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Beware Of The Silent Killer!

George Whitten

And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them, And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee. Exodus 15:23-26

Murmuring or complaining is one of those sins that are overlooked. Sometimes we get so focused on the "big sins" such as murder and adultery that we overlook this sin -- but the Lord doesn't give this sin a free pass -- quite the opposite. It's a hidden killer! This sin unleashed a plague that killed thousands of Israelites! [Numbers 16] In this passage, we read how the Israelites, who were desperately thirsty, looked only at the fact that the water they had come to was bitter and undrinkable. How quickly they forgot their God who had led them out of Egypt with signs and wonders. They had just witnessed His dividing of the Red Sea and destruction of those who had enslaved them. And yet, so quickly they returned to looking only with their natural eyes at the problem in front of them, completely forgetting the miracle working power of their God! And so they murmured against Moses. But honestly, weren't they really murmuring against God? Once again, Moses interceded for them, revealing the faithfulness of His God to answer every impossible dilemma and provide for every need; and again, setting them the example: they simply needed to go the Lord! So often, just like the Israelites, we focus on our desperate situation with our physical eyes, and not with eyes of faith, and then fall into the trap of complaining. And if you're like me, once I start, it can be really hard to stop...until the Lord stops me, right in my tracks, and He reminds me -- aren't you really complaining against me? I have to remember to see that I actually hinder the Lord's answers to my problems by unbelief...which leads to the sin of murmuring! Let's not allow this sin to gain a foothold -- because it can easily become a stronghold! The same wonder-working God that led the children of Israel out of Egypt, is still at work today -- but are we hindering Him? If we are grumbling and complaining, the answer is, "YES"! And in so doing, until we stop, we are missing out on His answers and blessings which are waiting in the wings to meet our faith in Him!

www.worthydevotions.com

The Great Escape

Pastor Mike Vaughn

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 1 Corinthians 15: 55

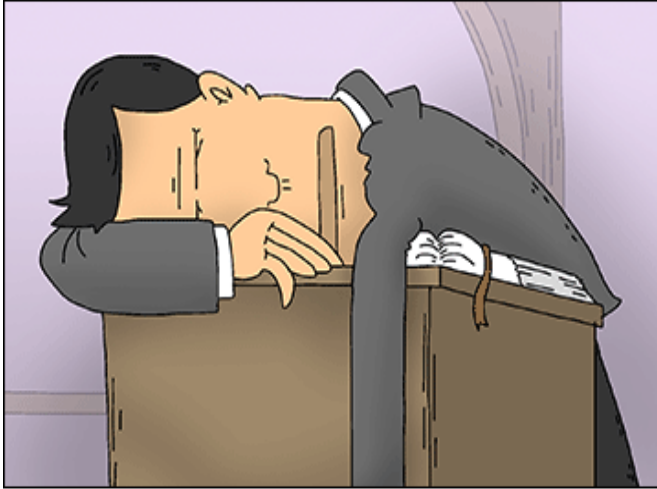
Harry Houdini was an escape artist. They tried all kinds of ways to keep Harry Houdini locked up. They would bury him in a coffin, but he would get out. They would sew him up in canvas bags and throw him in the river, but he would get out. His biographer said, "He would escape from anything except your memory." Yet there came a day when Harry Houdini died, and he did not escape the iron-clad clutches of death. As a matter of fact, he told his wife, when talking about his death "If there is any way out I will find it. If there is any way out, I will find you and I will make contact with you on the anniversary of my death." After Harry's death, for 10 years, his wife kept a light burning at the bottom of his portrait. And after 10 years, she turned out the light. Death had laid it's hands on Harry Houdini and he could not escape. Death also laid it's hands on another, "Jesus Christ". And death laid Him in a tomb. But death could not hold Him. In three days He arose, Triumphed over death, hell and the grave. Because He Lives we can live also, eternally. Up from the grave He arose with a mighty triumph over His foes. He arose a Victor from the dark domain and He lives forever with His saints to reign. And His victory is yours, Saints!!

