

## ***"Spreading God's Truth One Seed At A Time"***



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“The Berean Voice” is an outreach ministry or “integrated auxiliary” of Faith Christian Fellowship, a church located in Holmes County, Ohio. It is operated by a board of directors and ultimately answers to the elders of the church.

***We are a non-profit ministry and we are looking to God to provide for the ongoing work of this magazine and our other outreach projects, through the free-will offerings of His people.***

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## \* Attention \*

It is our desire that this magazine would be an effort of God’s people working together for the blessing and good of everyone involved. Therefore, we are asking for your input towards making this publication continually better.

### **We would be grateful for your help in these ways:**

(Please call for more information about the first three lines)

- ⇒ **Written Articles, Poems, and Quotes**
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***“This magazine is for the building up of God’s Kingdom and is available free of charge to anyone wishing to receive it. In order to help our mailing costs, please consider getting a bulk shipment (5 or more copies) with others, your church, etc. Also, please consider supporting this work financially in order to help make it available for the less fortunate and for those on the mission field.”***



## FROM THE EDITOR

### Introduction

In the Spring of 2015, Faith Christian Fellowship, a church in Holmes County, Ohio, developed a ministry which was named “The Berean Voice”. After the ministry was put into place, a board was selected out of the local brethren to oversee and work out the goals that had been set forth, in developing materials and resources for the church at large, with the purpose of fulfilling a number of Biblical mandates.

- ◆ Preach the Gospel - Mat 24:14
- ◆ Edify the Body of Christ - Eph 4:12
- ◆ Provoke unto Love & Good Works - Heb 10:24
- ◆ Exhort Believers with Truth - Heb 3:13
- ◆ Warn the Erring & the Unbeliever - 1Th 5:14
- ◆ Earnestly Contend for the Faith - Jud 1:3

Acts 17:11 has been chosen by the board as a theme verse, with the goal of using our efforts and resources to encourage those we have contact with, to personally “search the Scriptures” and to see “whether those things were so [are true],” regarding current ideas, teachings, and philosophies.

Along with this emphasis, we also are keenly aware of the Biblical teaching on spiritual authority and the need for individuals to have the proper respect, communication, and relationship with the authorities God has placed them under. With this in mind, it is our goal to stimulate individuals to seek God and obey Him in the midst of their situation.

We firmly believe that the Scripture is true where it says; “**All scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:” (2Ti 3:16) and “According as his divine power hath given unto us **all things that pertain unto life and godliness**, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:” (2Pe 1:3). **With these two Scriptures in mind, we will be endeavoring to lift up the simplicity and sufficiency of God’s Word in regards to having answers for the problems of humanity.**

One of the ways that was chosen as an effort to accomplish some of these goals was to start publishing a newsletter or magazine which would be

doctrinal and teaching in nature. Since “The Heartbeat of the Remnant” had been out of print for several years, the former publishers, Ephrata Christian Fellowship, asked us whether we would be interested in reviving their magazine. After several months spent in prayer and seeking counsel from others, we decided to follow through on this venture, with plans to publish it four times a year.

This first issue is being handled as a joint venture between us and Ephrata Christian Fellowship, in order to create a smooth transition of the publication from their ministry to ours. We are in the process of developing a website and are planning to eventually have all the back, archived issues of the magazine moved from their website to ours.

We will be using the “Remnant” mailing list to send out the first publication of the new magazine and will continue to refine the address list as we move forward. So you should be receiving an order just like before. If you do not receive a copy, or would like to be added to the mailing list, or have other changes you would like to have made to your information, please contact us.

There is a lot of emphasis these days on “the Anabaptists this” and “the Anabaptists that”. While we would be more aligned with the general views of Anabaptist perspectives than we would be with Protestant or Catholic viewpoints, we feel that it is best to always use the original whenever measuring something for accuracy, instead of using a template or a piece that has been cut from the original. Therefore, in our magazine we plan to **focus** on “thus saith Jesus and the Apostles, according to the Bible”, instead of “thus saith the Anabaptists, according to history”.

Having said this, we will, none-the-less, be choosing articles that are written from an Anabaptist perspective, since we feel that is more consistent with a literal, common-sense approach to Biblical interpretation and following Christ in simple obedience. We will also be planning to occasionally have some articles written on church history.

~ cont. on page 30



## Almost or Altogether?

~ E.S. Gutwein

April 13, 2013

When Can We Say



This Chick Is Hatched

One day, many years ago, a well-known Christian leader was arrested and brought before the king for telling his own people that they must repent, turn to Christ, and live their lives in victory over sin. After explaining that the prophets and Moses actually spoke of Christ's suffering and resurrection, this Christian leader asked the king, "Do you believe the prophets?" He then answered his own question by saying, "I know that you believe."

The king replied, "Almost you persuade me to be a Christian."

Then, with great eloquence, the apostle Paul responded to King Agrippa.

"I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds" (Act 26:29).

This passage helps us realize that we cannot just be "almost" Christians, "almost" persuaded, "almost" converted. We must be "altogether" Christians. Christ Himself said, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Mat 7:14). A chick halfway out of the egg is not a fully-born chick; likewise, a person halfway through The Door is not a completely "born-again" Christian. (Joh 10:9)

Good intentions are a good start, but are not enough to bring forgiveness and freedom from sin. Sadly, many in this world follow their own religion with good intentions, but unless they pass through the "Strait Gate", and walk the "Narrow Way", they will not get to Heaven (Joh 14:6).

You may dress modestly; you may be honest in your business dealings; you may be a good son, daughter, husband, or wife; you may even obey most New Testament commands; but if you have not repented of ALL your sins, and asked Christ to cleanse you, give you a new heart (Eze 11:19, 36:26) and change you, none of your good deeds, though they are a necessary part of the Christian life, will buy you a ticket to Heaven. (Rom 9:11, 32; Gal 2:16, 3:10; Eph 2:9; & Tit 3:5).

"Ye must be born again," said Jesus. (Joh 3:3, 7). The sinful nature with which we were all born must be rooted out by Christ and replaced with His new nature.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2Co 5:17).

A good Christian heritage is a wonderful thing to have, but it is not enough to justify us before a holy God. A godly heritage is an introduction to the Christian life, but if we do not have a personal change of heart, the outward appearance only makes us "almost" Christians. We cannot be saved by the faith of our fathers and mothers. Biblical faith must become our own faith!

Baptism, though an integral part of the beginning Christian, has no virtue of its own to a person who comes with good intentions only – unchanged, unrepentant, unconverted – with a faith other than his own, or just because others his age are getting baptized. Baptism by itself, does not make a person an "altogether" Christian. It is only for those who have sold themselves out to Christ in true repentance and are committed to living a life of obedience to Him.



However, make no mistake; we cannot reject baptism either. Jesus said that for Himself to be baptized was the fulfillment of all righteousness (Mat 3:15). He, as our perfect example and as the author and finisher of our faith, gave us this practice to follow.

Furthermore, the Scriptures tell us to “repent and be baptized for the remission of sins”, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved”, and other similar Biblical mandates. Therefore, while a person who gets baptized without conversion is an “almost” Christian, the same would also be true for those who refuse to be baptized after confessing and repenting from their sins.

The Bible prescribes some general principles concerning our dress. The Christian should be dressed like a Christian, not like the world. However, dressing right does not make you a Christian any more than putting on wings would make you an angel. Dressing right is an expression of a right heart, but does not make your heart right. Scripture does not lay down a certain pattern or style of clothing for the Christian, but has principles for us to follow. Therefore, do not think that your outward appearance will clean up the mess you have inside.

“Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also” (Mat 23:26).

Our heart is like the source of a fountain. When we realize we have said something nasty, we know that something nasty went into our heart first. For example, James 3:10 says that it is not fitting for our mouths to give forth both blessing and cursing at the same time, because “doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?”

When our lives are revealing rebellion to God through our practices, our dress, our music, etc., the Bible says that something went wrong in our hearts first. “An evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil” (Luk 6:45). Do not believe the lie that you can be an “altogether” Christian, claiming your heart is right, while still doing that which is evil.

### How to become an “altogether” Christian

The Bible says that God loved the world so much that He sent His only Son, Jesus, to save whosoever believes on Him (Joh 3:16). This means that God “first loved us” (1Jo 4:19), and “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8). He made the first move; now what will you do in response?

Ephesians 2 says that we are “by nature the children of wrath.” We are born with a sinful nature because the first man took on a sinful nature through disobedience, and that makes us enemies of God, who is holy. Furthermore, because we are born with a sinful nature, we are bent on rebelling against God’s commands, even if we were born into a Christian family and were “good” children. We are still sinners before God.

Although children are safe from God’s wrath, they still start responding with sinful behavior at a young age, and express the impulses of a sinful nature years before the age of accountability. Then when we arrive at an age that we start to understand our sinful condition before a holy God, we begin to be accountable for our sin and are no longer safe from God’s wrath.

The time has come to confess that we are a sinner by nature and that we have committed sins against God. We need a change of heart and a new nature. We do not want to experience God’s wrath in the lake of fire someday.

When we come to the time of this understanding in our lives, we have two choices: accept it and repent, or reject it and go on in rebellion. We may excuse ourselves by saying we have good intentions or that we have been raised in a godly home. But we know that this only makes us “almost” Christians. To be “altogether” Christians we must “repent and be converted, that [our] sins may be blotted out” (Act 3:19). We must enter the Kingdom of God through the Door, lest we are condemned for trying to break in and enter some other way. Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber” (Joh 10:1). We need to repent and believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior and as the ONLY way to God.

