



NON-PROFIT



TAX-EXEMPT

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

March 2020

FROM US TO YOU

One of the problems for the church these days, is distinguishing the difference between what society considers evil and what God considers evil. In this month’s main article, we want to focus on the difference between the fruit of the Holy Spirit and the sins of the normal human nature. Because God loves you so much that He “...gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16 KJV). Now you may view yourself as a fairly good person (Mark 10:18). So, did the Pharisee in the analogy of Jesus. He said, “two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Luke 18:10-14 NIV).

You see God’s standards are so much higher than most people think they are that **on our own** we can never be holy enough to get into Heaven. Even most Christians don’t take this seriously enough. Because unless your life is pure enough before the Lord, and your sins are paid for, you will not get to Heaven. Sadly, the only other option is Hell. That’s why Jesus said that we must “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a **few** find it” (Matthew 7:13-14 NIV). Don’t let anyone deceive you. Jesus made it clear that most people will not get to Heaven! So, if you love the Lord, don’t take your faith lightly. Because, “if it is **hard** for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?” (1 Peter 4:18 NIV).

And just as it was in the days of Jesus (Matthew 23:15), many in church leadership will not make it to Heaven! Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoers!’” (Matt. 7:21-23 NIV). Unfortunately, most churches have become so corrupted by this world that they are giving people a false sense of security. Even Paul, the apostle, knew that God’s standards are so high that he worried that he could even lose his own salvation.

Comparing the walk of faith (2 Corinthians 5:7) to the Olympics in Greece, he said, “Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize” (1 Corinthians 9:24-27 NIV). We are currently living in very dangerous times (2 Timothy 3:1), the last days before the return of Christ. Consequently, the devil knows that he doesn’t have much time left to rule this world system. “Therefore... woe to the earth and the sea, 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).

This world system has its own set of values, described as what is “politically correct.” Most are diametrically opposed to the Word of God! The things that are good to God are bad to the devil. And what’s good to the devil is bad to God. “...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. Also, see 1 John 2:15-17). So just because society promotes a certain way of thinking and judging right from wrong, doesn’t mean it’s God’s way. As Paul said to Timothy, a young evangelist, “Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths” (2 Timothy 4:2-4 NIV). That is exactly what is happening these days!

Seeing how the church in Corinth, Greece, was drifting away from the teachings of Jesus and the apostles, Paul, deeply worried about them, wrote saying, “I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to Him. But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:2-3 NIV. Also, see Galatians 1:6-8). Unlike the many “wolves in sheep’s clothing” (Matthew 7:15) and “hirelings” (John 10:12-13), we are obviously not trying to flatter you (1 Thessalonians 2:5). We are simply loving Christ enough to tell you the truth. And we trust God to bring in the funding we need. The devil will tell you that living for Christ is boring and doing so, you won’t have any fun. However, the truth is that nothing this world has to offer can compare with the joy of loving Christ and receiving the inner “...peace of God, which transcends all understanding...” (Philippians 4:7 NIV). For, “the Lord is... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9 KJV).

In the love of Christ, *Eric and Anne Kaestner*

The Holy Fire of God

By Anne Kaestner

The Bible tells us about a man named Simon. *“Now for some time ...Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, ‘This man is the divine power known as the Great Power.’ They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic (Acts 8:9-11 NIV). Simon was obviously a wealthy and prestigious man. People like to be entertained and willing to spend a lot of money on it. And since the Bible tells us that Simon used sorcery to perform his magic, he was also working under the power of the devil (2 Chronicles 33:6). So, he may have been on a par with Jannes and Jambres, the magicians who opposed Moses (2 Timothy 3:8). Then one day something happened that began to change all that. An anointed servant of God came to town. His name was Philip. But there was something very different about him.*

Suddenly people began to lose interest in Simon. Because Philip’s power was greater than his. *“But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them*

that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 8:12-16 NIV). There is a difference between accepting Christ as your Lord and Savior and being baptized in the Holy Spirit. God’s power is so much greater than anything mankind can have on his own, or anything the devil could give you. “When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money and said, ‘Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.’ Peter answered: ‘May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money!’” (Acts 8:18-20 NIV). There have always been those who try to profit from the Gospel. Even today there are those who sell books or audio’s supposedly to teach you how to have spiritual gifts. They are phonies. Only God can give you that which comes from God. And He will only do so when you love and serve Him.

