess.5:19)*

I am pretty sure when the Bible says not to do something, it means to not do that! Many times we have quenched the Spirit so long, that we no longer know HOW to let Him guide us. It definitely doesn't all

change in one day, but God is SO forgiving, and SO ready to meet us right where we are if we fall on our faces before Him, and acknowledge that He is the ONLY way! His bag of patience and forgiveness never runs low, unlike mine, with my husband and my children!! Sometimes we need to be quiet and meditate on God's Word, searching for any nugget that might help us, in whatever situation we're in, and applying it, and soon we will feel the Spirit beginning to work again.

So the next time you feel cross at your husband, or feel you have the right to punish him, stop and take a deep breath, then think: what would Jesus do? Crucify your flesh, and then feel the wonderful feeling of the Holy Spirit guiding you and showing you what you can do, so that a year from now, this will be a memory of a growing experience, instead of one that will make you blush with shame.

Remember, no matter what your husband has done, this saying is still true: "My response is my responsibility". Sometimes, I tell my husband his actions are forcing me to be long-suffering!! (*Gal. 5:22*)

And don't forget, God's not finished with any of us yet; we are all imperfect, and we have all we can handle working on our own life. *The Bible says:*

*"...Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." (Romans 12:19)*

I pray that we would all apply Eph. 6:10-18.

Love you all, Joy

*Joy Knepp, Loogootee, IN*

*Phone: (812) 259-2634*

## The Origins of Thanksgiving

—Taken from the Christian Law Association

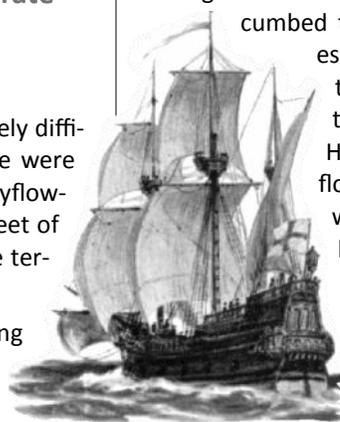
The following article reminds us why we celebrate  
Thanks Giving Day in America.

### Coming to America

The Atlantic crossing in the fall of 1620 had been an extremely difficult journey for the Pilgrims. For two months, 102 people were wedged into what was called the "tween decks" of the Mayflower—the ship's cargo space with only about five-and-a-half feet of headroom. No one was allowed above deck because of the terrible storms. This was no pleasure trip.

The Pilgrims comforted themselves on their journey by singing from the Book of Psalms. This "noise" irritated one of the ship's paid crewmembers. He told the Pilgrims he was

looking forward to throwing their corpses overboard after they succumbed to the routine illnesses common on such voyages. As it turned out, this crewmember himself was the only person to die on the voyage and be thrown overboard. God providentially protected His own people. A little-known fact about the Mayflower is that this ship normally carried a cargo of wine; and the wine spillage from previous voyages had soaked the beams, acting as a disinfectant to prevent the spread of disease.



During one terrible storm, the main beam of the mast cracked. Death was certain if this beam could not be repaired. —Continued next page—

At that moment, the whole Pilgrim adventure could very easily have ended on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. Providentially, the Pilgrims had with them a large iron printing press screw. That screw repaired the beam, saving the ship and all on board.

### **Land Ho!**

After sixty-six days at sea, land was sighted off Cape Cod, Massachusetts, not the place these Pilgrims wanted to be. They intended to establish their new colony in the northern parts of Virginia (which then extended to the Hudson River in modern-day New York), but two factors interrupted their plans. The winds had blown them off course, yes; but they later learned that other Englishmen who wanted to settle in the same part of Virginia had actually bribed the ship's crew to land them farther north.

Despite this chicanery, God was in charge and the Pilgrims landed exactly where God wanted them to be. Had they actually made landfall near the Hudson River, they most certainly would have been immediately attacked by hostile Indians. Instead, they arrived at the one spot along the coast where hostile Indians had been providentially removed from the land.

Many years before the Mayflower journey, local Indians had captured a Frenchman on a fishing expedition to that region. Just as



they were about to kill him, the Frenchman warned them God would be angry, would destroy them all, and would replace them with another nation. The Indians boastfully replied that his God could never kill

them. Yet, a year or two before the Pilgrims arrived in this very same region, nearly all the native inhabitants had been wiped out by a plague.

### **Help Arrives**

Despite this miraculous provision of safety from hostile Indians, the Pilgrims barely survived their first winter on the Cape. Only four families remained intact; but God was still faithful. In the spring of 1621, He sent Squanto, an English-speaking Indian who offered to teach the Pilgrims how to survive in this strange new land.

Squanto was one of only a few local Indians who escaped the plague. He had been captured as a young man and taken to England as a slave. During that time he mastered the English language. When he was freed, he returned to his native territory on the Cape shortly before the Pilgrims arrived. Probably the most important thing Squanto taught the Pilgrims was how to plant the native winter staple crop--corn.