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Good works before conversion do not save us; good works after conversion are our duty. The sinner’s prayer, as some call it, is an important beginning, but it does not end there. The Bible says that we are saved “not of works”, but “unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph 2:8-9, 10). First, we need to “put off concerning the former conversation (way of life) the old man, which is corrupt”. We must be “renewed in the spirit of [our] mind, and [we must] put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph 4:22-24).

Good works for the born-again believer are a natural expression of their new life in Jesus Christ. They are an expression of obedience to our Lord and Savior, for He has commanded us to live holy lives (1Pe 1:15), to depart from sin (2Ti 2:19), to help those in need (Gal 6:10), to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Heb 10:25), to cover our heads (for the women; 1Co 11:6), to not cover our heads (for the men; 1Co 11:7), to be chaste (Tit 2:5), to use our gifts for the edifying of the church (Eph 4:12), and many other commands about life. When we do good works before we are born again, we do it with our own power, but after we are saved, we should be doing them through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Being saved is not an end in itself either. God saves us so He can have a relationship with us and walk with us, as it were, “in the cool of the day”, just like God and Adam in the Garden of Eden. Take time each day to speak with God in prayer and to read His Word. An “altogether” Christian develops a relationship with his Savior and loves to spend time with Him. If the Christian does not develop and maintain a personal relationship with the Lord, he may well be one of

those to hear the words “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Mat 7:23).

And finally, it is very important for us to find other Christians, who have Biblical convictions, to regularly meet with (Heb 10:25) for fellowship, exhortation, encouragement, and guidance (Rom 12:4-8; Heb 3:13, and 13:17; plus all the “one-anothering” passages, Gal 6:2; Jam 5:16, 1Th 5:12, etc).

While the Bible teaches that it is necessary to be an active, blended part of a local body which teaches and lives out the Bible, there are some situations where this may not be possible, due to circumstances beyond personal control. However, our God

is longsuffering, gracious, and full of mercy, therefore, He understands when an individual has their heart turned towards Him and is trying to serve Him to the best of their ability in the midst of their situation. If believers find themselves in a less-than-ideal situation and seek God’s leading, He will provide for them in His perfect will and timing.

### Conclusion

When I open a door, and take one step into a house, remaining with one foot outside and one foot inside, am I in or am I out? I could say I am almost in; however, I am also almost out! The Bible teaches that if you are “almost” a Christian, you are still outside the Door.

**“Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able” (Luk 13:24).**

## Good works before conversion do not save us; good works after conversion are our duty.

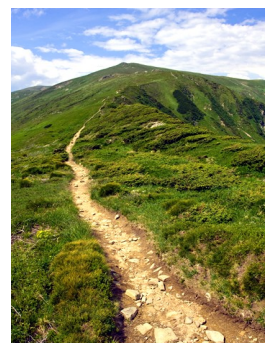


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You  
Must  
Go  
Through  
The  
Door

# Before

You  
Can  
Walk  
on the  
Narrow  
Path



Pavelk/Shutterstock

## *If Jesus Came to Your House*

If Jesus came to your house

To spend a day or two,

If He came unexpectedly,

I wonder what you'd do.

I know you'd give your nicest room

To such an honored Guest,

And all the food you'd serve Him

Would be the very best;

And you would keep assuring Him

You're glad to have Him there,

That serving Him in your own home

Is joy beyond compare!

But when you saw Him coming,

Would you meet Him at the door

With arms outstretched in welcome

To your heavenly Visitor?

Or would you have to change your clothes

Before you let Him in,

Or hide some magazines and put

The Bible where they'd been?

Would you keep right on saying

The things you always say?

Would life for you continue

As it does from day to day?

Would you sing the songs you always sing

And read the books you read,

And let Him know the things on which

Your mind and spirit feed?

Would you take Jesus with you

Everywhere you'd planned to go?

Or would you maybe change your plans

For just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet

Your very closest friends?

Or would you hope they'd stay away

Until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have Him stay

Forever on and on,

Or would you sigh with great relief

When He at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know

The things that you would do,

If Jesus came in person

To spend some time with you.

By Lois Blanchard

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## “I Have Been Wronged”

~ Abridged - unknown author

“I have been wronged,” they say. We have all met them. Every neighborhood has them, the jails are full of them, and church trouble often has its root in them—those people who carry around an attitude of grievance, a bitter, self-pitying, complaining spirit.

They are the ones waiting for those who have wronged them to come and make their wrongs right.

And until that happens they sulk and complain. Perhaps they won't come to church; but if they do, they won't carry any responsibility. They may refuse, in their condemnation of others, to participate in communion. They withhold their financial support. Then as the years go by, their attitude becomes hardened into a personality trait and they become known as people who carry a grudge for something that happened years ago.

Every brother who has served on a committee to adjust any church difficulty knows how the story goes. Almost every division in church history features people who felt that in some committee decision, in some church action, or in some bishop's ruling they had not been treated fairly. “They took away my office,” “They said things about me that were not true,” “They gave me no chance to present a defense,” and so the complaints run.

Where there are humans, there will be injustice. Life is not fair. Even the saved and sanctified are

fallible and, yes, even the church leaders have blind spots, so surely injustice will happen even in church relationships. Probably most people have been wronged at one time or another, or so it may seem. If you have been wronged, misused, set aside, or perhaps think you have, you are not alone; no solitary misfortune has befallen you (1Pe 5:9).

This is not to justify the giving of offense. Jesus said that “offenses must needs come, but woe to that man by whom they come.” However, when a stone of stumbling is thrown our way it is the sensible and Christian response to refuse to stumble. Most such stones can be stepped over or walked around. He is a foolish man who insists on stubbing his toe just because there is a stumbling block in his path.

Life is too short to let any of it be spoiled by moping around. If we have been wronged, we should quickly forgive, let go, respond with a Christ-like love, then go on our way. One does not need to wait until the offender asks to be forgiven. Yes, he should ask, but if he does not, it is his loss, not ours. Let us not warp our souls by allowing and harboring an unforgiving attitude. Love keeps no record of wrong (1Co 13:5).

The wrongs we suffer can be a means toward making our character more holy, Christ-like, and beautiful. The people who wrong us are potential change-

He is a foolish man  
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agents in our lives. Our response determines whether we are becoming more like Jesus or less like Him.

What a testimony it is to the world when Christians refuse to hold grudges! It takes no special grace to cherish a hurt; anybody can do it and many of us do. But only a Christian, one who has put on Christ (Rom 13:14) and who has become a new creature (2Co 5:17), can live above the hurts which come our way. Imagine Christ on the cross complaining, “I have been wronged!” Of course He had, and no one more than He! He was despised, rejected, falsely accused, misunderstood, and forsaken by His friends—He who had done no wrong had been wronged! But He allowed His pain to be turned into the world’s redemption. His life’s example shows us what He meant when He said “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”

Jesus said in Mar 11:26, “But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

Again: Mat 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.”

And again: Mat 18:34-35, “And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”

These Scriptures are clear; no one who claims to follow Jesus can carry a grudge or have within them a bitter, self-pitying, complaining spirit of unfor-giveness. Rather, the Christian looks to the cross of

Christ and trusts the heart of an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Father for whom ALL our life events are tools in His hands, to help “conform us into the image of Christ” (Rom 8:28-29).

Perhaps someone reading this cannot name one person who has wronged him. God bless you! You have forgiven and chosen to “remember it no more” and to have a heart full of God’s love “that covers a multitude of sin,” all according to God’s will. No true follower of Christ says, “I have been wronged,” because they see the hand of their sovereign Lord at work in their lives.

There is a an opposite side to this whole issue, which is reconciliation. According to Matthew 18:15 we are told, “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.” God’s heart in interpersonal relationships is that there would always be reconciliation between offended individuals and with Himself (2Co 5:18-19). The only way this can be accomplished is to develop and maintain open communication between each one involved; however, that is another subject.

In conclusion, the main purpose of this article is to examine the tendency of the human heart to focus on “hurts,” hanging on to them—all the while feeling justified in doing so, without realizing that if we respond in this manner we are actually hurting ourselves and hindering the work of God in our heart.

While we should never leave out the balancing aspect of reconciliation, we should always first take the time to check our own hearts in any given, hurtful situation and ask God to examine us, our attitudes, motives, and responses, so confusion does not settle in and so we do not become self-centered by being focused on ourselves instead of on God and others.

What a  
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**Rom 8:28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. **29** For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

**Gen 50:19** And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for *am* I in the place of God? **20** But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.

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This story has been written by the editor, from a first-person view of a minister's real life experience. The main facts of the story are true and were personally shared with the editor by this minister. Fictitious names have been used and some of the details have been changed, in order to protect identity and maintain a level of confidentiality. Permission was given by this minister to write the story in this manner.

### Dealing Redemptively with Sin

~ C. L. Wenger

Years ago one of our brethren came to me and said, "The other day I was down town at "Jack's Repair Shop", getting my car worked on. While I was there, "Jack" was telling me that "John", from church, was seen the other day, in the early morning hours, on the porch of 'what's her name', you know, that lady who lives on the other side of town". This certainly was troubling, since this particular woman was commonly known to have loose morals. It was also known that men regularly visited her house during the night hours. What possibly could John have been doing there? Surely he wasn't... No, not John, he's a faithful brother in our church, a strong pillar, in fact.

As an ordained minister during the 1970s, I carried a particular concern for our church in the area of church discipline. Several of our founding members had come from a church background that had used some unbiblical methods in the area of discipline, resulting in some reaction. Because of my concern and then seeing the tendency towards this reaction, I had done some preaching on the subject, with an emphasis on the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 18.

