

Be Angry and Do Not Sin

by Tricia Berg

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Ephesians 4:26-27

People prefer to only remember Jesus by how mild mannered and loving He was, but there were times when He did get angry. Can you name the two times that Jesus got VERY angry? (Tick, tock, tick, tock, time's up...) It was the two times that He cleansed the temple, once towards the beginning of His ministry and once at the end. (John 2:13-17, Matthew 21:12-13/Luke 19:45-46) Since Jesus NEVER sinned, we can know that what He did was right and just (as always). That was a serious matter, and it still is TODAY. What, you say? There is no temple today, is there? Isn't there? No, not in the traditional sense of a physical building, but today WE believers ARE the temple. This is why we shouldn't say we're "going to church," because the temple is inside of us and the church is the GATHERING of believers, who are meant to be called out and set apart as holy, not an institution, building or even a worship service. "Church" is wherever and whenever born again believers gather. Our lives are to be continual sacrifices of praise and worship to God, not just at set times or places.

*And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has **anointed us**, and who has also **put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee**. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22*

*Whoever keeps his commandments **abides in God, and God in him**. And **by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us**. 1 John 3:24*

*(For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And **we are his house if indeed we hold fast** our confidence and our boasting in our hope. Hebrews 3:4-6*

*So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may **grow up into salvation—if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good**. As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, **you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a***

spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:1-5

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Ephesians 5:15-21

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. **For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.** When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. **Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.** Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. **Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:2-17**

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, **we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.** For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may **not be found naked.** For while we are still

*in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. **He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.** 2 Corinthians 5:1-5*

*("Behold, I am coming like a thief! **Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!**") Revelation 16:15*

Isn't it interesting that the passage at the top of this article starts out this way?

*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must **no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.** They are darkened in their understanding, **alienated from the life of God** because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and **have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.** But **that is not the way you learned Christ!**—assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to **put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,** and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to **put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.** Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. **Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths,** but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,** by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.** Ephesians 4:17-32*

We are to forgive others when they sin *against us*. That does not mean never rebuking them for sinning, and that does NOT mean we have the right to redefine sin and tell others they can sin AGAINST GOD because we have decided according to OUR wisdom, that it is okay. We are NOT doing anyone a favor by giving them our OPINION as to what God would have them do when it goes AGAINST what He said in the Bible. If we actually LOVE them more than we love our own comfort (because people don't LIKE to hear the truth), then we will WANT them to repent and receive forgiveness!

Pay attention to yourselves! **If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him,** and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him." Luke 17:3-4

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." Matthew 18:15-17

I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now **I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.** For what have I to do with judging outsiders? **Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."** 1 Corinthians 5:9-13

What can we learn from Jesus' reaction to the temple being treated as a common thing, which was to defile it? How should that affect our behavior if we know that is the way He feels about the sanctity of His temple, and that WE ARE that temple in these days? Remember, there USED TO BE a physical building in the past and at that time, only select individuals had the Holy Spirit come over them. The mystery of this age is that Christ lives IN us, even Gentiles who believe! Wow! And we were NEVER instructed to build "God's house" except, again, to the extent that is US—we spread the Good News and Jesus Himself builds us up into a spiritual house by His Spirit. We are only messengers—God alone saves. (John 1:12-13)

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, **the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the**

hope of glory. We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so **that we may present every man complete in Christ.** For this purpose also I labor, striving **according to His power, which mightily works within me.** Colossians 1:24-29

If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. **Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.** Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. 1 Corinthians 3:15-18

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so **walk in him, rooted and built up in him** and established in the faith, **just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.** In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, **by putting off the body of the flesh,** by the circumcision of Christ, **having been buried with him in baptism,** in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And **you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.** He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. Colossians 2:6-15

