

SPIRITUAL INSIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE

# FAITH *for life*

*“The **life** which I now live...I live by the **faith** of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20*

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FROM THE MINISTRY OF FARGO BAPTIST CHURCH

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## real righteousness

a message by **pastor tony scheving**

*“What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?” (Job 15:14)*

**W**hat does it mean to be righteous? Webster's dictionary defines it as being *upright, just, virtuous and holy*. Perhaps one of the greatest desires of the human heart is to feel good about ourselves. Our self esteem and self worth are often based on our sense of our own righteousness. But if we take an honest look at ourselves, how righteous are we?

### our depravity

One day an elderly godly preacher just finished preaching an eloquent message. At the back of the church a dignified lady was shaking his hand and gushing

over the privilege of meeting such a famous “man of God.” The preacher honestly confessed, “Ma’am, if you really knew the depravity of my heart, you would spit in my face.” The prophet Job said, “*What is man, that he should be...righteous?*”

Back during the days of the Roman Empire, Crassus crucified 6,000 slaves at one time. Augustus had 30,000 killed. Trajan arranged for 10,000 fights to the death in the amphitheatre over 122 days, to the delight and amusement of the spectators. The gladiators were on a special diet that would help them to bleed better. Could our present society ever once again get so calloused?

Just several decades ago during World War II, we saw the cruelty of Germany and Japan. Back in the days of Noah, the Bible says in Genesis 6:5, “*GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*”

Today Americans are chuckling about “desperate” housewives committing adultery on prime time television. We laugh at drunkenness, vice and lewdness (while the Bible says, “*Fools make a mock at sin,*” Proverbs 14:9). A recent survey of high school students revealed that 45% of teens felt that date rape

was alright if the boy had spent a lot of money on the girl. Sixty percent felt date rape was acceptable if the boy and girl had been dating for at least six months. 60 million Americans currently have some form of a sexually transmitted disease. Then there are the more sophisticated sins of lying, cheating, stubbornness, selfishness, pride, greed, covetousness, envy and rebellion (which are considered normal). Mankind is depraved!

The Bible says “*The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*” (Ps 14:2) Man is not basically good. We talk about

stopping war and terrorism, while spouses still fight, and brothers and sisters still fuss. Over half of all marriages end in divorce. Aristotle said, “There is no good in mankind.” Jeremiah the prophet said the human heart is deceitful above all things. Man is more than “a product of his environment.” We are all prone to depravity though we don't want to admit it.

### our dilemma

Jesus said, “*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within,*

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**FAITH** *for life*

## RIGHTEOUSNESS

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and defile the man.” (Mark 7:21-23) Don’t let outward looks fool you.

The Bible also mentions our secret sins. (Psalms 90:8) While we all want to feel good about ourselves, we need to be honest. We can put on a good face and cover up our sins with fig leaves, but it doesn’t remedy our depravity. Jesus told the clergy of His day, “*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers (tombstones), which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.*” (Matt 23:27-8).

The Bible says all of us are “filled with all

*unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents”.* (Rom 1:29) God sees the housewife gossiping, and the two friends secretly criticizing a third friend. God sees the two teenagers being sexually immoral, and the businessman viewing pornography on his computer. God sees our self-centeredness, anger, cursing, and a host of other sins. The apostle Paul mentioned, “*The day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel*” (Rom 2:16)

## our determination

In 1972, a tardy bookworm finally returned

an overdue book to the Brooklyn library after 37 years. He was getting old and didn’t want to die with a bad conscience. Nobody wants to live or die in guilt and self-condemnation. We can try to clean up our mouths, our habits, and our lives, but Jesus said, “*Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees (clergymen), ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*” (Matt 5:20) Like the rich young ruler in Matthew 19, many people try to “do better” in order to attain righteousness. Some even deceive themselves into thinking they’re “pretty good”.

Yet the Bible says, “*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*” (Prov 14:12) God says in Proverbs 20:6, “*Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?*” Many people are sincere and determined to be righteous, yet Proverbs 30:12 says, “*There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.*” As well meaning as we might be, sadly we still continually fail to do right. No wonder Paul said, “*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” (Romans 7:24)

## our deliverance

There is no way we can work our way to heaven by doing good. Jesus spoke of the coming Judgment day in Matthew 7:22. He said, “*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied (preached) in thy name...and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

*And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity”.* We obviously need something better than our works to be right with God. In God’s sight, our righteousness is as a filthy rag. (Isa 64:6) It is futile to try to earn a right standing with God. This is the common mistake that people make. “*For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God”.* (Romans 10:3) So what is the solution?

Look very carefully at this next verse. Paul exclaims in Phil 3:9, “*And be found in him (Jesus), not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.*” We receive this free gift of righteousness when we accept the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross as the payment for our sins. Read carefully this next Bible passage: “*Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness”.* (Rom 4:4-5)

When we are born again through repentance and faith, God essentially says, “I’ll take your trusting in the sacrifice of my Son, and

put perfect righteousness on your record in exchange.” While this may sound easy, it was not cheap. It cost God the death of His Son. God spoke the world into existence with mere words, but He had to slay His own Son to save mankind from sin. While most people are foolishly trying to work their way to heaven, the Bible says “*Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”.* (Rom 10:4) II Corinthians 5:21 adds, “*For He (God) hath made Him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (Jesus)”.* No wonder Jeremiah said of Christ, “*This is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS”.* (Jeremiah 23:6)

While salvation is a free gift that has been purchased with the blood of Christ, it is not an automatic thing for the sinner. You must be willing to repent of your sins and make Jesus Christ the Lord of your life. This is what Jesus called being born again (John 3:3). While we may all want to be righteous, it is impossible without making Christ the Lord of your life. The prophet Job said in our opening passage, “*What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?*” ■

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“Spend more time counting  
your blessings than airing  
out your complaints.”

— unknown

# children are your most valuable treasure

by: paul chappell



A young man was to be sentenced to the penitentiary. The judge had known him from childhood, for he was well acquainted with his father—a famous legal scholar and the author of an exhaustive study entitled, *The Law of Trusts*. "Do you remember your father?" asked the judge. "I remember him well, your honor," came the reply.

