

ADVANCED DISCIPLESHIP

DR. DAVE LUELOFF

ROOT PROBLEMS

The book of Genesis introduces sin's presence into the world. The book of Revelation speaks of a new earth without the presence of sin. In between are the sad results of sin's effect on the lives of people.

SIN

Sin Defined

Sin means to 'miss the mark.' The goal of the archer is to hit the bull's-eye. God has given us a book of commands called the Bible. When we fall short, no matter how close we come, it is still called sin.

If a tennis player serves out of bounds, it is called a fault. The same holds true with sin. We are to live our lives within the boundaries God has set for us. This is to insure us a happier life and a more effective service for God.

Sin Described

Sin is deceitful. Sin brings pain and shame. Sin scars. It is a poison. Sin desires to drain every ounce of goodness, potential joy, and fulfillment out of your life. Sin is a cancer that destroys the body and soul. It caused Cain to kill Abel. It caused Sodom to be a homosexual city. It caused King Herod to kill all baby boys less than two years of age. It caused Amnon to rape his step-sister. It caused Absalom to try to destroy his father.

Sin may start small, but it always ends up big. Sin will cause a person to do things he/she never thought they were capable of.

Sin leads from a drink to drunkenness, from lust to adultery, from cigarettes to cancer, from a high to an addiction, and from a sensual web site to a perverted mind. Sin costs one their reputation, peace of mind and often their health.

- Sin will take you farther than you want to go
- Sin will cost you more than you want to pay
- Sin will take you where you do not want to go
- Sin will keep you longer than you want to stay

What happens when a Christian sins?

Fellowship with God is broken

Isaiah 59:1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: ² But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

Joy is robbed

Psalms 51:12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.

Prayers are hindered

Psalms 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*:

Reaping will come

Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. ⁸ For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Shames Christ

Hebrews 6:6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame.

Sickness may come

1 Corinthians 11:30 For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

Chastening may come

Hebrews 12:5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: ⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Death may result

1 John 5:16 If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

Steps To Sin

James 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: ¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

The steps to sin are L S D: Lust, Sin, Death. God never tempts Christians to sin to see how good of a Christian they are. The first step to sin is lust (desire). One may be tempted to sin by simply opening the door so they can fulfill their secret desires. If one has the desire for adultery, the devil simply has a ready participant available. If one has the desire for liquor, the devil has someone 'drop by' for a drink. This is why the Bible teaches:

Proverbs 4:23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life. ²⁴ Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. ²⁵ Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. ²⁶ Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. ²⁷ Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

The First Sin

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? ² And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: ³ But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. ⁴ And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: ⁵ For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. ⁶ And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. ⁷ And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

- The devil tempted Eve – the weaker vessel.
- The devil questioned God’s Word – “Yea, hath God said.”
- The devil majored on what Eve was not allowed to do.
- Eve talked to the devil and tried to reason with him. (Resist the devil – James 4:7)
- The devil lied – “ye shall not surely die”
- The devil mixed truth with error (vs.5)
- The devil worked on Eve’s desire (vs.5-6)
- Her sin affected her husband (vs. 6-7)
- Their sin separated them from God (vs. 10)

All false religion is based upon truth and error. Study Scriptures to discern heresy.

Sin separates us from a loving and caring God. Be wise with your life.

You are accountable to God for yourself. Do not let yourself and your family be deceived by a lie of the devil.

Is There Any Hope?

Will the Christian ever stop sinning? Yes, when we get to heaven.

Philippians 3:21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Until then, we are to battle, walk by faith, look unto Jesus, and strive to be victorious. When we sin, we need to confess it, forsake it, get up and move on.

1 John 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: ² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

ROOT PROBLEMS

Sin is Rooted in the Heart

All sin stems from the root – our heart

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Romans 11:16 ...and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches.

Sin (branches) stem from the root (sinful heart)

There are three mistakes that Christians often make:

1) Feeling Rule the Life

1 Corinthians 6:18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

Don't let feelings rule your life. One may be easily deceived by lust.

Revealed in words.	Filthy words and dirty jokes reveal an immoral lust.
Revealed in the mind.	Lusts control the thought life.
Revealed in clothing.	Bible describes a woman with the 'attire of an harlot.'
Revealed in TV habits.	Soap operas, nudity, sexual innuendo...
Revealed in music.	Rock /Rap music is sensual music.
Revealed in the eyes.	Eyes of lust rule this life.

2) Circumstances Rule the Life

Bitterness rules this life.

Often bitterness is a result of unforgiveness. Have you forgiven everyone and everything that has happened to you? Once you have forgiven, then every time that thought enters the mind, you must remind God that you have forgiven that sin – then change your thoughts to something else.

One may be bitter by not accepting their looks. This is rooted in rebellion toward our Creator:

Romans 9:20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus? ²¹ Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

You must accept your God-given looks.

3) Things Rule the Life

This life is ruled by covetousness. Jesus spoke five times as much about money and possessions as He did about any other subject.

1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Victory Over Root Problems

The longer a root is in a life, the deeper it grows. The atheist says, “There is no root,” The liberal says, “Just saw off the tree so it is not visible.” The worldly person says, “Fertilize the root.” God tells us to remove the root!

- Admit to God and to yourself your problem. Call it sin.
- Find Bible verses that address your sin
- Memorize the verses and apply it to your life.

Memorize: Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? ² God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Personalize: Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in pornography, that grace may abound? ² God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to pornography, live any longer therein?

Replace what you did with a godly / moral substitute
Walk with God – daily Bible / prayer / faithful church attendance

One of the keys to victory in a life is to truly discover the **root** issue.
Often one is bitter – due to the root of unforgiveness. One worries due to root of lack of faith.
One argues with spouse due to root of pride. One has a bad marriage due to root of lack of love.

