



NON-PROFIT



TAX-EXEMPT

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

September 2018

FROM US TO YOU

It's September. Most people are back from their vacations and feel ready to step into the refreshing Autumn season. And with it come decisions to make. One of them will be the mid-term election, which is very important this year, as most of you know. The whole future of the nation is at stake! As Christians, we must ask ourselves which candidates God would want. What is important to Him? Well the first thing that comes to mind is that we must cling to the foundation this country was built upon. It was at a time when the colonists didn't have the comforts we in America have today. If they wanted food they had to kill an animal then skin, pluck, or scale it. Or if they had the time to wait, they could grow their crops, and hope that the weather did not ruin a good harvest. They didn't have the luxury of pulling into a fast food restaurant, or going to a supermarket. There were not only attacks by native tribes to worry about, but wild animals, such as poisonous snakes, wolves, bears, and cougars. Many times people crossed the country in wagon trains, where their only protection from the environment was a thick canvas over the top of the wagon. There was no 911 to call if they had a problem. They never had cell phones or even old fashioned telephones. So they had to put their faith in something greater than themselves.

In those days, people put their trust and confidence in God, and most of them were Christians. They set up a system of government based on the Bible. As a result, God blessed them and their descendants and made America a desirable and powerful country. However, the devil doesn't want the United States to be a great country. And so he is using all those he has influence over to tear down this nation God has blessed so abundantly. One of his most reliable methods is to water down Christianity with Atheists, false prophets, and pagan religions. As Christians, we must be prepared for the devil's attacks. For if you love the Lord and promote Christian values, the enemy will view you as its target. For *“...whoever shuns evil becomes a prey...”* (Isaiah 59:15 NIV).

Through whom does our enemy, the devil, work? It is all those who defend the guilty and protect them while they kill innocent life. They laugh at traditional Christian values and dishonor God. And they seek to deprive Christians of their rights. *“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 - the testimony given in its proper time”* (1 Timothy 2:5-6 NIV). Remember what Jesus said when *“...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). That means no one comes before God and His laws!

Of those who glorify sin, the Bible says, *“...since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They*

are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them” (Romans 1:28-32 NIV).

How is the enemy of Christ working to deceive people? The answer is through the subtle brainwashing of ideas. Ideas are far more important than most people realize. For they are the framework from which all accomplishments evolve, both good and evil. They are a pattern for social thought and activity just the way an architectural engineer will lay out a blueprint for a building. Before the land is even prepared for construction, the design must be recorded on paper. It is the same way in our society today. The television networks, and other national media, know firsthand how much power they hold in subtly persuading gullible humans to think their way. Slowly, over a long period of time, humanistic ideas based on man-made theologies, have been promoted. “Seemingly” innocent tools such as secular education are used. And, especially, situation comedy, where viewers are made to laugh so hard that they don't even realize the subtle brainwashing that is taking place at the same time.

Television dramas are also a part of the strategy. Even Christians have gotten to the place these days, where Satanic television shows have gained more influence over them than they realize. Americans have been exposed to so much immorality, blasphemy, and violence on the screen, that slowly, over a long period of time, the shock value of such repulsive sins seems to diminish. One conversation Anne once had with a police officer is an example. She had complained about all the pornography that had been displayed regularly at an outdoor Flea Market she attended. Magazines and posters of naked women were openly exposed for all to see, even children. However, when she told him that the items were from old men's magazines from the sixties, the police officer laughed it off. He told her that “back in those days” what they put in magazines was too tame to worry about. In the sixties people didn't think they were tame! So what has happened to change that?

The magazines and the policeman's reaction to them, were a rather sad barometer of the way society has changed. It has slid so far away from God's standards of acceptable public behavior, that the “high” the sinner got from pornography in the 1960's simply isn't enough to satisfy the craving for sin today. Sin is like a drug from which you increasingly need to receive a higher dosage all the time, until it kills you! The antidote to the compulsion to sin is repentance to God and receiving His salvation (Luke 18:10-14, 1 John 3:8). Read the Bible for yourself and pray that the Holy Spirit will give you the understanding (John 14:26-28). This month's main article, “Are We Really All Children of God?” explains this in more detail.

In the Lord's Service, *Eric and Anne Kaestner*



Are We Really All Children of God?

