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My Story, Part 3

—By Emanuel Schrock

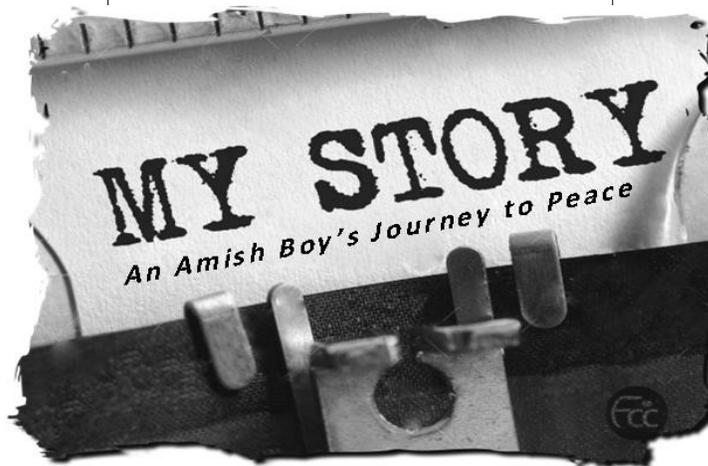
Welcome to part three of Emanuel Schrock's true life story.

3. The Answer

One day, I was listening to a man preach from the book of Hebrews. I was at the point where I was desperate to know the truth. I had worn myself out trying to please God, and I still didn't have peace. I listened to the words being preached, and I was ready to let the Bible say what it wanted to say to me. I was done with trying to figure out what I needed to do; I was ready to just listen. I had tried all that I knew, and all that I had to show for it was a history of failing and a bleak and miserable future of unending efforts that would only serve to ease my conscience while I waited in vain for the miracle of salvation.

At times, I thought that perhaps I must resign myself to hell, but the very thought of that drove me in anguish to grab on to the only lifeline I knew: to pray and beg God to save me until my conscience was eased, so that at least if I did end up in hell, God couldn't blame me for it, since I had tried my very best.

I knew it was a weak and fragile thread, but I hung on to it. I knew that everything I had tried so far hadn't worked, but I didn't dare let go. My soul hung suspended over the lake of fire, and there was no way I would allow myself



not to do something about it. I longed for something new to present itself, some method of salvation so powerful and effective that it would swallow up all the methods I had unsuccessfully tried. I longed for some means of salvation that was so high and powerful that my own efforts would not be able to interfere with its effectiveness.

As I listened to the words of the Bible from the book of Hebrews, I thought that

perhaps there was just such a method of salvation available.

The man was preaching from Hebrews chapter 10, which talks about how the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins in the Old Testament, because

God had no pleasure in them. Something greater than animal sacrifices was needed to take away our sins.

Hebrews 10:4 *For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*

In the previous verses in this chapter, the writer of Hebrews pointed out that if the Old Testament sacrifices had been able to take away sins, they would not have needed to be repeated each year. The thousands of bloody sacrifices made each year for the sins of the people could only make a temporary payment; they could never take away the full penalty of sins or clear the consciences of the people.

As the preacher explained the meaning of the passage, I suddenly realized something: I wasn't included in the passage. My performance and

**Continued
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experience weren't part of the equation in the flow of the argument. My attention was drawn outward, away from myself and my efforts, to an event with which my performance could not interfere. I suddenly realized that my response and my actions would not change anything in the outcome of what the passage was about to present. Whether I was a good person or not, the events these verses were talking about were independently true and real, regardless of my condition or feelings. No matter what efforts or lack of efforts I would invest, I could not change the truth about the events in the passage and the authority that the Bible gave to them. Hebrews 10 continues:

5 Wherefore when he (Jesus) cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

Again, my attention and my line of reasoning were drawn to something outside of my personal experience. Slowly, hardly daring to, I pushed aside the question of my problem of sin, and I focused on the argument.

My attention was drawn to two different realities in the argument: one, an ancient system of blood sacrifices that failed to provide a perfect payment for sin; and two, the Son of God who had been given a body so that He could come into the world to replace that system. I and my own experience were not included in either of these realities.

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.

All my life I had tried to do God's will, and I had failed. But here was a Man who had arrived on the scene two thousand years ago, and while all men before and after him have failed, He claimed to have had done the perfect will of God.

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

Now I saw that the whole question of whether or not my sins could be forgiven did not depend upon me. I was too far gone to do anything about my lost condition. Rather,

my forgiveness and salvation depended on whether or not this Man would succeed in His mission of earning complete and perfect salvation that would have the power to save me from my sin. If He would fail, then there was no hope for me, no matter what I did or didn't do.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Interpreted in German:

10 "In welchem villen vir sind geheiligt, Einmal geschehen durch

das opfers des Leibes Jesu Christi."

It hit me that the reason Christ had come into the world in a physical body was so He could offer His body as a sacrifice for my sins. The words brought a ray of hope to my soul. This sounded like something that God would accept on my behalf, because it was something that He had come up with, not me. And if He had come up with it, then surely He would be satisfied with it. Suddenly it hit me that while I had been trying to make myself holy and acceptable to God, He had already done what it took to make me righteous by allowing His Son to offer up

His body for me on the cross. A feeling of relief came over me as I realized that it was not my holiness that made me right with God, but it was the fact that



Jesus offered His body to make me holy. The work required for my salvation shifted from my hands into God's hands, and that felt so much better, because He knew what was required, and He alone was able to do it. And the amazing thing was, He had already done the work by having Jesus die on the cross.

"Once for all. . . ."

The words carried a powerful force of persuasion. Since Jesus was perfect and He was the one who was offered for my sins, then only one sacrifice was required, and nothing more was needed. My sins

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had been paid for by Jesus Christ Himself! My own efforts were useless, because Jesus had already done everything that was needed for my sins to be forgiven.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

The priests in the Old Testament had to offer hundreds of sacrifices every day for the sins of the people, and even that could not take away their sins.