The Holy Spirit’s job is to help the Christian in these areas. He truly will help as you seek the Lord.

SPIRITUAL HOUSECLEANING / PURITY

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Cleansing is a constant job. Things naturally get dirty. We must daily clean our bodies, teeth, hands and houses. We must also keep our physical and spiritual homes cleansed of sin.

We need to keep our home clean and our mind clean:

HOME

Activities in the Home

Prayer

Acts 10:30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing...

Dad is to Rule

1 Timothy 3:5 For if a man know not how to rule his own house...

No False Teachers Allowed in the Home

2 John 1:10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed...

Four Types of Spiritual Housecleaning

Trash out

Proverbs 28:13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

Everything in Order

Isaiah 38:1 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.

Washing

Psalms 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Dusting

Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Rooms to Cleanse

Kitchen

1. Throw out Liquor
Prov. 20:1 Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging ...whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.
2. Have meals together and live by schedule

Family Room

1. Dad is be the leader, Mom is to set a sweet spirit in the house. Mom sets the atmosphere of the home.

Entertainment Room

1. Clean up bookshelf.
2. Clean up the TV
3. Throw out Ouija Boards, Dungeons and Dragons, Astrology related items...
4. Change Music habits
5. Return borrowed items

MIND

1 Timothy 5:22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

The Battle is in the Mind

Romans 7:22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? ²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Thoughts

Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee.

You are not what you think you are, but what you think, you are! Thoughts produce actions, which produce habits, which produce lifestyles.

God sees your thoughts.

Matthew 5:28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Proverbs 15:3 The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

Words

Matthew 12:34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Music

Your mind has two great gates of entrance – your eyes and your ears

2 Peter 2:8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds;)

Ephesians 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Rock / Rap Music puts emphasis on: sex, drugs and violence. It is a language of rebellion. To listen to Christian Rock music makes as much sense as Christian Pornography or Christian Whiskey. There is no such thing. The Bible teaches us to be separate from the world.

Dealing with the Opposite Sex

Dress Properly – don't dress to attract others to your body

Being Alone with Others – Don't put yourself in a situation where others can accuse you of impropriety.

Touch

1 Corinthians 7:1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: *It is* good for a man not to touch a woman.

The word *touch* means *to kindle*. The danger with a sensual touch is that it alone does not satisfy. Lust always leads to more. The flesh is never satisfied.

Adultery

Proverbs 6:26 For by means of a whorish woman *a man is brought* to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.

Immorality causes:

- Loss of Joy
- Loss of Blessings
- Damage to Future Potential
- Lack of Resistance to Future Temptation
- Scars the Marriage Relationship
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Reap what you Sow

VICTORY

Breaking Habits

“I need victory in my life. I have an area I just cannot conquer. I have a habit I just cannot seem to break and it is hindering my Christian life. What can I do?” These words are often hear by a pastor. People want to change but cannot seem to make it over certain habits. What can be done?

Quote Scripture

Matthew 4:3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. ⁴ But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Guard Your Thoughts

2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ...

Pray

Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Die to Self (Crucify Lusts of the Flesh)

1 Corinthians 15:31 ...I die daily.

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Fast

Matthew 17:21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

Replacement

One must replace sin with something constructive. Attending a tavern can be replaced with attending a health club. Smoking can be replaced with chewing gum.

There are Bible examples of this:

- Egypt was replaced with Canaan
- Temple was replaced with the Church
- Jesus was replaced with the Holy Spirit

Accountability

It is wise to enlist help to overcome habits. For instance, if you are not getting up early enough to read your Bible and pray, you could have someone call you and wake you up. If you are trying to give up smoking, someone could call you at the end of everyday to see if you had victory. Just knowing they were going to call would put positive peer pressure on you to do right. This would also be a great help with pornography and the Internet. Be wise in choosing an accountability partner. The right person can strengthen your Christian walk.

Christian Fellowship

This can help in victory.

Jesus washed the disciples feet in John 1:1-17. The two great lessons from this are:

- (1) We get defiled by walking in this world and need daily cleansing, and
- (2) We are to serve one another to help us live above this world.

Hebrews 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

John 13:15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

STANDING GUARD

- Read your Bible Daily
- Die to Self
- Pray to 'not enter into temptation'
- Fast weekly
- Guard your thoughts
- Be faithful to church services

SINS OF THE BODY

DRUGS AND WITCHCRAFT

Jeremiah 27:9 “Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon...”

Many people use drugs to escape or cope with reality. These drugs include alcohol, marijuana, heroine, cocaine, ecstasy, Valium, and even many other drugs prescribed by a physician.

The word *sorcerer* in Jer. 27:9 comes from the word *pharmakos* where we get our word *pharmacy*. Drugs and witchcraft do go hand in hand. The devil never gives the entire picture.

THE BIBLE CONDEMNS WITCHCRAFT

Deuteronomy 18:10 There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, *or* that useth divination, *or* an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

Observer of Times	One who is superstitious
Enchanter	One who whispers magic spells
Witch	One who practices magic
Charmer	One who fascinates by spells
Consulter	One who raises the dead
Necromancer	One who communicates with the dead

Daniel 5:11 There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom *is* the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, *I say*, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, *and* soothsayers;

A soothsayer is a fortuneteller.

Jeremiah 14:14 Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart. If someone tells the future and is not 100% correct, they are not of God.

There has been much revival in the interest of the occult. Everyone needs guidance. If people reject the concept of God and His Word, they will look for guidance elsewhere. God says it is wicked to go any place other than to Him and His men for guidance.

