



NON-PROFIT



TAX-EXEMPT

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” MARK 16:15

April 2022

FROM US TO YOU

Wow, it's April already! This year so much has been happening that it feels like only last week was Christmas. It's good to keep busy for the Lord. But Satan and his demons have a way of lousing up all of our well planned good intentions. For example, about a year ago we met up with a Christian couple we had not seen for more than twenty years. It was a nice reunion. We got together for lunch and had a chance to talk over old times and get updated on what we had all been doing over the years. We had planned to spend some regular time with them and get together once a week. They were on Long Island to take care of Tom's mother, who was sick. Then Annemarie got Covid-19, and our plans were delayed. Then Tom, her husband, got sick with Covid. Then Tom's mother died, and they had to move back to Virginia.

Have you noticed, Satan has a way of ruining all the good things we Christians try to do that are working well? When we first got our house in 1999, after nineteen years of living in a small apartment, we enjoyed the luxury of finding a quiet spot in our garden to pray. A few years later it was so noisy in our neighborhood, it seemed like everyone near us was having construction done on their house. And it seemed, everyone's gardener was working nearby, at the times we went out to pray. That was discouraging. Then all the cute birds that we used to feed decided to make a habit of using our patio furniture for target practice. Cleaning off that mess was not easy! And it was time-consuming. We did not give up, but conditions got worse. Eric's sciatica got bad and Anne developed cutaneous vasculitis, which causes horrendous itching of the skin. She still tried to pray in the garden, but it seemed like every time she would go out there she would get bitten by insects, which caused the itching to get worse. The itching is more under control now with the help of medicine. However, we now do our praying indoors. More recently, Eric has neck and shoulder problems and Anne has arthritis, and a serious back problem. So please keep us in your prayers. However, God has said, if you don't go through the test of faith you don't get the victory.

So what do you do when things don't turn out the way you want them to? You go with the flow. In other words, you trust God to lead you and guide you according to His will. Did you lose your job? Trust God to find a better one for you. Is your marriage in danger? If you have faith in God and things keep getting worse, the Lord may be working on your spouse. People often get meaner when they come under spiritual conviction. So keep praying for them. Folks are more likely to turn to Christ when they have exhausted all other means of help. That's why prisons are such a fertile place for lost souls. Jesus said, *“The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field”* (Matthew 9:37-38 NIV). In Christ, bad things often happen for a reason. Eric was once sending out the newsletter on his computer to people on our mailing list when something went wrong. He accidentally sent three copies to each person. He was upset about the mistake and sent out an apology. A woman responded by telling him, “Don't



apologize. I usually don't read the newsletter but today, since you sent out three of them, I read it. It gave me a wonderful blessing.”

Many years ago we arrived early for a Christian crusade we attended. A small group of people waited there with us. The atmosphere was full of love and Holy Spirit joy. We were strangers but family in the Lord. Anne sat down next to a woman who told us an amazing story. She said that a number of years earlier she was diagnosed with terminal cancer. The doctor hoped to prolong her life a bit by operating on her. She got all her legal papers ready and convinced herself that she would die during the surgery. The day of the operation she was all excited. “I'm going to see Jesus today!” she told herself with enthusiasm. She looked forward to going to Heaven and seeing people she had read about in the Bible. So when she awoke after the surgery she was disappointed. She was returned to her room in the hospital and God spoke to her heart. He told her that he had cured her of her cancer and that she needed to drink lots of water to flush out all the toxins from her body. When she told her doctor she was cured, he did not believe her. However, he ordered new x-rays to be taken. The new x-rays showed no cancer. The doctor was convinced her x-ray technicians had sent him the wrong film. He ordered more x-rays, but they also showed no evidence of cancer. Many years had passed, but the cancer never returned.

Another woman wrote to a large Christian ministry. She said that when she was six months pregnant with her son God spoke to her. He said that her son would be used by Him to bring thousands of people to Christ. She imagined he would be a missionary or an evangelist or something like that. However, her son died when he was nine months old. The insurance company sent her a check and after the boy was buried, two hundred dollars was left over. She took the money and sent it to a Christian ministry along with her letter. She said she loved her son so much, but she loved Jesus even more and hoped they could use the money. Now the ministry she sent the money to was very large. And one might reason that \$200 is not worth the life of a child. However, the ministry published her letter in their magazine that went out all over the world. It wasn't the money that brought people to repentance. It was the woman's selfless act of faith that did it. And we know that all Christians will go through tests of faith in their walk with God (Psalm 34:19-20).

