

God's Promise To Satan

By Jimmy Stevens

INTRODUCTION: 1st-century preachers preached God's promise of salvation to the world. Acts 2:38-39, 13:17-33, Rom 1:1-5. But what about this promise itself?

I. Promise "An oral or written agreement to do or not do something; vow." (Webster)

- A. Something fulfilled in the future. **KEYWORD: "Future"**. God's promise was fulfilled in the future.
- B. The Bible is all about something God promised early and fulfilled later concerning salvation.

II. Promises need a reason.

- A. God had a promise in mind **before** the **reason** arose. Eph 1:3-10
- B. Sin **provided** the **reason** to reveal the promise.
- C. Sin. 1 John 3:4. Law, Gen 2:16-17. Law broken = Sin. Gen 3:1-13
- D. Punishment for breaking the law. Three kinds of death. Gen 2:17
 1. **Physical** death ushered in, Gen 3:22,
 2. Death by sin is a present **separation** from God. Isa 59:1-2, Eph 2:1-5
 3. **Eternal** death by an eternal separation to those who die in sin. Rom 6:23
- E. This was the sentence Adam and Eve and all mankind faced.

III. Then God made a promise to Satan. Gen 3:15, Gal 4:4

IV. "Grand Theme" of salvation is based on two facts from the "bruises".

- A. Gen 3:15
 1. "*you shall bruise His heel*". when Christ died. Matt 26:28, Acts 2:31-32. **Blood atonement**.
 2. "*he shall bruise your head*," when Christ arose to reign in His **Kingdom**. Heb 2:14-15, Acts 2:22-36
- B. **Blood atonement**, sins removed through the blood of Christ.
 1. Animal blood atonement, Lev 16:11-16
 2. Christ's blood atonement, Eph 1:7
- C. **Kingdom**, Kingdom Christ would set up. Refers to the NT church.
 1. Scepter, Gen 49:10, Psa 45:6, Heb 1:6-9, Micah 5:2, Matt 2:6
 2. Dan 2, kingdom during the Roman Empire
 3. John the Baptist, Jesus, Matt 3, 4:17, 23, 16:18-19, Mark 9:1, the kingdom is at hand.

V. OT, a history of the promise.

- A. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Gen 22:18, Gal 3:16, Gen 26:4, 28:13-14, 49:10, Heb 7:14, John 18:36-37
- B. Moses and prophets spoke of promise, Deut 18:15, 18-19, Act 3:22-24
- C. Jesus and his kingdom the object of this promise, Acts 3:25-26, Luke 24:44-45

VI. What about the Law of Moses?

- A. A copy or shadow of the NT law or gospel of Christ. Heb 8:4-5, 9:23-10:10

B. As a copy it served to preserve the Jewish race until Christ and the New Law, Gal. 3:15-25

SUMMARY



VII. Back to the bruise. How can one benefit from Christ's death?

- A. In Jesus' death was His saving bloodshed. Matt 26:28
- B. By obedience we benefit from His blood. Acts 2:37, Heb 5:8-9, 2 Cor 5:14-15, Requirements of obedience.
 1. **BELIEVE** Jesus is the Son of God, King of His kingdom, and His blood can cleanse the sinner. John 8:24, Acts 16:30-31
 2. **REPENT** or turn from a life without Christ to a life with Christ, Luke 24:47, Acts 2:38
 3. **CONFESS** faith in the Son of God. Rom 10:10, Acts 8:37
 4. These are essential to salvation, but cannot contact the blood of the "bruise". WHAT WILL?
 5. **BAPTISM**, Heb 9:14 with 1 Pet 3:21. WHY BAPTISM? Because it is where the sinner comes in contact with Christ's blood. Rom 6:3-11, Gal 3:26-29. God's promise to Satan included baptism.
- C. The promise consisted of Christ's **Blood atonement** in His **Kingdom**—the gospel of salvation. These steps above, **BRCB**, are how one enters into the benefits of the promise.

CONCLUSION: The Bible is a relatively simple book about the Promise of salvation to all mankind by the blood of Jesus Christ in His kingdom which will be delivered up to God at the end of time. 1 Cor 15:24. WILL YOU BE PART OF THAT KINGDOM WHEN HE DOES?

“Will Only The Baptized Be Saved?”