Deuteronomy 18:12 For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Exodus 22:18 Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.

Whenever a person dabbles in drugs, séances, and palm reading, they are opening the door to their mind for demonic influences.

Acts 16:16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

Never participate in astrology, horoscope, séances, charms, voodoo dolls, and occult practices.... Remove any rebellion in your life. Rebellion leads to immorality and/or the occult.

1 Samuel 15:23 For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.

Samuel noticed rebellion in Saul's life. Soon, Saul was seeking guidance from a witch in Endor.

LIQUOR

Beer, whiskey, vodka, bourbon, scotch, rum and wine – it is all alcohol. Billy Sunday called it *liquid hell*. For years preachers took a stand against all forms of alcohol. Today, many cannot seem to envision what is wrong with it. They will say, “After all, the Bible mentions *wine* often.”

Fermentation

Laws of fermentation are fixed facts, always operating the same way and requiring the same conditions.

- There must be saccharine (sugar) matter and gluten (yeast).
- The temperature should be between 50 and 70 degrees F.
- The juice must be a certain consistency. Thick syrup will not undergo vinous fermentation.
- The quantity of gluten or ferment must also be well regulated. Too much or too little will impede and prevent fermentation.

Count Chaptal, an eminent French chemist, says, “Nature never forms spirituous liquors; she rots the grape upon the branch; but it is an art which converts the juice into (alcoholic) wine.”

Professor Turner, in his *Chemistry*, says of alcohol, “It does not exist ready formed in plants, but is a product of fermentation.”

Adam Fabroni, and Italian writer, says, “Grape juice does not ferment in the grape itself.”

Proverbs 20:1 Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

Proverbs 23:29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? ³⁰ They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. ³¹ Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright. ³² At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. ³³ Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. ³⁴ Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. ³⁵ They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

TRAGIC RESULTS

- Noah (Gen. 9:20-21)
- Lot's Daughter (Gen. 19:32-33)
- Nabal (I Sam. 25:36-37)
- Ammon (II Sam. 13:28-29)
- Ahasuerus (Esther 1:10-11)
- Belshazzar (Dan. 5:1-2)

BIBLE TEACHES TOTAL ABSTINENCE

Leviticus 10:8 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, ⁹ Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations:
The Rechabites in Jer. 35 were forbidden to drink wine.

BIBLE WARNINGS

Proverbs 31:4 *It is* not for kings, O Lemuel, *it is* not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: ⁵ Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.

Isaiah 5:11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, *that* they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, *till* wine inflame them!

Isaiah 5:22 Woe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: ²³ Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

There is a curse on people who offer liquor to others. The Joseph Kennedy family is a prime example. They bootlegged liquor during Prohibition. Kathleen's husband died in WW II while she died in an air crash. John F. Kennedy and Jackie lost 2 babies, and he was assassinated. Bobby, his brother was assassinated also. His son, J.F. Kennedy Jr. and his wife died in a plane crash.

SUMMARY OF THE WORD *WINE*

1. The unfermented beverages existed, and were a common drink, among the ancients.
2. That to preserve their very sweet juices, in their hot climate, they resorted to boiling and other methods which destroyed the power and activity of the gluten, or effectually separated it from the juice of the grape.
3. These were called *wines*, were used and were highly esteemed.

Prof. M. Stuart says, “Facts show that the ancients not only preserved their wine unfermented, but regarded it as of a higher flavor and finer quality than fermented wine.”

The fact that they also had drinks that would intoxicate cannot be denied. All that we have aimed to show is that intoxicating wines were not the only wines in use.

To put alcohol in the human body is like putting sand in the bearings of an engine. Thanks to Thomas Edison, and the study of science, history, and ancients, we are better able to know what the Bible means when it says *wine*. Our stubborn minds are prone to always think *fermented* when we hear the word *wine*.

JESUS NEVER TOUCHED LIQUOR

Luke 22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

1 Corinthians 11:25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

Fermented wine is never connected with the Lord’s Supper. It was called the **cup** of the fruit of the vine. Leaven and yeast were a picture of sin. Jesus never sinned. His first miracle was simply turning water into grape juice.

HOMOSEXUALITY

Is homosexuality a sin or a sickness? Is it acceptable? Is it gay or gross?

Homosexuality is not new – it is only discussed more openly now. History says that Socrates, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and Augustus Caesar were homosexuals. Nero used to seduce boys – he even married one.

1 Kings 14:24 And there were also sodomites in the land: *and* they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

1 Kings 15:11 And Asa did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father.¹² And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.

2 Kings 23:7 And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that *were* by the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the grove.

Sodomites are formed, not born.

Romans 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,²³ And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.²⁴ Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:²⁵ Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.²⁶ For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:²⁷ And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

The downward progression begins with *unthankfulness*, and ends with *perversion*. It is a bondage to sin.

Jude 1:7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

One family expert has concluded that:

A melancholy temperament + A permissive childhood + Insecurity about sex role + An early sexual experience = A Homosexual.

Guard children from pornography, early sexual exploitation, and gender confusion. Have boys play and do 'boy games' and have girls play and do 'girl games.'

Boys should be masculine and girls should tend to be feminine.

PERSONAL STANDARDS

Once you know that you are saved, you need to seriously ask questions like, “What is pleasing to God? What is not?” Many times our thoughts are not His thoughts. The key is to have a teachable, godly spirit, and allow the Holy Spirit to lead in your life.

There are some things God does not approve of. When it comes to obedience, there are no little matters with God. The Bible states, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God (I Cor. 10:31).”

Sometimes people will say, “But I do not see anything wrong with it.” We need to be able to take the Bible and prove what is right or what is wrong.