You are loved with an everlasting Love, Mike

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03-23-2015

EVEN PASTOR EVENTUALLY CONCEDED THAT
THIS PARTICULAR SERMON RAN ON MUCH
TOO LONG



Cousin Leroy

Leroy was completely lost in the kitchen when it came to cooking and he knew little to nothing about grocery shopping. But when the misses came down with the flu he volunteered to go to the store for her. So she sent him off with a carefully numbered list of seven items. Three hours later Leroy returned home very proud of himself, and proceeded to unpack the grocery bags. He had one bag of sugar, two dozen eggs, three jars of pigs feet, four boxes of detergent, five boxes of crackers, six onions, and seven green peppers.

Signs That Your New Can Is A Piece Of Junk

- ~ As you leave the used car lot, you see the owner rush out with a gigantic smile and high-five the salesman.
- ~ The booster cables are not in the trunk but are permanently soldered to the battery.
- ~ You get a "Good Luck" card from the previous owner.
- ~ As you drive up to a service station for gas, the mechanic opens the big door and waves you in.
- ~ The little "Service Engine" warning signal in the dashboard comes on and reads "Me Again."

House Looking

Approaching ninety-five years of age, Mrs. Lipkowitz finally decided it was time to give up her apartment in New York and move to Miami. She was given the name of a Florida realtor, who enthusiastically drove her all over Miami, extolling the virtues of every apartment they looked at. "And this one, what a steal," he rhapsodized, "the investment of a lifetime. Why, in ten years it's gonna be worth three times..." "Sonny," interrupted Mrs. Lipkowitz, "at my age I don't even buy green bananas."

Three older ladies were discussing the travails of getting older. One said, "Sometimes I catch myself with a jar of mayonnaise in my hand in front of the refrigerator and can't remember whether I need to put it away, or start making a sandwich." The second lady chimed in, "Yes, some times I find myself on the landing of the stairs and can't remember whether I was on my way up or on my way down." The third one responded, "Well, I'm glad I don't have that problem; knock on wood," as she rapped her knuckles on the table, then told them "That must be the door, I'll get it!" ..."

A group of women were talking together. One woman said "Our congregation is sometimes down to 30 or 40 on a Sunday." Another said: "That's nothing.

Sometimes our congregation is down to six or seven." An elderly lady in her 70's added her bit: "Why it's so bad in our church on Sundays that when the minister says 'dearly beloved' it makes me blush."

Curious when she found two black-and-white negatives in a drawer, The elderly wife took them and had them made into prints. She was pleasantly surprised to see that they were of a much younger, slimmer, very attractive version of her, taken on one of her first dates with her husband. When she showed him the photos, his face lit up. "Wow," he said. "It's my old Plymouth!"

A torrential rainstorm was knocking down power lines all over town. That meant, a customer service rep for the electric company was dispatching repairmen right and left. When one lineman called a customer to get her exact address, he was told, "I'm at Post Office Box 99." The weary lineman replied, "Ma'am, I'll be coming to you in a truck, not an envelope."