Anyone who is committing sexual immorality of any kind can be sure that Jesus is NOT pleased with them. How does that kind of behavior show they are a new creation in Christ? How is that dying to the old sinful flesh to live in newness of life? Discipline is needed and because He always does what is RIGHT, He will provide it. We love our children, but that doesn't mean we approve of everything they do. Today the lines are even blurred in that regard, because children, as God predicted for us in the Scriptures, are becoming spoiled. Many parents and even grandparents (who should be providing wisdom, not caving in to the world, but standing in the GAP) are letting their children run wild and even approving of sexual immorality in the name of "love" or "changing times." God does NOT change. He NEVER defined love as "anything goes." Just because

we love someone doesn't mean we have intimate relations with them—God has set boundaries for that kind of love and it's not for us to question Him. He has defined loving Him as OBEYING Him. He ALONE defines what is good and what is evil. Also note that the one who loves Jesus is the same one who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. That is the difference between a true believer and just any person. That is what "born again" is—to have the spirit you were physically born with, which was dead to God due to all mankind inheriting the sinful nature regenerated by God's Spirit, so that you are now His child, adopted into His family. You MUST be born again to enter the kingdom of God.

Let those who love the Lord hate evil, for he guards the lives of his faithful ones and delivers them from the hand of the wicked. Psalm 97:10

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ***"Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?"*** Jesus answered him, ***"If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."*** John 14:15-27

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like

a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. **By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.** These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. **You are my friends if you do what I command you.**" John 15:1-14

For we ourselves were **once** foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, **he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.** The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that **those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works.** These things are excellent and profitable for people. But **avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.** Titus 3:3-11

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" John 3:3

But understand this, that **in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slandering, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. **Avoid such people.** For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. 2 Timothy 3:1-7**

Doesn't the above passage describe these times perfectly? We are ALL about the pleasures of life—vacations, homes that are so luxurious that many have a hard time finding hotels that are as nice when they go on a trip, home theaters, cars that have all the comforts of home, dining out, endless forms of entertainment, sports, etc. We take it for granted that both toddlers, tweens and teenagers behave like little monsters, especially toward their parents. We teach that PRIDE in many forms is acceptable: grades earned, possessions owned, titles held, awards won, talents, etc. We are very quick to defend our rights and take vengeance when we've been wronged—but God values HUMILITY—HE will exalt the ones who are humble as HE chooses and HE will avenge His own. (Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, 18:14) At times, there is no pleasing us—whatever concessions are made in an attempt to appease us are never enough. We do whatever we wish and think about the consequences later, usually trying to figure how to escape from them and often blaming them on others.

It's all about getting our way in this country and much of the world these days. We are not controlled by the Spirit and are probably puzzled by what that even means. Well for one thing, it means stop behaving as if you are your own if you belong to God. Consult Him by reading the Bible to find out what He desires from you. When He convicts you of sin in your conscience, repent instead of drowning out His still, small voice with things and advice of the world. There is such a thing as "searing" your conscience so that you can no longer hear it or rely on it as a moral compass to guide you. (1 Timothy 4:1-2)

*But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "**God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.**" Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. **Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.** James 4:6-10*

*Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with **humility** toward one another, for "**God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.**" **Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. **Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And **after you have suffered a little while, the God*******

of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 1 Peter 5:5-10

It's high time that people started finding out for themselves what pleases God. Be smart! We need to question why someone would want to tell us what we like to hear. Here's a hint: Money! It's very profitable to tell people lies, but not so much to tell unpopular truth. The new creation God talks about is to be evident in our lives from the point we come to faith onward. He said that if we love the world, it is obvious then that we do NOT love Him. If we're honest, we'll admit that IF we love this world, then we are NOT looking forward to the day when it's destroyed and replaced with everything holy.

*Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.** The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17*

"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." Matthew 6:24

*You ask and do not receive, because **you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.** Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously **over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us**"? James 4:3-5*

*What shall we say then? **Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.** For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that **our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin.** Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must **consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make***

you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. What then? **Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.** I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For **just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.** For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. **But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.** For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:1-23

Therefore be **imitators of God, as beloved children.** And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. **But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.** For you may be sure of this, that **everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things **the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.** Therefore **do not become partners with them; for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.** Ephesians 5:1-12

If you believe Jesus suffered horrifically for YOUR sins and died, rising again to show that His Father accepted His offering and that all who trust in Jesus will be raised again as well, then He is your LORD from that point on—it's not just an honorary term. It means that He is the BOSS of YOU. He OWNS you. You are bought and PAID FOR. I am not joking about this. We WILL all answer to Him for how we lived AFTER He cleansed us IN HIS BLOOD. He is SO full of grace and mercy that He will forgive ANY sin, but that does NOT mean that we continue deliberately in sin. That, my friend, is called "outraging the Spirit of grace by which we were sanctified." People who are not saved can't do that, because they have NOT been sanctified. The passage below is NOT directed only at prostitutes, but at ANYONE who practices sexual immorality—because God considers believers who do that to be NO BETTER than prostitutes. Our bodies are His temple and therefore to be kept HOLY. Faithfulness to our spouse in marriage (and purity for those who are not married) is symbolic of His faithfulness to us, just as He likens it to adultery if we worship false gods. It's a serious matter.

*"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"—and God will destroy both one and the other. **The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.** And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. **Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her?** For, as it is written, "The two will become one flesh." **But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.** 1 Corinthians 6:12-20*

***"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."** Acts 20:28*

*As obedient children, **do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,** since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." **And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds,***

conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. 1 Peter 1:14-19

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and **by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.**" Revelation 5:9-10

For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. **For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, **if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.** So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but **if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" **The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.** Romans 8:6-17

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. For **if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.** Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has **trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the**

Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." And again, "**The Lord will judge his people.**" It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Hebrews 10:24-31

Consider the following two passages:

For the **wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does.** Likewise **the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.** 1 Corinthians 7:4

"Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food"—and God will destroy both one and the other. **The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.** 1 Corinthians 6:13

How do those passages go together? Like this—the wife (who is represented by the church, regardless of gender, since we can ALL be saved, not only women or men) reserves herself only for her husband and the husband does likewise. Jesus consecrated Himself for OUR sake. This is a BIG deal, people!

"They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. **Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.** As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And **for their sake I consecrate myself**, that they also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask for these only, but also **for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us**, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, **I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.** Father, I desire that they also, **whom you have given me**, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. **I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.**" John 17:16-26

Women, if you reject the idea of submitting to your husband's will (because that is God's will and design for orderliness—it does not make you inferior or of lesser value); and men, if you mistreat your wife rather than loving her as yourself and being willing to lay down your life for her (because men are given the

greater responsibility by God—it is also wrong to let her rule over you just because it's easier than doing the job God gave you), then you are in rebellion against GOD:

*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For **the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.** He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because **we are members of his body.** "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." **This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.** However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Ephesians 5:22-33*

How about these next verses? They were talking about Israel, but remember, everything that has happened happens again, and today's believers are grafted into Israel.

*"I will make mere youths their officials; **children will rule over them.**" People will oppress each other— man against man, neighbor against neighbor. **The young will rise up against the old, the nobody against the honored. 12 Youths oppress my people, women rule over them.** My people, **your guides lead you astray; they turn you from the path.** Isaiah 3:4-5, 12*

*I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may **know him better.** I pray that **the eyes of your heart may be enlightened** in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And **God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who***

fills everything in every way. As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. Ephesians 1:17-2:3

