

## **Key Social Issues Facing Christians**

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## **Introduction**

This book is written to address some important issues that we as Christians must take a stand on. The Bible gives us direction as to what our position should be on these matters yet many who claim to be Christians adopt positions that go contrary to the Word of God. If we are going to say we are believers in Jesus Christ, we must be willing to follow Him. To do otherwise makes us disobedient.

It is amazing to me to see how many Christians practice open sin and theological error in some of the areas addressed in this book. This ought not to be. We will be accountable to God for the things we support. As salt of the earth, we need to set the example and follow God's Word completely even if it causes us to suffer economically or otherwise.

This book covers some of the most important social issues of our day. These issues will also be important in the future. Whether you are a Christian or not, I hope you will read this book to see what the Bible has to say about these very important matters.

## Chapter 1

### “In the beginning...”

#### Where Did We Come From?

It is not in the scope of this book to deal in a thorough way with the argument of evolution versus creation. However, I would like to make some comments about this subject.

I want the reader to think a moment about all the organization of the Universe. Think about the countless number of solar systems. Look at our solar system. How interesting it is that our sun is the exact right distance from the Earth to provide the proper warmth and light we need for our existence. Too close to the sun and we die of heat. Too far away and we die of cold. The atmosphere just happens to protect us from the harmful parts of the sun's rays. Notice how our planet tilts just the right way and rotates once each 24 hours to provide us with day and night. We have days to complete our work and nights to rest and sleep. Planet Earth also happens to revolve around the sun every 365 days to give us our seasons and mark calendar years.

Look at our planet. It is marvelous to look at from space. There is green vegetation, flowing rivers, plant and animal life. The oceans are teeming with fish and all kinds of sea life. All life is supported by the resources of the Earth. Notice that we have gravity that keeps us from flying off into space. We have clouds that provide us with rain water.

Next think about men and women. Where did they come from? Think about the amazing complexity of these beings. Notice we are all structured much the same, with an intricate composition of skin, bones, nerves, and organs. Think about how often in a

lifetime the heart beats to pump blood around miles of veins. What about the brain? It is a magnificent computer. We each have one. Each human being is made up from a different DNA code. It is very complex. Who gave us this code? Think about all the molecules, proteins, and atoms that make up the human body. What a marvelous machine we are. We can reproduce ourselves. Think about the complexity of how a sperm unites with an egg and produces a human being over a 9 month period. We all live, grow old, and die in about the same life span, approximately 60 to 100 years old.

Now think about how we as humans build things. We plan. In constructing a building, we have architects who draw detailed sketches. Engineers are consulted. Contractors build from these detailed plans. Much thought and planning goes into the structure.

So, how could we have such a wonderful planet called Earth, with so much organization in the Universe and bodies that are so wonderfully built? How could this master plan have developed? Where did we get our intelligence from?

There are two views. Let's discuss them briefly.

## **Evolution**

Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines evolution as follows:

**Biology:** a theory that the differences between modern plants and animals are because of changes that happened by a natural process over a very long time

: the process by which changes in plants and animals happen over time

: a process of slow change and development

As I understand evolution, the animal and plant life that we have today evolved from lower forms of life in the past.

This brings to mind several questions. Where did the lower forms of life come from? Where did that first single cell come from? Where did the planets come from? Where did all these solar systems come from?

The main answer science gives us is the Big Bang Theory.

### **The Big Bang Theory**

Again, as I understand this theory, billions of years ago there was a tremendous explosion that produced all the planets and solar systems that we see in the Universe today. That is where we as humans came from, after evolving from lower forms of life to what we are today.

More questions come to mind. Where did the matter come from to cause this huge explosion? How does something come from nothing? Are we really to believe that all the order of our solar system, our planet Earth, and our own bodies came about by some cosmic accident? Can some mathematician calculate what the odds are of that happening?

### **Creation**

The other view is creation. It is the belief that there is a divine Creator, God, who is the Master Architect and Planner, who by His wise Providence created all things. There is no accident that could have caused all this order and intelligence. It is all by the One who has more intelligence and power than we can imagine.

## **What Does The Bible Say About Creation?**

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen. 1:1)*

This one verse tells us that God, that Master Architect and Planner, created the Universe. There is no attempt to prove the existence of God. There is no debate. The Word of God clearly states that God did this. Chapter one of Genesis shows us how God created everything. He is all-powerful and all-knowing. His greatness and power knows no bounds. He speaks things into existence. Doesn't it stand to reason that some Being of great intelligence and power designed and brought into existence the worlds as we know them?

*1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. (John 1:1-3)*

*<sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Col. 1:16-17)*

*<sup>10</sup> And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. <sup>11</sup> They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; <sup>12</sup> Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail." (Heb. 1:10-12)*

*Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. <sup>2</sup> Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. <sup>3</sup> You turn man to destruction, And say, "Return, O children of men." <sup>4</sup> For a thousand years in Your sight*

*are like yesterday when it is past, And like a watch in the night.*  
(Psalm 90:1-4)

### **Which View Takes More Faith To Believe?**

Many people do not take the biblical account seriously because they say it is all about faith and it is something we can't prove.

Well, can we prove the Big Bang Theory? Do we have a proven explanation of where the matter came from that caused the Big Bang?

As rational, intelligent beings, are we to believe that all the order, complexity, and beauty of our solar system, planet, and human life just all accidentally happened by some random accident? Somehow this explosion happened, but we don't know how or if it did. The dice was rolled, by itself, and the Universe with all its order, complexity, beauty, and life just happened.