Now this. This certainly sounded dire, but what should we do? What should I do? How would God want us as a church to respond in this situation? Adding strength and urgency to the need of doing something about this sooner rather than later was the fact that Jack, the mechanic, was known to be the town gossip, even though he was the deacon of the local Methodist church. Yes, he was known to be a gossip and to exaggerate a story, but could we afford to let this go, with the potential of ruining the reputation of the Gospel, whether the story was true or not?

I urged the brother who had come with the report to personally make contact with John and check

whether the story was true, since that would be the biblical approach. However, as we discussed it further, it soon became clear that there were several legitimate reasons why he should not be the one to go. This left me as the one responsible to follow through on the job (which very often seems so difficult to do) of approaching the accused in order to verify the facts of the story.

I made an appointment to meet with John, the accused brother, and sometime later we were sitting down together in the study. With a heavy heart I gently repeated the gossip I had heard and asked whether it was true. Imagine my surprise as tears started to well up in his eyes and he began weeping uncontrollably. What had happened? I had been careful to not accuse him, but simply repeat the story and ask whether it was true. What a blessing to find out God's Spirit had been at work in his heart and my compassionate, gentle approach had broken down his restraint and potential resistance.

"Yes," he finally choked out, "It is true, I was there, but she didn't answer the door, so no sinful behavior happened; but I went there planning to meet with her, with the intention of sinning, so I really did sin." [see Mat 5:27-28] After a time of repentance, confession, and prayer, John asked me to call his wife to come join us there in the study. After she arrived, he was able to openly and humbly confess his sin to his wife and a time of beautiful forgiveness and reconciliation followed!

Presently, I started thinking about what should be done concerning a public confession. To my pleasant surprise, before I even had time to voice my thoughts, John spoke up and said, "I would like to confess this to the church on Sunday." Praise the Lord, His



Spirit was still quietly at work in this dear brother's heart!

The following Sunday John shared a public confession in church. Tears flowed freely from the brothers and sisters as their wayward brother cleared his heart before them all! They freely expressed their forgiveness, even though his sin had marred their reputation as a church, as well as his own testimony. His open confession had helped to bring healing to the body which had become diseased by his sin.

Several weeks later my car developed a problem requiring a mechanic's attention, so before long I found myself in the company of Jack, as he took a look at the issue. As he worked, true to form, he started asking questions of a personal nature. "Do you still pastor that church on the north end of town?" After getting a yes reply, he then proceeded to tell me the story of John being seen on the porch of 'that woman' during the wee hours of the morning. As soon as I realized which story he was telling me, I stopped him and shared that John had made an open, public confession in church about the matter. Therefore, I informed him that he should not continue telling the story since the matter had been cleared before God and man.

This deacon was amazed that a public confession had been made. It seemed to hit him harder still when I shared that John knew that he, Jack, was telling the story all over town, but John would rather be honest with his sin, and have the facts be known, than have a distorted version spread around. Needless to say, that was the last time I ever heard Jack share any gossip in

my presence, so God was working on even more issues than the one personally involving our brother.

Jesus said, "Go tell him his fault between you and him alone". Too often the practice is, "Go tell whoever will listen." Another mistake we, as a church, have seen as a potential response, is to simply ignore the situation and hope it was not true. Or I could have knocked on the accused brother's door, with a judgment already formed in my mind that he had sinned and thus demanded repentance from him. Instead, God brought beauty out of ashes by means of compassion, tenderness, and honesty.

Today, looking back on that experience, I rejoice to see how God kept me from making the mistakes that I so easily could have made in this type of situation. To Him be all the glory! May God help us to use the redemptive, Biblical approach when we are aware of sin in the fellowship of which we are a part. May God richly bless each one of you, as you endeavor to follow His will for you in the situations He allows you to go through.

Oh, and by the way, you are probably wondering how this situation is doing today, all these years later. People usually want to know, "Does it work?" or "Did it last?". I am happy to say that in this situation, the brother did his part and has continued living a repentant, God-fearing life of simple obedience to Jesus. Today he is still faithfully serving God and is an active, committed part of our local body.

**Joh 8:1** Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. **2** And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. **3** And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, **4** They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. **5** Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? **6** This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not*. **7** So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. **8** And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. **9** And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. **10** When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? **11** She said, No man, Lord. **And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.**



Al Jazeera English - commons.wikimedia

Thousands of Muslims on pilgrimage (Hajj) to the city of Mecca at Al-Haram Mosque

### Muslims - In Need of a Savior

~ Titus Hofer

April 16, 2009

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake. And then shall many be offended,

and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Mat 24:3-13

In this article, we would like to look at the life of one of these false prophets Jesus warned about, and the false belief system that he put into place—a belief system that has blinded the eyes of at least 1 billion people around the world today.

To begin with, what is a Muslim? Who are these people in need of a Savior?

A Muslim is a person who adheres to the religion known as Islam. Islam means submission, and in this context it means submission to the will of Allah. (Allah is the name Muslims use for their god.)

The religion of Islam was founded by a man named Mohammed. His followers consider him to be a great prophet. They say he is a prophet who superseded all other prophets who came before him including the One whom the Muslims call Jesus, the Son of Mary.

Who was this man known as Mohammed? Consider these basic historical facts:

- ◆ He was born in the city of Mecca, Arabia, around 570 AD.
- ◆ He was raised as a polytheist – (as a child he was taught to believe in many gods.).
- ◆ Both his parents had died by the time he reached the age of six.
- ◆ He was sent first to his grandfather and then passed off to his uncle, Abu Talib, to be raised.
- ◆ While on his travels as a caravan driver, he met Christians and Jews on his travels who believed in one God.
- ◆ He was noticed by a wealthy 40-year-old widow named Khadija who was impressed by his abilities. She proposed marriage, which he accepted. They were married when Mohammed was 25 years old.
- ◆ Married to this woman of wealth, he had lots of time to think. He would go out to a mountain cave to fast and meditate. It was there he claimed to have received visions of the angel Gabriel choking him, in order to force him to recite.
- ◆ In these trances he would go into convulsions and fall on the ground.
- ◆ His wife and his cousin Ali became his initial followers, and after a time he began to preach in public, reciting the verses of his (proclaimed) revelations, which came to be known as the Qur'an (Koran). He gained some prominent converts, but the movement grew slowly.
- ◆ Mohammed was ridiculed in the city of Mecca and moved to Medina, a city about 200 miles north.
- ◆ He then began to raid the caravans that passed through Medina.
- ◆ He organized an army and drove the Jews out of Medina, murdering about 700 men.
- ◆ As his forces grew stronger through plunder, he eventually was strong enough to overthrow Mecca.
- ◆ He killed several poetesses and also a nursing mother.
- ◆ After Khadija died, Mohammed married many other women including a 9 year old girl.

- ◆ His immorality is well documented in Muslim literature (A sickening account of one Muslim's discovery of Mohammed's evil deeds can be read in chapter 43 of Nabeel Qureshi's book "Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus", which was written by a Muslim who discovered these revealing details.)
- ◆ He began to "convert" all Arabia to Islam, by using the threat of death and was in control of the whole area by the time of his death, at the age of 63.

**We would like to share 4 reasons why Mohammed is one of the false prophets that Jesus warned would come:**

#### **Reason 1.**

Mohammed claimed that the Old and New Testaments spoke of him. Two passages Muslims use are Deuteronomy 18:18 and John 16:12-13

Deu 18:18, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

Joh 16:12, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13, 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."

In examining Deuteronomy 18:18 we observe that Mohammed was not of Jewish descent and he commanded things that were against the will of God. Mohammed was also not "like unto thee" (referring to Moses.). Moses met God face to face, wrought miracles, and was the meekest of men. This description fits Jesus perfectly, but not Mohammed!

In looking at John 16:12-13, Mohammed's followers say "that's him! Mohammed is the prophet that Jesus was saying would come." But Mohammed was no such comforter. Jesus said this Comforter would be a spirit of truth, not a very sinful man! Jesus said this comforter would dwell within the apostles. Mohammed obviously could not have done that. Jesus also said this Comforter would be with them forever. Mohammed was most assuredly dead and buried at 63 years of age. Many generations of true Christians could testify to a





en.wikipedia.org

A map of Saudi Arabia, showing the location of both Medina and Mecca.

Medina is where Mohammed is buried. Mecca is where the Kabba is located.

Also notice the location and size of Israel to the top, left of the map.

personal experience with the Holy Spirit of a living God that fits this description perfectly.

**Reason 2.**

Mohammed was not a holy man. In 2 Peter 1:21, we read, “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

We will not go into all the details of Mohammed’s personal life, but he was a wretchedly sinful, immoral man. Not only did he do these immoral deeds, but he also had them put in the Koran as permissible.

In Sura XXXIII The Confederates (CIII.) we read:

“And when Zaid had settled concerning her to divorce her, we married her to thee, that it might not be a crime in the faithful to marry the wives of their adopted sons, when they have settled the affair concerning them. And the behest of God is to be performed. No blame attacheth to the prophet where God hath given him a permission.”

So you see when Mohammed wanted personal liberties, he tailored his so-called “holy” book [the Ko-

ran] to fit it in! He was also a murderer. Remember the caravans? Remember the poetesses? Remember the 700 Jews?

Let’s ponder the question. Which man is most worthy of our allegiance? Compare the sensual, sinful, vengeful life of Mohammed with this description of Jesus, written by the Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2:21-24.

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” 1Pe 2:21-24.

That, my dear friends, was written by a man who knew Jesus personally.

**Peter knew that Jesus was guilty of:**

- ◆ Not a single lie.
- ◆ Not a single attack on passing caravans.
- ◆ Not a single act of immorality.
- ◆ Not a single murder of anyone, let alone old women and nursing infants.