Then trying to probe the offender's conscience, the judge said, "As you are about to be sentenced and as you think of your wonderful dad, what do you remember most clearly about him?" There was a pause.

Then the judge received an answer he had not expected. "I remember when I went to him for advice. He looked up at me from the book he was writing and said, 'Run along, boy; I'm busy!' When I went to him for companionship, he turned me away, saying 'Run along, son; this book must be finished!' Your honor, you remember him

as a great lawyer. I remember him as an uncaring Dad." The magistrate muttered to himself, "Alas! Finished the book, but lost the boy!"

Dads and Moms, your greatest life's work is to properly train and guide your children into a loving relationship with God. More important than a career, a promotion at work, or a hobby are the hearts of your children. God has given you the great privilege of training your children! Make it a top priority in your life.

Are you biblically training your children? Are they a priority in your life? The devil is attacking young people like never before, and as Christian parents, we must be active in guiding them to Christ. Spend time mentoring your children today. Let them know you love them and that you care. Seek God's help in leading your family, and don't lose the time you have to train your children. ■

## 10 Commandments for husbands & wives

### for husbands

Thou shalt not take thy wife for granted, but will honour and respect her as thy equal. (1 Pet 3:7)

Thy highest allegiance, except God, shall be to thy wife, not thy relatives or friends. (Gen 2:24)

Thou shalt frequently tell thy wife how important and valuable she is to thee. (Phil 2:3; Prov 31:10-11)

Thou shalt hold thy wife's love by the same means that thou won it. (Song of Solomon 5:10-16)

Thou shalt actively establish child discipline with thy wife's help. (Eph 6:4)

Remember to do all the little things for thy wife when you say you will. (Mt 5:37)

Keep thine eyes on thy own wife, not thy neighbor's. (Prov 5:15-20; Job 31:1; Jer 5:8)

Thou shalt make every effort to see things from thy wife's point of view. (Gen 21:12)

Thou shalt not fail to kiss thy wife every morning. (Song of Solomon 8:1)

Thou shalt not be stingy with thy wife when it comes to money. (Esther 5:3)

### for wives

Expect not thy husband to give thee as many luxuries as thy father hath given thee after many years of hard labor. (Phil 4:11; Amos 4:1)

Thou shalt work hard to build thy marriage with the husband that you have, not fantasizing about "the one that could have been". (Prov 14:1)

Thou shalt not nag or criticize thy husband. (Prov 27:15; 21:19)

Thou shalt coddle thy husband and be a warm wife. (1 Cor 7:3-5)

Remember that the frank approval of thy husband is more to thee than the applause of many strangers. (Ezek 16:32; 2 Pet 2:14)

Thou shalt not yell at thy husband but will have a gentle and quiet spirit. (1 Pet 3:1-4)

Permit no one to assure thee that thou art having a hard time of it. (1 Pet 5:9)

Thou shalt not fail to dress up for thy husband with an eye to please him, as thou didst before marriage. (Song of Solomon 4:9-11)

Thou shalt follow thy husband from thy heart and allow him to be head of the household. (Col 3:18; 1 Pet 3:6; Eph 5:33)

Thou shalt assure thy husband and others that he is the greatest man alive. (Phil 2:3; 1 Pet 5:9-16)

## AN ANGRY ATTITUDE

by tony brown

*“Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools” Ecclesiastes 7:9*

Recently, I read the story about a baseball game between the Orioles and the Red Sox played in 1894. It was supposed to be another routine baseball game. But what happened that day was anything but routine. The Orioles’ John McGraw got into a fight with the Boston third baseman. Within minutes, all of the players from both teams had joined in the brawl. The warfare quickly spread to the grandstands. Among the fans, the conflict went from bad to worse. Someone set fire to the stands and the

entire ballpark burned to the ground. Not only that, but the fire spread to 107 other buildings in Boston as well.

Fast forward to the 21st century. Something is said...someone gets mad...sides are taken and everything is blown out of proportion. Now maybe the town isn’t burned down, but anger has ruled and fools have been revealed.

God says that anger rests with fools. In other words, it’s always there just waiting to be stirred up. If you find yourself easily angered, it’s always a deeper issue than what

actually caused you to blow up. It was in you before. The circumstances just brought it out.

People who are angry are usually people who feel that life hasn’t given them a fair shake. They are always looking at what’s not fair and what’s not going their way. They rely heavily on circumstances for their happiness. Does that describe you? If so, repent of the attitude that you deserve this or that. You and I really don’t deserve anything but punishment for our sin! That puts everything in perspective, doesn’t it? ■

## parents want kids to **practice abstinence**

An overwhelming number of parents want their kids to practice abstinence until marriage and support abstinence education programs that drive that point home. Although six states have announced their intent to refuse federal funding for abstinence-only education, a new Zogby poll shows they are out of touch with Americans.

The poll found that 83 percent of parents want their children to save sex until marriage and a majority of families believe that programs should reinforce the abstinence message.

— LifeNews.com

## *I liked the* **OLD PATHS** *when...*

Moms kept the home, dads were at work, brothers served their country in the military, and sisters got married BEFORE having children.

Crime did not pay, but hard work did, and people knew the difference.

Moms could cook, dads would support their kids and children would behave.

Husbands were loving, wives were supportive, and children were polite.

Women wore the jewelry and men wore the pants.

Women acted like ladies, men acted like gentlemen, and children looked decent.

People loved the truth, and hated a lie.

They came to church to get IN, not to get OUT!

Hymns sounded Godly, sermons sounded helpful, rejoicing sounded normal, and repentance was sincere.

Cursing was wicked, drugs were for illness, and divorce was unthinkable.

The flag was honored, America was beautiful, and God was welcome!

We read the Bible in public and prayed in school.

To be called an American was worth dying for, to be called a Christian was worth living for, and to be called a traitor was a shame!

Preachers preached because they had a message, and Christians rejoiced because they loved the Lord!

Preachers preached from the Bible, singers sang from the heart, and sinners turned to the Lord to be saved!