From the Pastor's Desk

THE BRIDGE IS OUT

Pastor Billy R Douglas

A preacher was driving home one night with his wife and two daughters in the car. It was raining and dark and because of the intensity of the rain he could hardly see past his headlights. On the way he had to drive over a huge bridge. There were signs posted all along the bridge that said "DO NOT PICK UP HITCH-HIKERS." There was an institution for the criminally insane near the base of the bridge and sometimes people would escape from it and try to hitch a ride. On this particular night, as he turned his car on to the bridge, he had to drive exceptionally slow because he could hardly see the road. Somewhere near the top of the bridge a man suddenly appeared in the headlights. He was soaked, standing in the middle of the road with his shirt off frantically waving it over his head and screaming. This preacher's wife began to say, "Oh please don't stop, try to drive around him!" But the man was unavoidable and there was nowhere for the car to go to miss him. So he had to stop the car and as soon as he did, the man slapped his hand down on the hood of the car and was screaming at the top of his lungs. The preacher looked over at his wife and said to lock the door after him and not to unlock it until he returned. His family was now crying and pleading with him not to get out of the car. He opened the door and stepped outside...He was immediately soaked from the rain. As he approached the front of the car to grab the man, all of a sudden he could make out what the man was screaming, "THE BRIDGE IS OUT! THE BRIDGE IS OUT! A BUS LOAD OF KIDS JUST WENT OVER!" As these words registered in the pastor's mind, he looked back in the car at his wife and two daughters. He wrapped his arm around the man and wept in gratitude. The preacher stood there with the man for the next half-hour in the middle of the road, waving his jacket above his head screaming. "THE BRIDGE IS OUT! THE BRIDGE IS OUT!" For a lost and a dying world, "THE BRIDGE IS OUT!" For a people heading to a Christ-less Eternity, "THE BRIDGE IS OUT!" Charles Spurgeon once made this plea "Oh, my brothers and sisters in Christ, if sinners will be damned, at least let them leap to hell over our bodies; and if they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees, imploring them to stay, and not madly to destroy themselves. If hell must be filled, at least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for." Where are the men and the women who will stand in the middle of the road and forbid people to perish? HELL HAS OPENED IT'S MOUTH WIDE AND MANY ARE SPEEDING INTO IT. Where are those who will stand in the gap, on the streets, the highways and the byways proclaiming the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST and warning people of an eternity in hell if they do not heed? Where are those who will ride the altar and stain it with hot tears in agony for the lost? If they go to hell let it be in spite of **and** not the lack of our prayers. If they go to hell let it be in spite of **and** not the lack of our efforts to keep them out!! The great commission given to the church by Jesus was not to go into the world and build bigger churches, it was not to go into the world and start denominations. The great commission that we find in Mark 16:15 says "And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel** to every creature." For the most part the church of today has forsaken that call...they have rejected the Word of God and gone chasing after fables! While in prayer a few days ago the Holy Spirit whispered these words to me "If my people could get a vision of the cross THEY WOULD have a burden for the lost!" The price that was paid there to ransom the souls of man!! Jesus Christ did not come to make people rich, or to empower people to build an earthly kingdom. The Bible tells us very clearly why He came in Luke 19:10 "For the Son of man is come **to seek and to save that which was lost.**" And it just as clearly tells us what our duty is...what our commission is and that is to **Go into all the world, and preach the gospel!** That should be our passion our desire today...to tell someone about Jesus in hopes of saving them from spending eternity in the flames of hell! To warn them of what lies ahead for every one that rejects the way that has been made by what Jesus did on the cross of Calvary. There's an old song called "Win The Lost At Any Cost" I want to leave you with some of the lyrics to that song today and I pray that it be more than a song but that as we read it that it will ring in our hearts as a **CHARGE from the throne!!**

As we look all around us, All the fields are white, They're ripened unto harvest, Yet so quickly comes the night. Christians must get busy, There's so much work to do. Here's an urgent task awaiting you. Souls are crying, men are dying, Won't you lead them to the cross. Go and find them, Please help to win them Win the lost at any cost.

Until next time may the LORD Bless and keep you is our prayer. Pastor Billy R Douglas