By Jimmy Stevens

INTRODUCTION: Answering any Bible question requires a thorough search of the Scriptures to avoid missing important points of truth, especially when searching for answers about salvation. Baptism is perhaps one of the most discussed topics among those who believe that Jesus is the Savior. One can get confused by the different ideas about baptism. All these ideas cannot come from God since some disagree with others, and God would not contradict Himself. Since God does not contradict Himself, He has only one correct answer. It is found in the book He authored, the Bible, 2 Tim 3:16-17, 2 John 9, 1 Cor 4:6

I. The Problem of Sin, and God’s Promise to Save Sinners From Sin.

- A. Adam and Eve introduced sin into the world. They broke His commands, 1 John 3:4. Sin separates one from God. Isa 59:2, and Adam and Eve were separated from God and doomed to eternal condemnation.
- B. God immediately promised victory over sin and eternal death through the seed of woman who is Jesus, Gen 3:15. It was fulfilled when the virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus. Every human being since Adam and Eve has been offered the hope of forgiveness through this promise. Gal 4:3-5, Matt 1:18-22

II. Jesus Is the Answer to the Sinner’s Problem of Sin.

- A. When mankind sinned, God’s justice demanded eternal death as punishment. Heaven is not a place for sinners, and with sin, they cannot go to heaven. However, God offered an escape from sin. Titus 2:11.
- B. “Grace” in this text means “unmerited favor” or a “gift” given to someone who does not deserve it. The gift of God’s grace was in “giving” His only Son as a sacrifice to take away the sins of the world. John 3:16, 1 Tim 1:15, 1 Cor 15:3, 1 Pet 2:24

III. What is the Power in Jesus’ Death that Takes Sins Away From Sinners?

- A. The **blood** Jesus shed on the cross. Matt 26:28, Eph 1:7, Col 1:14, Rev 1:5
- B. Jesus proved power to take away sin in His resurrection, showing power over Satan, sin, and death, as foretold in Gen 3:15, Acts 2:22-24

IV. What Do We Have So Far?

- A. Those who sin are separated from God.
- B. God wanted to save sinners.
- C. God sent His Son to shed His blood to take away their sins.
- D. Jesus proved the power of His blood over sin and death in His resurrection.
- E. Now, the most logical question is, **“If forgiveness and remission of sin come through the blood of Christ, how does the sinner today come in contact with that blood to have his sins forgiven?”** In some way, sinners must join Jesus’ death to contact the cleansing power of His blood.

V. How Does One Join With Jesus’ Death, or “Die With Christ”?

- A. Must be **crucified** or **die** with Jesus, not literally, but figuratively, to be saved. Gal 2:20, Col 2:20, 3:3
- B. Again, **How does one join with Jesus’ death, or “die with Christ”?**

VI. Paul explains it very clearly in Romans 6:3-11

- A. V 3, “*baptized into His death?*” Baptism connects one with Jesus’ death where His blood was shed. If one can be saved **without** or **before** baptism, he can be saved **without** or **before** contacting the blood of Christ.
- B. V 4, “*buried with Him through baptism...raised from the dead...newness of life.*” To join Jesus’ death naturally means joining His burial. One is “buried with him” in water “through baptism”. Acts 8:36. Some define baptism as “sprinkling” or “pouring”, but its real meaning is “dipping” or “immersing” to completely cover like a burial. We have read of the importance of Jesus’ resurrection to prove His power over sin and death. God raised Him to “newness of life” without sin. A sinner is “buried with Him through baptism”, so God can raise him “to walk in newness of life”, as well. “Did Jesus enjoy “newness of life” **before** or **after** His burial?” “Does the sinner enjoy “newness of life” **before** or **after** burial with Christ in baptism?”
- C. V 5, “*united...in the likeness of His death...shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.*” Death, burial, and resurrection through baptism is a “likeness” of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. 1 Cor 15:1-4
- D. V 6, “*old man was crucified...body of sin might be done away...no longer be slaves of sin.*” When joining Christ’s death through baptism, the “old man” and “body of sin” are “crucified with Him (Jesus)” and “done away with”. “Is the sinner’s “old man” and “body of sin” “done away with” **before** baptism or **after** baptism?”

- E. **V 7**, *For he who has died has been freed from sin.* This sums up the “old man” being “done away with”. One is not freed from sin until **after** baptism.
- F. **V 8**, *“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,”* Death through baptism (v 3). To “live with Him” describes the “newness of life” (v 4). Gal 2:20, 1 Pet 2:24. One cannot “live” with Christ, free from sin, until **after** being baptized with Him in His death and not **before** baptism.
- G. **V 9-10**, *“knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.”* Jesus could not have had “dominion” or power over sin and death until **after** He had gone through His death, burial and resurrection from the dead. If He had not risen, His death would have been like any others.
- H. **V 11**, *“Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Referring to vs 9-10, just as Jesus proved His power over sin when He was raised from His death and burial, the sinner can also “reckon” himself to be “dead indeed to sin” and be made “alive” having been raised from baptism. “dead indeed to sin, but alive to God” comes **after** baptism and **not before**.

VII. What Is Romans 6:3-11 Teaching?

- A. **With baptism:** What happens to the sinner? He is put into Christ; joins Christ’s death, burial and resurrection; contacts Christ’s bloodshed in His death; gains newness of life; crucifies the old man and body of sin; is freed from slavery to sin; made alive to God.
- B. **Without or before baptism:** What does not happen to the sinner? He is not in Christ; does not join Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection; has no contact with Christ’s blood; no newness of life; the old man and body of sin are not crucified; is still in slavery to sin; not alive to God.