And Peter knew that instead of causing others to suffer, Jesus Himself personally suffered for you and for me!

**Oh, if Muslims would only have the courage to compare the sordid character of Mohammed with the spotless character of Jesus Christ, would not the blindness fall from their eyes?**

**Reason 3.**

Mohammad denied the Deity of Christ. Mohammed denied that Jesus was the Son of God. And even today, Muslims cling firmly to that teaching.

If you would go into the third most holy Muslim shrine, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, you would see the Arabic inscription that spells out Islam's denial of Christ, written in three places:

**“Allah has no son”**

Also, Mohammed's words in the Koran in Sura V The Table (CXIV) are:

“Infidels now are they who say God is the Messiah, son of Mary.”

But what does the Bible say?

Isaiah 7:14 “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

Matthew 1:23 “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”

Isaiah 9:6 “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called

Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Here's another passage from the Koran, in Sura IX.1 Immunity (CXIII.)

“The Jews say Ezra is a son of God and the Christians say The Messiah is the Son of God. Such the sayings in their mouths! They resemble the saying of the Infidels of old! God do battle with them. How are they misguided!”

Compare this with:

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Mat 16:13-18

What then is the condition of the over one billion Muslims before God? John 3:36 makes it very clear. Jesus said, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Does your heart not ache for all these poor deluded souls? They are all under God's wrath!

**Reason 4.**

Mohammed was driven by an evil spirit. Consider this quote:

“Stricken with panic, Mohammed arose and asked himself, “What did I see? Did possession of the devil which I feared all along come to pass?”



Zurijeta/Shutterstock

Muslims circumambulating (going around an object of worship) the Kaaba in Mecca. This is the focal point of every Muslim around the world whenever they say their prayers.

Mohammed's first response, and might I add the correct one, was that he was dealing with an evil spirit. God's Spirit does not choke us and throw us into sweating convulsions like Mohammed went into when he prophesied.

2Ti 1:7 "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Mohammed had most likely been exposed to God's truth when he spoke with Christians in his younger days, but when he rejected following Christ, he automatically became a servant of Satan.

Now we will quickly review the 10 points that make up Islamic belief and practice. First, there are the **5 Articles of Islam**, and then there are the **5 Pillars of Islam**.

### 5 Articles of Islam

- 1. One god** – whose name is Allah
- 2. Angels** – every person has two
- 3. Last Days** – when the good one has done will be weighed against his bad deeds.

- 4. Scripture** – Muslims accept the Torah, Psalms of David, the four Gospels, Koran (the words Mohammad said when he came out of his trances, which were memorized and later written down, though he could not read or write)
- 5. Hadith** – recordings of what Mohammed did and said (an appendix to the Koran to help interpret it)

### 5 Pillars of Islam

- 1. Shahada** – There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet
- 2. Daily prayers** – Five times a day toward Mecca
- 3. Almsgiving** – 1/30th of a person's income
- 4. Fasting** – during the month of Ramadan—sunlight hours only
- 5. Pilgrimage** – a once in a lifetime trip to Mecca

Other characteristics of Islamic culture:

### **Women -**

It is a well-documented fact that women are considered inferior to men in many parts of the Muslim world, and in some cases treated most cruelly.



**Jihad –**

“Fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them and lie in wait for them in every stratagem of war. Fight those who do not believe in God in the last day, and fight the people of the Book, and fight them also who do not accept the religion of truth”.

Muslims believe the only way they can know they will go to Paradise is if they die while fighting. This, in part, explains the fanatical zeal of the suicide bombers of 9/11 and groups such as Al Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah. Many Muslims despise the West and want Israel destroyed more than anything else.

**Conversion -**

Converting to Islam is very easy. All one needs to do is make the statement publicly, “There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet.” Well, you say, what if I don’t mean it? It doesn’t matter. Under Muslim teaching that is a genuine conversion. They consider a statement of the lips to be a genuine conversion. The heart does not need to be involved at all.

That is so different from the God we serve, isn’t it? God doesn’t want a lip profession; He wants our heart! Jesus said “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” When the Ethiopian and Philip were in the chariot, and the Ethiopian inquired about baptism, Philip said... “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest”. Christianity is not about getting people to perform certain phrases, prayers, payments, and pilgrimages. Christianity is about a transformed life; a life that voluntarily pours itself out in loving service to a loving Savior.

**Apostasy -**

If you renounce your belief in Islam, you have 60 days to recant. If you do not, you become open game for death. You can renounce Islam the 2nd time, and again have a 60-day chance to repent. But if you renounce it the third time, you do not have 60 days. You can be killed on sight, immediately.

**Conflict -**

Muslims are deeply divided into two main camps, the Shiites and the Sunnis. Muslims do not believe Jesus died on the cross. Some of them say God took Jesus to heaven and replaced Him with someone that looked like Him. Some say Jesus just fainted, and then managed to get out of the tomb when He revived.

But the Bible insists on one thing, which is, that Jesus did indeed die on the cross of Calvary! And if that is true, (and all of history, Biblical and otherwise, supports it) then the passage in the Koran which

claims that Jesus was neither killed nor crucified is false. Like a row of dominoes, the entire Koran comes falling down, because Muslims themselves believe that if there is one error in the Koran, then all of it is false.

In spite of everything we have just considered, Islam is the 2nd largest religion in the world today, with Christianity being listed as number one. This is correct, but only because all the persuasions of religion that call themselves “Christian” are included with that count, even though most of these groups would be “Christian” in name only and would not fit the Biblical definition of “true Christians.” Approximately 65 nations in the world are Islamic today, with nearly half of them being 85% Muslim or higher. India and China both have 100 million Muslims, while Indonesia has nearly 200 million Muslims. This means that today, one out of every 5 people on the face of the earth is Muslim.

What is even more alarming is the rapid growth of Islam in the West. In 1945, England had one mosque (a Muslim place of worship) in the whole country. Today there are well over 1,000, with Muslims outnumbering Methodists and Baptists combined. Think about it – in England, the denominations of John Wesley and Charles Spurgeon together, are outnumbered by the followers of Mohammed. As churches are closing in England they are being reopened as mosques. Even the very church that sent out William Carey, the great missionary to India, is a Muslim mosque today.

The picture is also sobering in the United States and Canada. In 1990, there were 30 mosques in America. Today there are over 3,000, with a new one being established every week.

**What are the reasons for this growth?**

- ◆ Islam is an aggressive religion and is sponsored by oil-rich Islamic nations
- ◆ Muslim’s high birthrate—four or five children vs. two or less for most “Christian” nations
- ◆ An easy to follow religion—recite the creed and you are converted
- ◆ A universal religion—accepts all races and nationalities
- ◆ The vacancy in men’s hearts because many churches are no longer preaching the Gospel

Many Muslim countries are very closed towards Christians. The word “missionary” to them is equivalent to the word “spy”. If you do manage to get

in, you are very handicapped and live there at risk of your own life.

But God is bringing the Muslims to North America, where Christians can reach out to them with relative ease. Dearborn, Michigan, has more Muslims than some entire Islamic countries. More Iranians live in Los Angeles than in every city of Iran itself, except one.

Muslims move here thinking that all Americans are Christians. One of our responsibilities in talking with them is to let them know that “true Christians” are people who **obey** the Word of God. We must make clear to them the teachings of Jesus – that the way to everlasting life is straight and narrow; then, invite them to walk in that way.

### **How can we witness to a Muslim?**

Be a friend, listen, then respond. (We actually have quite a few beliefs in common that make it easier for us to witness to Muslims.)

### **Some similar beliefs we have in common:**

- ◆ One sovereign god over all, who created all things.
- ◆ There will be a Judgment day.
- ◆ In the end, there is a Heaven and a Hell.
- ◆ Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus are from God and everything they said is true. (The way they get around the verses where Jesus indicated that He is the Son of God is by saying that the Gospels have been corrupted).

So ask your Muslim friend what he believes and then listen. Christians don't have to be afraid to hear what Muslims believe because Islam has nothing to offer a born-again Christian.

- 1) They have a dead prophet; **we have a living Savior!**
- 2) They have a God who only loves you if you earn his love by doing a lot of things; **we have a God who loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins!**
- 3) They have no assurance of salvation, because their salvation is based on works; **we can go to rest each night with the sweet assurance that it is well with our soul!**

Let a Muslim tell you what he believes and then ask him “You believe in Jesus, don't you?” They will say “Yes.” (Muslims believe Jesus was a mighty, truthful prophet and that He never sinned.) Then just tell him what Jesus has done for you. How sinful, scared, helpless and hopeless you were before you knew Christ. How frightening eternity looked without Jesus.

Share with them that when you repented, confessed your sins, believed in your heart that Jesus is the Son of God, and surrendered to Christ, that He not only became your Lord and Savior, but also your dearest friend. He has forgiven all your sins and He helps you say “no” to sin, so you can walk in victory and freedom. He gives you peace and rest, and that you love Him so very much, and that you want to live for Him and love Him forever more!

Don't get into an attack mode; don't mention terrorism; don't get into a “my book versus your book” argument. Just talk about Jesus, the Son of the One True God, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures!

It takes love and it takes time to reach Muslims. Relationships are important to them. Many Muslims have been saved simply because someone demonstrated God's love to them. True believers have a special obligation to Muslims. The average Christian has a hard time convincing a Muslim that he is a sinner because the Muslim will say, “I pray and I fast faithfully, I don't drink, I dress modestly, I live a good life – what more is needed to gain eternal life?”

