

## The Obituary

by Tricia Berg

On January 16, 2017, I read an obituary that a woman with bone marrow cancer wrote for herself before she died, to which her family added many details. It was terribly sad. Not only that she died, but that she and her family wanted to have one last say in corrupting the world with her ungodly views after she left it. Apparently, they were proud of her beliefs. The woman even asked for donations in lieu of flowers to Freedom from Religion—more accurately “freedom from God” as they oppose Him, not only “religion”—it’s similar to how “pro-choice” is really “pro-death” because they only want abortions and oppose organizations that help mothers to keep their babies (and thereby reduce profits from abortion). She also endorsed and supported PFLAG (which is a pro-aberrant-sexual-behavior organization for parents—rejecting God’s design for male and female and the warnings in the Bible against such behaviors).

This deceased woman had been raised Roman Catholic and left, not because of the many false teachings, but because of her rebellion against God. She refused to accept the hierarchy between male and female that He designed for orderliness, both now on earth and symbolically of the order in heaven. Please read my post [“As Christ Loved the Church”](#) for enlightenment on that design and how there is nothing to be offended about—men have a very high calling to treat their wives as Christ does the church, and women are not second-rate in any way. We all give honor to Jesus Himself when we follow His design for authority, which represents and acknowledges His authority as Head over the church. (Col. 1:18, Eph. 1:22, Eph. 5:22-33)

This woman who died exalted man’s opinions (including her own) over God’s sovereign rule over His own creation, and by doing so, she became an idolater. (1Cor. 3:18-20, Rev. 21:8, 22:15) She didn’t know God as He revealed Himself in the Bible. She rejected the truth in favor of lies. (Rom. 1:18-31) This is a sobering thought, but it is very likely that she is at this time wishing she could come back and warn her family and friends not to do what she did or listen to her words of “wisdom,” whether in this life or in her obituary. (Luke 16:29-31, 2Tim. 3:12-17, 1Cor. 1:18-31) To be perfectly clear—anyone who ends up in hell gets there by rejecting the ONLY way to be forgiven of their sins, Jesus. (Rom. 6:23) False beliefs (and their corresponding actions) are evidence that we have not come to a saving knowledge of the Way, the TRUTH and the Life.

*Jesus said to him, “**I am the way, and the truth, and the life.** No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6*

My point in writing this article is not to speak ill of the dead, but to steer people away from being influenced by the false teachings she accepted and promoted. If people were hearing a last message from me after I had passed away, here is what I would like them all to know. Some of the best advice we can find in the Bible for this fallen world is in the Book of Ecclesiastes. Why? Because the main message conveyed by Solomon (the wisest man there ever was - 1 Kings 4:29-34, 2 Chron. 1:11-12) is that all of this passes away and then comes the judgment (also see 1John 2:15-17):

*The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 (also 2Cor. 5:10, 1Pet. 1:13-25)*

In America, we're enslaved but we don't know it. (2Pet. 2:19) All of our priorities are wrong. We care WAY too much about appearances and temporary things, giving God leftovers (if any) of our time, money and effort. (1Tim. 6:17-18, Matt. 6:33) I spent the majority of my life going along with the flow. I shudder to think of how many hours I spent watching worthless television or listening to music that did not bring me closer to God. Whatever does not build up tears down, and we can't get that wasted time back. (Prov. 14:1) As the above passage says, that's not what we're here for. We say we don't have enough time to give more of ourselves to God and seek Him first (Matt. 6:33), but really we just don't care enough to make time. (Mark 4:13-20, Rev. 3:14-22) We do plenty of things that don't need to be done—things that won't have any lasting impact, and nothing "bad" will happen if we don't do them.

I squandered a lot of time, money and effort on temporary things that do not bring lasting happiness or store treasure in heaven. (Matt. 6:19-21) In our culture, we have even put family above God, and we think that pleases Him. Our families are gifts from Him. He is pleased that we appreciate them, but ultimately they belong to Him, just like everything else in the whole world. They're not meant to replace Him in our affections. (Matt. 10:37, Matt. 22:37-38, Psa. 24:1, 1Chron. 29:14, Hag. 2:8, Jam. 1:17) We also invest heavily in our bodies and homes, forgetting that we are only visitors here. (1Pet. 2:11, Heb. 11:13) We compare ourselves to others and waste emotion feeling "less than," trying to remedy it with more wasted time, money and effort—but what really matters is on the INSIDE. (1Pet. 3:1-6, Prov. 31:30) Those who belong to God will receive glorified bodies that will never be sick or die. Our permanent home is in heaven. (Phil. 3:20-21, Luke 20:35-36, Col. 3:1-2)