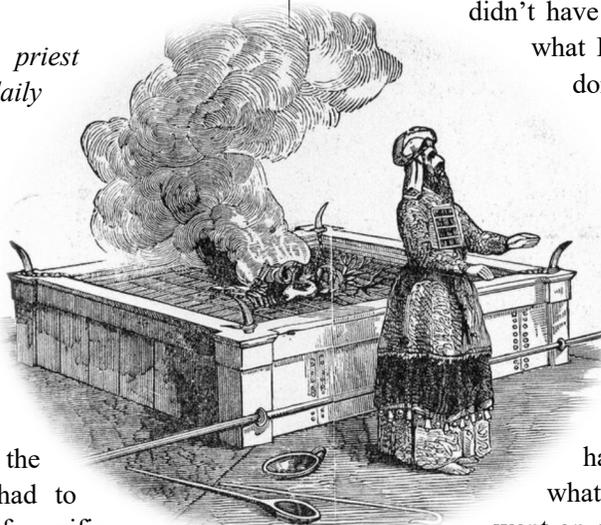
12 But this man, (Jesus) after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Once again, the words of the Bible hit home. The words *once* and *forever* kept coming up: *Once for all. . . . One sacrifice for sins forever. . . . By one offering. . . .* Slowly the truth dawned on me. Christ had made one sacrifice for my sins, and that was all it took. Nothing more was needed to pay for my sins, because He had finished the job. I could do nothing to add to His sacrifice to make it better. I suddenly realized that all the months and years of trying to please God by living a good Christian life had absolutely no value in paying for my sins. I realized that while I had been waiting on God to forgive my sins and save me, He had already paid for my sins through the sacrifice of Jesus, and He was waiting

on me to believe it. The problem had not been that God did not want to save me; the problem was that I was so busy trying to live a good life to impress God that I didn't have time to accept what He had already done for me.



I now saw and understood that my salvation was sure and secure because it rested on what Jesus had done, not what I did. As time went on and I continued

to study the Bible, I became more and more convinced and persuaded of this. There were many times when I took my eyes off Christ and His sacrifice and tried to keep God happy by being a good Christian. Every time, though, I would come to the point where I would once again long for the peace that came from simply trusting in Jesus, and I would return to the cross, where I was guaranteed to have freedom. All my life I had been taught that I had to be a good person to please God, and now I had to retrain my mind to understand that my goodness could never be good enough.

It took some time for me to learn how to live in this new reality of depending upon the work of Jesus instead of upon my own works. Often in desperation I went back to the Bible, again looking for the answer, and every time it pointed me to Jesus. Slowly, I learned to walk by faith in Jesus, to trust Him day by day as all that I needed to stand before God.

As I grew in this faith, I became more and more confident and bold in Christ, and I learned how to stand strong in faith against the doubt and fear that kept trying to come into my heart. I learned to love Jesus more and more, and as I followed Him and continued to believe Him, I

discovered that sin, although it was still as much of a temptation as before, was losing its power over me.

Today, I testify that I have peace with God because of Jesus Christ. I can look death square in the face and not be afraid of it, because Jesus has gone before me into death and has taken the keys of death from Satan. He has finished all the work that was required to pay for my sins and to get me into heaven, into the very presence of God.

He is sitting at God's right hand, praying for me before the Father, waiting for me to arrive safely in heaven. I do not have to simply hope that I will be lucky enough to make it; I know I will make it, not because I lived a good enough life, but because Jesus made a good enough sacrifice for me. I do not trust in my own righteousness; I trust in the righteousness of God, given to me on my behalf.

John 3:35 *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.*

36 *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

—End—

Part 4 is coming up in the next issue.

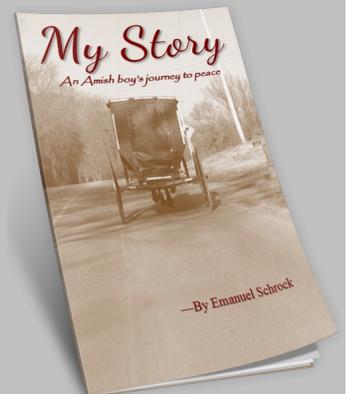
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A Puzzling Situation

Can You Find Sixteen Books Of The Bible?

PUZZLE: *Yes, there are actually 16 books of the Bible contained in the paragraph below. How many can you find? One person found fifteen in 20 minutes, but it took him 3 weeks to find the 16th one. Can you find all sixteen?*

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a fluke. It kept people looking so hard for facts and others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since they were not capitalized. But the truth finally struck home for numbers of readers. To others it

was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them and there will be lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now for there really are sixteen names of the books of the Bible in this story.

You can find the answers on page 7.

Praying Women

—By Norma Miller



There are very few things as powerful as praying women. The tenacity of a woman praying for those she loves is a force to be reckoned with! Today I would like to address something that can hinder this force.

Do you ever feel like you are praying and praying to no avail? One of the most powerful forces in making sure your prayers bring change is to make sure your heart is properly aligned with the Lord. I'll give you an example. For years I have prayed that my husband's priorities would

be lined up with God's, that he can keep God first, me second, the children third, etc. But for years this has been an area where the enemy keeps attacking our family in one way or another, bringing much frustration and hurt.

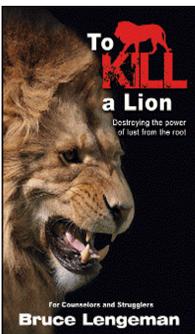
Now, you would surely think God would honor such an amazing prayer, wouldn't you? But God hit me squarely between the eyes when He reminded me of Matthew 6:33, which says, *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

Not only did I have my focus on getting all my work done and beautifying our home (both are really good things in their own place), but I did not give my husband the priority in my heart and in our home that was rightfully his. You see, how can God move to answer my prayer to help my husband with his

priorities if mine are not lined up to His Word?

Many times I became frustrated and angry that I as the wife needed to be the strong one and do what is right first, but really, I needed my viewpoint changed just a bit to see that when we first make sure that our hearts are properly aligned, we RELEASE God's hands to begin to do the work we wish to see done in our husbands! Alignment always releases God to do the work. It releases us from needing to fight our own battles. It releases us from victimhood!

Today, as women, let's be okay with being strong. Let's be okay with first lining up our hearts with God's Word, because it will release Him to pour out His favor and blessing on our lives! It may seem unfair and hard, but it will create an open heaven above us, which is totally in our favor! God bless you today!



Do you struggle with lust or other sins and addictions?

To Kill a Lion, written by Bruce Lengeman, is designed to help men find the roots of their sexual addiction. The theme is, "Men cry out, 'I know it is wrong, but why can't I stop!'" The book is for both counselors and strugglers. *To Kill a Lion* will help men understand their own sexuality and what makes it operate "out of

alignment" with God's design. You'll learn why it is healthy to be sexual as a man, but in a pure and Godly way. Though this book was not written for women, many are reading it and getting understanding of things they never knew about sexuality.

To order, call us 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).

Amish Voice Conference Calls (Past, Present, and Future)

Join us for a live conference call on the first Sunday of every month at 8:00 P.M. EST.

Simply dial (302) 202-1110, and then enter the conference code 409703. Join us in discussion or just listen to the call!