What then can the average Christian say? If you are a true follower of Jesus and you know Him as your personal Lord and Savior, then you know that you have something more to offer them—something more than just trying a little harder to earn their salvation by doing good deeds. You know that “all our righteousness is as filthy rags”, “there is none righteous, no not one”, it is “not of works, lest any man should boast”, and “unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

You can also contribute financially to the various publishing houses that are sharing the Gospel in the form of books and pamphlets. You may not be able to personally travel to Turkey or Egypt, but your gift can help sow many seeds of truth in those countries by way of the printed page.

Please pray for the salvation of the Muslims. Let us do all we can to reach them for Christ. Their ultimate goals are no different than the Christian's goals. They have jobs. They have children. They want to be happy, they want peace in their hearts and they want to go to heaven when they die.

“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” Joh 10:10

**We know that Jesus is the answer  
for the longing of the Muslim heart!**

## THE TWO KINGDOMS AND NONRESISTANCE

- Dwayne Stoltzfus

When Rabbi Lord Jesus walked here among men,  
The truth He proclaimed in the land;  
His message was clear—"Repent and believe,  
For the kingdom of God is at hand."

To all those religious—the scribes of the day,  
This teaching did not go down well;  
"Who authorized you to teach us these things—  
These things about heaven and hell?"

As Jesus kept teaching the kingdom of God,  
His followers furrowed their brows.  
*What did He mean that the ones who can't enter,  
Are those looking back from their plows?*

His teachings roused interest—they seemed so unique,  
So different from what they were taught;  
*"Let's make Him our king right here on this earth,  
And then all is peaceful,"* they thought.

But the mission of Jesus was not to be King  
On a throne that was here on this earth;  
"My kingdom is not of this world," He explained,  
"It's a kingdom of immortal worth."

Now this is not something abstract in the sky,  
That's only for heaven above;  
This kingdom's within you to show to the world  
How God meant for mankind to love.

The kingdom of God is so different, you see,  
From the kingdom this world is in charge;  
These kingdoms stand contrary—one to the other;  
The contrast between them is large.

The theme of God's kingdom is loving and giving;  
It sets His disciples apart;  
Your love for another lets everyone know  
You love God with all of your heart.

Now many believe that my love for my neighbor  
Is only if he loves me first;  
They don't really think Jesus meant what He said  
When he told us to bless those who cursed.

They think they can kill if it's in self defense  
And still show the world Jesus' love;  
But Jesus taught clearly what Christians should do  
When enemies hurt us and shove.

Love them and bless them and pray for them too,  
And give them some water and food;  
Let them slap twice on your face if they try,  
And give up your coat to the rude.

This model He gave us is hard for the flesh  
To really enjoy and feel good;  
We'd rather not hear about crosses and thorns,  
And loving our foes like we should.

Some want to fight back for the rights that they own,  
And try to make peace with the sword,  
Explaining away Bible truths that are clear—  
Ignoring the words of our Lord.

*But what if the enemy enters your house,  
And beats up your wife and your child?  
Shouldn't you hurt him and push him away,  
Resisting the one who's defiled?*

*What about nations who rise up and kill,  
The innocent children galore?  
Are we not morally bound to go fight—  
Bring justice and call it Just War?*

This way of thinking is natural for all  
Who wish for this world to be right;  
But Jesus predicted that bad things would happen,  
And nations would rise up and fight.

But lay aside reason and seriously ask  
A question that's simple instead;  
"What if each word that our Master has taught,  
He meant it—just like He said?"

The mission of Christians is not to take lives  
And try to keep peace on this earth;  
But rather to show people what God is like  
And show them how much they are worth.

When we show the world what Jesus showed us,  
That giving one's life is true love;  
Then His kingdom comes and His will is done,  
On earth as it is up above.

What would it look like if all Christians loved  
As Jesus loved those who hurt him?  
They'd feed them and clothe them and walk extra miles,  
Because of God's kingdom within.

Instead of defending their rights and their lives,  
They'd love and forgive every foe.  
The world would then see the true meaning of love.  
God's kingdom would suddenly grow.

For what will it profit a man if he gains  
The whole world but loses his soul?  
Isn't it better to lose your life here,  
Than save it and miss heaven's goal?

If anyone wishes to follow the Lord,  
Denying yourself is the key;  
You must bear your cross as Jesus bore His—  
Obeying His Word to the T.

So let's show the world how true Christians love,  
Regardless if men think we're odd.  
Let's love one another as Jesus loved us,  
Displaying the kingdom of God.

This poem is not copyrighted. May no one ever do so. It is the author's preference that there be no revisions.  
May it be used to the glory of God, for the edifying of the brotherhood and the furtherance of the kingdom of God.



Dr. Miggiani has graciously agreed to write a medical column in each issue of this magazine, as the Lord leads and gives direction.

The main focus of this column will be to look at medical issues from a Biblical perspective and endeavor to develop awareness on issues and encourage Christian ethics regarding these matters.

Your Comments and Questions are Welcome!

### An Introduction to The Medical Column

~ Wolfgang Miggiani, MD

April 23, 2016

*Christian greetings to my brothers and sisters, subscribers and readers of "The Heartbeat of the Remnant"! It is a privilege to have been asked to contribute to this worthy publication.*

*Before becoming a born-again, baptized Christian 21 years ago, I was in the US Air Force, as a pilot, for almost a decade. During that time, the Lord put it in my heart to turn away from "breaking things and killing people" (the self-professed mantra of the military man) to become a healer of mankind through Christ, as He wills. I am endeavoring to work this out through my current profession, as a full-time, emergency room, medical doctor, which I have been practicing now for the past 18 years.*

*It has been a long road traveled, but I have been greatly blessed to have been accompanied by my cherished wife, Lori, and our eight children. We have two biological and five adopted children which are a great blessing. Additionally, we had another biological son who was killed in a tractor accident approximately five-and-a-half years ago. We currently reside in Holmes County, Ohio.*

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;" 1Pe 1:13

In these times of great uncertainty, it is good to see the concerned brethren, of the board for "The Berean Voice", seek God's grace in inspiring and exhorting the community of believers. For my part, I hope to inspire you to be the best steward possible of the body and mind the Lord has given you. Additionally, I would like to show you how a person can exercise discernment within the multitude of constantly changing medical and psychological theories, practices, and fads that are out there.

In medical school, we were taught about the "bio/psycho/social" view of man. In this view, man is rightly viewed as being more complex than that of simply being a biological machine. One's state of "whole" health is an intricate interaction of three things: his biology, state of mind, and social/physical environment. Think of someone with a chronic disease and how it affects his state of mind and his standard of living—or vice versa—how a poor standard of living or poor state of mind can lead to chronic physical health problems.

To the Christian, this view is incomplete. We are "bio/psycho/social/spiritual" beings. It is by the sovereign grace of God that we are not condemned by the iniquities of our fathers (in a general sense). Neither do our environments, genetics or mental predispositions deprive us of the hope in

God that is set before us. (see Psa 103, Eze 18, Jer 31:29-end, 1Pe 3:9, & Rev 22:17.)

But this is also wherein lies the origin for many of the apparent conflicts between the “medical community” and the “community of believers”. According to the mindset of too many medical practitioners, a person’s “spiritual being” is a mere figment of his or her mental condition. By having this perspective, these medical professionals deny the wisdom and power of God.

It is for this reason, for example, that when studying the effects of spanking, they see no difference between beatings that are done in anger, or “using the rod” in a spirit of love. So it is no surprise that in denying God’s Word (Pro 22; 23; etc.), the results of these “studies” show negative outcomes and Christians are viewed with suspicion. Herein the society of humans is accepted as being sovereign, instead of realizing and accepting the fact that God is the one who is the Creator and therefore the one who sets all standards of life. Many would say that only those in charge of a given society are qualified to make important decisions for that culture, and also for the individuals living therein.

By the same token, if we as Christians put our *individual* opinions above that of God’s written Word, don’t we end up testing Him? For example, we need to be careful about not putting our faith in anecdotal testimonials, that run in contradiction to sound and legitimate scientific studies. In other words, when we place our trust in potentially harmful remedies, while trying to eke out a few more days on earth, it may put us at odds with God’s will for our life.

Our God is supernatural and unconstrained by the laws of physics or biology. In addition to the Bible, He also gave us the tool of science with which to help us improve our physical state. So how do we navigate the complexities of life and medical dilemmas that seem to continually confront us as we go through the process of decay, while on this earth with mortal bodies?

Since the time of Adam, the key to this struggle is in finding the Truth, where neither the pseudo-science of the society of man or the false hopes of the individual is placed above the sovereignty of

God. There is no contradiction in this, and we do not need to deny that miracles still happen. We simply need to recognize that for most of us, God has chosen to enhance the miracle of our lives by using the blessings of science, medicine, and health-care providers that honor Him.

In the next number of magazine articles, I would like to probe deeper into the issues and conflicts in medicine that can pull Christians away from having a close walk with the Lord. Here is a sampling of the type of topics that we could take a look at, in regards to Christian ethics in light of the modern health-care mentality: tainted vaccines, end-of-life complexities, comfort care and the Christian, birth control, homosexuality, opiate addictions, and medical marijuana, just to name a few.