Spiritual Burnout - conclusion

By Evangelist Mike Heltsley

A. Partners in Prayer Matthew 18:19 - Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. God desires for us to be people of prayer. We need to be attentive to our personal prayer life, but we also need to pray with one another! We find the examples in the N.T. of the early church spending time with one another in prayer. They would pray with one another in times of trouble. Acts 4:23-24 - And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Acts 12:5 - Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. Acts 12:12 - And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying. Acts 16:25 - And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. They would pray with one another in times of transition. Acts 20:36 - And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all Acts 21:5 - And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. There is a sense of fellowship and strength when we pray together that's why we SHOULD be doing it daily!!! B. Partners in Burdens. Galatians 6:2 - Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. We need to be sharing our burdens with others...and we need to share other's burdens. I don't mean to gossip about others burdens either. Burdens can be anything that is difficult for us to bear, that which weighs us down. When we are struggling with a burden; we do not become prideful and refuse to ask for help. When we are aware of a brother who is burdened; we don't sit back and selfishly refuse to help! We need to be partners in this area of burden bearing! C. Partners in Stewardship. The Bible says that as believers, we are not our own any longer. 1st Corinthians 6:20 - For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. Our purchase price was paid at Calvary with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Now everything about us, every possession we have, every ability that we have, every talent that we possess no longer belongs to us...it belongs to God. As a result, Paul says in 1st Corinthians 3:9 - For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. The work of the local church here and around the world moves forward as we are partners in stewardship. We need to be Partners not hitchhikers! D. Partners in Ministry. Luke 5:10 - And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. We must work together to reach our community and this world for Christ. Everyone having a part ... that is the key. In our text we find men who were partners in the fishing business. When they needed help, they called or beckoned to their partners to get involved in accomplishing the task at hand. The task is too great for one...but together we can accomplish so much more! How can we avoid spiritual burnout? Realize that we are not in this alone. We need each other. We need to partner with one another in our service to God. Do you see the signs of burnout in your spiritual life? Lack of enthusiasm, lack of activity, or presence of stagnation? Come to the Lord today and renew your commitment to Him and receive a fresh vision for what God can do through us! Do you know the Lord today? Come place your faith in Him right now! Be saved today!

Until next time, let your light shine for Jesus! Evangelist Mike Heltsley

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Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14



God-Glorifying Prayer

Pastor Steven Huston

And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Mark 1:40

The Apostle Paul bids us, through his first letter to the Corinthians, to give God glory in everything that we do. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (10:31)

Of all the "whatsoever" topics that I could speak to, the one I feel led to address may surprise you. Whether you eat, or drink, **OR PRAY**, do all to the glory of God. I imagine that most think that the act of prayer itself is God-glorifying. Is it though? Are we glorifying God with our prayers?

While there is no "magic formula" to prayer, in Mark 1:40 we find three principles of prayer; all of which are repeated throughout the Scriptures and all are necessary for God-glorifying prayer. In short, they are: **1) Worship**—"kneeling down to him;" **2) Seeking God's will**—"If thou wilt;" and **3) Faith**—"thou canst."

It's clear from this verse that these principles needn't be lengthy in nature; neither do they need to be equally represented regarding time. Let's look at each one briefly.

Worship: In our main text, worship is shown through the leper's humility of spirit and position. On other occasions worship is shown by the words that are chosen. In Daniel's great prayer of confession, in Daniel 9:4, he uses the words, "O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments." When Jesus taught the disciples to pray, in Matthew 6:9, he said, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." These are more than mere words; it's recognition of who God is. More important than the words we use or the physical position we choose to pray, is the condition and position of our heart. Without a heart of worship—recognizing and glorifying God for who He really is—the words you utter are just noise and your posture is nothing more than a position.

How often are the way we approach God and the request we make much less than glorifying? Do we prepare our hearts and minds to enter before the Judge of all the earth; or do we barge into God's presence with less regard than we would use in coming before kings or presidents, neither considering who He is nor what He wants? If we would glorify God in our prayers mustn't we still recognize His awesomeness, His Almighty power, His position as our Creator and Sovereign God over all? Shouldn't we come before His presence with thanksgiving and praise, full of gratitude to our Redeemer, Saviour, Sanctifier, and Friend? Although we can come boldly before His throne of grace, oughtn't we to still recognize His position and power with fear and trembling? Children are commanded to honor their earthly father; how much more must we honor our Heavenly Father.

