



NON-PROFIT



TAX-EXEMPT

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

October 2021

## FROM US TO YOU

Here we are in October already and the holiday season is just around the corner. What a year this has been! Since the end of January this country has endured one crisis after another; the COVID-19 Delta variant, the surge at the border, U.S. weapons and Americans left behind in Afghanistan, the Woke agenda invading our schools, and much more. This is not the same America we had in 1950's. America has changed. The first change began after the assassination of President Kennedy on November 22, 1963. What followed was a buildup of the Vietnam War, Woodstock and talk of a counter culture revolution, long lines at the gas station, Watergate, etc. Life got harder, but we as a society began to adjust. It seemed that many in our culture started to blame God for our troubles and gave up on the old ways that built America and made her the strongest, mightiest country in the World at that time.

Now we, as a nation, have changed again. Too many people have turned their backs on God, the one who made America strong and able, in the past, to defeat our enemies up until the Vietnam War. America has always been proud of its strength. However, it has come though God's grace alone. "... 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty" (Zechariah 4:6 NIV). We didn't get strong because of our weapons or military. "No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear Him, on those whose hope is in His unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine" (Psalms 33:16-19 NIV). Now that is over and America is beginning a decline.

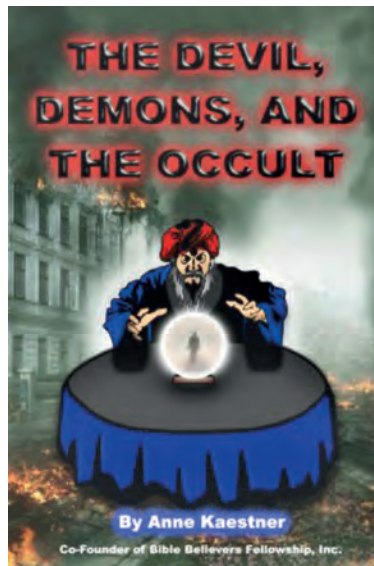
Our Lord is the one who made America strong and prosperous. God helps those who love and serve Him, not with lip service alone (Mark 7:6-7) but in sincerity and truth. Even most Christians have become weak and have one foot in the world. Jesus said, of His latter-day backslidden church, "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of My mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent" (Revelation 3:15-19 NIV).

This is the month of the devil's favorite holiday, Halloween. Things have gotten so bad that some churches are celebrating it these days, despite its wicked history, even involving human sacrifice. Anne wrote about it in her "[The Devil, Demons, and the Occult](#)"

ebook. Why would anyone want to celebrate the devil's favorite day when he is the one who causes all of the misery in our lives? Then he persuades people into believing that it is God causing all their problems. But Jesus said that Satan, "...was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44 NIV). When people believe Satan's lies he insulates them from Christ, God's Son (John 14:6), the one who is most equipped to help them. Even if your troubles seem impossible to fix, God specializes in the impossible (Matthew 19:26, Philipians 4:6-7)! Scripture tells us who the real culprits are. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 6:12 NIV).

That refers to demon spirits.

So, you may be wondering, why doesn't God take away all your troubles. Well, for one thing, He is more concerned about your salvation than anything carnal in this world. For this world and the problems within it will not last. "The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever" (1 John 2:17 NIV). For your human body will eventually decay and turn back into the dust that it came from (Genesis 2:7) but your "...spirit returns to God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7 NIV). And that's forever. Jesus said, "I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear Him" (Luke 12:4-5 NIV). Jesus warned His backslidden latter-day church, "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in



the fire..." (Revelation 3:18 NIV). That's why so many of you are going through hard times right now. God is refining the church. Peter told the suffering church in his day, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and even though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls" (1 Peter 1:3-9 NIV).