I'm sorry, but that takes much more faith than I have to believe such a story. It makes much more sense to believe that a Supreme Being, with infinite knowledge and power, created all things as the Bible has told us.

Whatever view you hold to, it is based on faith. Which faith makes more sense? To me the answer is clear. God created all things!

## Chapter 2

### Abortion

#### When Does Life Begin?

There has been a raging controversy for decades as to when life begins. Back at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century many believed that life began at birth. As science and medicine have advanced it is now indisputable that life begins at conception. At that point, the baby starts growing inside the mother's womb. There is no denying this. Abortion advocates want pregnant women to have the right to abort or kill their unborn babies. They refer to this as a women's right to choose or pro-choice. Some states allow abortion depending on what trimester the pregnancy is in. Any birth control method that terminates the pregnancy after conception is abortion.

Life is a precious gift. All life is created by God, the divine Creator. God is the only One who has the right to end His creature's life. God will, at times, abort an unborn child by miscarriage. He does this for His own purposes and reasons. The Bible makes it clear that God creates, forms, and develops the baby in a woman's womb.

*<sup>13</sup> For You formed my inward parts;  
You covered me in my mother's womb.*

*<sup>14</sup> I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
Marvelous are Your works,  
And that my soul knows very well.*

*<sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from You,  
When I was made in secret,  
And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.*

*<sup>16</sup> Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.  
And in Your book they all were written,  
The days fashioned for me,  
When as yet there were none of them. (Psalms 139:13-16)*

*<sup>2</sup> Thus says the LORD who made you  
and formed you from the womb, who will help you: (Isa. 44:2)*

## **You Shall Not Murder**

The sixth commandment of the Ten Commandments is "You shall not murder." (Ex. 20:13) All life is to be most highly valued. One of the most precious things that we have is our lives. Those who murder others are considered the worst of criminals. Almost all civilized societies condemn the killing of another person. There are exceptions; for instance, for self-defense. We have seen the horrors of mass murders both by nations and by individuals. Hitler, Stalin, and other dictators have murdered millions of people. We have seen the terrors of serial killers who for their own fiendish pleasure or purpose have murdered many innocent persons. We are shocked by the millions tortured and murdered during the Holocaust of World War II. Yet many don't understand the terrible holocaust of the unborn. The statistics concerning the number of defenseless young babies that have been aborted over the past 100 years are staggering. This great sin is repulsive to God, and He will judge those nations and individuals who commit it.

However, for those who have aborted their unborn children there is total forgiveness through faith in God's Son, Jesus Christ. I will speak more on this later.

## **What About In The Case Of Rape?**

This is a very emotional question to answer. The brutal act and crime of rape is abhorrent to civilized societies. A rapist deserves the full penalty of the law. However, what is the Christian way to handle a child conceived by this terrible act?

Only God can create life. Only God has the right to abort a life. Is it fair to kill an innocent unborn child because of the evil deed of another? Do two wrongs make a right? Any child that God has created should always be allowed to live. The mother and father can be brave and raise the child with all the love they can give it. If they can't love or take care of the child, they can give him or her up for adoption to be given to a couple who can love and nurture the child the way the baby deserves. One day that child may become President of the United States, a great musician or artist, or a wonderful mother or father.

### **What About In The Case Of Protecting The Life Of The Mother?**

In this day and age, with science and medicine progressing to the point it has, this question almost is a moot point. With caesarian (c- section) surgery and other medical techniques, the life of the mother is almost never at risk.

What I'm about to share may be shocking to some but I believe it is biblical. The physician should use all means to save both the mother and child. The doctor or others must not play God and decide who should live, either the mother or the child. That is God's decision, for He created them both. The doctor should try to save both even if that means both may die. I know that I will be criticized for this position. Many will say it is extreme. Some will say that is easy for me to say because I am a man. However, I believe we should not be making decisions as to which of God's creatures must live and which should not. We do the best we can, using all medical technology we have, to save all life. We leave the results to God and trust in His wisdom and power to do what is right and good in His eyes.

## Chapter 3

### Marriage, Divorce, and Sex

#### Marriage

God instituted marriage when he created Adam and Eve and brought them together as man and wife.

*<sup>18</sup> And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." <sup>19</sup> Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup> So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.*

*<sup>21</sup> And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. <sup>22</sup> Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.*

*<sup>23</sup> And Adam said:*

*"This is now bone of my bones  
And flesh of my flesh;  
She shall be called Woman,  
Because she was taken out of Man."*

*<sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

*<sup>25</sup> And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Gen. 2:18-25)*

God's biblical plan for marriage was for a man to have a wife and for them to enjoy each other in emotional and physical intimacy.

A man was to have his wife so that the two could enjoy each other and to have children to populate the earth. Sexual intimacy within the bounds of marriage between one man and one woman is what is best for both partners of the marriage and for any offspring that the Lord might bless from this union.

Here is what the Apostle Paul said in the New Testament about marriage.

*It is good for a man not to touch a woman. <sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. <sup>3</sup> Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup> The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. <sup>5</sup> Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. <sup>6</sup> But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment. <sup>7</sup> For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. (1 Cor. 7:1-7)*

Here we are given some excellent biblical advice concerning marriage. Sexual relations outside the bounds of marriage are immoral and sinful. It is fornication. Marriage is between a man and woman. The husband and wife must not refuse to have sexual relations with the other except by mutual agreement during a short time of fasting and prayer. Remaining single is fine. However, if one is full of sexual passion it is better for that person to marry than to remain single and burn within or perhaps even commit immorality.