A new birth meant a new life, salvation meant a changed life, and following Christ led to eternal life.

Being a preacher meant you proclaimed the word of God, being a Christian meant you would live for Jesus, and being a sinner meant someone was praying for you!

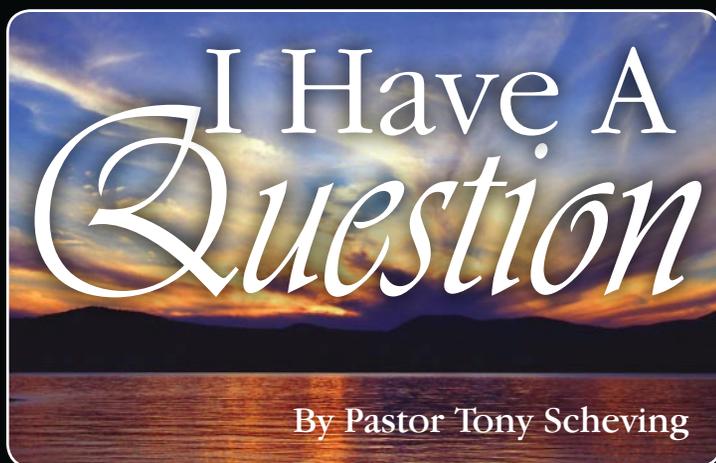
Laws were based on the Bible, homes read the Bible, and churches taught the Bible.

God was worshipped, Christ was exalted, and the Holy Spirit was respected.

Church was where you found Christians on the Lord’s Day, rather than in the garden, on the lake, on the golf course, or being entertained somewhere else.

I still like the old paths the best!

— written by a retired minister



## What Will It Be Like at The End of The World?

Have you noticed all the floods, tornados, earthquakes, and other crazy weather patterns lately? Perhaps many people are wondering, "What is this world coming to?"

Jesus spoke of "earthquakes in divers (various) places" occurring during the last days of earth's history. (Matthew 24:7) One third of the Bible was prophetic when it was written, and it has a lot to say about end-of-time events. It all hinges upon the second coming of Jesus Christ. There were 300 Bible verses that predicted the first coming of Christ. There are over 1,800 verses that speak of His second coming. The Bible says, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time". (Hebrews 9:28)

In approximately 30AD, Jesus died, rose, and ascended back to heaven. Before He left, Jesus said to His followers, "In my Father's house are many mansions... And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive

you unto myself". (John 14:2-3) There are over 7,400 promises in the Bible. God the Son has never broken a promise! The next event on God's prophetic calendar is the *rapture*. This is when born-again Christians will be 'snatched' from the earth in an instant of time. It is referred to in various places within the Bible.

In the book of I Thessalonians 4:16-17, God's Word says, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord". This event will take place without warning.

The Bible says, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (living believers) shall be changed". (I Corinthians 15:52) Those unbelievers who are left behind after the rapture will experience

unspeakable chaos on this earth such as the world has never seen before. The Bible calls it the "Great day of God's wrath". (Revelation 6:17) The globe will come under the control of a 'one-world ruler' (Globalism is already shaping up across our world with national boundaries slowly being erased).

In the Bible, this one-world ruler is called the 'antichrist', or the 'beast'. He will require every person to be accountable to him, and will force them to receive some type of an identification voucher (possibly a computer chip?) that will enable him to keep track of everyone's whereabouts and purchases.

The Bible says, "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save (except) he that had the mark". (Rev 13:16-17) The Bible sheds more light on this identification mark when it says, "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six (666)". (Rev 13:18)

Already, this number can be found encoded into the Universal Product Code (UPC) located on almost all

items you buy at the grocery stores, retail stores, etc. The worldwide rule of the antichrist will last for seven years with the first three and a half years taking place under the guise of peace, and the last three and a half years being utter chaos! (Matthew 24)

According to the Bible, approximately two thirds of the world's population will be eliminated in a blood bath. The antichrist will especially target the Jews for extinction, which is why the tribulation period is called a time of "Jacob's trouble". (Jeremiah 30:7)

The antichrist will make Adolf Hitler look like a choir boy. (Rev 12) Meanwhile, back in heaven, the raptured believers will be appearing before the judgment seat of Christ. (II Corinthians 5:10) At the end of the seven-year tribulation, Jesus will return to the earth at the valley of Armageddon. There He will defeat the armies of the antichrist. (Rev 19) In the late eighteenth century, the French military leader Napoleon once saw this valley in west central Israel, and called it the greatest

place he had ever seen for a battle. From there, Jesus will go up to Jerusalem: "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst." (Zechariah 14:4)

Ironically, seismologists report that this fault line was created on July 11, 1927, when an earthquake struck the Holy Land. From Jerusalem, Jesus will set up His kingdom and world peace will finally be realized (Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:1-10). With all of that in mind, the key for a real Christian is to be found faithful when Christ returns. The Bible says, "Abide in him (Christ); that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming". (I John 2:28)

If you have a question you may email Pastor Scheving at [RevSkev@faithforlife.net](mailto:RevSkev@faithforlife.net). Also, for a more in-depth sermon on this subject, you may purchase a CD sermon for \$2 from Fargo Baptist Church, 3303 23 Ave. S, Fargo, ND 58103.



## HOW TO HAVE A RIGHT *Relationship* WITH **GOD** GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

There are three things you can know for sure...

**1) That you are going to Heaven.** *"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"* (I John 5:13).

**2) That your life will be changed when you get saved.** *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"* (II Corinthians 5:17).

**3) You will never lose your salvation.** *"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."* (John 10:28).

It all revolves around Jesus Christ!

Who is Jesus Christ? John 1:1 says, *"In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* John 1:3 continues, *"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."* Jesus was God in flesh or God the son who created everything.

He came to earth to save us. *"For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Luke 19:10). The first step in

going to heaven is to realize we need to be saved.

How do we get to heaven?... *"Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"* (John 3:3).

There is a difference between a physical birth and a spiritual birth. *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit"* (John 3:6).