The more God wants to use you, the harder the tests will be. Paul and Silas are one example (see Acts 16:20-36). However, God has a way of turning trouble into blessings and bringing glory to Himself. *“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose”* (Romans 8:28 NIV). Therefore, *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones”* (Proverbs 3:5-8 NIV).

In God's love, *Eric and Anne Kaestner*

The Ten Virgins

By Anne Kaestner

One of the most misunderstood parables of Jesus is the one about the ten virgins. Jesus told His disciples, *“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the Bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The Bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the Bridegroom! Come out to meet Him!’ Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’ ‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’ But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the Bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with Him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. Later the others also came. ‘Sir! Sir!’ they said. ‘Open the door for us!’ But He replied, ‘I tell you the truth, I don’t know you.’ Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour”* (Matthew 25:1-13 NIV).

The Bridegroom is Jesus Christ and the ten virgins are those in His spiritual church who expect to go up in the Rapture (1 Corinthians 15:5-55, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) when Jesus comes back for His Bride, the church. This is not about nominal Christians, most of which have never heard of the Rapture. It is about Born Again believers who expect to go to Heaven some day. It is about lukewarm Christians (see Revelation 3:15-19) who hate the corruption of this world, but still have one foot in it. That’s because there are things in this world that they do not want to give up. Like Lot’s wife, their worldly things have become a normal way of life for them. Remember, the angels had specifically told Lot and his family that they were going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah and that when the family left Sodom they must not look back. However, Lot and his family had lived in that city so long that the lifestyle of the city had become normal to them, even though Lot hated the sin (2 Peter 2:1-16). As they left the city, Lot’s wife could not stand not knowing what was going to happen to her city. *“Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah—from the LORD out of the heavens. Thus He overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities—and also the vegetation in the land. But Lot’s wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt”* (Genesis 19:24-26 NIV).

Jesus said, *“Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. On that day no one who is on the roof of his house, with his goods inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. Remember Lot’s wife!”* (Luke 17:26-32 NIV). A secretary who used to work for me gave every indication on the surface of being a true Christian. Then one day she mentioned to me that her first marriage took place in Las Vegas, also jokingly called “Sin City” by people, due to its decadence. I thought she was talking about before she and her

husband were saved, but she responded, “Oh no. We were both Christians.” I was shocked. Before she died, my stepmother, who claimed to be a strong Christian, and I were talking about my brother and his family taking a vacation in Las Vegas. I was sadly showing disappointment when she said, “I’ve been wanting to go there.” I was astonished. A few years later my brother and his wife were divorced and remarried, each to someone else. Frankly, over the years I have become very skeptical of people who claim to love the Lord Jesus Christ and yet love the things of this world.

The Bible tells us, *“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever”* (1 John 2:15-17 NIV). It’s amazing to me that someone who considers themselves a strong Christian would even want to visit “Sin City” at all. Don’t you know that Satan is the “god” of this world (Matthew 4:8-11)? If you’re a Christian, you are supposed to be a part of the church, which is the Bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2). When you engage in idolatry you are therefore, being unfaithful to the Lord and God sees it as adultery. *“You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God”* (James 4:4 NIV).



ship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God” (James 4:4 NIV).

Satan didn’t make the world. God did that. Originally, Satan was just a powerful angel God created to serve Him. For, long before mankind was ever created, the angels existed. And one of the most powerful angels was called “Lucifer” (in the King James Bible). It means “light bearer.” The name “Lucifer,” is translated “Morning Star” in the more recent translations, such as the “New International Version,” and the “American Standard Version.” I believe it is really a title more than a name. Most likely it means that he had authority over the earth at one time. Remember the dinosaurs? They probably existed during that period. However, God destroyed the old world before He remade it for us. For the Lord told Adam and Eve to *“...replenish the earth...”* (Genesis 1:28 KJV). That indicates that there had been a civilization here before mankind was created. Eventually, Jesus will rule the planet earth when He returns as *“...Lord of lords and King of kings—and with Him will be His called, chosen and faithful followers”* (Revelation 17:14 NIV). At that time, He will be the “Morning Star” (Revelation 22:16).

However, that will not happen until the millennium (Revelation 20:4-6), which will not occur until the time that God originally gave to Adam runs out. Right now, we are living in the “last days” before the return of Christ (2 Timothy 3:1). And Satan is, once again, controlling this earth. He lost it the first time because *“...there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him”* (Revelation 12:7-9 NIV). God spoke about the fall of Satan and his kingdom when He said, *“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart,*

I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit” (Isaiah 14:12-15 KJV).

