



MAP ♦ P.O. Box 128 ♦ 575 US Highway 250 ♦ Savannah, OH 44874 ♦ (419) 962-1515 ♦ November 2017

LIVING IN THE STRONGHOLD OF DECEPTION

Hearing the Voice of the Lord in Suffering

Part 4
of 8

We do not like the word “suffering.” There are some who do not believe that a Christian should suffer in any form. They say: if we suffer, we do not have enough faith — that it is not God’s fault, it’s our fault. This is not true teaching. Let’s see what the Bible says about this.

Let’s start with Romans 8:16-18:

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

When we suffer with Jesus, our sin nature, or our carnal ways, are being put to death, that we may be raised with Him, that His glory will be revealed in us. This is death and resurrection. This can only come by the cross of Jesus Christ and what He accomplished for us. This is true faith. It is in this that we receive the mind of Christ. Yes, we must submit to this process. It is our choice. It

is always free will. It must be a personal choice.

Through suffering we hear from God, if we are Christians. The more we allow our flesh or sin nature to be ripped from us, the more we will hear from God by the Holy Spirit and come into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Our sin nature wants this liberty without the flesh being put to death. This is the very reason for suffering with Christ. This is the work of the cross. Without this process there can be no resurrection and no holy liberty. This is why the sons of Aaron died when they offered strange fire before the Lord in the wilderness of Sinai (Numbers 3:4). We can ask ourselves, “Are we offering strange fire today?” Yes, we are, if we are not allowing this holy work of sanctification to be done in us, through the cross by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is God’s order. God is holy. This is true suffering, or holy suffering. The Bible says few will find this life or this liberty.

Somebody might say we don’t have to suffer because Jesus suffered for us. This is true, but is not the whole counsel of

God. If we don’t suffer with Him, we will stay in our sin nature or carnality. We will never come into Christ and learn of Him. We will never come into sonship or become a disciple of Jesus Christ. We will stay blind, and we will never hear from God.

Some churches teach that if we keep certain rules, we are suffering. They are trying to create their own cross so that, someday, they can be righteous enough to go to heaven. The Pharisees liked rules, too. The problem is not the rules. Rules can be good and helpful. The problem is when I trust in those rules to make me righteous before God. The Pharisees thought God was pleased with them simply because they kept their own rules and were religious on the outside. This is offering up strange fire before the Lord. This is our sin nature trying to come into the liberty of the children of God. God wants us to be clean on the inside—to be born again and have a new heart and a new nature that only He can give. As Jesus taught, we can have a clean outside and a filthy inside, but if God changes us on the inside, our outside will please Him, too.

Trusting in religion will keep me from growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. I must trust in Him and submit to Him. He came to set me free from the law. Jesus is the head of the church. What is wrong with just preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified? The power of the Holy Spirit brings the life of Christ into the people that will cause them to go into true death, be raised with Christ, be called the children of God. Yes, I will have law and good works, but it will be because of Christ within me. This is the law of the Spirit, which leads me.

Keeping religious rules makes my sin nature feel good. It is called eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. People might look at me and think that I am holy because I appear religious, go to church, give money to the needy and try to do good things. This alone, though, is self-righteousness. This brings no life of Christ in me.

First Timothy 4:1: *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.* These spirits always produce self-righteousness. This is a terrible, terrible sin. This is the sin of all sins. Without suffering with Christ, which is the work of the cross and the power of the Holy Spirit, I will stay in this sin. It is called pride.

By trusting in my own rules, I am not fully trusting in Jesus. Jesus came to die for me because I could not keep the law. How, then do I think I'll go to heaven by keeping manmade rules? What can happen so easily is, I begin to question if

I really need the Holy Spirit's guidance. This makes me feel good, just as Eve felt when she ate of the wrong fruit and gave some to her husband.

How many churches in the world are in this very condition today? We are controlled by our flesh and not by the Holy Spirit. We are not in the faith. God have mercy on us. We are not hearing from God, because there is no cross in our life. Did not the Israelites start making their own gods because they did not know what became of Moses, who had the word of God? I do the same thing when I reject the cross. Jesus is not part of the way to heaven; He is the way to heaven. He is the only way. Without the operation of the cross, I don't hear from God. Instead I go into self-righteousness and produce many false gods. This is called idolatry.

John 16:13-14: *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

Who are the *you*? Back then, they were His disciples. Today, it is us, the church, the children of God.

The Holy Spirit still guides, teaches, and speaks to the church today. But if I trust in my own guidelines, how will I hear when the Holy Spirit speaks? If I am not be able to hear the Teacher, who is the Holy Spirit; true faith cannot come, for *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God* (Romans 10:17).

First Peter 4:1-2: *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*

My flesh or sin nature does not choose the will of God, but my heart is crying out to God. God hears the cry of my heart. Ah, but the flesh, the law of sin and death, is in the way. I will never come into the will of God or the ways of God on my own. The flesh must be dealt with by the operation of the cross of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, I arm myself with the mind of the Holy Spirit. God's workmanship begins, and my flesh, that does not choose God, is put to death. This is called suffering or ceasing from sin. God knows how to do this. Praise Him!

Galatians 5:16-18: *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*

It is my choice: to be led by the Holy Spirit or to be led by religion and works. Christ has suffered for me in the flesh and has given to me this great salvation. I also must arm myself to suffer in the flesh and walk in the victory and in the power of what Christ has provided for me.

There are those who are suffering, but never come into the victory, refusing to

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Since our beginning in 2000, many people have written to us, asking to be added to our mailing list, while others have sent us names of their friends and family members. We think it's important for us to tell you that the cost of *The Amish Voice* is \$.50 a copy and is totally funded by readers from across our great country who appreciate the ministry and care to support it. If the Lord would lay it on your heart to come along side of us by helping with expenses, it would be a great benefit as well as highly appreciated. In order to continue receiving the Amish Voice, please keep us informed of any changes to your address. Thank you. —Editor, Joe Keim

be trained according to God's ordained order. This order is the working of the cross by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, they never receive the mind of

Christ or understand what the will of God is. Many times we receive wrong teaching at this stage of our Christian walk. May God give us understanding

and wisdom. The laborers are few. Matthew 7:7: *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.* —D. Wickey

Five Hundred Years Ago: October 31, 1517

—By Paul Miller



October 31, 1517. What is so special about this date? Why should we care about the Protestant Reformation? How sad it is that so many Christians can talk about politics, sports, music, romance fiction books, work, and so much more,

yet do not know much about Martin Luther, John Knox, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, and others whom God has used to bring a group of people or even an entire nation back to His Word.

