

1Ti 2:8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Tit 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

Jas 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

Jas 1:20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Advanced Study:

There are seven Greek words that are translated into anger, angry, and wrath in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible. The following shows the Greek word transliteration to English characters, and the Strong's number. Then it shows how the KJV of the Bible translates them and the number of times they are translated that way.

On the blog there are links which take you to the Blue Letter Bible lexicon, which provides further information and a list of all the scriptures where these words are found.

- thymos G2372 KJV - wrath 15, fierceness 2, indignation 1
- orgE G2709 KJV - wrath 31, anger 3, vengeance 1, indignation 1
- orgilos G3710 KJV - soon angry 1
- orgizmos G3711 KJV - be angry 5, be wroth 3
- parorgizo G3949 KJV - anger 1, provoke to wrath 1
- parorgismos G3950 KJV - wrath 1
- cholaO G5520 KJV - be angry 1

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MoreChristLike.Com

POB 263, Aylmer Ontario, Canada N5H2R9

Contact: Bob Mutch

Tel: 519-636-6636

Email: bobmutch@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.MoreChristLike.com>

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Using Harsh Language

I have been reading a book by Peter Hoover called *The Secret of the Strength (SOS)*. I have found it interesting and informative. It introduces the reader to many different Anabaptist leaders and writers, and shows what they taught on a number of different subjects.

I have to admit that, while reading through this book, I have been surprised to find judgmental and harsh attitudes that some of the leaders held towards those that disagreed with them.



In chapter 15 - On to Visibility, where the sacraments are discussed, I found examples of extreme harshness that really helped me to see myself a bit better.

Lately, (even before I realized how harsh Menno and Dirk were) I found myself toning down much of what I wrote. I have been toning down in my blog, and especially in the articles in which I have written on OTVC (One True Visible Church), and on sin-free living. Many times as I write, I have been corrected by the Lord after I had stated things in a harsh way. I would then have to go back through an article and tone things down. I have been doing the same with my posts on web forums.

Quoted below are a number of what I feel are very harsh and intolerant statements that I found in the SOS book:

“To this, Dirk Philips replied:

Something horrible is coming up like smoke from the depths of the pit to hide the brightness of the sun. This is Sebastian Franck’s teaching that the holy rites instituted by Christ are no longer important, and that they are like a baby’s things and child’s play. Franck says the visible sacraments are weak elements, and no longer necessary. . . . To this coarse blasphemy I reply: Who has ever written so shamefully of the holy rites as Sebastian Franck? Shall God permit the devil to do with the sacraments whatever he wants?

It is an unendurable blasphemy for Sebastian Franck, a scorner of God and the sacraments, to look upon the first Christians as

from sin through faith (1Pet 1:5).

5. Confession - Any actions of anger that you have expressed towards another person needs to be confessed first to God, and then to the person you expressed them toward. Immediately, when you realize you have acted in a way that is below the Gospel standard, go and pray and ask God to help you, empower you, and forgive you.

Pray until the feelings of anger go away. Cry out to God and plead the blood of Jesus. Then go to the person and humble yourself, taking all blame to yourself, and confess and ask for forgiveness. If they are a Christian, it may be in order to ask them to pray with you and for you. Let them know you take these things serious and that you are looking to Jesus for complete victory.

When you humble yourself in this way, the Word of God promises grace. “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble (Jas 4:6). A commitment to ask others for forgiveness brings with it a shame factor that also helps you resist wrong attitudes and conduct.

6. Entire Sanctification - Anger is the result of the carnal nature. When we are saved, God gives us grace to suppress the carnal nature. In the work of entire sanctification (sanctify you entirely” 1The 5:23 NRSV), he removes the sinful nature and gives us a pure heart (Act 15:9). This is a very important step for the Christian. The Bible also refers to this experience as the “promise of the father” or the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit”.

Applicable Scriptures:

Gal 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, **wrath**, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Eph 4:26 Be ye **angry**, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your **wrath**:

Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness, and **wrath**, and **anger**, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Col 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; **anger**, **wrath**, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

must reject the idea that this is a weakness or a sin that you will have to bear for the rest of your life, or you will not be able to get victory over it.

There is power in the name of Jesus to deliver and keep you from all sin and help you perfect holiness in the fear of God. God is able to make all grace abound toward you, and to help you grow in patience and meekness and have greater victory in your life.

Also, it is important to not overlook your conduct just because it may only happen once in awhile. The Christian graces you have are only as high as they are at your worse moment. You are only as spiritual as you are in your lowest conduct. What comes out of your life in the middle of your worst trial is what was there all along.

2. Flee to Christ - Whenever you start to feel irritated, frustrated, or annoyed, you must stop everything you are doing and go and pray. If you are at work, you should go and take a restroom break and pray there. Pray until you have the victory over these feelings. You may need to take a break from what you are doing and come back to it later if you find the task annoying. The reason Christians get upset or angry is because they do not go to prayer and seek God for help, but keep on going in their own strength. This is where failure comes in.

3. Hearing and Following the Voice of God - You must learn to listen and hear the voice of God. He will be faithful to warn you that temptation is on its way and that you need to pray. You must make it a matter of prayer every day that God will help you to hear His quiet voice of warning. Then, when you hear it, you must heed it. How many times have you gotten into trouble by overriding the voice of the Lord?

4. More Faith Through Prayer and the Word - Anytime you have a lack in your Christian walk, you need more grace and faith. By reading the Word of God and seeking God in prayer, your faith will be increased.

You build faith by hearing the Word of God (Rom 10:17), and by praying in the Holy Spirit (Jud 1:20). It is by faith that you stand (2Cor 1:24; Rom 11:20), by faith that you have victory over the world (1Joh 5:4), by faith that you quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one (Eph 6:16), and you are kept by the power of God

children who played with rag dolls, while he claims to have reached spiritual manhood. As if Jesus Christ, the apostles, and the first Christians did not have the Holy Spirit because they used outward elements in connection with faith! What abominable presumption and blindness! A man contradicting Christ and rejecting his rites. What foolishness of heart!”

“Menno Simons wrote:

Do not say, as some do, “I will renounce the (state) church and idolatry, I will serve my neighbour, etc., but I do not wish to be baptized.” Oh you blind men! Do you think the Lord is pleased if you reject his counsel and Word? No. He desires obedience and not sacrifices.”

“Dirk Philips wrote:

I must warn my brothers and sisters against proud despisers of the commands of Christ – men who have no regard for baptism, which Christ himself instituted, which the apostles so earnestly practiced, and to which the holy writings give such a prominent place. The nighttime meal is of no significance to them.”

“Menno Simons wrote:

If we do not perform the nighttime meal and baptism, or if we perform them differently from what God has commanded, we have by our disobedience neither covenant nor promise. Whoever teaches you differently deceives your soul.”

This is all quoted from chapter 15 of SOS, On to Visibility:

In the quotes above, they use terms like “coarse blasphemy”, “scorner of God”, “foolishness of heart”, “blind men”, “proud despisers”, and “deceiver your soul”.