By Anne Kaestner

Jesus once made a statement that should shake every complacent churchgoer to their very core. He 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!’”* (Matthew 7:21-23 NIV). By then it will be too late to do anything about it! Their names will **not** be written in God’s heavenly book of life (Philippians 4:3, Revelation 21:27). For *“...it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment”* (Hebrews 9:27 KJV). Some day we will all stand before God. The Apostle John saw the scene in the spirit realm and prophesied it.

He said, *“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it... And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the **book of life**. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. **If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire**”* (Revelation 20:11-15 NIV). Most people assume that if someone is considered a good person, they will get to heaven. But the Bible tells us that it is not based on good works. It is based on whose name is written in the Lord’s book of life!

Satan and his fallen angels are destined for the Lake of Fire (see Revelation 20:10). But they want to take as many of us with them as possible. So they will do everything in their power to cause confusion and false doctrine to deceive us. One of Satan’s strategies is to pretend to be a minister of God. That’s why Jesus said, *“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...”* (Matthew 7:15-17 NIV). And the Apostle Paul told the church leaders in Ephesus, *“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears”* (Acts 20:28-31 NIV).

Many people call themselves Christian because their parents went to a church, and sometimes they do. In a similar way, the Pharisees believed they were pleasing to God because they were descendants of Abraham. They even went to John the Baptist, expecting to be water baptized. They thought it would make them look holy. However John refused to baptize them. He said, *“...You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham”* (Matthew 3:7-9 NIV).

For no one gets into Heaven through the first birth alone! 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). Nicodemus didn’t

understand how an old man, like himself, could be born a second time. However, Jesus was speaking of a **spiritual** rebirth, not physical. And He told Nicodemus that just because you can’t see something, it does not mean it’s not there. He used the wind as an example (John 3:8). Jesus went on to explain the difference between being born of flesh and being born of the Spirit of God. He said, *“Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit”* (John 3:6 NIV). What Nicodemus didn’t realize, at that time, was that his only means of getting to Heaven was standing before him.

Of course the reprimand of John the Baptist didn’t deter the religious leaders. They hated Jesus and treated Him with no respect. They even implied that He was sired illegitimately by a Gentile. They sneered at Him and bragged that they were born children of Abraham. But Jesus told them, *“... ‘If you were Abraham’s children... then you would do the things Abraham did. As it is, you are determined to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the things your own father does.’ ‘We are not illegitimate children,’ they protested. ‘The only Father we have is God Himself’”* (John 8:39-41 NIV). This really got Jesus angry! And He replied, *“You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He 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).

Some people believe that doing one’s best and trying to please God makes one a Christian. However, *“...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). You cannot bargain with God! Good works don’t erase sin.

Jesus compared Himself to a Vine in order to illustrate how important it is that Christians cling to Him. He 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**”* (John 15:1-6 NIV). The “fruit” Jesus was talking about was spiritual. *“...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”* (Galatians 5:22-25 NIV).

Isaiah put it another way. He was telling us that without God’s Mediator, whom we now know as Jesus Christ, we are on our own. Therefore, spiritually speaking, *“All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away”* (Isaiah 64:6 NIV). Leaves shrivel up when they fall off of the tree, because they are no longer receiving their life-sustaining sap that comes to them through the tree. In like manner, we Christians will also shrivel up like leaves if we fall away from Christ. Take a look at a leaf and you will notice tiny lines within it. These are the veins through which



the leaf receives its sap. As followers of Christ, we need to receive our life-sustaining sap from our Holy God-given Vine of Life, Jesus Christ. It is through His blood that we are cleansed, nourished, and purified as "...we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7 KJV) through this sinful, rebellious world.

That's because we have all been born through the blood of Adam and Eve. And they rebelled against God, thus acquiring a terminal disease called sin. Consequently, all their children inherited it. The disease separated them from God and doomed them to end up the same way as the snake they listened to (Genesis 3:1-5). The snake was Satan, the devil (Revelation 12:9). And the disease they caught would eventually kill them physically, then doom them spiritually. For they obeyed the devil, and "...everyone who sins is a slave to sin..." (John 8:34-35 NIV). Adam was originally a son of God (Luke 3:38). That was until his disobedience separated Him from the Lord and he lost his relationship with God. Therefore, he was **no longer a son of God**. Neither was Eve.