*It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife! <sup>2</sup> And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this*

deed might be taken away from among you. <sup>3</sup> For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. <sup>4</sup> In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>5</sup> deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

<sup>6</sup> Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup> Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us <sup>8</sup> Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

<sup>9</sup> I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. <sup>10</sup> Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. <sup>11</sup> But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

<sup>12</sup> For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? <sup>13</sup> But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person." (1 Cor. 5:1-12)

God condemns sexual immorality which is having sexual relations with someone other than one's spouse.

## **Divorce**

The divorce rate is shockingly high for first time marriages and even higher for second and third marriages. Christian marriages

fail at about the same rate as those of non-believers which is about 50%. Why do so many marriages fail? Many couples go into marriage with the attitude that if it doesn't work out they can easily walk away by divorce. There is no lifetime commitment to work through the many struggles and difficulties in marriage.

God hates divorce!

*For the LORD God of Israel says that He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence, Says the LORD of hosts. (Mal. 2:16)*

People get divorced for all sorts of reasons. Incompatibility, mental cruelty, physical abuse, finances, sexual problems, child rearing issues, addictions, boredom, differences in expectations, communication problems, growing apart, and marital infidelity are the main ones.

However, Jesus said that there was only one reason that a person could divorce his or her spouse. That reason was adultery. Jesus made this clear when the Pharisees, trying to test Him, asked him a question about divorce.

*<sup>3</sup> The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"*

*<sup>4</sup> And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,<sup>15</sup> and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? <sup>6</sup> So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."*

*<sup>7</sup> They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"*

*<sup>8</sup> He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the*

*beginning it was not so. <sup>9</sup> And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."*

*<sup>10</sup> His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry."*

*<sup>11</sup> But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given: <sup>12</sup> For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it." (Matt. 19:3-12)*

*<sup>10</sup> In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter. <sup>11</sup> So He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. <sup>12</sup> And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery." (Mark 10:10-12)*

Marriage is not something to go into lightly. It is a serious, life-time commitment and contract between a man and a woman. It truly is for better or worse, in sickness or health, till death do us part. It should be based on an unselfish love toward each spouse. Divorce should never be considered unless one spouse commits adultery. Just as a widow or widower is free to marry again, so too is the faithful partner in a divorce able to remarry in the Lord.

However, it would be better for the couple to stay together if the unfaithful spouse truly repents and promises never to commit adultery again. This would take real love and strength for one to take back an unfaithful spouse. However, it is entirely up to the aggrieved spouse who has the legal right before God and man to divorce the unfaithful spouse and move on with his or her life.

Some churches / denominations feel that Scripture does allow for divorce in the case of a person abandoning their spouse.

*<sup>14</sup> For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. <sup>15</sup> But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace. (1 Cor. 7:14-15)*

In the vast majority of cases, when a person abandons his or her spouse, that spouse has already committed adultery or will commit it.

### **Homosexuality / Bisexuality / Bestiality**

In our liberal and permissive society, alternative sexual lifestyles are becoming more and more accepted. However, homosexuality, bisexuality, and bestiality are forbidden in Scripture and are an abomination to God.

*<sup>13</sup> If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them. <sup>14</sup> If a man marries a woman and her mother, it is wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you. <sup>15</sup> If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal. <sup>16</sup> If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood is upon them. (Lev. 20:13-16)*

*<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. <sup>27</sup> Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men*

*committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. (Rom. 1:26-27)*

Yet, with the Word of God so clear on these issues, we see so-called Christian churches accept into their membership those who participate in these sinful lifestyles thus supporting it. To make matters worse, some of these churches even ordain ministers who practice these sinful lifestyles. These churches and their leaders will be judged harshly by our Lord. No one who continues to be involved in these transgressions will ever enter heaven.

*<sup>7</sup> as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. (Jude 7)*

## **Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD'S)**

We see in the Bible how God sent plagues on those who committed grievous sin against Him. God has sent STD's to punish those who participate in an immoral lifestyle whether that be through illicit sex or sharing needles in drug use. HIV/AIDS often results in death. Disobeying God has serious consequences.

The consequences of sin often cause disastrous results for those who are innocent bystanders. A baby may be born with an STD or a drug addiction because of the sinful acts of parents. This is a very sad situation. Perhaps someone get AIDS because of a tainted blood transfusion received in a hospital.

Some things we can understand and other things we can't. One thing we do know is God is in control and has promised to work out all things for good for those He has called.

*<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Rom. 8:28)*

## **Pornography**

Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines pornography as follows:

"movies, pictures, magazines, etc., that show or describe naked people or sex in a very open and direct way in order to cause sexual excitement."

Years ago, pornography was limited to several magazines that specialized in showing naked or partially naked women. Now, with the internet, one is only several clicks away from viewing others performing all kinds of sexual acts. This is especially troubling because young children now have easy access to pornography, and parents must be hands on with preventing these images from corrupting these young minds. Parents must constantly monitor what their children see at home and outside the home. Computers children have access to should have filters on them and the computer(s) should only be placed in open areas of the house.

Viewing pornography is an addiction just like having an addiction to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. It is an addiction that can only be broken through prayer and a relationship with Jesus Christ. It is similar to all other addictions in that one can't just have a little bit of it. As some drugs will lead a person to harder drugs, so too will soft porn lead one into hard core porn. One is constantly striving to get more highs that lead to other sins and to personal devastation.

Pornography is used by Satan to destroy marriages. He uses it to destroy ministries. It denigrates the beautiful sexual relationship and union established by God between a husband and wife. It causes one to have a lack of respect for both men and women. In marriage it has caused some to seek sexual satisfaction and fulfillment with persons other than their spouse.

Christians must not allow pornography to come before their eyes.