This indeed is very harsh language to use towards others that you disagree with. While I am a strong believer in baptism, I could not call others such harsh names if they disagreed with me.

The following is a better way to write about others. The first clause is from the above quotes, and the second clause is what they could have used to convey what they were saying without appearing to be so harsh, condemning, and arrogant.

to this coarse blasphemy -- to this unscriptural position
scorner of God -- dishonoring to God
foolishness of heart -- lacking proper judgment

blind men -- not clearly understanding
proud despisers of the commands -- not taking serious the
commandments
deceiving your soul -- leading you in a wrong way

I am seeing that these kinds of condemning statements are not proper, and even if they do not come from an arrogant heart, the statements themselves appear to be arrogant.

Arrogance – offensive display of superiority or self-importance; overbearing pride.

Arrogant – making claims or pretensions to superior importance or rights; overbearingly assuming; insolently proud:

When we are writing to others, our aim should be to correct them in meekness and love. We want to be careful that we are not more of a hindrance than a help to them. When we correct others, we want to win them, not insult them and further alienate them from what we consider the truth.

Now, I realize that Jesus and others in the New Testament used strong language towards those that were in sin - and especially those that were hypocrites - but I am referring to other professing Christians that disagree with us in what we teach.

Anyone can stir up the devil. Anyone can rail on others. But it takes wisdom to correct and point out what we consider faults in a way that will win people and not alienate them.

I have seen a lot of this being done in the writings of D.S. Warner and in the writings and preaching of the Church of God Restoration.

Those that rail on others and use disparaging language need to check their hearts for arrogance. I know this has caused me to check my heart, and the Lord revealed something to me that I did not know was there, and I have repented over it.

May God help us all to deal with our fellow Christians in a way that becomes the meek and lowly spirit of Jesus.

Here are some scriptures to meditate on concerning this issue:

1Co 4:21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

Gal 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are

of the hardness of their hearts (Mat 3:5), and began (Joh 2:15) and finished (Mar 11:15) his ministry by driving the money-changers out of the temple.

One of the qualifications of an overseer is that he is “not soon angry” (Tit 1:7). Jesus said that “whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment” (Mat 5:22). We are told as Christians to put away (Eph 4:31) and put off (Col 3:8) anger and if we are angry to not sin (Eph 4:26) and that we should be “slow to anger” (Jam 1:19 YLT).

Paul warns us that “fits of rage” (Gal 5:20 NIV) are one of the works of the flesh, and that “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal 5:21). Some people are meek and mild by nature, and do not have much of a problem with anger even before they were converted. To others, this can be an area in their life that has been a weakness and they have had failures in this area even after being born again.

My Personal Experience

This area was a big weakness in my life, and I can testify by the grace of God and to the glory of Jesus that I have complete victory in this area of my Christian walk. There was a time in my life before I was converted that I would very quickly get upset and angry when things did not go my way. I would be verbally abusive toward others, or bang and kick things around.

Even after I was saved, I had to deal with strong temptations to get upset and often had to suppress strong feelings of annoyance, frustration, and irritation. I know what it is like to personally struggle with and suppress feelings of anger, but I am thankful that I have found complete victory in this area in my life. After I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which purifies the heart from the sin nature (Act 15:9), all feelings of anger were completely eradicated, and I no longer have those feelings that I used to have to suppress.

I feel for those that have struggles in this area, and if we have spouses or Christian brothers and sisters that are struggling in these areas, we need to uphold them in prayer and exhort them to look to Jesus for complete victory.

Six Steps to Victory

1. Attitude Change - You must change your attitude towards whatever degree of anger you are dealing with in your life. You

Victory over Anger

Anger is a response to something that a person considers negative that has happened around them or to them. It is an emotion which has various levels of intensity and different responses.

People undergo changes in their personality when they get angry. They often are no longer in control, become irrational, and say or do things that they later regret.



Different Degrees of Anger

There are different words in the English language used to describe the different degrees of the emotion anger. Within each of these terms, there are also different degrees where they move from one term to another. For example, being very frustrated and getting upset are similar, and being very upset and starting to get mad are also similar.

I have come up with five different groups of words that represent five different levels of anger. 1) annoyance, frustration, and irritation, 2) cross, 3) angry or upset, 4) mad, and 5) rage or wrath.

As Christians, we are going to deal with minor irritation, frustrations, and annoyances in this life as long as we are in this body. But these feelings can be contained and controlled by the grace of God so that they do not advance into the realm of acting cross or being angry, upset, mad or going into a rage.

I would hold that irritation, frustration, annoyance and being cross are not sin, but getting mad and going into a rage is definitely sinful and should never be once named among those that profess the name of Christ.

Jesus displayed a righteous anger towards the Pharisees because

spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Col 3:12, 13 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Eph 4:2, 3 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

2Ti 2:24, 25 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

Tit 3:2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.

Jas 3:13-17 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

1Pe 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

While the Bible tells us to “rebuke them that sin before all, that others also may fear” (1Tim 5:20), this does not mean that when you rebuke someone you have to use disparaging rhetoric like Menno and Dirk did.

You will not see any of this when Paul rebuked Peter (Gal 2:11-14). He said things like “he was to be blamed”, “carried away with their dissimulation”, “walked not uprightly”. This (I think) was very acceptable.

When John reprovved Diotrephes for not accepting some of the

brethren and casting those that did out of the congregation (3Joh 1:9, 10), the words he used were not like Menno's or Dirk's. The most forward thing John said was that they were "prating against us with malicious words".

When Paul spoke of Alexander the coppersmith to Timothy, all he said was that he "did me much evil" (2Tim 4:14). He did not rail on him with the kind of rhetoric that Menno and Dirk used.

We are told to "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him" (Pro 26:4). The reason not to answer a fool according to his folly is clearly stated as "lest thou be like unto him". We are not to imitate a fool in the way he speaks. Fools will speak insultingly, coarsely, undignified, make personal attacks, use obscene language, be abusive, and will be full of derision, contemptuousness and mockery.

Using harsh language towards other Christians that disagree with you comes from a lack of love, a lack of understanding, or from an arrogant attitude; or perhaps from all three. May God help us all to stand free from dealing with others in a harsh manner, but rather may we show our love and concern by following the above scriptural examples.

God Promises Complete Victory over All Sin

I added another scripture to this list, so I am republishing it. Plus, I want to encourage everyone to memorize these 11 scriptures. These will be very good to have around to meditate on when you are being tried and tempted.

1Co 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the



courtship, not giving into the flesh. You see them stand there and look into one another's eyes with intense love.

Jesus is the bridegroom, we are the bride of Christ. To think that it is normal for a Christian to prostitute themselves to the devil by sinning makes no more sense than for that lovely, newly-married wife to go to the bar by herself and act as a prostitute.

