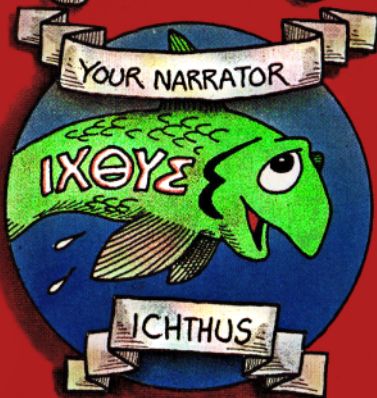




Growthbook

Volume 1:

for fledgling disciples



Text & artwork by Steve Gregg

THE NARROW PATH

TheNarrowPath.com

Before You read this book... read this page:

This book proceeds on the assumption that the reader is a recent convert to Christianity—that he or she has entered upon a new life of faith and of obedience to Jesus Christ! If you are not such, read on ...



Jesus, the Son of God, was sent to die in your place for your sins. Three days later, He rose from death and lives forever as absolute Lord & King! To be saved, you must believe this.

See: Romans 10:9

You must humble yourself before God, acknowledge that you have been a rebel against His just laws, turn from your sinful ways, and ask for forgiveness through the shed blood of Jesus.

See: 1 John 1:7, 9



Finally, you must resolve to live no longer for self, in pursuit of your own goals, and instead to follow Jesus completely and without reservation!

See: Matthew 16:24

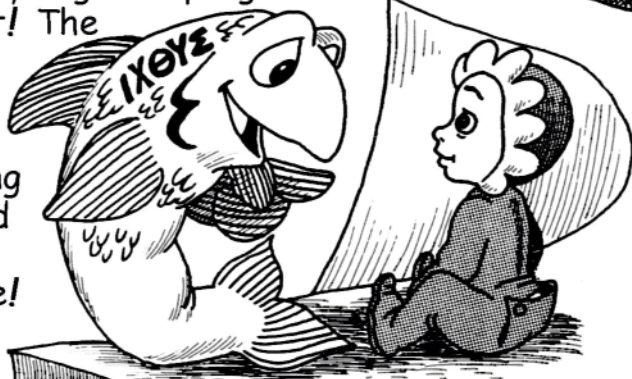
If you have sincerely done these things, then proceed ...

GREETINGS, JUNIOR!

Well, well! Here you are at the beginning of a new road and a new life! No matter how old you may be, or how worldly-wise, get used to this fact; in the business of walking with God, you are an ignorant babe - with everything yet to learn! I'm

here to help you grow-up right and grow upright! The only way you will make any progress will be by keeping a humble and teachable attitude!

See: Proverbs
12:15; 13:18; 15:32



Remember you were living in spiritual darkness until the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ penetrated your world!

See: Ephesians 5:8/ 2 Corinthians 4:6



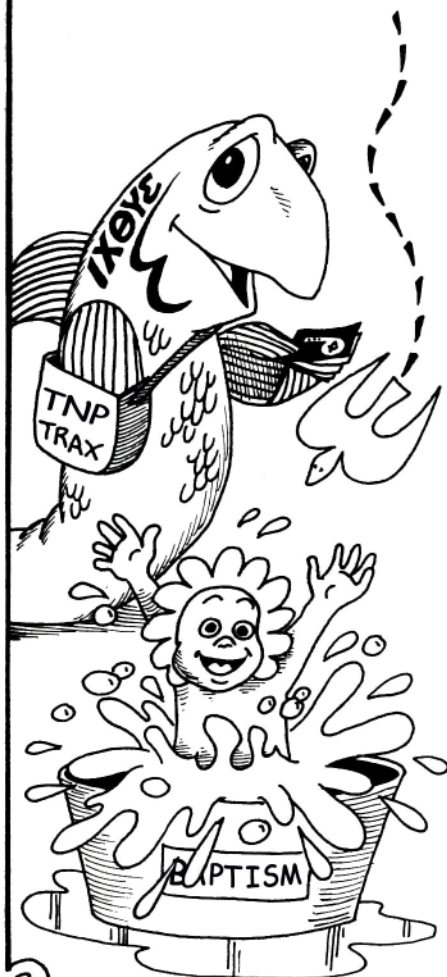
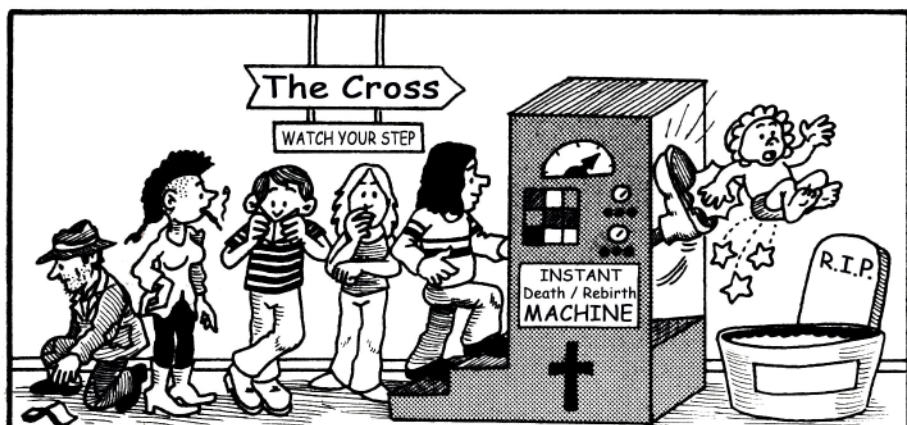
Your decision to follow opened the door to a new life! This is called being "born again"!

See: 2 Corinthians 5:17



TNP (The Narrow Path) *Growthbook for Fledgling Disciples*: volume one, © 1984, is drawn and written by Steve Gregg for *Good News Underground* (GNU), *International*. Printed in USA. Revised 2022





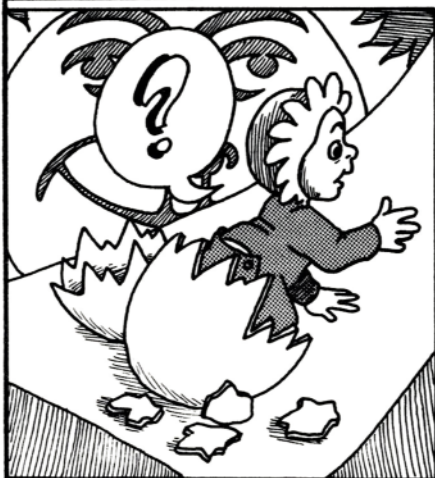
The trouble with getting
a new life is: what do you
do with the old one?

Jesus takes care of that!
You have died with Christ
because of your association
with Him in His death, and
you are risen with Him to
a new life! It remains, then,
for you to bury the corpse of
your old life! This is what
baptism in water is! It is the
formal burial of your dead
past (when you go under) and
the resurrection to a new life
(when you come back up).

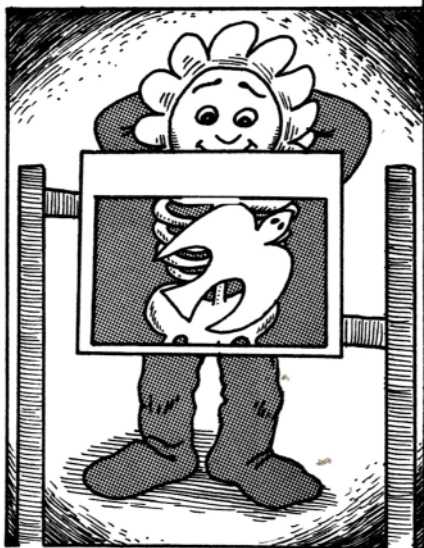
If you have not yet been
baptized, do it right away!
Why pack a corpse with you
wherever you go?
Receive the Holy Spirit
as you come up!

See: Acts 2:38/ Mark 16:16/
Galatians 2:20/ Romans 6:2-3/
Colossians 2:12

New lives begin with infancy! You now have a brand new road to navigate-and no experience under your belt!



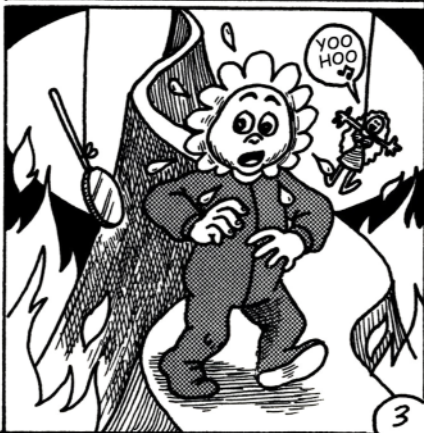
Fortunately, you're not alone! God's spirit is in you to guide & assist!