Seeking God's Will: In Mark, the leper's request comes with the recognition of Christ's Almighty power and His benevolence: "If thou wilt." Too often we come with a deep desire for our own needs to be met, but have no thought to the glory of God. Do we even remember that God didn't make us for ourselves; but rather, He made us for His own glory? In Matthew 6 again, as Jesus taught His disciples to pray, we read, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Much of what follows are other requests for things we know are God's will. There are many things in the Word which tell us the will of God. Then there are things in which we should ask God, "How would you have me pray?" and be directed by His Spirit's promptings upon our heart and mind. Shouldn't we at times, worshipfully, say, "If thou wilt?" or even ask, "I know you are able; are you willing?" Let us follow such requests with, "Nevertheless, not my will by Thine be done."

Faith: Without faith it is impossible to please God; we must believe He is and believe He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6). The leper in Mark 1 had faith; "If thou wilt, thou canst." Do we really believe that there is nothing that is too hard for God? How much more our faith is strengthened and is increased when we recognize that God is not only able to do a thing for us but He desires to do that thing for us. James warns us that if ask not believing, we will receive nothing from God. As I said, there aren't any magic formulas to prayer; but there are hindrances that we should avoid and helps that we should practice. Pray with worshipful awe; seek God's will for how you should pray; and ask in faith, believing. A holy life will go a long way in accomplishing all three.



Oreo Delight

- 1 pkg of regular Oreos
- 8 oz cream cheese, softened
- 1 large (5.9-ounce) pkg chocolate instant pudding
- 6 tbsp melted butter
- 16 oz cool whips
- 1 cup confectioners/powdered sugar
- 2¾ cup milk

Crush the whole package of cookies either with a food processor, or take out your frustrations and do with a rolling pin. Save about 1 cup to sprinkle on top of dessert when it's done. In a small bowl mix remaining crumbs with melted butter. Press Oreo crumbs/butter mixture into bottom of 9X13 pan to form a crust. Make chocolate pudding according to package directions and let it setup in the fridge. Using electric mixer, mix half of Cool Whip, softened cream cheese, and confectioners sugar in a large bowl. Spread the Cool Whip/cream cheese/sugar mixture on top of the oreo crust. Spread the pudding over the previous layer, then your remaining half of cool whip on top. Sprinkle with reserved Oreo crumbs on top. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Cabbage & Sausage Skillet

- 1 lb. bacon
- 1 head cabbage, chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 can rotel
- Smoked sausage, sliced

Fry bacon in skillet and reserve grease. Add onion and cabbage to grease and cook for 10 minutes. Add can of rotel. Cook until cabbage is almost tender, add sliced sausage. Cook until cabbage is tender and sausage is hot.

Cheesy Baked Tortellini

- 1 (20oz) container of refrigerated or frozen cheese tortellini
- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 (24oz) jar of tomato sauce
- 8 (ounces) cream cheese (cubed)
- 1-2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup grated or shredded parmesan
- seasoning to taste

Cook the pasta a la dente according to the package directions; drain and set aside. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and grease a 9x13 baking dish. In a large skillet, brown the ground beef with the seasoning of your choice (I use salt, garlic powder, pepper & Italian seasoning). Remove the excess grease from the browned beef and then stir in your tomato sauce and cream cheese. Simmer for a few minutes until the sauce is well incorporated. Gently toss your cooked tortellini in with the sauce mixture and then pour it into your casserole dish; Sprinkle with shredded mozzarella and parmesan. Bake uncovered in the center rack of your oven for about 20 minutes. Switch the oven to broil and continue baking for an additional 2-3 minutes or until the cheese starts to brown.

Breakfast Bundt Cake

- 1 cup cooked diced ham, bacon or sausage
- 2 cups tater tots, still frozen
- 1 dozen whisked eggs
- 1 can (8) Pillsbury Grands biscuits, diced up (raw)
- 2 cups cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup milk

Mix all ingredients together. Put in greased bundt pan. Bake on 400 degrees for 45 minutes. When done flip onto platter, cut and serve.



Words of Wisdom

Pastor Lindel E. Hinton

Brother Hinton had a way of putting things into words that you would never forget...

On people getting mad about what you preach...*If you throw a rock down a dark alley the dog you hit is gonna holler"*

On evil thoughts...