CLOTHING

1

Just as a sad countenance reveals a problem; clothes can reveal rebellion, low self-esteem, or desire for attention and approval. It does matter what you wear, for people look at your clothing:

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for **man looketh on the outward appearance**, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

2 Corinthians 3:2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men.

The Bible standard for clothing is *Modesty*:

1 Timothy 2:9 In like manner, that women adorn themselves **in modest apparel**, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.

Paul is teaching is that women ought to emphasize their lifestyle rather than their outward appearance. Peter stated the same thing:

1 Peter 3:3-4 Whose adorning let it **not be** that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; **But let it be** the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

A man is generally attracted to a woman by sight and a woman is generally attracted to a man by touch. The Bible addresses these two ideas:

1 Corinthians 7:1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: *It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*

Proverbs 6:27-29 Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever **toucheth her** shall not be innocent.

Matthew 5:28 But I say unto you, That whosoever **looketh on a woman to lust** after her hath committed adultery **with her** already in his heart.

The Bible teaches that a man should not go around touching other women and a woman should not wear that which causes a man to lust after her. When Jesus stated, “whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery **with her** already in his heart,” He showed us that the woman can also be guilty when a man lusts ‘with her.’

The Holy Spirit will lead a person into modesty. An attitude of a modest spirit will lead a person to the proper kind of dress.

DANCING

2 Samuel 6:14 And David danced before the LORD with all *his* might; and David *was* girded with a linen ephod.

Some would say that since David danced, it is all right for us to dance today. They miss the meaning and reason for his dance. It was a victory dance of praise to God. David was not doing a fleshly, modern dance.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH DANCING?

1. **Dancing puts you in bad company.** The crowd at the dance are lustful people.
2. **The world’s music is present.** Whether it is a live band, CD’s or radio, it is ungodly.
3. **Jealousies occur.**

Proverbs 6:24-34 To keep thee from the evil woman... Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids... Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? ... whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. *Men* do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry... whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding... A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. For jealousy *is* the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

4. **Dancing stirs lusts.** What would Jesus do?

GAMBLING

Gambling is an addictive sin. Casinos, horse racing, bingo, lotto, and raffles are all forms of gambling. All but four states have legalized some form of gambling. Gambling has the love of money and covetousness at its root.

The only thing Jesus owned (that we know of) was a robe, which was gambled for by the soldiers (Matt. 27:35).

Christians are to be good stewards. A steward is a manager over another’s goods. God requires every Christian to be a good steward over all the possessions that God has entrusted to them.

Hard work is God's pathway to money. There are three plans for money:

1. Receiving - through work
- through prayer
2. Giving - tithes
- offerings (missions)
- to others
3. Managing - living on the rest
- paying bills promptly
- not borrowing
- building sales resistance
- staying out of debt

One of the leading causes of marriage difficulty is financial problems.

Matthew 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (Mammon is the god of money)

TELEVISION / INTERNET

TIME It is the most precious thing a Christian can possess.

Franklin Field said, "The great dividing line between success and failure is five words – 'I did not have time.' To say you did not have enough time is usually a lie. You must **make time**. We make time for that which is most important in our life. Each of us has twenty-four hours in each day. In order to 'give us more time', we must eliminate time wasters.

The average person wastes 30 hours per week in front of a TV. TV promotes idleness. Spurgeon said, "If the devil can catch an idle man, he will set him to work, find him tools, and before long, pay him wages."

Ezekiel 16:49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.

Psalm 101:3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; *it* shall not cleave to me.

Ephesians 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Of course, today the Internet has taken some of that time away from the TV. The great danger of the Internet is pornography. Pornography is an addictive sin that must be avoided at all costs.

The Christian must control their TV and Internet time. One must be diligent, disciplined and temperate to not indulge in sinful activities. Remember, small sins leads to bigger sins.

CIGARETTES

What is wrong with cigarettes?

Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, so therefore it is wrong to ingest poisonous, addictive chemicals into the lungs from cigarettes. It is also wrong to over-eat, over-sleep, eat too much candy....

There are many things we do that are wrong for us – we are all sinners. The biggest problem with cigarettes has to do with the Christian's testimony. The world knows that the Christian is not to smoke and therefore cigarettes taint the testimony of the Christian.

1 Corinthians 8:13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

TATTOOS

Should a Christian get tattoos? The Bible directly addresses this area.

Leviticus 19:28 Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I *am* the LORD.

One cannot do anything about previous decisions, but the Christian ought to honor the Lord with his / her body. A Christian needs to know that his/her body belongs to God. This truth is vital to all of your personal standards that you form.

Our body is:

The temple of the Holy Spirit; it is God's (He owns it); it is one with Christ's body:

1 Corinthians 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? ²⁰ For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Ephesians 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. ³¹ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. ³² This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

CONCLUSION:

Personal Standards are to be formed by following the Word of God, the Holy Spirit and your conscience. Let us form our own standards, major on what God majors on, and love others – no matter what their **personal standards** are.

BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES

The Word *Church*

The word *church* is found 80 times in the New Testament. The Greek word is *ecclesia*, which means a ‘called out assembly.’ Hence the local New Testament church is a called out assembly of baptized believers whose purpose is to fulfill the Great Commission.

Authority to Baptize

The authority to Baptize is from heaven.

Mark 11:28 And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things? ²⁹ And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. ³⁰ The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me.

The one God sent was John *The Baptist*

John 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John..

Hence the authority to baptize started with a *Baptist* and it is a name that has re-emerged. The Catholics called us Anabaptists because we ‘re-baptized’ people after they got saved. Actually, they were baptized once, and gotten wet once. Later the Ana (re) was dropped, and we were again called Baptist.