Babies learn to walk by trial & error! As you learn to walk in the Spirit, you'll make some mistakes! Don't sweat it! Keep moving on!



Avoid all those temptations to deviate from your course! They will kill you! If you do fall into sin, confess it to God, get back on your feet & keep plugging along! (1 John 1:9)



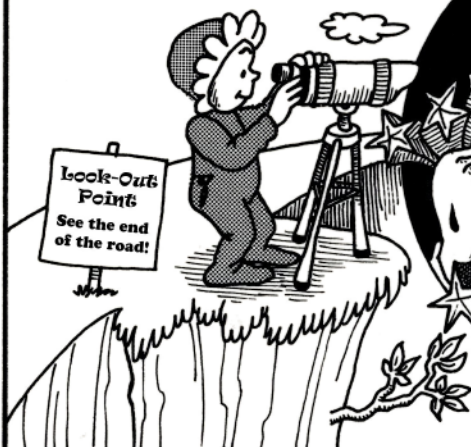
Don't get caught in the trap of wallowing in the guilt of past failures! When you have repented, God forgets them...and so should you!

See: Hebrews 8:12/ 1 John 1:9/ Philippians 3:13-14



Just keep looking ahead to Jesus, and you'll make good progress! As you look to Him, you become like Him!

See: Hebrews 12:1-2/ 2 Corinthians 3:18



A baby's awareness of the world around him is poor, but developing! Ditto for spiritual babies!

Well, that is one mistake I won't make again! What's the next lesson?



Never look longingly back at your old life! Lot's wife did, and she was sorry!

See: Genesis 19:26

Luke 17:32



Your awareness of and sensitivity to the spirit realm - so new to you now - will increase with maturity!

See: Hebrews 5:13-14

Hmmmm! I sense a strange spirit here!



One thing you will discover is that spiritual babies - just like natural babies - aren't born into a vacuum, but into a worldwide family!



God has kids all over the world - and they are your brothers & sisters! You are expected to love them as God does!



You will learn to really appreciate these brothers & sisters! They are pursuing the same goal you are, and some are far more experienced than you in walking in the spirit! They can help carry you over the rough spots!

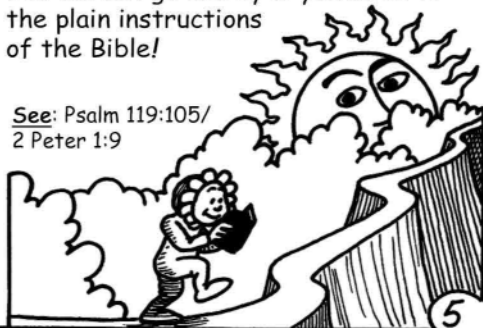


Then again, your walk is also a personal matter between you and God alone!



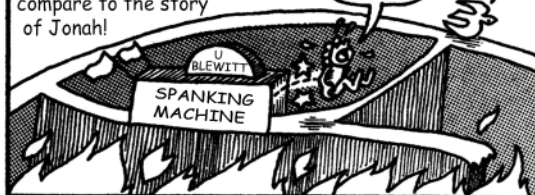
You, and you alone, are responsible for every step you take, so keep close to God's word, so that you can step wisely! You will not go astray if you stick to the plain instructions of the Bible!

See: Psalm 119:105/
2 Peter 1:9



When you succumb to temptation, and disobey God's word, you have deviated from the narrow road onto one that leads, if one stays on it, to destruction! To rescue you from your own self-destructive waywardness, God will discipline you to persuade you to return to the right path!

See: Hebrews 12:6-11 & compare to the story of Jonah!

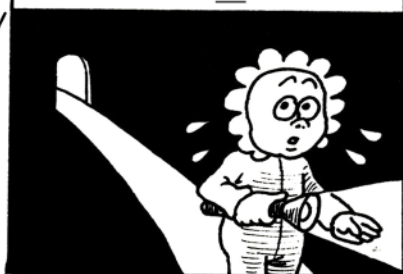


Many hate Jesus for no reason, and will hate you for no better reason than that you are His! If you suffer for Jesus, you are blessed! See: Luke 6:22/ 1 Peter 4:12-14



At various points along the way, you must pass through "tunnels"! These are periods when you are not able to see God's hand at work or feel His presence! Do not conclude that they indicate a fault on your part! You may be right in the middle of the right path! God has engineered these tunnels to test your faith!

These tunnels serve to weed out half-hearted disciples, who have only chosen to follow Jesus for the good feelings that He gives! See: Matthew 13:20-21

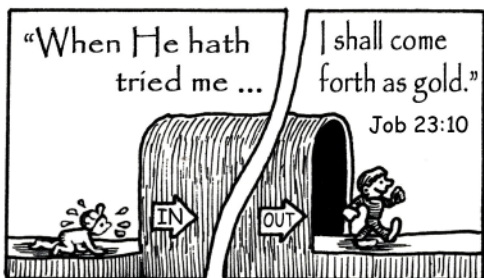


They also train you not to rely on feelings, but on God's promise never to leave you! Hebrews 13:5-6

Though I don't sense it, I know by your promise that you are with me still!



Through these tunnels, and through other kinds of trials, you will get to know God better, resulting in growth in wisdom, stability, and faith! Expect it! See: 1 Peter 5:10



We all go through these trials, and so did Jesus! We should not think it strange!

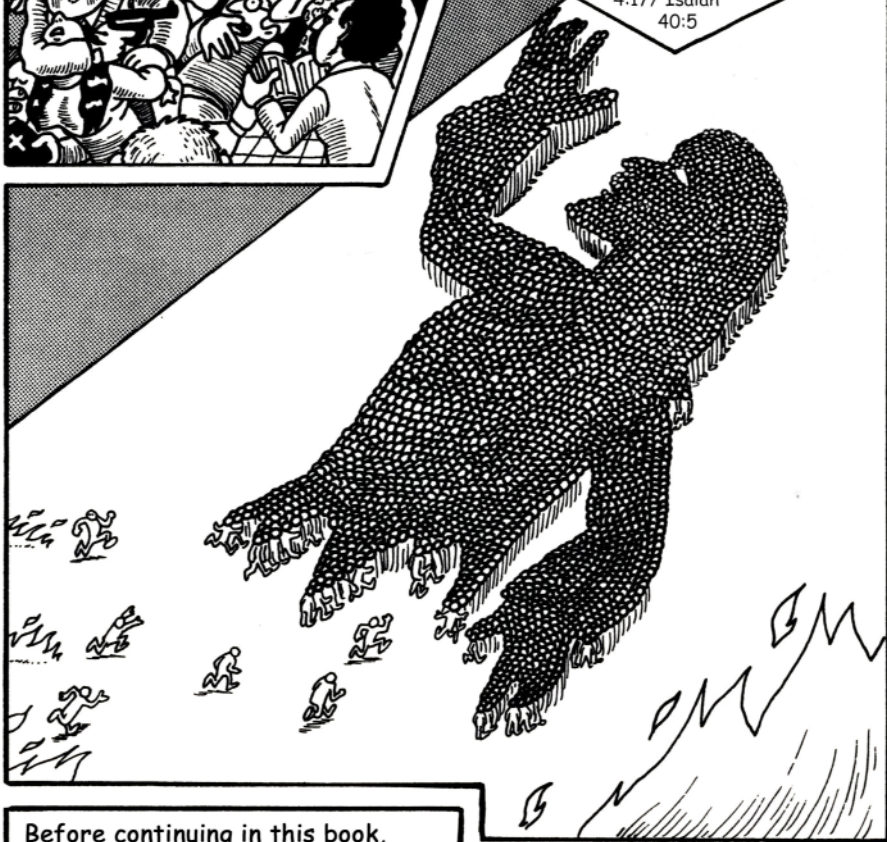
We live in a fallen world - one which is generally hostile toward Christ and His followers! Jesus predicted - and history confirmed - that the church will normally experience persecution!

See: Matthew 10:22/ 1 Peter 4:12/ John 15:19-21; 15:23



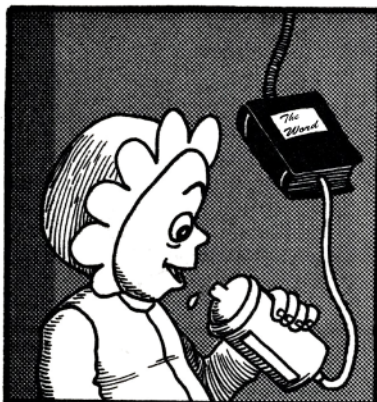
But as the fires of the tribulation burn more fiercely against us, we join ranks the more closely with our brothers & sisters and with the Lord, resulting in a fuller manifestation of the image of Christ in us and among us corporately! In this way, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together!