#### Questions:

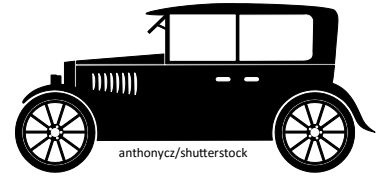
- ◆ Should a Christian have a “zero-tolerance” attitude towards birth control?
- ◆ What principles can we find in God’s Word relating to a “pro-life” vs “planned parenthood” mentality?
- ◆ Should it cause us spiritual concern that some vaccines are manufactured from cultures derived from aborted fetus tissue?
- ◆ If we accept “medical marijuana” as being legitimate, will we someday do the same for alcohol?
- ◆ If a drunkard is barred from entering heaven, should we also be concerned about dependency on other “mood altering” substances?
- ◆ Did you know that “comfort care” tends to be focused on drugging **all** pain, with little or no concern for a clear mind at the time of death?

Just like having a fat bank account can tend to draw us to a life of comfort and away from God, so also can buying into the attitude that “if it feels good or seems to make sense, then it must be okay.” Modern medicine has been the vehicle that makes such things happen. For example, it does this by separating poor healthcare choices from their natural repercussions, as mentioned earlier in this article. It can even change our opinions on what actually constitutes a blessing (as in how we view our children). So join me in the next issue as we delve into these issues and more!





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## What Is Our Child Born With?

~ Kevin Otto  
December 2014

Another popular car rolls off the assembly line. Its shiny paint and gleaming chrome invites us to take a closer look at its many details and qualities. It not only looks sharp, but is equipped with every feature you need to navigate the highways.

Another precious baby arrives in our home. She is tiny and helpless, and yet she comes fully equipped with the “hardware” she needs to go through life. She has been created in God’s image and has everything in place to start developing into the person He wants her to become, with the proper training and teaching.

What is a child born with? What all is included with the “original equipment” package and what is optional? Or, what are the factory “default settings” of a baby? I think all of us that are parents have at times pondered these types of questions, as we have watched our children, from infancy, start responding and interacting with those around them. As we see them becoming aware of themselves and their surroundings, we wonder what they are born with and what they are learning from others.

There are many sources to turn to for information, but it is of utmost importance that we turn to God’s Word and study what He teaches us about children and the correct way to raise them, since it is He after all that created them...

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the

earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Gen 1:26-27)

From these verses we clearly see that we are created in God’s image. Other scriptures also testify to this: Eph 2:10; Act 17:28-29; and 1Co 11:7.

How are we created in the image of God?

- ◆ We are intelligent beings—we are the only part of God’s creation that can think rationally and communicate intelligent thoughts and ideas.
- ◆ We are emotional—nothing else God created is emotional in the sense that humans are.
- ◆ We have a will—none of God’s other creation is given the kind of intelligent free will that man has.

Furthermore, our children are not just a result of passing on our genetics. As human beings created by God in His image, our children come with the traits and characteristics that He has chosen for them. He has specifically designed each one to fill a vital role in His kingdom.

Secondly, our children are also born sinners. As Paul states in Romans 5:12, “Wherefore, as by one man, sin entered into the world, and so death passed upon all man, for that all have sinned.” For additional references that give teaching on this idea, see: 1Co 15:21-22; 1John 1:8-10; & Rom 3:23.

Our children will not tend toward better and better behavior if left to themselves, as the humanists so fondly propose. They are born fleshly and will often allow their selfish desires to lead their behavior if not properly trained. Proverbs 22:15 states, “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”

Do you teach your child to hoard his toys, run around the house pulling books off the shelves, hit other children, or throw food at mealtimes? Or does his sin nature and in-born carnality lead him into such behavior? Does his ignorance of the consequences of certain actions allow him to move forward in ways that will be potentially hurtful or harmful to himself or others? If there is any doubt in your mind concerning the need for parental direction, look up the following verses and give them thoughtful consideration: Prov 13:24, 19:18, 22:15, 23:13, 29:15 & , 29:17.

Besides these two basic characteristics—the imprint of God, and a struggle with carnality—we should consider some other important characteristics native to children.

Children are born with the ability to love and the desire to be loved. What parent has not felt the clinging arms of an infant or heard the words “I love you” whispered by a young child? One of the central themes of the Bible is God’s love for man and His desire that man would love and obey Him in return. We are created to receive and give love. If this were not the case, God’s love would be meaningless to humankind. “We love him, because he first loved us.” (1Jn 4:19)

Children are born with the need to look up to someone with respect and admiration, hopefully their parents. What child, too young to know better, has not said with honest faith, “My Dad can do anything”? Every child looks at their parents as tremendously capable (often more capable than they really are). In a

way, children are born with a desire to idolize someone. This is key, because God wants that in-born desire of idolizing and worshiping someone or something, to be directed to Himself.

Every child comes preset to learn and to want to know. As we know, with all abilities there is a varying degree of correct usage, but the abilities are there nonetheless. We cannot imagine what it would be like to not be able to learn, because so much of our lives consists of learning. The Bible is full of commands on learning about God’s ways and learning to become like Christ. Without the ability to learn, these would all be meaningless.

Every child is born with a desire to please. This desire is a real motivating factor in a child’s life. While there are times that parents wish their child was more willing to please them, and it seems like this ability is weak, it is still there and motivates the child. A child generally wants their parents to be happy with them. If a child senses that something is wrong between them and a parent, even if they don’t know the reason, it will naturally make them sad as well. God has given our children a desire to please us so that as they learn to know and love God, they will also want to please Him.

There are many other aspects that we could consider, but hopefully as we look at some of “what our child is born with,” it will cause us to stop and think about the seriousness of the responsibility that God has entrusted to us. He has given us the solemn charge to mold and train these little ones in His ways. May God give us wisdom to train up our children in the way they should go, as we endeavor to teach and train them to grow up to love God and follow the footsteps of Jesus.

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**Psa 127:1 A Song of degrees for Solomon.** Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain. **2** *It is vain* for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: *for* so he giveth his beloved sleep. **3** Lo, children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* the fruit of the womb *is his* reward. **4** As arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; so *are* children of the youth. **5** Happy *is* the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

**Deu 6:4** Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD: **5** And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. **6** And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: **7** And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

## The Influence of Older Women

~ Mary Ann Smucker

February 04, 2016

“The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness...that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Tit 2:3-5).

It was at a weekend of meetings on the godly home when I saw her. She sat contentedly with her family at the end of the long row of chairs in front of me, where I sat holding one of our six-month-old twin babies, while my husband sat beside me holding the other one. Being a mother of five small children, there were times when the responsibility of raising a godly family loomed before me like an unattainable task. These precious souls the Lord had so graciously entrusted to us were a constant reminder for me to draw into a deeper, richer relationship with my Lord. However, I must admit there were days when the task seemed too big, too heavy, and rather overwhelming. I felt in need of some encouragement.

I glanced across the room again. There was something about this woman’s countenance that was attractive. She seemed to have a rare kind of beauty that appeared to be as one who was full of joy. Her face radiated with the love of Christ and permeated the very atmosphere around her.

...the serene look on her face was one that revealed a life of trials, blessings, and victories...

Her modest dress gave indication of a meek and quiet spirit. Her graying hair was tucked carefully under her head covering. Her very being seemed to be surrounded by a sense of tranquility, while the serene look on her face was one that revealed a life of trials, blessings, and victories; a life of toiling, while in His faithfulness, the Lord had taken her through them all. She was as one who was devoted to her God.

Later that day, during a woman’s talk, I had the opportunity to listen to this godly woman sharing, encouraging all of us in our role of motherhood. I was thrilled. Not the kind of thrill that worldly pleasures bring; this was different. It was the thrill of having a deep longing of the heart fulfilled.

I was one of those young women eager to learn from the older, as taught in Titus 2. As I sat there with eagerness, I was certain God saw the desire in my heart and was bringing it to pass. Enthusiasm welled up within me, inspiring me to rise up to the challenges that motherhood would bring. It would be worth it all on that great day when I would stand before my Savior and present each of my children as a sacrifice to Him. Suddenly, I felt like a queen who had inherited a valuable kingdom. I certainly did not want to fail my Lord.

I never did get to personally know this woman, and likely she will never realize how she influenced my life that day. The impression she left on me was not just a normal, everyday experience but one of those long-lasting, never-to-

be-forgotten ones that seems to leave its mark for a lifetime. It was one of my first experiences (but certainly not the last) in realizing the power of influence that older, godly women hold in our society, something that is not defined by positions of prominence but by their faithfulness and devotion to God and their family.

Going home that day, I felt so inspired. I knew without a shadow of doubt that I wanted to be a godly mother, leaving a goodly heritage for my children. Then the Lord began to work in my heart, as realization dawned on me of the power of influence that I held in my hand. Were there not little eyes watching me day in and day out? Was I not influencing these young ones that graced my life? Surely I was also an older woman teaching my young daughters who wanted to grow up to be “just like Mama.” I began to realize how much my children were learning from me and that I had a wonderful opportunity in life to show the love of Christ by joyfully serving in our home.

Sometimes we tend to feel overwhelmed by the ordinary tasks that seemingly consume our time—our very lives, if you will. It is what we make out of these mundane responsibilities that help build our character. Our attitudes toward these things express clear messages to our children. They will either see chores as being a drudgery, something that just needs to be done every day, or they will see it as an opportunity to serve in the home.

Special occasions, projects, and events can all be fun times, but what really counts is when we can take those ordinary tasks that repeat themselves day after day and do them with a pleasant attitude—with joy and enthusiasm.

Learn to find ways to make these tasks enjoyable, not only for yourself, but also for your children. Teach them the blessing of work. For example, you can teach them that if we did not have extra clothes to wear, there would not be as much laundry to do. And if it were not for having plenty of food to eat, we would not need so many dishes. Therefore, we can be grateful that we have sufficient food and clothes, while doing the extra work with thanksgiving in our hearts.

