



NON-PROFIT



TAX-EXEMPT

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

AUTUMN 2016

FROM US TO YOU

In this issue we want to discuss the strong, emotionally painful, compulsion that tempts a person to do something others find foolish, illegal, or offensive. It may be the obsessive compulsion to steal something just for the sake of taking it. The person engaging in this behavior may have no worthwhile purpose for it. But something inside of them compels them to take the item. If they resist the urge, the harassment grows stronger and deeper until they begin to feel physically ill. It's the same thing with substance addiction. The craving slowly begins to grow stronger with more ferocity until the person gives in to it. Society has come to terms with this. But intense emotional struggles can be more difficult to understand.

It could be the desire to have sex with multiple partners. Or it may be the compulsion to use frequent vulgar terminology and/or obscenities. It may even be something society considers even more weird, such as the obsessive emotional pressure to have a healthy arm or a leg cut off. The urge grows softly at first. But as the person resists the temptation, the pressure grows in intensity until it is so overwhelming that the victim can't stand it anymore and finds a way to make it happen. We believe this is also the case in the LGBTQ community. The obsession for a man to become a woman or visa versa may go on for decades. The pressure is there. It may be hard to sleep or relax without the pounding, unrelenting urging to do something about it. The same temptation may be toward homosexual or lesbian activity. It is easy for us Christians to judge the person going through this kind of mental anguish. We know the Bible tells us it is sinful (Romans 1:24-27 & 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). But understanding the emotional torment that goes on behind such drastic action is harder for the child of God to fathom. Past generations never discussed these things. Yet today's society has drifted so far away from God, our Creator, that out of control passions are more prevalent in our society.

However, as we mature in Christ, we not only gain a better understanding of the ways of God, but also of the devil as well. The worldly folk don't have a clue how to deal with this. So their only answer is to give into it. Psychologists and psychiatrists teach that such things are normal. And that the person suffering this turmoil needs to realize that it is natural for them. Some people suffering these compulsions endure an emotional tug of war between their desire to grow closer to God and their cravings to do what the Bible warns against. The medical, educational, and entertainment communities have only added to the problem. For they insist that the general public needs to readjust their thinking to accept that these compulsions are an alternative lifestyle for some people.

So where are these cravings coming from? And why are they more prevalent in this generation than in times past? Well, first you need to understand that God, our Creator, is not some big spoilsport in the sky who doesn't want you to enjoy life. God loves you and knows about the pain you are going through. He also has the answer. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him" (John 3:16-17 NIV). Your Creator wants to deliver you out of this awful bondage Satan has you in. He wants to free you to have peace, love, and joy in your life.

In this sinful world in which we live today, it is important to know the Word of God. What led up to the strange compulsions so many people have today? The answer is that Satan's time of rule over planet Earth is quickly coming to an end. So, *"...woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time"* (Revelation 12:12 KJV). Originally God planned for the creation of mankind the way loving parents plan the birth of a much wanted baby (Proverbs 8:22-29). God the Son tells us, *"...I was the craftsman at His side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in His presence, rejoicing in His whole world and delighting in mankind"* (Proverbs 8:30-31 NIV). So great was Their love for mankind, everything was prepared in advance. The waterfalls, beaches, picturesque mountains, valleys, green grass. Everything was made perfect (see Genesis 1:31) for us.



Then, God created Adam and Eve and gave them temporary control over planet earth (Genesis 1:26-30). Most of us know about the story. And, no, it's not a fairy tale. There was a Garden of Eden. There was a tree that God told them not to touch. And there was a snake. Yes, we know snakes don't talk to people, but this snake was different. For the devil, who had once been a powerful angel named Lucifer, had sinned against God (Isaiah 14:12-14 KJV). Therefore he no longer had a body of his own. So he had entered into the body of a snake. God

had destroyed Lucifer's body (Ezekiel 28:18) after he attempted a failed mutiny in Heaven (Rev. 12:7-9). Lucifer's name was changed to Satan. All this occurred before mankind was created. It would have been wonderful if Adam had not disobeyed God. But when he did, he lost everything God had given him, including authority over this world. For Adam chose to obey the devil who tempted him. And, *"...everyone who sins is a slave to sin"* (John 8:34 NIV). Slaves control only that which their master allows them to. Now Satan was his master.