Martin Luther did not intend to start a big movement that affects us still today. If we do not know our history, we will not know its importance to us. Why did Martin Luther write ninety-five theses? For whom were they intended? Why does it even matter? Why did the Pope condemn Luther? Is the Roman Catholic Church the same today? Why should we examine our own beliefs, our own church, and ourselves in the light of the Holy Scriptures?

If we claim to love God and His Word yet have not spent time reading His Word, we might need to change. If we rely on devotional books or church services yet do not know the Scriptures, we might need to change. If we are comfortable criticizing the world yet get offended and irritated when we

are forced to look at ourselves, we might need to change. If we have no problem playing for an hour but cannot pray for an hour, it might be time to examine ourselves.

If you avoid any confrontation or disagreement, then it might be time to learn from the boldness of Martin Luther; and it is likely that you would have not liked the confrontations that Jesus had with the religious people of His day. If you are comfortable as a lukewarm Christian, you might not like to learn about the Protestant Reformation.

If you want more, though, if you are ready to put aside the things of the world and set your heart on the things of above, then you can learn much from the sacrifice and efforts of those who returned to the Word of God and proclaimed God's Word.

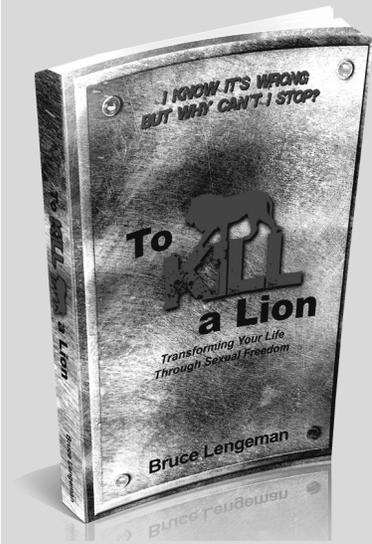
The Reformers expected the people to be holy, and they set the example themselves. They studied God's Word and expected others to do the same. They were certainly not perfect, but neither are we. They said and did some things that we might not like, but they emerged from a thousand years of Bibleless tradition and religious ceremonies.

Let us set our hearts on God and His Word and desire His fullness at any cost. There is much to learn about the Reformation and the need of God's Spirit to move mightily again in our hearts and in our communities. —Paul Miller

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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 \$17 (includes S&H).



Amish Voice Conference Calls

UPCOMING DISCUSSIONS

- ◆ **December 03:** Jonas Yoder leads us in a discussion about Christmas. Should we celebrate it? Why or why not? How?
- ◆ **January 07:** Charles and Diane Breznau, Healing of the Heart Ministries
 - * 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.**

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS

(RECORDED)

- ◆ **October:** Bruce Lengeman, author of *To Kill a Lion*, discusses personal identity
- ◆ **November:** Paul Helmuth shares his testimony

*If you missed any of our **previous conference call discussions**, dial **(641) 715-3800**, enter code **89752**, and listen to the recordings. Simply talk into the phone when the recording is over and leave us a message. Tell us what you thought or what you would like to hear.*

Bitterness and How to Overcome It

—By Pastor Duke



Jesus told us that offenses would come (Luke 17:1). There is no way to avoid them. So the question is how we deal with them and not allow bitterness to set in. Bitterness is a very destructive force, and the Bible warns us to stay away from those bitter feelings. So I felt that it might be a good idea to share with you what I have learned about bitterness and how to avoid it.

I have had many experiences in my life where I could have allowed a root of bitterness to take hold in my heart. In fact, at times I had to really struggle with bitterness that was trying to creep into my life. Because of what people have said or done to me, I have had many opportunities to get bitter and allow that bitterness to jade my relationship with others, and more importantly, with God. So here are a few things I have learned about this destructive force called bitterness.

What is Bitterness?

Bitterness is defined as: unpleasant, angry, hostile, sour, and resentful. When we are offended and refuse to forgive and receive God's comfort, it is just a matter of time until bitterness sets in. Bitterness is the emotional state in which people are hurting and angry and want everyone else to feel the pain that

they are feeling. It is because of that need to make people feel their pain that they end up lashing out at everyone else, either passively or aggressively.

It is like the person who has been hurt by church people. They more than likely were unjustly hurt, but because they have allowed that hurt and pain to infiltrate their heart, they lash out at all church people or Christians just because they are part of the larger group, even though they never personally did anything to hurt them. Instead of going to God and receiving the comfort that is available in Him, they refused to be comforted and still harbor the pain.

There are many examples of bitterness in the Bible. The children of Israel were bitter because of what they had suffered in Egypt during their captivity. They responded to every situation they were in after that from a bitter perspective. You can see this by reading the things that they would say. Jesus said that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. A murmuring and complaining attitude is proof of a bitter heart.

The Bible's Warning against Bitterness

Hebrews 12:15: *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*

Many people worry about the outward things in Christianity and morality, but fail to look at the inward things. This verse explicitly says that bitterness will defile us. That means that it will make us unclean on the inside. The Bible is very clear that bitterness is something to be

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avoided at all costs. It will totally destroy your relationships with your family, friends, and even with God.

I have had more than one dear friend who has allowed bitterness to drag him away from his relationship with God and the joy of his salvation. They have become cynical, depressed, and miserable people because of it, but they will not face the fact that they refused to be comforted and consoled by Jesus just because someone disappointed them or some church taught them things that went beyond what the Scriptures teach.

What are the Symptoms of Bitterness?