As Paul and John both said, if we sin regularly with no effort to repent, STOP! Even as you read this, your flesh says "God doesn't actually mean what it sounds like He's saying. I like that other version where we can do whatever we want if Jesus died for all of our sins." That is because the devil is using the same trick he used in the Garden of Eden: "Did God really say?" He always mixes in some truth with the lies to make it more believable for those who don't bother to check his "facts." Jesus did pay for ALL of our sins, but we WILL answer to Him for how well we loved Him after He became our Redeemer. We are not able to trick Him as to whether we have true faith or not, nor as to whether we could have obeyed Him or not. He knows whether we strived against sin and how many ways He provided us a way out, but we rejected His help. Don't listen to wolves in sheep's clothing. We were warned for good reason. We will know them by their fruits, one of which is twisting Scripture. I was once told not to "parade my righteousness before others to be seen" when I dared to suggest that believer participating in a parade taking pride in sin (of any kind) is not the way to "shine our lights before men that they may glorify our Father in heaven." (What an ironic, backward accusation this woman made of me for daring to question whether proudly wearing a hat representing female genitalia (in the presence of minors, although I don't feel there is ever a "good" time or place to do that) and supporting groups going against pretty much every moral God stands for is a good way to glorify His holy name.)

Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame. 1 Corinthians 15:33-34

Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. Philippians 3:17-19

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; **if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;** and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the **sensual conduct of the wicked** (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to **keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority.** Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. **But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction,** suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. **They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray.** They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness. These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. **For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them**

never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire." 2 Peter 2:1-22

My little children, I am writing these things to you **so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.** 1 John 2:1-6

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:12-16

"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For **the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?** So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. **Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.** Thus you will recognize them by their fruits. **Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.** On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do

many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. **And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.**” Matthew 7:13-27

Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I **did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.** Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure **fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert,** remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. Acts 20:26-31

“Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.** But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. **A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.**” This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. **All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.** I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. **The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.** I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. **He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.** I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For

this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.” John 10:1-18

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 1 Peter 5:8-10

Once we have become children of God by receiving salvation, we are meant to be LIGHTS pointing the way to God's TRUTH. People who are not saved (and that includes MANY who profess faith, but you would never know they were believers by looking at their lives) can't understand what pleases God. They don't have His indwelling Spirit to guide them. Those of us who say we DO, because we ARE born again need to LIVE IT OUT. Saying we believe, with empty words and no actions, is NOT evidence of being saved (which is the same as born again).

*Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, **arm yourselves with the same way of thinking**, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh **no longer for human passions but for the will of God. For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 1 Peter 4:1-5***

"Living in sensuality" above applies to all sexual contact outside of marriage between one man and one woman. (Matthew 19:4-6- It is irrelevant that the question was about divorce, but the answer included more than that—Jesus took the opportunity to reiterate that God designed marriage to be between opposite genders.) Drunkenness? He doesn't say we can't drink at all, but being "buzzed" is the same as drunk, both for driving and with God. The moment our judgment is impaired so that we have less self-control of ourselves, we have gone too far. Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit—no temper tantrums, fits of rage, crude talk.

"For no good tree bears bad fruit, **nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit**, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from **thornbushes**, nor are grapes picked from a **bramble bush**. **The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.** "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But **the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.**" Luke 6:43-49

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a **foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God**, and of instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits. For **it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.** For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. But **if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned. Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation.** For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. And we desire each one of you to **show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.** Hebrews 6:1-12

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also **faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.** But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart

from your works, and **I will show you my faith by my works**. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! **Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?** Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? **For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.** James 2:14-26

For you were called to freedom, brothers. **Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh**, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. But I say, **walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh**. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now **the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.** Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Galatians 5:13-26

"For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person." Mark 7:21-23

Unsaved people can't understand why God would send His Son to die for our sins, nor can they understand PICKING UP OUR CROSS and carrying it (if we claim to be disciples of Jesus). They think sin is fun and don't believe God sees everything they do, hears everything they say and even knows every thought

they think. They don't see ANY point in giving up anything at all in the world. They do not submit to God's authority, since they don't even believe He exists, or if they claim they do--"their Jesus" wouldn't say or do many of the things the Jesus of the Bible did and said. Should we take advice of the LOST as to how to live? If we do take it, can we possibly expect anyone to believe that we are not just like them--lost?