Sin is the reason why we humans feel a natural compulsion to do something stupid or evil. It's why alcoholics are addicted to alcohol, and kleptomaniacs feel the strong temptation to steal, and liars can't seem to help themselves but lie. People have different weaknesses. Without Christ, Satan can control them in different ways. Because, "we all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him [Jesus Christ] the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6 NIV). The desire to do something we know we shouldn't do is due to the fact that we are born slaves. "...Everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (John 8:34 NIV). Adam and Eve became slaves to sin and we inherited it from them. It is passed on through our blood (Leviticus 17:11). That's why only the blood of Christ can wash away the sin. That's why we must repent of all the sinful things we have done and ask God's forgiveness. It means we turn from our sinful past and ask Jesus to wash us clean in His Holy blood. Becoming Born Again is a spiritual process.

Often I've heard people, even ministers, say that we are all children of God. We are not! Only those who have repented of their sins and received Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior "...to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to **become** children of God - children born **not** of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but **born of God**" (John 1:12-13 NIV). If we were all children of God, the Pharisees would have been children of God too. But Jesus told them they were not. They were children of Satan, the devil. Originally, Adam was pure and innocent in the eyes of God (Genesis 1:27-31). "...When God created man... He created them **male and female** and blessed them. And when they were created, He called them '**man**'" (Genesis 5:1-2 NIV). God loved His prized creation, and did something so tremendous that there are no words to describe the greatness of it.

This perfect and beautiful world that God put so much love into, He put under the control of Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:28-31). The Son of God, Jesus Christ (John 1:1-14), describes the joy God the Father and God the Son had together forming this earth for us in Proverbs 8:23-31. And the Holy Spirit had His role to play in it too (Genesis 1:2). Imagine the value of this earth? Just a small plot of beautiful land costs a great deal of money in human terms. What's even more incredible about God's gift to mankind is that He gave us freedom to choose to love and serve Him or to disobey. The only other creation God had made were the angels. And one third of them mutinied against Him and chose to follow their leader, Lucifer, who became Satan (Revelation 12:7-9).

You see, God didn't want to create us programmed like a computer or a bunch of androids. He wanted us to love Him out of choice. Not because we knew no other way. We were made in God's own image (Genesis 1:26) not just physically, but also emotionally. And, just as we humans want to be loved, God wants us to love Him as well. That's why, when mankind disobeyed God and believed the devil's lies, our Creator was so hurt. "*The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The LORD was grieved that He had made man on the earth, and His heart was filled with pain. So the LORD said, 'I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth - men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air - for I am grieved that I have made them.'* But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD" (Genesis 6:5-8 NIV).

However, long before the human race was even created, back when God the Father and God the Son were making up the blueprints, or DNA, for us God knew that there was a chance mankind would rebel against Him. So the plan of salvation was formed between them. They decided that if mankind should fall into sin, God's own Son, Jesus Christ, would pay for our salvation and buy us back to become true children of God once again. "*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him*

might be saved" (John 3:16-17 KJV). Yet these days, there is so much animosity toward Christ and His Holy laws that I can't even imagine how painful that must be for the Lord Himself. That is despite all He has done for us!

However, the joy that God gets when a person receives Him as Lord and Savior, makes it all worthwhile. And He loves you so much that if you were the only person that needed salvation, Jesus would have died for you, so great is His love for us! "*I will proclaim the name of the LORD. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He. They have acted corruptly toward Him; to their shame they are*

no longer His children, but a warped and crooked generation" (Deuteronomy 32:3-5 NIV). So the first step to getting right with God is being "Born Again." A Jewish woman I once worked with became Born Again. She had been an alcoholic and she told me that she wanted to become a Christian. So I arranged for her to listen to a taped testimony by Jewish evangelist, [Arthur Katz](#). With the help of a woman she knew at "Alcoholics Anonymous," she accepted Christ as her Savior and became Born Again. She described it to me as a "natural high." And I think that's a good analogy. I was in a back-slidden state myself at the time. But I knew what she meant.

A couple of years later I recommitted my life to Christ. At this writing, that was 39 years ago. But I remember it so well! I was having problems at work and had lost my job. I was totally supporting myself and I didn't know where my next paycheck would come from. I was in debt and I had no savings. The Lord had been trying to reach me in subtle little ways and now everything came to a climax. I was driving home from my parent's house one day when I felt an overwhelming need to stop outside a Pentecostal church on Staten Island and go inside. They were just finishing a business meeting at the time and the elders were getting ready to leave. But I met the pastor and told him how I felt the Lord urging me to go inside. He was so warm and friendly that I felt welcome.