UPCOMING DISCUSSIONS

- ◆ **Sunday Night, December 04:** Witnessing
- ◆ **Sunday Night, January 01:** Allowed or Not for Christians?
- ◆ **Sunday Night, February 05:** Sam Troyer Testimony

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS (RECORDED)

If you missed any of our **previous conference call discussions**, dial (641) 715-3800 and enter code 89752 and listen to the recordings.

November—Victory in Jesus

October—Unity in Christ

September—Norma Miller Testimony: Listen to Norma Miller and her life-changing testimony. You may know her from the articles she writes for the Amish Voice. This month, she writes about praying women on page four.

August—Power of Prayer: We know that prayer is important. We should pray often and effectively. Have you seen God answer prayer in your own life? Do you believe that God answers prayer today?

July—Taking the Gospel to Others: We should take the Gospel to others, but what does that mean? Are we obeying the command of Jesus to take the Gospel into all the world?

June—The Return of Jesus: Jesus is coming back, and soon. Are you ready?

A Journal of the Heart

—By Grace

A heart that is heavy. Do those who carry such hearts know what brought such sorrow? When they wake up they're filled with loneliness and grief. At times their sadness leaves. They laugh with friends; they share their troubles. Friends call them kindred spirits, but in the quietness of their home, when no one is around but God Himself, the grief is keenly felt. Then are their hearts bleeding. There is a deep longing within. It is such a longing that it is indescribable. The hills cannot hold their grief. The very wind sighs because of the sorrow they know that is within those four walls.

They lift their eyes to the hills. Will

they ever get relief? They cry unto God. Is He there? They find refuge in Him.

1 Corinthians 2:15, 16: *But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.*

These writings of the heart were written before I received memories of my abuse, so I couldn't deal or start to heal of my childhood abuse until many years later. I fought feelings of despair, turmoil, and grief, but did not know why. So please keep this in mind as more of my writings come. Thank you for being patient!

—Grace

A Few Lines of Wisdom

1. God wants spiritual fruit, not religious nuts.
2. Dear God, I have a problem. It's me.
3. There is no key to happiness. The door is always open.
4. Silence is often misinterpreted, but never misquoted.
5. Do the math: count your blessings.
6. Faith is the ability to not panic.
7. If you worry, you didn't pray. If you pray, don't worry.
8. As a child of God, prayer is kind of like calling home every day.
9. Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape.
10. The most important thing in your house is the people.
11. When we get tangled up in our problems, be still. God wants us to be still so He can untangle the knot.
12. A grudge is a heavy thing to carry.
13. He who dies with the most toys is still dead.



Thru the Eyes of Little Tobias, the Amish Kid (A True Story)

Little Tobias tried his best to be a good little boy, to sit up straight, and listen to the sermon. but it was all to no avail. Eventually, nature would take over, and little Tobias would put his arms on his knees, his chin in his hands, and doze off. It was not humanly possible to stay awake.

It was during one of those times that little Tobias had the most embarrassing experience of his life. At this point, sleep and nature were in complete control of little Tobias. He had his head between his

hands, his arms resting on his knees, and had sailed off to Amish la-la land. In his happy Amish dreams he was feeding Amish goats and Amish chickens, and feeling good about the farm world around him.

Suddenly, as if the heavens were speaking to him, one arm slipped off his knee, which propelled his body forward, and he stumbled across the aisle and into Mrs. Detwiler's lap (Mrs. Detwiler was also known as Mamma Roly-Poly). Gone were the chickens, gone were the goats, and Tobias found himself in a house—in a church house—and in a roly-poly lady's lap! It was a soft landing, much too soft for comfort!

To say that little Tobias was awake at this point is a complete understatement. In fact, words cannot describe the embarrassment little Tobias felt at this

point! There were a few giggles, as some of the other boys tried to keep from breaking out into laughter, But for the most part, all who were involved and on the scene did a good job of keeping things serious, as it ought to be in church. The good old preacher never missed a beat, and nobody ever talked about it!

Amongst the Amish there are certain things you just don't talk about! When things fly out of control as they did that Sunday, and situations come along that are out of their control, they let it go!

It's like wise old Papa Yoder says, "Many times silence and time is the best remedy." The Amish know that misfortune can strike at any time, to anyone, at any place, and so they carry on! The goats must be fed, the cows must be milked, and little Tobias must be forgiven for sleeping in church.

Thank You, Jesus

Thank you Jesus for forgiving me.

Thank you for your redemptive work on Calvary Cross.

Thank you for loving me when I couldn't love myself.

Thank you for defeating me in my rebellion, conquering me in my sin, winning my heart, and capturing my mind.

Thank you for being my hope and my best friend.

Thank you for welcoming me into your presence, working on me, reshaping me, molding me.

Thank you for providing for my family, for shielding and guiding me and all your people.

Thank you for my preacher; build him up where he is torn down, strengthen him where he is weak.

Thank you for every church door that opens up in your name, the name above all names. I pray have mercy on all your people.

Thank you for the privilege of being your servant. I can't and I won't go back. Continue to allow the message and gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to continue to be spread across the world. You are so deserving of our praise.

When I thought I was garbage and full of guilt, and I didn't want to live, you thought I was worth saving and worth fighting for.

When I had a mindset of "I'm going to do what I want," you still were right with me.

When I wasn't a friend to you and ashamed, you were still a friend to me, always right by my side loving me

unconditionally. You encouraged me to go on and I'm forever grateful. Help me never to play Church again. Forgive us of our many sins.

I will never apologize for being serious about my faith, because Jesus was serious when he died for all of our sins. Continue to do what only you can do, King Jesus. God, we know you are still on the throne, always have and always will be. Thank you for the blood of Jesus, our resurrected King who is going to reign forever.

—Andricus, A Willing Servant

James 1:17: *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

2 Corinthians 9:15: *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.*

Matthew 3:1-3: *In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*

When John the Baptist began his ministry, he went around preaching repentance. Common people whom we might call simple received his message. However, there were those who did not receive it. These were the Scribes, Pharisees, and teachers of the law. Their concept of repentance was probably that others needed to repent, but they themselves had life under control, and therefore did not need to repent.

Even though we know and would wholeheartedly agree that we are all sinners by birth, we feel good about ourselves after confessing and staying clear of misdeeds for a while. And the Scribes, Pharisees, and teachers of the law likewise wondered what the call to repentance was about. Yet, you and I know that they, too, needed to repent. It all comes down to the question, “What does repentance mean?” That is the intent of this writing.

