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The Believer's Life and Walk: Free and Spiritual

Galatians 5:13-6:18

—*Teacher's Outline and Study Bible™*

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First, let the spiritual believers handle the matter 2. Second, approach the brother in a spirit of gentleness 3. Third, watch yourself 4. Fourth, bear one another's burden 	<p style="text-align: center;">CHAPTER 6</p> <p>D. A Walk Restoring the Man Who Slips, 6:1-5</p> <p>Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.</p> <p>2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of</p>	<p>Christ.</p> <p>3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.</p> <p>4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.</p> <p>5 For every man shall bear his own burden.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Fifth, confess your own nothingness 6. Sixth, examine your own behavior and work 7. Seventh, realize your own responsibility
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Section V

THE BELIEVER'S LIFE AND WALK:

FREE AND SPIRITUAL

Galatians 5:13–6:18

Study 4: A WALK RESTORING THE MAN WHO SLIPS

Text: Galatians 6:1-5

Aim: To learn how to help fallen and hurting believers.

Memory Verse:

“For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself” (Galatians 6:3).

INTRODUCTION:

The Christian army is the only one that shoots its wounded. This is a saying that is often stated. But is this really true? Are

Christians really guilty of shooting their wounded? Sadly, Christians do often put other believers down when they fail or fall. For too often, believers become judgmental and critical when others slip and are wounded by the effects of sin.

But note: the issue is not to be why was a believer wounded by sin but how can a believer be restored? We have been given an opportunity that has been birthed in the heart of God. God is a God of restoration. He does not hold a grudge. Just ask the Prodigal Son...just look into the mirror and you will see who He restores. The Christian has been charged with the responsibility to restore fallen saints. Will we be found faithful in this critical ministry?

Note the word *man*. This means a person who is just like the rest of us; that is, he has desires, passions, and urges just like we have. He walks and lives in the flesh just like we do. Therefore, he faces the very same temptations we do, for *all temptation* is common to all men (1 Co.10:13).

What is to be done when a Christian brother has succumbed to temptation, stumbled or fallen? What is to be the spirit and attitude of the church? How are we to approach the problem? Are we to...

- ignore him?
- criticize him?
- withdraw from him?
- shame him?
- censor him?
- dismiss him?
- isolate him?
- spread rumors about him?
- slander him?

Note a fact: no sin is specified. The sin may be large or small, black or gray, despicable or acceptable (to man), serious or innocent, harmful or harmless. The point to note is this: a true Christian brother can be overtaken by sin. The word “overtaken” is interesting: it means to be taken beforehand, by surprise, or unexpectedly. A true Christian is *surprised* when he is overtaken by sin; he *never suspected* it. In fact, being overtaken by serious sin was seldom, if ever, a concern; for he belonged to Christ and lived in Christ.

However, when a brother is caught in sin and slips and falls, what should be done? Scripture is clear: Christian brothers are to restore him. The word “restore” is a word that is used for setting a broken arm or leg, for mending nets, or for cutting some growth out of a body. Believers are to help the brother:

- ⇒ set him right
- ⇒ restore him
- ⇒ help cut the sin out
- ⇒ mend him
- ⇒ lead him back

However, there is a right way and a wrong way to help the fallen brother. This is the point that is being stressed and that is desperately needed by believers and the church. All believers are mere men of like passions with all other men, and there are always some being overtaken by sin. This, of course, means that we need to constantly stay alert and available to fallen brothers.

But again, how we approach a fallen brother is of utmost importance. It is a very delicate matter. The brother will be very sensitive and perhaps embarrassed and easily shamed. He could become so ashamed that he would be too embarrassed to return to the fellowship of believers. He could also feel that he would be unwelcomed, for what he has done is just not

acceptable among believers. He has failed and failed publicly, and he has damaged the name of Christ and hurt the image of the church. He knows the attitude of the church and its believers about the matter.

Therefore, unless he is approached in the right spirit, he could be lost to the cause of Christ upon this earth. This, of course, means that the ministry of restoration is of paramount importance, for the life of a dear brother is at stake. What the church needs to realize is this: the ministry of restoration is the ministry of God. It is the ministry to which God has called us. We are to walk restoring men to the Kingdom of God and the fellowship of His church.

OUTLINE:

1. First, let the spiritual believers handle the matter (v.1).
2. Second, approach the brother in a spirit of gentleness (v.1).
3. Third, watch yourself (v.1).
4. Fourth, bear one another’s burden (v.2).
5. Fifth, confess your own nothingness (v.3).
6. Sixth, examine your own behavior and work (v.4).
7. Seventh, realize your own responsibility (v.5).

1. FIRST, LET THE SPIRITUAL BELIEVERS HANDLE THE MATTER (v.1).

Spiritual believers are those who walk in the Spirit. How can the church tell if a believer is spiritual, if he is truly walking in the Spirit? The former passage spells out how.

1. Does the believer bear the fruit of the Spirit? (Ga.5:22-23).

- love
- long-suffering
- faith
- joy
- gentleness
- meekness
- peace
- goodness
- self-control

2. Does the believer live a crucified life with Christ, that is, a sacrificial, self-denying life? Has the believer crucified his flesh with the passions and lusts? (Ga.5:24).