VIII. The Rest of the New Testament Considers Baptism Necessary for Salvation.

- A. **Disciples were made by baptism**, Matt 28:19
- B. **One is saved after he believes and is baptized**, Mark 16:16. If one is not saved after baptism, then he is also not saved after believing. *Believe* and *baptized* are equally necessary for salvation.
- C. **Water baptism is required for the remission of sins**. Mark 1:4, John 3:23
- D. **Remission of sins in baptism**, Luke 24:46-48, Acts 2:38. The remission of sins came **after** baptism. If believers were saved **before** baptism, they were also saved before the *remission* of their sins.
- E. **Baptism washed away Paul’s sins**, Acts 22:16. **Before** his baptism, he believed but still had sin. **After** his baptism, his sins were washed away. Remember, he wrote Romans 6
- F. **Become sons of God through baptism**, Gal 3:26-27. Baptism is how to “*put on Christ*” and get “*in Christ*”. If one is a “*son of God*” **before** baptism, he is a son **before** he has “*put on Christ*” or is “*in Christ*.”
- G. **Sin is cut away in baptism**, Col 2:11-13. If one can be saved **before** or **without** baptism, he can be saved **before** or **without** sins being cut away or forgiven and without being *raised* to be *alive* with Christ.
- H. **Baptism saves**, 1 Pet 3:20-21. Noah was saved by water. If one can be saved **before** or **without** baptism he can be saved **before** or **without being saved**. (??????)

IX. What Sinners in the First Century Were Taught To Be Saved.

- A. **Believe** in Jesus, the Son of God, that He can take away sins. John 8:24, Acts 16:31
- B. **Repent** by turning from sin to follow Christ. Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38
- C. **Confess** faith that Jesus is the Son of God. Rom 10:9-10, 1 John 4:15. While all of these are necessary for salvation, one thing they cannot do is remove sin. But one is...
- D. **Baptized** to wash away his sins, Acts 22:16

CONCLUSION: The answer to “*Will only the baptized be saved?*” would have to be “**YES!**” With all these things depending on baptism for salvation, it is evident that one who is not baptized is not saved. Mark 16:16. Anyone can be dunked in water, but true baptism requires genuine faith in Jesus Christ and His gospel to be saved.

Moral Living In An Immoral World

By Jimmy Stevens

INTRODUCTION: Godly faith is designed for facing adversity and sinful challenges. The strength of our faith can be observed in how we handle these challenges. By being well informed about these challenges as well as God's word, we can learn how to strengthen our faith to defeat the temptations we encounter.

I. Marriage between a “real biological” man and a “real biological” woman is a wonderful relationship designed and ordained by God.

- A. Since the creation of man and woman, God intended for them to have a sexual relationship to reproduce people like themselves on the earth.
 - 1. Gen 2:19-25, 1:27-28, God created the sexual union so human males and females could come together to produce children. God set this standard for all time. This sexual union was ordained by God for the good of mankind only in the context of marriage. God designed the beauty of human nakedness and sexual desire to be an important part of what continually draws a husband and wife together binding them with a life-long bond and establishing a home and family. Only in marriage should human nakedness and sexual desire be enjoyed without sin and shame. This special, secret treasure is nobody else's business on earth but theirs.
 - 2. Gen 3:16, 1 Cor 7:1-5, God wants husbands and wives to share nakedness and sexual desire only with each other and not with anyone else.
- B. Nakedness and sexual desire are a natural part of every normal human being, but they must always be controlled so that they are not shared with anyone except their marriage partner.

II. God's law of marriage for life is specifically designed to protect and preserve these special, secret treasures of the sexual relationship between husband and wife. (Matt 19:1-9, Mark 10:1-9, Rom 7:2).

- A. Remarriage after the death of a spouse, continues to respect those treasures.
- B. God's prohibition of divorce also seeks to preserve those treasures.
 - 1. Adultery shares these treasures with the wrong person, therefore the adulterer forfeits the right to enjoy future marriage—while at the same time, God grants the innocent victim of adultery the right to divorce the adulterer and share these treasures with another, eligible mate in marriage.
 - 2. Divorce for just any cause except fornication or adultery threatens to share those special treasures with someone who has no right to them.
- C. Throughout the history of mankind, people have diluted the importance of preserving for marriage this unique, intimate sexual relationship. Adultery weakens the determination to protect and preserve marriage. So, the adulterers will often choose to separate or divorce. Their former relationship no longer has that special bonding power because they have been drawn to someone else's secret treasures. The innocent victim no longer feels comfortable with the mate who has betrayed their privately shared treasures. Reconciliation, if it is accomplished, is long and very difficult, because a sacred trust is broken. ***“Trust is easier maintained than regained.”***
- D. In the last 75 years or so, a correlation can be clearly seen between the rise of divorce among married people and the increased relaxed attitude toward preserving the personal, sexual treasures that help strengthen the relationship in marriage.
- E. One of the most aggressive attacks that has weakened this sacred bond between married couples is society's loose attitude toward preserving the power of the attractiveness of the human body that should be shared only in the unique sexual relationship in marriage. (“free love”, “do what feels good”, Hippies of 1960s-70s)
 - 1. The importance of preserving sexual treasures is either overlooked or the treasures are intentionally flaunted, especially when raising children. This failure is not just an issue among adults but is cultivated early in childhood in many families. The treasures of innocent children are exhibited in the public's eye. It is a blatant disregard that surrounds us in nearly every activity yet is considered normal in our society.
 - 2. It is the problem of immodestly exposing and displaying the nakedness of the human body outside the special, private relationship of marriage and it is condoned and promoted by our society and even among those who call themselves Christians.