*But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matt. 5:28)*

*For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. (1 John 2:16)*

*"I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman? (Job 31:1)*

*<sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. (James 1:14-15)*

Dr. James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, interviewed serial murderer Ted Bundy right before Bundy was executed. Bundy admitted his desire to rape and kill women came from his addiction with pornography.

"Ted Bundy, an infamous serial killer, granted an interview to psychologist James Dobson just before he was executed on January 24, 1989. In that interview, he described the agony of his addiction to pornography. Bundy goes back to his roots, explaining the development of his compulsive behavior. He reveals his addiction to hard-core pornography and how it fueled the terrible crimes he committed.

A road that leads to nowhere...

When Ted Bundy was thirteen years old, he discovered "dirty magazines" in a dump near his home. He was instantly captivated by them. In time, Bundy became more and more addicted to violent images in magazines and videos. He got his kicks from seeing women being tortured and murdered. When he tired of that, there was only one place his addiction could go - from fantasy to reality." (From Pure Intimacy – Fatal Addiction: Ted Bundy's Final Interview)

Only evil and harm will come from being involved with pornography. It produces sinful / lustful thoughts and can lead to fornication, adultery, divorce, torture, and murder.

We must also be careful what we put before our eyes regarding all forms of entertainment which includes television, movies, concerts, and other forms of entertainment. If the entertainment shows inappropriate sexy dress, dancing, or bodily movements, it should be avoided by the Christian. Much of what we see on these mediums is a form of pornography. There are television and movie reviews on the internet which will reveal the sexual content, language, negative and positive spiritual aspects of the entertainment to guide us. Christians must be vigilant in this area to protect themselves and their families.

## **Polygamy**

There are some who practice polygamy which is having more than one spouse at a time. This is outlawed in most states. Normally this is where one man may have multiple wives. This practice is one that is not acceptable before God. Although there are some instances in the Old Testament where this was practiced as in the case of Jacob, it was never condoned by God. In almost all cases, it caused problems within the marriage unit. God's plan for mankind is for marriage to be between one man and one woman. (Note Genesis 2:18-25 previously noted.) The husband and the wife are to become "one flesh." Having more than one spouse at the same time is committing adultery.

Pastors and deacons, the spiritual leaders and examples in our churches, are commanded to be the husband of one wife.

*A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; (1 Tim. 3:2)*

*Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (1 Tim. 3:12)*

## **Sex Change**

There are some individuals who attempt to change their sex. They feel that they were born wrong as either a man or a woman. They will use hormones and surgery to correct that mistake as they see it. However, the Word of God is clear. God created us as either a man or woman.

*<sup>27</sup> So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Gen. 1:27)*

God doesn't make any mistakes. He planned in eternity past to create us as either a man or woman. We should not try to undo what God has created us to be. That is really an insult to Him. He knows what is best for us.

## Chapter 4

### Capital Punishment

In most societies, a person who murders another person receives the strongest condemnation, judgment, and punishment allowed by law. Should a person who murders another person receive the death penalty? There is great debate over this issue.

What does the Bible say about this?

*"Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man."* (Gen. 9:6)

<sup>12</sup> *"He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death."* (Ex. 21:12)

God places great value on His creation of mankind. He made man in His own image. No person has the right to destroy that image or creation.

*He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.* (Rev. 13:10)

God has commanded that the governing authorities are to execute those who murder others.

<sup>3</sup> *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.* <sup>4</sup> *For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.* (Rom. 13:3-4)

## Chapter 5

### Drugs

When it comes to taking drugs, there are some principles we can apply to determine if this is right or wrong for the Christian. The improper use of drugs can destroy a person's life and terribly affect the lives of that person's family. When we think of drugs, we are referring to all forms of drugs that one can ingest in pill form, smoking or chewing, inhaling, injecting into the body, or using some other method to get the drug into the body's system.

We are talking about all kinds of drugs such as over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs, tobacco, alcohol, amphetamines, barbiturates, soft or recreational drugs such as marijuana, LSD, chemically produced concoctions, and hard drugs such as cocaine, heroin, and morphine. This list is not all inclusive.

Let's look at some principles or guidelines we can use to see if drug use is permissible for a Christian.

#### **Is It Legal?**

The first question we want to answer is whether or not taking this substance is legal. If it is not legal, then we must never participate in that activity. The Word of God makes it clear that we are to obey the authorities over us as God has instituted all such authorities. To be right with Jesus Christ, we must be good citizens obeying the laws of the land. We must never break the law.

*Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. (Rom. 13:1)*

*Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, <sup>2</sup> to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. (Titus 3:1-2)*

*Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. (Matt. 22:21)*

Just because something is legal, doesn't make it allowable for a Christian to participate in. However, its legality is a first step as to whether one can consider it. If it is not legal, then anyone, Christian or otherwise, should not participate in that activity. We show respect to God by showing respect to the governing authorities He has placed over us.

### **Is It Prescribed For A Medical Condition?**

Any prescription medicine is certainly fine to take as long as it is taken properly under a doctor's care. Any overdose or improper use is to be avoided as it can be harmful to the body. This is discussed more fully in the next section.

### **Is It Harmful To The Body?**

The next question is whether there are any harmful consequences to our bodies from taking the drug? Our bodies are a gift from God that He created to be used to serve Him. Our bodies belong to Him, not to us. We must never do anything to harm our bodies or use them in ways other than for that which the Lord created them.

*Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Cor. 6:19-20)*

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:1-2)*

As Christians, God considers our bodies a temple that the Holy Spirit resides in. Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. He purchased us with His blood. We should do things with our bodies that bring glory to Him. Improper use of legal or illegal drugs that harm this vessel God has given us must never be done.