Like new wine aging to perfection produces gas, the new covenant took some understanding of the fact that thinking had to change for those who

desired to become a part of it. New wine would burst old wineskins, and new thinking will burst old ways of thinking. The new covenant will stretch your mind and cannot fit into the old way, which is the system of laws and punishment for disobedience.

Have We Forgotten How to Repent?

When Israel was liberated from Egypt, they went from slavery to being a free nation all in one day. The adjustment is well documented in the Old Testament.

For a moment I shall digress. When I was young, I often had the privilege of seeing a field newly plowed. I would marvel at how clean it looked when it was just finished. What had been growing yesterday was now clean and ready to receive new seed. What was turned under was not only weeds, but grass that might have produced hay if allowed to grow. Not only are weeds turned down, but also valuable plants.

Not only is sin turned down when we

repent, but the old thinking that stood in the way. Some of that thinking was not evil in itself; it just stood in the way. And that is why Scribes and Pharisees could not repent. Repentance was for evil people.

Likewise we, too, have difficulty adjusting to being set free under Christ. The question immediately pops up, “What drives people to obey if the law is not compelling and threatening punishment?” It seems dangerous.

When a slave is set free, he has to learn to live free. No one tells you what you have to do. Sleep late? After all if you can’t sleep till 9, are you free? It may not be a good idea, but others will certainly notice. And we do notice when other believers do things that are unwise. What then moves us to serve Jesus? The answer has to be love.

When I first knew beyond a doubt that I was born again, I also knew that God loved me absolutely and truly. Now my degree of serving matches my degree of loving him, also. You can determine how much you love God by how you serve. Jesus teaches that if I don’t love my brother and even think that I love God, then I am a liar and only fool myself. Repentance teaches me not only to reject sin, but also to live in freedom. That is hard when you love the perks of slavery (See Numbers 11:5).

END

A Puzzling Situation Answers (Continued from page 4)

Can You Find Sixteen Books Of The Bible?

I once made a re **MARK** about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a f **LUKE** . It kept people loo **KINGS** o hard for f **ACTS** and others it was a **REVELATION** . Some were in a **JAM, ES** pecially since they were not capatilzed. But the t **RUTH** finally struck home for **NUMBERS** of readers. To others it was a real **JOB** . We want it to be **A MOS** t fascinating few moments for you. Y **ES THER** e will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require **JUDGES** to help them. I will quickly adm **T IT US** ually takes a minister to find one of them and there will be a **LAMENTATIONS** when it is found. A little lady says s **HE BREWS** a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can com **PETE. R** elax now for there really are sixteen names of the books of the Bible in this story.



As the world continues to turn its back on God, we want to take a look at what the future holds according to the One who is the Beginning and the End—God! We hope you enjoy and benefit from this series, courtesy of Middletown Bible Church. Follow along, fill in the blanks, and look up! May we all be ready for the return of Jesus Christ!

You will need a Bible for this lesson.

The Devil’s Man

In previous chapters we have studied about Satan and we have studied about the time of great trouble called the Tribulation. In this chapter we want to learn about the man whom Satan will use in the Tribulation period.

When the Lord Jesus came to earth the first time, what man did the devil use in a special way (John 13:2)? _____

Did Judas do what the devil wanted him to do? _____

In this lesson we will learn about another man who will do Satan’s will.

The Devil’s Offer

In Matthew chapter 4, Jesus Christ was tempted by the devil. We learn in verse 8 that the devil took Jesus up into a very high _____ and showed Him all the *kingdoms of the world*.

The devil then made an offer. He tried to make a deal with Jesus. What did the devil promise to give to Jesus (Matthew 4: 8-9)? _____

The devil did not promise to give Jesus just some of the *kingdoms of the world*. He did not say, "I’ll give You the kingdoms of Russia and England and India and China, but that’s all." No, Satan promised Him *all the kingdoms!* But according to the devil’s deal, what would Jesus have to do if He were to get these kingdoms (Matthew 4:9)? _____

Was Jesus willing to do this (Matthew 4:10)? _____ Was Jesus willing to be a devil-worshiper? _____

According to Jesus, who is the only Person whom we should worship and serve (Matthew 4:10)? _____

Jesus said "NO" to Satan’s offer, but sometime in the future the devil will turn to another man and make the same offer, and this man will say "YES." Jesus rejected and refused the devil’s offer, but there will come another man who will accept it. The devil will say, "If you worship me I will give you all the *kingdoms of the world*." A man will come along who will accept this offer. The devil will find his man!

What is His Name?

What will this man’s name be? We do not know what his real name will be, but we do know what the Bible calls him. The Bible calls him by three different names (among others), and each name tells us something about this evil man:

1) The Beast

In the book of Revelation, this man is called THE BEAST (see Rev. 13:1, 2,4; 16:13; 19:19-20; 20:10). God sees this man as a BEAST! God sees him as a wild animal. When we think of a wild and ferocious animal, do we usually think of a gentle lamb or a graceful deer? No, we usually think of a dangerous animal such as a lion, tiger, leopard, or bear. We think of an animal that has the power to kill and destroy. During the time of great trouble, Satan’s man will be very dangerous and he will have power to kill and destroy (Rev. 13:7, 10).

2) The Man of Sin

In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, this man is called "THE MAN OF _____." We need to remember that sin began with the devil: "for the devil _____ from the _____"

**Continued
Next Page**

beginning" (1 John 3:8). The devil was the very first creature that sinned against God. Instead of loving God and serving God, Lucifer wanted to take the place of God. He even said in his heart, "I WILL BE _____ THE MOST HIGH" (Isaiah 14:12-14).

The man of sin will copy Satan's sin. He will also try to take the place of God. Instead of worshiping God, he will demand that people worship him (Rev. 13:12, 15). Instead of serving God, he will try to force everyone to serve him. He will even present himself as GOD (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

This man's life will be the opposite of righteousness. If you want to know what righteousness really is, then study the life of Jesus Christ the Righteous One (1 John 2:1). If you want to know what sin really is, then study the life of this man (THE BEAST) who is called the wicked one (2 Thessalonians 2:8). If sin could become a person, this man would be what sin would look like!

Note: The word "wicked (one)" mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 actually means "the lawless one." The Antichrist will not only be the man of sin, but the man of lawlessness. He will have no regard for the law of God. He will be a rebel against all that represents God and His standards. His greatest act of lawlessness will be when he presents himself as God (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

3) The Antichrist

John tells us in 1 John 2:18 that "ANTICHRIST shall C _____." John was saying something like this; "This man is not here yet, but he is coming!" The ANTICHRIST will come! The devil's man shall come! In fact, it is very possible that he is alive today!