Why do we need a spiritual birth? Man was originally created a three part being in God's image—a trinity. *"And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: so God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them"* (Genesis 1:26). Man is made up of body, soul, and spirit.

God placed Adam and Eve in the garden. *"And the lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest*

*thereof thou shalt surely die"* (Genesis 2:16-17). Man ate of the fruit and though he didn't die that day physically, he died spiritually!

When Adam and Eve had children they were now born spiritually dead as well (no longer in God's 3-part image). Genesis 5:3 says *"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth."* That is why we must be re-born spiritually.

That is also why we have a sin nature. You don't have to teach a toddler to be selfish, lie, steal things, sass back, fight with siblings, etc... it is also our nature as we grow up. The 10 commandments reveal our sinful condition.

**#1 "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me"** (Exodus 20:3). No one can claim that they have never put anything ahead of God

(money, career, another person, own goals, pleasure, sin & vice, etc).

**#2 "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image"** (Exodus 20:4). Many have been guilty of inventing a God of their own imagination and liking (a "God that overlooks sin and takes everyone to heaven").

**#3 "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain"** (Exodus 20:7). Read it carefully—are you guilty of ever doing this?

**#4 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy"** (Exodus 20:8). Have you always been faithful in this area?

**#5 "Honour thy father and thy mother"** (Exodus 20:12). Who can say that they have always honored their parents?

**#6 "Thou shalt not kill"** (Exodus 20:13). While most have never committed murder, Jesus clarifies this commandment when he tells us that to even hate or be bitter at someone is murder of the heart (Matthew 5:21-2).

**#7 "Thou shalt not commit adultery"** (Exodus 20:14). While many have never committed adultery, Jesus tells us in the Bible that to even lust after the opposite sex is adultery of the heart (Matthew 5:27-8).

**#8 "Thou shalt not steal"** (Exodus 20:15). Who could claim that they've never taken anything that doesn't belong to them?

**#9 "Thou shalt not bear false witness"** (Exodus 20:16). (i.e., lie) No one could honestly claim they have never told a lie.

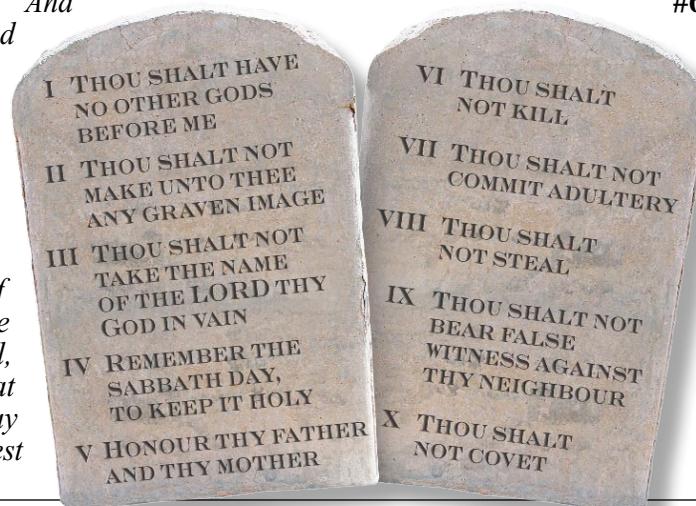
**#10 "Thou shalt not covet"** (Exodus 20:17). Have you ever desired anything you didn't need, or that wasn't yours?

Many places in the Bible tell us that liars, adulterers, idolaters, thieves, the covetous, etc., will spend eternity in hell (Revelation 21:8, I Corinthians 6:9-10, Galatians 5:19-21).

Romans 3:10 tells us, *"As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one."*

Romans 3:23 says *"for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."*

Romans 6:23 explains that sin has a penalty: *"For the wages of sin is death"* (hell).



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## RIGHT WITH GOD

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We cannot possibly get to heaven by keeping the law (10 Commandments).

The 10 Commandments were given by God to show us how impossible it is to be saved by doing good works. *“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith”* (Galatians 3:24). The law (10 commandments) shows us that we are condemned and need a Savior.

You will never get to heaven by doing good works. Titus 3:5 says, *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.”* *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Romans 5:1).

Yet getting to heaven is not automatic just because Jesus died for your sins! Salvation is a gift that must be received. *“For by grace are ye saved*

*through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God”* (Ephesians 2:8). That means that baptism has nothing to do with being saved. Romans 6:23 explains, *“The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

How does a person know when they are ready to be born again? They know they are ready when they mean business with God, and are willing to repent of sin. Acts 3:19 says, *“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.”* II Peter 3:9 says the Lord is *“not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”* Jesus said, *“except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”* (Luke 13:5). That means being willing to also turn from false religion or false teaching—anything contrary to the word of God, the Bible.

To repent means to change your mind about your sin, and make Christ the Lord of your life. Are you willing to turn from your sin and turn to God?

Do you believe that Jesus paid the full price on the cross for your sins?

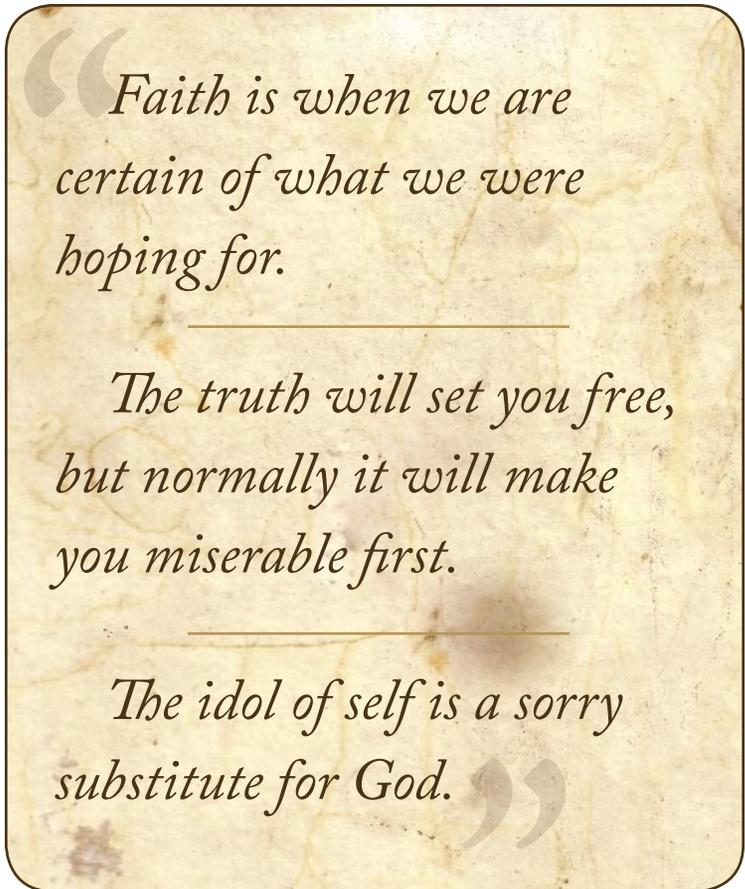
Though God hates sin, he loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins. *“But God commendeth (proved) his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8).