III. The focus of our study is summed up in Heb 13:4, *“Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”*

- A. This text declares two things:

1. In marriage there is the God-given natural desire to embrace the beauty of the human body in the sexual relationship identified as *“the marriage bed”*.
 2. To share that same beauty of the human body outside of marriage is a sin worthy of eternal condemnation.
- B. **“Marriage is honorable”** God gives honor to this timeless relationship. Mark 10:6-9, The primary point of the expression *“the two shall become one flesh”* is that they have the God-given right to share their bodies in a sexual way that is prohibited in any other relationship. It defines one of the greatest privileges of marriage.
- C. **“among all”** God requires every human to honor this institution of marriage for all times, the way He instituted it.
1. The **unmarried** are to respect and preserve their treasures in a way that honors the marriage law of God whether they chose to marry or not.
 2. The **married** are to respect and preserve their treasures for each other and not share them with anyone else on earth as long as they live.
- D. **“and the bed undefiled”**
1. **“bed”** identifies the sexual relationship. Deut 27:20, *“father’s bed.”* An **“undefiled”** bed shows God’s approval of the sexual relationship in a marriage.
 2. Anything associated with human nakedness and the arousal of sexual desires, whether mentally—thoughts, verbally—words, physically—touch, or visually—including apparel or suggestive bodily movements are all part of the special secret treasures to be enjoyed **ONLY IN MARRIAGE**.
- E. **“but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”**
1. It is implied from the context of Heb 13:4, that fornication and adultery are dishonorable because it involves engaging in the same kind of sexual activity outside the “honorable marriage bed”.
 2. While **Honorable** marriage and **Dishonorable** fornication or adultery are as far apart as God is from Satan, both are defined by the same association with sexual desire and fulfillment.
 3. Anything associated with human nakedness and the arousal of sexual desires, whether mentally—thoughts, verbally—words, physically—touch, or visually—including apparel or suggestive bodily movements are all part the sins of fornication and adultery and are **NEVER HONORABLE** outside of or before marriage.

IV. What promotes sexually immoral thoughts and conduct in our world today?

- A. Mental portrayal of the nakedness of those outside of marriage. **WITHOUT MENTAL IMAGES ASSOCIATED WITH HUMAN NAKEDNESS—NO ISSUE.**
1. Therefore, preventing images of nakedness is a major part of keeping hearts pure. This requires an understanding of what is appropriate (sometimes called “modest”) **apparel** and **conduct**. (**emphasize—not just clothing.**)
 2. **2-Way relationship everyone must honor.** We are all responsible for controlling our own eyes and thoughts to keep them pure. We are also responsible for respecting the eyes of others to help them keep their thoughts pure.
- B. Two keys to understanding what God teaches on appropriate appearance in apparel and conduct.
1. **First.** Nakedness is to be shared, mentally and physically, only in marriage.
 2. **Second.** Determine what God calls shameful nakedness outside of marriage and cover it.
 3. Therefore, the subject of modest apparel and conduct is **DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE MARRIAGE BED, WHETHER ONE IS MARRIED OR NOT. It revolves around the God-given, special, secret treasures of the sexual relationship in marriage. Experienced outside of that relationship, God calls it sin.**

IV. Can we know what God calls modest? “Is there a line?” Has God defined shameful nakedness and modesty in the Bible?

- A. Objecting to objections **Some will say....**
1. **“God did not draw a line for modest apparel.”** ARE THEY SURE ABOUT THAT?
 2. **“Cannot use the Old Testament because we are not under the Old Law”** ARE WE DEALING WITH AN OLD LAW—NEW LAW MATTER?
 3. **“Godly men and women will just know what is modest.”** IF THEY KNOW THEN THEY KNOW WHERE THE LINE IS. BUT IF THERE IS NO LINE HOW CAN THEY KNOW?