The commandments Solomon referred to in the above-quoted passage were the Ten Commandments. However, in the New Testament (new covenant), we are no

longer under the letter of the law, but under the "royal law." (Jam. 2:8, Jam. 2:12, 2Cor. 3:6, Rom. 8:13-14, Gal. 5:25) "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Matt. 7:12, Matt. 22:39) Not one of us is able to keep it perfectly, even with the best of intentions. However, many people today twist the biblical meaning of "love." Let me tell you, God's definition of love NEVER, EVER includes committing acts that He has said are sinful, nor approving of them or causing anyone else to do them. (Matt. 18:7-9, Rom. 1:32)

To contentious people who love to argue: Just stop. You're only trying to justify your behavior, but no one wants to hear you compare your sin to the Old Testament ceremonial laws that are no longer in effect because they were foreshadows and Jesus fulfilled them. Oh, did I just answer your questions about shellfish and textiles? (Col. 2:17, Heb. 8:5-6) But nevertheless, I agree with anyone who says that a lot of hypocrisy has been going on with so-called "Christians" in disobeying many commands themselves, but condemning others for doing the same. (Rom. 2:1, Eph. 5:5-17, 1Pet. 2:11-12, Matt. 7:2-5) Our motive in speaking the truth is LOVE. (Eph. 4:15-32, Jam. 5:19-20, 2Tim. 2:24-26) Remember, we are not earning salvation by obeying—we are showing that we truly have saving faith, and that we love and respect our Savior, to whom we are eternally grateful. (Psa. 50:23)

The commands that are still in effect were specifically reiterated in the New Testament. One that comes up OFTEN is refraining from sexual immorality of all kinds. (Matt. 5:32, Matt. 15:18-20, Matt. 19:9, Mark 7:18-23, Acts 15:19-20, Acts 15:28-29, Acts 21:25, Rom. 13:13, 1Cor. 5, 1Cor. 6:9-20, 2Cor. 12:21, Gal. 5:19-21, Eph. 5:3-12, Col. 3:5-7, 1Thess. 4:2-8, 1Tim. 1:8-11, Heb. 12:15-17, Heb. 13:4, Jude 1:6-8, Rev. 2:14, 2:21, 9:20-21, 21:8, 22:15, 1Cor. 10:8, 2Pet. 2:6-10)

It is one thing to slip, but another to make a regular practice of sin, unconcerned by it. It's not about what we have done, but what we DO after supposedly coming to the saving knowledge of the TRUTH. (2Tim. 2:19-26, 2Pet. 2:20, Heb. 6:4-8) In fact, the word "practice" comes up repeatedly in the Bible's discussion of the fate of unrepentant sinners. (Rom. 1:32, Rom. 2:1-3, 1Cor. 6:9-10, Eph. 4:19, Gal. 5:19-21, 1Thess. 1:9-10, 1John 1:6, 1John 3:4-10, 2Pet. 2:14, Rev. 2:14, Rev. 2:20, Rev. 22:11) The sins of believers are referred to in past tense, where they belong (with the help of the Holy Spirit). (1Cor. 6:11, Eph. 4:17-24, Rom. 6:6, Rom. 6:19-23, Eph. 2:1-3, Gal. 4:8, Eph. 4:22-23, 1Tim. 1:13, 1Pet. 1:14-16) We are meant to imitate the godly examples given to us. (1Cor. 4:16, Eph. 5:1, Phil. 3:17, Phil. 4:9, 1Thess. 1:6-7, 2Thess. 3:7-9, Gal. 5:22-24, 1Tim. 4:15, Heb. 5:14, Heb. 6:11-12, Heb. 13:7, Jam. 1:27, Jam. 3:16, 2Pet. 1:3-12, 3John 1:11, Rev. 22:11)

But again, all we need to remember to do are the two greatest commands, because by keeping them, the rest will be kept. If we love God first and our neighbor as ourselves, then we will not do anything to displease God on purpose, including causing harm to our neighbor. (Rom. 13:8-14, 1Thess. 4:1-8) Stop taking verses out of context! (Don't cut off "Go and sin no more." John 5:14, John 8:11) Let's not be deceived by listening to people telling us what we like to hear! The door is narrow. (2Tim. 3:1-7, 4:3-4, 1Cor. 6:9-10, 1Cor. 15:33-34, 2Pet. 2:18-22, Matt. 7:13-27, 1John 1:5-10) The bad fish "caught in the net" of the kingdom of God will be thrown OUT. (Matt. 13:47-50, Luke 6:43-49) God will not be mocked by people who pretend to have faith, but show by their actions that they don't even know the first thing about who He is or what He's like. (Gal. 6:7-8, 1John 2:3-6, 1Thess. 4:5, Heb. 11:6)