Several days later I went to an evening service there. The pastor's sermon seemed as if he was speaking (Continued On Page 4)



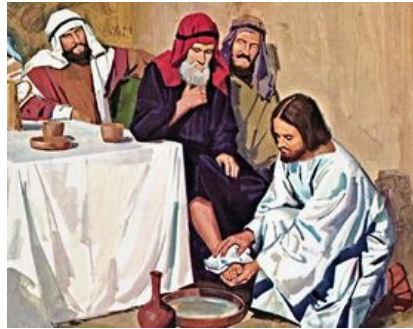
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directly to me. One phrase in particular hit home when he said to the congregation, "What happens when you try to do it your way?" A woman in the congregation responded and he said, "Say that again Sister. It never works out!" I realized that one of my problems had been trying to do it my way. Yes, I know that many worldly people are successful. But Satan runs this world system. He is "...the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2 KJV). He has had control over it since he finagled it away from Adam in the Garden of Eden (Genesis chapter 3).

Therefore, people who insist on following the ways of this world, are controlled by him. And, sometimes, he will make them a big success in this world. However, "...all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:16-17 KJV). Or to put it another way, "...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. Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows" (James 1:14-17 NIV). My coworker was right. Feeling the Holy Spirit in your life gives you a feeling a peace, inner joy, and serenity that the world cannot give. Sure, the unsaved feel happy when they win a lottery, or buy a new car. But it doesn't last!

Jesus compared His salvation to life giving water. When stopping at a well for water, Jesus told a Samaritan woman, "...everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14 NIV). Jesus died on a Friday. "...The next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked



Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water" (John 19:31-34 NIV). The water is a physical symbolism in the body of Christ, but it represents the spiritual cleaning of our souls. The psalmist put it this way, "There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day" (Psalms 46:4-5 NIV).

In order to symbolize how Christians need to humbly renew their relationship with Jesus daily, He told His disciples that He was going to wash their feet. In those days people wore sandals and their feet would get dirty and smelly. So when you went to someone's house, if they were wealthy enough to have a servant to do it, they would wash the feet of the guests. It was such a humbling job that usually only slaves would do it. Peter said to Jesus, "'No... you shall never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me.' 'Then, Lord,' Simon Peter replied, 'not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!' Jesus answered, 'A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean...'" (John 13:8-10 NIV). Peter was thinking of Jesus washing him physically. But Jesus was using a physical example to convey a spiritual truth. What the Lord was really telling Peter was that he was spiritually washed clean when he repented of his sins and

accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior. However, we still have to live in this sinful world until we are called home to Heaven. It is so easy to be tempted or influenced by the things of this world since they are all around us. So, since "...we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7 KJV) we still get our feet dirty, spiritually speaking.

Just prior to His arrest and crucifixion, Jesus prayed to His Heavenly Father, in the garden of Gethsemane. At a time like that, when most of us would be worried about ourselves, Jesus' concerns were of those He redeemed. He prayed, "I have revealed You to those whom You gave Me out of the world... For I gave them the words You gave Me and they accepted them... I am not praying for the world, but for those You have given Me, for they are Yours... I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, protect them by the power of Your name... so that they may be one as We are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe... I am coming to You now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of My joy within them. **I have given them Your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.** My prayer is not that You take them out of the world but that You protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it" (John 17:6-16 NIV).

On another occasion, Jesus reminded the Jewish people around Him about the bread God gave to their ancestors to fill their stomachs (Exodus 16:4), He said, "...it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' 'Sir,' they said, 'from now on give us this bread.' Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me will never go hungry, and he who believes in Me will never be thirsty'" (John 6:32-35 NIV). We need food to stay alive. Bread represents food. So Jesus wasn't talking about cannibalism. He was speaking spiritually. What He was saying is that just as our **physical** bodies need food to keep us alive, our **spirits** need Christ to maintain our relationship with God.

As food is our physical sustenance, Christ is our spiritual sustenance!

Christians often have it backwards. They love their fellow believers more than they love Christ. Yes, the Bible tells us to love each other (1 Peter 4:8). But we must love Christ more! Christians have no trouble condemning the world and pointing their finger at sinners (1 Corinthians 5:9-13). But they will defend those in the church even when they are caught committing the most horrendous of sins! And they will rally around them in a protective way, no matter how bad they make Christ look. The world sees this hypocrisy and it draws them away from Christ! This was also a problem in the Corinthian church. However, Paul told them, "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans... And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this?" (1 Corinthians 5:1-2 NIV). "Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast - as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:6-7 NIV).

Heaven should not be taken for granted. Even the Apostle Paul was worried that he might lose his own salvation (1 Corinthians 9:26-27)! "My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20 NIV). That's true Christian love!