4. **Would God give mankind such a powerful and potentially dangerous human desire without clearly defining the guidelines for using it properly?**
 5. **How would God's laws on shameful nakedness be enforced if He did not clearly define shameful nakedness?** Consider the violations related to this. Lev 18, 20
- B. We can know what is **modest** by first understanding what is **shameful nakedness that should be covered**.
- C. Both OT and NT can be used since nakedness is a natural human trait.
1. *Patriarchal, Mosaic and Christian* age human anatomy and psychology have not changed since the beginning. (Cover to Cover in the Bible: Judah & Tamar, David & Bathsheba, Amnon & Tamar, Jesus—Matt 5:28, 1 Cor 5, and many, many more)
 2. 1 Cor 10:6, *Now these things became our examples, to the intent that **we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted**.*

V. Where is God's line between shameful nakedness and modest apparel and conduct?

- A. **Adam & Eve**, Gen 3:6-10, 21. Their choice of clothing still left them shamefully naked before God. V 7, "coverings", "apron, girdle coverings of the waist and hip area". God made proper garments. "a tunic, worn next to the skin...generally with sleeves, to the knees, but seldom to the ankles." "from to cover, coat, garment, robe." God made this a permanent design for **both** men and women. V 21, "them". "Lines" of covering *shoulders* and to the *knees* in Genesis 3 are consistent with what the rest of the Bible describes as the proper covering of the body.
- B. God uses the same standard of shameful nakedness both **literally** and **figuratively**.
1. **THIGHS:** Exo 28:42-43, 20:26, Isa 47:1-3. The knee is a natural, visual, and psychological break in that section of the body. The more the thigh is exposed the greater the anticipation of viewing something higher with sinful thoughts. Ask any normal man for further confirmation about the attraction of exposed thighs.
 2. **HIPS:** (midsection). 2 Sam 10:4-5, Isa 20:2-4
 3. **BREASTS:** (chest). A woman's breasts are to give pleasure to her husband and **not other men**. **Exposed cleavage of breasts** is a major part of that attraction. Prov 5:15-20, Ezek 23:3, 8, 10, 18, 21, Hos 2:2-5
- C. When clothing or bodily movements draw visual attention to the **thighs, hips, and chest areas**, they can excite sexual desires whether for **good** in marriage or **evil** and **shame** associated with fornication. It is foolish to argue that God has not drawn a "line".
1. Speaking for men, God intentionally designed the male mind to be drawn to the attractiveness of the exposed female in the honorable relationship of the marriage bed. God established these "lines" to help all of us fight the battle against causing others to sin with their eyes and hearts.
 2. Wives, daughters, and sisters in Christ, the battle against immorality in this world is strong against your husbands, sons, and brothers in Christ. Following God's lines in appearance can go a long way to help prevent lust and sin. All males and females should be on guard to honor God's lines, not just because He says so, but because they prevent lust from being stirred.

VI. Shameful nakedness can be exposed by apparel and body language to cultivate shameful images.

- A. **Bodily movements.** Even fully clothed, body language can suggest nakedness. Dancing, cheerleading, provocative walking, movements, or poses. Godly people turn away their eyes and thoughts, and ungodly people stare and lust. Hand and facial gestures, suggestive words, lips, and eyes, can stimulate sensual thoughts. Prov 5-7
- B. **Tight fitting.** Fully covered, offering a false sense of security, yet nearly every feature of nakedness is still exposed. (ex: **skinny jeans, leggings, or tights with or without short skirts**)
- C. **Special occasions.** Do not change sexual desire. Ungodly men ignore the occasion and look. Godly men turn their heads away. Thin strap, strapless, or low-cut formal "**prom**" or "**wedding gowns**". Athletics or drama, both male and female. Swimming or outdoor recreational attire, both males and females. **Don't let anyone talk you into surrendering your marriage treasures by insisting you wear immodest clothing for the occasion.**
- D. **Short and revealing.** Obviously. The exposed human body alone stirs thoughts, even without provocative gestures. It is not uncommon for people to intentionally expose their underclothing which express a careless attitude.
- E. **Exposing the special treasure of marital nakedness IS THE ISSUE.**

VII. “Godliness” and “good works” promote modest apparel and conduct and therefore promote moral living in an immoral world.