It all begins with being Born Again. Most people seem to assume that unless they are a serial killer or some evil dictator, they will probably get to Heaven. They compare themselves to other people and don’t feel so bad by comparison. They think that if they do a few good works, it will balance out the sin in their life and God will forgive them. The Catholic church has encouraged that way of thinking with its erroneous doctrine about Purgatory. The teaching was started by Popes Pascal I (817-24) and John VIII (872-82) as a way of raising money for the church.* It was one of the prime reasons for the Protestant Reformation. Back in the Dark Ages, the general population was basically uneducated. Catholic theologians were the only ones who were taught to read the Bible for themselves. Consequently, they noticed the difference between what the Bible actually says and their church’s teaching of it. Thus, they protested against the false doctrine. That’s where the name “Protestant” comes from. As a result, thousands of them were burned alive or tortured to death in some other way.* The truth is that your good works have nothing to do with

your salvation! If you’re found righteous enough to get to Heaven *“...it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV. Also, see Romans 3:22-24).*

Jesus told Nicodemus, *“...I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is **born again**” (John 3:3 NIV). It doesn’t mean physically born again. It means spiritually! It means that you forget your pride and humbly admit you’re a sinner, and ask God’s forgiveness. And you ask Him to come into your heart and change your life, through the cleansing power of the blood of Christ (1 Timothy 2:5-6). That’s the baptism that John the Baptist taught. However, John used a metaphor comparing people to trees. He told the false religious leaders in his day, *“The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce **good fruit** will be cut down and thrown into the **fire**. I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit and with fire**. His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will clear His threshing floor, gathering His wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable **fire**” (Matthew 3:10-12 NIV).**

John was talking about spiritual fruit. His remark was similar to the words of Jesus who 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). Many Christians don’t understand what spiritual fruit is. “...The **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control... 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). Now compare this with the sinful nature we are all born with. “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” (Galatians 5:19-21 NIV).

God does give gifts to those who love and serve Him and are Born Again. It was the gifts of God in Philip that amazed people, as they were so much greater than anything Simon could do. I went into great detail about each gift in my “Gifts From God” article in our [“Early Winter 2017-18”](#) issue. So now I’d like to focus on the gift that we give to God when we truly love and serve Him. For the Lord is more interested in what **fruit** we can give Him! People don’t realize how much God has to offer in both fruit and gifts through His Holy Spirit. Even Christians are sometimes so drawn to the things of the earth that they cannot even fathom that which comes from Heaven. Yet God is not running this world at the present time. And even after people accept Christ’s salvation, they often backslide into sin.

As Jesus said in His parable of the Sower, *“...A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good*



soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown” (Matthew 13:3-8 NIV). Many distractions will come along and entice people away from the word of God to earthly things. The parable means “the one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful” (Matthew 13:22 NIV).

That’s why John the Apostle warned 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). The temptations you feel don’t come from God (James 1:13). They come from the current ruler of this world, Satan, the devil. He even tempted Jesus! “...The devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I will give You,’ he said, ‘if You will bow down and worship me.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Away from Me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only’” (Matthew 4:8-10 NIV).

When God created mankind, He gave control of this entire world system to Adam. Adam was never supposed to die. He was supposed to rule over this earth until God reclaimed it many millenniums later. Yet we all know the story. Satan was there, but he no longer had a solid body of his own. God had destroyed it as part of his punishment when he rebelled away from the Lord. But I’ll get to that later. All he had was a spiritual body. So, he entered into the body of a snake so that he could tempt Eve. God had given control over this world system to Adam. So, when Satan wanted to tempt Adam, he used Eve to do it. Adam was so powerful, because of all that God had given him, that Satan would not go to Adam directly. He used Eve to entice him into sin. Now Eve didn’t know what would happen when she sinned against God. She only knew that God had told her and Adam not to do it, or they would die. “...Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner” (1 Timothy 2:14 NIV). Satan knew that Adam loved the gift God had given him, his wife, Eve, more than he loved God. And Adam knew that Eve’s sin would separate him from her. So, foolishly, whatever happened to Eve, he wanted to be with her.