See: 2 Corinthians 3:18;
4:17/ Isaiah
40:5



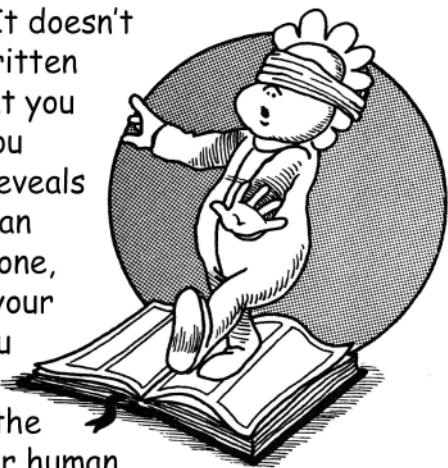
Before continuing in this book,
check one of the following!

- ☐ Hey! This is heavier than I expected! This is where I get off!
- ☐ I'm a fool! I'm going with Jesus all the way! No turning back! He's worth that much and more to me!



⇒ Every healthy baby has an appetite - and spiritual babies crave spiritual food! This food is the Word of God - and what good food it is! The Bible must be read, studied, meditated upon, and obeyed daily - not simply for the sake of "head knowledge", but for spiritual nourishment! See, for

example, 1 Peter 2:2/ Jeremiah 15:16/ Matthew 4:4. Many things the Bible says may be hard to understand at first, or even hard to accept! It doesn't flatter you! It is God's written Word, and it tells you what you need to know, not what you want to hear! The Bible reveals more of reality than you can learn from your senses alone, and is more reliable than your senses are! Therefore, you will often be in a position to trust the Bible against the testimony of your senses or human wisdom! **The Word of God is an unchanging constant in**



the universe, so you can always trust it.

Millions have before you and have NOT been disappointed!

See: Matthew 24:35/
Romans 3:4/ Proverbs 3:5;
30:5/ 2 Timothy 3:16-17



LESSON 1: Getting to Know "You" ...

Two-thirds of you is invisible! To ignore

There's more to you than meets the eye!



the spiritual side of you is to live in gross ignorance! People are more than mere physical beings, so to live life conscious only of your body must result in an imbalanced existence.

Let me introduce you to yourself ...

See: 1 Thessalonians 5:23



THE FLESH

That "animal" part of you - your body, along with all of its natural cravings, tendencies, and limitations - is sometimes called, "the flesh." It is this part of us that we naturally tend to gratify. Our old life was "after" or "according to" the flesh. Even now it seeks to dominate your life and keep you "carnal." (fleshly)!

See: Romans 8:5-8 & 13/
Ephesians 2:3



THE MIND (or SOUL)

The seat of your thought, emotion, and will is the real cockpit from which your life is directed.

The mind can be "carnal" (dominated by the flesh), but cannot be completely neutral. The flesh & the spirit both court the mind, seeking to exert influence over it at all times.

See: Galatians 5:16-17



THE SPIRIT

When you were "born again", you became spiritually alive to God! You now possess a living spirit, which - in union & cooperation with God's Spirit - urges you into communication & fellowship with God. Its influence runs directly counter to the influence of the flesh, and seeks to control the mind for good.

See: Romans 8:4/
Galatians 6:18

You're history, Flesh! No more privileges for you!

⇒ The flesh ruled your life before the Holy Spirit came to give you a new life!

Now the flesh has neither the right nor the power to govern you without your permission! Because you have been crucified with Christ, the flesh-dominated life is a thing of the past! The cross condemned the flesh, canceling its right to give orders! You now are to walk in the Spirit, who gives you power to "put to death the deeds of the flesh" and "not fulfill the lust of the flesh"!

See: Romans 8:8-13; 6:6/ Galatians 5:16,24



EXTINCT LIVING SPECIMEN

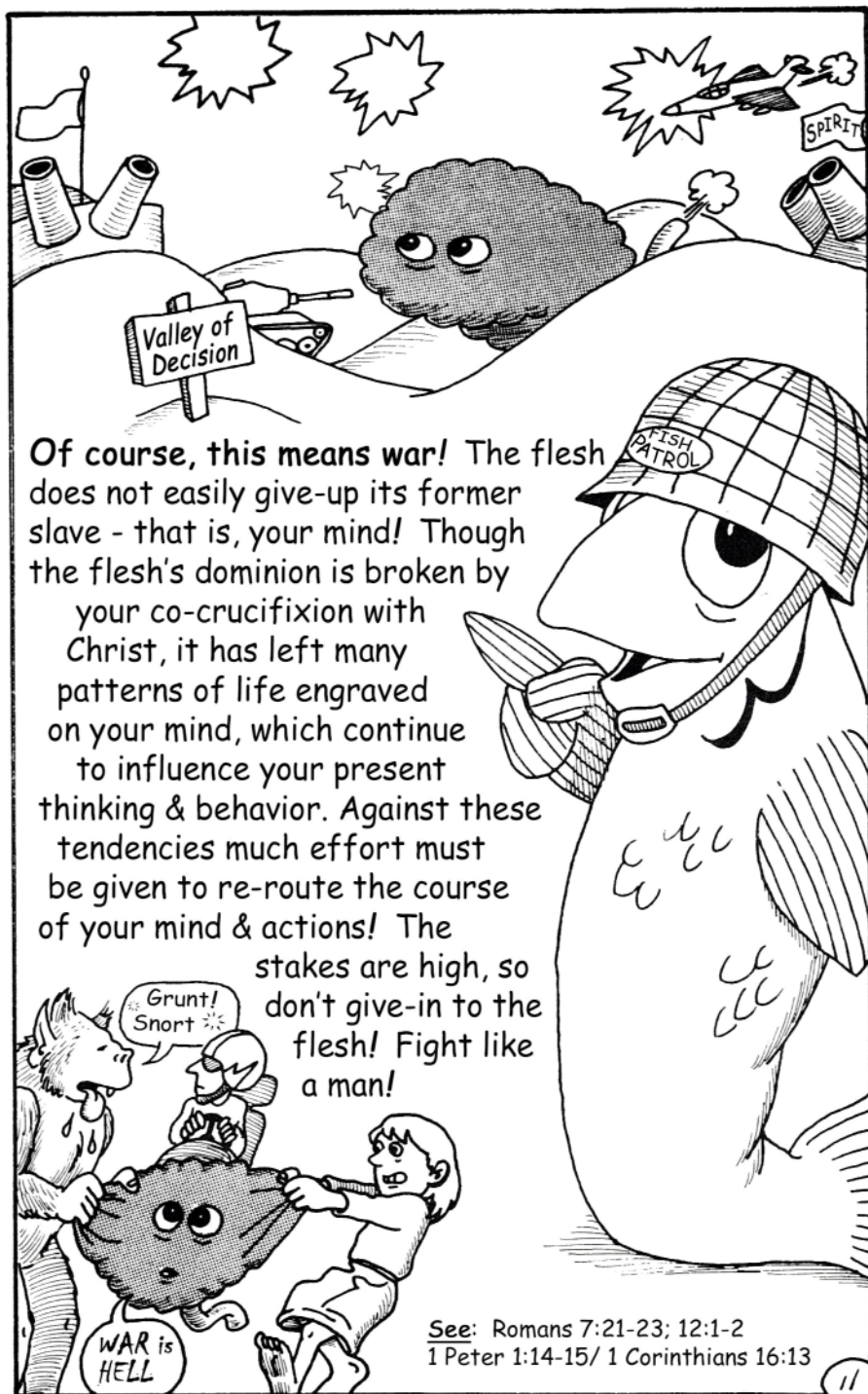
CRUCIFIED

There is your old haunt, the porno shop across the street!

You're dead meat, Flesh! My Lord is Jesus Christ! I take orders strictly from Him and don't owe you a thing!

FLESH!
Do NOT Feed!

JESUS



Of course, this means war! The flesh does not easily give-up its former slave - that is, your mind! Though the flesh's dominion is broken by your co-crucifixion with Christ, it has left many patterns of life engraved on your mind, which continue to influence your present thinking & behavior. Against these tendencies much effort must be given to re-route the course of your mind & actions! The

stakes are high, so don't give-in to the flesh! Fight like a man!