God demands faithfulness, and part of what God works in the heart of those that have been truly converted is godly sorrow and heart repentance from the old ways of living for the devil, sin and the flesh. To say you are sorry and then continue committing sin, when God has made a way of escape for every temptation (1Cor 13:10), clearly shows that a person is being either dishonest, deceived, or perhaps both.

Salvation is a divine operation that delivers us from the control of darkness, and transfers us into his kingdom, where He rules in our heart (Col 1:13). When we are spiritually immersed into Christ, we become a new creation and the old moral and spiritual condition passes away (2Cor 5:17).

God's precious and exceedingly great promises (2Pet 1:4) are given to mankind through Christ, that they may be made partakers of the divine nature and escape the moral decay and corruption that is in the world.

This is what the coming of Christ was all about and what He came to do. You "shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Mat 1:21). This saving is not just from the penalty of sin, but from the power, pollution, and-if we are faithful unto the end-the very presence of sin. Hallelujah! Even so, come Lord Jesus (Rev 22:20).

This was the very purpose that Jesus was manifested, that "he might destroy the works of the devil" (1Joh 3:8) in us. Let us never be guilty of turning the grace of God into a license for immorality (Jud 1:4) by promoting any teaching that brings disobedience to the moral law of God.

Dear people, do not be deceived by this unbiblical teaching; reject it and cast it out. If you have fallen under the influence of this teaching and have willful sin in your life, bow right now and plead the mercy of God and the blood of Christ. Look to Jesus, who came to save you from not only from the penalty of sin but from the very power of sin. Have godly sorrow and repentance, forsake all sin, and commit your life anew to God.

Commit to God that by his grace you will take sin serious, and by His power and grace you will never give into it again. Spend much time in the Word of God (Rom 10:17) and in prayer (Jud 1:20), that your faith may be built up; for we are kept by the power of God though faith (1Pet 1:5).

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Heb 13:20, 21).

Note: If you have a sin problem or are in need of spiritual counselin, I offer free confidential counseling and can be contacted 24 hours a day at 519-636-6636. If you are a Christian brother and looking for discipleship from a mature Christian, I have a program where we would get together weekly for prayer and Bible study. Contact me if this interests you.

God Deserves Faithfulness

I see the experience of sin-free living and obedience to God as something that real Bible salvation gives us. Not something positionally that needs to be realized, so that we can have it experimentally through some kind of additional experience after we are converted.



I like the picture of a pure young couple getting married that have kept themselves for each other, and have had a godly

temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

2Co 12:10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Gal 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Php 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

2The 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.

2Tim 4:18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Heb 2:18 (RSV) For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

2Pe 1:3, 4 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: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2Pe 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

2Pe 2:9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.

Jud 1:24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

Tips for Plain-Life Christians to Become Debt Free

Christians should not be tying themselves down with unnecessary debt, but rather be working to free themselves of it so that they can have more time to spend with their children and work for the Lord. The idea of incurring debt for luxury items is the way of the world.



With the economic troubles that we are currently observing in the United States, Canada, and around the world, it would be wisdom for not only those who are just barely making ends meet to start cutting expenses, but for all of us to become better stewards of those things which God has given us. The economy in Canada is currently stalled, and things will probably get much worse before they get better. What would you do if you are laid off next week?

With this in mind, the following financial tips are offered to help you to live more within your means. These tips will help you to stay out of the debt trap, and for those who are caught in it, to start the progress of getting free.

We are not our own, but we have been bought with a price by Jesus, and all we have is his. We must learn to be proper stewards of the time and money the Lord has put in our hands. The New Testament standard is that 100% of all we have belongs to the Lord. In the final day, we will give an account, so let us move with fear; and in all we do, do it as unto the Lord.

It is unfortunate when a Christian family fails financially, and in some cases it is a failure of church leadership to help them in

act of the will to be committed, and condemnation when fallen into. Sin is not something that can happen without you knowing about it, nor is it mistakes or frailty of humanity like worrying, irritation, or lacking patience. While frailties of humanity can lead to sin if we do not look to God for grace, in and of themselves they are not sins.

Willful sin brings spiritual death and separation from God (Gen 2:17; Eph 2:1), sears and harms the conscience (1Tim 4:2), leaves you without eternal life (1Joh 3:15), and your past sins are no longer covered by Christ's sacrifice (Heb 10:26). If you were to die, or if Christ were to return and call the world into judgment while you are in this state, you would be lost (Rev 22:11).

Even if you were to turn from the sin you have fallen into and have godly sorrow and repentance unto salvation (2Cor 7:10), you would have greatly harmed your soul. You have lost your first love (Rev 2:4), you have seared your conscience (1Tim 4:2), and as the bride of Christ (Rev 21:9) you have cheated on Jesus by prostituting yourself to the devil.

Going back to the vomit and wallowing in the mire of sin (2Pet 2:2) is no small matter. The scriptures are clear that "this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments", and for the Christian "his commandments are not grievous" (1Joh 5:3), for we love to obey our Lord Jesus Christ.

We can be thankful that "God is faithful" and will not suffer his children "to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape" (1Cor 10:13). God both has power and wills that His children be obedient.

The Word is clear that one of the ways we know we are a Christian is that "we keep his commandments" (1Joh 2:3). Those who say "I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1Joh 2:4). The Word of God is very clear on this point and tells us that those who "hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1Joh 3:15).

John gives the solemn warning to "let no man deceive you", for "He that committeth sin is of the devil" (1Joh 3:7, 8). Paul also warns us to "Be not deceived... For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal 5:7, 8).

Sin-You-Must Teaching

Sin-You-Must – This teaching holds that a person will continue to commit sin after being saved and that as a believer you will sin in word, thought, and deed almost daily. Teachers of this doctrine say that we should try not to sin, but that sinning and repenting is the reality of living in this flesh.



Most would teach that if you commit a serious sin like fornication or adultery you would fall out of fellowship with God. If you would continued committing serious sins like those you might loose your salvation, but for the most part they teach you can sin and still be a child of God. They hold that the Christian cannot expect to be completely free from sin until they die or when they get a glorified body at the return of Christ.

Those that teach this doctrine hold that you will commit “willful sins” and what they call “unwillful sins”, like errors, faults, and mistakes in opinion or conduct or anything short of the full fruit of the Spirit. In doing this, they make the word sin to include willful sins, as well as errors and frailty of humanity that all Christians experience. Under this mixed definition of sin they then claim that no one can live free from sin.

With this definition of sin, this teaching ends up making a dangerous allowance for willful sinning under the guise of ‘we are all human and have faults and nobody is perfect’. Under the New Testament, sin is a willful transgression against a known commandment of God (Jam 4:17) and you must be tempted and give into temptation before you sin (Jam 1:14, 15).

Sin always includes a warning from God when it is presented, an

their finances. The Word of God is very strong on this matter and tells us “if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1Tim 5:8 NKJV). This scripture should be a warning and a wakeup call to all that are carrying a heavy debt load because they are living beyond their means.