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

# Now That You Are A Christian

By Anne Kaestner

Are you a Born-Again Christian in Jesus Christ? Do you love Jesus with all your heart, soul, and might (Matthew 22:37)? That may seem like a strange way to start an article but I have been concerned for a long time about growth in the body of Christ. Jesus said that only, "...he that shall endure **unto the end**, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13 KJV). Pastors and evangelists all over the country are anxious to lead people to salvation and to fill up congregations with rows of eager believers. But I wonder if, all too often, the desire to bring new souls into the church so outweighs the burden to spiritually feed the sheep (Isaiah 53:6) that new believers aren't put at a disadvantage. Jesus told Simon Peter three times that the best way for him to show his love for the Lord was to feed His sheep (John 21:15-17). I cannot emphasize enough how vital Christian growth really is, and how little of it is evident these days. The writer of Hebrews also had a concern in this matter (Hebrews 5:11 thru 6:1). Too many churches spend all their time giving "a nice salvation message" over and over again. Yes, it is important for the unsaved to hear about being Born Again (John 3:3), but you can't stay in the kindergarten forever!

Moreover, the best way of reaching people for Christ is through demonstrating His love and peace through our lifestyles and actions, not through words alone (James 2:14-20). Instead, these days, Christians have been following the ways of the world. The increase in media, especially television, has made it easier to backslide. "*The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways...*" (Proverbs 14:14 KJV). Not only are Christians copying the world, but the world is getting worse all the time! Just compare the type of television shows people watched in the 1950's with what is on the screen today! It was not unusual for television families to go to church in those days. The story plots taught that crime doesn't pay. That began to change with movies like the 1967 film "Bonnie and Clyde" which glamorized it. And there was often a moral code of ethics years ago as well, especially in the old Westerns. However, it's not just the media that has decayed so much over the years, schools, medical establishments, and even many churches are just as bad. Some churches even condone homosexuality and ordain those involved in this sin! "*Do you not know that the wicked will **not inherit** the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God*" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 NIV).

As Christians, we are supposed to be light in the midst of darkness, peace in a violent, sinful world. But many Christians, especially those of you in your teens through twenties, don't even know the difference between right and wrong! These evil times were prophesied by Paul long ago (2 Timothy 3:1-5), and unless you separate yourself from them, you will not be able to maintain the proper relationship with God! When a person repents of his sin and comes to Jesus for spiritual cleansing, he is turning his back on his past! Repentance means that you no longer continue to live as you did before. You change directions! You leave the wide and crooked path that leads to eternal damnation, and move over to the straight and narrow path to life instead (Matt. 7:13-14). Therefore, your lifestyle must change! "*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, faction 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 5:19-25 NIV).

When you have the Holy spirit in you, you are no longer rude to people for no reason. You have good manners. You respect those who have authority over you. You obey the law as long as it does not conflict with the Word of God (Romans 13:1-5)! You are careful about the language you use. You don't use profanity or blasphemy when you talk to people! I've been appalled at the many Christians who say "Oh my God!" in exclamation to something (Exodus 20:7). That term should only be used in prayer! You need to dress in a manner that will bring glory to God. Ladies, you don't dress like a bimbo anymore with low cleavage and bikinis! And you men learn proper grooming. You dress neatly and appropriately for the situation. You don't go to church looking like a bum! You respect God, not just in words, but in lifestyle as well. The biggest change of all is that you humble yourself before God and people! This is the hardest thing for the Christian to do, but unless it is done, Christ will not be able to take up residence in your life! He won't force Himself on you. Unless you're willing to move out of the way, even when it's difficult, and let Jesus have total control, God will never be able to grow good fruit in you! (See Matt. 3:10, 7:17-20, 21:19.)

The human heart has always sought to be deified, to become in effect, a "little god." It stems from the original sin, pride! People, there is no greater sin than pride! It was the sin that caused Lucifer to rebel against God and become a fallen angel known as Satan (Isaiah 14:12-15

and Ezekiel 28:13-17). Pride is what made the religious leaders so angry at Jesus. For He exposed their sin, and there's nothing Satan hates more than to be exposed! Pride is also the reason why Eve sinned against God in the Garden of Eden. She knew that God had forbidden her and her husband to touch the tree that was in the center of the Garden, and certainly never to eat its fruit. Yet, Satan came along with his lies and knew exactly how to trap her. He started by telling her not to trust God. Secondly, he appealed to her pride when he said, "...God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be **as gods**, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5 KJV). Human beings have wanted to be little gods ever since! That's why the doctrine of "**self-esteem**" is so dangerous!