The term “mornings stars” is also mentioned in the Bible, meaning that it can apply to multiple angels, not just one. God used it when responding to Job and said, “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? ...On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone—while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?” (Job 38:4-7 NIV). So the term “stars” can refer to God’s angels, or to Satan’s fallen angels, called “demons” in the newer Bible translations, and “devils” in the KJV. So anyone who is called a “star” in this world (especially those who are considered idols) are operating under the authority of the devil and demons. Now you know why this world is so evil and getting worse all the time. But don’t be surprised at the attacks that are launched against anyone who tries to oppose the dark powers of this evil world. Pray for our leaders and all those who are endeavoring to “Fight the good fight of the faith...” (1 Timothy 6:12 NIV. Also, see 1 Peter 5:6-8). “...Because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short” (Revelation 12:12 NIV).

Years ago I spoke with a man who asked me if we could help his organization obtain access to youth based correctional facilities. He said that they had been sending former professional athletes into schools for the purpose of preaching the Gospel, and that the men are all Christians and that they each have ministries of their own. “We don’t get involved with professional sports in any way,” I told him. “We consider it idolatry, and want nothing to do with it” (1 John 2:15, 1 Corinthians 10:14, & Galatians 5:19-21). “But these men are **Christians!**” he stated. “They want to tell young people about Jesus Christ.” “You told me that they are former professional sports **stars,**” I countered. “Therefore, the young men who go to listen to them are going because they want to see their idols. They are not going to be thinking about Jesus Christ.” “But the men we send in want to promote the Gospel,” he replied. So I asked him, “Do they tell the young men that they have **turned** from the ways of their past and the things of this world, and now they want to live holy lives for Christ?” (See Matthew 3:2 and 1 Peter 1:15-16, 4:3-5.) “Well, they can’t preach a fire and brimstone message in the schools,” he said. “We had to promise the school board that they would not come on too strong. Otherwise, they would not allow us to send them in. But this is a wonderful opportunity for these kids to hear about Christ.” I knew that he thought that he was doing a good thing. That is because the devil is a great deceiver (Revelation 12:9) especially within the church (Matthew 24:24, Acts 20:30)! So, I replied, “In the first chapter of the book of Galatians, the Apostle Paul warns us about a **false Christ** and a **counterfeit Gospel**, and we want no part of it.”

When someone uses the things of this world in order to talk about Christ, they are not living by faith. It is therefore, not the Holy Spirit who is providing opportunities for them. It is the world! For they are bringing along the world’s idols. If the opportunity was given to them by God, they would not have to compromise on their faith. Remember what James said in James 4:4. Some Christians have a distorted view of the Christian faith. They hear so much about the love of God that they think of Christianity as a “love boat” when it should really be a battleship. For the enemies of Christ are constantly attacking the church in subtle little ways. So it is a battle of faith. Nevertheless, we do not get violent. That’s the devil’s way.

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NIV). “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing” (1 Peter 3:9 NIV). Jesus said, “But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you” (Luke 6:27-28 NIV).

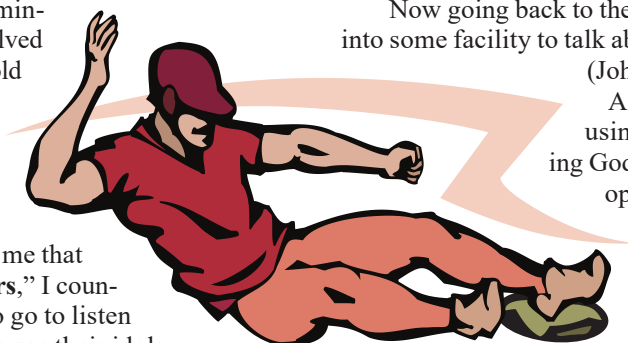
And you don’t win people for Christ by just preaching at them. “In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us” (Titus 2:7-8 NIV). You win them over by your good example. It’s the Holy Spirit’s job to convict people of sin. Your job is to live such a holy life that it glorifies God. So, “Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:3 NIV). Read your Bible often and, “...contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord” (Jude 1:3-4 NIV). If there is one thing that Jesus dislikes, it is a lukewarm Christian with a compromised, unholy faith (Revelation 3:15-19)!

Now going back to the sports stars, what good does it do to get into some facility to talk about Christ if the Holy Spirit is not there (John 6:44, John 14:16-17, Romans 8:9-11)?