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”* (John 3:16).

If God is convicting you of your need of forgiveness, and you would like to be saved (born again), the final step is to ask God for the gift through a simple prayer. *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”* (Romans 10:13). Notice the promise of this verse from a God who cannot lie. Titus 1:2 says, *“God...cannot lie”*. Do you believe that God will save you simply because He said He would? Christ will save you if you are willing to make him the Lord of your life.

If you know that you are ready, you can pray and ask God to save you in your own words such as: *“Dear Heavenly Father, I know that I am a condemned sinner unable to save myself, but I am willing to turn from my*

*sins and make Jesus my Lord and master. I now trust in His sacrifice on the cross to pay for my sins. Please forgive me and save me. Amen.”*



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*"Never man spake like this man." • John 7:46*

## THE INCREDIBLE SAYINGS OF Jesus

VERSES COMPILED BY DAVID DENNIS

Several years ago, a radio commercial stated, "People judge you by the words you speak". How true that is. The words that come out of one's mouth determine in the eyes of others his character, life, and personality.

Jesus Christ was without a doubt, the most incredible and central figure in all of history. His coming was predicted and was fulfilled to the letter. The things that He did, no other man can say he has done. But the point of this article is this: if He was who He said he was, and if He was able to do such incredible things, would they be reflected in His words? Could you take his words and use them to determine Who He was?

The Jews in Jesus day tried to reconcile the words of a man, at least he looked like an average man, with the words which only God Himself had the right to speak. Claims so incredible, that if spoken by just a man, would be preposterous, or even worse, blasphemous.

Judge for yourself. Look at the incredible words of Jesus Christ. Was He just a man? Or was He God?

Following are some of the incredible sayings of Jesus that only God Himself could make (Some Scripture portions have been capitalized for emphasis).

### *He Claimed That His Words Were Eternal.*

*"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."* Matthew 24:35

### *Jesus Said That He Was Alive Before Abraham.*

*"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."* John 8:58 Abraham was born in approximately 1996 BC. Whoa!

Not only that, but by saying, "I AM" Jesus was claiming to be the same I AM that spoke to Moses from the burning bush – God himself. And the Jews knew it, because right after they took up stones to cast at him. John 8:59

### *Jesus Said That He was the Messiah, the Saviour of the World*

*"Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ (the anointed One – the Messiah), the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I AM: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."* Mark 14:61-62

### *Jesus Said That the Bible Fortold His Coming*

*"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."* John 5:39

### *He Claimed That if Someone Believed on His Name, That Person Would go to Heaven.*

*"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."* John 6:40

*"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."* John 5:24

### *He Claimed That If Someone Did Not Believe In Him, That Person Would not go to Heaven*

*"If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."* John 8:24b

### *He Claimed to be Able to Forgive Sins*

The Pharisees of Jesus' day rightfully asked, "Who can forgive sins but God only?"

Jesus replied, *"Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins"* Mark 2:7-10

### *He Even Claimed to be Able to Resurrect the Dead*

*"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."* John 6:44

*"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death."* John 8:51

*"Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again."* John 11:23

### *He Claimed to be the Exclusive Entrance Into Heaven*

*"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall*

*be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."* John 10:9

*"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the father, but by me."* John 14:6

### *He Even Claimed That After Death, He Would be Able to Bring Himself Back to Life*

*"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."* John 10:17-18

### *He Claimed That If Someone Believed In Him, That Person Would Never Die.*

*"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"* John 11:25-26

*continued on next page*

## *He Claimed to be Able to Give Life Forever*

*"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."* John 10:27-28

## *He Boldly Dared Others to Examine His Life for Sin – Stating They Would Find None.*

*"Which of you convinceth me of [can reprove me for] sin?"* John 8:46a

## *Jesus Does not Refuse Worship! He Accepts It.*

And finally, one other thing that is notable is not for what Jesus said, but for what he did NOT say. In Acts 10:25-26 Peter refused to accept worship. In Rev 19:10 and 22:8-9, an angel refused to accept worship,

stating that worship is reserved only for God. But in the following passage (John 9:38), along with the approximately 7 other times in the Bible, Jesus is worshipped:

*"And he (the man born blind) said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him (Jesus)."*

It has been Jesus' words that for approximately 2000 years have made men and women ask the question, "Who but God could make such incredible claims?"

Let's look at the facts. If Jesus Christ were only a man and said of Himself what you have just read, and if just one of Jesus' claims about himself were not true, and if he accepted worship even once, then Jesus would not be a good man, he would not be a good teacher, he would be a liar, or at the very least would have serious psychological problems! So was Jesus a fraud, or was He who He said He was and who the Bible says He was? If Jesus Christ was who He said He was, then that can mean only one other thing. He was God in the flesh!

That is why Jesus Christ was the only man in history whose words matched his life. Jesus Christ didn't just stop with His words. He backed up his words by raising the dead, healing the lame and the sick, and living a sinless life—as only God could do. Jesus "... thought it not robbery to be equal with God." (Philippians 2:6) because He was God.