Christians, listen to me. God doesn't want us to be **self-centered**. He wants us to be **Christ-centered**! We don't pick and choose what we will do for the Lord. We fall at His feet spiritually, and love Him enough to deny ourselves. "*Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone would come after Me, he must **deny himself** and take up his cross and follow Me'*" (Matthew 16:24 NIV). Self-esteem doesn't teach self-denial. It teaches self-love! If Jesus had put Himself first, He never would have died for us on Calvary. Jesus never had self-esteem. He was self-sacrificing (Matthew 10:24-25, 20:25-28). Even when the Cross was just hours away, He prayed, "*Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet **not My will**, but Yours be done*" (Luke 22:42 NIV). We get many letters from prison inmates who want to go out and save the world for Jesus. When we read



them, we know that the person has a long way to go in their relationship with the Lord. For it's not what we do **for** God, it's what He does **through** us that matters! *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do"* (Ephesians 2:10 NIV).

Now, I think that it's important that we define our terms because people can get confused. What is self-esteem? Some children were once asked the question and one little girl spoke for the group and said, "Self-esteem is when someone tells you that you are ugly but you really know that you're not." But that's not what I'm talking about. Neither am I advocating that you live in a state of perpetual guilt and fear. *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"* (2 Timothy 1:7 KJV). Those of us who are truly putting Jesus first don't dwell on guilt from the past. It is Satan who tries to get us to look down at the sin and depravity all around us. We know that it's there, but we don't need to concentrate on it. This reminds me of a statement made by a driving teacher I had in high school. He told us that when we drive a car we must not stare at objects on the side of the road, because if we do that, we will tend to drive into them! You get the "big picture." You keep your eyes straight ahead of you, and become aware of what is around you without smacking into it. Remember how Simon Peter could walk on water when he kept his eyes on Jesus, but as soon as he began to look down at how deep the water was, it intimidated him. His faith departed, and he began to sink into it. *"We live by faith, not by sight"* (2 Corinthians 5:7 NIV).

It's not so much the teaching of self-respect that is the problem. It's the fact that those promoting self-esteem also teach self-reliance. As Christians we are not supposed to rely on ourselves, but Christ! Paul said, *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"* (Philippians 4:13 KJV). John the Baptist said, *"He must increase, but I must decrease"* (John 3:30 KJV). Self-esteem also promotes arrogance and selfish behavior, quite the opposite from the humility Jesus taught us (John 13:4-16, Luke 14:8-11).

So, what's a newly reborn Christian to do? For starters he is to keep away from sin. *"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God"* (Luke 9:62 KJV). You don't return to your past! You don't hang around with the same crowd anymore. They are still living in darkness and, if you are saved, you are light (see Matthew 5:14)! *"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?"* (2 Corinthians 6:14 NIV). Satan will try to deceive you by telling you that you should go back to them and bring them to salvation. Witnessing to people for Jesus is one thing, but socializing with them is something else entirely! You don't get drunk in order to save the alcoholic! Moreover, returning to your past is one of the best ways of backsliding, because you are taking your eyes off of Jesus.

Satan doesn't always use bad things to trap people. He may use your church, or your loved ones, or your friends. Your desire may be a legitimate one. You may want salvation for a loved one. But Satan can use that desire against you, until you focus so much on "why doesn't God save my wife?" that you end up losing your own relationship with Him! Jesus said, *"Do not judge, or you too will be judged"* (Matthew 7:1 NIV). Many sinful religious leaders have given an erroneous meaning to that scripture, and have taught their congregations that we are not to judge the actions of other people as being right or wrong. But in reality, that is not what Jesus meant. In the very same chapter, the Lord stated plainly, *"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they*

*are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits..."* (Matthew 7:15-16 KJV). God wants you to judge the difference between right and wrong. It's hypocritical judging that Jesus is talking about! The Lord expounded on this in His parable mentioned in Matthew 18:23-35. Pray for the person, show them Christian love, and *"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good"* (Romans 12:21 KJV).