"You cant stop a bird from landing on your head but you can keep him from building a nest there"

On Smoking Cigarettes...

"Fool on one end and fire on the other"

On being thankful...

"You don't have to look very far to find someone who has it worst than you do"

On going through trials...

"Don't throw away your ticket just because your going through a tunnel"

On sin...*"Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay and cost you more than you want to pay."*

During testimony service when no one would testify...*"If your gonna kill me don't drag me to death"*

A few others...

Smile, show me your teeth or show me where they used to be.

Prayer changes things: the thing it changes most is the one doing the praying.

Can I preach? I knew you'd let me!

If you feel a bad spirit in here tonight, you must have brought it with you.

I'm not getting any favoritism.

Dead and dry as last years birds nest.

Lost as a ball in high weeds.

Some of you look like your mother in law just moved in with you

Their way of doing something may be better than your way of doing nothing

I know I am on the level because my bubble is in the middle.

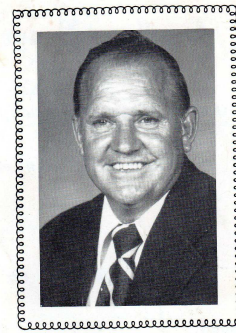
I'm past 70 so I am living on borrowed time

I run things at my house...the vacuum cleaner, the dish washer...

You can tell I am on the level cause my bubble is in the middle

You gonna have to get in, get out, or get run over

The time to quit cooking is when the fire goes out



Remembering...The Preacher

Rev. Lindel E. Hinton

August 19, 1926 - January 15, 2001



Oh how happy I will be
When life's journey here is run
And I look upon His face
And I hear Him say, Well done
You have fought a faithful fight
And my child you've kept the faith
Enter now my joys are yours
So just step inside the gate"



50 Reasons Why I Don't Drink

Pastor Jamie Morgan

I am a Christian and I don't drink. I am also a pastor and ex-alcoholic. I need to make that disclaimer right up front. Although it makes me biased, it also makes me an expert on this hotly debated issue. Some of the worst "shudder moments" of my life have been under the influence, and as a pastor, some of the worst "shudder moments" I have witnessed in the lives of others have been because of alcohol. You have come too late to tell me it's God's best for a Christian to drink. We are living in a church age where drinking has become "hipster" for some. Christian young adults post pictures of their signature drink on Facebook. Middle-aged Christian women name drop their favorite brand of Pinot Grigio to impress their wine snob friends. Churches send direct-mail postcards that read, "Give our church a shot!" featuring an edgy shot glass graphic. Even some pastors drink. Not this one. I stopped drinking when I became a Christian 26 years ago. No one told me to abstain. I just knew it would be contradictory and self-defeating to my relationship with Christ. I had given my life to follow Jesus and nothing was going to hinder my walk. For me, it was a no-brainer. This article is not a theological defense on the topic of Christians and alcohol (another article for another time), but it is a heartfelt plea. I humbly ask you to table any knee jerk, pro-alcohol, fight-for-my-right-to-drink arguments that you have ever heard, or made, and prayerfully consider this list.

50 reasons why I don't drink:

1. I can't be sober-minded if I'm not sober. 2. Alcohol has an assignment: destruction. 3. Alcohol is a depressant. Anything that depresses should be avoided at all costs. 4. I don't want to make my brother or sister stumble in the name of exercising my "Christian liberties." My choice to drink could lead to someone's demise. 5. Alcohol skews my judgment. 6. Alcohol leaves me worse, not better. 7. What I do in moderation, my children will do in excess. 8. Even the unsaved know I shouldn't drink. Bible in one hand, beer in the other—any lost person could point this out as a confusing contradiction. 9. Alcohol doesn't bring others closer to the Lord when they see me drinking, but further away. 10. Alcohol doesn't bring me closer to the Lord when I drink, but further away. 11. I want to be fully awake and ready for the return of Christ, not drowsy, sluggish and fuzzy. 12. Show me a family for whom alcohol has made a positive difference in their lives. You won't be able to. 13. I have never heard anyone say, "Wow, that gin and tonic made me feel so Christlike!" 14. I want to avoid all appearances of evil. 15. Alcohol makes it much harder for me to practice the fruit of self-control. 16. Alcohol causes me to lose my filter. 17. Alcohol is a legal mind-altering drug. 18. Alcohol is addictive. 19. Alcohol is a numbing agent for pain and sorrow only Jesus can heal. 20. Many regrets are associated with alcohol. (I can give you a whole bunch!) 21. No one has ever said, "If only I had taken a drink, things wouldn't have gotten out of control." 22. Alcohol causes me to act in ways I normally wouldn't. 23. Alcohol kills brain cells. 24. Alcohol is a counterfeit and provides a false peace. 25. The Bible says that no drunkards will enter the kingdom of God. Being drunk starts with one drink. I don't want to see how far outside the lines I can color when eternity is at stake. 26. Alcohol is a waster—money, gifts and talents, destinies and so on. 27. Alcohol leads to really bad behavior. It is a factor in 50 percent of violent crimes. 28. Alcohol distracts and derails you from living the victorious life for which Christ died. 29. Wisdom is the principle thing that I need to pursue at all cost; alcohol makes me stupid. 30. Alcohol has ruined many, many marriages. 31. The only influence I should be "under" is God's. 32. The Bible tells me to be alert; alcohol delays my reaction time. 33. If I don't start drinking, I'll never have to stop. 34. Alcohol severely tarnishes my testimony. 35. Don't want your teenagers to drink? Yep, same reasons apply to you. 36. God is holy; alcohol is not. 37. Alcohol and prayer don't mix. 38. Alcohol and Bible study don't mix. 39. Alcohol lowers my resolve to resist temptation. 40. Alcohol = Brokenness (broken lives, health, dreams and so on) 41. When the world sees us drinking, it sends the message that Jesus isn't enough. 42. Moderate drinking? How about moderate pornography or moderate heroin use or moderate lying or moderate adultery? 43. Christians are called to live a life of total surrender and separation from the world. 44. Alcohol makes me forget. It can make me forget that I am married, that I am saved and so on. 45. "I don't get drunk. I only have one or two drinks." If they didn't affect you, you would drink soda. 46. I should never look to the glass or bottle for joy, which can only be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. 47. Alcohol fills my mind with impure thoughts. 48. If it could hinder my faith walk or love walk or dishonor the lordship of Jesus Christ, I need to forsake it. 49. Alcohol doesn't help me run the race that Jesus has marked before me to finish with more accuracy. It does the polar opposite. 50. For any argument that tries to justify Christian drinking, there are at least 50 other reasons not to. The writing is on the wall. It's not God's best for Christians to drink.

Pastor Jamie Morgan Life Church (Assemblies of God)



A Word for TODAY!



By Sister Michelle Deuling

Verse for Today: Luke 10:27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

Additional passage for Today: Matthew 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Mark 12:30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

Thought for Today: Who do you really love? If you really love God the most, it will show through in all your other relationships.