The reason for all this? God needed a sinless sacrifice; but only God is sinless. So God Himself (not an angel) came down from heaven - "*God was manifest in the flesh*" - and then went back into heaven - "*received up into glory*". 1 Timothy 3:16

This could only be the long awaited Messiah, who for thousands of years had been promised as God's sacrificial Lamb, come "*to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*" Heb 9:26b

Who could make such claims? Only God.

People judge you by the words you speak. Go ahead, judge the words of Jesus

Christ. They were written because that is precisely what Jesus Christ wants you to do; to honestly examine Him by the words He spoke (which matched His actions to follow). He has nothing to hide.

*"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that*

*ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."* 1 John 5:13

Are they the words of man, or God?

Truly the words of the soldiers who in John 7:46 were mesmerized by the incredible statements that only God could make, said it all when they stated, "*Never man spake like this man.*" ■

## a scientific thought to **CONSIDER**

To stretch your thinking about God, just step outside on a clear night. Although the stars seem too numerous to count, without a telescope you can only see about 3,000 stars from any point on Earth. Those three-thousand stars seem overwhelming when they are spread across the darkened sky, yet scientists estimate the universe contains at least 70 sextillion stars (70-thousand-million-million-million). That's 7 followed by 22 zeroes, or ten-times the number of grains of sand on earth. Mind-boggling to us, but God "*calls them all by name*" (Psalm 147:4). Houston Chronicle, 1/20/8 ■

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## GOD'S PURPOSE *for* LIFE

*"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace...Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself."* Ephesians. 1:7-9

Forty-five years ago, Hugh Morehead began a hobby of writing to famous philosophers, scientists, and authors asking them, "What is the purpose of life?" He is now the chairman of the Department of Philosophy at Northeastern University in Illinois. The responses he got back were depressing at best.

Isaac Asimov wrote back, "As far as I can see there is no purpose to life." Karl Jung, the Austrian psychiatrist, wrote, "I don't know what the meaning or the purpose of life is, but it looks like as if there were something meant by it." And Albert Ellis, the psychiatrist who invented RET therapy said, "As far as I can tell, life has no special or intrinsic meaning or purpose." Edward Gorny replied, "I doubt if there is one."

So many people today are searching for the meaning of life and yet are not finding it. They see life as mere existence, void of any

purpose or meaning. But as Christians we know that God has a purpose for our lives. He doesn't want us to merely exist, but to fulfill His will for our lives.

Solomon indicated in the book of Ecclesiastes that if we do not understand the purpose of life, life will seem useless, tiresome, and unfulfilling. Ecclesiastes 1:2-3 says, "*Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?*" God tells us that when we live without purpose and without God's will, it is all vanity! May we find God's purpose for our lives from His instruction manual, the Bible. ■

— Paul Chappell

## the other side of **ALCOHOL**

The next time you see a clever beer or alcohol commercial consider these sobering thoughts:

- By the age of 18, a child will have seen 100,000 beer commercials.
- Two out of five children will have tried alcohol before age 13.
- Two out of three high school seniors have drunk an alcoholic beverage within the past month.
- Alcohol is the leading cause of death of those between the ages of 16 and 24.
- Nearly 18 million adults in the United States are problem drinkers, and more than 10 million are alcoholics.
- The economic costs to Society of alcoholism and alcohol abuse are estimated at nearly \$117 billion a year, including \$18 billion from premature deaths, \$66 billion in reduced work effort and \$13 billion for treatments.
- Alcohol use kills 100,000 each year, 25 times as many as illegal drugs combined.
- Alcohol is a major factor in marital and family breakups.
- Among state-prison inmates, 532,000 drank heavily before committing rapes, burglaries and assaults.

- It is estimated that alcohol is involved in 54% of all violent crimes, 60% of all murders, 40% of crimes to property and 50% of rapes.
- Alcohol use was the cause of approximately half of all traffic fatalities last year (about 23,000 deaths).
- Up to 70% of drownings involve alcohol use.
- Cirrhosis of the liver kills 14,000 drinkers each year.
- Alcohol use increases the chances of getting cancer in the digestive tract, liver and colon.
- Women who take as little as three drinks per week run a 30% greater chance of contracting breast cancer than non-drinking women.
- Drinking by expectant mothers can cause birth defects and is a major cause of mental retardation in children.

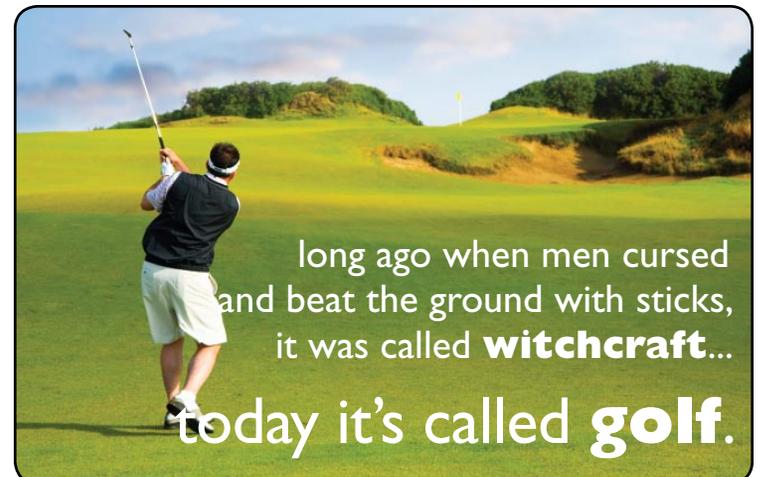
These are facts you're not apt to find in the carefree, exciting, romantic world of alcohol commercials.