The word "ANTICHRIST" can mean two things, and both of these are true about this man:

1) The word "ANTICHRIST" can mean "AGAINST CHRIST." We know that this man will be against Christ and against the people who believe in Christ. He will be God's enemy! He will be a foe, not a friend. He will OPPOSE God (2 Thess. 2:11) and he will fight against everything that stands for God. He also has a BIG MOUTH that will speak against God (see Daniel 7:8; Rev. 13:5). The Bible says that he "shall speak marvellous things _____ the God of gods" (Dan.11:36).

2) The word "ANTICHRIST" can also mean "To take the place of Christ." Jesus Christ is the One who should be loved and worshiped and adored, but this wicked man will try to get himself loved and worshiped and adored (2 Thess. 2:4). Instead of exalting Jesus Christ, whom will he exalt (Daniel 11:36)? _____

Instead of getting people to worship Jesus Christ, whom will he get people to worship (Rev. 13:15) _____

And if people refuse to worship him, what will happen to them (Revelation 13:15)? _____

How Powerful Will This Man Be?

How long will this evil man be in power (Rev. 13:5)? _____ MONTHS (or 3½ years).

We learned in Chapter 7 that this 3½ year period is called the Great Tribulation (the time of great trouble). At the beginning of this period, Satan will be cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:7-12) and he only has 3½ short years to cause trouble (Rev. 12:12).

Where does the BEAST get his power (Rev. 13:2, 4)? _____

Who is the DRAGON (Rev. 12:7)? _____

It is during these last 3½ years that the devil gives this man absolute power over all the kingdoms of the world. Satan is the one working behind this man (2 Thess. 2:9). People will not only worship the BEAST, but they will also worship the one who gives the BEAST his power (Rev. 13:5)!

Will anyone be able to make war with this man (Rev. 13:4)? _____

Will he have power over all peoples and nations throughout the world (Rev. 13:7)? _____

This man will be the RULER over the whole world! He will be the WORLD DICTATOR. He will be the earth's king. He will be the most powerful and the most evil ruler the world has ever known.

The False Prophet

There will be another evil man living during the Tribulation who will help the man of sin. This man is called the FALSE PROPHET and he is described in Revelation 13:11-16. He is also called a "BEAST" (Revelation 13:11).

Revelation 13:1-10 talks about the FIRST BEAST who is the MAN OF SIN or the ANTICHRIST. He is the world ruler.

Revelation 13:11-16 talks about ANOTHER BEAST who is the FALSE PROPHET. His job is to get people to worship the FIRST BEAST. The FALSE PROPHET will cause those who dwell on the earth "to _____ the first beast" (Rev. 13:12). This man will do great miracles which will really fool people.

What is one miracle that he will do (Rev. 13:13)? _____

**Continued
Next Page**

Where do you think he will get his power to do these amazing miracles (Rev. 13:12; 2 Thess. 2:9)? _____

Two Amazing Miracles That Will Fool the World

MIRACLE NUMBER 1—The BEAST (man of sin) will be mortally wounded. "Mortally" means that he has the kind of wound that results in death. How did he get this wound (Rev. 13:14)? _____

What happened to his deadly wound (Rev. 13:3)? _____

Even though he died from this sword wound, the Bible says that he "did L _____" (Rev. 13:14).

Was all the world amazed at this miracle (Rev. 13:3)? _____ (How does this miracle imitate the resurrection of Christ?)

MIRACLE NUMBER 2—The FALSE PROPHET tells those living on the earth to make an image or statue of the BEAST (the man of sin). We read about this in Revelation 13:14-15.

What was this FALSE PROPHET able to do to this image or statue (Rev. 13:15)? _____

By the power of Satan he will make a lifeless statue come alive and even speak!

The Evil Trinity of Satan

God is a TRINITY. He is ONE GOD, but He makes Himself known in three PERSONS (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). The devil tries to COUNTERFEIT and COPY God. He, too, has a TRINITY (three evil persons who all work together as one):



THE TRUE TRINITY:

- 1) God the Father: "the God of gods" (Daniel 11:36).
- 2) God the Son: THE LORD JESUS CHRIST (God's perfect Man)
- 3) God the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's job is to draw attention to Christ and get people to worship Him.

THE DEVIL'S TRINITY:

- 1) Satan the Devil: "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- 2) The BEAST THE ANTICHRIST (The devil's man)
- 3) The False Prophet

The False Prophet's job is to draw attention to the Antichrist (BEAST) and get people to worship him. Can you find all three members or the devil's trinity in Revelation 16:13?

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

The First Two People In Hell

It does not pay to follow Satan and fight against God and God's people. God never loses. Those who fight against God always lose.

At the end of the 3½ years of the Great Tribulation, Jesus Christ will return to the earth. When Jesus comes, what will He do to this wicked person (the BEAST)? _____

We learn in 2 Thessalonians 2:8 that Jesus will D_____ him with the brightness of His coming. This same event is described in Revelation 19:20.

What will happen to the BEAST and the FALSE PROPHET? _____ . They will be the first two people to be thrown into the lake of fire.

Who will join them 1,000 years later (Rev. 20:10)? _____

_____ . It is in the lake of fire that the devil's trinity will suffer and be punished forever and ever! All three of them!

The Mark of the Beast

The False Prophet will also cause people to receive the mark of the Beast (see Rev. 13:16). Where are the two places that this mark may be put (Rev. 13:16)?

- A. _____
- B. _____

A person must have this mark in order to do what important activity (Rev. 13:17)? _____

**Continued
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Today, many people use credit cards to buy or sell. The credit card has numbers on it and it can be handed to the clerk at the store. People living in the Tribulation will have credit "cards" also, but these credit "cards" will not be on cards. They will be on people's right hands or foreheads. If they do not have the right mark, then they will not be able to buy or sell. How well would your family do if you could not go to the grocery store, the drug store, the gasoline station, or any other kind of store? You would not be able to get the things that you need for daily living.

Note: The mark of the beast will probably involve some kind of computer chip or RFID tag [radio frequency identification] attached to the right hand or forehead that will be able to be scanned at stores, etc. Even today such technology exists and can be implanted under the skin. It is quite amazing and a tribute to the divine inspiration of the Bible, that the book of Revelation mentions such a technology that was unknown to the world until the last part of the 20th century. It was not unknown to God, who knows the end from the beginning!

What will a person be saying when he takes the mark of the BEAST? Taking the mark means that he has actually made this decision:

"I have decided to worship the beast (Rev. 14:9). I am rejecting Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and I am choosing to worship the devil and his man (Rev. 13:4). I do not want to be part of God's kingdom, but I want to be part of the devil's wicked system. My name will not be found in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 13:8), and I will perish in hell forever (Rev. 14:9-11). I am choosing Satan and I am rejecting God!"

