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Ambassador

Delivering the Truth that Sets People Free

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ENCORE ISSUE

God of Wrath? or God of Love?

By Seth Halpern
Editor

Many people assume that there are two Gods in the Bible: There is the angry God of the Old Testament who sets unattainable rules and laws and then doles out harsh consequences for not meeting them. They see the God who smites people, seemingly at will, and even kills entire communities and nations with their women and children. Who would want to serve a God of Wrath like that?

Then the New Testament ushers in the Loving God, who even first appeared as a sweet baby. He grew up to be a gentle, loving, and forgiving person who didn't judge the prostitutes, lepers, or the

down trodden, and lowest of society.

This is how the Bible might be seen at quick glance. However, a deeper look will show that God has not changed and He is both Loving AND Holy (which

brings about his wrath), which has remained the same since the beginning.

After creation, when Adam and Eve sinned, God's holiness could not allow them into his presence without a covering for that sin. They were also driven out of the garden and would

eventually see death-the end of life. In Noah's time, God had enough of man's sin and corruption and did away with the entire human race apart from Noah's family. In both of those situations, God

made a promise, to Adam, it would be that a redeemer would come, to Noah, a rainbow showed that God would never flood the earth again.

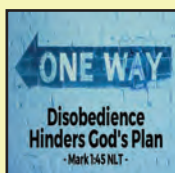
Later, the family of Abraham was blessed and promised provision, protection and the hope of a redeemer.

The Law given to Moses required the Jewish people to follow rules in many areas of life and worship. The rules (or Law) was given to keep them separate from the pagan cultures so that Israel would remain "Holy" and His Chosen people. Even the dietary laws were established in order to keep the people healthy. Yes, God showed His power and might and did so to provide and protect His people at times. He also demonstrated that He was not to be taken lightly and some were taught a harsh or even fatal lessons.

Throughout the Kingdom of Israel, God sent prophets to warn the people that their sin would bring disaster. He

“Although, you can't earn your salvation or God's love, if you are not seeking to please Him in response to His love for you, then you should examine whether you're in the family of God.”

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Disobeying Christ in the name of Christianity
by Dave Kugelman

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Compassion: 10 Ways to Help People in Crisis
by Steve Arterburn

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thebridechurch.org
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Church of Glad Tidings
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 Sundays - 10am
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 Pastor Sean Blount
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 4902 Powerline Rd, Olivehurst
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www.facebook.com/cccplo

Legacy Baptist Church
 1980 S. Walton Ave., YC
 Sundays - 11am & 6pm
 Wednesdays - 7pm
 Pastor Dan Callaghan
www.fbcyuba.com

Loma Rica Baptist Church
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INSPIRATION

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"When Good Enough Isn't!"

By Lee Roberts

Years ago, I worked in construction and my employer required me to join the carpenter's union. As a member of the union, it was necessary to attend two weeks of union classes learning the various aspects of the construction trade. One day the instructor assigned a project that we were to complete individually, and for a couple of hours, I diligently followed the specifications. When I was satisfied with the finished product I handed it to the instructor and asked, "So, what do you think? Is this good enough?"



but the good. Meaning the bad can be easily avoided because it is easily seen. But the **good**? Well, that is on the acceptable end of the spectrum, so "good enough" is deemed... well... good enough. Somehow believing that if we at least get close to the best, that is sufficient.

Sadly, this mindset has become prevalent within Christian circles. It is far too common to hear comments such as, "I may not be perfect, but I am better than most." Or "I know I can do better, but that is good enough."

God's desire is for us to discern what is best. Aim for what is best. Do what is best. Live the best. Speak the best. In doing so, as the passage above mentions, we enjoy a degree of purity and blamelessness.

With the "bad" on one end of the spectrum and the "best" on the other end, we find "good enough" falls somewhere in the middle. Sounds kind of like being lukewarm, don't you think? And do we need to be reminded what the Bible says about that?

I will never forget that crusty old carpenter looking over the top of his glasses and saying, "Young man, in this business there ain't no such thing as good enough."

As those words came from his lips, I may have been listening to one carpenter, but I heard a different Carpenter speaking. A man was talking, but Jesus was speaking because in His Word I read...