### **Is It Addictive?**

When taking a substance, does it cause one to lose control over whether we can take it or not take it? Does the substance control us or do we control it? One sign the substance is not right for the Christian is this matter of addiction. As Christians, we must always be in control of our lives. Either we are in control, or Satan is in control. If we are doing something we can't stop, we are letting outside forces control our lives. If any substance has this kind of control over us, you can be sure it is evil and will result in sinful consequences. The Spirit-led Christian must never give up control of his life in any way whatsoever.

*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Rom. 8:14)*

*Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)*

*And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, (Eph. 5:18)*

*No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. 10:13)*

### **Is It Mind-Altering?**

Again, we must be in control of our bodies and mental faculties to make sure we are obedient to the Word of God. If we do something where we are put in a mind-altering state, we lose control of our senses. Drugs that do this can cause severe mental and psychological problems. Being in this state can cause one to be easily possessed by demonic forces. Even in a sober state we are still in the grip of sin and are often easy prey to demons. When drunk or high, we are even more easily manipulated by these unseen forces. We can end up harming or even killing someone in an auto accident when driving under these influences.

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8)*

*Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; (1 Peter 1:13)*

### **Is It A Stumbling Block To Others?**

As Christians, we must be careful not to do things that offend others or that might result in damaging another person's faith in Christ. If we are taking drugs that violate the principles mentioned in this chapter, then doing so can weaken the faith of someone who knows that we are believers in Christ. Christians must not only

think about how their conduct affects themselves but also how it can adversely affect others. Paul was concerned about this in his life. Even when he knew that doing something was not wrong in and of itself, he still would not participate in it if doing so would potentially harm someone else.

*<sup>14</sup> I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. <sup>15</sup> Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. (Rom. 14:14-15)*

*<sup>19</sup> Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. <sup>20</sup> Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense. <sup>21</sup> It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak. (Rom. 14: 19-21)*

*<sup>9</sup> But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. <sup>10</sup> For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? <sup>11</sup> And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? <sup>12</sup> But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble. (1 Cor. 8:9-13)*

## Chapter 6

### Gambling

It is true that gambling is not mentioned in the Bible. However, there are a number of verses that give us principles regarding this subject. Let's examine some of those verses.

*For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Tim. 6:10)*

Gambling, pure and simple, is for the love of money and it often results in greed and many sorrows. When we gamble our sole focus is to get more money. We do this, not from the sweat of our brow through honest labor, but by a game of chance in which we have no control. It is true that for the love of money all kinds of sin and evil are committed including theft, bribery, forgery, murder to collect on life insurance, illegal use of campaign funds, and the list goes on.

<sup>12</sup> *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. (1 Cor. 6:12)*

Often gambling becomes an addiction. The gambler can become totally possessed by spending more and more of his hard-earned money to hit the jackpot. Life savings can be wiped out by this addiction. It can destroy marriages, families, and careers.

<sup>5</sup> *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Heb. 13:5)*

<sup>17</sup> *"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female*

*servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's." (Ex. 20:17)*

To covet is to have an inordinate desire to have something that does not belong to you. We often covet objects such as a very nice home, expensive cars, fancy clothing, and a lifestyle beyond our means. The way some try to satisfy this covetousness is to get quick money to buy these things. Some gamble hoping to achieve this end and often with disastrous results. The Lord commands us to be content with the things we have and not to covet other things. We are to trust in Him to take care of our needs, not in cards, dice, or a spinning wheel.

<sup>25</sup> *"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"* <sup>26</sup> *Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?* (Matt. 6:25-26)

<sup>33</sup> *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.* (Matt. 6:33)

Rather than gamble with your money, give that money to the work of the Lord. That will be an investment that will earn you heavenly rewards.

<sup>19</sup> *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* (Matt. 6:19-20)

## What About Investing In The Markets?

Some might ask, what about buying stocks, bonds, commodities, and real estate? Isn't that a form of gambling? The answer is no. With investing, one is researching different types of investments. Decisions are made with regard to the strength of the investment or companies involved. Planning is used. A broker may give advice. No cards, dice, wheel, or other medium of chance is used to make an investment decision.

The Lord wants and even expects us to invest our funds to make a return. He used that concept to show how we should use our spiritual talents for the best return in serving Him.

*<sup>14</sup> "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. <sup>15</sup> And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. <sup>16</sup> Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. <sup>17</sup> And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. <sup>18</sup> But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. <sup>19</sup> After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.*

*<sup>20</sup> "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' <sup>21</sup> His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' <sup>22</sup> He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' <sup>23</sup> His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'*

*<sup>24</sup> "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. <sup>25</sup> And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'*

*<sup>26</sup> "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. <sup>27</sup> So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. <sup>28</sup> Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.*

*<sup>29</sup> 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>30</sup> And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*  
(Matt. 25:14-30)

As we should invest our money to bring us the highest rate of return, so too should we take the talents God has given us and use them to their fullest extent to bring a great return for the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Chapter 7

### Suicide / Euthanasia

As was mentioned previously in this book, life is a gift from God. It is God who causes life to begin at conception. In the Bible, women who were childless, often referred to as barren, understood that it was God who controlled the opening or closing of their wombs. We need to understand that God planned in eternity past to create us. Not one human being has been conceived without the direct plan and intervention by God. Besides salvation in Jesus Christ, our individual lives are the most precious gift we have. We must not be involved in murder for that is certainly one of the most heinous sins one can commit. Suicide is murdering oneself. God hates murder for it terminates the life He created.