Taking the mark of the beast in that day will actually be a deliberate choice to go to hell (Rev. 14:9-11).

The Great Decision

Those living in the time of great trouble will have a great decision to make. Will they take the mark or not? Will they worship the BEAST or not? Will they follow Christ or will they follow the Antichrist? Whom will it be, GOD or the DEVIL? Let's think about this important decision and what people will gain and lose:

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. (Revelation 15:2-3)

The Person Who Takes the Mark of the Beast:

What will he gain? Will he be able to buy and sell (Rev. 13:17)? _____ Will the Beast persecute him and try to kill him (Rev. 20:4)? _____ For 3½ years, the person who takes the mark will be protected by the Beast and by his government.

What will he lose? Will he be in the book of life (Rev.13:8)? _____ Will he be punished forever and ever in fire (Rev. 14:9-11)? _____

The Person Who Refuses to Take the Mark of the Beast:

What will he lose? Will he be able to buy and sell (Rev. 13:17)? _____ Will the Beast be after him (Rev. 13:7)? _____ Could he lose his life (Rev. 13:5)? _____ Could he lose his head (Rev. 20:4)? _____

What will he gain? If he dies in the Tribulation, is he cursed or blessed (Rev. 14:13)? _____ Will he enjoy the kingdom of God (Rev. 20:4)? _____ He may suffer for 3½ years, but he will enjoy the blessing of God forever (see Revelation 7:14-17).

It will not be easy to be a believer in the time of great trouble. It will be very easy to take the mark. God wants us to do what is right, even if it is not an easy thing to do. If we choose to do right, God will help us to do even those things that are very difficult.

Think about yourself and the decision you need to make. Are you going to reject Christ or receive Christ? Are you going to be part of the devil's system or are you going to be part of Christ's kingdom (Colossians 1:13)? Whom will you choose—God or the devil? If you choose to reject Christ, what will you gain? What will you lose? If you choose to receive Christ, what will you lose? What will you gain? Is it easy being a Christian today? Why? Why not? Have you decided to follow Jesus? Why? Why not?

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November 2016

Freedom From Bondage I, II—30 minutes (by Charles Stanley): Is there something preventing you from becoming everything that God created you to be? Listen to this sermon and find out.

God's Blueprint for a Healthy Marriage I, II, III—30 minutes (by Focus on the Family): Dr. Timothy Keller and his wife, Kathy, describe their personal marriage journey and how a biblically-rooted understanding of God's design for marriage transcends that of both ancient and modern cultures.

How to Deal with Difficult People (by Leadership Coach): We all know people difficult to deal with. On this episode of Leadership Coach INC, you are presented to "Invitations," or ways, to think about dealing with a difficult person in your life.

December 2016

Where Will You Spend Eternity, I, II—30 minutes (by Charles Stanley): Every human on the face of the earth will someday come face to face with eternity. The time to prepare for that moment is now. Are you ready?

The Grace of God I, II—30 minutes (by Chuck Swindoll): Some Bible words have been handled and mishandled for so long they've become shopworn and

of very little interest to anyone. Not so with the word *grace*; it still retains its luster and mystery. Perhaps this is because grace, unlike so many other biblical ideas, is never earned or rewarded. Grace is only given as a free gift, a gift given to all who are undeserving and disabled — and that includes all of us.

Healing the Father Wound, Parts I and II—30 minutes (by Focus on the Family): Ed Tandy McGlasson offers advice on finding healing from the emotional and psychological wounds you may have suffered as a child from your father.

January 2017

Why God Chose You I, II, III—30 minutes (by Greg Laurie): (I) It seems some believers have a lack of spiritual power in their lives. As a result, they become stagnate and suffer. Greg Laurie points out that the Lord makes unlimited power and resources available to His children. We just need to access them. (II) God chose you before you chose before the world began — He chose you before you chose Him. (III) Because of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, we are not only forgiven, and justified, but accepted.

The Key to Victory—30 minutes (by Charles Stanley): You've probably been there: temptation, defeat, repentance, repeat. This cycle doesn't have to define your Christian life. God has provided a

better way. You don't have to keep giving in. Learn how to win for good when temptation comes knocking.

Adding Some Spice to Your Marriage—30 minutes (by Focus on the Family): Pastor and author Ted Cunningham combines humor with practical advice for enjoying more connection and intimacy in your marriage.

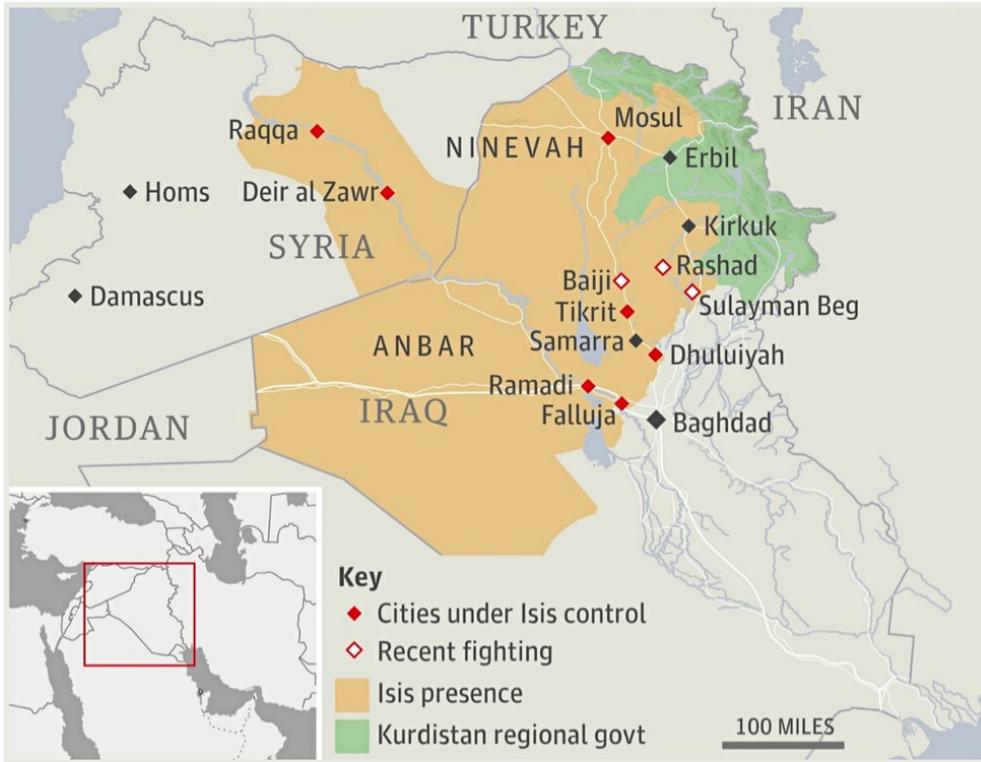
February 2017

Parenting Your Teenager When Times are Tough—30 minutes (by Focus on the Family): Dr. Greg Smalley offers encouragement to parents who are struggling with the challenges of raising teens.