"And this is my prayer... that you may be able to **discern what is best** and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ." Philippians 1:9-10

Someone once said that the primary enemy of the **best** is NOT the bad,

"Thank You Jesus": My Battle Cry

"For the Joy of the Lord is our strength" ~Nehemiah 8:10

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." ~ Philippians 4:4

"A Christian should be an alleluia from head to foot." ~Augustine

"I find that rejoicing opens me for the invasion of His Spirit. All great prayer, all liberating worship, all lasting encounters with God, begin with praise and rejoicing."

~Lloyd John Ogilvie: Let God Love You

By Wendi Blount

In this fallen world there's enough darkness and despair to crush the very souls of men. Just read the news or talk to a hurting neighbor or look over your own life. This is a wounding world we live in and it usually leaves its mark in the form of physical, mental and emotional scars. Remember Jesus still bore the scars of the cross after the resurrection, yet the cross is not a symbol of despair but of victory!

To really do battle in this world against the darkness we must praise God when the darkness seems to be winning. I'm not speaking out of ignorance. I've experienced the brutality of violence, the death of loved ones; a childhood full of all those abuses no one likes to think about. The question in the face of evil is: Is it bigger than God?

This doesn't mean we ought to disavow our suffering. That would only give the pain power. Of course we hurt and grieving is simply another name for healing. Grieving must do its work in us if we are not to remain broken. Too often wounded people attempt to avoid the pain of grief because it makes them

feel small and vulnerable. We must trust God in our weakness as Paul learned to do in his suffering when Jesus told him, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9) Jan Dravecky beautifully described how this works when she wrote: "What suffering and persecution and pain and difficulties do is not so much make us weak, as show us we are weak. Without them, we can deceive ourselves into believing we're prizefighters. With them, we're reminded that we're not constructed to function on our own power. The trick is to allow suffering to be used as a tool to help us depend on God and not upon ourselves."

So often the struggling Christians I meet react to this message with: "yeah, yeah, I know that, but..." response which indicates that they have missed the meaning altogether. The point is not that God Is. The point is; how should a believer respond to the truth that God Is. How is it ever good for a believer to respond to tribulation with an "I know

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THE AMBASSADOR

- ✂ **The Ambassador** is a free, monthly publication promoting unity and revival among the local Yuba-Sutter area Bible-believing churches
- ✂ **The Ambassador** has a circulation 3,700 - 5,500 and is distributed in local churches and businesses in the community.
- ✂ The purpose of **The Ambassador** is to pursue the great commission of Christ by making disciples and to encourage, inform, challenge and connect the local body of Christ.
- ✂ We believe in the inspiration and authority of the Bible as the written word of God. We believe that God exists as One, in three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ✂ We believe that the atoning work of Christ (His death) on the cross and His resurrection is the **ONLY** means of salvation and the only way to Eternal Life in Heaven.
- ✂ We welcome editorial content from anyone wishing to promote the mission of **The Ambassador**. All articles and advertisement content is subject to the approval of the editor.
- ✂ Views expressed in *The Ambassador* do not necessarily reflect those of our sponsors or advertisers.

Editor/Publisher - Seth Halpern

Advisory - Dave Kugelman

Layout/Design - Teresa Davis

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A DIFFERENT WAY

By Paula McBride

Martin and Gracia Burnham, missionaries for seventeen years with New Tribes Mission, were excited about celebrating their eighteenth wedding anniversary at an upscale resort off Palawan Island, Philippines. While there, they were kidnapped by a militant group of Muslims and held captive for 376 days. The Burnhams faced near starvation, constant exhaustion, frequent gun battle, coldhearted murder and intense soul-searching about a God who sometimes seemed to have forgotten them. On June 7, 2002, in a firefight between the Philippine military and the extremists, Martin was killed and Gracia, although wounded, was rescued.

As I ponder this story, I sense that countless prayers sped heavenward for over a year. Appeals for God's intervention certainly came from the three Burnham children and the missionaries still on the New Tribes compound. Add to that the prayers of church family and supporters in the United States, and then the number of people who began praying when the story hit national news. Where was God when faithful servants, Martin and Gracia, needed Him so desperately? Did He hear the prayers?



The answer is yes, though God answered in a different way--His unfathomable way. Gracia writes that the captives were able to stay faithful to God during the ordeal by going over and over the truth of God's Word. They reflected on the promises of God and sang hymns. When Martin died, she was grateful that he didn't have to be chained any more. God had gotten him out of the jungle. Today Gracia chooses to believe that God does all things well.