I would like to say that in the area of debt reduction, I feel like I know what I am talking about. When my wife and I moved to Aylmer 5 years ago, I had a sizable short term debt load - which at its peak was over \$30,000. This was being carried on a bank overdraft and high-interest credit cards. For our first 4 months after we purchased our home here in Aylmer, we did not own a fridge. We had decided not to incur new debt. I found work wherever I could and got by on a very small budget. We saved up enough to pay for half of a used fridge, and my parents helped us pay for the rest.

We had to take radical steps to pay off our debt. Not only did we have a huge debt-load, but I did not have a full-time job. I had been living a wasteful lifestyle and had to make major changes. With hard work and the help of the Lord, I paid off my short-term debt in 2 years. I worked repairing computers for local businesses, and at the same time built a successful home business. We paid off our home at the end of 2007 after my home business had a very successful year in 2006.

In the short period of 5 years I have been able go from a high short-term debt with no investments and very little equity in our home, to all short-term debt paid off, our home paid off, and a considerable sum of money which I have invested successfully in local business endeavors. It took a lot of hard work, major changes in the way I handled my money, and the help of the Lord and my dear wife Susan.

Even as I have been writing this article, I have knelt in prayer weeping and repenting for the foolishness and the wastefulness of the prior years of my life. Oh, what regret I feel in my soul! In the writing of this article, I have addressed a number of stewardship issues in my own life. I made a decision about a year ago not to build a 1700 sq ft luxury home, and have had to repent for some of the purchases I have made in the last year, as well as a foolish investment that went bad. I have made a commitment

to God to live a simpler lifestyle.

Even though I have made a couple of bad business decisions in the past 5 years, the Lord has blessed overall. I am now working part-time and, with the help of the Lord, I am spending my free time as a servant to his people and in laboring to win souls to Christ. This past year has been the most glorious, fulfilling, spiritually fruitful year of my life. All glory be to Jesus!

Some of the following tips may seem more radical than others, and some are geared towards bigger families.

Repentance and Principle Commitments:

1. Repent that you have been living beyond your means and being a poor steward of that which God has put in your hands.
2. Make a commitment to God to pay off your short-term debt as quickly as possible.
3. Realize that to the degree that you have lived above your means, to the same degree you will have to live below your means to get your debt paid off.
4. Do not consolidate your debt and add it to your mortgage. People that move their short-term debt to long-term will typically just incur more short-term debt.
5. Make a commitment to use all the money you save to pay off your debt.
6. Make a commitment that as you pay off your debt, you will reduce your credit limit on credit cards, lines of credits, and bank overdrafts so that you will not use that credit again.

First Step Commitments:

7. Commit to stop all impulse buying.
8. Commit to stop window shopping and looking for something to buy.
9. Commit to not allow any door-to-door sales people in your home, and refuse to talk to sales people on the phone.
10. Commit to stop all eating at restaurants. Instead, pack lunches when you travel.
11. Commit to stop buying coffee, pop, chips, snacks, magazines, and books.
12. Commit to stop buying luxury food items.
13. Commit to stop going to garage sales.
14. Commit to purchase used major household items instead of new ones.

Eph 6:13, 16 Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand... Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

2Co 1:24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

1Pe 1:5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1Jn 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

When you have this study with a new Christian who has not already fallen back into the rut of sinning and repenting, they have no reason to accept or uphold the 'Sin You Must' teaching. You will find that it is not hard for them to see that there is no place for sin in the Christian's life.

I have found for the most part that those who reject this teaching are those who either currently-or in the recent past-have been involved in willful sin, or in the past have been up and down and are not willing to take a stand against their past experience by taking a strong stand against all sin.

The Scriptures are very clear that there is no place for sin in the Christian life. Let each one renounce this wrong teaching, no matter what implications it has on our past or present profession. Let us walk carefully, humbly, and prayerfully before God, taking heed lest we should fall into sin (1Cor 10:12).

1Ti 5:6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.
1Jn 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

15. Sin will sear and defile your conscience:

Mar 10:5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

1Ti 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

Tit 1:15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

16. To go into sin is like a dog to his vomit and a pig to its mire:

2Pe 2:21, 22 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

17. Those who sin are of the devil:

1Jn 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

18. The power of God in us is greater than the power of sin:

1Jn 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

1Jn 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

19. All Christians are free from sin:

Rom 6:18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

Rom 6:22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

20. Through faith, Christians stand, are kept, and overcome:

Downsizing:

15. Consider downsizing your owned home, or home rental, or vehicle.

16. Do not purchase brand new vehicles, but purchase something used that is well within your means.

17. Consider going into shared living with another Christian friend or family.

Money Saving Tips:

18. Get rid of your cell phone. If you are tied to a 2 or 3-year contract, you can sell the contract.

19. Do not buy gifts at Christmas time.

20. Buy used clothing at second-hand stores.

21. Get your dental work done at the University.

22. Ride a bike to work if possible.

23. Skip vacations.

24. Get rid of your Internet account and get a Gmail account where you can receive email and access it from the library.

25. Sell your computer if it is not completely necessary.

26. Gather all the things you are not using and have a garage sale, or sell the items on london.kijiji.ca.

27. Make sure you and all your family brush and floss your teeth 3 times a day. This will cut down on dental bills.

28. Record your spending for 3 months and look for places that you can limit your spending.

29. Keep proper track of your checking account so you do not have NSF checks.

30. Make sure you pay all bills on time by posting all payment dates as they come in the mail on the front of your fridge.

Vehicle Tips

31. Use your vehicle less. Plan your trips to town and try to go less often.

32. Sell your second vehicle.

33. Carpool with someone and change your insurance from commuter rate to personal rate.

34. Keep extra change in your vehicle and always put money in the parking meters.

35. Avoid fines by obeying traffic laws.

36. Save on gas by driving the speed limit.

37. Do not leave your car idling when you are not driving and turn your car off at red lights.

Energy Saving Tips:

38. Use mini spiral bulbs that consume less energy per light output. Use smaller watt bulbs. Turn your outside lights off at night.
39. Turn down your heat 5 degrees, and put on long-johns and wear sweaters.
40. Turn your heat down a further 5 degree at night and put more blankets on.
41. Move your freezer out into your garage or on your deck for the winter.
42. Turn off your AC unit.

Food Tips:

43. Do not shop on a empty stomach.
44. Use coupons and shop on deal days.
45. Eat more beans, rice, and soups. Bake your own bread.
46. Grow your own garden and store up preserves for the winter.

Family Tips:

47. Use cloth diapers with liners instead of disposable diapers.
48. Stop buying toys for your children and make toys for them instead.
49. Find a small business that you can have your children involved in.
50. If you are homeschooling, have your children put their answers in scribblers and re-use the workbooks.
- *51. Have your wife cut your hair and cut your children's hair yourself.**

Country Tips:

52. Get a wood stove.
53. Get laying hens. Get double the hens you need for yourself and sell their eggs to pay for the feed of all the hens.
54. Raise meat chickens. Double up on the number you need and sell them to pay for your feed.
55. Raise your own beef and put it in your freezer.
56. Hang your clothes on the clothesline instead of using a dryer.