1. Feeling others have more than you.

One of the symptoms of bitterness is when you always think that others have it better in life than you, or you think that others are considered more special than you. In the book of Acts, there was a guy named Simon the sorcerer, and he saw that God was using Peter to touch people with the power of God; he wanted to buy this gift. Instead of understanding that God uses each of us in unique and different ways, he thought that Peter was blessed by God more and wanted to buy that blessing. Read what Peter said to this man.

Acts 8:20-23: *But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.*

Do you see how bitterness poisoned his soul? He was looking at Peter through the eyes of bitterness.

2. Feeling that others owe you.

Bitterness is tied to unforgiveness. Remember the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:21-35? Even though he had been forgiven a million-dollar debt, he could not forgive a twenty-dollar debt. This was because of bitterness. He was angry and consumed with the fact that he was owed something. Bitter people think that others owe them something and they are going to exact a price out of them no matter what. The result of this is that they become bound up or tied up in their own lives and can't see beyond what is right in front of them. They are tortured in their hearts, always keeping people in prison in their hearts and always dwelling on the pain and the price they are owed.

3. Feeling that God has let you down.

Since bitterness is tied to unforgiveness, many people will start to blame God for everything wrong in their lives. They will feel that God has let them down. I know in my own life, shortly after

dealing with a difficult marriage, I was really angry at God and I blamed Him for things that happened in our relationship. What I didn't realize at the time was that this feeling that He had let me down was directly related to my unforgiveness toward my wife and the unforgiveness that I had towards myself and my own failures. When I dealt with the unforgiveness area, then I no longer had the bitterness towards God.

Remember what Jesus told us to pray in the Lord's Prayer? Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Our relationship with God is directly influenced by our level of unforgiveness we are holding against others.

How Do You Overcome Bitterness?

1. Learn to accept your trials rather than curse them.

I know that this is easier said than done, but trials are put into our lives to test us, not to punish us. That is a big difference. When we view our trials as tests, then we can see the purpose in those trials. They are no longer seen as undeserved acts of vengeance against us. Everybody in this life goes through trials. No one is exempt, so learn to view these trials as opportunities to grow and learn the faithfulness of the Lord rather than try to avoid them at all costs. Learn to be quick to forgive.

You cannot go through life without somebody sometime offending you. The question is, are you going to take it to heart or are you going to learn to forgive quickly? I am speaking from experience here. It is not always easy for me. Some of the hardest things I have had to forgive is when people have made deep and personal promises to me and then broke their word and didn't even say they were sorry. I had a choice to make. I could either forgive, or I could get bitter. I chose to forgive even though with some of them I had to make that choice daily for weeks on end until my heart lined up with my choice.

2. Learn to be transparent with others and ask for help.

We are not meant to walk alone on this planet. We are called to be part of a body. That means that we should be able to go to others in our church or group of believers and ask for their help with this. Of course, that means that our church has to be healthy enough to handle people being transparent and asking for help without judging them. Go to someone you trust to pray for you and encourage you as you are overcoming bitterness.

James 5:16: Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

It is in the context of this type of relationship that James is talking about. When you confess what you are struggling with and what you need to work on, healing can happen and you can be free of bitterness controlling your life. You can overcome bitterness. The reason I know is because I did, and if God will do it for me, He will do it for you!

What Scripture Says

Hebrews 12:14-15: *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*

Ephesians 4:31-32: *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

1 Peter 2:23: *Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.*

Luke 23:34: *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.*

Matthew 6:14-15: *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

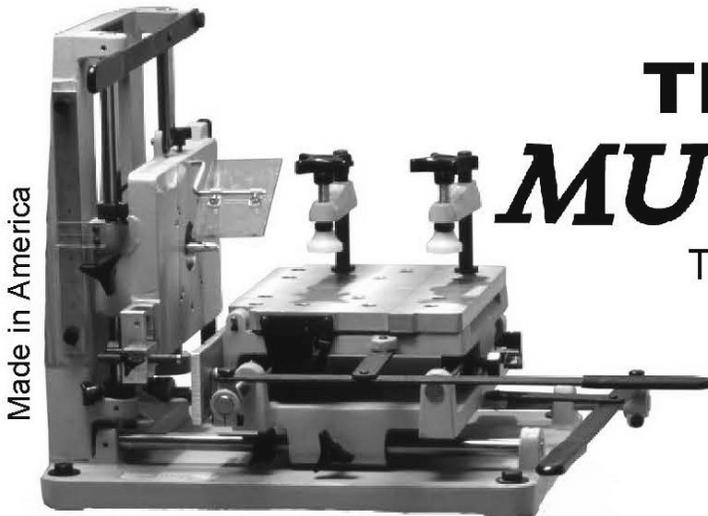
Romans 12:14-21: *Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Pray in this manner:

Father, I acknowledge that I've held resentment and bitterness against _____. I confess this as sin and ask you to forgive me. I forgive _____. Remind me, Lord, to not hold any more resentments, but rather to love this person. Father, I ask you to also forgive me.

Thank you for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name, Amen.

End



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Feedback and Response Section

1

Please do not send the “Amish Voice” to this address. We have the Holy Bible for our TRUE guidance. We can go to church and hear the Word preached by servants ordained by God. Why don’t you send these things to unbelievers? Why the name “Amish Voice”?

I am under the assumption (I may be wrong) that the folks doing this are not Old Order Amish and use modern conveniences. Why are people led away from denying themselves these things?

It happens with people that say, “Oh, yes, we can serve God and have worldly things as long as our heart is right.”

These conference calls that have taken over the interest and hearts of so many Plain people, when their time should be spent with their children or visiting the sick, etc. It is just Satan’s ways to get them away from God and closer to the internet with its evil. Now you are hiding these conference calls with supposed Bible study.

Let us pray to keep families at home studying the Bible without a telephone and going to church with prepared hearts to listen to Jesus’ instructions through ordained ones—not self-ordained people who have not kept to their parents’ and church’s instructions. — M. A. H.

Jonas Yoder responds: Thank you for your response and concern about the Amish Voice. We appreciate your input about our publication as we strive hard to keep it biblical and relevant to the times we are in.

It is a wonderful privilege that we have God’s Word readily available in our homes to read every day. We also believe that it is our ultimate guide in life, along with the Holy Spirit, who dwells in us if we are born again.