That's why we, who are born the offspring of Adam, are controlled by the devil, *"...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience"* (Ephesians 2:2 KJV). However, the good news is that Christ Jesus defeated the power Satan has over us and wants to be your new master. All you have to do is repent of your sins and ask Him to take control back of your life. For Christ has said, *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"* (John 10:10 NIV). Only Christ has the power to release the chains of sin Satan has on you and set you free to have the kind of love, peace, and joy the Lord originally intended for us. When all else has failed, God is still waiting patiently for you to come to Him. He loves you, and wants you back!

In His love, we remain, *Eric and Anne Kaestner*

Those Sinfully Bad Apples

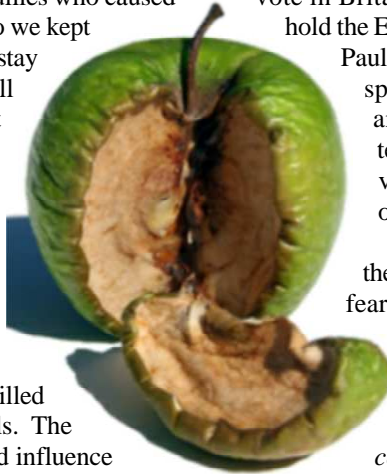
By Anne Kaestner

When I was a little girl my mother had a friend named Kay. Kay invited all of us to her home for dinner one day. While there I noticed all kinds of items which she called “souvenirs” from different places she had been. There were ash trays and towels with the names of motels on them, drinking glasses from restaurants, and various other items. My family never took such things. But they never said anything about it as my mother didn’t want to offend her. However, being a child, and a newly reborn Christian (John 1:11-14 and 3:3), I asked Kay, “Isn’t that stealing?” “No Anne,” she replied. “You pay for it. They know that people will take things so they add it to the bill.” To put it another way, they know that there are a lot of thieves around. So everyone has to pay more for products and services, even if they don’t steal anything. Television has added to the problem. My husband and I only watch old television shows. But even likable characters such as Laura Petrie of “The Dick Van Dyke Show” and Sally McMillan of “McMillan and Wife” are seen in episodes condoning the thievery of towels from hotels. Young people, especially, are very impressionable and are influenced by the things they hear and see.

This reminds me of my grade school years. The boys were always more rambunctious than the girls and they sometimes liked to act up and throw things when the teacher’s back was turned. The teacher would ask the class who did it. It was always the bullies who caused the trouble and the rest of us were afraid of them. So we kept quiet. Consequently, the whole class would have to stay after school for punishment. The teacher would tell us that everyone was being punished so that the rest of the class would be annoyed at the one who threw the item and not talk to him. Have you noticed how a few bad examples can, over time, influence others to act the same way? My grandmother had a saying, “Put one bad apple in a barrel and it will turn all the good apples bad.” In this case, the “bad apples” would cause the problem and the whole class would suffer for it.

It was also at a time when children from crime filled neighborhoods were being bussed into good schools. The idea, they told us, was that the good children would influence the troubled youth to be better behaved. That might have worked if they had not taken prayer and Bible study out of the public schools. But that had already occurred. In my fifth grade class there were 30 children. Two of them were bussed in. One was a boy who seemed very studious. He sat quietly at the back of the class and didn’t bother anyone. The other was a girl with a rather pugnacious attitude. She would talk so tough that even the boys were afraid of her. She sat behind me in class and I’d go home later that day and find bits of chewed up gum stuck on my school bag. By the time I got into junior high the schools had become more dangerous. I also heard some scary stories about fights that had broken out at the senior high school.

My family moved to the suburbs before my sophomore year. But junior high in the city was troublesome enough. I was trying to live for Christ and be a good Christian. Yet, during lunchtime I would hear girls talking about how they had stolen lipsticks from the local variety store. And they were children who lived locally. One day, when my mother came to drive me home, I saw some boys outside holding the arms of another boy while some bully punched him in the stomach. I know that, compared to today, when kids have to worry about being shot or stabbed in school, this doesn’t sound so bad. But the point is, it never used to be that way! The bad apples were spreading! As the Apostle Paul put it, “A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough” (Galatians 5:9 NIV). In scripture, yeast symbolizes sin, which grows more and more. It’s like a cancer that destroys the good!