In His grace, God provides examples of faithful servants in the Bible whose prayers were answered a different way. David wrote many psalms that indicated he went through long periods of time without positive answers to his pleas. When Paul prayed for relief from his

thorn, God did not take it away, nor did He take away the cup that Jesus had to drink.

So how are you persevering with your unanswered prayers? A prayer I prayed for a little less than half my entire life was answered last July with a definite, "I'm going to answer a different way from what you are asking. You are asking the right thing in the right way, but I know the plans I have for you. And don't worry about My reputation. I'll take care of that."

Author Henry Blackaby writes that part of the process of experiencing God is a crisis of belief. When we're hanging on the precipice of unanswered prayer, we are tested in the area of our devotion. Do we acknowledge the

sovereignty of the Holy One? He is God and I am not. The moment we allow the blood of Jesus to purchase us, we give up all rights to ourselves. God desires to conform us to the image of His Son, and only He knows what it will take to do it. Our circumstances are tailor-made to suit us individually, and a prayer answered one way for someone else might not be the way He answers it for us.

It is important to remember that God is not heartless when the prayers He answers a different way result in suffering and death. It hurts Him, too, and He cries just as we do (Matt.23:37; John 11:33-37). The unspeakable horror of the cross is testimony that He does not exempt Himself from suffering.

So let's not grow weary in bringing our unanswered petitions to the throne room. Let's be submissively persistent and comfortably confident because Abba Father is in control, and He does all things well.

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CALENDAR

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ONGOING EVENTS

ROAD TO RECOVERY - Sundays, 7:00pm
Christian 12 Step support group
Crossroads Community Church - 445 B. St. Yuba City

GRIEF SHARE - Mondays at 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Praise Chapel Church 398 Aylor Ave.
A grief support program that meets weekly to help give encouragement after the death of loved one. Anyone can attend on any week because each class is "self-contained." For more information about GriefShare you can go to www.griefshare.org or contact the church at 530-870-0511.

PRAYER FOR THE NATION - Every Tuesday Night 7PM - 8:30PM
Church of Glad Tidings
1179 Eager Rd (Building 200) - Live Oak, CA 95953
(530) 671-3160 - info@churchofgladtidings.com

GRIEF SHARE; GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP - Wednesdays, 6:00pm,
For those dealing with the loss of a loved one.
Crossroads Community Church - 445 B. St. Yuba City

EMBASSY HOUSE OF PRAYER - Every Thursday Night 7PM - 8:30PM
Church of Glad Tidings
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(530) 671-3160 - info@churchofgladtidings.com
"My house shall be called a house of prayer." (Matt. 21:13). The church today is in an all-out war against the evils of darkness. The body of Christ is called to step up and be aggressive in their prayer life.

FREEDOM NIGHT - 2nd Friday of each month
Church of Glad Tidings
1179 Eager Rd., Live Oak
www.churchofgladtidings.com
Join us for a night of worship, prayer, and freedom

BETHESDA HEALING WELL - 3rd Saturday of the Month 10AM - 12PM
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Come to receive prayer and be refreshed while soaking in an atmosphere of worship and praise. Sorry, No Childcare.