3. Does the believer walk in the Spirit—live a life that is consistent with his position in Christ? (Ga.5:25).

4. Does the believer walk free from super-spirituality and envy, pride and jealousy, arrogance and selfishness? (Ga.5:26).

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ILLUSTRATION:

Sometimes Christians can act just like sharks that sense blood in the water: they circle in for the kill. But this is not God's way! Here is an example of how restoration is to be done:

One of the great preachers of the South was marvelously converted when he was a drunkard. His ministry was quite demanding and after a great deal of pressure and temptation he got drunk one night. He was so ashamed that the very next day he called in his board of deacons and turned in his resignation. He told them, "I want to resign." They were amazed. They asked why. He frankly told them, "I got drunk last night. A preacher should not get drunk, and I want to resign."

It was obvious that he was ashamed, and do you know what those wonderful deacons did? They put their arms around him and said, "Let's all pray." They would not accept his resignation. A man who was present in the congregation that next Sunday said, "I never heard a greater sermon in my life than that man preached."

Those deacons were real surgeons—they set a broken bone; they restored him. There are some people who would have put him out of the ministry, but these deacons put that preacher back on his feet, and God marvelously used him after that.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who do you personally know who fell into sin but was restored by other Christians? What kinds of things did these loving people do for this person?
2. What causes some people to be judgmental? How can trusting God help you to not be judgmental of others?
3. If you were to fall into sin, who could you count on to help restore you? Why? Who would not help restore you? Why?

2. SECOND, APPROACH THE BROTHER IN A SPIRIT OF GENTLENESS (v.1).

How desperately this charge is needed! Too often what is displayed is a spirit of...

- hardness
- criticism
- reproof
- indifference
- censorship
- super-spirituality
- harshness
- rumor
- holier-than-thou
- rejection
- slander
- ostracism

This approach, of course, is not ever concerned with restoring a

brother. It is bent more on downing or destroying him. And the great tragedy is that it forces him to turn more and more to the world, to those who are more understanding of his weaknesses because they, too, are weak.

However, the spirit of rejection is not what Scripture is telling believers to show. Scripture is saying to approach the brother in meekness: to be gentle, tender, warm, loving, and caring. Discuss his sinning, yes, but with him not with others! Approach and love him, reach out to him, minister to him, help him, show care and concern and *above all else*, stay after him. Open your arms and welcome him back. Restore him into your fellowship. Let him know that he is forgiven, forgiven by all and accepted by all, warmly and tenderly.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation [calling] wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" (Ep.4:1-2).

QUESTIONS:

1. How should you pray before you approach a fallen believer?
2. How do you cultivate a spirit of meekness?
3. How could your having a spirit of meekness affect the fallen Christian that you are trying to reach?

3. THIRD, WATCH YOURSELF (v.1).

Consider yourself, for you, too, can be tempted and overtaken by sin. This is a crucial point, for all believers are tempted with all kinds of sin (1 Co.10:13). There is a real possibility that we may be overtaken by sin; therefore, we are to love and help our fallen brothers just like we would want to be loved and helped. The word *consider* means to look to oneself, to think about oneself and to give attention to oneself. It means to keep an attentive eye on oneself. If we really consider the matter, then we will reach out in love and meekness to help our fallen brothers. We have to help them, for we are all ever so subject to being overtaken by sin.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Co.10:13).

ILLUSTRATION:

Some of the most inaccurate words that glide across the lips of Christians are these: "I'll never fall. It could never happen to me."

One of the first jokes of the age of automation describes a

planeload of people soon after takeoff. A voice comes on the plane's intercom, "Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome aboard. We are climbing to our planned cruising altitude of 39,000 feet. All of the plane's systems are working perfectly, and we expect to land at our destination on time. This is a fully automated plane. There is no pilot or copilot. Everything is guided and monitored by a computer. We want you to sit back, relax, and enjoy the flight. Nothing can go wrong...can go wrong...can go wrong...."

Do not put your trust in man and his abilities, not even in your own. As you well know, we all fail...we all fail...we all fail—far, far too often. Place your trust in Jesus Christ, for He never fails.

QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever said, "I'll never do this or that," but you did? Why did you think you were not capable of falling?
2. Pride has a way of producing blind spots in people. What kind of blind spots does pride produce in you?
3. What can you do to strengthen your ability to resist falling into sin?

4. FOURTH, BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDEN (v.2).

The law of Christ is the law of ministry and love.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

Christ gave and sacrificed Himself to reach out to man. He bore the sins of man *for man*. We, of course, cannot bear the sins of men; but we can bear the burdens of each other, for we all suffer under the weight of sin—whether the sins are known or not. We can...

- be compassionate
- encourage
- pray
- forgive
- be warm and tender
- share the promises of God
- sympathize
- empathize

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Ro.12:15).

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the heaviest burden that you had to bear that belonged to someone else? Why was it so heavy? What was the final outcome?
2. How do you feel when someone comes along side of you to bear one of your burdens?

3. Briefly describe the greatest burden that you are carrying. What has to happen before it crushes you? Can you carry it alone and remain spiritually healthy? Why or why not?

5. FIFTH, CONFESS YOUR OWN NOTHINGNESS (v.3).

This is the reason so many fallen brothers are locked out of the fellowship of believers and churches. They are looked upon as being...