Have you ever noticed how expensive things are in department stores? There is a huge mark up on them. They are the same kind of items that can be purchased much cheaper from catalogs. But then it’s rather difficult to steal a garment from a mail order catalog. Walk into most department stores and you will see yourself on the monitors by the door. Security costs are far worse now than they were decades ago. The problem is that as society continues to draw further away from the traditional Judo-Christian values America was founded on, the bad apple population increases. And Satan has added a new component to his recipe for the decay of society.

We are told through liberal politicians, educational establishments, and modern entertainment that we are not supposed to criticize anyone else’s religion or lifestyle. It’s “not politically correct.” This flies in the face of Peter’s bold statement about Christ, “...Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:11-12 NIV). Or Paul’s admonition to believers, “Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them” (Ephesians 5:11 NIV). How can you expose false religions and other forms of evil if you do not condemn them? Thankfully, the more moral part of society has finally had enough and is turning away from this socialist propaganda. The recent Brexit vote in Britain is a breath of fresh air compared to the stranglehold the European Union had on the nation. My English cousin,

Paula, said that it has gotten to the place where even free speech has been stifled. The EU was making the rules and one of them made it against the law for doctors, teachers, or other professionals to say anything that advocated Christianity in a public place. And criticizing other religions, especially Islamic, was strictly taboo!

I look back on the history of the United States and the Constitution that was written by Christian men who feared God and I am sad that things have gotten so bad. This reminds me of Paul’s words to the backslidden Christian church in Galatia, “You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth? That kind of persuasion does not come from the One who calls you. A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough” (Gal. 5:7-9 NIV). Was Paul afraid of offending people? No! He had been imprisoned, flogged, and condemned by the religious and political hierarchy in his day many times. Yet he was not afraid to expose the “yeast” that had infiltrated the church. That included the church Paul had started in Corinth. Since he couldn’t always be with them, he worried about false doctrines contaminating the purity of their faith (compare with Acts 20:28-31). However, the Corinthians had become offended by some of his admonition against condoning evil. Paul knew that the church was in danger of falling away from Christ (John 15:6, Hebrews 6:4-6). They had, apparently, put up with backsliders in their congregation (1 Cor. 5:1-6) who were influencing others to do the same. They mistakenly thought that, as Christians, they should not condemn anyone, but just love everyone, especially those in their church. They didn’t want to upset them (see Ezekiel 3:17-21).

Paul responded, “I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people - not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave **this world**. But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a **brother** but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat” (1 Corinthians 5:9-11 NIV). Despite their hurt feelings, he loved them enough to tell them the truth! He wrote back saying, “As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody...

will stop this boasting of mine. Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for **Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness.** Their end will be what their actions deserve” (2 Corinthians 11:10-15 NIV).

Even in those days Satan had his false prophets preaching “...a form of godliness, but denying the power [Holy Spirit] thereof...” (2 Timothy 3:5 KJV). Compare this to the Lord’s warning, “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them... Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire” (Matthew 7:15-19 NIV). The false prophets will appear to have good fruit at first. That is, until you compare their rhetoric with scripture (see 2 Peter chapter 2). Remember Eve’s reaction when she looked at the forbidden fruit. “When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it” (Genesis 3:6 NIV).

On the surface sin looks good. Eve’s fruit looked appealing and it probably smelled good. I’m sure Delilah probably smelled good to Samson as well. And her lips were sweet. The temptation was great and Samson, a man greatly blessed by God, gave into his own lust and died as a result (see Judges 16:4-30)! For, “...each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death” (James 1:14-15 NIV). Delilah was an idol to Samson. Anything that becomes more important to us than God, our Redeemer, is an idol. That can even be things that seem to be good, like liking your neighbor enough to refrain from hurting his feelings. You know that he’s believing a false religion and worshipping a false god. But you don’t want to anger him. He’s very touchy about his beliefs. So you keep quiet, due to fear. In fact, you feel tempted to condone some of his religious views so that you can get along with him better. Yet the Bible says that even “...the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Revelation 21:8 KJV). We are not to deny Christ even if threatened with death (Matthew 10:28 and Philippians 1:21)!