One reason we are burdened to publish and send out the *Amish Voice* is because of a realization that many people who do go to church (this is not limited to the Amish or Mennonite people) are simply going through the religious motions and have never developed a spiritual connection with God through the new birth, and because of that will live their life of religion and then die and go to hell. We believe it is very important to constantly challenge and admonish believers and non-believers alike. God desires relationship instead of religion. Matt 23:27

While unbelievers definitely need these kinds of materials, we believe that Christians need to be challenged in all areas of life

as well. In other words, if it's good for the unbeliever it's also good for the believer. 2 Tim 2:15

The reason for the name “Amish Voice” is because the contents are geared to address spiritual needs that are oftentimes relevant to the Amish culture.

The articles published in the Amish Voice are written by people from various walks of life who all use certain forms of modern conveniences. The fact is, all of us living in a modern world, use modern conveniences, including Old Order Amish. I am assuming you are referring to Romans 12:2: *And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.* While many people think of modern conveniences as of the world the Bible never defines it that way, but rather, it calls things such as cursing, stealing, drunkenness, sexual immorality, taking the Lord’s name in vain etc. as of the world. Ironically, all the above listed are current problems in the Old Order churches. Also it tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, which in its context is calling worldliness a condition of the mind rather than material things.

True spirituality is not defined in what a person has or doesn't have. In essence the Plain churches of today, by application, back up that statement in that every community is different in what they allow themselves to have and yet across the whole spectrum of communities allow practically every modern convenience you would find in the average American home. All the while, many times condescendingly looking at those who have more than they do, as too worldly; and those who have less, as unnecessarily strict. Bottom line is, God looks at the heart rather than what we allow ourselves.

It happens with people that say, “Oh, yes, we can serve God and have worldly things as long as our heart is right.”

The heart or the spirit of man absolutely has to be right with God in order for anything to be right. Behavior modification or disallowing oneself certain things never produce righteousness. In fact the only righteousness that produces favor with God is the imputed righteousness of Jesus. Read Romans 4, also 2 Corinthians 5:21: *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

I would encourage you to join in on the conference calls, every first Sunday night of the month at 8 pm EST; whenever it does not conflict

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with things such as time well spent with your family or visiting the sick. We all find time to do what is important to us. The motive of the conference calls is never hidden, as we plainly advertise the purpose and the subject of the calls in the *Amish Voice* publication. All our previous calls have been recorded along with the subject of each one plainly stated for anyone to listen to — and yes, they are Bible studies. We welcome you to join in the discussion on the live conference calls.

Thank you for your input and concern. Prayer for our families is

always needful and very vital. We believe God has called all believers to communicate His will and Word by whatever means necessary because of the value of a soul.

Every living soul is an eternal being and it is our God-given duty to share the hope of the gospel by any means necessary. Matt 28:19-20. After all, it makes an eternal difference to the one who receives the Word of God and believes the

Gospel. John 3:16 —Jonas Yoder

End

2

Hello. Thank you for reaching out to our spiritual needs. May God continue to bless your efforts.

I used to think that a submissive wife would quietly go along with what her husband decided, showing little emotion, etc. I have come to realize that most men do not actually want passive, unemotional wives, but a wife who can voice her concern and disagreement in a calm, kind voice—no pouting, etc. And, most importantly, have a smile and a spark (even if he is rather dull). Encouraging, praising, and continually surprising him in little ways.

We Amish tend to shy away from flattery, praise, etc., but it is so upbuilding. Encourage the men to express love, too. Too many of us go through life taking our loved ones for granted and harboring grudges. After they are gone, we are filled with regret. A quote I read somewhere: “The best way to get praise is to die.”

— Best wishes. Mrs. H

Joy Knepp responds:

Wow! You are a woman after my own heart! What jumped into my mind as I read your letter is that if we want to know how a marriage should be, we should always look at Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:22-33). For us wives, of course we have to focus on the church part of this picture. Believe me, it is easy for me to point out to my husband how HE should be! Ugh! Am I the only one who struggles with this?

When you think of the REAL church, the bride of Jesus Christ, can't you just FEEL the life and awe and excitement as we worship our Savior? There is nothing dead or dull about it. I agree totally with you that our husbands don't want to be married to a mousy doormat. I think it's a great thing to voice our opinion in an animated, loving way. Do I always get that done? Not by a long shot! I've got the animated side down pat,

but the loving side can go missing in a hurry! But my husband has told me that he knows the desire of my heart and that makes up for my mess-up times. I really think that's the point we have to get to—the heart's desire.

Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give you the desires of thine heart. (Psalm 37:4)

We cannot fake the desire of our heart; our husbands can feel the truth. In fact, there have been times when my attitude toward my husband has been in a horrible rut, and when I let God change the desire of my heart, my husband knew it while he was at work.

As for what you said about the best way to get praise is to die, there is WAY too much truth in that, in our culture! I know someone who says that you shouldn't praise people because it will make them proud. How SAD! And Father God taught against that. Think about what God said about Jesus, *And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* (Matthew 3:17). Oh, glory! How our husbands and sons need to hear words like that!

Also, one of my favorite verses on this subject is Proverbs 18:21, *Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.* Basically, whichever one our tongue dishes out, we will get back.

Deuteronomy 30:19: *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.* Wow! Sounds like a life or death matter to me!

Anyway, I will quit rambling on now! Wishing you and your family lots of God's blessings. Thank you so much for your letter!

—Your sister in Christ, Joy Knepp

End



The Value of Relationship

By Joe Keim

A true relationship is based on two people putting 100% of their trust in each other. Anything less than 100% trust is not a perfect relationship. It is also true that perfect relationships are not build overnight. It takes months, sometimes years. Let us not

forget that years and years of trust can crumble in a moment of time.

So, let us stay focused today and truly value and appreciate the trust that has been built between me and God, between me and my spouse, and between me and my friend(s). Hold on to it! Consider it precious, and value that trust like you do your own life!