- unfit
- less capable
- weaker
- less spiritual
- too tarnished
- insufficient

This attitude, of course, is contrary to the Spirit of Christ. Note the words, "When he is nothing." Christ came to save "nothings," that is, sinners. All men are sinners whether they know it or not. Even believers, after they are saved, are sinners. This is too often forgotten, yet believers are both *saved and kept* by the righteousness of Christ and not by their own righteousness. We must always remember this, for the only acceptable approach to God is through the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

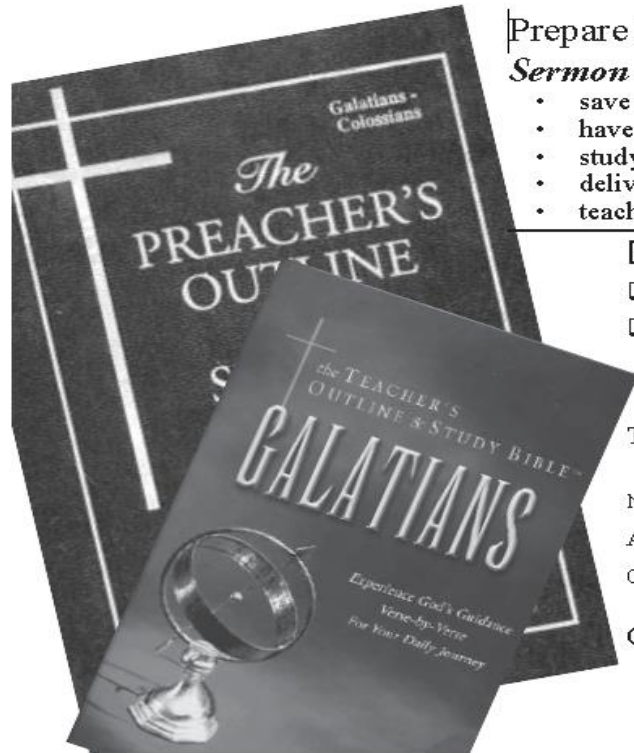
The point is this: no person is better than any other person, not in righteousness and godliness. All men stand before God as sinners; in fact, they stand as totally depraved sinners. There is not a single man who is righteous, no, not one—not today, not tomorrow, not ever. If a man, believer or unbeliever, wants to stand in God's presence, he has to come by Jesus Christ and his righteousness alone. Therefore, there is absolutely no place among God's people for...

- super-spirituality
- spiritual snobbishness
- spiritual pride

There is absolutely no place for feeling superior or spiritually better than others. Only one person can make that claim: Jesus Christ. Within the church and its believers, there is to be only one attitude: that of confessing our nothingness before God—that of confessing our total dependency upon the grace of God—that of confessing the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Note that any other confession is a deception. If we think otherwise, we only deceive ourselves.

When a believer understands this truth, then he is ready to reach out and help restore the erring brother. He knows he is no better; he has to approach Christ just like the erring brother—as nothing, for he is nothing. Righteously and godly, he stands on the same footing as the fallen brother: neither one of them has any righteousness or godliness to offer God.

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Therefore, they both must approach God through His Son Jesus Christ. Knowing this truth is what will stir love, concern, and care within the hearts of believers for fallen brothers.

“And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted” (Mt.23:12).

“Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?” (Pr.20.6).

ILLUSTRATION:

All ground at the foot of the cross is level. There is no spiritual hierarchy for men to climb in this life. A dynamic example of this truth was Saint Francis of Assisi, who was the founder of the Order of Friars (Franciscans). He lived out his life in an attempt to imitate Christ, to live just as Christ had lived upon earth. He set a dynamic example for all of us in one primary thing; he had a firm grasp on this eternal truth:

When someone asked [him] why and how he could accomplish so much, he replied: “This may be why. The

Lord looked down from Heaven upon the earth and said, “Where can I find the weakest, the littlest, the meanest man on the face of the earth?” Then He saw me and said, “Now I’ve found him, and I will work through him. He won’t be proud of it. He’ll see that I am only using him because of his littleness and insignificance.”

Could God say the same things about you?

QUESTIONS:

1. What kinds of attitudes do you have to guard against?
2. Do you have a hard time controlling your pride when you are around people who are living carnal or fleshly lives? Why or why not?
3. Share an example of how you deceived yourself. What kinds of things would you do differently the next time?

6. SIXTH, EXAMINE YOUR OWN BEHAVIOR AND WORK (v.4).

The word *work* refers more to conduct and behavior than to employment. Of course, employment or work is involved, but the point of this verse deals with *all our behavior*. We are to

be examining and judging our own lives, not the life of a fallen brother. Scripture is forceful on this point: *every man* is to keep busy examining *his own* work and life, and no man is exempt. There is so much evil flying around the world and the flesh is so weak that it is difficult for a person to remain unsoiled and clean. The flesh lusts...

- for acceptance
- for recognition
- for position
- for honor
- for compensation
- for approval
- to look
- to taste
- to feel
- to do
- to have
- to experience

Of course, every one of these desires is needful and beneficial until it crosses over into the forbidden or is taken too far. Tasting food is good; tasting too much food is bad. Wanting recognition is good; loving recognition is sin.