The Pilgrims thanked God for this wonderful helper. They also repaid Squanto by sharing with him the most valuable treasure they had brought with them from England—the Gospel. Squanto died a year or two after coming to the aid of the Pilgrims, but before his death he asked them to pray with him that he might go to be with their God in Heaven.

### **Peace and Thankfulness**

Squanto introduced other Indians to the Pilgrims, and these Indians



were also impressed with the Pilgrims' God. During the summer of 1621, it appeared the year's corn harvest would not survive a severe drought. The Pilgrims responded by calling for a day of fasting and prayer. By the end of the day, it was rain-

ing. The rain saved the corn, which miraculously sprang back to life. One of the Indians who observed this miracle remarked that the Pilgrims' God must be a very great God because when the Indians pow-wowed for rain, it always rained so hard that the corn stalks were broken down. They noticed the Pilgrims' God acted differently by sending a very gentle rain that did not damage the corn harvest.

It was that miraculous corn harvest in 1621 that provided grain for the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving meal with their Indian friends and helpers. The evidence of history shows that on this first Thanksgiving Day, both the Pilgrims and Indians thanked God for His great provision and for His goodness toward them all.

Unlike other Europeans who came to America, these Bible-believing Pilgrims were model Christians in their dealings with the native populations. During their first year on the Cape, Squanto, acting as a friend and interpreter, had assisted the Pilgrims in negotiating an important peace treaty with Chief Massasoit, leader of the nearby Wampanoag Indians. The two populations, Indian and Pilgrim, kept that treaty of peace for more than fifty years.

### **The Tradition Continues**

The story of Thanksgiving doesn't end there. The holiday itself was not officially celebrated until almost 170 years later, after the Revolutionary War had been won and our American Constitution had been adopted. In 1789, Congress approved the Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the Constitution. Congress then "recommended a day of public thanksgiving and prayer" to thank God for blessing America. President Washington declared November 26, 1789, as the first national day of prayer and thanksgiving to the Lord.

Another 75 years later, after the Civil War ended, President Abraham Lincoln officially established the last Thursday in November as a day to acknowledge "the gracious gifts of the Most High God," which He had bestowed on America. Every president continued this tradition until 1941 when Congress officially made Thanksgiving a national holiday.

### **Teach Your Children and Grandchildren**

Now that you know the true story of Thanksgiving, this year make sure your children and grandchildren learn it too. As America is currently facing serious challenges both at home and abroad, let's join together with countless generations before us in giving thanks to God for blessing and preserving our nation. Let's make sure that all our children and grandchildren learn Whose hand of protection has been on America; and let's all pray that He will continue to bless and sustain our nation as we continue to acknowledge and honor Him."

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### **Eli Weaver Sentenced: 15 years to Life in Prison**

Many have asked, what is going on with Eli Weaver in Ohio? What could possibly have caused a human being to become so evil minded? And for that reason, we thought it might be good to share a recent update with you, concerning Eli's outcome.

One of the things that keeps coming to my mind, is this:

*Sin will often take you further then you want to go, keep you longer then you want to stay, and charge you more then you want to pay.*

Have you ever been honest with yourself and wondered, "what has kept someone like yourself from committing a murder?" Is it because you and I are not capable of doing such an act? Is it because you and I are better persons, and Eli was just a worse then normal person? The answer is of course very obvious. All of us are born into a world that was already drowning in sin. You might say, not one of us stood much of a chance.

**Psalms 51:5 says:** *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

David does not say he was a "sinner baby" but rather that his mother conceived him in sin. Read it again and see! David was born into a sinful world. Sin was all around him from birth, so he was 'brought forth in iniquity."

**Ephesians 2:3 says:** *"we were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest"*

In other words, our very nature took on that which is sinful and wicked. Left to our own, mankind will always choose evil over good.

But praise God for loving us with such a passionate love that He was willing to let His only begotten Son come down into this sinful infested world and die for us so that we could have everlasting life.

**Romans 5:8-10 says:** *But God commendeth [proved] his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified [made acceptable] by HIS blood, we shall be saved from wrath through HIM. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled [restored] to God by the*

*death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by HIS life.*

*—Joe Keim*

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### **Eli Weaver Update**

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"I'm very sorry for what I did and I hope everybody can forgive me for what I did," Eli D. Weaver told Judge Robert J. Brown Wednesday morning as a packed Wayne County court room watched his sentence hearing. Judge Brown handed down a sentence of 15 years to life in prison. Weaver's sentence followed a plea he made to testify against his girlfriend in the murder of his wife, Barbara Weaver.

Weaver and his girlfriend, Barbara Raber, of 6109 Township Road 310, Millersburg, are accused of planning and executing the murder of Weaver's wife, Barbara Weaver, on June 2, 2009. Mrs. Weaver was found dead in bed at her residence at 10465 Harrison Road in Apple Creek, Ohio. She suffered a gunshot wound to her chest.

*—Continued on Page 8—*