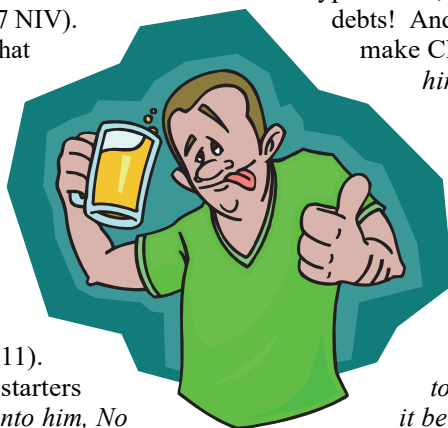
Now while we're on the subject, I'd like to make something very clear. Just because God has forgiven you of your sins and you have been Born Again, does not mean that your debt to society has been paid. They are two totally separate things! Jesus said, *"...Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's"* (Matthew 22:21 NIV). For example, let's suppose for a moment, that prior to becoming Born Again, I took out a loan from the bank for \$5,000. God has forgiven me of my sins and I am now living for Him, but does that mean that I don't need to pay back the \$5,000 that I borrowed? Of course, I need to repay it! We are expected to be the "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) when we love and serve Jesus Christ, "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). We are expected to live our lives above reproach, to bring glory to Jesus Christ, not shame! What is that bank going to think if I go to them and tell them that I've been Born Again since taking out the loan and therefore I don't need to pay them? They're going to get angry. They're going to sue me, and they're going to think that being Born Again is a hypocritical, phony excuse to get away with not paying our debts! And nothing is going to make Satan happier than to make Christ look bad! *"Give everyone what you owe*

*him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another; for He who loves His fellowman has fulfilled the law"* (Romans 13:7-8 NIV).

Yes, it is difficult, even for a Christian, to totally humble himself before God, but when it is done right, you will respect those who have authority over you. *"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well"* (1 Peter 2:13-14 KJV). Peter is saying that we need to respect the authority of those who have a position over us. When a police officer tells you to stop, you stop! When your teacher rebukes you for not doing your homework, you don't mouth off at her, you apologize, and the next night you see that it gets done. When the judge tells you that you've ruined someone's life, you don't start cursing him. You hang your head in shame and ask God and the people involved to forgive you! And you turn from your past! That's what repentance means. Jesus didn't save us so that we can live **in** sin. He saved us **from** sin! Most of you in prison have a real problem with this. But the Bible tells us plainly, *"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves"* (Romans 13:1-2 NIV).

Likewise, if you don't treat your Christian parents with courtesy and respect, don't claim to be living for Jesus! I'm not talking about just respecting Christians. The police officer may be an Agnostic, the teacher may be Jewish, and the judge may be Moslem. But that should not change your attitude toward them. They may not be Christians, but if you claim to be, you had better act like one, or you may lose your salvation! If you're

*(Continued On Page 4)*



## Now That You Are A Christian (Continued From Page 3)

a prison inmate, I realize that you may feel that society has abused you, the judge and the police officer were unfair, and your parents may come home drunk every night. But when you stand before God someday (Daniel 7:9-10, Rev. 5:11-14, 20:11-15), He's not going to accept that as an excuse! If they have authority over you, you treat them with courtesy and respect, even if they don't deserve it! (See 1 Peter 2:18-24.) Because that is what gets people's attention and draws them to salvation! It's not what you preach. It's not what you teach. It's your life that's totally dedicated to Jesus Christ in humility, not just to God, but to others, that convicts the unsaved of sin! *"For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men"* (1 Peter 2:15 NIV). The world doesn't know Christ, and the only way that they have of observing Christianity in action is to look at the Christian (see Hebrews 12:1).

Therefore, the job of a Christian is to make Christ proud of us. Unfortunately, however, these days, too many Christians have brought reproach on the Word of God instead. There have been a number of times when my husband and I were driving to church on Sunday when some crazy driver came speeding up from behind us, cutting people off, and creating a real hazard on the road. As we turned the corner, we noticed the driver pulling into the church parking lot. It was a member of the congregation! People, what do you think the world sees when Christians behave in such a self-centered, dangerous manner? When you're truly in the will of God, you don't endanger the lives of other people foolishly. You show respect for the rights of others and you act in a considerate manner at all times. You do not clutter your life with worldly, trivial pursuits. You don't buy lottery tickets (Col. 3:5). You do not smoke anything. And if you are a new believer and you are having trouble breaking the habit, pray about the matter, because you can't continue to smoke and serve Jesus. In the meantime, do not inflict your smoke on other people.