Story for Today: Candy caught the apple as it flew through the air. Whipping around she spotted the mischievous culprit as his muscular body disappeared from sight. She took off at a sprint after him, knowing that if it was Chaz he was long gone. Chaz made all the other guys at her college look like little string beans. He was more than just a wonderful athlete. Chaz made weekly visits to both his grandparents homes to rake and mow the lawn or take care of the snow, whatever the need may be. He also was well loved in the community as he visited the nursing home and helped with crafts or read stories. The staff was amazed at how he reached out to those who seemed abandoned by their own family. And whenever there was a group project in any of his courses, he was the most sought out person by those looking for a good grade. He would be graduating top of the class if he continued as he had been. And to top it all off Candy thought about how much fun she always had with him. He was always making her laugh with his cute antics that caught everyone off guard. And to think he was still showering her with attention! It started over a year ago and he just seemed sweeter and sweeter every day. Both Candy and Chaz attended church and loved being part of the singles group. They loved the Bible Study and support they got through the prayer times and from Chuck and Linda their leaders. They were both "committed Christians" that loved God. For as long as she could remember, Candy had attended church. She studied her Bible and had memorized verses, even participating in the National Bible Bee. Candy enjoyed a good debate and loved to talk about God. Well, she used to. She still did if she wasn't too busy chasing after Chaz! If she had to be honest, she didn't spend her waking moments praising God like she had done before dating Chaz. Now, her waking moments were filled with a face of the man she hoped to one day marry and her prayers of praise had turned to thanks for such a wonderful man. More often than not, her Bible lessons were done in a rush and debates were handled from past memories of what she thought she remembered rather than a current study due to the lack of time for such things as she made time for this love in her life. If you were to even hint that God wasn't first place in either one of their lives, they would have said you were wrong. Nothing had changed. They both still loved God. They prayed and read their Bible. They were good moral people. As Valentine's Day approached, like all the other couples in their church, Chaz purchased the tickets to the banquet and they prepared to be a part of the celebration of Love. Little did they know how their lives would be changed as the speaker shared his story of how he had let God slip through his fingers and out of his life as he replaced the wonderful relationship with his Saviour for that of a girlfriend and later a wife. He shared how he had replaced his desire for God's will with that of making his beautiful bride the happiest girl on earth. He shared how he had taken a job that would support the family that they began instead of listening to the voice of his Master that called him to take a position that would have offered little security and a lot of danger. He shared how as he made his choices, his love for God just seemed to slip away until he realized it was all just a farce. He was his own lord and that was who he was really living for. Thankfully he didn't stop there. He continued on and shared how he had come to his senses. And challenged each of them there to do a self evaluation. He reminded them that God is waiting. Let Him be your first love.

Questions for Today: Won't you do a self evaluation? Won't you check to see who really has your heart?



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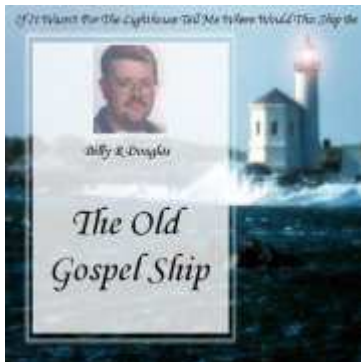
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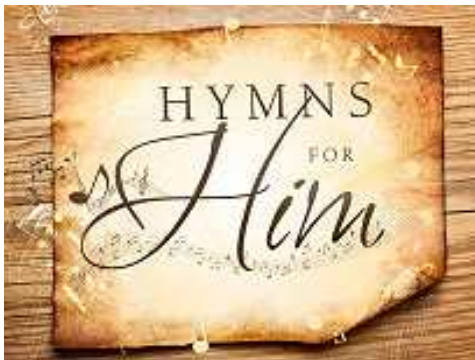


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William Cowper, pub. 1772

There is a fountain filled with blood, Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood Lose all their guilty stains:

Lose all their guilty stains, Lose all their guilty stains;

And sinners plunged beneath that flood Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see That fountain in His day;

And there have I, though vile as he, Washed all my sins away:

Washed all my sins away, Washed all my sins away;

And there have I, though vile as he, Washed all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood Shall never lose its pow'r,

Till all the ransomed church of God Are safe, to sin no more:

Are safe, to sin no more, Are safe, to sin no more;

Till all the ransomed church of God Are safe, to sin no more.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream Thy flowing wounds supply,

Redeeming love has been my theme, And shall be till I die:

And shall be till I die, And shall be till I die;

Redeeming love has been my theme, And shall be till I die.

When this poor, lisping, stamm'ring tongue Lies silent in the grave,

Then in a nobler, sweeter song, I'll sing Thy pow'r to save:

I'll sing Thy pow'r to save, I'll sing Thy pow'r to save;

Then in a nobler, sweeter song, I'll sing Thy pow'r to save.

In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David
and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

Zechariah 13:1



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