City Tips:

57. If you pay for your water, put two bricks in the back of your toilet.
58. Have shorter showers or get a shower head that limits the water flow.

forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Mat 12:33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

Joh 15:4-6 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

12. Sin brings bondage:

Joh 8:34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

Rom 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

2Pe 2:19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

13. Those who sin should be ashamed of themselves:

Rom 6:20, 21 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

Php 3:19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

14. Sin brings separation (spiritual death) from God:

Gen 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Gen 3:2, 3 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

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

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1Jn 2:4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

1Jn 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

9. Those who sin do not have eternal life:

1Jn 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

10. Those that die with sin in their life will be lost:

Mat 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Gal 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

1Jn 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Rev 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Rev 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Rev 22:11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

Rev 22:15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

11. Sin is bad fruit, and bad fruit means the tree is bad:

Mat 3:10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Mat 7:16-20 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not

Home Tips:

59. Consider downsizing your owned home, or home rental.

60. Build a tiny home on wheels and live in that.

Note: When “debt-free” is used above, it does not include the mortgage on your home. Homes do not usually decline in value, will contain equity, and in most cases are easily liquidated.

Christian Discipleship

Lately I have been thinking a lot about accountability to the brethren, the discipleship of new converts, and church life. I have written a short article on Accountability to the Brethren, one on Discipleship of New Converts, and a poem on taking heed to ourselves, to the brethren, and on carrying a burden for the lost.



I see these three things as very much interrelated. If you are not making yourselves accountable to others, you will not be working to help hold others accountable. If you have never been disciplined, you will not be discipling others. And if you are not carrying a proper burden for the spiritual well-being of other brethren, you will more than likely not be carrying a proper burden for yourself - let alone the lost.

It is the responsibility of the local church to take every new convert God entrusts them with and disciple them and turn them into disciple-makers. The new converts are to be first and foremost established in the faith. This means showing them by scripture and by clear example what it means to be a sin-free,

on-fire, sanctified, zealous, Christian.

The new convert needs to be shown by example what it means to love, to pray, to love the Bible above all books, and to love praising the Lord for saving their soul from the bondage of self and sin.

This is to start immediately when the love of the new convert is burning hot. They must be taught what it means to pray earnestly, how to live carefully, and how to carry a burden first for themselves and then for others.

Those that disciple new converts will produce in them what they themselves have. If they are dry in their soul, do not carry a real soul-burden, and do not know what it means to really die to self, this is what they will produce in others.

So first the call goes out for sin-free, sanctified Christians that are willing to spend and be spent for others. Those that are willing to work less and do without the luxuries of this materialistic world so that they can have time to labor for Jesus.

Can you say as Isaiah said “Here am I; send me” (Isa 6:8)?

Laborers Must First Have Partaken of the Fruit of Holiness

In the first letter to the Corinthian church, Paul had corrected the church over a number of things. Of the things he corrected them for, the worse was that they had allowed an immoral person to be part of the



which I say?

Joh 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

Joh 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Joh 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Joh 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

1Jn 2:3, 4 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

1Jn 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

1Jn 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

6. It is God's will that we do not sin:

Joh 5:14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

Joh 8:11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

2Ti 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

7. If we transgress God's commandments, we show we do not love him:

Joh 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Joh 14:24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

1Jn 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

8. Those that claim to be Christians and sin are liars:

1Jn 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Rom 5:13 For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Jas 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

3. One sin is as bad as another sin, in the eyes of God:

Luk 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Jas 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

4. God is faithful to keep us from falling into sin:

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

2Th 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.

2Pe 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

Jud 1:24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

5. We must keep the commandments:

Mat 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Mat 19:17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

Mar 12:29-31 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Luk 6:46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things

congregation (1Cor 5:1, 2), and had not put judgment on his actions (1Cor 5:12).

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul records his rejoicing at the report that Titus brought him concerning the reaction to his letter, and how the church had godly sorrow and repentance for the things which they had allowed (2Cor 7:6-12).

Paul writes of the effects of their godly sorrow and what it produced in them. He notes what their repentance had worked in them.

In the middle of discussing the godly sorrow and repentance that the Corinthians had over their error, Paul lets us know that it is godly sorrow that works repentance unto salvation (2Cor 7:10). As Paul nowhere charged the church at Corinth with sin in their lack of judgment for not putting the immoral man out, I conclude that Paul is providing a related principle.

A person cannot be born again without repentance (Luk 13:3), and those that profess repentance must bring forth fruits consistent with repentance (Mat 3:8). Therefore, I do not think it is doing the Scriptures injustice to say that repentance is a fruit of godly sorrow, and godly sorrow is a fruit that is consistent with repentance.

If a person is not sorry after a godly sorrow for the wicked and carnal life they have lived, how can there be a change of mind and attitude (repentance) toward those very sins?

With the Corinthian's godly sorrow and repentance, there came carefulness, clearing, indignation, fear, vehement desire, zeal, and revenge. I think it would be fair to also expect those things in someone that has godly sorrow and repentance unto salvation. When the heart is changed, a person's actions and conduct will also be changed.

Let us look at some of the ways these fruits of repentance can be applied to a person that gets saved.

The newly saved will be careful to not fall back into sin and bring shame unto the holy cause of Christ. They will clear themselves of all things that are questionable. There will be an indignation toward the devil, the flesh, and the self-life that had caused them so much harm.

This indignation will bring a holy hatred against sin and will cause them, through the Spirit, to rule over the flesh and to take up their cross daily and deny themselves (Luk 9:23).

There will be a fear of displeasing the Lord and a fervent desire to please Jesus. There will also be a zeal to help others find what they have found in Jesus, and thereby to do damage and get revenge against the kingdom of darkness.

Those of us that are working to lead souls to Christ and help those who have either just gotten saved or have made a new start, need to have discernment and wisdom from the Lord to lead souls into the right way.

First and foremost, we must have these very things working in our own soul. A person that is binge-sinning every 3 or 4 months is in no condition to help anyone. Those who have lost their first love (Rev 2:4), and are filled with their own ways (Pro 14:14), will not be able to help others to get more than what they have themselves.

While God is calling for laborers in his vineyard, he wants those who gather to not scatter (Luk 11:23). May we pray to the Lord of harvest, that he send qualified laborers into his harvest field.

How to Get a Greater Concern for Souls

Having a burning hot concern for souls is very important, and a great help for your spiritual life. Part of our armor is having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel (Eph 6:15). I received an email



mistakes in opinion and action are sins. You can read Biblical Definition of Sin where this issue is covered in greater depth.

They put what they are calling ‘unwilful sins’ together with what are ‘willful sins’ and call them both sins. They have it in their mind that we are all sinners, and you will hear them confessing that they are ‘sinners (present tense) saved by grace’.