See: Romans 7:21-23; 12:1-2
1 Peter 1:14-15/ 1 Corinthians 16:13

The Law of SOWING & REAPING



A Farmer who planted corn, hoping to harvest wheat would look pretty foolish, wouldn't he? Well, a lot of folks make that very mistake in their spiritual lives! They want to reap a Godly life and Christ-like character, but they spend most of their time cultivating their flesh! Your soul

is a field in which some kind of

"fruit" will grow! God wants you to produce the fruit of Christian

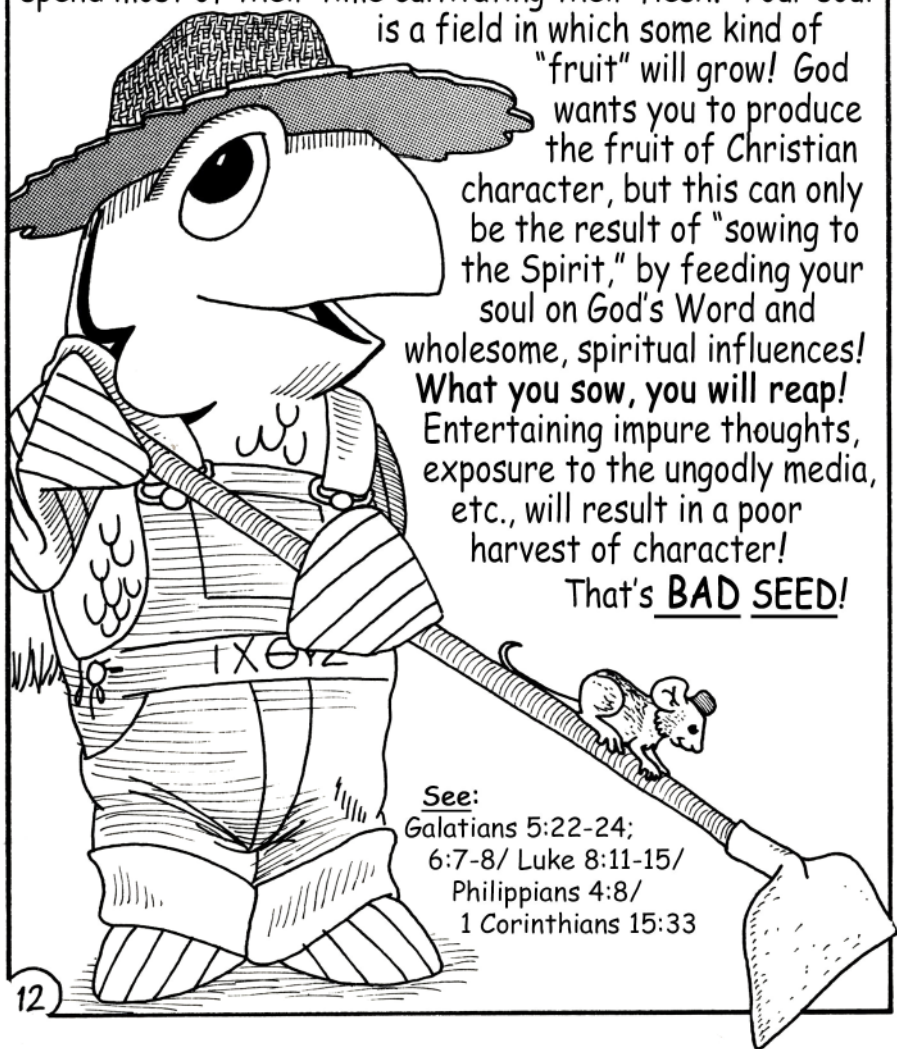
character, but this can only be the result of "sowing to the Spirit," by feeding your soul on God's Word and

wholesome, spiritual influences!

What you sow, you will reap!

Entertaining impure thoughts, exposure to the ungodly media, etc., will result in a poor harvest of character!

That's **BAD SEED!**



See:

Galatians 5:22-24;

6:7-8/ Luke 8:11-15/

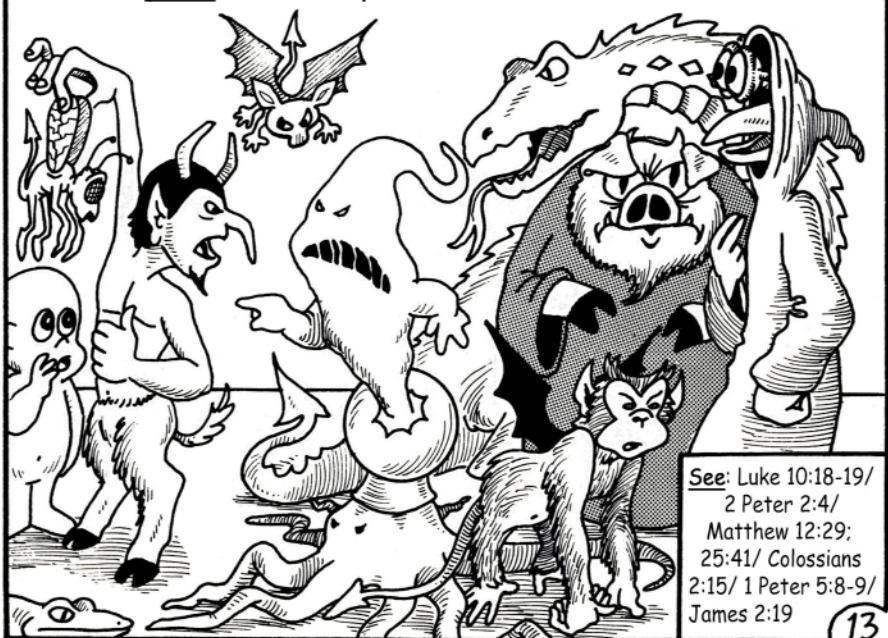
Philippians 4:8/

1 Corinthians 15:33

LESSON TWO: The Resistance ...



Besides the old flesh, you will face opposition from Satanic forces - demons, who at the bidding of their master, the Devil, seek to allure you into sin or otherwise make your life difficult! Though they cannot be ignored, the demons should not be feared! Satan has been stripped by Christ at the cross of any authority to control or harm you! In fact, demons fear your authority in Christ!



See: Luke 10:18-19/
2 Peter 2:4/
Matthew 12:29;
25:41/ Colossians
2:15/ 1 Peter 5:8-9/
James 2:19

In order to sin, one must temporarily see reality out of focus, confuse true values, and ignore remote consequences. In other words, sin is an act of stupidity! So why do otherwise intelligent people sin? For one thing, we are drawn by our own lusts (James 1:14-15)? Second, the devil deceives us into thinking sin's rewards are greater than sin's penalties! Also, he intimidates us with the lie that sin is unavoidable and cannot be ultimately resisted!

See: John 8:44



The best way to avoid sinning is to flee from temptation altogether! Keep far from places and people which tend to tempt you most! If temptation pursues you, then confront the tempter in Jesus' name and refuse to yield! If you stand your ground, Satan must eventually give-in (James 4:7)! Jesus said to pray to God for assistance against temptation (Matthew 6:13; 26:41)! Jesus, Himself, dealt with temptation by citing relevant portions of scripture (Matthew 4/ Luke 4)! If you use these resources, you will win over temptation!

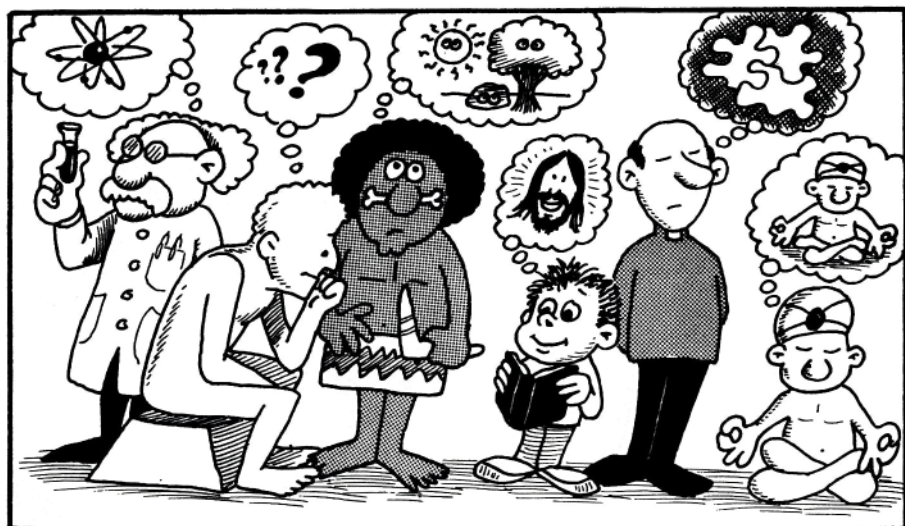
See: 1 Corinthians 10:13

Jesus Christ is the rightful King of the universe!
 However, most people still do not acknowledge His rule and maintain their allegiance to Satan! Hence, Satan is called the "god of this world" and the "prince of this world"! If Satan is the god & prince of the present world system, then it follows that this world is no friend of God's nor of His children! Satan has not only perverted the minds of men in the world, but also the forces of nature, so that creation itself "groans" for release! Though we must remain in this corrupt world, we are not to conform to or love its ways!