*For the word of the cross is **folly to those who are perishing**, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 1 Corinthians 1:18*

*Then Jesus told his disciples, "**If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.** For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? **For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.**" Matthew 16:24-27*

*And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "**If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." Mark 8:34-38***

***And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.** Hebrews 11:6*

What else makes Jesus angry or sick? You may be surprised to hear the answer: lukewarm Christians. He says that He spits (or vomits) them out of His mouth. He is NOT interested in lip service. (Matthew 15:7-9) He wants the walk to match the talk. Did you know that one of the traits among the people who are NOT allowed to enter the Holy City is cowardice? We need to STAND UP for Jesus and not be ashamed of ANY of His words. The letters warning the churches what Jesus expects of them were written to BELIEVERS. He is not suggesting we earn salvation—He is telling us what He as our Lord wants from us. If someone doesn't belong to Him, then they are NOT redeemed and their behavior will NOT save them. The expectations are for the children of God.

Something else that Jesus hates is tolerance of false teachings and practices. (Revelation 2:2, 6, Revelation 2:14-15, Revelation 2:20-23, 3:9)

*"I know your works: **you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.** For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that **you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.** I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. **Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.** Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. **The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.** He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."* Revelation 3:15-22

The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death." Revelation 21:7-8

Do you want to be rewarded for the way you faithfully lived your life for His glory when He returns, or find out then that He is NOT happy with you? We believers in this age have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, which means that 1) we are the temple of God--that is not something to take for granted or trifle with, and 2) because of His Spirit in us, we ARE able to overcome the desire to sin. He will help us to resist temptation and give us the desire to please Him instead of ourselves and others when we put Him first, which includes seeking the truth in His word.

And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him. 1 John 2:28-29

Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him." But **we are not**

of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls. Hebrews 10:35-39

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. **Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction;** whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Galatians 6:7-8

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always **obeyed**, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work **out** your own salvation with fear and trembling, for **it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.** Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be **blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.** Philipians 2:12-16

For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ. Galatians 1:10

What does God mean when He warns us through Paul and Peter that people will try to deceive us? Does He mean they will try to tell us that God still hates sin, but we shouldn't believe them? Or does He mean just as He said, that people will try to tell us that God is no longer concerned with sin, but has changed with the times--that we can now do whatever we like and He loves us and our behavior just the same?

Let me ask this: Why didn't the disciples understand when Jesus told them on THREE different occasions that He was going to suffer and die, then rise again? (Matthew 16:21, 17:22-23, 20:17) Because they had been taught WRONG all their lives that the Messiah would come as a CONQUERING Lord to rule over the earth and they missed the passages in Isaiah 53 and other places that said what would happen FIRST. So is it possible that you've been taught wrong as well, that once someone is saved, they are free TO sin? Then why did Paul say DO NOT use your freedom to indulge the flesh and NO, sin should NOT abound that grace may abound. (I realize there are many at the other extreme who think that we earn salvation or keep the letter of the law to remain saved, but those errors are not the subject of this article.)

If our Lord got ANGRY when the temple was defiled, then how should that make US feel when we see people everywhere claiming to be Christians indwelt by His Spirit and yet choosing to sin and defile His temple as a way of life? (Sad, to say the least, at how many are deceived.) ALL sexual immorality is unacceptable to God, especially by believers. There is no "free pass" for anyone. Another lie that we have bought is that our families are so important that we should keep silent about the truth if that is "necessary" to "keep the peace." Jesus said that He came to bring division and that if we love anyone more than Him, we are not worthy of Him. He NEVER called us to compromise on His holy word, or to take the side of someone just because we're related to or friends with them. In fact, He said NOT to be a respecter of persons, showing partiality. (Colossians 3:25)

*"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. **I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.** For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. **Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.**" Matthew 10:34-39*