Continued from the last issue

Triumphs of Faith

Now, how are we to get the victory over all our enemies? We live by faith. *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me* (Galatians 2:20). We get this life by faith, and become linked to Immanuel – God with us. If I have God for me, I am going to overcome. How do we gain this mighty power? By faith.

Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith (Romans 11:20). The Jews were cut off on account of their unbelief. We were grafted in on account of our belief. We live by faith, and we stand by faith.

Next, we walk by faith. *For we walk by faith, not by sight* (2 Corinthians 5:7). The most immature Christians I know are those who want to walk by sight. They want to see how a thing is going to come out. That isn't walking by faith at all. That's walking by sight.

I think the people whose lives best represent this difference are Joseph and Jacob. Jacob was a man who walked with God by sight. You remember his vow at Bethel: If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the LORD be my God (Genesis 28:20-21). Remember how his heart revived when he saw the wagons Joseph sent him from Egypt? He sought after signs. He never could have gone through the temptations and trials that his son Joseph did. Joseph represents a more mature Christian. He could walk in the dark. He survived thirteen years of misfortune, in spite of his dreams, and then credited it all to the goodness and providence of God.

Lot and Abraham are also a good illustration. Lot turned away from Abraham and tented on the plains of Sodom. He claimed a good stretch of pastureland, but had bad neighbors. He had a weak character and should have stayed with Abraham in order to get strong. Many men are just like that. As long as their mothers are living or they're shored up by some other godly person, they get along fine. But they can't stand alone. Lot walked by sight. But Abraham walked by faith and walked in the footsteps ordained by God.

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (Hebrews 11:8-10)

Finally, we fight by faith. *Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked* (Ephesians 6:16). Every dart Satan fires at us can be quenched by faith. By faith, we can overcome the Evil One. To fear is to have more faith in your antagonist than in Christ.

In the very early days of the Civil War, Secretary Seward, who was Lincoln's Secretary of State and a shrewd politician, prophesied that the war would be over in ninety days. Young men in thousands and hundreds of thousands came forward and volunteered to go down to Dixie and whip the South. They thought they would be back in ninety days. The war lasted four years and cost about half a million lives. What was the matter? The South was a good deal stronger than the North assumed. Its

strength was underestimated.

Jesus Christ makes no mistake of that kind. When He enlists a man in His service, He shows him the dark side. He lets him know that he must live a life of self-denial. If a man is not willing to go to heaven by the way of Calvary, he cannot go at all. Many men want a religion in which there is no cross, but they cannot enter heaven that way. If we are to be disciples of Jesus Christ, we must deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Him. So let's sit down and count the cost. Don't think that you will have no battles if you follow the Nazarene, because many battles are before you. Yet if I had ten thousand lives, Jesus Christ would have every one of them. Men do not object to a battle if they are confident they will achieve victory. Praise God, victory is possible for all of us.

The reason so many Christians fail all through life is that they underestimate the strength of the Enemy. We have a terrible Enemy to contend with. Don't let Satan deceive you. Unless you are spiritually dead, it means warfare. Nearly everything around us tends to draw us away from God. We don't step straight from Egypt to the throne of God. There's the wilderness journey and there are enemies in the land.

Don't let any man or woman think that all he or she has to do is join the church. That will not save you. The question is, are you overcoming the world, or is the world overcoming you? Are you more patient than you were five years ago? Are you more good-natured? If you are not, the world is overcoming you, even if you are a church member. The epistle that Paul wrote to Titus says that we are to be sound in faith, in charity, and in tolerance. We've got Christians, a good many of them, who walk victoriously in some areas but are immature in others.

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From outward appearances, just a piece of them seems to be saved. They aren't rounded out in their characters. It's just because they haven't been taught that they have a terrible foe to overcome.

If I wanted to find out whether a man was a Christian, I wouldn't go to his minister. I would go and ask his wife. We need more Christian life at home. If a man doesn't treat his wife right, I don't want to hear him talk about Christianity. What's the use of his talking about salvation for the next life if he has no salvation for this one? We want a Christianity that goes into our homes and everyday lives. Some men's religion just repels me. They put on a whining voice, a sort of religious tone, and talk so sanctimoniously on Sunday that you would think they were wonderful saints. Then on Monday they are quite different. They put their religion away with their clothes, and you don't see any more of it until the next Sunday. You laugh, but let's be careful that we don't belong to that group. We must possess a more mature Christianity, or the church is gone. It's wrong for men or women to profess what they don't possess. If you are not overcoming temptations, the world is overcoming you. Just get on your knees and ask God to help you. Let us go to God and ask Him to search us. Let's ask Him to wake us up and not think that just because we are church members we are all right. We are all wrong if we aren't achieving victory over sin.

PART II: Internal Foes

Now if we are going to overcome, we must begin inside. God always begins there. An enemy inside the fort is far more dangerous than one outside.

Scripture teaches that in every believer there are two natures warring against each other.

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I

would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (Romans 7:14-23)

Again, in the epistle to the Galatians, he says, *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would* (Galatians 5:17).

When we are born of God, we get His nature, but He does not immediately take away all the old nature. Each species of animal and bird is true to its nature. You can tell the nature of the dove or canary. The horse is true to its nature, and the cow is true to its nature. But a man has two natures. Do not let the world or Satan make you think that the old nature is extinct, because it is not. *Likewise also reckon yourselves to be truly dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ, Jesus, our Lord* (Romans 6:11). If you were dead, you wouldn't need to reckon yourselves dead, would you? The dead self would be dropped out of the reckoning. Then Paul states in 1 Corinthians 9:27: *I keep my body under*. If it were dead, Paul wouldn't have needed to keep it under. I am judicially dead, but the old nature is alive. Therefore, if I don't keep my body under and crucify the flesh with its affections,

this lower nature will gain the advantage, and I will be in bondage. Many men live all their lives in bondage to the old nature, when they could have liberty if they would only live the overcoming life. The old Adam never dies. It remains corrupt. *From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment* (Isaiah 1:6).

A gentleman in India once got a tiger cub and tamed it so that it became a pet. One day when it had grown up, it tasted blood. The old tiger-nature flashed out, and it had to be killed. It's the same with the old nature in the believer. It never dies, though it is subdued.