As Christians, do we want the last act of our life before we stand before the judgment seat of Christ to be the sin of murder? How can you repent and ask forgiveness after the sin of suicide?

My heart goes out to people who are suffering greatly because of an illness or disease. Perhaps they are aged. Many have opted to be euthanized as a way to stop the pain they are going through. Is it all right to take your own life to prevent having to live with a painful disease or condition?

The Bible does not give permission for one to take his life to escape pain or his circumstances. We have had Christian martyrs through history who have endured painful deaths by being burned at the stake, torn apart by lions, scourged, and crucified. Jesus Christ died by scourging and crucifixion. He made no attempt to end His life before experiencing His painful death.

*"You shall not murder."* (Ex. 20:13)

## Chapter 8

### Music

Singing and music can be such a blessing. They can be used to inspire our hearts, calm us, help us to recall pleasant memories, and lift our spirits. However, music can also be a negative factor in our lives.

### Lyrics

Lyrics communicate heartfelt feelings from the songwriter. However, some use words that are inappropriate, mean, vindictive, filthy, and even hateful. Lyrics that glorify hate and violence against others are evil and should never be listened to. Words that demean men and women in a sexual way are also to be avoided. Any song with words that promotes sin in any way is evil, and a Christian should have no participation in it. When someone allows his mind to listen to evil, it will change his heart for evil. Words matter. Words can deceive. The great deceiver, Satan, likes to use words to trick people into committing evil. He did this to Eve and countless others since creation. He will do it to you if you allow evil and sinful words in your mind and heart. Listening to evil words causes those words to become the words of the listener. Those words will be thought and spoken by the listener.

*"...But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. <sup>37</sup> For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." (Matt. 12:36-37)*

## **Musical Instruments**

Some Christians think music is a neutral medium. It is my opinion that this is not true. Music affects our emotions. Music that is played with loud, hard rhythm and beats is used to excite the listener. We all know of the rock concerts that have been an evil force for immorality, crime, and drugs. Music should be a calming medium to bring peace to the mind and soul. It should never be used to promote sinful thoughts and activities. A Christian should be careful with the music he or she listens to. When listening to music, ask yourself this question, "Would Jesus be pleased with the music I am listening to?"

## **Christian Contemporary Music**

There is debate among Christians about Christian contemporary music. Some say it is okay while some say it is not. When examining this issue we need to look at it as we did above by judging the lyrics and the way the instruments are used. If the words bring glory to God, that is good. Where most of the debate occurs is how the instruments are used. If the instruments are playing loud hard rock type music, one needs to ask the question, "Is this glorifying God?" Is the same type music that is used in rock concerts to glorify sex, crime, and drugs the kind of music we want to listen to or play to glorify God? Would He be pleased with that?

Christians should separate themselves from the way the unsaved world lives. If our music is the same as the music the ungodly plays or listens to, is that good? Some say we must appeal to the ungodly to get them in our churches. However, do we let down our standards to the ungodly world's system on the grounds we might increase our numbers among the ungodly?

*<sup>14</sup> Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? <sup>15</sup> And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? <sup>16</sup> And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."<sup>17</sup> Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you."<sup>18</sup> "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:14-18)*

What is right or wrong with regard to music is often not clear. You can have heavy metal hard rock music that appeals to the sensual and the flesh on one end of the spectrum and traditional, church hymnal music on the other end. All kind of music falls in between. How do we tell what is right or wrong? The Bible doesn't tell us what is good music and what is bad music.

The purpose of Christian music is to worship God. It should bring glory to Him. Its goal is not to entertain us, show off our talent, or appeal to the flesh. All focus and attention should be on the Lord. If the music we worship the Lord with is the same or close to what the ungodly plays or listens to, that should be a red flag. With regard to Christian music, I think we should err on the side of music that has a soft, peaceful, calming effect on us that focuses on worshiping God. I believe that is most pleasing to Him.

## Chapter 9

### Holiday Myths

#### Santa Claus

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year. It is a time for us to gather with our family and friends to celebrate the many blessings God has bestowed on us. God gave us the most special blessing of all when He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for the sins of all who believe on Him.

*<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)*

Our giving gifts to those we love and care about reflects, in a small way, the love the Father has for us in giving His Son, the greatest Gift, for us. It is important to keep our gift giving in perspective. Christmas should be all about the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He is the only reason for the season. He should be the focus on what Christmas is all about, God sending His Son as a baby born in a manger, who would be our Lord, God, Savior, and King!

What about Santa Claus? Should a Christian have anything to do with him and the myths surrounding him? I'm going to give my opinion on this as a believer applying biblical principles. I believe that a Christian should not have anything to do with Santa Claus for several reasons.

First, this fable takes away from Jesus Christ as the sole reason why we celebrate this special day. It dilutes the meaning of Christ in Christmas. Christ must always be pre-eminent and this myth takes away from our Lord. Instead of people and children

focusing on Christ, many have replaced Him with this mythical being. This is pleasing to Satan as he has been able to use a being that has never existed to take emphasis away from Christ. Just look around during the Christmas season. You will see countless pictures, statues, songs, television shows, and movies about Santa Claus. Christ is largely left out. Santa Claus is an invention of the world system. Can't we celebrate Christmas fully without paying homage to this imaginary person?

Second, everything about Santa Claus is based on lies. He is even given God-like attributes. He is all-knowing as he knows what children are doing at all times to determine their rewards or presents. He is able to be everywhere at once as he can cover the whole world of gift giving in one night. He is an idol of Christmas. Although most of these falsehoods are well-meaning they are still lies to children. We know from Scripture that Satan is the father of lies. In speaking to the unbelieving Jews, Jesus said this about Satan:

*"... there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."* (John 8:44)

If we lie to our children about Santa Claus will they also think we lied to them about Jesus Christ?