The point is that temptation just swirls around us—all of us. Therefore, we must be busy examining and judging ourselves and not others. In fact, so much temptation swirls around us that if we lower our guard to examine and judge others, we are immediately overcome by sin ourselves. Remember: criticizing and judging others is sin; therefore, by turning away from examining ourselves to judging others, we have sinned.

We must measure ourselves against the Word of God, not against others. Our attitude toward others is to be that of love and care, ministry and restoration, not criticism and judgment.

Note that the believer who constantly examines himself has reason to rejoice in himself and not only in others. It is when our hearts and lives are pure that joy fills us. Nothing fills us with joy as much as a pure conscience. True, we do joy when we see others walking as they should, but deep joy comes from knowing that we ourselves are pleasing God by the way we walk.

“Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye” (Mt.7:5).

QUESTIONS:

1. Who is to be the model for your life?
2. How can you keep from judging and criticizing others?
3. Do you ever examine yourself? What things need to be on your personal checklist?
4. Grade yourself on how you’ve done this past week. Have you passed or failed in these areas?
 - _____ Had a daily worship or devotional time?
 - _____ Attended church and Bible study?

- _____ Witnessed to someone about Christ?
- _____ Prayed for those who are backsliding?
- _____ Used your time wisely with your family/friends?
- _____ Spent your money wisely?
- _____ Encouraged or met the needs of others?

7. SEVENTH, REALIZE YOUR OWN RESPONSIBILITY (v.5).

The point of this verse is to warn the believer: he is personally responsible to the Lord for his own behavior and shall be judged for what he has done. Every believer has his own burdens, his own weight of faults and sins to bear. It is these that he is to be carrying, looking after, examining, and judging. He can never overcome them unless he gets his eyes off the failure of others and concentrates on the burden of his own failure.

“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (Mt.12:36).

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Co.5:10).

QUESTIONS:

1. When are you least likely to own up to your responsibilities? Why?
2. What kind of failures in others capture your attention? Why?
3. Who do you tend to shift the blame on the most when things do not go your way?
 - _____ God
 - _____ Someone in your family
 - _____ Your employer
 - _____ Your circumstances
 - _____ Yourself

SUMMARY:

You now have in your possession a great treasure—a treasure that has the power to grant another chance. God has called each one of us to be a “Wounded Healer.” As a reminder, this is how restoration is to be done:

1. First, let the spiritual believers handle the matter.

Continued next page

2. Second, approach the brother in a spirit of gentleness.
3. Third, watch yourself.
4. Fourth, bear one another's burden.
5. Fifth, confess your own nothingness.
6. Sixth, examine your own behavior and work.
7. Seventh, realize your own responsibility.

PERSONAL JOURNAL NOTES

(Reflection & Response)

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

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—The Amish Voice, P.O. Box 128, Savannah, OH 44874—

Convulsions

—By Ben Girod

As we see Muslim conflicts imploding worldwide, we should pause and reflect silently before our Father in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those of us who are alert know that we have entered the hour of international conflicts heralding the coming of Christ and the horrific tribulations ahead of us.

In the coming days, Christians and Jews will be increasingly targeted, not only by the Muslim world, but by the press and politicians—including many world leaders.

What should our response be?

Few of us seem to understand that you and I hold the power to change the course of events as we stand before God in true repentance. As true children of God, we need to grieve over our history of neglectfulness. God has always responded and changed the course of humanity where heart genuine heart repentance was in evidence.

Although many in the western church are beginning to wake up, that will not be enough. Until we fall prostrate before a most Holy God in deep remorse for our personal sins, we will miss God's fullness in our own hearts. We who have been born again, if we want to be truly surrendered

to God, must confess our sins of omission, sins of pursuing our own interests above God's interests, sins that distance us from His presence, and sins of forgetting Him in all that we do or think in the course of our daily lives.

It only takes a remnant to change the course of history.

The final stage is set where God is forging the "one new man" of Jew and Gentile. This comes through the convulsions of severe tension on the world

stage, forming and preparing the hearts of both Israel and the true church.

You and I have a part in God's staging of these events, of the reconciliation of the Jews and the church. (See Ephesians 2:14-18. Romans 11:11-26).

It is not what we accomplish in life that qualifies us for Heaven (as some seem to think and attempt to do) but it is our personal, unhindered relationship with the Father through Christ Jesus that qualifies us for Heaven and prepares us for these final stages of history.

In conclusion, all who are true Christians today are beheld and recognized in Heaven.

The End

Last Days

Mark 13:19-23

For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

²⁰ And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

²¹ And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here *is* Christ; or, lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not:

²² For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect.

²³ But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.



Views on Aging

—By George Carlin

Do you realize that the only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we're kids? If you're less than 10 years old, you're so excited about aging that you think in fractions.

"How old are you?"

"I'm four **and a half!**" You're never thirty-six and a half. You're four and a half, going on five! That's the key.

You get into your teens, now they can't hold you back. You jump to the next number, or even a few ahead.

"How old are you?"

"I'm **gonna be 16!**" You could be 13, but hey, you're gonna be 16! And then the greatest day of your life . . . You **become 21.**

Even the words sound like a ceremony. **YOU BECOME 21. YESSSS!!!**

But then you **turn 30.** Oooohh, what happened there? He **TURNED.** There's no fun now, you're just a sour-dumpling. What's wrong? What's changed?