There is a sad confusion in these wicked times we live in even among Christians about justification (being declared innocent, "righteous") and sanctification (being made pure, "holy"). Jesus' blood does wash away our sins—both justifying and sanctifying us—but that is the beginning, not the end. When He gives us new life, He redeems and purchases us as His possession. (1Cor. 6:19-20, 2Cor. 5:17, Titus 2:14, 1Pet. 1:17-19, 1Pet. 2:9, Rev. 5:9-10) Why do you think He told parables about how we should live while He is away? (Matt. 25:1-30, Luke 19:11-27) Why are we told to pursue holiness, to endure and persevere, to do good works and bear fruit? (Heb. 12:14, John 15:1-10, Eph. 2:10, Rom. 2:6-10, Titus 3:8, Gal. 6:9-10) Because it matters, that's why! Some will lose rewards when their worthless works are burned up, but some will find out that they were deceiving themselves about their alleged faith. (1Cor. 3:14-20, Jam. 1:22-25, 2Cor. 13:5, Rom. 8:9, 1Pet. 2:2-3)

Because Jesus set us free, even from the control sin ONCE had over us, we CAN live in a way that pleases Him, IF we love Him. (Rom. 6, Gal. 5:24, John 8:34-36, 2Cor. 5:14-15, 1John 5:3) God's own Spirit inside of us helps us to overcome this evil world IF we are born again and therefore belong to Him. (John 14:18:24, Rom. 8:9-11, 1John 3:6-10, John 7:39, 1John 3:24, 1John 4:13, Phil. 2:12-16, Gal. 5:16-25) Salvation is a free gift and so is the Holy Spirit, who helps us live in a manner worthy of God, who has adopted us as His own dear children. (Eph. 4:1, Col. 1:10, 1Thess. 2:12, Phil. 1:27-28, 1Thess. 4:1, John 1:12-13, 1John 3:1, Rom. 8:15-17, Gal. 4:6-7) Stop making excuses to sin. Stop quenching the Holy Spirit. Be ready for Jesus' return! (1Thess. 5:19-20, Eph. 4:30, Mark 13:32-36)

God does not delight in punishing anyone, but He will not leave sin unpunished. (Nah. 1:2-3, Psalms 5:4-7) He is righteous, just and holy. The ONLY way to be forgiven is by Jesus' suffering and death on the cross to take our place. Jesus took all of the wrath we deserved upon Himself, but we must believe in order to have

it applied to ourselves. (Isa. 52:13-53:12, 2Cor. 5:21, Rom. 10:9-10, John 8:24, 1John 2:23; please also read my article "[Beautiful](#)".)

God is keeping detailed, perfect records of all of those times when we had a chance to receive and love the truth but refused. We are condemning ourselves by our rebellious attitudes and actions. (Rev. 20:11-15, Dan. 7:9-10, Rom. 14:11-12, Rom. 2:4-10, 2Cor. 5:9-10, 2Thess. 2:9-12) Hell was prepared for Satan and the other fallen angels, who had free will like us but lived in the visible presence of God. (Matt. 18:10) For them there is no mention in the Bible of any redemption being available. They were not born with the sinful nature as we were—they were each created sinless like Adam and Eve. But unlike Adam and Eve, they were not instructed to be fruitful and multiply (and yet some did - Gen. 6:4, 2Pet. 2:4, Jude 1:6). (Gen. 1:27-28, Luke 20:34-36)

God had mercy on Adam and Eve. Eve was deceived by the serpent and Adam was led astray by Eve. (Gen. 3:12-13) He has mercy on us because we were all born with their fallen nature. We are the crown of His creation, the only ones made in His own image, and He didn't leave us without a Rescuer—His only begotten, beloved Son. (1Cor. 11:7, Rom. 5, Matt. 17:5) If that doesn't fill us with awe that the one and only God, who always has been and always will be, who made everything there is from nothing (Heb. 11:3, Heb. 3:4), would come to earth to live as a man at all, but let alone for the purpose of suffering and dying a horrible death in order to save us ungrateful, unworthy, ignorant and arrogant creatures (Heb. 2:6-18), then I don't know what it would take to impress us. It brings tears to my eyes to even write it.