Third, much of this myth places too much emphasis on materialism. Stores and businesses use this fable to generate more sales. It seems that so much of Christmas has become worldly and about getting more toys or things. If we are not careful, we can get caught up with all the commercialism and materialism that surrounds Christmas. We set the tone for our children. The Bible teaches us to be content with the things that God has given us. The only items that Jesus owned in His life were the clothes He wore. Satan, the god of this world, tried to get Jesus to focus on materialism but was defeated by our Lord.

*<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. <sup>9</sup> And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" (Matt. 4:8-10)*

Finally, it is interesting that the name Santa spells Satan if the letters are rearranged. Satan will use any means at his disposal to take away the glory and pre-eminence of Jesus Christ. Satan has made Santa Claus an idol of this materialistic world.

## **Easter And The Easter Bunny**

For Christians, perhaps the most important day of the year is Resurrection Sunday. We commemorate our Lord Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead after He made atonement for our sins on the cross outside Jerusalem. On the third day, He arose from the dead! He provided atonement for the sins of Christians.

Although many Christians refer to the day of the Lord's resurrection as Easter, I do not to call it by that name because that word has pagan origins. I refer to the day of the resurrection of our Lord as Resurrection Sunday. The word Easter is not found in the Bible nor does it have any direct biblical reference to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Easter bunny is another pagan myth that takes away from the resurrection of Christ. It puts a worldly and commercial spin on this special day and offers children goodies, treats, and candy eggs from the Easter bunny. Where did the Easter bunny come from? Bunnies or hares reproduce more rapidly than any other mammal. It is a pagan symbol of sexuality and fertility. A search on the internet will reveal the pagan origin and aspects of the word Easter and the Easter bunny.

Again, although this all seems like harmless child's play, it is an attempt by the world to take away the emphasis on Christ and His resurrection and replace it with a worldly and pagan activity. Letting children search for candy or other goodies is certainly fine. However, I would not do it on Resurrection Sunday and would make no reference to "Easter" eggs. Let us reserve Resurrection Sunday for the worship and celebration of our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **Halloween**

There is certainly nothing wrong with kids going door to door hoping to get candy and dressing up in harmless costumes. It is the evil side of Halloween which is of greatest concern. Any involvement with witches, goblins, ghouls, ghosts, or having anything to do with the demonic is forbidden in Scripture. This is true whether adults are putting these things up on their property as part of Halloween or parents are letting their children dress up as these demonic or evil characters.

<sup>9</sup> *"When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. <sup>10</sup> There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, <sup>11</sup> or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. <sup>12</sup> For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. <sup>13</sup> You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. <sup>14</sup> For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you". (Dt. 18:9-14)*

As Christians, we should stay away from all activities that have anything to do with witches, witchcraft, wizards, sorcery, or spiritualists who try to communicate with the dead. We should stay away from books, television, and movies that promote these activities. God calls these things an abomination to Him.

Some churches have special games, food, and activities at their facilities during Halloween for their children to participate in so they are not involved in the evil or worldly side of this day. Some Christians do not involve themselves in Halloween by not being home at night. Some will give out Bible tracts along with the candy. Each Christian should pray and decide what the Lord would have them do regarding this day and their children. I believe the best course of action is to just not participate so that one does not end up supporting a day in which evil is glorified by many.

## **Conclusion**

The key here is to always be truthful to others in all matters. Never lie or deceive children to perpetuate a myth even though that myth seems cute, fanciful, fun, or harmless. It is never right to deceive or lie to someone else.

<sup>16</sup> *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor".* (Ex. 20:16)

It is understandable that young children may have fantasies like being a super hero, a princess, etc. If they have that fantasy as a child, there is nothing wrong with that. However, if they ask you, as the parent, are Santa Claus or some other mythical figure real, you must always tell the truth. They are going to find out the truth eventually and it is better that it come from you than from some kid unmercifully teasing them because they believed

in something that was false. As parents we must always maintain truthfulness with our children and others.

*<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32)*

## Chapter 10

### Politics

Christians have a responsibility to not only live a moral and godly life; they also must try to influence society for good in Christ. We are to let our light shine brightly for the Lord and be a good testimony to others.

<sup>14</sup> *"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup> Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matt. 5:14-16)*

To be able to influence society for good, Christians must get involved in politics and try to get elected to office Christian men and women. We should not just sit on the sidelines. We need to join in the battle for righteousness. If a Christian is not in the field of candidates, then Christians should select the one who most closely typifies Christian values. If all the candidates seem to reject Biblical values, then Christians should not vote for any of them.

It amazes me how many people call themselves Christians yet will support a political candidate and party that stands for things that go contrary to the Word of God. For instance, I see many church-going individuals who claim to be Christians, yet they will support candidates and a party that is for abortion rights. This is the height of hypocrisy.

If someone supports with their money and votes for a candidate who takes stands against the Bible, then that person is saying he or she believes in those positions. How can a Christian support

causes that are anti-Christian? A house divided against itself cannot stand.

*<sup>14</sup> And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. <sup>15</sup> But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."*

*<sup>16</sup> Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven. <sup>17</sup> But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls. <sup>18</sup> If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. <sup>19</sup> And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. <sup>20</sup> But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

*<sup>21</sup> When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. <sup>22</sup> But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. <sup>23</sup> He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters. (Luke 11:14-23)*

God will hold us accountable for those causes and individuals we support. Let us make sure we are on the right side of these issues: God's side.