Unless he is watchful and prayerful, the old nature will gain the upper hand and rush him into sin. Someone once pointed out that "I" is the center of S-I-N. It is the instrument through which Satan acts. The worst enemy you have to overcome, after all, is yourself.

When Capt. T. became converted in London, he was a great society man. After he had been a Christian some months, he was asked, "What have you found to be your greatest enemy since you became a Christian?"

After a few minutes of deep thought he said, "Well, I think it is myself."

"Ah!" said the lady. "The King has taken you into His presence, for it is only in His presence that we are taught these truths."

I have had more trouble with D. L. Moody than with any other man who has crossed my path. If I can keep him right, I don't have any trouble with other people. Many people have trouble with employees. Did you ever think that the trouble lies with you instead of the employee? Or if one member of the family is constantly snapping, he will have the whole family snapping. It's true whether you believe it or not. You

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speak quickly and snappishly to people and they will do the same to you.

Appetite

Now take appetite. That is an enemy inside. How many young men are ruined by the appetite for strong drink. Many have grown up to be a curse to their father and mother instead of a blessing. Not long ago, the body of a young suicide victim was discovered in one of our large cities. In his pocket was found a paper on which he had written, "I have done this myself. Don't tell anyone. It's all through drink." A hint of these facts in the public press drew 246 letters from 246 families, each of whom had a prodigal son who, it was feared, might be the suicide.

Strong drink is an enemy, both to body and soul. It is reported that Sir Andrew Clarke, the celebrated London physician, once made the following statement: "Now let me say that I am speaking solemnly and carefully when I tell you that I am considerably within the mark in saying that within the rounds of my

hospital wards today, seven out of every ten that lie there in their beds owe their ill health to alcohol. I do not say that seventy in every hundred are drunkards; I do not know that one of them is; but they use alcohol. So soon as a man begins to take one drop, then the desire begotten in him becomes a part of his nature, and that nature, formed by his acts, inflicts curses inexpressible when handed down to the generations that aspire to follow him as part and parcel of their being. When I think of this I am disposed to give up my profession—to give up everything—and go forth upon a holy crusade to preach to all men, 'Beware of this enemy of the race!'"

It is the most destructive force in the world today. It kills more than the bloodiest wars. It is the fruitful parent of crime, idleness, poverty, and disease. It spoils a man for this world and damns him for the next. The Word of God has declared it:

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor

effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

How can we overcome this enemy? Bitter experience proves that man is not powerful enough in his own strength. The only cure for the accursed appetite is regeneration – a new life – the power of the risen Christ within us. Let a man that is prone to strong drink look to God for help, and He will give him victory over his appetite. Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, and He will take away that appetite if you will let Him.

This article was taken from the book, **The Overcoming Life — by D. L. Moody**. In the coming months, we will be printing each chapter, one at a time. You can either read the chapters one at a time as they come out in *the Amish Voice*, or you can order the entire book now.

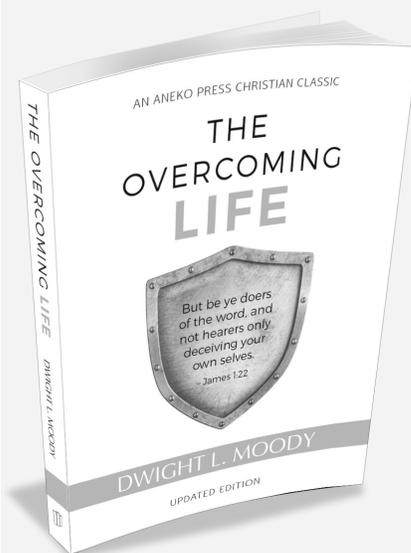
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There's an old saying that goes like this: "Silence is golden." But is it always? Is there ever a time when silence is not a good option?

Silence may be golden in some cases, but I question whether our silence on sexual abuse in our churches has done anything other than cultivate more abuse. Most of us would like to think that we are pretty good—that this kind of stuff doesn't happen all that often. Yet many of us personally know people who have either been abused or who have abused.

Though abuse is often gossiped about in our communities, we hear very little preached about it. Anabaptist periodicals rarely publish articles concerning it. It's almost like there's an unspoken rule that claims we "shouldn't talk about such things."

That sentence highlights a major part of the problem and also part of the solution.

By failing to bring sexual sin and abuse to light, we have become bound in generational strongholds. For the most part, the older generation thought it was wrong to "talk about such things." But refusing to open up about the issues in their generation has only caused the sin and abuse to be passed on to their children and grandchildren. Today, the younger generation faces an enormous epidemic of sexual abuse.

Thankfully, there are some people who are finally realizing that "not going there" has only multiplied the problem. Our eyes are being opened by Jesus, who loves children.

Of course, when anyone starts messing with the devil's agenda to take back the ground that sexual abuse destroyed, they are in for some serious spiritual battles. The people who are hiding behind the culture of secrets suddenly become wolves in sheep's clothing. People you thought highly of suddenly turn and rend you. All hell breaks loose, trying to distract you from the work God has given you to do — exposing the sin, helping the sinner, and bringing healing to the weak and hurting.

And yet, in the midst of the chaos and flying darts meant to forever shut you up, Jesus gives His blessing. His voice guides you through the battle. He comforts. He gives confirmation after confirmation. His hand in the battle to expose sexual sin in the church is unmistakable.

Everywhere in His Word, I find His heart. From Genesis to Revelation, His heart is the same. He cares about the broken (Psalm 147:3). His ear is tuned to the weak, the vulnerable, and the hurting (Psalm 10:17-18). He hears the cries of the children (Genesis 21:17). He defends the innocent (Psalm 82:3) He sets the captives free. He binds up the brokenhearted. He gives them beauty instead of ashes (Isaiah 61:1-3).

If we are honest, we as Anabaptists have failed miserably when it comes to hearing the cries of the children. Instead of listening, we have been shutting them up. Instead of caring, we've been stomping out the last little bit of life they had. And the sick thing is, we do it in the name of forgive and forget. We take Scripture out of context to "prove" that talking about such things is sin. Sometimes, we tell them to get over it.