And then there is that quiet time spent with the Lord, which can make such a difference in our day, in

our responses, and in our character. It isn't always easy for moms with many children to find this quiet time. One thing I tried to make good use of was the time I sat down to nurse my babies. This can be a wonderful time to pray. Or you can have your children join you in prayer or Bible reading. Nowadays, we also have the privilege of listening to audio recordings of the Bible or other godly books, which is something our children have greatly enjoyed.

Having a period of quiet time after lunch greatly enhances our vitality, as well. This is a time when Mom can take a nap along with the younger children, while older ones take the opportunity to read books or work on some type of project that is quiet and will not disturb those who are resting. We have found this to be a real blessing. On our daily work chart, as we home school, we have our three R's in the morning of “reading, ‘riting, and ‘rithmetic.” In the afternoon we have an hour of a different kind of three R's which we call “rest, relaxation, and refreshment.” Getting a proper amount of rest and nutrition, along with spiritual nourishment, will all affect how we respond to situations in life. It is in how we respond to these things that build our character and make us women of virtue and strength.

For us to experience the life that is filled with His presence and with His Spirit, we need to continually yield ourselves to the lordship of Christ. We need to practice what Romans 8:12-14 says; “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

Finally, as we practice this in our daily lives, we will be able to minister to others in many ways, even without words, just like that sister ministered to me, never realizing the impact she left by the way she allowed herself to be used of the Lord. Therefore, never underestimate the power of influence that your life can hold. Whether you are married or single, you never know who is looking up to you as an example for their own lives.

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## Lessons from the Maple Tree

~ Marcia Zimmerman

February 10, 2016



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The air hung heavy and still that hot, humid, August afternoon on a little property in New Holland, Pennsylvania. The heat shimmered off the long, gray broiler barns that stood in stark contrast to the brown brick house, which was cool and inviting inside, since my mother had all the curtains and blinds drawn to protect the house from the heat. Lunch was over and the dishes were washed.

"Children," my mother said to me and three of my siblings, "I am going to put the little ones down for a nap, and I want you to bring in the laundry from the line while I am doing that." Groans erupted inside my heart although I knew it would do no earthly good to let them be heard aloud. As I trudged along with my siblings to the clothesline in the yard, even the grass felt hot beneath my bare feet. The towels hung stiff on the line, silent witnesses to the lack of strong, cool breezes in the summer afternoons in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Who felt like doing this job on such a hot afternoon?!

The maple tree stood tall and strong by the clothesline, its lovely beautiful green leaves spreading their welcoming shade toward me. I stood gazing up into that big, beautiful tree (procrastinating from my work). On impulse, I grabbed a washcloth and climbed onto the lowest branch, declaring that I would do my share of the work, up in the tree. One washcloth is quite a measly contribution to pulling my weight in the work force of the home. I know it now, and I knew it then, but I certainly did not choose back then to let that stop me from acting on a whim, without carefully considering God or others. Impulsive living is that way. It

only focuses on the here and now, and not on the effect our actions will have on others and ourselves.

My sister, who was much more dependable and much more diligent than I had proven to be, stopped her work to appeal to my bad behavior. Wrapping her arms around the tree branch on which I sat, she peered up at me with a laugh, and a call for me to come down from the tree. Suddenly, without warning, that tree branch shook just enough for me to lose my balance (remember, I was folding that washcloth!). Down from that branch I tumbled onto the hot grass below. Immediately, searing pain in my right wrist caused me to scream in pain, writhing on the ground, while my siblings looked on in shock and concern at their sister's plight.

My screaming brought my mother to the upstairs window. After looking out and seeing the emergency that was unfolding on the yard below, she quickly called my father, who was at work.

I was sad as my mother cut the sleeve of my favorite dress to help me get ready to go to the hospital, but she assured me that it could be mended. It was far from a fun trip to the hospital. Every bump in the road or shifting of my arm caused tingling pain to radiate through my arm. Once at the hospital, my arm was examined and X-rayed. Then came the news that my arm was broken and would need to be in a cast for six weeks. What a long, long time that seemed to me as an eight-year-old girl.

Six weeks of beautiful summer weather and I could not go biking with my siblings. I could not go swimming with my cousins. I could not swing very



easily on the swing set. As much as I loved to read, now even that became tiring and boring, because it was about the only activity I could do.

Then, almost before I knew it, summer was over. I walked into the hospital with my father that day, six weeks later, and had my cast removed and the doctor's stamp of approval that I was healed. My, how weak that arm was! I remember trying to shell lima beans later that same day, but I just couldn't do it with that weak hand! The next day, school started and I realized that I had spent six weeks of my summer vacation with my arm in a sling.

Children, as I look at the story from the perspective I have now, as a grown woman in my 40's, I have some thoughts I want to share with you. Maybe my story and the unwise choice I made can put a caution in your own heart when you are tempted to disobey your parents, or in some other way to walk outside of God's will.

That day, when I climbed the tree instead of doing the task my mother gave to me, I chose to walk contrary to God's will. You see, He has perfectly arranged for people to walk in protection inside the plan He created for us. He commissioned my parents to be my protectors and my teachers, but I rose up in rebellion that day to live life my own way. God does not smile at that, my friends. Also, in my disobedience, I created a ripple-like effect, much in the same way a stone does when it is thrown into a pond. My wrong decision caused problems which spread out to touch the lives of others besides my own.

My mother, who was putting my siblings down for their naps, had to be interrupted from her task. My siblings didn't get their naps when they should have. My father had to be called home from work to take me to the hospital and we had to wait there until it was confirmed that my arm had been broken. Then my father had to pay money for the hospital visit, the cast, pain medication, X-rays, and gas to drive me to and from the hospital. For six weeks, I could not be depended on to do many jobs around the house, which made it necessary for others to fill in for me and do extra work. I could not do many of the fun summer

things with my siblings and friends, that children like to do.

At last the doctor took the cast off, but summer was over and school had begun, leaving little time for those kinds of activities anymore. Then I still needed to have extra help for a number of days after I had the cast off, since my arm was so weak from all the inactivity. This caused continuing inconvenience for others who already had busy schedules.

God was gracious to me in my rebellion. He provided an opportunity in my growing-up years to show me that it is not without consequence when we rebel and go our own way. My parents cared for me in my disability and used the opportunity to teach me things I needed to think about. This whole experience still brings many memories back to me, all these years later, some of learning lessons, but some also of blessing in the midst of my trouble.

A man from our church, who had fallen from a roof while helping to build a new church in New York, called to wish me well when he heard that I had broken my arm. (That still blesses me all these years later!). And my grandma gave me some gum and a scrapbook of pictures and poems which she had made for me. Though I did not deserve any of those things, God still graciously showed me mercy through them, in the midst of a very painful lesson learned.

I did not think of all these things until many years later, after God had taken me through some very difficult experiences to break me of the desire to live life my own way. I am so glad that He has pursued me in this way and did not give up on me. I am happy now to live my life the way God planned for me, because it truly is the best way to live. Also, I appreciate that God had my parents there in my life to help me learn lessons along the way. I encourage each one of you to obey your parents, turn your hearts toward God, and live humbly within His will for you in every situation.

God bless you all.



Eight-year-old Marcia with her broken arm



Dennis Cox/Shutterstock

## How Shall We Find Water?

~ A. Clair Auker

October 2015

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Recently a brother, whom we'll call "Andrew," decided to have a new well drilled, since his old one was repeatedly running dry. When the drilling rig arrived, the driver "George" jumped out, holding two wires in his hands.

"What are they for?" asked Andrew. "To find water?"

"Yes," George replied. "Is that okay with you?"

### The Question

What should Andrew have said?

### What Is Dowsing?

Dowsing for water, or water smelling, is a method of searching for underground water. The custom is hundreds of years old, if not thousands.

Typically, a dowser uses a tool known as a divining rod. Often it is a Y-shaped stick from a tree. The dowser holds the ends of the branches, with the stem pointing forward, as he walks over the search area. The rod is to indicate water by suddenly pulling downward.

Other dowsers use L-shaped metal rods, holding one in each hand like a pistol. The rods are to indicate water by crossing each other or by swinging apart, depending on the dowser.

Some use a pendulum, which moves in different ways to mean different things, again depending on the dowser, who first "programs" it.

Some dowsers use their bare hands to just feel for a tingling sensation.

Dowsing is used to find not only the location of a water source but also its depth and rate of flow, such as by counting how many times a rod bobs up and down in the dowser's hands. Many dowsers say their methods can be used to find anything hidden—oil, minerals, lost keys, etc.—and even answer other questions. Some also claim to find things from a distance by holding a pendulum over a map.

### How Does It Work?

What moves the divining rod? Is it a known physical force? Various explanations have been given through the years, often involving electricity or magnetism, but they just raise more questions.

### Please give these questions careful consideration.

- 1) If the force is electrical, how could it be strong enough to pass through many yards of earth, which is a poor conductor, and reach the rod without injuring the dowser?
- 2) If it is magnetic, it must be even weaker than the earth's magnetic field; otherwise anybody could find water with a compass. How then could it be

strong enough to move a dowsing rod, sometimes with such force that the dowser can't stop it?

- 3) If a dowser's body electricity somehow amplifies the force, what violence would he experience when exposed to a vastly stronger source like a lantern battery or cow magnet close at hand?
- 4) Can flowing water induce electrical or magnetic fields in the first place?
- 5) How could electricity or magnetism move a wooden stick?
- 6) How can such a wide variety of materials and methods all work to detect water?
- 7) When a rod or pendulum is used to measure depth or flow, how does it "know" what unit to count—feet or meters, gallons or liters?
- 8) When you pick up sticks while cleaning the yard, why don't they jump in your hands?
- 9) If a physical force is involved, why can't we measure it with a simple device, just as we can measure temperature or voltage and get consistent results no matter who is reading the instrument?