Yes, I know that scripture tells us that Christ would be a man of peace (Isaiah 9:6). But that peace does not come through things or people of this world (1 John 2:15-17). Jesus said, “...My kingdom is not of this world...” (John 18:36 KJV). Real peace of God only comes through Christ. It begins when you confess your sins to God (Luke 11:2-4) and ask His forgiveness. Then you commit your life to Christ, read your Bible, and become filled with God’s Holy Spirit (John 20:22, Acts 2:38, 19:1-6). You will find that, as you grow closer to Christ, “...the **peace of God**, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7 NIV).

When that occurs, your body stays on earth, but your heart is in the kingdom of God, spiritually. That’s because you can feel yourself being led by God’s Spirit. As Paul put it, “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” (Galatians 5:24-25 NIV). “Crucified” means to put to death the sinful ways of your past (see Ephesians 2:1-5). It means that your whole

personality changes. You don’t value the carnal things of your past that used to make you so enthusiastic. Your heart desires the things of God, a closer walk with Him, a better understanding of the Bible, the joyful peace you feel praying and praising Him. You’re no longer one of the bad apples. Unlike the worldly folk, you have the fruit of the Holy Spirit in you. That’s strong enough to even turn bad apples into good fruit! That’s because it won’t be you doing it. It will be the Holy Spirit working through you!

As you mature in Christ, you stop worrying about the “...cares and riches and pleasures of this life... [which] bring no fruit to perfection” (Luke 8:14 KJV). But you “...store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:20-21 NIV). You become special to God. “...You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light... Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us” (1 Peter 2:9-12 NIV).

“For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us” (2 Corinthians 4:6-7 NIV).



refers to the human body which is made “...from the dust of the ground...” (Genesis 2:7 NIV). When the storm raged on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus was so full of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:16-17) that He was fast asleep (Luke 8:23-25). After receiving the Holy Spirit Simon Peter had that kind of peace (Acts 2:3-4). Do you remember how frightened he was when Jesus was arrested? Peter denied knowing the Lord three times (Matthew 26:34-75). He hadn’t received the Holy Spirit at that time. However, after he did, Peter was no longer afraid. Even

after he was arrested, “the night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was **sleeping** between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance” (Acts 12:6 NIV). This peace is not something you get when you win a lottery ticket. It’s a peace that only the Holy Spirit can give us!

You’re going to need that peace if you truly want to live for God. Because the world we live in is still a sinful place. And it is heading in the opposite direction from the ways of God! Consequently, “...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). So, as you try to grow closer to God, you’re not going to be very popular with those who love the sinful pleasures of this world (Isaiah 59:15 and John 15:18-19). Even the church you go to may lose patience with you. They want to indulge in some carnal pleasure and you won’t go along with them. Yes, even many churches want “... to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time” (Hebrews 11:25 NIV). Your family may also turn against you, even if they deceive themselves into believing that they are good Christians. Going to church doesn’t save anyone (see Acts 7:49-51). You need a **relationship** with Christ, not a religion.

Jesus said, “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law - a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’ Anyone who loves his father or mother more than Me is not worthy” (Continued On Page 4)

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of Me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matthew 10:34-39 NIV). In other words, if you become a martyr and die for Christ you will end up in Heaven with eternal life. If you are afraid to die for Him and acquiesce to evil, you will eventually die and end up in hell and the lake of fire (which is the liquid center of the earth). That is the second death (as mentioned in Revelation 21:8). Your flesh will be decayed and decomposed but you will have a spirit body which is capable of feeling extreme pain (Luke 16:19-31).

The Bible tells us that all the idols people worship in place of Christ are controlled by demon spirits! The ancient Hebrews were the only ones in Old Testament times who worshipped and served the only true God. And even they would stray away from Him after being influenced by other cultures who worshipped their own “gods.” They even got to the place of sacrificing their own newborn babies in the fire to heathen “gods” (see Isaiah 57:5-13). This infuriated the Almighty, especially after all that He had done to deliver them from their enemies, who were far greater than them (Deuteronomy 20:1-4). You see, when Satan realizes that one technique will not work, he switches to another.