Also, many times when they pray you will hear them confessing their sins to God just like it is a completely normal thing to be sinning. They do this in a general way with no shame, and in the same breath they thank the Lord for the good day he has given them.

New Christians hear this kind of talk and they do not always realize these people are talking about errors, faults, and mistakes, thus they conclude that sin is part of a Christian’s life. Then when they are presented with a sin that appeals to their flesh, the devil is there to tell them, “It’s okay, God will forgive you and we are all sinners anyways.”

One of the first issues I deal with when I am disciplining a new Christian, is to get them straight on the Biblical definition of sin and teach them that sin is not an option for a Christian.

Most people that come to Christ have been around Christians and have been exposed to the Sin You Must teaching, therefore, it is very important to go over this subject as quickly as possible with them.

For a more in depth discussion concerning the meaning of death as related to spiritual death (separation from God) in the Bible, please read Committing Sin Brings Spiritual Death.

This is how I deal with the subject:

1. You have to be tempted before you can sin:

Jas 1:14, 15 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

2. Sin under the new covenant is rated by light and understanding, and is willful:

Rom 14:22. 23 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God.

Rom 14:3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

1Co 11:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

Col 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

Heb 10:30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

Jas 2:13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

Jas 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

Jas 4:11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

Sin Is Not an Option for the Christian

Because of the Sin-You-Must teaching and the great compromise of Christianity, even those that feel like they are committed Christians have got the idea somewhere in the back of their minds that to commit sin is an option.

In part, this has happened due to confusion over what sin is. Honest Christians have been confused into thinking that errors, faults, and



today from a reader, asking how to get a greater concern for souls; and the Lord prompted me to write this article.

1. Concern For Your Own Soul – The first thing that you need to deal with when it comes to having a concern or greater concern for souls is how you are doing in your personal walk with Christ. If you cannot carry enough of a concern for your own soul to perfect holiness in the fear of God, you are not going to have much of a concern for others. The first place to look when you are wanting to increase your concern for souls is to an evaluation of how your concern is for your own soul.

Are you being prayerful, careful, and living up-to-date? Do you have complete victory over all sin? Are you growing in the grace and knowledge of God? Or are you lukewarm and filled with your own ways? Or worse yet, having problems with giving in to the flesh and sin?

2. Endued With Power- Just before Jesus parted and was carried up to heaven, he told his disciples “that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem” (Luk 24:47). Jesus told the disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they were “endued with power from on high” (Luk 24:48). In this, we have one of the most important points concerning witnessing.

The Word tells us clearly that “the law and the prophets were until John” and “since that time, the kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it” (Luk 16:16). People were pressing into the kingdom, their names were written in heaven (Luk 10:20), and Jesus was forgiving people’s sins (Luk 7:49). So without going into a whole lot of detail, I would hold that the Bible clearly teaches that people were being born again under the preaching of Jesus.

After the disciples went back to Jerusalem, they tarried and received the promise of the Father. The promise of the Father is the indwelling of the Spirit of God which purifies the heart (Act 15:9) from the inherited sin nature.

There is an important connection between being a witness, and receiving the promise that is made in Acts 1. The disciples were told to “wait for the promise of the Father” and, further, that they would “receive power” and that they would “be witnesses

unto me” (Act 1:4, 8).

3. Jerusalem, Judea, Uttermost Parts of the Earth – The next important point is that the disciples were to “be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Act 1:8). I think there is a principle that can be taken from this scripture. First, be a witness in your own block, in your own congregation, in your own town, then to the nearest big city, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth.

You should be witnessing wherever you go. It should be a part of your life. You should be passing out tracts as you go throughout your day. You should be praying for people that you meet and talk to, as well as looking for other doors where you may find someone who is interested in the gospel. In the congregation, you should be carrying a concern for those in your midst that are not saved, and letting them know you are praying for them.

In short, witnessing is to become a way of life for you. I guess you could call it missional living.

4. Tips To Be More Effective – Doing tract work is just a means to an end. What you are using the tracts for is to open up a conversation so that you can talk to the person about their spiritual needs. You are wanting to form a relationship where you can minister to the person and lead them to Christ. Tract work is more than just going out on Friday night and passing out tracts. It is finding people that have an interest in the Gospel and following up.

This means getting their name, email and phone number, and befriending them. It means getting together with them and discussing the Bible. And it means going and picking them up and bringing them to church meeting.

So with this in mind, you need to be equipped. You need a good supply of tracts, booklets, New Testaments, a note pad, a pen, and some change so you can take prospects to the coffee shop for herbal tea.

5. Pray, Pray, Pray, Then Pray Some More – I do not think there is anything more beautiful than a notebook full of names and phone numbers of people you have contacted through tract work that you pray for regularly. People that you are carrying a burden

Christian Mercy & Judgment

There is an interesting concept that I am getting a hold of in a deeper way. When we have mercy on others, we are having mercy on ourselves.



Here are a few scriptures to meditate on about mercy:

Pro 3:3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

Pro 17:15 He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.

Pro 21:21 He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honor.

Mat 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Mat 7:2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

Mat 12:7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

Mat 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Luk 6:37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

Luk 10:37 And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Joh 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

Joh 7:51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

1Co 7:10, 11 (KJV) And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

1Co 7:39 (KJV) The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

Following are the most popular reasons that people give for remarriage or staying in a second marriage while they already have a lawful¹ living spouse:

1. The exception clause of Mat 19:9 in the case of unfaithfulness of the other party.
2. The Pauline permission of 1Cor 7:15 for the case of abandonment.
3. You get a new slate when you are saved.
4. To separate a second marriage is wrong and causes more harm.
5. It is not fair that the innocent party suffers for the sin of the guilty party.
6. The sin is only in the act of remarrying, not in copulating, therefore you can repent for the act of remarriage and stay together.
7. We are all sinners anyway and our sins are forgiven - past, present and future.

I may do a more detailed post some time soon that goes over the above popular reasons.

¹The use of lawful is in respect to the new covenant law (the law of liberty, the royal law) and is not referring to the law of Moses or the current marriage laws of any nation.

for. People that you have wept and prayed for. How this must please the Savior!

When we are dealing with souls, everything must be bathed in prayer. Again, if we have not carried a proper spiritual concern for ourselves and have learned how to have a proper devotional life, we will not be able to pray fervently and effectually for others.

As you pass out tracts, you need to carry a burden for the people. Greet them with a "Isn't it a nice day?" and bless them with "The Lord bless you!" as they accept or reject your tract. Exhort them as they pass by with "Are you concerned about your soul?" and "Have you fed your soul today?", and do it with a concern. It makes the world of difference.

While some of us are more emotional than others, I can tell you that laboring for souls with heartfelt concern is very fulfilling. Many times I have come back from the street with a smile on my face and a huge blessing in my soul, thinking that I probably got more help than those that I talked to.

I have had blessed times when talking with people about the need of their soul where I had to make an effort to keep my composure so that tears of my burdened heart would not fall. Many times I have experienced a deep burden for souls where I just weep many tears as I pray for them. And yes, I have written much of this article with tears in my eyes.