- A. **1 Tim 2:9-10**, “*in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, 10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.*”
1. **“Moderation”, “modest”**, avoids drawing attention to oneself for the wrong reason. Includes extravagant attire, scant attire, or even decent attire badly displayed. The kind of person we are, is the kind of person we will attract. When people are immodest, decent people turn their heads away. Who’s left looking?
 2. **“Godliness with good works”** (context), “*in like manner*” both men and women. Too often, style is more important than **“godliness and good works”**. Not the attitude, **“It’s all about me.”** without regard for others. Can we attract people with shameful nakedness, **then ask them to study the Bible?**
 3. **“Propriety”, “proper”** proper for pleasing God. Godly minds ask first “What would please God?”, then dress and act accordingly. Phil 1:9-10. A person with this kind of mind has no problem with proper dress and conduct.
 4. Godly minds understand that immodest apparel and conduct are the **bait used in fornication**. (whether fornication is committed or not). Therefore, 1 Cor 6:18, “*Flee sexual immorality*”. 2 Tim 2:22, “*Flee also youthful lusts;*” 1 Th 5:22, “*Abstain from every form of evil.*”
- C. **Teach children early.** The home is God’s sex education environment.
1. The age of a child’s understanding of sexual matters is not exactly known. Establish in early childhood the habit of modesty before they mature with questions about sexual matters, and it will make explaining modesty to them easier. In fact, they will grow up to defend and promote modesty, especially among their worldly peers.
 2. **“Isn’t that teaching that their bodies are shameful?” NO! That is propaganda from people with immoral minds.** It is teaching them that the body is powerful and wonderful with special treasures worth preserving, that should not be made cheap. Teach that God has given them powerfully, special treasures that belong to no one else on earth except their husband or wife. Teach that modest apparel and conduct are how God wants them to respect themselves and their marriage. **INDOCTRINATE THEM!**
 3. Sadly, parents teach children to dress and act like fornicators by letting them share their treasures with the public, then fear for their morality as they get older. **(costumes, uniforms, performances, dance routines, etc.)**. Sadly, many parents are teaching their children that it is OK to give away their purity by teaching that it is OK to expose their nakedness to the public.
- D. Husbands and fathers are the best advisors for wives and daughters on how men look at women, and what is proper dress. **It is possible for husbands to help their wives cheat on them by not encouraging their wives to preserve their nakedness from other men, and wives may not even be aware that they are cheating on their husbands.** Care enough to protect your wives’ and daughters’ special treasures which are yours.
- E. Wives and mothers help preserve decency in their husbands and sons. **All be humble enough to listen.**
- F. Sadly, society promotes the things it abhors. (registered sex offenders, child molesters, sexual assaults, etc., while promoting dancing, immodesty, etc.).
- G. **Professional advice for the workplace, (Ginny Ervin, Anne’s music education teacher)**, “Sit or bend over in front of a mirror to see what your students see.” **SEE WHAT OTHERS WILL SEE!** Look at yourself in a mirror or ask someone to help you.

CONCLUSION: The gift of human sexuality is beautifully designed by God to be expressed and enjoyed as a special treasure only in the marriage relationship. Proper attire and conduct are necessary for preserving that treasure. Use your godly character to attract others. 1 Pet 3:3-4, “*Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel-- 4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*”

Created For A Purpose

By Jimmy Stevens

INTRODUCTION: The Lord never promised Christians an easy life.

- A. Becoming a Christian does not remove all evils and ills of our world. Acts 14:22
- B. Becoming a Christian saves our souls and gives us the inner strength to live righteously despite this wicked world. 2 Cor 1:3-7, “*consolation*”¹
- C. As a Christian when you are troubled how can you be consoled or comforted?

I. Examples of consolation. (ex: Job, Samuel, David, Jonah, Jeremiah, and others).

- A. **Moses**, Num 11:1-6, 10-17, Israel complained about the food sent by God. Moses was deeply discouraged. God expressed his confidence in him and reminded him of his purpose. He became a great leader of Israel.
- B. **Joshua**, Josh 6:18-19, 27, 7:1-13, 8:1-2, After taking Jericho, he lost the battle of Ai. Joshua was discouraged and complained to God. God expressed his confidence in him and reminded him of his purpose. Joshua made corrections and led Israel to conquer Canaan.
- C. **Elijah**, 1 Kgs 18:1, 17-22, 40, 19:1-18, When Jezebel sought to kill Elijah he hid in the wilderness and a cave. Feeling alone and sorry for himself, God expressed his confidence in him and reminded him of his purpose and the work he still had to do and it brought him out of hiding.
- D. **Paul**, 2 Cor 11:22-28, 12:7-15, 1 Cor 15:9-10. Paul suffered many things in his life and even complained about one affliction. God expressed his confidence in him and reminded him of his purpose and the work still to be done. He went on to gladly fulfill his purpose of spreading the gospel. Eph 3:1-8, 2 Tim 4:5-8

II. Common denominator.

- A. They all struggled with challenges in this life, even greater than ours, and became discouraged at times.
- B. God reminded them that He was with them and that they still had a purpose in life to “*Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all.*” (Eccl 12:13).
- C. They all still had work to do, and God believed they were qualified to do their work.
- D. God urged them to repent of their paralysis and get to work.
- E. By correcting their problems and getting back to work, they overcame their discouragement.
- F. Remember! Satan uses discouragement to blind us from our purpose which stops our work for the Lord.
- G. These examples show how doing God’s will without compromise can overcome discouragement.

CONCLUSION: These principles still apply to us today. We were created with a purpose and work to do. Let us never lose sight of that, and it will help us through times of discouragement.