Worse yet, we blame the hurting for leaving our church. We talk about them behind their backs. We think they are

rebellious, not realizing that WE might be to blame for their distrust and disgust for God and His Word.

Judgment is coming. God does not deal kindly with those who trample the weak and needy (Psalm 109:16). He has little mercy for people who claim to know Him and then offend children (Matthew 18:6) To God, this is serious.

What should we do and where do we start? How can we shatter the silence and shed the light on the sin?

I beg you to start by reading the Word of God with an open heart. Put all your preconceived ideas aside and ask the Holy Spirit to show you what God's Word means. Ask God to show you what He thinks about sexual sin and sexual abuse. Seek His face. He has the answers.

About a year ago, my husband and I began to ask God those same questions. We started studying His Word, specifically paying attention to passages that pertained to sexual sin and sexual abuse. We prayed a lot and asked Him to guide us into all Truth. Our view and perspective on what God thinks of abuse and how we should deal with it changed dramatically.

I can talk and write all I want, but I cannot change the hearts of my people. But I know Someone who can. In fact, He already is, and I believe He will continue to do so.

If each of us would seek His face and turn from our wicked ways, it would be the start of a great revival in our communities and churches. It starts with you. It starts with me. Together, with God, we can change our children's and grandchildren's destiny so that they can be free from the generational strongholds that have plagued us.

—Ann Detweiler

End

Which of Jesus' commandments do you think is the most disobeyed, neglected, and ignored today?

I once heard Brother Zac Poonen, a wise and gifted Bible scholar, say that he believed the most neglected commandment is the one that says to "Fear not." When Brother Zac made this statement, he supported it by saying that the words "Fear not" are found in Scripture 144 times. Now, when talking about fear, he is not referring to the fear of God; this is a completely different kind of fear. The fear he was talking about, and the fear we will look at in this article, is the fear that involves things such as worry, anxiety, fret, etc.

The Bible stresses nothing as being more important than faith. *Without faith, it is impossible to please Him* (Hebrews 11:6).

When you think about it, the opposite of faith is fear. God wants us to live a life of faith. He wants us to walk in faith, and then one day, to die in faith. We cannot live in fear and also live in faith; the two are not compatible, and one will cancel the other out. If we choose to live in fear, we are trusting ourselves rather than God.

We need to rely on the scripture that tells us to cast all our cares upon Him, for He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7). We need to live in the reality of the song that says, *He's bigger than all my problems, bigger than all my fears; God is bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see*. What are the first words that angels often said when first meeting people in the Bible? "Fear not."

What are the first words that God sometimes said when He first spoke to someone in the Bible? "Fear not."

There are, of course, many things about which we can develop fears. We can have fear of failure, fear of dying, fear of sickness, fear of the unknown, fear of the future, and fear of the dark. But my friend, to all of these things, I say, "Fear not!" Every one of these things and many more are under the control of God. You just have to trust in Him.

He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD.

—Psalm 112:7

If you, on the other hand, are the one helping someone else become free from fear, remember that it will not work to try to explain that their fears are unfounded. To those affected by fears, they are real. They need to be delivered, not rationalized.

I gained understanding of this deliverance process when Brother Steve Stutzman gave the following example: In front of you is a young girl that is average height, weighs eighty pounds, and is so weak that she can hardly stand. This girl has one overriding fear. What is the fear? It is a fear that anyone can see is totally wrong just by looking at her. She fears that she is fat.

The person who is overtaken with fear

will need love and compassion. They will need a helping hand to aid them in turning their fear to faith. Remember, it is faith that overcomes the world. Fear has torment, but faith will cause fear to leave.

My heart goes out to the person who lives in fear. I do not look down on anyone who has been overtaken in fear, because no one enjoys or wants to live in fear. Several times the Bible even calls fear a "spirit."

Here are a few biblical examples that can be found on the topic of fear: *For God has not given us a spirit of fear* (2 Timothy 1:7). *For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear* (Romans 8:15). Psalm 34:4 says, *I sought the Lord and he heard me, and DELIVERED me from ALL my fears*.

Fear is imagining what might happen to us, whereas faith is knowing that God is in control and casting all our cares upon Him. A person who has been overtaken with fear will need prayer and deliverance. Praise God that he wants to deliver us from ALL of our fears.

Seek the Lord and tell Him about your fears. Choose to trust in the Lord. Memorize and believe the verses in the Bible that will help you to overcome. Proverbs is a great place to start!

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*.

Praise God! Truly, the Lord is on my side. I will not fear!

End

**How Do
I
Overcome
the
World?**

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4-5)

Note that the same point is being made in every statement; the very same thing is being said three times. What emphasis! The point is to be understood and followed.

- * The person who is *born of God* overcomes the world.
- * The victory that overcomes the world is our *faith*.
- * The person who overcomes the world is the person who *believes* that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Who is it that is *born of God*? It is the person who *believes* that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The world is overcome by faith. Victory is gained over the world by faith in Jesus Christ, by believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. —POSB Commentary

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December

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made, Really?

Katherine and Jay Wolf talk with Dennis Rainey about the massive brainstem stroke Katherine miraculously survived just months after giving birth to their son.

The Five Pillars of Salvation

Have you ever considered what your salvation is resting upon? It has to withstand the world, the flesh, and the devil--and it has to last forever. Be fortified with this message from Pastor Adrian Rogers from Romans chapter 8.

Never Quitting, Parts 1-3

Marked by grace and grit, Paul didn't know the meaning of quitting. Charles Swindoll shows that despite constant hardship, physical abuse, emotional anguish, verbal assaults, false accusations, unrelenting pressure, frequent misunderstandings, multiple imprisonments, and heartbreaking abandonment, Paul pressed on toward the prize of knowing Christ. Quit simply wasn't in the man's vocabulary. We ought to erase it from ours as well, and we can if we'll hear and heed Paul's last words to his friend, Timothy.

January

How to Resist the Devil

Charles Stanley explains that James 4:7 says to submit to God and resist the devil. We can't truly submit to God unless we resist the devil, and we can't truly resist the devil unless we are submitted to God. These must be done simultaneously.