• What Do You Need? •
• Find it Here •

• Prayer List for April 2024 •

- 1-Apr **April Fools Day**- "The Fool has said in his heart 'There is no God'- Pray for those with stubborn and hardened hearts to be awakened by God.
- 2-Apr **Pastors**- That God would give them strength, courage and wisdom to speak the truth from the pulpit
- 3-Apr **Pray for China, Sudan, North Korea and other nations** that God would intervene and the leadership would restore civil rights
- 4-Apr **Homeless- Safety, health and provision**- Twin Cities Rescue Mission, other local homeless ministries. Safety from summer heat
- 5-Apr **World Affairs**- Pray about international activities that point to the Last Days
- 6-Apr **Israel**- Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem-and for an end to the war against in Gaza- the destruction of Hamas and the protection of civilians as well as limited Israeli casualties
- 7-Apr **Veterans**- Pray for all those who served our country and their families to get the assistance they need
- 8-Apr **Mental Health**- Pray for the millions of people who struggle with Mental Health/ Illness issues and suicidal thoughts, that they would receive support & treatment
- 9-Apr **The Economy**- Pray for the underemployed, unemployed and struggling small businesses- Pray for financial stability and resources
- 10-Apr **Global Revival**- Pray that our global chaos would lead multitudes to repent and follow the Lord!!
- 11-Apr **Local city/county leaders**- Wisdom for leading our community
- 12-Apr **Marriages**- Pray that relationships would grow and families would seek the Lord together
- 13-Apr **Local Ministries**- Pray for continued financial support and volunteers to meet needs (see page 3)
- 14-Apr **California**- pray for our Godly representatives (including James Gallagher and Doug LaMalfa) to fight against liberal and harmful state policies.
- 15-Apr **Pray that fathers would give Godly wisdom** and have a positive impact and influence on the lives of their children
- 16-Apr **Disabled**- that they would receive the assistance and support they need
- 17-Apr **Life**- Pray that abortion clinics would be shut down that people would choose life for their babies.
- 18-Apr **Human Trafficking**- Pray for the freedom, healing and restoration of survivors and for traffickers to repent
- 19-Apr **Pray that God** would show Himself to Pres. Biden and he would radically change his life and leadership
- 20-Apr **Discipleship**- Pray that believers would seek to follow Jesus and become more like Him every day!
- 21-Apr **The Persecuted Church around the world.** Pray that believers would stand strong in the midst of brutal persecution
- 22-Apr **Pray that children of fatherless homes** as well as those in foster care would feel loved and protected by adults as well as the Lord
- 23-Apr **Restore America!** Pray against the divisiveness and violence in this nation
- 24-Apr **Addicted**- pray for those under the control of substances that they would surrender to the Lord pursue and receive the treatment they need
- 25-Apr **Race Relations**- Pray for Race relations in our nation. Pray for understanding and collaboration between races and an ease of racial tension
- 26-Apr **Pray for each of us to be bold by the Holy Spirit** to speak and act in accordance with God's Word and His Way!
- 27-Apr **Unity of Churches/Global impact**- Pray for churches to unite and influence the world!
- 28-Apr **Seniors and Elderly**- Pray for renewed physical and mental strength.
- 29-Apr **Pray for your neighbor**- for opportunities to serve them, pray with them and share the Gospel with them!
- 30-Apr **Schools**- Pray for the removal of harmful and Godless curricula that will cause confusion in children

SPECIAL EVENTS

ANNUAL THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS LUNCHEON FOR CHRISTIAN ASSISTANCE NETWORK

On Wed. April 17th is the annual Thank You Volunteers and Supporters Luncheon for Christian Assistance Network. It is a day to celebrate the things that C.A.N. accomplished during each year. In 2023 we supplied food for 8018 People, Clothing for 3454 people. Our lunch this year is being hosted by Marysville United Methodist Church, 730 D Street in Marysville, CA on April 17th at 11:30 am. Pastor Glen Raley will be our guest speaker. Anyone interested in helping to support C.A.N. would be welcome to attend our luncheon. The luncheon is free but would appreciate knowing who would be coming to the luncheon. The phone number at C.A.N. is (530) 671-7344. We are open from 1 pm to 3 pm on Mon. thru Thurs.

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NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

Adventure Church - 876 Onstott Frontage Road, Yuba City
Thursday, May 2, 2024, 7:00-9:00 a.m. Full Buffet Breakfast
Guest Speaker: Kevin Downes
Tickets: \$30 each or \$200 table of 8
Tickets Available: Adventure Church, Shadd Janitorial, or Gaiser Pets.
Event Sponsored by Yuba-Sutter Christian Community Network
For More Information- Contact Dave Kugelman at (530) 632.9292, www.YSCCN.org

Contact Seth Halpern, Editor - (530) 933-1385
editor@ambassadornewspaper.com
to list Special Events your church is hosting.
(partner churches have priority)