6. Standing on the Word- Here are a number of beautiful scriptures that you should memorize and stand on as you work to reach souls:

Psa 126:5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Ecc 11:1 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

Ecc 11:4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Hos 10:12 Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

Mat 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I

say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Mar 12:30, 31 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Luk 6:31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

1Cor 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7. Make a Commitment – Will you kneel and pray now and repent for your lack of concern? I am repenting for mine. Will you make time for Jesus, first for your own soul and then for the souls of others?

Would you put aside some time today and meditate on the joy and zeal you had when you were first saved, and how you wanted to tell everybody about Jesus? Then repent for having grown cold and having lost that first love. Will you renounce the luxuries of this world and commit to live within your means so that you will have more time to work for Jesus?

Carrying a heartfelt concern for the souls of others is not an option, it is a commandment (Mar 12:31). Our love for the Savior is shown by our love for others (Mat 25:40).

It would be my prayer that you will take time to meditate on these scriptural principles and let them sink down into your ears and into your heart. That you will take time for the Lord to speak to you concerning these things.

Time is short and our life will soon be over. Only that which is done for Jesus will last. May the Lord bless you as you consider these thoughts.

remarriage is ok because it is not adultery for them, since they are no longer married in the eyes of the Lord. If the innocent party is no longer married in the eyes of the Lord, then clearly the guilty party is no longer either. The only reason remarriage could be adultery for the guilty party is because they have a lawful¹ spouse. It is not possible for the guilty party to have a lawful¹ spouse and the innocent party not to have a lawful¹ spouse, thus the innocent party having the right to remarriage while the guilty party holds no logic.

So, we are back to the position that Jesus left divorce and remarriage wide open. Well, in Jesus' time it was already wide open, so we have to explain why the disciples were so surprised and thought perhaps it was better off not to get marriage at all (Mat 10:10).

When I read through all the scriptures in the New Testament concerning remarriage, I just do not see any room at all for remarriage. The following are the scriptures that deal with remarriage in the New Testament.

For Mat 19:9, I have also put in the McFall's version which is translated without the influence of Greek ei in the Textus Receptus Greek from which the KJV came from.

Mat 19:9 (KJV) And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

Mat 19:9 (McFall) Now I say to you that who, for example, may have divorced his wife—he may not have divorced her for fornication—and may have married another woman, he becomes adulterous by marrying her.

Mar 10:11, 12 (KJV) And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

Luk 16:18 (KJV) Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.

Rom 7:2, 3 (KJV) For the woman which hath an husband is bound by

door and make sure they have put the knife down. Then ask them to step out of the house and sit in the car.

17. In almost all cases, it is advisable get the person to come to your home or take them to the hospital. If you leave the person where they were, they may fall into the same despair again.

18. You are responsible before the Lord to follow up with this person and do whatever you can to give them spiritual and mental help.

Divorce and Remarriage Excuses

I would hold that the Bible teaches that in all cases where there is a living lawful¹ spouse, it is adultery to remarry.

If allowance for remarriage is given for unfaithfulness, based on the Mat

19:9 exception that is found in the Textus Receptus (TR) and in most translations, then all a person must do is backslide and commit adultery and then you have an excuse for remarriage.

Or the person could just get married to their second spouse and consummate the marriage. This would be considered adultery, and now they can lawfully¹ be remarried while they have a living spouse from a lawful¹ marriage. Then they would redo their vows just in case the Lord did not accept the first vows because they had not committed adultery yet.

Some hold that Mat 19:9 only provides the right of remarriage for the innocent party. It makes no sense to say innocent-party



Looking for a Different Congregation

The subject of whether to look for a different congregation or not is on the mind of many people. This is an issue that comes up as God leads people into a deeper Christian walk and they receive more light and

understanding. They have to address the following question: “Do I stay in this congregation, or do I find one that is more in line with what God is showing me?”

This issue must be considered carefully and prayerfully. You must not lean on your own understanding, but acknowledge God by asking him to guide you and direct you. I do not think there is any ‘across the board’ answer for this question, but there are guidelines that can help you with your decision.

The most important issues are going to be:

Can you grow and thrive in your Christian walk where you are?

Are you being fed by the preaching and Bible studies? Or have church meetings become a source of battle where you leave discouraged about the standards and doctrines that are being upheld and taught?

Are people moving forward for God and growing in the knowledge and grace of God, or are things pretty well stagnant?

When is the last time you got challenged in your soul by the Sunday message?



Are you being exhorted and held accountable by the other brethren in the congregation? Are you being challenged by the lives of the brethren?

Further issues that need to be addressed for those who are married include:

How is your family doing where you are attending?

Is your wife being challenged and is she growing?

Are there sisters in the congregation whose Christian lives are being an encouragement to her soul?

Are your children being properly influenced for the good?

Is the fellowship going beyond just having two meetings a week, where the other members are a part of your lives on other days also?

The issue of inviting people to church meetings needs to be considered also. As we are all called to missional living, this is a very important issue. As you reach out in your daily life to those people that God has placed in your life, you need to be able to feel comfortable with inviting them to the fellowship you are attending. Will the other members be a good influence on them, or will the good work you are trying to do for the Lord be torn down?

Our devotion and commitment is first and foremost to God. This commitment is higher than any commitment we make to a group or congregation. If there are things going on that you disagree with, you need to address them with the leaders of the congregation and see if things can be worked out.

You will need to be able to discern the cause of the problems you see, and deal with the root instead of dealing with the bad fruit. If there is worldliness and sin in the congregation among professing Christians, the problem is often a lack of church discipline and a lack of clear teaching that true conversion delivers from committing sin.

If the ministry is rude, overbearing, and carnal in their manner of dealing with members that disagree with them, the concept of ministers leading by example, instead of by authority and control, is missing. If a large number of the members are falling into sin

that all things are possible with Him (Matt. 19:26), that His grace is sufficient (2 Cor. 12:9), that He has mercy to forgive, that His plan is fore-ordained (Eph. 2:10), and any other verses that focus their attention back on God's ability and love.

9. Seek to resolve any anger they may have towards God, others or themselves!

10. If someone is drunk or high on drugs and they call you, this is not the time to counsel them. All you can do at this point is to keep them from doing something rash.

11. If a person asks you, "Will God forgive me and accept me into His kingdom if I kill myself?", tell them the Scripture gives no such assurance and that it is sin to kill yourself. Then concentrate on what Jesus did say: His desire to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10), and that He came to give abundant life (John 10:10). Encourage them that if they will allow you to counsel them, you can help them solve their problems in a Biblical way. It is the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom (Luke 12:32).

12. Avoid all argument if a person is on drugs or is intoxicated. Just get the person to put the gun or knife down, or throw the pills away. Get them to do this indirectly by getting them to write down their problems, or make coffee etc.