You **BECOME 21,** you **TURN 30,** then you're **PUSHING 40.**

Whoa! Put on the brakes, it's all slipping away. Before you know it, you **REACH 50** and your dreams are gone.

But wait!!! You **MAKE it** to 60.

You **didn't think** you would! So you **BECOME 21, TURN 30, PUSH 40, REACH 50,** and **MAKE it** to 60.

You've built up so much speed that you **HIT 70!** After that it's a day-by-day thing; you **HIT Wednesday!**

You **get into** your 80's and every day is a complete cycle: you **HIT lunch,** you **TURN 4:30,** you **REACH bedtime,** and it doesn't end there.

Into the 90s, you start going backwards; "**I Was JUST 92.**"

Then a strange thing happens. If you make it over 100, you become a little kid again. "I'm 100 and a half!"

May you all make it to a healthy 100 and a half!!

Living a Life That Counts

—By Joe Keim

Have you ever wished to know the exact day and hour you will die? Or maybe you are like me; I wonder sometimes how I will die. Regardless, God alone knows these answers. All of us want to spend our days, hours, and seconds on something important.

As Christians, we want our lives to count for God.

If that's the case, we have to manage wisely the three primary resources God has entrusted to us: our time, our money, and our talents. If you want your life to count, you have to number your days.

Psalm 90:1-12

V-1 & 2 Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

The word everlasting means "from the vanishing point to the vanishing point." God is from the vanishing point in the past and reaches to the vanishing point in eternity future. Just as far

as you can see, from vanishing point to vanishing point, He is still God. —J. Vernon McGee

V-4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

It would be like the flight of a bird through a lighted room, coming out of the darkness through one window and going out another window into the darkness again. —J. Vernon McGee

V-10 The days of our years are threescore years and ten (70 years); and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years (80 years), yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

Time can be spent like money, which leads most people into one of two mistakes:

1. Some think they have too much time and waste it on unimportant things, preventing them from spending it on things that matter.
2. Others think they have too little time and don't even try to do anything significant.

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next page—

Continued: Living a Life That Counts

V-12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Our culture seems to elevate things that don't last. For instance, they would like to make us believe that we should invest all our time in money, power, fame, comfort, etc.

By numbering our days we realize how few we actually have, and it helps us to spend them wisely as we live them out for God's eternal purposes.

Whatever the circumstances of our lives, God is God and He is

worthy of our praise. He loves us and has made a covenant with us through the blood of His only Son, whom He gave to die for our sins. May we learn to praise Him at all times, in trials and triumphs, in burdens and blessings, in gains and losses, in good and bad!

Philippians 4:11-13 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

The End

The Heart of God

—By Joe Keim

I know the days are evil and many of our country's leaders are corrupt. You know that, too. Feelings of powerlessness go to bed with us, and when we awake, they are right there waiting to follow us another day. The results: many are gasping for relief, but be aware, be careful who you open yourself up to and what you grab onto for relief. God has already warned us that "many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." He also warns us that "there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24).

What should we do?

How can we be sure?

There is only one answer!

Press into the heart of God. Press deep! Deeper! Press until you hear and feel His heartbeat. Don't move. Stay there. It is the

place - the only place - where the following needs are satisfied: security, joy, fruit of the Spirit, love for my enemies, stability, and honest answers.

Romans 8:35-39 says: *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors*

through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Comments and Prayers Welcome!

1. If you have any comments, ideas, suggestions, questions, prayer requests, or might want to contribute a possible article for the Amish Voice, please let us know.
2. If you enjoy the Amish Voice and would like to help us with the cost of printing and postage or if you know of others who might benefit from the Amish Voice, please contact us.
3. Please pray for us and with us that we would all grow nearer to God.

Amish Voice
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Throughout our lifetimes, we meet a lot of people. We connect with many people, and develop relationships with quite a few of them. Seasons come and go, and people come and go. Sometimes we are ready to let go of someone before they are ready to let go of us, or maybe they are ready to let go before we are.

God uses people in our lives in many ways. Some of them need us for encouragement, for someone to believe in them. Some are in our lives to irk us so we are driven to the feet of Jesus. Some are there to speak grace into our lives. Some people are meant to be connected to us for life and others for only a season or a moment. We need to choose wisely those who we allow deeply into our hearts. We also must be willing to fight to protect those relationships.

Gossip can destroy relationships. Relationships are broken when someone hears and believes false information about another. This could have been avoided if only they had cared enough to check with their friends and discover the truth. Do we care enough about people to verify information before we give them a cold shoulder?

Relationships can also be destroyed when we are not willing to invest in them. Good relationships don't just happen; they take work, and honest communication, even when it is hard. Do we care enough to invest in others? Do we care enough about people to get to know them before we make a judgment

about them? Do we care enough to take the effort to say hi and get past the awkward stage of finding something to talk about? Listening to some people takes work. Is it worth it to you? Some of the people I have least expected to get