Matthew 3:13 “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.”
Jesus walked 60 miles to be baptized by John!

Jesus is the head of the Church and the Chief Cornerstone (Eph. 2:20). When John baptized Him, He became the first member of the church.

Next, the apostles were added to the church --

1 Cor. 12:28 “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles.”

Before Pentecost, it had a membership roll of 120 -- Acts 1:15 “And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty).”

Later, on the day of Pentecost, 3000 souls were added to the Church -- Acts 2:41 “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were **added unto them** about three thousand souls.”

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down and empowered the church as His indwelling ministry began (Jn. 7:37-39).

The Baptist church traces its roots back to its founder – Jesus Christ. Any church that traces their history to a man is a man-made church. Churches founded upon men like Wesley, Luther, Calvin, Constantine and others are not the true church. A true church must have the authority to baptize. This authority to baptize came from heaven in the eleventh chapter of Mark and has been passed down through the ages to churches like ours.

Baptists have always been independent churches. The Catholic Church split off of the true churches starting in 251 A.D.. The Protestant Reformation was a split off of the Catholic Church from 1400-1600. The Baptists were not a part of that movement as we were not a part of the Catholic Church. Sir Isaac Newton: “The Baptist are the only body of known Christians that have never symbolized with Rome.”

History of the Catholic Church

Revelation 2:6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.
Revelation 2:15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

Nicolaitans – nikao ‘to conquer’ laos ‘people’ (Clergy ruling over the congregation)

These Nicolaitans divided the clergy from the laity. They took away the freedom of the people – ‘let the clergy decide for you.’ This goes against Jesus’ teaching.

Ministers are to serve, not lord over: Matt. 10:37-45 and John 13:1- 17.

Each believer can let the Holy Spirit guide them into all truth: Jn. 16:13, I Jn. 2:27

The seeds of the Catholic Church date back to the 2nd chapter of Revelation (90 A.D.). This concept of clergy ruling over the people started then. Soon after this, bigger churches were lording over smaller churches which led to a break in fellowship as early as 251 A.D.. Constantine, the new emperor of the Roman Empire, had a ‘wonderful’ vision. He saw in the skies a fiery red cross and on that cross written in fiery letters these words: ‘By this thou shalt conquer’. He interpreted it to mean that he should become a ‘Christian.’ Hence, the marriage of the state and the church was formed. Christ was dethroned, and Constantine was enthroned as head of the church.

When this hierarchy was created, Constantine, who was made its head, was not himself at the time a Christian. He had agreed to become one. But as the erring or irregular churches which had gone with him into this organization had come to adopt the error of baptismal regeneration, a serious question arose in the mind of Constantine: “If I am saved from my sins by baptism, what is to become of my sins which I may commit after I am baptized?” He raised a question that has puzzled the world in all succeeding generations. Can baptism wash away yet uncommitted sins?

Not being able to settle satisfactorily the main questions thus arising, Constantine finally decided to unite with the Christians, but to postpone his baptism until just preceding his death, so that all his sins might thus be washed away at one time. This course he followed, and hence was not baptized until just before his death.

Constantine’s action in repudiating for the whole Roman Empire, the pagan religion, and accepting Christianity incurred the displeasures of the Roman Senate. They repudiated his course. And the opposition finally resulted in the removal of the seat of empire from Rome to Byzantine; an old city rebuilt and then renamed Constantinople for Constantine. As a result there came to be two capital cities of the Roman Empire – Rome and Constantinople. The two rival

cities several centuries later became the ruling centers of the divided Catholic Church – Roman and Greek.

Up to the organization of the Hierarchy and the uniting of church and state, all the persecution of Christianity had been done either by Judaism or Paganism (mostly Roman Rulers). Now comes a serious change. Christians (in name) begin to persecute Christians (born again ones). Constantine, desiring to have all Christians join with him in his new idea of a state religion, and having many conscientiously opposing this serious departure from New Testament teachings, he began using power of government to compel. Thus began the centuries of a hard and bitter persecution against Christians in the period known as the Dark Ages.

In 416 A.D., the doctrine of infant baptism became mandatory – government law. This law was enforced by punishment of death. Shortly thereafter, one of the new doctrines was: “There is no salvation outside of the Church – the Catholic Church.”

Later, the Catholic Church practiced the sale of Indulgences. Sins were paid for – literally. Another false doctrine was ‘Transubstantiation.’ This doctrine taught that the elements at the Lord’s Supper were supernaturally (by the priest) turned into the actual body and blood of Christ. Confession of sins to a priest and celibacy of priesthood followed.

1 Timothy 2:5 For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; ² Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; ³ Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

The Inquisition

Two errors – Baptismal Regeneration and Infant Baptism have caused the shedding of more Christian blood as the centuries have gone by than all other errors combined. B.H. Carroll, a church historian, has estimated that 50,000,000 Christians died martyr deaths, mainly because of their rejection of these two errors during the *Dark Ages*. This false church attempted to rid all *heresy* and killed those who were *heretics*.

In 692 A.D., Ina, King of West Saxons, enacted a law by which it was enjoined that all infants should be baptized within thirty days after birth, under penalty of thirty shillings. If the child died without baptism, the father’s entire estate was to be confiscated.

Protestants

There were people who wanted to change or reform things in the erring churches. Though they had differences in some doctrines, they did agree on the sole authority of the Scriptures, opposition of tradition, and the necessity of personal faith in Christ alone for salvation. Many great men led the way, such as Savonarola, Luther, Huss and Calvin. Many of these men were martyred for their stand.