Sin separates us from God. Since “...when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?” (Romans 6:16 NIV). Therefore, since God’s enemy, the devil, succeeded in tempting Adam in the Garden of Eden, Adam obeyed him, thus becoming a slave to sin. And a slave is totally subject to his master. The only possessions a slave has is that which is given to him by his master. And that only happens when the master is happy with the slave, and the slave serves him well. Therefore, all that God gave to Adam, to rule over this entire world system, now fell under the control of God’s enemy, the devil. He was originally a holy angel named Lucifer. However, his pride and all that God had given him made him so powerful that after a while he began to despise the Lord. Therefore, he led a mutiny into Heaven, but was unsuccessful (Revelation 12:7-9).

God later said of him, “...You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they

were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you” (Ezekiel 28:12-15 NIV). It was Lucifer’s pride that led to his sin. God said of him, “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” (Isaiah 14:12-14 KJV).

Satan now became the father of everyone born through the seed of Adam. Therefore, when we are born as babies we inherit Adam’s sin and all the devil’s personality traits that go with it. That’s why we need to be Born Again. Therefore, our sin has to be paid for to reconcile us to God the Father. The problem is we humans cannot pay for our own sin. As slaves to sin, we own nothing of value that could pay the high cost of sin, for sin is like an uncontrolled cancer, that continues to increase. What’s more, a slave goes where his master goes. And since his mutiny, “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 12:9 NIV). God has a habit of changing people’s names when they change their spiritual position. Abram became Abraham (Genesis 17:5). Saul became Paul (Acts 13:9). Simon’s name became Peter (Mark 3:16). And God obviously changed Lucifer’s name to Satan and his position as the devil. The angels who were thrown out of Heaven with him, became demons. But first, there was a trial in Heaven, where God incinerated their solid bodies. God said, “By your many sins... you have desecrated your sanctuaries [bodies]. So I made a fire come out from you, and it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching” (Ezekiel 28:18 NIV).

Even today, these bodiless spirits can enter into the bodies of humans (Matthew 12:43-45, 8:16) and animals (Matthew 8:28-32). It’s called demonic possession. The only way we humans can be protected from this is to have the baptism in the Holy Spirit inside of us. “For our ‘God is a consuming fire’” (Hebrews 12:29 NIV). What did God do to keep Adam and Eve out of His Garden of Eden? “After He drove the man out, He placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life” (Genesis 3:24 NIV). Holy fire is our protection from God. Remember what John the Baptist said about Christ. “He will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit and with fire**” (Matthew 3:11 NIV). But before you can receive that protection and the joy, peace, and wisdom that goes with it, you must first become reborn as a child of God. And that means that you need to repent of your sins to God, and accept salvation through Christ. “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all men...” (1 Timothy 2:5-6 NIV. Also, see John 14:6).

You see, “...God said, ‘Let Us make man in our image, in **Our likeness...**’” (Genesis 1:26 NIV). God’s Son, Jesus Christ, is the second person of the Holy Trinity. Way back in eternity, long before mankind was even considered, God took a part of His own deity and formed a Son from Himself. Later that Son came to earth in human flesh, as Jesus Christ. Through His shed blood on Calvary, we are able to be eligible to become God’s adopted children (John 1:12-13). Because we also become the Bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2) when we repent of our sins and change direction, through the help of the Holy Spirit. “He is the image **(Continued On Page 4)**



of the invisible God, the **firstborn** over all creation” (Colossians 1:15 NIV).

Christ, speaking through the prophet Solomon, said, “*The LORD brought Me forth as the **first of His works**, before His deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water; before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, before He made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world. I was there when He set the heavens in place, when He marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, when He established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, when He gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep His command, and when He marked out the foundations of the earth. Then 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 8:22-31 NIV).