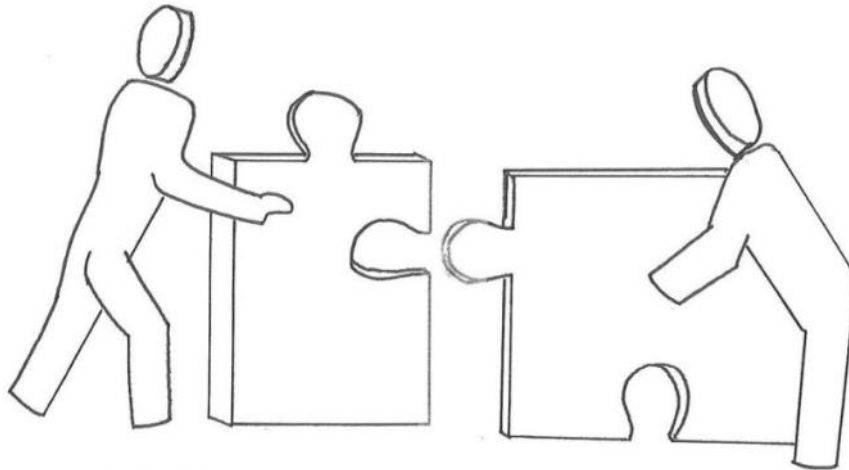
worth the effort it took to build a relationship.

When something seems to be creating distance between us and a friend, do we care enough to reach out and talk about it? If their life seems to be winding in a slightly different direction, are we willing to reach out to them or are we content just to let them slowly float away?

If we do not understand the decisions someone is making, or feel they have made unwise or even wrong decisions, are we ready to cut them off without giving them a chance? What do we want our friends to do when they disagree with us or

with a direction our lives are taking?

These are good questions to ask ourselves. We can hurt others without intending to, without having a clue of what we are doing. Are you willing to fight to protect your relationships? Are you willing to have heart to heart talks that may take you out of your comfort zone, for the sake of a relationship? Are you willing to give second chances? Are you willing to refuse to believe rumors until you have given your friends a chance to explain themselves? Are you willing to work to keep a relationship alive and healthy? Will you choose to walk toward them and reach out in love? Will you ask God if this relationship was for a season and it is time to let go, or if perhaps He wants you to work on this relationship? What is the price you are willing to pay for the sake of the people in your life?



Building Relationships

By Lydia

along with or to have anything in common with, ended up being my closest friends.

I remember meeting one gal who seemed a little stuck up, and I was not sure how to take her. But something in her eyes caused me to stop and consider. I realized she was a cautious person, kind of shy, and self-protective. She wanted to be careful about the relationships she got into. She is now one of my very dearest friends. I can count on her when the 'whole world is against me'. Another girl I know is super quiet and shy. It is work for her to open her heart and talk, and it is work for me to be quiet and listen, but she is a good friend. I am learning to give her lots of time to share, and she is opening up more and more; she has such a sweet heart. But I had to give these women a chance, and they had to give me a chance. We had to decide if it was

The End

My Picture of God. Jesus taking my burden:

Here I am in this world. I have struggles and burdens and there are things I don't understand. Then I think of God and take my cares and burdens to Him in prayer. Then I try to picture God and Jesus taking my big burden and sorting through it.

I try to see Him taking my hurts and wounds and putting ointment and healing oil on them and wrapping it in His bandage of healing love and care. Then He goes through my burdens one by one and puts them in the place they belong. He comforts me and tells me that if I keep brining my cares to Him and if I keep trusting Him, He will work things out in my life even better than I can imagine.

He will provide the family the love, the care and the support I need. He assures me that He is taking care of my family and friends and will allow me to have contact and do enjoyable things with my friends.

I picture myself sitting in Jesus' lap and He is assuring me that He love and cares. He takes me like I would want a Dad to do

for me. He fills the need of security and will allow a Father image to provide the same thing for me. He gives me peace and quietness in my soul in the times of trial. He tells me never to give up, but to give all to Him and to trust in His love and care. He promises never to leave me alone.



By Lydia

This is a very peaceful assuring thought. I feel God gave this to me so that I know that He understands and sees everything. Give God all honor, glory and praise for His precious Word and for his promises.

1 Peter 5:6-7 says to *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

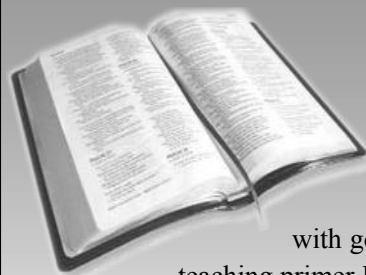
Why is it that we can confidently cast all of our care upon the Lord? It's because we know that He cares for us. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32).