The enemy couldn't defeat the Jews because God was helping them. So, since Satan couldn't beat them, he decided to join them.

Consequently, his people made friends with the Hebrews and lured them into pagan practices through peaceful coexistence, sinful pleasures, and the promise of peace. God was livid! He wrote through the prophet, “*Jeshurun [Israel] grew fat and kicked; filled with food, he became heavy and sleek. He abandoned the God who made him and rejected the Rock his Savior. They made Him jealous with their foreign gods and angered Him with their detestable idols*” (Deuteronomy 32:15-16 NIV). The Bible says, “*The LORD saw this and rejected them because He was angered by His sons and daughters.*”

‘I will hide My face from them,’ He said, ‘and see what their end will be; for they are a perverse generation, children who are unfaithful. They made Me jealous by what is no god and angered Me with their worthless idols... For a fire has been kindled by My wrath, one that burns to the realm of death below. It will devour the earth and its harvests and set afire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap calamities upon them and spend My arrows against them. I will send wasting famine against them, consuming pestilence and deadly plague; I will send against them the fangs of wild beasts, the venom of vipers that glide in the dust. In the street the sword will make them childless; in their homes terror will reign. Young men and young women will perish, infants and gray-haired men’” (Deuteronomy 32:19-25 NIV). Does this remind you of some of the miseries we face today? New diseases, wild animal attacks, protests, riots, pestilence, and that which is mentioned in Matthew 24:6-7. Doesn't this sound like modern day news broadcasts?

Now let's get back to bad fruit. How does an apple turn bad? One way occurs when it is separated from its Vine too long. 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*” (John 15:1-2 NIV). If you are reborn in Christ through repentance and submission to His will, you are in the Vine. Therefore, anything that

God tells you to do will work out eventually because He will make it happen. One problem with churches these days is that the leadership seeks to please God through what they perceive to be good works. They try to grow their own fruit for the Lord. Cain tried that and it was not accepted by God because he did not obey what God told him to do. He should have traded some of his fruit for a lamb to sacrifice, as the Lord instructed him to do. For only a blood sacrifice will do! You can't fool God with the juice of beets. He knows the difference, and it will not be acceptable.

The animal blood was symbolic of the blood of Christ. So it was a faith offering. It was symbolic of trusting God to provide you with the price of your salvation. It is just as Abraham said to Isaac, “*...God Himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son...*” (Genesis 22:8 NIV). Isaac was a human metaphor for Christ. He was the son the father loved and had spent a hundred years waiting for. It would be a heart wrenching experience for the father to kill his own son and spill his blood. Isaac carried the fire wood on his back as Christ carried the cross on His. Abraham was very old by then and Isaac was young and healthy. If Isaac had put up a fight Abraham would not have been able to control him. But, as with Christ, Isaac loved his father and submitted to his will, even to the place of giving his own life. Abraham was just about to plunge the knife into his beloved son when God grabbed his hand. He said, “*...Abraham! Abraham!... Do not lay a hand on the boy... Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from Me your son, your only son*” (Genesis 22:11-12 NIV).

It was not Abraham, but God who would be sacrificing “*...His only begotten Son...*” (John 3:16 KJV).

However, unless you remain in the Vine of Christ, you will not bear good fruit for God. Jesus said, “*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*” (John 15:5-6 NIV). The world we live in today is very dangerous. Politics has polarized

formally Christian nations and people have become divided. There are groups like the radical Islamic terrorists who actually kill people in the name of their god. But their god is not God the Creator, the God of true Christians. Their fruit is very bad. You see, Satan has been arousing the anger of as many people as he can influence to do evil. In fact, any group who is filled with such hatred that they maim and kill innocent people is being controlled by the devil and his demon helpers. “*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against... spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms*” (Ephesians 6:12 NIV).

So, what is bad fruit, and good? “*...The sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want... The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 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*” (Galatians 5:17-25 NIV).