Let it not be thought that all these persecuted ones were always loyal in all respects to New Testament teachings. In the main they were. And some of these, considering their surroundings, were marvelously so. Remember that many of them at that far away time had only parts of the New Testament or the Ole Testament. The Bibles had been destroyed often by its enemies and worn out by those who read it. The printing press was not invented until around 1460 A.D.. Few, if any families, or even simple churches had complete copies of the whole Bible. Before the formal close of the Canon there were probably very few simple manuscripts of the entire New Testament. Of the one thousand known manuscripts only about 30 copies included all the books.

Baptist History

Evil has always persecuted good. Wrong always criticizes right. Error always persecutes truth. Following the crucifixion of Christ, many New Testament Christians were persecuted and killed. Stephen was stoned, James was killed by the sword, eleven apostles were martyred... Since then, the devil has had only one group which he has persecuted more than any other in history – The Baptists! They began with Jesus, His apostles, the Montanists, Novations, Donatists, Paulicians, Albigenses, Waldensians, Anabaptist, and Baptists. This is the independent group of baptized believers who attempted to carry out the Great Commission but were hunted, tortured, persecuted and killed.

Why did the Catholic Church persecute the Baptists? Baptism of infants and baptism for salvation were big issues. Both of these are false doctrines. They are not found in Scripture. The Catholic Church had married the state, and had power to persecute and destroy all Bible believers who did not bow to her authority.

- Peter of Bruys was martyred in 1124 because he believed the church is to be composed of believers alone and that baptism was not a part of salvation.
- Pope Innocent III was frustrated with Baptists not being completely destroyed, so he proclaimed a crusade. He promised full pardon of sins to all those who would fight in his 'holy war.' This large army was gathered. Inhabitants in town were butchered. In one case, 50 were hanged and 400 burnt. In Lavaur, 'the numberless heretics (Bible-believing Baptists) that were in the fortress were burnt alive with great joy...'
- Cardinal Hosius (1524), President of the Council of Trent: "Were it not that the Baptists have been grievously tormented and cut off with the knife during the past twelve hundred years, they would swarm in greater number than all the Reformers."
- The following edict was put forth by the Council of St. Fall, March 26, 1530: "All who adhere to or favor the false sect of the Baptists, and attend hedge meetings, shall suffer the most severe punishments. Baptist leaders, their followers and protectors, shall be drowned without mercy."
- On Jun 10, 1535, a furious edict was published at Brussels. Death by fire was the punishment of all Baptists who should be detected and should refuse to abjure. If they recanted they were still to die, but not by fire; the men were to be put to death by the sword, the women in a sunken pit. Those who resisted the operation of the edict by failing to deliver up Baptists to the authorities were to suffer the same punishment as

accomplices. Informers were promised one-third of the confiscated estates and all persons were forbidden to claim or seek forgiveness, or reconciliation for the said Anabaptists, or re-baptizers, or to present, on their behalf, any petitions or bequests. “It being understood,” says the Emperor, “that it is not our will, nor will we permit, that any Anabaptists, or re-baptizers (because of their wicked opinions), shall be received into favour, but be punished as a warning to others, without any dissimulation, favour, or delay.”

- When Philip II succeeded his father, Charles V, in the year 1556, he renewed the edict of 1550 with additional articles. The publication of Baptist books was prohibited, and the right of disposing of their property, by sale or will, was taken away. “Every settler was required to furnish proof that his children had been baptized according to the rites of Rome.”

As the Reformation began, Baptists came out of hiding. They were soon disappointed. The Baptists were too far and too fast for the Reformers. Soon the Reformers strove to suppress the Baptist sentiment. Now, Catholics, Protestants, Episcopalian, and Presbyterians treated them the same way. Emperor Charles V ordered the Baptist women to be drowned, buried alive, or burned at the stake.

After 1534, they (Baptists) were numerous in Northern Germany, Holland Belgium, and the Walloon provinces. They increased and had a missionary zeal.

Massachusetts Bay Colony was a bastion for anti-Baptist laws:

”It is ordered and agreed that if any person or persons, within this jurisdiction, shall openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or go about secretly to seduce others from the approbation or use thereof, or shall purposely depart the congregation at the ministration of the ordinances after due time and means of conviction – every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment. This law was enacted especially against the Baptists.”

Preachers were whipped, buildings seized, property auctioned off, and taxes raised.

“Evidently, one of the greatest obstructions to religious liberty in America, and probably all over the world as to that, was the conviction which had grown into the people throughout the preceding centuries that religion could not possibly live without governmental support. That no denomination could prosper solely on voluntary offerings by its adherents. And this was the hard argument to meet when the battle was raging for the disestablishment of the Church of England in Virginia, and also later in Congress when the question of religious liberty was being discussed there. For a long time the Baptist fought the battle almost alone.”

The Baptists did not want state support or sanctuary of law for everyone to be a Baptist. Baptists fought from becoming the states’ established religion in America, as well in the Netherlands.

“It is stated the King of Holland appointed a committee to examine into the claims of all existing churches or denominations. They reported to the King that the Baptists were the best representatives of N.T. teaching. He offered to make Baptists the ‘established church.’ The

Baptist kindly thanked him but declined, stating that it was contrary to their fundamental convictions and principles.”

Even the Puritans, who fled from persecution in England, had no idea of religious liberty. They came here to establish their own faith and to exclude all others. Hence, they were more rigidly intolerant than the countries whence they had fled from. Intolerance was a necessary condition of their enterprise. They feared and hated religious liberty.