The task of the disciple is to change the world, not to be tainted by it or absorbed into it!

See: Matthew 28:18-20/ 2 Corinthians 4:4/ John 16:11,33; 17:15; 15:18-19/ Romans:19-23/ James 4:4; 1:27/ Ephesians 2:2/ 1 John 2:15-17

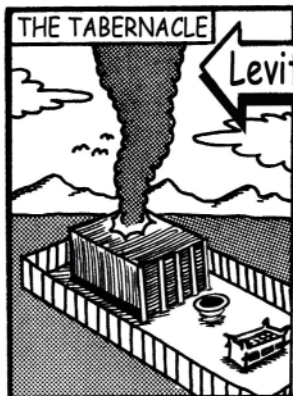


LESSON THREE: What is God like?...

Everybody, including the atheist, has some opinion about God! If God had not revealed the truth about Himself to us in the Bible, all men's notions about God might be equally valid! However, there are many things God has told us about Himself! First, He is personal - not some vague "force" or "higher power", but a conscious, caring Spirit, who created all things for a specific purpose, and who evaluates our lives on the basis of our conformity or nonconformity to the purpose! He is the only true God that exists, and is higher than, and other than, all created things! That is, He is "transcendent" - not inherent - in the cosmos! He governs the universe with both justice and grace, meaning there is an ultimate reckoning with Him for every thought, word, or deed. At the same time, God is a loving father, very attentive and approachable, and eager to forgive any lawbreaker who truly repents!

See: Hosea 4:1/ John 17:3; 15:21-22; 4:24/ Isaiah 45:18; 55:7-9/

Revelation 20:11-12/ Psalm 113:5-6; 103:13/ Matthew 12:36/ Romans 11:22



Leviticus 16:2

Luke 1:35

We can know such things about God because He has communicated with us! The medium of communication is "The Word". God's Word exists



in written form in what we know as the Holy Bible! But God's Word is His thought in expression, and has been also embodied in the man, Jesus Christ - who is the ultimate expression of the mind of God revealed in the flesh! God's Word is no other than Himself ("The Word was God" - John 1:1), so Jesus is none other than God manifest in a human person! We say, "God incarnate" to express this concept! How Jesus was God and yet also the "Son of God" is not simple to explain. The Bible says, "The Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us" (John 1:14)! God has manifested His presence on earth in various ways (a "Burning Bush", "Pillar of Fire", etc.) in history! In the Old Testament tabernacle, the presence of God was manifested in a visible cloud! The same glory "tabernacled" in the person of Jesus. The virgin-born man had only God as His Father, giving Him the title, "Son of God". He was also the fullness of God Himself, bodily manifest on earth!



See: John 1:1-4, 14/
Revelation 19:13/
1 Timothy 3:16/
Colossians 2:9/
Luke 1:35/
Isaiah 7:14; 9:6/
John 14:8-11

Why did Jesus come? In a word, He came to restore us to God, the Father! He taught us about the love of the Father toward us, and showed us how to live to

please the Father, and to be in His Kingdom! Also, He revealed the Father's

active concern by doing the Father's works of healing the sick, relieving the demonized, forgiving sinners, defending the poor and the afflicted, and even raising the dead! Finally, He died for our sins, removing the guilt barrier between us and the Father! His blood cleanses all sin! He was buried, but rose again the third day! He ascended to heaven promising to some-day return for us!

See: John 14:1-3 & 6; 10:32; 14:10/
Acts 2:22-24; 10:38-40/ 1 Peter 3:18/
1 Corinthians 15:3-4



Since God is a Spirit, and is holy in character, it is not suprising to find the Bible speaking of Him as "The Holy Spirit" (Acts 5:3-4). God gives His Spirit to His people, and He dwells in us, rendering our bodies "temples" of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19), so that, through His indwelling Spirit in the church, God has made His tabernacle to be with men. The Holy Spirit, in the Old Testament, empowered people to prophesy and to perform special works for God (2 Peter 1:11/ Exodus 31:3-5)! Even Jesus Himself performed His ministry in the power of the Spirit (Matthew 12:28)! After His ascension, Jesus poured out His Spirit on His followers (Acts 2:1-4), thus making them an extention of His own Person! Once endued with the Spirit, believers are

empowered to live a holy life and to do supernatural works like those Jesus did (Acts 1:8)! Peter's example is classic! Before the Spirit came, he denied Christ! Afterward, he boldly took his stand for Him!

BEFORE



AFTER



Matthew
26:69-74
Acts 2:4ff;
4:8-13
Luke 3:16
Romans
8:14-16
Ephesians
1:13
1 John
4:13

LESSON FOUR: "Be filled" ...



Paul wrote: "Don't be drunk with wine but be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18)! This is the key to successful Christian living, so don't neglect it, nor take it lightly! There are three kinds of relationships with the Holy Spirit available to people! These three are described in scripture by the use of three different prepositions: "with", "in", and "upon"! You need to discover which relationship you have, and move, if necessary, to the third!

"With"

Before your conversion, God's Spirit was with you, convicting you of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8)! It was this presence of the Spirit "with" you that inclined you to repent and become a Christian in first place! "No man can come to me, except my Father draw Him", Jesus said. This drawing is through the Spirit! To His disciples in the upper room, Jesus said, "The Spirit ... is with you" ... (John 14:17).



2

"In"

"...and He shall be in you!" (John 14:17). At the time of your conversion, the Holy Spirit took up residence in you, bringing you into the second relationship with Him! This happened to the apostles after Christ's resurrection, when He "breathed on them and said, 'receive ye the Holy Spirit'" (John 20:22)! This experience is called being "Born of the Spirit" (John 3:6)! All true disciples have the Spirit (Romans 8:9), though not all are "filled"!

WOW!
Something changed!
God is in me! I'm
one of His
kids!



"Upon"

Being a Christian and having the Holy Spirit in you, qualifies you to experience the ultimate relationship with the Spirit, when He comes "upon" you! Jesus said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you" (Acts 1:8)! This is called the filling or the "baptism" in the Holy Spirit! This relationship anoints and empowers you for service to Christ and all would-be disciples must possess it! See: Luke 24:49

So! Now
we'll see a few
changes around
here!



20

Getting Filled with the Holy Spirit ...



To live a Spirit-filled life requires that you first get filled with the Spirit! Only Jesus can baptize you with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11), and He can do so when and where He chooses! But the scriptural norm is for the Spirit to be imparted by the laying-on of another believer's hands (Acts 8:17; 9:17; 19:6)! More important, however, than the method of impartation, is the proper state of the heart of the recipient! To be filled with the Holy Spirit, one must, first of all, be a Christian disciple committed to obeying the Lord (Acts 5:32)! A full surrender of your will to God will allow the Holy Spirit to fill every part of your life! You should specifically ask God for the fullness of the Spirit (Luke 11:13/ James 4:2-3), and by faith (Galatians 3:2) receive Him as a free gift from God! God does not need to be coaxed to give His Spirit, for He wants you to be filled more than you desire it yourself! The Holy Spirit will fill your heart, but His fire in you can be quenched. (1 Thessalonians 5:19)!

"Maintenance" is a key concept of the Spirit-filled life! Many once-Godly people have fallen away through the neglect of this crucial point! Don't become another statistic! As the lamp in the tabernacle required maintenance to keep shining brightly - so you need to walk in the Spirit to stay filled.

See: Ephesians 5:18-27



WRONG!



RIGHT!



1 "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs ... making melody in your hearts to the Lord." (Ephesians 5:19)

It's too easy to let the world fill your head with its Spirit-quenching philosophy! Music is a major medium of this not-so-subtle influence. You must avoid and counteract such influences by singing & presenting your heart to God continually in worship.

See: Philippians 4:8

2 "...giving thanks always for all things unto God ..." (Ephesians 5:20)

God can use every circumstance that He allows you to encounter to help you grow spiritually more like Jesus (Romans 8:28 & 1 Peter 5:10)! Therefore, it is reasonable to thank Him for everything - since all things conspire to benefit you! It is not always easy to be thankful - but then, hell isn't easy either! You've got plenty to thank God for at all times!

See: 1 Thessalonians 5:18

WRONG!

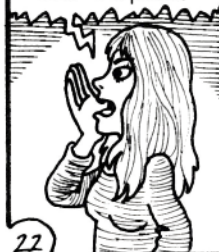


RIGHT!



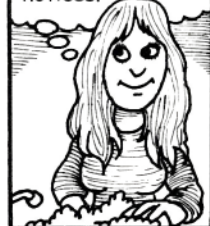
WRONG!

All right! Who's the slob that left dirty dishes all over the place?



RIGHT!

Somebody left dirty dishes! I'll get them cleaned-up before anybody notices!