• Support Area Church Events •

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Matthew 16:18-19



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1. Pray with us and for us to not only sustain but to grow in impact. Pray for our health and for spiritual protection
2. Read it yourself – You will be enriched by reading it.
3. Share a copy or an article with someone- you will have someone in your life benefit from an article in every issue, cut it out and send it to them, or send them the whole issue
4. Leave a copy of The Ambassador when you're having coffee or a meal or waiting for your car. Use it like a tract. It may be less intimidating.
5. Monitor The Ambassador at your church: assure its presence and visibility
6. Subscribe for a friend or family member (or yourself)
7. Find new locations- ask businesses that you frequent to take some papers, deliver and monitor them
8. Deliver a small route- 1 to 2 hours each month
9. Give financially as an Individual partner, business partner, churches/ministries partner (every dollar helps to impact the community)
10. Talk to your like-minded Christian friends, family, business associates and church leadership, about helping as well.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1: "GOD OF WRATH OR GOD OF LOVE"

always sought to bring the people back to Him. Why? Because of His Love. All the while, God provided a way be right with Him and enjoy His love and provision. Man usually rebelled and then suffered for it. In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God told them "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." That has always been the heart of God.

Just as people often think of the God of the Old Testament as the God of Wrath, they envision the New Testament God once of Love. It is true that "God is Love". It says so in 1 John 4:7,8 . Jesus did show grace to the lepers, demon possessed, prostitutes and others abandoned by society. However, He also used scathing words towards the religious leaders. Let's not forget that He told us that to follow Him, we would need to take up our "cross". The cross is not appealing. It represents death. He was speaking of death to self, which is our own will and any desires that are not part of God's will. Ananias and Sapphira, two "believers" gave some money to help the church- but they didn't give all that they said they did. They lied to God.

**God's wrath is part of God's glory.
Because if you look at the cross
and don't see the wrath
of God against sin,
you are not seeing the
love of God there either.**

They were both killed by God! It was to show that you don't "mess with" God! He is Righteous and will not be made a fool of or mocked (Gal 6:7) Later in the New Testament, we are told that God will not allow people into Heaven who continue to sin without confessing and repenting before God. In His love, He provided a sacrifice, the only sacrifice that would once and for all pay for the entire cost of our sin. It is like the sentence handed down to the criminal by the judge. Except in this case, Jesus "does the time". Up until that time, God

instituted a system of animal sacrifice that would bring temporary forgiveness. Yet, now by giving up His only Son, Jesus, there would never be further need for forgiveness. Jesus death on the cross was not simply to demonstrate the horrible end of a wonderful man and profound teacher. It was the fulfillment of God's plan from the beginning. It was the plan that was promised as early as when Adam sinned. Why the need for a sacrifice? Why couldn't God just overlook the sins of mankind? Because of His Holiness and Righteousness.

Nothing sinful can be anywhere near God. Only complete purity can be in His presence. We could never get there on our own. So, because God is Holy and Just, His justice requires payment for the sin. The only payment that would satisfy that would be the purity of a perfect sacrifice. This is why God the Father had to offer Jesus His Son, who willingly gave His life for us. All of our sins have been paid for by the blood shed of Jesus on the cross.

Many years ago, it was much more common to hear about the God of Holiness and Wrath in our churches. The Fear of God was taught, possibly to the neglect of the Love of God. In fact, in the 18th century a prolific preacher, writer and theologian named Jonathan Edwards preached a sermon titled "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God". People responded by confessing their sins and repenting. It helped to usher in the revival of the First Great Awakening. Today, it is rare to hear these kinds of messages from pulpits. They would be seen as legalistic and certainly not "seeker-friendly". We have nowadays all kinds of marketing and fun activities to bring people to our churches. There is nothing wrong with

CONTINUE ON PAGE 14

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- Be Fair When Interpreting the Bible -

By Eric Lyons, M.Min.

Twenty-first-century Americans think very little about how contradictory our communication sounds to those unfamiliar with modern American English. Driving on parkways and parking on driveways seems very illogical given the definitions of parking and driving. Receiving shipment from trucks and cargo from ships sounds equally bizarre, though not to Americans. We have feet that smell and noses that run. We eat hamburgers made of beef and hotdogs made of pigs. What's more, we drive on interstate highways that never cross into other states (e.g., Hawaii's interstate H1), and we are programmed to read speed "limit" signs as speed "minimum" signs.