“In Virginia, where the first permanent colony in America was established, the charter bearing the date 1606, fourteen years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Baptists were bitterly persecuted. By law, a fine of two thousand pounds of tobacco was imposed on ‘those who neglected to have their infants baptized.’ Baptist ministers were arrested and imprisoned for preaching, insulted, and whipped, and many were imprisoned for preaching the Gospel. John Waller, Lewis Craig, and James Childs were seized at a meeting, dragged before the magistrate, and imprisoned for forty-three days in Fredericksburg. Mr. Wofford was severely scourged, and carried the scars to his grave (1768).”

Dr. Hawks, historian of the Episcopal Church of Virginia says: “No dissenters in Virginia experienced harsher treatment than did the Baptists. They were beaten and imprisoned, and cruelty taxed its ingenuity to devise new modes of punishment and annoyance.”

Finally, in 1639, Roger Williams had permission to establish the first Baptist Church in America in Rhode Island. Baptists stood alone during the Reformation, and for many years thereafter. It will be seen, that their idea of the church, composed of none but believers, immersed on the profession of their faith, was the cause of the separation of the Baptists from all the ecclesiastical organizations supported by the Reformers and their successors. Baptists were neither Romanists nor Protestants, but thorough religious reformers, elevating their standard of religious liberty far above the most exalted ideas of Protestant toleration.

Baptist Distinctives

What are the Baptist distinctives? They are teachings that distinguish Baptists from all other church groups. Here they are:

1. Bible Authority

Baptists elevate the Bible as the Authority over churches, pastors, teachers, councils, and tradition. The Bible is a God-breathed book (II Tim. 3:16).

2. Autonomy of the Local Church

Autonomy means *independent*. Baptists teach that each local church is self-governing. The church is not controlled by a denomination, district headquarters, or man. (Matt. 18:17)

3. Priesthood of All Believers

Each believer can approach God for him/herself – by the Blood of Jesus (I Pet. 2:5-9)

4. Two Ordinances

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances. They are not sacraments and do not add to our salvation. (Acts 2:41, I Cor. 11:23-25)

5. Individual Soul Liberty

Baptists believe that each person must choose Christ for himself. (Rom 14:12)

6. Regenerate Membership

Baptists believe that salvation by grace and baptism are prerequisites for membership. We believe that once a person is saved, they are always saved. (John 3:3, 5:24)

7. Two Offices

Baptists believe there are only two offices in the church – Pastors and Deacons (II Tim. 3).

8. Separation of Church and State

Baptists believe that the state should not control the church nor should the church control the state. (Acts 5:29)

Every Baptist church should be able to site Scripture to back up what they believe. The Word of God is to be diligently studied and taught. We proudly stand upon the Word of God.

Baptists have a great heritage. We ought to be proud, in the right way, to be called Baptist.

FALSE TEACHERS

The devil has counterfeited everything God has made. God has established His church – the devil has his churches. God calls men to preach – the devil has his ministers. God uses truth – the devil uses error.

Truth is absolute. Here is where truth can be found:

- God the Father is Truth:
Deut 32:4 *He is* the Rock, his work *is* perfect: for all his ways *are* judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* he. (See also Ps. 31:5, Isa.65:16)
- God the Son is Truth:
John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (See also John 1:14&17,)
- God the Holy Spirit is Truth:
John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. (See also John 14:17, 15:26, I Jn. 5:6)
- Word of God is Truth:
John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. (See also Ps119:43&142&151, II Cor. 6:7, Eph. 1:13, Col. 1:5, James 1:18, II Tim. 2:15)

Acts 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers... That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

The way to discern truth is to search the Scriptures with the help of the your pastor and the indwelling Holy Spirit. The job of the pastor is to teach truth.

The Holy Spirit's job is to confirm that what is spoken is truth. The discernment rests with the believer. A pastor has a grave accountability for what he teaches.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FALSE TEACHERS

Damnably Heresies

2 Peter 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnably heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Covetous

2 Peter 2:3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. They love money.

Adulterous

2 Peter 2:14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

Speak Often of Demons

2 Peter 2:10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

Thrive on Unstable Souls

2 Peter 2:14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

These deceitful, self-willed teachers and preachers often hobbyhorse one subject. They appear very authoritative and are smooth talkers. It is easy to be deceived by these men / women.

Note these areas of error:

The Bible

They will put experience above Scriptures. Of course, they do not admit that, but they will read a verse of Scripture and then never return to it while they preach. They may put another book equal to the Bible. They may allegorize Scriptures. Leaving a literal interpretation of the Scriptures always leads to error.

The Resurrection

Liberal preachers do not believe in a literal bodily resurrection of Christ. They will spiritualize it.

Virgin Birth

An essential doctrine – Jesus is 100% God and 100% man

Hell

They explain it away by calling it the ‘grave.’ They will state that the rich man in hell is just a parable. They will not believe in a literal lake of fire.

Works for Salvation

They will teach that one must be good to stay saved – thus salvation is grace plus works.

Feelings

False teachers put great emphasis on feelings and emotions. This is a dead give-away that truth is compromised. They will justify their works by the supernatural. (The magicians were able to imitate Moses’ miracles – so will Antichrist and the False Prophet II The. 2:9, Rev. 13)

Fact then **Faith** then **Feelings**

CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

Matthew 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Charismatics believe some basic heretical doctrines.

1. Revelation Prophecy

When they state, “I have a Word from the Lord,” they are saying that they have something that is on an equal plane with the Bible. They teach that God is not done revealing Himself. We believe that God has completed His revelation with Rev. 22:21. We have the indwelling Holy Spirit and the completed Word of God. There is no reason for God to add to this.

Revelation 22:19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

One Charismatic said, “God does not restrict this revelation to the Bible or to our ordained ministry. Anyone with an authentic gift of prophecy may speak the very Words of God.” This is heresy.