All of us were born with a Christ-size hole in our hearts, and only He can fill it. If we put ourselves and our own desires first, there won't be any room for the Lord. When He really takes first place in our lives worldly things don't seem to matter much anymore, because we are filled to overflowing with His love, joy, and peace (see Psalm 23:5, Matthew 25:21-23, and Nehemiah 8:10)! However, when He's not there, we try to fill the emptiness with worldly pleasures and treasures and they come between God and us (Matthew 6:19-21). Another thing that is important to the Christian is to always be gracious. When you receive something nice for free, don't complain that it's not exactly the way you want it. If someone sees you with cold hands and buys you a warm pair of gloves, don't gripe that the gloves are brown instead of blue! New Christians especially need to learn this. I used to be guilty of it too.

When I was twenty years old I thought for a while that I'd like to be a flight attendant. Braniff Airlines sent me a pass to fly out to Dallas for an interview at the hostess college. I'd flown out a few weeks earlier for an interview at the personnel office and the airline had put me in first class round trip. On my second trip there, the same thing happened. So, I began to take first class for granted. While I was at the boarding counter in Dallas, I asked the clerk to put me in first class again. But he put me in my place right away! He told me that I wasn't paying for the seat,

and that I was flying back to New York at the courtesy of the airline. If there was room in first class he would put me there, but if not, he'd fit me in wherever he could. He was right of course. When you don't pay for something, you can take it or leave it, but you don't have the privilege of insisting that it be tailor made to suit your individual desires!

The further away from God you are, the more likely you are to feel sorry for yourself. Everyone has a sad story to tell. But when you truly love Jesus you stop thinking about the faults you see in other people, you keep your eyes on Christ! You accept the admonition of those who have authority over you, whether you think they are mean to you or not! You act like a Christian anyway! If some politician doesn't do something that you think he should do, you don't write him a nasty letter. You pray about it. If your pastor is living for Jesus, and he tells you that you are wrong about something, you don't become arrogant and rude. You listen to what he says, and then you pray about the matter. If he is wrong, you ask God to tell him so, it's not your job to tell him how to do his job! If you don't like his sermons, you stop going. You don't cause trouble! *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"* (2 Corinthians 5:17 KJV). If the old things in your past haven't passed away, you're not truly living for Jesus! You may want to go out and preach the Gospel to the world, but if you're not living for Christ yourself, how can you teach anyone else (see

Hebrews 5:12)? God has set teachers over you to point you toward what is right (Ephesians 4:11).

If you love Jesus, you respect them, and you remain humble before them. You don't get a chip on your shoulder and take an attitude of self-righteousness because you love Jesus, and you do that which will honor Him. This is the hardest part of being a Christian. But until God can get the world out of you, He can never fill you to full measure with His Spirit! Yes, it's hard, because we live in a sinful world, among sinful people, but *"...we wrestle not against*



*flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"* (Ephesians 6:12 KJV). You don't fight the devil by acting like the devil! Jesus said, *"...How can Satan cast out Satan?"* (Mark 3:23 KJV). *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good"* (Romans 12:21 NIV). It takes light to get rid of darkness. You don't fight darkness with darkness! And unless that Light comes through the Holy Spirit, and you reflect the righteousness of Christ, evil will not be destroyed! You're going to make the devil angry when you determine in your heart that no matter what he sends your way, you're going to remain sweet and live for Jesus anyway. He'll be angry because you are using the only surefire weapon that works. You are humbling yourself before Jesus and, giving your problems over to Him.

It's not your fight! (See 2 Chronicles 20:15.) You may feel attacked, but if you've given your life over to God, you're not in charge anymore. He is! You belong to Him, and He will take care of the problem, but He can't do so when you keep getting in His way. You need to move out of the way and allow Jesus to get the job done. *"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).