Ye Must Be Born Again

Joe Keim discusses the New Birth. Jesus was very clear: if you want to see and enter the kingdom of God, you must be born the second time (John 3:1-7). The Scriptures go on to tell us the second birth is supernatural, meaning the event cannot be manufactured by ministry workers or any other family member. It is strictly a work of God. Furthermore, the second birth, according to Peter 1:23-25, is only possible when someone first plants the incorruptible Seed – God's Word – in a lost person's heart. From there, God will take the Seed and bring the second

birth to fruition; that is, if the lost person is willing to accept God's gift of everlasting life.

Faith Without Works is Dead

Pastor John Bouquet explains that while no amount of good deeds can save a person's soul, a genuine salvation by faith should always result in good works. This sermon is based on James 2:14-20 and helps the listener understand the difference between works salvation and salvation by faith alone, grace alone, and Christ alone.

Dying to Self

The concept of "dying to self" is found throughout the New Testament. It expresses the true essence of the Christian life, in which we take up our cross and follow Christ. Dying to self is part of being born again; the old self dies and the new self comes to life (John 3:3-7). Not only are Christians born again when we come to salvation, but we also continue dying to self as part of the process of sanctification. As such, dying to self is both a one-time event and a lifelong process.

February

Faith Active in Works

Pastor John Bouquet preaches from James 2:22: *Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?* Abraham's faith fulfilled Scripture. What Scripture? The Scripture that said *Abraham believed God; and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.*

A Covenant of Redemption

Listen as pastor and author Bruce Lengeman speaks on the fulfillment of the Old Testament as it is revealed in the New Testament.

Saying "Thanks" vs. Being Grateful

We can say "thanks" but not be grateful. Emerson Eggerich explains that we can mouth words while our hearts are elsewhere. We are fixated on ourselves. We have probably all seen this in ourselves. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 3:2 that people can be "lovers of self . . . ungrateful." We can even sing a song of thanks while in church, but inwardly dwell on the hurt and offense we feel toward someone who wronged us the day before.

with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. My Lord came to this earth and was made a little lower than the angels to die for my sins and pay the penalty for sin.

Romans 5:8 says, *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* Jesus paid for my sins and satisfied the justice of an eternal God.

1 Corinthians 15:22 says, *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*” He imputed His righteousness to me so that my standing is no longer in Adam, but in Jesus Christ. I am justified by faith in His precious blood alone, and God views me faultless because positionally, I am His Son Jesus Christ. God looks at me as being His son clothed in His righteousness.

Further, I know that I am going to Heaven because of the Word of God. It is the Word of God, which makes me confident of my salvation. It is the blood of Christ that makes me safe, but it is the Word of God that makes me sure that I am safe.

Have you ever noticed the “shalls” and the “have nots” of the Holy Scripture? There are too many to list them all, but notice the words of Christ in John 5:24: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent*

me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Jesus tells me in His word that if I believe on Him, then He, by grace, will give me the gift of eternal life. To believe means to commit ourselves to a person to do for us the thing that we cannot do for ourselves. The same is true about salvation. I cannot save myself; I must trust Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life.

I love the verse Titus 3:5: *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* Oh! How we need God’s mercy.

Finally, there is the witness of Christ that makes me sure that I am going to heaven. The witness is twofold: There is the witness of a changed life. Since I trusted Jesus Christ for my eternal salvation and repented of my sins, my life has been changed by the power of God.

The Bible says, *Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new* (2 Corinthians 5:17). I am a new man by the grace of Jesus Christ. I look different; I act different; I even smell different. The bondage of sin with the habits of cigarettes and alcohol are gone.

Second, there is also the witness of the Holy Spirit, who now indwells my life. The Bible declares in Romans 8:15-16: *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* The Holy Spirit now lives within me, *and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me* (Galatians 2:20).

As I live my new life, I realize that God loves me and that Jesus paid for all of my sins on the cross. The work of Jesus satisfies God to the salvation of my precious soul. 1 John 2:2 says, *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

I thank the Lord for the gift of salvation and all that He has done for me. I don’t deserve it, but by the grace of God, I’m happy I have it. The closer you get to heaven, the more you talk about it. By the grace of our Lord, I am ready to meet Him when my times comes. Are you ready?

—Fred A. Krueger

My Life’s Verse:

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

End

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Trusting Jesus

—By Fred A. Krueger

My name is Fred A. Krueger, and I am eighty years old.

In 2008, I was diagnosed with cancer. I had three lumps that formed on the right side of my neck, and I also had a larger lump appear in the clavicle area several months later. This lump was removed on July 14, 2008 and was later evaluated and diagnosed as being Hodgins Lymphoma of a multi-cellular type.

My surgeon gave the opinion that my cancer was at least stage two or three and said that I would have a port surgically inserted into my body for chemotherapy treatments. He recommended me to an oncologist, who ordered blood tests, a CT scan, and a PET scan. He said he wanted to stage the cancer.

After these tests were taken, my cancer was re-diagnosed as stage one. A new recommendation was then given for radiation alone. This procedure, called “The Mantle,” would involve radiation of the chest

as well as the neck. There would be twenty-two radiations, which were very intense. They caused me great pain in my esophagus and caused swelling and difficulty in swallowing my food.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

During this time in my life, the Lord was very precious. My relationship with Him was primary, and His precious Word was of great comfort to me. I committed my life to God, and it was good to know that if I died, I would leave this life and immediately be transported into the presence of the Lord.

You see, I know that I am going to heaven when I die. This is of great comfort when facing cancer and

radiation treatments.

One verse in the Word of God, which meant a lot to me, was Psalm 62:5, which states: *My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.* I can truly say that my expectation is from God and Him alone. The medical community has their studies and statistics and recommended treatments, but the bottom line is that I belong to the Lord, and my expectation is from God alone.

I know I am going to heaven for three outstanding reasons, and these reasons are found in the Word of God.

First, I know I am going to heaven when I die because of the work of Christ upon the cross. Our Lord came to this earth to die for the sins of the world. The Bible states in Hebrews 2:9, *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned*

Continued Inside