We WILL suffer the wrath of God and share the same end as Satan and those who follow him IF we reject the priceless, amazing sacrifice of love that has been made on our behalf and offered freely to us. (John 3:16-18, John 3:36, 1John 4:9-10, Rom. 5:7-8, John 10:17-18, Jer. 17:13, Eph. 2:8-10) God knows our very hearts and thoughts. (Heb. 4:12-13, Rev. 2:23, Psa. 139:23-24) We can deceive ourselves, but He can't be fooled. (Gal. 6:7-9, 1Cor. 6:9-10, 1Cor. 15:33-34, 2Cor. 11:3, 2Tim. 3:10-17, Jam. 1:12-16, Jam. 1:22, Jam. 1:26, Matt. 24:24, Mark 13:22-23, Rev. 13:13-14) Jesus is our greatest treasure, and we're to appreciate that and behave accordingly. (1Cor. 2:9-16, 1Pet. 1:6-9, 1Pet. 4:15-19, Luke 12:33-34)

Let's read the Bible for ourselves. We have an abundance of opportunity in this country to hear and study God's Word if we actually want to. We have no excuse for remaining ignorant and letting false teachers lead us astray. There are many good translations (please stay away from "specialty" versions published by false religions and paraphrases that spin the original meaning to fit their viewpoint). Don't fall for health and wealth preachers and teachers who are making a

shameful profit off of people seeking God by telling them selfish, "feel-good" messages about how God lives only to please His creation. (2Cor. 4:2, 2Pet. 2:3, 14, 1Pet. 5:2, Titus 1:11, Matt. 6:24, 1Tim. 6:10, Heb. 13:5) Stay away from anyone who claims to hear directly from God, wanting to have a following based on their "special" knowledge, which usually doesn't agree with the Bible. (1Cor. 4:6)

How can we love God if we don't even know Him? How can we recognize false teachings if we don't know the truth? We can know Him if we read what He had recorded for us in the Holy Bible. It's that simple. Pray, praise, worship, love, trust, obey. When we truly love Him, our desires will be the same as His. (Psa. 37:4)

*The LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works. The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them. The LORD preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. Psalm 145:17-20*

As the New Testament repeatedly warns us, our response to this great salvation and hope of what is to come (living in the glorious presence of God for eternity - Rev. 21:3) should be reverent respect (healthy fear) of our God and His mighty power, and LOVE for the way He loves us and saves us from our depraved, lost selves—at the ultimate cost to Himself. (Heb. 2:1-4, 1Pet. 1:14-19, Heb. 12:1-4) If we actually think there is room for deliberate sin on our part after receiving Jesus as Savior AND Lord, then we should question whether that is believing at all or is that another gospel, another Jesus, still blind, slumbering, and enslaved to sin? (John 8:12, Eph. 5:8-17, 1John 1:5-7, 1John 2:11, John 9:41, 2Pet. 1:9, 1Cor. 15:33-34, 1Thess. 5:5-8, Eph. 6:10-12, 2Pet. 2:18-21, Heb. 10:26-39, 2Cor. 11:1-4, Rom. 13:14, 2Cor. 13:5)

Let's not play games with God. The result will not be a "win." All of the pleasure and treasure in the world is rubbish compared to what God has in store for those who love Him. (Phil. 3:8-21, 1Cor. 2:9) Whatever is "gained" by disobedience to God will someday lead to bitter regret. (Psa. 37, Psa. 73) Listen to me and you will not regret it. (2Cor. 7:10) I guaranty it. Put your trust in God because He is able to work everything out for our good and never fails (but we must bear in mind that what seems best to us is not always so in His perfect wisdom). (Rom. 8:28) His ways are higher than our ways and He sees it all from beginning to end. (Isa. 55:8-9) Those who hope in the Lord will never be put to shame. (Rom. 5:3-5, Rom. 9:33, Rom. 10:8-13) Give your life to God for His good pleasure—serve Him with your whole heart. (1Chron. 28:9) You'll be glad you did.

Don't put this off—none of us knows how much time we have left. Cry out to God—He hears you and knows you better than you know yourself—and amazingly, He loves you anyway and offers you eternal life! (1Tim. 2:3-6, 2Pet. 3:9) We're ALL unworthy, but for those who believe, He will forgive us just as He told us we must do, if we repent and ask Him—He will cleanse us from our sins. (Matt. 18:21-35, Luke 17:3-4, 1John 1:9, 1John 4:18) Our part is to humble ourselves and stop fighting against Him. He alone is God, and He alone saves. (Acts 4:12)

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 4:8-10

For thus says the LORD, who **created the heavens** (he is God!), who **formed the earth and made it** (he established it; he did not create it empty, he formed it to be inhabited!): **"I am the LORD, and there is no other. I did not speak in secret, in a land of darkness; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, 'Seek me in vain.'** I the LORD speak the truth; I declare what is right. "Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you survivors of the nations! They have no knowledge who carry about their wooden idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save. Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together! Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, the LORD? And **there is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me. Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.** By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: **'To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.'** "Only in the LORD, it shall be said of me, are righteousness and strength; to him shall come and be ashamed all who were incensed against him. In the LORD all the offspring of Israel shall be justified and shall glory." Isaiah 45:18-25

No one has EVER been saved by following the world's advice to "believe in yourself." Let's listen to God instead and then we will truly have a bright future!

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26

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