The End

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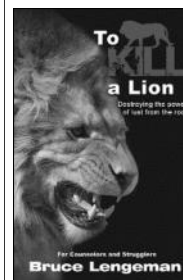
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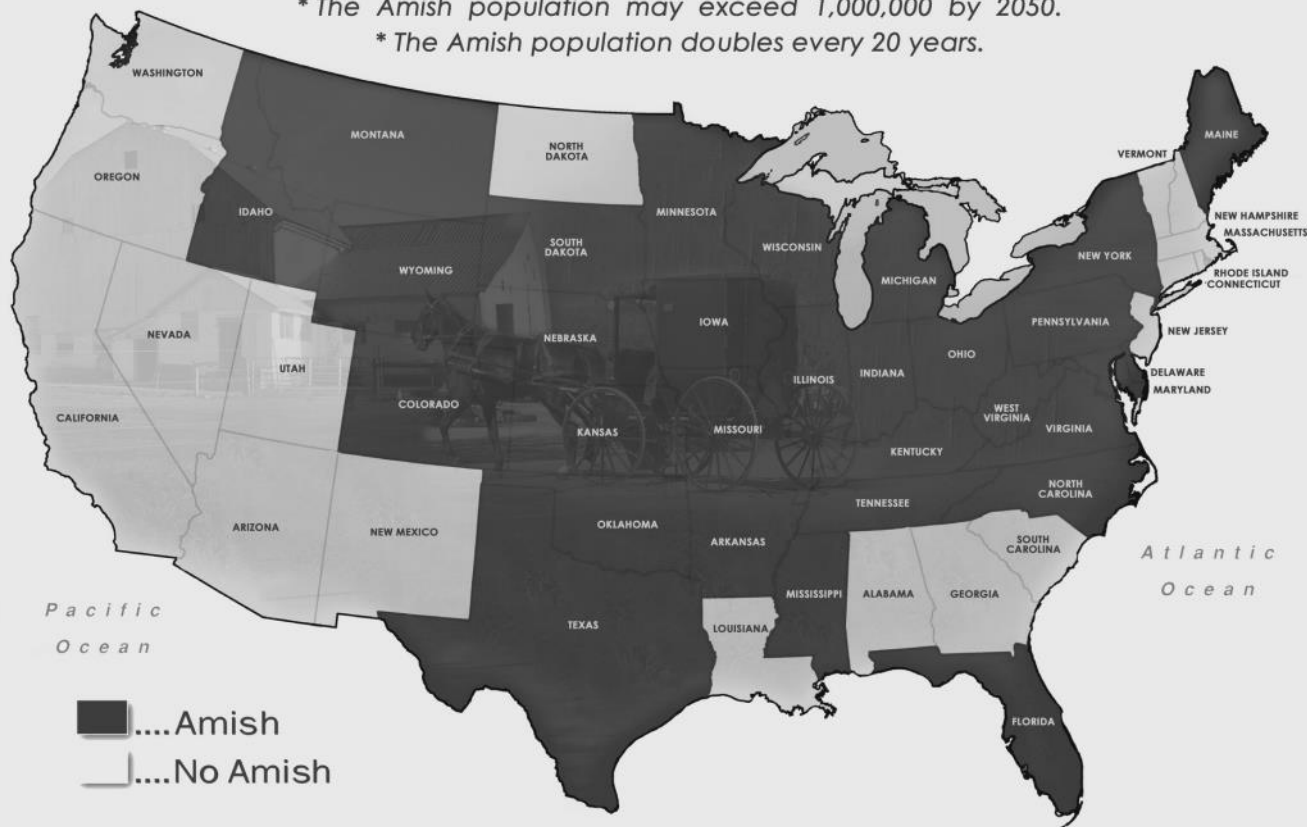
To order, call MAP at (419) 962-1515 or mail a check to "The Amish Voice, PO Box 128, Savannah, OH 44874. The price of the book is \$15 (includes S&H).

There are 290,090 Amish Living in the U.S.

* A New Amish Community is formed, on average, every 3-1/2 weeks.

* The Amish population may exceed 1,000,000 by 2050.

* The Amish population doubles every 20 years.



Population. The estimated population of the Amish of North America (adults and children) as of May 1, 2014, is 290,100. This is an increase of approximately 8,400 since 2013, a growth rate of 3 percent.

Big Three States. Historically, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana have claimed about two-thirds of the North American Amish population. That trend continues this year: 64 percent of the total Amish population lives in those three states.

The statistics above were collected from "Amish Population Profile 2014." Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, Elizabethtown College. http://www2.etown.edu/amishstudies/Population_Profile_2014.asp.

As of September, we have recorded 71 car/buggy accidents for 2014



Amish Population By State

State/Province	# of Settlements	# of Church Districts	Est. Population
Ohio	55	498	67,230
Pennsylvania	54	453	67,045
Indiana	21	356	50,195
Wisconsin	47	133	17,025
New York	50	122	16,470
Michigan	40	101	13,330
Missouri	42	94	11,000
Kentucky	35	78	9,750
Iowa	23	59	8,320
Illinois	18	51	7,140
Ontario	15	36	4,860
Minnesota	23	36	4,535
Tennessee	8	19	2,375
Kansas	7	15	2,025
Delaware	1	10	1,500
Maryland	3	11	1,485
Virginia	6	8	1,080
Nebraska	5	6	810
Oklahoma	3	6	810
Colorado	3	5	675
Maine	5	5	675
Montana	4	4	540
Arkansas	2	2	270
West Virginia	3	3	225
North Carolina	1	1	195
Mississippi	1	2	150
Florida	1	1	75
Idaho	1	1	75
South Dakota	1	1	75
Texas	1	1	75
Wyoming	1	1	75
Total	480	2,119	290,090

What Christmas Means to Me

What does Christmas mean to me?
 It's more than gifts beneath the tree
 It's God's love so rich and free
 Sent to this earth for all to hear and see.

What does Christmas mean to me?
 Come kneel with me and you will see
 Baby Jesus as sweet as any babe can be
 The Son of God sinless and holy.

What does Christmas mean to me?
 It is God's grace to us abundantly
 Wrapped in a baby, oh so wee
 The Son of God who rules eternally.