One of the most awkward questions Americans ask is, "You didn't do that, did you?" How are we supposed to answer such a question? We generally say "No," but mean "Yes," and if we mean "No," we say "Yes." Recently I asked my two young sons a similar question. One said "No" and the other said "Yes," but they meant the same thing. They simply were confused as to how to answer such a question. When one pauses to consider the many figures of speech Americans use in communication, he is overwhelmed with the number of paradoxes we regularly invoke.

It is essential for students of the Bible to recognize that the inspired writers also used many figures of speech. If we fail to identify these idioms, we may ignorantly draw the same conclusion that so many Bible critics have drawn—that the Bible writers made mistakes. In actuality, the "mistakes" are on the interpreter's part, not God's or His penmen's. When skeptics allege that Jesus lied when He stated He

would rise from the grave "after three days" (Mark 8:31), because on other occasions He indicated that He would rise "the third day" (Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; cf. Acts 10:40), they fail to recognize a common figure of speech in ancient times. "After three days" and "on the third day" frequently meant the same thing (cf. 2 Chronicles 10:5,12; Genesis 42:17-18; Esther 4:16-5:1; see Lyons, 2004). Even Jesus' first-century enemies used these expressions synonymously (Matthew 27:63-64).

One critic of Christ has condemned Jesus for calling His mother "woman" in John 2:4 (see McKinsey, 1995, p. 134). Allegedly, the Son of God would not use such an impersonal noun in such a disrespectful way. In truth, however, though this expression may sound rude in the 21st century, 2,000 years ago it was used in a most respectful manner (cf. Matthew 15:28; John 19:26; 20:15).

If Bible critics would pause to think of the plethora of figures of speech we use everyday (which to some sound perplexing at best, and contradictory at worst), likely far fewer alleged discrepancies would be levied against the Bible. A fair approach to Scripture is one that takes into account its many figures of speech, rather than simply assuming the worst of its writers.

<http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/3310>

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Kug's Kolumn

Disobeying Christ in the name of Christianity Inter-Faith: Good or Bad?

Are we disobeying Christ in the name of Christianity? That might be an odd question, but Christians do it all the time. And it is all in the name of Christian love and unity. Let me explain. Last week a local (Christian) church hosted a prayer meeting. Prayer meetings are essential because as Christians we believe that God answers prayers that are prayed in the name of Jesus Christ. The unique thing about this prayer meeting was that all faiths were invited. Let me be clear. They said all faiths, not all "Christian denominations." When we unite with Christian brothers and sisters from other denominations we are fulfilling the desires of Christ when he prayed the following from John 17:21 (NLT) "My prayer for all of them is that they will be one, just as you and I are one..." However, this prayer meeting was intended to bring all faiths together; Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindu's, etc. Their invitation encouraged people to come and pray for their own prayers or pray the prayers from other traditions.

We are to love all people including those lost or trapped in false religions. Jesus would want us to befriend those of other faiths for the purpose of introducing them to the One True God; Jesus. We cannot stand together with people of other faiths who deny

that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Amos 3:3 (NLT) Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction? We send a very confusing message to the unbelieving world when we unite with other faiths for the purpose of prayer. They will be led to believe that Christianity is simply one choice among many religious options. That simply is not true. Jesus Christ is God. Period. Therefore there is no other. All other gods are false gods and it is our responsibility to lovingly share this truth.

Several years ago, I challenged a local pastor who was organizing an interfaith group which was to include leaders from all the major faiths in the community. I asked him if he had any Biblical support for what he was doing. He honestly answered no. But he, like many Christians feel that this is the "Christian" thing to do, thereby disobeying Christ in the name of Christianity. Please be on guard for this type of continued deception. As Christians, we are to be unbending as we stand for Biblical truth. We cannot stand in unity and pray with others who deny Jesus is the Christ. In addition we are to speak the truth in love with the hopes of bringing lost souls to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Direct comments and questions to Dave at drkug@comcast.net

David Kugelman is the president of the Christian Business Alliance. All are invited to the Tuesday lunch meetings in Yuba City. For more information, contact "Kug" at 632-9292.

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Psalm 66:2

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 4/23 Sheila Messick
 4/30 Prayer

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6 Ways to Develop Intimacy in Your Relationship

By Steve Arterburn

There are six external activities that can help you build a strong intimacy in your marriage.