How the Truth Can Set You Free—25 Minutes (Charles Stanley): (I) If we focus on our position, person, and possessions in Christ, we'll be set free to fulfil God's plan for our lives. (II) For many of us, the biggest battle we'll ever face is between what we have been taught and the truth of God's Word. (III) Once we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior, we become His workmanship.

Dealing with Discouragement—30 Minutes (by Adrian Rogers): Any work for God is going to be met with opposition from the devil. When God's people have a mind to work the devil has a mind to wreck, and discouragement is his most valuable tool. But you can be armed against it and defeat him.

IRAQ – DID YOU KNOW?



know which nation is second? It is Iraq! However, that is not the name that is used in the Bible. The names used in the Bible are Babylon, the land of Shinar, and Mesopotamia. The name Iraq means *country with deep roots*. Indeed, Iraq is a country with deep roots and is a very significant country in the Bible.

Here's why:

1. Adam & Eve were created in Iraq—Genesis 2:7-8
2. Satan made his first recorded appearance in Iraq—Genesis 3:1-6
3. The Tower of Babel was built in Iraq—Genesis 10:8-10 & 11:1-4
4. The confusion of the languages took place in Iraq—Genesis 11:5-11
5. Abraham came from a city in Iraq—Genesis 11:31 & Acts 7:2-4
6. Jacob spent 20 years in Iraq—Genesis 27:42-45 & 31:38
7. The first world empire was in Iraq—Daniel 1:1-2 & 2:36-38
8. The greatest revival in history was in a city in Iraq—Jonah 3
9. The events of the book of Esther took place in Iraq—Esther
10. The book of Revelation has prophecies against Babylon (the old name for Iraq—Revelation 17 & 18)
11. No other nation, except Israel, has more history and prophecy associated with it than Iraq.

END

1. The Garden of Eden was in Iraq.
2. Noah built the ark in Iraq.
3. The Tower of Babel was in Iraq.
4. Abraham was from Ur, which is in Southern Iraq.
5. Isaac's wife, Rebekah, is from Nahor, which is in Iraq.
6. Jacob met Rachel in Iraq.
7. Jonah preached in Nineveh - which is in Iraq.
8. Assyria, which is in Iraq, conquered the ten tribes of Israel.
9. Babylon, which is in Iraq, destroyed Jerusalem.
10. Daniel was in the lion's den in Iraq!

11. The three Hebrew children were thrown into the fiery furnace in Iraq (that's good news to know that JESUS has been in Iraq, too, as the 4th person in the fiery furnace!)
12. Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, saw the "writing on the wall" in Iraq.
13. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, carried the Jews captive into Iraq.
14. The wise men were from Iraq.

The "Empire of Man" described in Revelation is called Babylon, which was a city in Iraq!

Israel is the nation most often mentioned in the Bible; but do you

Physical and Emotional Wounds

—By Joe Keim

Emotional wounds are just as painful as physical wounds. Both wounds require time to heal. Neither one can be hidden or ignored. If I'm dealing with a physical wound on my hand, I fear that people will try to shake my hurting hand; so I pull back, stay away from crowds, and hide in the shadows. If I'm dealing with an emotional wound in my heart, I fear that someone will

come too close, rub against my immense pain, and hurt me all over again. For that reason, I'll build a wall around my heart-wound and live in a prison cell without bars. I feed my wounds through all kinds of addictions, and I protect those same wounds by easily losing my temper and staying in control of everyone's life around me. —Joe Keim

made on a hard heart. A hardened heart is one in which the conscience is dull and insensitive. A hardened heart will scarcely be moved by circumstances or the warnings of other people. And of course, a hard heart will not sense that still small voice in the inner man.

We must be moved by the voice of God speaking to us in our heart. It must cause us to change our course of action. To believe is not enough, even *the devils believe and tremble*. Our beliefs must affect our actions or it is not real belief, and we have been deceived. **Harden not your hearts.**

So, the idea here is that the heart is hardened by the refusal to listen to and obey the voice of God. I will give you a good illustration.

My husband has to get up every morning at 5:00 AM, and I don't have to get up until later. His alarm clock is set to go off at 5:00 AM, but I hardly ever hear it. The loud buzzing does not wake me up any longer, and most mornings I sleep right through it. The repeated action of ignoring the alarm clock has caused me to be unable to hear it. That is how a hard heart is created: the repeated choice of refusing to heed.

It seems to me there are three kinds of hardness of heart that we have to deal with and be on guard for. First, there is a natural hardness of heart that we are all born with. It is from the old nature of Adam and does not necessarily come by our choices, but by the sin of Adam. Because of Adam's sin nature, *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God* and *ye must be born again*. Being born again of the nature of God is the remedy for this one.

Second, there is a hardness that can come because of offense (someone hurts you), especially to Christians, and I want to address this one very briefly.

A. We must not become bitter or unforgiving when we are wronged. If

it is another Christian who sins against us, we must confront him according to Scripture in Matt. 18 and hold him accountable.

B. If we are wronged by way of persecution, we are to rejoice that we were counted worthy to suffer for His Name's sake, and we are to pray for those who persecute us.

The third kind of hardness of heart is the one referred to in Hebrews 3:12 when the author writes to the Hebrew Christians, ***Beware lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.*** This is the one I would like to address at length. A "departure" from someone or something comes in taking small steps or in making small choices, if you will. A departure from the living God would look something like the following steps I have outlined.

Step 1. Consenting to, in the mind, or agreeing with sin. (Verse 13 tells us that sin is deceitful, so this first step, or the very foundation of this "departure," is to join ourselves with a liar).

Step 2. Doing or committing the sin. The more times this step is taken, the harder the heart becomes.

Step 3. No longer seeing the wrong of your sin and past the boundaries of believing what God has to say about it.

Step 4. Openly defiant to the truth as given to us by God, in both your speech and your actions.

Step 5. At some point, you become no longer reachable by God or man, grieving the Spirit so that He leaves, with the end result being a seared conscience and a reprobate mind.