What does Christmas mean to me?
 It's Mary's baby born to bring us liberty
 From sinful nature He came to set us free
 That by His grace we live in victory.

What does Christmas mean to me?
 From earth's foundation God's plan was Calvary
 Where Christ would bear our sins on that tree
 And rise from the grave victoriously.

This is what Christmas means to me
 It's Christ in us—O, blessed reality
 Relationship for all eternity
 Where from all sin we're fully free.

THIS IS WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME!

**“For God so loved the world
 that He gave His only begotten
 Son, that whosoever believes
 In Him shall not perish, but
 have everlasting life.”**

John 3:16

—Lydia Chorpensing

Call in, Listen, and Participate!

Call in and listen to some of our **past conference calls** on topics like:

- ◆ Commitment, Dependability, and Keeping Your Word
- ◆ Spirit, Soul, and Body
- ◆ Premarital Sexual Relations and Homosexuality
- ◆ The Security of the Believer
- ◆ Forgiveness
- ◆ Evangelism and Mark 16:15

The recordings are about an hour long. To listen to our past recordings, dial: **(641) 715-3800** and enter **pin # 89752**.



Also, join us for a **live conference call** on the **first Sunday of every month at 8:00 p.m. EST**.

Simply dial **(267) 507-0240**, and then enter the conference **code 409703**. Join us in discussion or just listen to the call!

Upcoming conference calls:

December 07: Does God still speak to people in an audible voice — 8 ways God speaks to His people

January 04: When I pray for something, should I pray once, or many, many times? If I pray many times, does that show a lack of faith on my part?

Four Ways We Can Rob Ourselves Of God's Blessing

1. Judge ourselves:

... I judge (try, condemn) not mine own self ... he that judgeth me is the Lord ... who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts... —1 Cor 4:3-5

2. Condemn ourselves:

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. —Romans 8:1

God is infinitely greater than our hearts (in not condemning us). When we realize this, our hearts no longer accuse us... (and) we may have the utmost confidence in God's presence. (1 John 3:20-22)

3. Not accept His unconditional love:

The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. —Jeremiah 31:3

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. —Romans 5:8

4. Not accept His invitation to minister to us:

And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you ... he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. —Isaiah 30:18-19

God knows and loves you, warts and all. By judging or condemning yourself, you belittle the great grace of God. So relax in Him and drink in His immeasurable love. —Facts of the Matter: Daily Devotionals.

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teens and adults!



Do you know what God's word says?

"Search the Scriptures"

"Study to show thyself approved unto God"

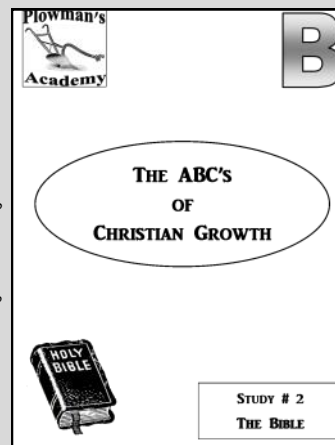
"Seek ye out the book of the LORD, and read"

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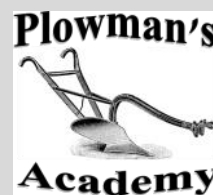


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The Amish Voice
Conference Call Schedule
is listed on page 14!

Do you Know What You Believe?

—Joe Keim

Every single hour of our life, we are faced with distractions and interruptions in this world, which makes it ever so difficult to stay glued to what is most important. And as we enter into the last hours before Christ's return, we must push forward and not lose focus.

I Know What I believe

More than ever, we need to know what we believe and why we believe it.

1. Do you believe it because someone before you taught you that way?
2. Do you believe it because God said it?

One way to find out what you and I really believe is to ask ourselves this question: If someone pointed a gun at our head and asked us to die for each one of our beliefs—how many [of those beliefs] would we die for? How many are really worth fighting over? Pushing on others? Hanging on to?

The truth is, much of what people believe and war over now-a-days are only preferences, or simply traditions passed on by those before us, or something our

culture has always done. And the truth again is, when you and I die, those things will all die with us. They hold no eternal value. You cannot find them in the Word of God. They are what they are—preferences, traditions and cultural.

So, again, what would you die for, if you had to? Think about it!

Would you die if a Muslim man came up to you and demanded that you turn your back on Jesus Christ? Would you die if the same Muslim man came up to you and demanded that you stop using your horse and buggy for transportation?

What I'm trying to get you and the rest of us to consider in these last days is this: when persecution comes—and it is coming quickly—we will need each other's support. That means we'll have to drop our walls and finger pointing and start focusing on things we do believe and are willing to die for.

I Don't Know What I Believe

It appears that we have many half-hearted and lukewarm church goers living all around us today. They come to church; they dress the dress, talk the talk

and act the act, but they don't really have a passion or desire to know God and His ways.

Does that ever bother you? Does it bother you to the point that you have laid awake at night, or found yourself calling out to God on behalf of someone you deeply care about?

Consider God's response to lukewarm Christians who don't really believe much of anything. He says:

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. —Revelation 3:15-16

These are people who just go with the flow. Their idea of Christianity is more about fitting in; it's more about fitting in and being accepted. They're more concerned about what men think of them than they are what God thinks. Consider what Peter says in 1 Peter 3:15: *...be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.*

The End