*"I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished! **Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.** For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." Luke 12:49-53*

*Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and **leave the dead to bury their own dead.**" Matthew 8:21-22*

I can't make anyone care about this, but for myself, I want to live in such a way as to hear "well done, good and faithful servant" when Jesus returns. There is NOTHING in this world worth giving up eternal rewards for, and that includes the smile I hope to receive from my beloved, beautiful Savior when I see Him face to face. How can we overcome to the point of death if need be, considering our bodies to be mere "tents," if we can't even control our tongues and our

desires? We haven't done God any favors by believing. Our faith was a gift that we accepted when we surrendered our will to His—when we admitted we are sinners in need of a Savior and that He is God and we are not. Likewise, the good works we do after receiving salvation are really fruits produced *by Him* when we care more about His plan and purposes than about our own selfish desires.

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' Matthew 25:21

Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. 1 Corinthians 3:12-18

*Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how **you ought to walk and to please God**, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. For **you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.*** 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

*Know this, my beloved brothers: **let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*** For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer,

he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But **the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.** Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. James 1:19-27

His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. By these **He has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires.** For this very reason, **make every effort to supplement your faith with goodness, goodness with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with godliness, godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.** For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they will keep you from being useless or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **The person who lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and has forgotten the cleansing from his past sins. Therefore, brothers, make every effort to confirm your calling and election, because if you do these things you will never stumble. For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly supplied to you.** Therefore I will always remind you about these things, even though you know them and are established in the truth you have. I consider it right, as long as I am in this tent, to wake you up with a reminder, knowing that I will soon **lay aside my tent**, as our Lord Jesus Christ has also shown me. And I will also make every effort that you may be able to recall these things at any time after my departure. 2 Peter 1:3-15

Even if I am to be **poured out as a drink offering** upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Philippians 2:17

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be **set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of**

God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have **the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.** For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise **the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, **for those who are called according to his purpose.** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the **firstborn among many brothers.** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall **tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?** As it is written, "**For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.**" No, **in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.** For I am sure that neither **death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,** will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:18-39

For anyone reading this, there's still time to **repent** (don't just "say sorry," but TURN from sin) and be forgiven of considering as common what God has made holy, of caring more about yourself than God. He is able to cleanse and He has promised to forgive and restore our fellowship with Him when we confess. I don't want to ROB anyone of that opportunity by telling them what they wanted to hear in this life, to their GREAT detriment in the next. The first thought when reading this article should not be "who does she think she is to tell me anything?" but "THANK YOU, GOD, for loving me enough to use others to startle me awake, as uncomfortable as it is, while where is still time to get ready!"

Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, **to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.** 2 Corinthians 5:9-10

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. **If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.** 1 John 1:5-10

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. **No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning.** The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. **No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed [Spirit] abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.** 1 John 3:4-10

Besides this you know the time, that **the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.** The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us **cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.** But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.** Romans 13:11-14

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, **let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,** looking to Jesus, the

founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. **Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.** And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? **"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."** It is for discipline that you have to endure. **God is treating you as sons.** For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? **If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.** Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. **For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God;** that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears. For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned." Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." **But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven.** At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but

*also the heavens.” This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore **let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken**, and thus **let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe**, for our God is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:1-29*

For others who feel as I do that we need to sound the alarm so that people can wake up and get ready, we need to do this out of LOVE. If God wanted to force anyone to obey, He would have made robots. He wants people to obey out of LOVE. We can only pronounce the message from the Bible without sugar-coating it, twisting it, taking it out of context, etc. If people choose NOT to love God enough to obey Him after all He’s done for them, then they will answer for that. I do not approve of name calling or violence against anyone, nor of hypocrisy by people who do not address their own sins but are only concerned with OTHER people’s. We ALL need to read our Bibles for ourselves, in context, not letting others put their own spin on it and not reading our own preferences into it.

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