3 "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." (Ephesians 5:21)

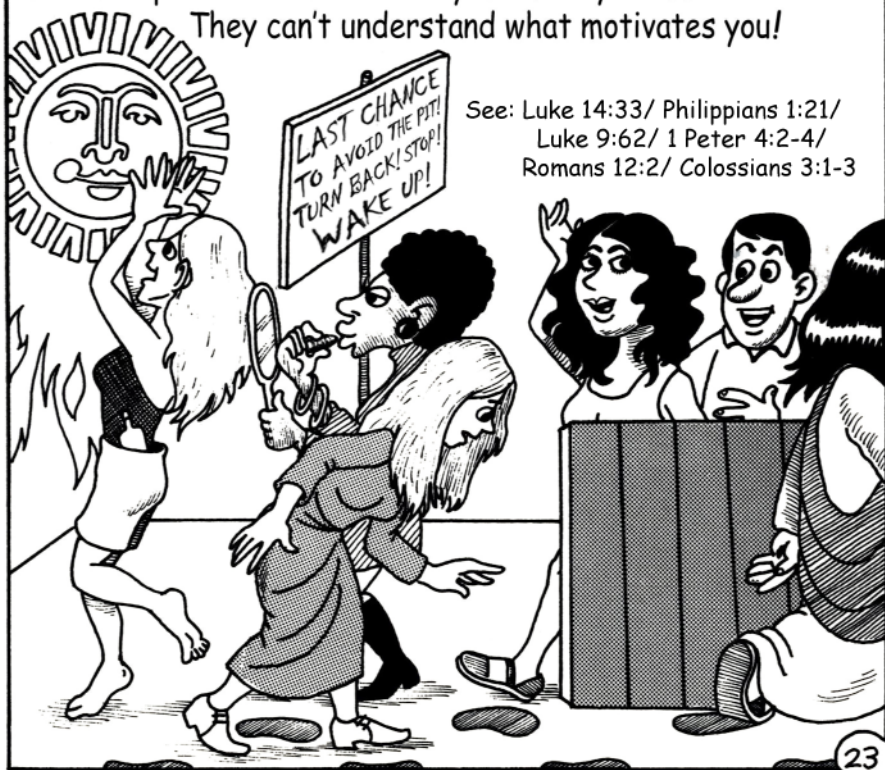
You are not here to be pleased, but to please God (Revelation 4:11/ Romans 15:1-3)! And He is pleased when His children humbly adopt the mind of a servant (like Jesus did - John 13:3-15) and serve one another! As you serve the brothers & sisters, you are serving Jesus (Matthew 25:37-40)! This is the mark of greatness in the Kingdom of God!

See: Matthew 20:25-27

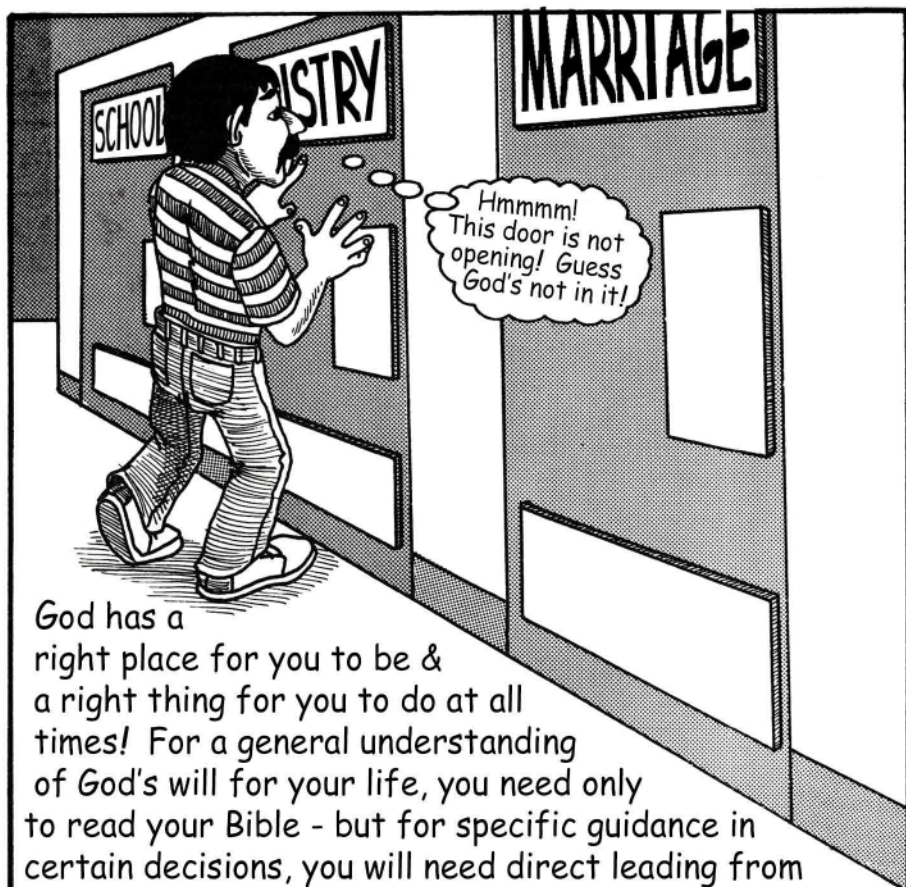
LESSON FIVE: Following Jesus ...

Following Jesus is now to be your lifetime vocation! It must be allowed to take priority over everything else - including survival! Following Jesus may well cost you everything, and you might even have to die for your loyalty to Him! This is not unusual, and Jesus warned us to be prepared for this contingency! Turning back should never so much as be entertained as an option! Temptation to turn back will likely come, since a walk with Jesus goes against the popular tide - and even many in the church will criticize you, if you uncompromisingly obey the Words of Christ and follow where He leads! As your mind becomes transformed more and more, you will hate what the world cherishes, and will love what the world despises! No wonder they will find you offensive!

They can't understand what motivates you!



See: Luke 14:33/ Philippians 1:21/
Luke 9:62/ 1 Peter 4:2-4/
Romans 12:2/ Colossians 3:1-3



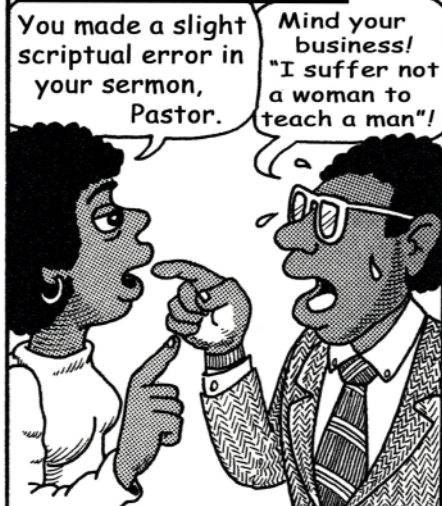
God has a right place for you to be & a right thing for you to do at all times! For a general understanding of God's will for your life, you need only to read your Bible - but for specific guidance in certain decisions, you will need direct leading from the Holy Spirit. This guidance will never contradict or supersede the teachings of scripture, but will give details not found in scripture for the specific will of God regarding (for instance) your career, your choice of a spouse, where to live & to whom you should witness.

As a general practice, you should pray for guidance. Then be still and let God lay upon your heart the right move to make. For major decisions, it is wise to seek counsel from mature Christians. Ask God for confirmations of various kinds - including "open doors"- which are God-sent opportunities & favorable circumstances.

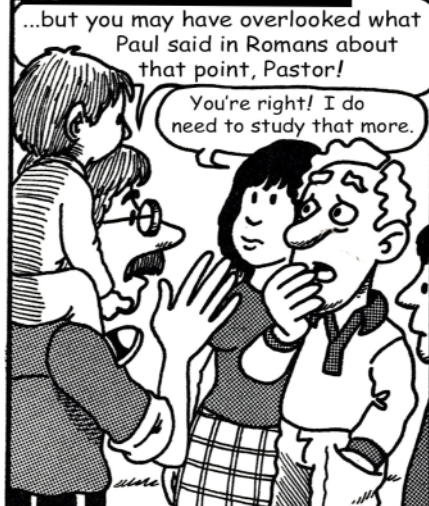
See: Romans 8:14/ Proverbs 3:5-6/ Psalm 119:105/
Proverbs 11:14/ 2 Corinthians 13:1

Even though God can speak to you directly, He may also speak indirectly through a person! We tend to dislike criticism, but it may be God's way of telling us something audibly! Even criticism offered in a bad spirit, or from someone not "qualified" to give it, may serve to correct us! We must keep a teachable - not a defensive - attitude! See: Proverbs 12:1, 15/ James 3:17

WRONG RESPONSE:



GOOD RESPONSE:



WRONG RESPONSE:

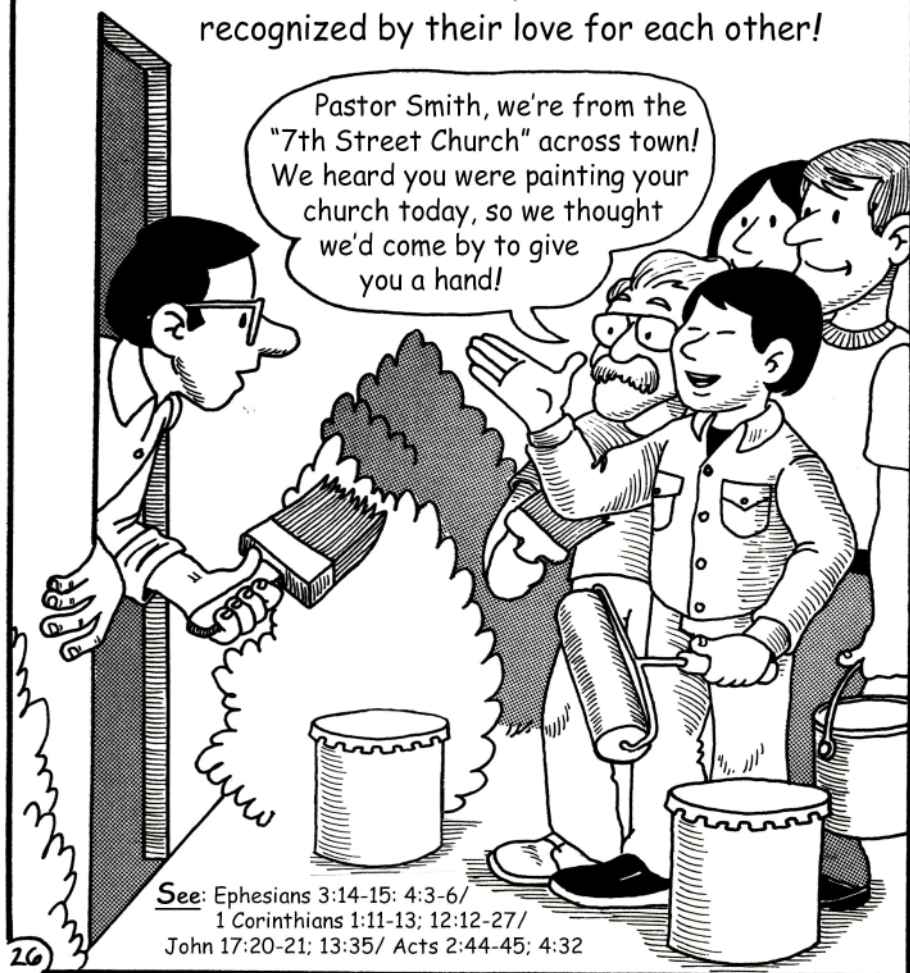


GOOD RESPONSE:



LESSON SIX: *God's Family & You*

Now that God is your father, all of His kids are your brothers & sisters! This is an international, interracial and interdenominational family - The global Body of Christ! We are all members of Christ, and therefore, of each other, as well! The Lord does not approve of any barriers that would bar fellowship or mutual concern among His children! Jesus prayed that His people would be united and said His true followers would be recognized by their love for each other!



See: Ephesians 3:14-15; 4:3-6/
1 Corinthians 1:11-13; 12:12-27/
John 17:20-21; 13:35/ Acts 2:44-45; 4:32



As a member of the worldwide Body of Christ, you are called to take part in the local expression of the Body in your area! You have a vital function to perform in the movement, just as each member of an organic body has! The whole body relies upon the involvement of each individual member, so don't neglect to fit-in! You have been given certain unique gifts by God, equipping you for a special function in the total, corporate expression of Christ to the world through His Body-the people of God! For this reason, you should be attached to some specific, regularly meeting group of believers for fellowship - no matter how imperfect all such groups may seem to be! Remember, you aren't perfect either! However, in a committed fellowship of believers, you and other disciples can promote mutual growth toward the perfection that you desire for them and for yourself! You can't grow without fellowship!

See: Hebrews 10:25, 1 Corinthians 12:14-22; 27-31/ 1 John 2:9-11

The Adventures of Jonathan Livingston Finger

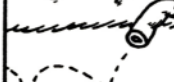
This body is asleep! I'm not being used here! Besides, these guys are all totally boring!



Ah, YES! That's much better! They will complain a bit, but they'll get used to my absence!



Besides, it serves them right! They never really appreciated me! I'm better off now!



Of course, I can't exactly see where I am going, but it beats hanging-out with those losers!



What do Christians do when they get together for "fellowship"?

Well, in general, they share the life of Christ together, singing and praising God, praying, studying the Bible and waiting on the Lord for His present speaking to the church through various gifted persons! In ancient times, the high point of the Christian meeting was "the breaking of the bread" - also called "The Lord's Supper", "Communion", or "Eucharist"! This consists of eating a ceremonial meal of bread and wine, which symbolizes the body & blood of Jesus, reminding us of His act of giving His life for ours! Not all modern Christian groups incorporate all of these features at every gathering, but most groups do all of these things at some time or another! Which group should you join? That's not easy to decide - and some groups can do you more harm than good! As a guideline, look for at least the following characteristics:



1. Godly leaders, like those described in 1 Timothy 3:1-3;
2. Reverence & faith in the Bible and an emphasis on teaching the scriptures to the congregation;
3. Openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit;
4. A desire for unity with all Christians.

See: Acts 2:42/

1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 14:26-33

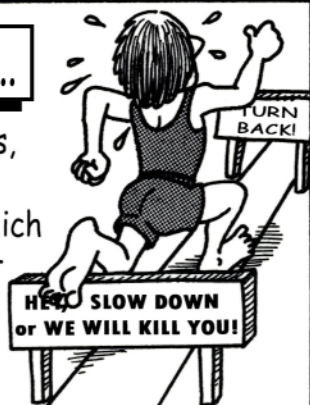


LESSON SEVEN: Continuing ...

In the Bible, you will find the words, "continue", "remain" and "abide" used interchangeably - but regardless of which word is used, the basic message is that if you don't keep it, you won't have it!

If you don't remain "in" Jesus, you won't ultimately be found "in" Him!

Accepting Christ put you into the race, but there's no prize unless you finish the course! And there will be many hurdles to overcome!



**Nobody's Perfect!
Why Kill Yourself?**

For those who persevere, there is eternal security

but not for those who give-up the race or who "draw back unto perdition". The prize is great! Don't hesitate to discard

any sin or weight that will put you out of the race! Many have run well at first - only to be distracted or disheartened

later on! They have lost all! Keep your eyes on Jesus, and press on toward the mark for the prize!

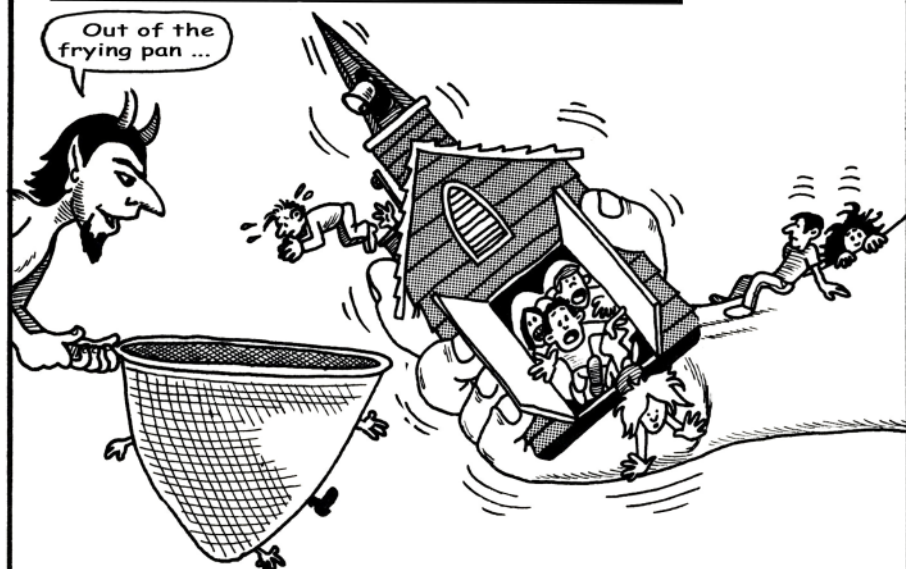
Continue!

**TAKE IT EASY!
Why not STOP to
smell the roses?
NO ONE ELSE IS
TRYING SO HARD!**

**What are you trying to do?
Make everyone else look bad?
Are you a spiritual
giant or something?**

See: John 15:4-6/ Romans 11:17-22/ Hebrews 10:38-39; 12:1-4/
Philippians 3:12-14/ Matthew 24:13/ Galatians 5:7/ 2 Timothy 4:7-8

THE SIFTING & THE SHAKING ...