Praise God! Those who have known the Father and have "departed" because of sin can reverse their direction and come back to Him. This reversal is called repentance, and God the Father will be waiting with open arms to forgive and cleanse them. They can and will be restored as if they had never departed from Him. The mercy of God is extended

to us, and we can come to Him boldly and without shame when we need His help to overcome and forsake sin.

For those who have not yet known the Father, the same is true. ***He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*** Come before the Lord and pour out your heart to Him, surrender your whole life to Him, and purpose to obey Him no matter the cost. Confess and forsake your sin and receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior and follow Him. Today is the day of salvation, and the Lord Jesus is calling out to you.

So, let us ***exhort one another daily***. It is our duty to exhort each other in this way, ***and so much the more as we see the day approaching***. To exhort means to speak to, to address, to admonish and warn. No doubt, many people have been severely wounded by the so-called "exhortation" of others, and much evil and damage has been done to the Body of Christ. This will, unfortunately, likely continue to happen, but is that a sufficient reason to disobey this command to exhort one another? I don't believe it is. Does this mean we should look for the faults in others so that we can be the best "exhorter" in the church? Of course not! Love does not look for faults; love is not easily provoked and thinks no evil. We need to grow up and learn to walk in the Spirit. The reason the Holy Spirit will lead a person to exhort another is for the glory of God and for His Kingdom, not to tear someone else down or to exalt yourself.

Now, let's look at the ***deceitfulness of sin***. Sin is from the devil. He is the father of lies, so sin is a liar. The person who commits sin is always under a delusion. Sin promises much but gives little. It will give pleasure for a season, but that season is very short. It appears to be fun, but is actually filthy. It presents itself as pleasant, but is very destructive. It assures us of pleasure and fulfillment that it will

Continued
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never deliver. It will take us way beyond where we ever thought we would go, once we submit to it. If we could see the end of a journey with sin before we started that journey, we would flee in abhorrence. This is why we must trust God and believe what He says about the matter, because He can see the end of such a journey when we cannot.

The devil has had thousands of years to perfect his traps, and I see how he goes after young people in the body of Christ when they are in a vulnerable time in their life. While they are children, they obey the voice of God that comes through their Christian parents. When they reach the age of accountability to God and they have to start making their own choices in life, the enemy is ready and waiting. Because their faith must be a work in their own heart and not a hand-me-down from a church or from their parents, they will start to question some of the things they have been taught. I believe this questioning is normal and a part of growing up into maturity. During this

time of questioning, the devil is willing to provide answers for them. If they humble themselves and pray and seek God's face for answers to their questions, they will come through this time safely. If they become prideful and pay no attention to the written guidelines God has for them in the Scriptures and the voice of the Lord speaking in their hearts, they will eventually find themselves in a place they never thought they would be.

What young person, now vigorous and healthy with a good prospect of a happy and fulfilling life, would ever take that first dose of drugs to fit in with friends, if they could see themselves a few years in the future when their health is gone, teeth missing, no money and alone in life? Sin will say, "You can stop at any time!" but sin is deceitful.

What young person, now strong and happy with a bright future, would ever take that first drink of alcohol at a worldly party that caters to their fleshly lusts, if they could see years into the future when their liver is destroyed and

they've lost their home and family because of drunkenness? Sin will say, "That won't happen to you!" but sin is deceitful.

What young lady, with a beautiful body and the hope of a loving marriage would ever wear clothes and behave in ways that excite the flesh and draw the attention of lustful men to attempt to fill her need for one true love, if she could see years into the future when her body and emotions are broken, having been used by many with no love from any? Sin will say, "You're in charge and you can handle it!" but sin is deceitful.

The list of traps is endless, and they are not just for young people, by any means. But, praise God! He always makes a way of escape for us and it will always be through hearing and obeying His voice today! Our relationship with the Lord must be the kind of relationship that Jesus had with God the Father. Jesus is our example and He lived his life by hearing from the Father and obeying His voice daily. —G. Yoder

END

The Power of the Invisible

John 3:8, *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

Things are not unreal just because they are unseen. The wind cannot be seen, but it is real. We see the trees bend before it and sails filled with it, and we hear its sound, but the wind itself is invisible.

The Holy Spirit cannot be seen, but we see the effect of His indwelling in the hearts of men—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Surely it takes something real and powerful to produce these effects in a human life.

The manager of a granite quarry said, "We can lift an acre of solid granite ten feet thick to any desired height by using compressed air." If invisible air can accomplish such a feat, and we know it can, why should we think it incredible that the Holy Spirit has power to do all things?

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Do Not Harden Your Heart

—By G. Yoder

Paul starts Hebrews 3:7 by writing, **Wherefore as the Holy Spirit says...** and then quotes Psalm 95:7-11. By quoting Old Testament scriptures to these New Testament Christians, Paul is making it quite clear that the Holy Spirit still speaks to us today from the Old Testament. In fact, in I Cor. 10:1-11 he tells us the things that happened to the children of Israel while they journeyed in the wilderness were **written for our admonition** so we could be warned and learn from the mistakes they made. The danger of hardening our hearts is as great today as it was for the children of Israel in the desert. We need to heed the solemn warnings of the Old Testament against sin and hardening of our hearts, as well as those in the New Testament. All were given to



us by the Holy Spirit, and these warnings are as applicable to us today as they were to Israel at that time.

Paul then continues with **Today if you will hear His voice.** A willingness to hear is crucial as well as a willingness to hear today. A lazy man will put off work until tomorrow, and a foolish man will put off forsaking his sin until tomorrow, but tomorrow never comes for them. A person who is willing change today will soon be changed. A person who is to learn today will have knowledge. A person living in sin is unable to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. The evidence of a hardened heart. we need to ask God for a willing and obedient heart and mind. We need to pray as David did, **Search me, O**

God, and know my heart. . . see if there be any wicked way in me (Psalm 139).

Jesus said, **My sheep hear my voice.** There are many ways to **hear His voice.** As Christians we need to become well acquainted with the voice of the Shepherd, but a hard heart will keep us from hearing and recognizing His voice. The voice of the Father will speak to our heart. Some of the ways God may speak to us are:

1. Through the Scriptures
2. By preaching or teaching of truth
3. Through our conscience
4. Through circumstances and events
5. Through the admonitions and counsel of other Christians
6. By the leading of the Spirit or a "knowing" in the inner man
7. Through dreams and visions
8. By an audible voice

A hardened heart will have no interest in the Scriptures. When it hears truth preached, there is very little impression

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