So when you're asked to buy America's favorite dangerous drug, remember these facts... and don't allow your future to be sacrificed in a bottle. ■

—By Tim Campbell

## God's Positive Bible Answers

You say...	God says...	Bible Verses
"It's impossible"	All things are possible.	(Luke 18:27)
"I'm too tired"	I will give you rest.	(Matthew 11:28-30)
"Nobody really loves me"	I love you.	(John 3:16 & John 3:34 )
"I can't go on"	My grace is sufficient.	(II Cor. 12:9 & Ps. 91:15)
"I can't figure things out"	I will direct your steps.	(Proverbs 3:5- 6)
"I can't do it"	You can do all things.	(Philippians 4:13)
"I'm not able"	I am able.	(II Corinthians 9:8)
"It's not worth it"	It will be worth it.	(Roman 8:28 )
"I can't forgive myself"	I forgive you.	(I John 1:9 & Rom. 8:1)
"I can't manage"	I will supply all your needs.	(Philippians 4:19)
"I'm afraid"	I have not given you a spirit of fear.	(II Timothy 1:7)
"I'm always worried and frustrated"	Cast all your cares on ME.	(I Peter 5:7)
"I'm not smart enough"	I can give you wisdom.	(I Corinthians 1:30)
"I feel all alone"	I will never leave you nor forsake you.	(Hebrews 13:5)



long ago when men cursed  
and beat the ground with sticks,  
it was called **witchcraft...**  
today it's called **golf.**

## faith & finances

seven requirements  
for financial freedom

by pastor scheving



Many people feel that it is not spiritual to discuss money, but the Bible says more about finances than almost any other subject. Financial mismanagement has contributed to the fall of many nations as well as marriages. The goal of every Christian should be to “owe no man anything” (Romans 13:8), and get out of debt bondage. Normally, the problem with debt is not a lack of money, but a lack of control over our desires. Many are not willing to live on the level that God supplies. Someone well said, “If there’s a will, there’s a way.” May I suggest seven ways for a person to achieve financial freedom?

### Labor

Obviously, work is a must; however, most people need to overhaul their definition of *work*. We have 168 hours every week. If every week we work for 40 hours, sleep for 56 hours, eat for 14 hours, and use 7 hours getting ready, we still have 51 hours leftover! Perhaps we could use that time in a productive way to help eliminate debt. How about skipping the television to work on our houses (increasing its value and equity)? Or, perhaps, we could save rent by using our spare time to manage the apartment we live in. Of course, there is always a part-time job to help retire debt. The Bible is full of admonitions to work! The Bible even says, “*The sleep*

*of a laboring man is sweet*”. (Ecclesiastes 5:12)

### Contentment

The world is full of discontented people, and Americans are especially guilty. Discontentment is the result of a lack of gratitude. Covetousness says, “*I want more than I have.*” It is the result of an attitude that says, “I deserve better.” Advertisements from billboards, TVs, magazines, and catalogs all feed this attitude. The Bible says, “*Be content with such things as ye have.*” (Heb 13:5) The apostle Paul said, “*I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*” (Phil 4:11) It will take a long time to pay off the house mortgage if you don’t cultivate the spirit of contentment. Many people ‘sacrifice the future on the altar of the immediate’ because of covetousness.

### Thriftiness

Anyone can throw money around, but it takes real character to be thrifty. Jesus called this ‘wise stewardship’. (Luke 12:42) The thrifty person purposely lives below his means. He drives a less expensive car, and eats out less. He purchases less of a house than he qualifies for, and pays it off sooner. His grocery bill is lower because he eats less elaborate, and cooks more from scratch. He purchases items at rummage sales or thrift

stores, and watches the flyers to patiently wait for the sale price. This all adds up to thousands of dollars over a year’s time.

### Vision

Vision is an absolute necessity in order to get out

Normally, the problem with debt is not a lack of money, but a lack of control over our desires.

of debt. We must be able to see the end result. It is best called *delayed gratification*. The average millionaire didn’t necessarily make more money, but had the foresight to live frugally in order to save the money. In Proverbs 6, God commends the ant for having the foresight to store up for the days ahead. Instead of spending a raise in pay or a tax return on new furniture, the wise steward will pay down the house in order to avoid interest in the long run. When a person has foresight, he can eliminate

the creditors calling to collect their overdue money.

### Interest Awareness

When interest works for you, it’s your best financial friend. When it works against you, it’s your worst nightmare. The Bible tells us, “*The borrower is servant to the lender.*” (Prov 22:7) Many homes will cost nearly three times the original purchase price over a thirty-year payback period due to the interest. Choking on interest makes it nearly impossible to ever get ahead. The Bible mentions ‘*usury*’ (interest) in a very negative

a deal, or wait. We need to wisely know when to repair or when to replace. Some people spend a dollar trying to save a quarter. There is a time to be a do-it-yourselfer, and there is a time to hire it out. We need wisdom to know the difference.

### Humility

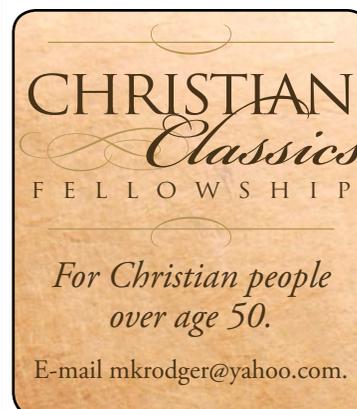
Trying to keep up with the Joneses is a sad path to the bankruptcy court. Your friend driving the brand new sport utility vehicle might be laughing pretty loud now, but you will have the last laugh if you are willing to drive the humble, used car. When Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton was alive, he drove an older, used pickup in spite of the fact he was one of the world’s richest men. Fancy houses, furniture, or cars doesn’t make us ‘somebody’. Jesus said, “*A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*” (Luke 12:15) If we would forget about impressing others, and live a humble lifestyle early on, it would pay off in the long run. Pride has gotten a number of people into the debt trap.

Conclusion: A person in debt doesn’t think clearly and enjoys life less. Make it your financial goal to become ‘unvulnerable’ by practicing disciplined spending habits. It will eliminate much stress from your life, and also benefit you spiritually. ■

light. We should try to avoid it like the plague!