And He will not be there unless you stop using the tools of this world and start trusting God to open the doors for you! If they don’t open right away, perhaps it is because you are not close enough to the Lord yet that He is able to use you (see Luke 16:10-12 and 1 Peter 5:6-7). Does this mean that a former professional athlete cannot become a Born Again (John 3:3)

minister of the Gospel? No! Billy Sunday (1862-1935) was a famous sports star who **turned** from the ways of his past when he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. He did not focus his ministry on his own past laurels, then tack on a Christian label. He **repented** of his past life in this world and chose to **live by faith** (2 Corinthians 5:7). When he quit baseball in 1891, he was at the **peak** of his career. But he gave it all up for Christ! That year Sunday had set a record of 90 bases stolen in 116 games. The Philadelphia Phillies offered him \$400 a month. Cincinnati offered him \$500 a month. Yet he took a “Secretary of Religious Department” job for the YMCA for \$83 a month. In 1894, the Pittsburgh Pirates offered him \$2,000 a month to return to baseball. Sunday took a job as an advance man for Evangelist J. Wilbur Chapman, making \$40 a week! When God calls someone to preach the Gospel, He tests them severely. Sunday passed the preliminary tests of faith and God eventually gave him a huge ministry.

The five foolish virgins were like many Christians today, who go to church regularly but leave their faith at the door when they leave the building. They have the idea that the church is the mediator between God and man. However, the Bible tells us, “...there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Timothy 2:5-6 KJV). The problem with many in the church is that they have lost their first love. Jesus said, “You have persevered and have endured hardships for My name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: You have **(Continued On Page 4)**



forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place” (Revelation 2:3-5 NIV). Has Christ been “put on the back burner,” so to speak, in your life? He has been replaced by some who “...hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful” (Mark 4:18-19 NIV). It’s no coincidence that mankind was originally started out in a beautiful garden. It is symbolic of the spiritual garden of souls that God expects to win **through** His Holy children. Notice I didn’t say **by** us. Only He can bring new souls into His Heavenly kingdom through His Holy Spirit, who will live in the hearts of all who have repented of their sin, live for Christ daily and will diligently seek Him. However, “some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm” (1 Timothy 1:6-7 NIV. Also, see Matthew 7:15).

Jimmy Swaggart used to sing a song called “[Leaving On My Mind](#)” by Rusty Goodman. Some of the lyrics say: “The old house I’m livin’ in, it’s needin’ repair, the windows and the shutters are lettin’ in the cold, cold air. I say to myself I’m gonna fix ‘em when I can get the time. But all I’ve been gettin’ lately is leavin’ on my mind. Lately all I’ve got is leavin’ on my mind. Seems that’s all I’m thinkin’ ‘bout most of the time. Soon and very soon I’ll leave my troubles so far behind. Lately I’ve got leavin’, leavin’ on my mind. So I guess I should be lookin’ for a better place to live. But I can’t seem to get excited about this world and what it can give. For I couldn’t care less if I could buy it all with a solitary dime. For what good would a world do me with leavin’ on my mind.” I’ve always liked the song. However, lately it has been reminding me of something David Wilkerson said on a tape of one of his sermons. He said he had just gotten back from a Florida where, I assume, he had visited a number of churches. “They all want to die there. They’re just waiting to go to Heaven” he said. And he was shocked at the attitude. “I want to keep on working. I want to die with my boots on, or at least shoes.” As it turned out, he died on April 27, 2011 in a traffick accident, with his shoes on. But the point is a good one. And I agree. I don’t want to get to Heaven empty-handed.

I want to bring as much spiritual fruit into Heaven as I can! Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and My Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch **in Me** that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in Me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the **fire and burned**. If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to My Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples” (John 15:1-8 NIV). Jesus wasn’t talking to the unsaved. He was speaking to His own people, His followers. Today they would claim to be Born Again

(John 3:3). And He was saying that Heaven is not a guarantee but is conditional on whether we bring in fruit to the bank of Heaven or get treated like chaff and get blown away (Isaiah 64:6) and burned. So what is the fruit? “*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other*” (Galatians 5:22-26 NIV).

In the parable of the ten virgins, five of them were sluggish and sleepy. They took their relationship with the Bridegroom for granted and had no oil in their lamps because the oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit anointing, which they didn’t have. So they could not bring any “fruit” into the wedding feast. Jesus also told another parable He said, “*Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called His servants and entrusted His property to them. To one He gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to His ability. Then He went on His journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put His money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid His master’s money*” (Matt. 25:14-

18 NIV). The hole in the ground represents this earth, or the things of this world. Did God give you a talent like singing or writing or drawing, or something similar? Everyone was given some type of talent, even if it is only driving a car or bus. You could use that talent to drive disabled people or children to church or Christian summer camp. However, do you have the opportunity to glorify Christ with your talent, but prefer to bury it in the earth? See what happens when the Master returns.

“*After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘You entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your Master’s happiness!’ The man with the two talents also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘You entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.’ His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’ Then the man who had received the one talent came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid Your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’ His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put My money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth’” (Matthew 25:19-30 NIV).*