2. Speaking in Tongues

Tongues were a known language

The word *tongues* in Scriptures simply mean *language*. *I Corinthians* is a doctrinal book. Chapters 12-14 give doctrinal instructions as to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. *Acts* is a historical account of the early church. It is not a doctrinal book. *Acts* tells us what historically occurred when they spoke in tongues.

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. ⁵ And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. ⁶ Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. ⁷ And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? ⁸ And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? ⁹ Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, ¹¹ Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

Rules for Tongues

Paul gave some rules for speaking in tongues – the church at Corinth had been misusing the gifts and Paul gave a doctrinal treatise to help them.

1 Corinthians 14:27 If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and *that* by course; and let one interpret.

1 Corinthians 14:28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

1 Corinthians 14:32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

1 Corinthians 14:34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

1 Corinthians 14:37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

These Bible rules are almost always violated by Charismatics.

3. Sign Gifts

Sign Gifts Given

Mark 16:17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; ¹⁸ They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. ¹⁹ So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. ²⁰ And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Matthew 10:8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

Sign Gifts Were To Confirm the Work was of God

Mark 16:17 And these signs shall follow them that believe...And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Hebrews 2:4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

Sign Gifts Were to Cease

1 Corinthians 13:8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

Whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease.

A.T. Robertson states, “They shall cease (*pausontai*). Future middle indicative of *pauō*, to make cease. They shall make themselves cease or automatically cease of themselves.”

Tongues would cease – and so would all the other sign gifts. Sign gifts were given to confirm that the work was of God. Once the New Testament was completed and the early church had instructions from God, they did not need sign gifts to confirm that a work was from God, they only needed to search the Scriptures to verify truth.

People Skills – The Ministry is People

Confidence

Just why do you need confidence in yourself? It will give the stability in every area of your life.

Confidence is contagious. Contentment is being confident that you measure up to any test you are facing because Christ has made His strength available to you.

Philippians 4:11-13 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

You cannot consistently perform in a manner that is inconsistent with the way you see yourself

Six steps to developing confidence:

1. Establish your worth according to God's value system.

A. God created us in his own image (Gen.1:26)

B. Christ died for our sins (John 3:16)

When we begin to see ourselves in light of God's actions on our behalf, then we immediately begin to have more confidence.

2. Focus on God and not on your situation.

Psalms 27:1-3 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.

3. Develop friendships with confident people.(birds of a feather flock together)

4. Put a few wins under your belt. (Start with building on small successes and little by little you will tackle bigger and bigger challenges)

5. Find one thing you're good at and then specialize until you are special. (a sport, a task, a natural ability or a personally developed talent.)

6. Begin to develop a knowledge of people and product. (15% product knowledge, 85% people knowledge.)

- When you have knowledge or skill and the momentum that confidence brings, then things begin to happen in your relationships. (Confidence can provide momentum you need to be the person God meant you to be)

A leader with confidence is a leader who brings about positive change.

What to do with confidence when you have it.

Keep refueling it! Confidence is not constant; it fluctuates according to your success/failure ratio.

You will find that your confidence has a contagious quality.

Image Building

1. Character. Do I make decisions based on what is right or what is most easily accepted? Am I a leader or follower?
2. Change. Do I change my personality, speech, or actions according to the people I am with?
3. Credit. When I do something for the Lord, do people see me or do they see God? And do I care who receives the credit?
4. Channel. Does God work through my life to touch others?

Be An Encourager:

1. Encouragement is your key to helping other people succeed.
2. The key to encouragement is in knowing what gives people courage; what spurs them into action.
3. It's a fact of life that people spend most time doing what they believe will benefit them most.
4. Reward people for the right behavior and you get the right results.
5. People withhold their best efforts when they see little or no relationship between what they do and how they are rewarded.

Loving All People

The key to successful relationships really gets down to responsibility. You are responsible for how you treat others. You can't choose how they treat you, but you can choose how you treat them.

Types of Personalities:

- Sherman Tank: runs over anything and everything that gets in its way
- Space Cadet: people who live out of this world
- Volcano: explosive, unpredictable
- Thumb Sucker pout, and full of self pity
- Wet Blanket: constantly down and negative
- User: manipulates others for personal gain

How to Deal With These Personalities

- Love them unconditionally (I John 4:7-8)
- Ask God for wisdom in dealing with them (James 1:5)
- Stay emotionally healthy yourself
- Be honest with God, yourself and them (Acts 24:16)

Problems in Relationships

In most relationships it is inevitable that at some point a confrontation will take place. If a confrontation is handled correctly, it can actually strengthen the relationship.

How to solve the problem:

1. Bring the principle persons involved in the conflict
2. Line up the facts
3. Never reprimand when angry (Proverbs 14:29)
4. Be precise about the offense
5. Get the other persons side of the story
6. Don't hold a grudge (Luke 17:3-4)

Our ultimate goal in dealing with people should be to present the truth in such a way as to build the relationship not destroy it

People and the Ministry

Unity:

Uniformity is not the key to success teamwork. The glue that holds a team together is unity of purpose. Characteristics of a winning team:

1. They play to win. (*Hebrews 12:1-2*)
2. They take risks. (*1 Kings 17:12-15*)
3. They keep on improving. (*2 Timothy 2:15*)
4. They care about each other. (*1 Cor. 12:25*)

The highest reward for a man's improvement is not what he gets for it; it's what he becomes as a result of it. The essence of developing a team is the ability to inspire others to work together as a team - to stretch for a common objective.

Relationship + Attitude x Talent + Expectation = Production

We as Christians should have the same goal in common, and that is to win souls for Jesus.

Proverbs 11:30 / Matthew 25:23 / Matthew 28:18-20