Possibly you have not found it to be very difficult, yet, and continuing in Christ has been a breeze! If so, don't be shocked when you encounter "the sifting & the shaking"! There is much in Christianity that is desirable and attractive! Many people attach themselves to the church for these benefits, but without a real consecration of themselves to God! God knows this, and may periodically "shake-up" your world, your finances, your home, your church, etc.! He knows this does no harm to His true disciples - but by this method, He is able to "sift" His grain and remove the chaff! Personal trials, persecutions, church splits, etc., are used to allow true sheep to be distinguished from the goats! This is the less "attractive" side of discipleship, but don't let it get you disoriented. In the end, those who spiritually "survive" will reign with Christ!

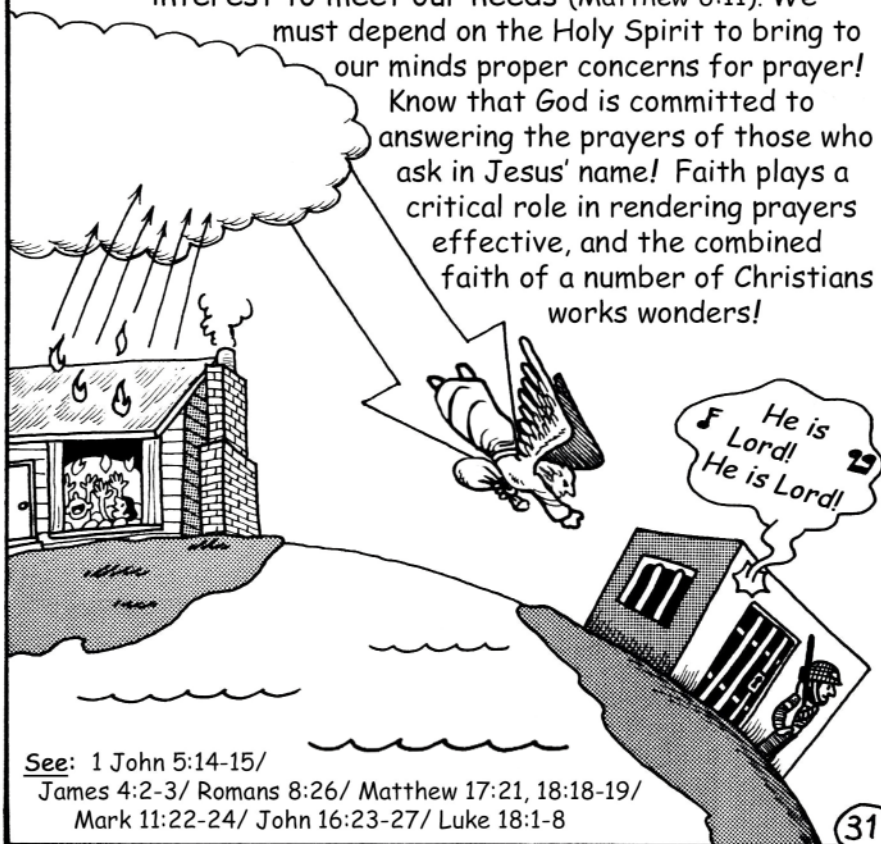
See: Hebrews 12:25-29/ Matthew 3:10-12; 13:20-22/
1 Corinthians 11:18-19/ Amos 9:9/ Luke 22:31/ 2 Timothy 2:12

CONTINUING IN PRAYER (ACTS 2:42)

By the Word of God and prayer, the Kingdom of God is spread & achieves victories! But not all prayer gets results! For starters, prayer is not intended to be a means of you getting God to do YOUR will! It is us humans inviting God to impose His will upon our world! It is God's Kingdom, not your empire, that your prayers are supposed to be building! (Matthew 6:10). If your prayers are not answered it may be because they are self-centered rather than God-centered! (James 4:3). To pray for our own daily needs does not violate this principle, since we are God's servants and it is in His interest to meet our needs (Matthew 6:11). We

must depend on the Holy Spirit to bring to our minds proper concerns for prayer!

Know that God is committed to answering the prayers of those who ask in Jesus' name! Faith plays a critical role in rendering prayers effective, and the combined faith of a number of Christians works wonders!



See: 1 John 5:14-15/

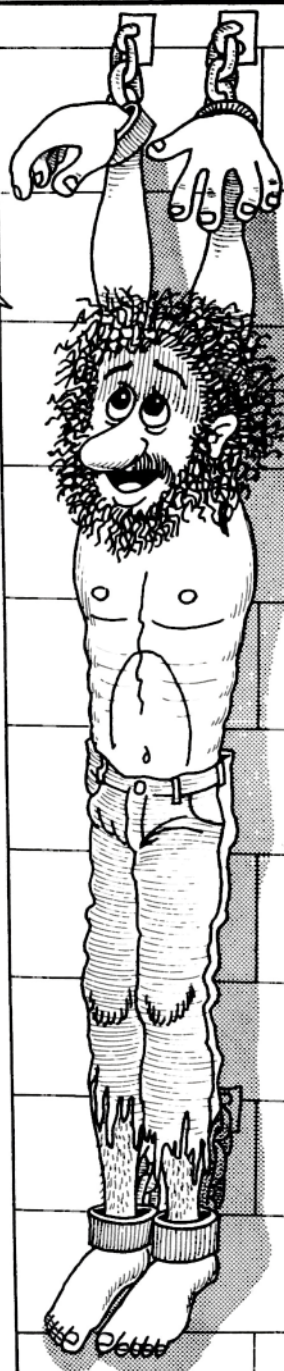
James 4:2-3/ Romans 8:26/ Matthew 17:21, 18:18-19/

Mark 11:22-24/ John 16:23-27/ Luke 18:1-8

Well, finally I am
no longer too busy to
talk with you ...

Prayer is your direct line to the Father, and in order to keep your relationship with Him tight, you should converse with Him all day long! Also, set aside special times daily to be alone with God and to pray! Apart from sin in your life, nothing at all can break your access to God in prayer! Demons, persecution, or even death can never sever this connection! Share with Him every concern and every need - and don't forget to praise and thank Him for past mercies. Also, listen! Don't dominate the conversation! Let God speak to you, too!

See: 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18/
Matthew 6:5-15; 26:40-41/ Psalm
66:18; 1 Peter 5:7/ Philippians 4:6/
Romans 8:35-39



If this booklet has proven helpful to you, please let others know about it. The truths covered here go all the way back to the teachings of Christ and His apostles in the Bible. They are often neglected in the modern church, so don't assume that all your Christian friends already know them. Many of them do not.

If you did not look up the scriptural references at the bottom of each page, we suggest that you go back over the material, looking them up and reading them. The explanations on the pages are those of the author, a mere, fallible man. However, the scriptures are the Word of God, and you should check-out everything you hear or read (including this book), against what God's Word says.

These booklets are not for sale. They can be downloaded for FREE from the website noted below. You will also find at the website site hundreds of resources-also FREE-both audio and text documents. If there is anything about which you want biblical understanding, there are hundreds of lectures on most topics of importance. There are also audio lectures of verse-by-verse teaching through the whole Bible.



Steve Gregg, the author and artist who produced this book has also written several full-length Christian books on important topics. He believes every human on the planet needs the information in his two books:

Empire of the Risen Son - Books One & Two.

While these books may be obtained in hard copy from any bookseller, it is possible to listen to them in audiobook format for FREE! Go to the website, and click the tab that says "Books". The audio links to these two books are there, just below the picture of the book. If you listen to these free audio books, and they do not transform your life, we will be surprised.

"God bless you as you endeavor to follow Jesus faithfully in this hostile world." -Steve Gregg

The Narrow Path

www.TheNarrowPath.com

www.Matthew713.com



Jesus Christ has issued a call to the general public to come to Him for the forgiveness of sins and rest from the burden of guilt (His shed blood, through faith in Him, can cleanse from all sin)! Many are content to receive these benefits and then go no further with Jesus. This is not reasonable, for to all who have come to Him, He issues marching orders! Jesus is not some static religious system, but a King & Commander with a job to do and ground to cover! He is presently recruiting disciples to follow Him and to be dispatched into all the world to spread His Kingdom! Want to come along? Better count the cost before you do! Check out

Matthew 11:28-30;
16:24-27 &
Luke 14:28-33!

This book is a training manual for serious beginners in a walk with Jesus Christ! If that describes you, read-on!

But, if you're going to draw-back when things get rough, you'd better think twice!

See: Hebrews 10:35-39 &
Luke 9:57-62