The best way to understand the Holy Trinity is to realize that the term “God” does not refer to just one person, but a Holy Family unit of three separate individuals. God the Father is the head of the family and the most powerful. He is also the original. Jesus Christ, is “...the only begotten of the Father...” (John 1:14 KJV). “For there are **three** that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one” (1 John 5:7 KJV). And we know that Jesus Christ is the Word of God (John 1:1-14). The Lord created mankind because He wanted children who would love Him. However, God did not want to create a race of androids who have no choice but to serve Him. So, He gave us a choice. We could love and serve Him, and enjoy the pleasures that come with doing so. Or we could rebel against Him and receive a terminal disease called sin. Since Satan’s rebellion, our Lord had already lost one third of His angels (Revelation 12:4). [The Bible often refers to angels as stars as in Job 38:7.]



Now let’s get back to Holy Spirit Baptism, which John was referring to in Matthew 3:10-12. Jesus told His disciples, “...the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26 NIV). “And with that **He breathed on them** and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” (John 20:22 NIV). Then, after Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven, He kept His promise to them. “When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be **tongues of fire** that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Acts 2:1-4 NIV). Remember that “...our ‘God is a **consuming fire**’” (Hebrews 12:29 NIV).

Fire destroys that which is flammable. Yet it refines that which can withstand the heat. The three Hebrew men in the book of Daniel were found worthy enough to escape death because they were pure enough to withstand the heat of the furnace. As a result, none of the men were hurt. In fact, they were ecstatic! However, the fire killed the guards who put them into the furnace (Daniel 3:19-27). Although it is a true story, it is also a metaphor for our relationship with God. In the same book Daniel tells us that he saw God the Father in a vision during his prayers. Therefore, he must have been “in the spirit” at the time. It must have been similar to the way the Apostle John

saw what he spoke about in his book (Revelation 1:9-10). It was the anointing of the Holy Spirit who made it possible. And Daniel described God the Father this way. “As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of His head was white like wool. His throne was **flaming with fire**, and its wheels were all **ablaze**” (Daniel 7:9 NIV). Moses also saw the **fire** of God when the Lord appeared to him in a bush (Exodus 3:2-2).

Fire purifies that which can withstand the flame. And fire destroys that which cannot withstand the heat. For God is holy. Fire also has the unique power to increase itself without diminishing the original flame. Therefore, the Lord can create or destroy whatever He chooses to do so. It’s through His holy fire that God gave mankind life and the ability procreate after itself. The invisible fire that God put within Adam made him the flame that would start life in every descendant who would ever be born through his blood. For life is in the blood (Genesis 9:4). God **breathed the eternal fire** of life into Adam’s body that was supposed to continue indefinitely. The fire that God breathed into Adam made us eternal. But the disease of sin made us slaves to Satan, who will burn forever in Hell and the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:10), along with his children (Revelation 20:15, 21:8), all who were born through Adam’s blood. That’s why Jesus came to save us.

Only the blood of Christ can save us from the slavery of sin and

restore us to the position God wanted us to have as His children. The first Adam brought death upon us. The last Adam, Jesus Christ, brought life (see 1 Corinthians 15:45). And through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, we can have power from God. The **fire** of the Holy Spirit that Jesus breathed into those who receive His baptism can continually burn up the sin within us. Because it enables us to remain in Christ (John 15:5-6) and restore us to God. Instead of the sinful traits of the devil, we can now have the love, joy, and wisdom that comes from Christ. But once you accept the Lord’s Baptism, you will be the devil’s enemy. “For 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...” (Galatians 5:17 NIV). Jesus is the light of this world (John 8:12). Through His Holy light, we have the illumination to see the sin in our own hearts. Those without the Spirit have no light to see the evil within them. We who love and serve Christ reflect His holy light. However, “the man without the [Holy] Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14 NIV). Light exposes darkness and destroys it. Satan doesn’t want to be exposed. That’s why Jesus said those who don’t have His Spirit will resent those who do (John 15:18-21).

Since the time of the early church there have always been those who have tried to profit from the Gospel (1 Timothy 6:10). They are false prophets, because anyone who truly loves and serves Jesus Christ is led by His Holy Spirit. Therefore, they will not attempt to profit from that which Christ purchased in His own blood (Acts 8:22-23, 1 Peter 1:18-19)! That means you need more than lip service (Mark 7:6-8). You need a commitment to Christ, or you won’t receive the gifts, and you sure won’t have the fruit (Galatians 5:22-24). For “...Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come” (Revelation 4:8 NIV).