¹ From “console”: “To allay the sorrow or grief of”, *American Heritage Dictionary*

WHAT DOES LOVE LOOK LIKE?

Mulvane, KS
April 13, 2023
Anne Stevens

I. Title: What Does Love Look Like?

A. "Love" used to describe many emotions and preferences.

1. More than a feeling for someone.
2. More than a feeling for something.

1 Cor 13:4-7

B. Confusing *lust* for *love*.

1. Inconsistent with the will of God.
2. Seeks its own.
3. Uses people.

II. Love acts.

A. Love involves giving.

B. God loved. John 3:16; 1 John 3:1

C. Jesus loved. John 6:38; 13:5; Rom 5:8

D. The Law and the Prophets Matt 22:37-40

1. Loving Jesus requires our obedience. John 14:15
2. Commanded to love the right things. 1 John 2:15
3. Commanded to love our brethren. John 15:12
4. Commanded to love our enemies. Luke 6:27

E. Love for man involves activity. 1 John 3:16-17

III. Biblical Examples of Love

A. Churches to needy brethren. 2 Cor 8:1-5

B. Dorcas (Tabitha) for widows. Acts 9:36-42

C. David for the Lord. 2 Sam 7:1-17; 1 Kings 8:17-19; 1 Chron 22:1-16

IV. Love in Application

A. Church is a body. Eph 1:22-23

1. Pray for one another. Phil 1:3-4
2. Seek their prayers for you. 2 Thes 3:1-2
3. Work for peace. Eph 4:1-3; Rom 12:10
4. Teach others. 2 Tim 1:13
5. Protect others. 1 Cor 13:4-6
6. Value self. 1 Cor 12:15-19
7. Value others. 1 Cor 12:21-22
8. Be united. 1 Cor 12:26
9. Rejoice and weep together. Rom 12:15

B. Examples of service, both small and great.

C. Recognizing a need.

V. Conclusion

While we may use the word "love" loosely in some contexts, God has shown very clearly that love in its truest sense involves action and giving. He showed His love for us by giving His Son. Jesus' love for us was active and giving. We show our love for God by giving Him our obedience. We show our love for mankind by valuing them, accepting them, assisting them, and giving of ourselves and our service.

Power Of True Faith

By Jimmy Stevens

INTRODUCTION: There are many kinds of faith. What is true faith? What power is in true faith? How is true faith demonstrated? What does having true faith and putting God first have to do with each other?

I. What is faith?

- A. Trust in something trustworthy, which does not change or betray, even though the object of this trust may not always be seen. Heb 11:1
- B. Faith is only as valuable as that in which it trusts.

II. What is true, Biblical faith?

- A. Trust in God and His word. God does not expect blind faith. Rom 1:18-20. He provides what to believe, but does not provide faith. FAITH IS OUR PART. Rom 10:17, John 20:30-31, 1 Cor 4:6
- B. God's word is worthy of complete trust. Psa 33:4, 119:160
- C. It has what is necessary for true faith. We cannot decide what to believe. Deut 29:29, John 14:26, 16:13, Acts 20:20, 27,
- D. His sufficient word produces sufficient faith. Jude 3, 2 Tim 3:16-17, Jas 1:25
- E. His word is written down so we can read what He wants. Eph 3:1-5, 2 Th 2:15

III. Because God's word is more powerful than Satan's devices, faith based on it will be more powerful than temptation and sin.

- A. God's word has supreme power. Rom 1:16, Heb 4:12-13
- B. It can defeat anything Satan has to throw at it. Eph 6:10-16, 1 Cor 10:13, Heb 2:1-4

IV. However, true faith benefits only those practicing what it demands.

- A. Trusting God cannot help unless we act on that trust. 2 Th 1:11, Gal 5:5-6, Jas 2:14-20
- B. But practicing true faith conflicts with what disagrees with it. Now the challenge that separates "real" Christians from those just "playing": WILL I BE WILLING TO SACRIFICE TO PUT GOD FIRST IN MY FAITH?

V. Putting God first forces opposition. No surprise. Matt 7:13-14, Acts 4:16-20. Christians are often opposed. Acts 28:22, 2 Tim 3:10-12, Heb 10:32-34, 1 Pet 4:3-4

VI. Trials test courage. True faith is the seed of godly courage.

- A. Opposition to truth defines courage, Principle: 1 Cor 11:19
- B. True faith works **best** when things are the **worst**.
 - 1. Being faithful is **easy** when all are doing right. Ex: Society opposes drinking, dancing, or other immorality, or when the church is practicing truth and at peace.
 - 2. What about **when challenges come**? Ex: Drinking is important to employment. Being immoral to be accepted. The conflict between ballgames, homework, entertainment, and attending worship. Unfaithful brother disrupting the church.
 - 3. True faith overcomes: Ps 27:3, 46:2, 56:4, 118:6, 1 Th 2:2
- C. Brethren of the first century magnified their righteousness in trials, Jas 1:2-4
- D. Boldly proclaim the truth. Matt 5:13-16, Acts 5:41-42