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In the many studies that have been done, dowsing generally did not work under scientific scrutiny. The consensus among scientists is that it works no better than chance. They say it often appears successful because in many areas water is so widespread you can drill almost anywhere and find it. (This information was obtained from numer-

ous websites, including Wikipedia, and from booklets on the subject, printed by several conservative printing houses.)

Indeed, dowsers themselves admit there is no scientific explanation. Yet they firmly believe in it, and there are many accounts that seem to prove it works. (This information was obtained from dowsers' own websites, which would be completely in agreement with the practice.)

So let's assume it does work, at least in some cases. Since we have no physical explanation, we must reckon with the possibility that a spiritual power is at

work. This raises a serious question for the Christian. Is the power from God or from Satan?

The testimony of "expert" dowsers themselves supports the conclusion that the power is spiritual. They say you have to believe in it to make it work. They speak of a sixth sense, detecting waves with the mind, listening to the language of the earth, being in a receptive state of mind, asking questions of your divining rod as you work. They say anyone can learn to dowse, but some can do it better than others because individuals vary in their psychic abilities. (Again this is coming from the dowsers' own information.)

Does the term psychic give us a clue as to what power is at work? Why is water smelling commonly known as water witching or divining for water? Why is the tool called a divining rod? Why do people involved in the occult, put dowsing (also known as rhabdomancy) in the same category as practices such as Ouija, crystal gazing, table tipping, and automatic writing? If the world calls dowsing, divination, should there be any doubt in the Christian's mind as to where it belongs?

### What Does God Say?

While the Bible does not refer directly to water witching, it has much to say about divination. God called it an abomination. He drove out the Canaanite nations because of it, and He forbade the Israelites to practice it (Deu 18:9-14). Later He exiled them for practicing divination, among other sins (2Ki 17:17). He equated it with rebellion (1Sa 15:23). Look up divination or sorcery in a topical Bible or a concordance, to find many more scriptures revealing God's hatred of divination.

Especially relevant is Hos 4:12,

"My people ask counsel at their stocks [sticks], and their staff [a shoot, a stick for divining] declareth unto them: for the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God."

While this may not refer specifically to water dowsing, it describes exactly what dowsers say they do—use a divining stick and ask it questions. As this verse indicates, people practice divination because they have gone astray from God, and the practice leads them further astray. Like Saul, they are not getting answers from God, so they seek them elsewhere.

When a damsel with a spirit of divination met Paul, Silas, and Luke in Philippi, she actually stated the

truth (Act 16:16-18). But Paul did not say, “She has a gift from God and she is doing a good service for mankind.” Nor did he say, “She must be using some force that science has yet to discover.” Rather, he recognized the demonic source and commanded the spirit in the name of Christ to come out, even though the act landed him in jail.

This is not to suggest that every water dowser is demon possessed. But using divination opens a door for the devil to gain a foothold in an individual’s life.

Some Christians see water witching as innocent because they know of other Christians who practice it. However, this reasoning can justify many sins. What should be our standard: other Christians, or the Word of God? No doubt every experienced disciple can testify of times in his Christian life when he repented of an old practice because God helped him see it as sin. That is Christian growth.

The Christian also understands that just because something works does not make it right. When Moses struck the rock twice, it worked—“the water came out abundantly” (Num 20:11). But he had disobeyed God, and it cost him the promised land.

### The Answer

Andrew told George that he was not comfortable with the use of divining rods, and that his chosen method was to pray for God’s direction. George consented and followed Andrew to the site he had prayerfully selected. Before long the drill bit struck a good aquifer, and then another one.

Testing revealed a flow rate of 80 gallons per minute—far beyond the old well’s 10 gpm, and to Andrew’s knowledge, the best of any well in the area. Although George didn’t have much to say, Andrew’s testimony of faith must have spoken loudly.

God could have answered Andrew’s prayer a different way and tested his faith further. Like Isaac of old, Andrew could have had to dig yet another well. But regardless of the outcome, he

would still have the blessing he is enjoying now, worth far more than any well of water—a clear conscience. His sensitivity to God was sharpened by listening to the Holy Spirit, not dulled by listening to the spirit of divination. He had drawn closer to God by following His way, rather than giving the devil a foothold by dabbling in witchcraft.

His sensitivity to God was sharpened by listening to the Holy Spirit, not dulled by listening to the spirit of divination.



~cont. from Editorial on page 3

#### **Topics we hope to cover in future issues:**

- ◆ Clear, simple Biblical teaching on the New Birth.
- ◆ Walking in the Light, as He is in the Light.
- ◆ Being in the world, but not of it.
- ◆ The Christian and politics.
- ◆ Current events and the church.
- ◆ New Testament church functioning.
- ◆ Godly home functioning.
- ◆ Training up children to walk in Truth.
- ◆ Resolving interpersonal conflicts.
- ◆ Dealing with problems in the church.
- ◆ Identifying false religions.
- ◆ Identifying New-Age philosophies.
- ◆ Identifying apostatizing Biblical views.
- ◆ Biblical views on counseling issues.
- ◆ Biblical views on mental health issues.

#### **Ways you can help with this work**

- Pray for God’s guidance and His will to be done.
- Pray that God’s Kingdom would be built up.
- Consider supporting the work financially.
- Consider writing articles for the magazine.
- Consider being available to draw or sketch.
- Consider sending in high quality photographs.
- Consider sending in sketches or drawings.
- Send us suggestions for authors.
- Send us suggestions for artists.
- **We urgently need children’s stories**
- **We urgently need sister’s articles**
- **We urgently need finances, with this being our first issue and having extra initial expenses.**

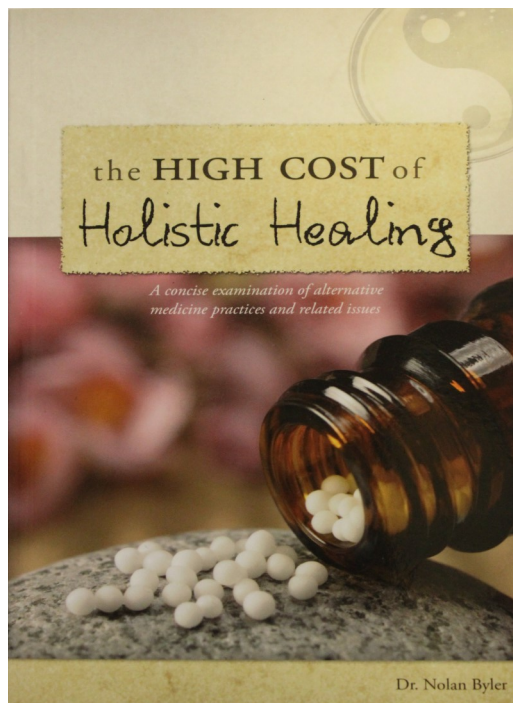
May God richly bless each one, ~ C. L. Wenger

## BOOK REVIEW

### *“The High Cost of Holistic Healing”*

Book Review

~ C L Wenger



In this small, easy-to-read book, Dr. Nolan Byler writes on the issue of alternative medicine, occultic practices, witchcraft, and New-Age or Eastern medicine. He has a very unique hands-on awareness of these issues from the many years spent fulfilling his duties as a Mennonite bishop and a medical doctor.

His occupation in medicine and his position as a leader in the church has given him many opportunities to interact with people who have been involved in these methods. He has seen, both, the blessing of those who have become aware of the error of these practices and repented, and the fruit of those who refuse to see anything wrong with their participation in these matters and continue their involvement in them.

As mentioned before, this book is small, only 51 pages in length, but don't let that fool you; it is packed with lots of practical information regarding this subject. The writer starts off by laying a Biblical

foundation and then goes right into the heart of the matter. He not only uses big words, in order to be clear about what he means, but he also tries to explain the more difficult terms for those of us who are not as familiar with modern medicine and the various alternative practices.

The author seems to breathe fresh air into a focus on this subject by being Biblical, clear, and to-the-point, while at the same time having a balanced, common-sense approach not found in some discussions on alternative medicine and witchcraft. He also uses numerous short stories from his personal interaction with others, to help bring clarity to his concern. Then in the last chapter, he shares a simple, Biblical, point-by-point response for someone who desires to repent and spiritually clear themselves, after having been involved in any of these questionable methods.

Throughout the book, many different points are mentioned only briefly, along with a very short explanation. This seems to be done in such a way as to raise awareness, stimulate thinking, and provoke discussion. For those who would have a desire to be like the Bereans (Acts 17:10-11) and search these matters out for themselves, the author uses Scripture for foundational points and in the back of the book he gives a list of other resources that can be used to do further research.

This book is recommended reading for a brief overview and beginning study on the subject. It can also be used as a ministry tool to give to others who may be involved in any of these questionable practices. Additional copies can be purchased from “Ridgeway Publishing” or possibly from your local bookstore.

**Ridgeway Publishing**  
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## **\* Food for Thought \***

***“What if we would use our Bibles the same way we use our mobile phones?”***

- ◆ **Carry it in our pocket, everywhere we go.**
- ◆ **Open and read in it multiple times a day.**
- ◆ **Make sure we have it with us at all times.**
- ◆ **Turn around to get it, when we forget to take it with us.**
- ◆ **Keep it within arms reach when we are sleeping.**
- ◆ **Read in it, as the last thing we do before going to sleep.**
- ◆ **Upon waking from sleep, open it to see if there is anything new to know.**
- ◆ **Make sure our children know how to use it, in case of an emergency.**