13. After you have talked to them for a bit, ask them for their address and tell them, "I am coming over so we can talk more about this, as I feel like I can really help you." Brothers should bring their wife or a spiritual sister from the congregation with them if the person is a woman, as some women will not want to give their address out to a man and it is good to have a modesty shield if possible.

14. Get them to talk with someone else while you go over to the house, so despair does not overtake them.

15. If you have a second phone, call the deacon in your congregation and have them phone others for prayer. If you do not have a second phone, then have someone else in the house go next door and phone. As you are talking to the person, be praying and asking God to guide you.

16. If they have a gun, you will have to call the police so they can disarm them. If they have a knife, you should meet them at the

“Do thyself no harm” (Acts 16:27,28).

What Do You Say and Do with Someone Considering Suicide?

1. First, take everyone seriously who threatens suicide! Sometimes people think, “Oh they’re only trying to get attention.” This is a common misconception. While in some cases this may be true, who would want to be make a wrong judgment call when it concerns a person’s life?
2. Try to get the person’s name, and if you have call display, write down their phone number immediately. This is very important, because if they hang up you would need to convey this information to the police. Get their name in a way that is as disarming as possible. You may want to say, “My name is Bob and your name is...?” If they only give you their first name, record it and then try to get the last name. You may want to say, “My last name is Mutch, which is Scottish. What is your last name?” Remember to write this information down.
3. Acknowledge to them that you can see that their problem is a serious one. This enables them to feel that someone really understands and is listening. This begins to give them hope. Do not minimize their problems, as this creates the opposite effect.
4. Share with them that at one time you were in despair and could not see a way out, but a way was made out. Also let them know that there are many people who have been in despair and have found a way out. This will offer them hope that there is a way out for them.
5. Have them explain fully why they are considering suicide; listen carefully, and take notes if possible.
6. Remember, they feel they are caught in an “either or” situation where they see no solution.
7. Explain to them that there is another solution that they have not seen yet: God’s solution! With every problem or trial, God always provides a way out or the grace to sustain them (1 Cor. 10:13) (2 Cor. 12:9).
8. Minister hope by sharing God’s plan for them. If they are not a Christian, explain the plan of salvation. God will forgive all their sin and make them a new creature in Him (1 John 1:9) (2 Cor. 5:17). If they are a Christian, remind them of the power of God;

and cannot seem to break the sinning and repenting cycle, then there is probably a lack of a system of accountability or discipleship.

I could go on with this list but you get the idea.

If you do decide the Lord wants you to leave, the next big question is “where will you go?”. In some cases, it is wise to move slowly and test the waters. The idea of just ‘upping and leaving’ and not knowing what you are going to do or where you are going to go, can leave you in a state of confusion and discouragement.

It is wisdom to visit prospective congregations and see what their meetings are like. Is there a strong core of spiritual families that are moving forward in the things of God? Are the people warm and hospitable, and did you get invited out for a meal and fellowship after meeting? Is there regular outreach and street-witnessing? Is there a spiritual ministry that is bearing a burden for the congregation and teaching the people to live the Bible instead of expounding on a system of dead doctrine?

Of course, you want to check and see what they are teaching. Do they have any unorthodox teachings? Are they sectarian and think they are the only church? Are they clear that salvation saves from committing sin?

Leaving a congregation can be a very difficult thing to do, and it can cause turmoil and stress in your home. I strongly suggest that you get up earlier and spend extra time in prayer and reading of the word of God, seeking God for extra grace. Make an extra effort to be graceful with your family and realize that this will be a difficult time for them too.

Life is very short and there is much to do for the Lord. The congregation we attend, and the instruction and fellowship we receive there, will -in many ways - effect our spiritual growth one way or the other. Lean heavily on the Lord, and let the trials of this life build in you patience and a greater desire for heaven. Amen.

How to Counsel Suicidal Persons

This article looks at what brings suicidal thoughts, shows that the Bible prohibits suicide, and shares how one can deal with a person who is suicidal.

In 2005, 32,637 suicides occurred in the United States. I wept when I read that statistic. Also, the picture to the right very much touched my heart. This should give us a greater holy hatred for the devil and sin.



There are four times as many men committing suicide than women. In the US, over half of the men that committed suicide used a firearm, whereas 40% of women poison themselves and only 30% used a firearm.

I was surprised to find out that elderly people (65+ yrs) have the highest rate of suicide in the US, with 14.7 deaths per 100,000 compared with 10.0 per 100,000 for youth (15-24 yrs). Also, the West has the highest rate with 12.1 per 100,000 compared with 8.1 per 100,000 in the Northeast.

The following information was written by Steve Carr, who is the Pastor of a congregation of 500 people and has received training and experience in counseling suicidal cases. I modified and added to the article a few points on logistics and modesty. This information will leave you better equipped to deal with a suicidal person if the Lord should allow you to be put into that position.

Despair, or a Total Lack of Hope – When a person is caught in

the midst of a problem that they feel has no solution, they naturally lose hope. When they continue to struggle with what they perceive as a problem with no solution, many people arrive at a place of complete despair. Thoughts of suicide are a natural result. The key to understanding someone who is thinking of suicide is that they see their problem as an **either or situation**. Either they go on in hopelessness, or they commit suicide. They see no other answer or possible solution. We notice that Judas saw no remedy for the guilt of betraying Christ (Matt. 27:3-5). Job saw no relief for the physical misery he was enduring (Job 3:20-21). Solomon hated life because he saw no purpose in living (Ecc. 2:17). The keeper of the prison thought the prisoners had escaped and felt he would be put to death. (Acts 16:25-30).

Another Cause of Suicidal Thoughts is Anger – This anger can be towards anyone, for any reason. Jonah wanted to die because he was angry at God for His mercy toward the people of Ninevah (Jonah 4:1-9). He was also angry at the Ninevites because of their wickedness. Samson's desire to take revenge on the Philistines motivated him to take his own life along with theirs (Judges 16:27-31). Many times people will commit suicide to get back at someone they are angry with, in an attempt to hurt them. Other times, people who are angry at themselves for their own failures will take their life in an attempt to punish themselves for their sin. This is a possible reason for Judas hanging himself (Matt. 27:3-5).

Scriptures That Prohibit Suicide

1. Murder is prohibited (Exodus 20:13). Suicide is self-murder!
2. Jesus came to save life and to do good, not to see a person kill or destroy their life (Mark 3:4). This would be contrary to the eternal purpose of God for their life (Eph. 2:10).
3. Suicide is contrary to faith, which fights and overcomes the pressures and temptations of the world (1 Tim. 6:12) (2 Tim. 4:7-8) (1 John 5:4).
4. For a person to commit suicide is to destroy something that does not belong to them. Their body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and belongs to God. To destroy one's life is to destroy something that belongs only to Him (Ezek. 18:4) (1 Cor. 6:19-20) (Eph. 1:14). God alone has the right to give or take away life. Job recognized this right in Job 1:22.
5. Peter tells the Philippian jailer who is about to commit suicide,