### Wisdom

In order to eliminate debt, we need wisdom and discernment. Many people knock themselves into a financial free fall due to a foolish purchase that should have never been made. The Bible says, “*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God...and it shall be given him.*” (James 1:5) We need wisdom to know when we should jump on



## PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

BY PASTOR TONY SCHEVING

### something called accountability

Several years ago, a professional gambler sued the Las Vegas Hilton for a large sum of money. He was upset with the hotel for his loss of \$1 million. He blamed the hotel for allowing him to gamble while he was drunk! Then there is the case of Daniel Dukes. His parents sued Sea World after Daniel broke into the facility at night to skinny dip with Shamu, and ended up drowning. The Dukes were blaming Sea World for portraying Shamu as harmless. It's ironic that everyone else knows that Shamu is a *killer whale*!

We live in a strange day and age; much different from the days of our grandparents. In these ever changing times we see a great lack today of something called *accountability*. The dictionary defines this as *being responsible and liable for ourselves*. The Bible says in Romans 14:12, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." In this wacky day and age of blame shifting and wiggling out of responsibility, the cry of the age is, "It's not my fault", as we seek to find a scapegoat. People all across our land claim to be the "victim" instead of the culprit.

A few years ago, a man spilled his milk shake while driving and caused a car accident. McDonald's was sued for not warning the man about eating while driving. The list of lawsuits is longer than your arm. If a child becomes obese the parents sue Burger King for selling him the food. If someone gets lung cancer, he sues the tobacco manufacturer for making the cigarettes. If someone gets in a car accident while distracted they blame the cell phone company. Blaming others for our predicaments is nothing new.

When Adam disobeyed God and ate of the forbidden fruit, he subtly put the blame back on God by saying, "The woman **whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat**". (Gen 3:12). Eve then turned around and blamed the devil. God didn't accept the excuses then, and still doesn't today. People in the 21st century are still saying, "The devil made me do it." The oldest game in the world is the blame game. When things go wrong we blame society, we blame poverty, we blame our parents, we blame the

educational system, and we blame our teacher, our boss, our coach, or our circumstances. Somehow, we think by blaming others we can eliminate our guilt, feel better about ourselves, and also look better to others. Claiming to be the victim is part of our sin nature. We don't want to face the consequences of our behavior. We don't like the cost and consequences of our words and actions. We don't like to admit that we failed or made a bad decision. We also don't want to be exposed for what we really are. That will make us look bad and make us vulnerable. Due to our pride we wear a mask and refuse to admit any weakness.

Another reason people claim to be the victim is to get sympathy. Apparently, they didn't get enough when they were growing up. At the Phoenix drug rehab center in New York, people often come in with a sob story concerning their drug problems. After the head counselor listens to the client seek sympathy within the group, he nicely says, "It wasn't society, your mother, or even the drug pusher who put those needles in your arm. It was you!" At that point, real therapy can begin. Society has created an unspoken attitude that you're not responsible if you've had it tough. But the Bible says in Galatians 6:5, "Every man shall bear his own burden."

If we were to take an honest look at the source of our past problems, we would have to take a look in the mirror! Yet there are currently hundreds of things called "mental disorders." The number of these disorders has tripled since the 1950s. If a child argues with his parents, throws a tantrum, and refuses to obey, it is called "oppositional defiant disorder." My question is, "What child doesn't have that disorder?" Today there are "sexual predator disorders", "nicotine dependency disorders", and if they haven't given it a name yet they call it an "unidentifiable mental disorder". Whatever happened to "sin", "rebellion", and "disobedience"? I'm afraid our society has bought into a bogus bill of goods.

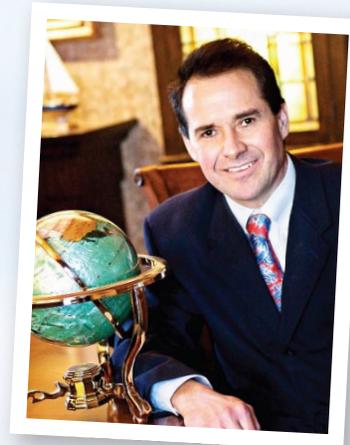
If Judas had lived today we would have given him sympathy for what he did to Jesus. We would have traced it back to some disorder due to Judas' upbringing or his family tree. The blame game never ends. Here is where people would protest and exclaim, "But you don't know what I've been through." The real issue is whether you've properly reacted to what you've been through. We can't change various people, or our past circumstances, but we can change the way we react to such things. You may have had it rough in life, but you still have the choice to forgive and move on. If we continue to "pass the buck" and be the victim, we'll get nowhere in life, and also foster a

tolerance for our own sin. Esau had no one to blame but himself when he sold his valuable birthright to his younger brother Jacob for a bowl of stew. Moses' brother Aaron tried to shift the blame for making a golden calf. Later on, King Saul blamed the people for his own disobedience. (Apparently, this problem wasn't dealt with in Saul's childhood). One of the greatest favors parents can do for their children is to catch this tendency at an early age.

Even Pontius Pilate refused to take responsibility for condemning Christ to the cross. We all like being free moral agents, but tighten up when it comes to accepting accountability. Many years ago, JD Rockefeller said, "Every right implies a responsibility, every opportunity implies an obligation, and every possession implies a duty." The blame game is eroding our nation at an alarming rate. The preacher who blows the whistle on this epidemic won't win a popularity contest, but the Bible says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." (Prov 27:6) We need to be man enough to repent, change, and stop making life miserable for others. Even Esau eventually grew up and stopped being a whiner and practiced forgiveness toward Jacob.

Many years ago a Christian stopped what he was doing every hour on the hour when he heard the chimes of the village clock. He would then quietly say, "That's another hour I'm now accountable for." We will never know true victory in our lives until we "take the bull by the horns", and take responsibility for the outcome of our lives. It's time husbands and wives stop making excuses for being irritable, angry and selfish. It's time young people get an attitude adjustment, and stop blaming their parents or society for their rebellion. It's time for people to

quit blaming God for the lawlessness in this world. It's time that people quit using "the hypocrites down at the church house" as an excuse for not attending church. None of it will "fly" on Judgment Day. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." One day every human will stand accountable before his or her Creator and there will be no excuses. Wouldn't it be wise to take responsibility here and now?



Pastor Tony Scheving

*Pastor Tony Scheving*