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Cor. 5:10)*

## **Chapter 11**

### **Tithes and Offerings**

How much of our income are we supposed to give to the Lord? Are Christians under the Old Testament law of the tithe which is giving 10% of our income to the Lord? Let's take a look at the Bible to see what it says about this matter.

#### **Old Testament**

We first see the word tithe in Gen. 14:20. Here God gave Abraham (Abram at the time) a great military victory over several different kings who had kidnapped his nephew Lot and his possessions. After the victory, Melchizedek, who was the king of Salem and the priest of God Most High blessed Abraham. Abraham then gave Melchizedek a tithe. He was not under an obligation to make this gift; he did it voluntarily.

As part of the law God gave to Moses, the people of Israel were commanded to give a tithe or tenth of their income, animals, or land to the Lord. These tithes were used to support the priestly tribe of Levi, the maintenance of the tabernacle and of temple.

*<sup>30</sup> And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's. It is holy to the LORD. <sup>31</sup> If a man wants at all to redeem any of his tithes, he shall add one-fifth to it. <sup>32</sup> And concerning the tithe of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD. (Lev. 27:30-32)*

<sup>21</sup> *"Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting. (Num. 18:21)*

This command to tithe was given to the Jews. Some obeyed this command and were blessed by God.

*Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. (Mal. 3:10)*

On the other hand, some were disobedient and robbed God of these tithes and offerings.

*"Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. (Mal. 3:8)*

The key to remember here is that the tithe was part of the law of God given to His people Israel. It was a duty or obligation of the Jews to perform. If they didn't keep this command they were breaking their covenant with God.

## **New Testament**

In the New Testament, the Lord does not give us any commands as to what specific portion of our income is to be given to Him. However, He does give us some guidelines or principles to follow.

<sup>2</sup> *On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. (1 Cor. 16:2)*

We see in this verse that we are to give as God has prospered us to give. Some make more money than others. Those people should be able to give more money to Lord than those who make less. God looks at our ability to give.

*<sup>5</sup> Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation. <sup>6</sup> But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. <sup>7</sup> So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. (II Cor. 9:5-7)*

God wants us to give to Him out of our love for Him not out of duty or obligation to have to give a certain amount. Giving because of a duty or obligation removes love from the gift. Our gifts really are meaningful if they are given freely. Those who give generously will be blessed in a generous way by the Lord. We should give what we feel is appropriate to give. We should give cheerfully and be glad that we are able to give to the work of the Lord. If it irritates us to give then we have lost all the blessing and reward from the Lord.

God isn't impressed with the amount we give; He is impressed at how sacrificial our giving is.

*<sup>41</sup> Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. <sup>42</sup> Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites which make a quadrans. <sup>43</sup> So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; <sup>44</sup> for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood." (Mark 12:41-44)*

These rich people dropped a lot of coins in the box, some to impress others. The poor widow gave such a small amount yet her gift was far greater as she gave everything she had to the Lord. Her gift was extremely sacrificial.

Who has given more, a multi-millionaire who gives a tithe or 10% of income or a person below the poverty level who gives 9%? Obviously, the person giving 9% has given much more sacrificially and faithfully to the Lord.

Am I saying we should not tithe? No. Tithing is fine as long as it is done freely without compulsion or obligation. Tithing is a good starting point for some. We can also give more than a tithe. Give whatever you plan to give, and give it with a cheerful spirit. That is pleasing to the Lord.

## Chapter 12

### Forgiveness

In this book, many sins have been enumerated. If you have participated in any of these transgressions or other sins, there is still hope and forgiveness available to you. How forgiving is God?

<sup>9</sup> *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* (1 John 1:9)

All these sins and others can be forgiven by God. He has provided a way for you to escape His wrath for your sins.

<sup>36</sup> *He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”* (John 3:36)

<sup>16</sup> *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* (John 3:16)

Jesus Christ came to this world for a number of reasons. He came to live a life that was a perfect example of how we should live. He came to show His power by many signs, wonders, and miracles. Most importantly, He came to take the punishment of the sins of those who receive Him as their Savior, Lord, King, and God. For us believers, His shed blood cleanses us of our sins. Jesus died on the cross on Golgotha to satisfy the righteous wrath of God for our sins.

What a wonderful plan God instituted. For those of us who look toward Jesus in faith, believing that He died for our sins and was raised from the dead, we receive Christ's righteousness as He received the penalty of our transgressions. Imagine, God loving us so much that He would send His only begotten Son to die for us.

Christ taught us about forgiveness. He said that if we want God to forgive us of our sins, we must be willing to forgive others who sin against us.

<sup>14</sup> *"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. <sup>15</sup> But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* (Matt. 6:14-15)

## Epilogue

In closing this book, my hope and prayer for you is that if you are not a Christian you would receive Jesus now in saving faith. Pray for Him to save you from your sins. He has promised He would do this for all those who sincerely ask and come to Him.

*<sup>37</sup> All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. (John 6:37)*

Once you have done this, you will be saved from the wrath of God and receive eternal life and a wonderful future with Christ in heaven forever. To reject Jesus Christ will bring eternal torment in hell and the lake of fire.

*<sup>36</sup> He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (John 3:36)*

*<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. <sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.] <sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:11-15)*

For those of you who are Christians, I hope this book will be helpful to you in your walk for the Lord. As believers, we should do our best to follow Jesus and His commandments. He has done so much for us. Jesus paid a terrible price to redeem and save us from the wrath to come. As Christians, we must fight the good

fight of faith for our Savior Jesus Christ who died for us. That is what the Apostle Paul said about himself:

*<sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. (II Tim. 4:6-8)*

May the Lord bless you!