- E. Greatest attribute of true faith is how well it performs under fire. Rev 2:10. HOW CAN SOME CHRISTIANS EXPECT TO DIE FOR THEIR FAITH WHEN THEY CANNOT EVEN CHOOSE TO ATTEND WORSHIP SERVICES BECAUSE OF SOME ENTICEMENT OF THE WORLD? WHAT KIND OF FAITH IS THAT? IT IS NOT TRUE FAITH. THAT IS WHY THERE IS NO POWER IN THAT KIND OF FAITH.

CONCLUSION: Persecution is natural to Christians when God comes first. There is nothing better to cause a hungering for heaven than escaping trials of this earth, but we must be willing to exercise the power of faith at all cost.

Growing Weary

By Jimmy Stevens

INTRODUCTION: Gal 6:7-10

- A. Context of spiritual good in teaching the truth and restoring the fallen brother. Vs 1-6. V 9, “*And let us not grow weary while doing good...*”
- B. We live in a world that seems bent on defying God and godly living.
 - 1. Denominations seek to gratify the fleshly man more than the spiritual man.
 - 2. Many churches of Christ try to compete with denominations. Sample: “Trunk or Treat”, First Baptist Church Fall Festival...will include carnival games, bouncy houses, food trucks, pumpkin painting, hayrides, and Trunk or Treat. First United Methodist, South Seminole Baptist, and West Side Church of Christ, Trunk or Treat, 5:30-7 p.m.”¹
 - 3. Being in the minority by following sound doctrine among our circle of religious peers, we can find ourselves growing weary in taking a stand “*for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*” Jude 3.
- C. All mankind has the freedom to choose which spiritual direction it will go. V 8. The church is designed for the “spiritual man”, not the “physical”.
- D. Christians are created for good works as God defines them. Eph 2:10
- E. Frequent exhortation found in Titus 1:16, 2:14, 3:1, 8
- F. The scriptures encourage us to not grow weary. 2 Th 3:13, Heb 12:1-3

I. Reasons for not growing weary.

- A. *Reap what we sow*—two types of harvests. *Heaven-* for sowing good; *Hell-* for sowing to the flesh or not sowing at all. No one can live the life of the wicked and die righteously.
- B. *To glorify God.* through obedience, Matt 5:16
- C. *To make the church grow*, spiritually and numerically. Cannot influence others to obey the gospel if we grow weary in obeying the gospel.
- D. *To secure our own salvation.* Phil 2:12

II. Causes of weariness in doing good. Understanding these helps overcome quitting.

- A. *Conflict with the ungodly world.* Some get tired of the conflict with this world and they give up and give in. Remember, someone will win, and we are a body of “someones”.
- B. *Ingratitude of those we serve.* Luke 17:11-19
- C. *Indifference of others who should be serving.* If you are the only one serving God—serve.
- D. *Size and nature of the tasks to be done.* Most problems tend to be bigger in our minds than in reality and we discover they are smaller when we jump in and start working with them.
- E. *Opposition to plans to do the Lord’s work.*
- F. *Fatigue.* Burnout: Burden carried by a few. Someone has observed that 90% of the church work is done by 10% of the people. Whether true or not, the evidence sometimes shows it. Because of the heavy demand on the 10%, some of them quit, and they are the strength of the church.
- G. *Failure to see results.* IT IS NEVER A WASTE OF TIME TO DO GOOD! Our reward will come at the end of the harvest, the end of time.
 - 1. Reward comes at the end. Matt 13:39, Luke 14:14, Jas 5:7.

¹ “Seminole will trick or treat on Halloween, Oct. 31”, *Seminole Sentinel*, Wed., October 20, 2021, Seminole, TX, pgs 1, 6.

2. We live in a hardened age and results come slowly. Ezek 2:3-8, 3:5-9
3. Our responsibility is to plant and water. God gives the increase. 1 Cor 3:5-17, 4:2

III. Remedy for weariness in doing good.

- A. *Pray.* Ask for forgiveness for quitting. Resolve to quit “quitting”. Ask for strength against the temptation to quit.
- B. *Study the Bible.* It teaches patience, Rom 15:4. Patience and Bible understanding work hand in hand.
- C. *Brotherly encouragement,* Heb 10:24-25, Discouragement is lessened when with good brethren not away from them. Failing to assemble takes one away from what God designed to help us overcome weariness. Seek Christian friendship, especially in times of weariness.
- D. *Trust in God’s promises.* Accept and believe that God knows what is going on. Continue doing your best and He will take care of the rest. 1 Pet 5:5-7

CONCLUSION: 1 Cor 15:58, Gal 6:9, “*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*”