1. Laughing Together

Laughter is a doorway to intimacy. It is like an instant vacation in a marriage and the best way to keep perspective when things go wrong. If you laugh together, you can cry together, and thereby feel more ready to trust each other when communicating feelings. If you can find humor in everything, you can survive anything. Do not take things so seriously. Learn to stop yourself when you are ready to get angry and instead use the love language of laughter. If this is your behavior at home, then you can take this behavior on the road through phone calls and little creative things you can do while you are away.

2. Encouraging Each Other

Become each other's cheerleader. Learn how to encourage and support your spouse's activities. Listen and really take an interest in the things your spouse likes to do. Express respect for your husband. Every chance you get, compliment him in public and in private. Build up your wife in front of others and



give her honest credit for your family's successes. Let your spouse truly know you appreciate him or her. The more we build up our spouses, the more they will feel valued by us and build us up in turn.

3. Touching Each Other

The power of intimate touch cannot be underestimated. You must develop a healthy habit of touching each other beyond just the bedroom. Intimate touch is the love connection of holding hands, cuddling, stroking each other's hair arm or leg, and other ways of showing physical affection. Too frequently I run

into couples who do not touch each other, especially in public. Touch is the basis on which couples develop a healthy desire for each other. Touching your spouse protects you from wanting to touch others in a world of many lonely people. Touch protects you from finding a substitute for what God has designed for your marriage—Intimate touch does not have to include sexual touch, but we must develop a language of sexual touch with our spouse as well. If you learn to touch your spouse, you will lose your desire to touch someone else.

4. Talking About Your Feelings

One of the biggest barriers to growth in marriage is the absence of discussion. Couples must talk about their feelings. Life is not perfect, and marriage is not perfect. Your spouse is not perfect and neither are you. You need to talk to your spouse about how you feel and what you struggle with. Traveling with unresolved issues can actually cause a heart to grow colder. Set aside time each week for just the two of you to go out and talk. Tell your spouse what happened each day and what challenges you had personally. If you learn to invest time together while you're at home, your time on the phone will increase in meaning and depth while out on the road.

5. Forgiving and Being Forgiven

We must not let resentments build up in our marriage; we must learn to forgive our spouses and ourselves. Conflicts in marriage happen, and we need to give our spouses permission to tell us what they are struggling with. Everyone's feelings are valid. We must get to know how our spouses feel on issues that cause conflict between us. If you do not

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

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"Keeping The Faith"
Get Out!!!



By Ronnie McBrayer

Churches are peculiar places. I've had the opportunity to serve a few of them. And here is one of the many things that make churches peculiar: The most heated arguments in the church were not over our location or theology or future plans. No, the worst controversies I ever endured were over our style of worship. Should we use hymnals or modern worship music? Should drums be allowed in the sanctuary? Is it blasphemy to move the pulpit to accommodate the children's choir? What would happen if someone clapped or raised their hands during the solo? These are the questions that send the ulcerated pastor scurrying to his or her gastrologist.

Which style of worship is "right?" I don't presume to know. Our form of worship will always be dictated by our traditions, culture, and context. A look at how Christians from other countries and times worship proves this point. "Which worship style is right" is, after all, the wrong question. The better questions are, "Does our worship push us out of our church sanctuaries (or wherever it is we meet) to be Christ to the world? What happens when the worship service is over?"

If our worship moves us past ourselves to the risen and redeeming Christ sent to love the world, then the worship is "right." If our worship sends us into the

community as the Father sent his own Son, then it is empowered with spirit and truth. But if our worship focuses us, on ourselves, then it is selfishness at best and sacrilege at worst. It isn't worship at all.

The final words of the old Latin mass were, *Ite missa est* – loosely, "Get out!" The priests who daily invoked those words over their congregations understood worship's purpose. When the last song is sung, the last prayer offered, and the last homily delivered, the goal of all worship is to redemptively and missionally leave the sanctuary in service to others.

So, take your pick: Sermons or liturgy; southern gospel or rock and roll; drums or pipe organs; corporate prayer or contemplation; kneeling benches or mosh pits. But if these things do not translate into loving action in the community, if these things do not force us out of the building and out to others, we aren't being worshipful at all. Do our worship styles matter? Sure they do. But what happens afterwards matters all the more.

Ronnie McBrayer is a syndicated columnist, speaker, and author of multiple books. You can read more and receive regular e-columns in your inbox at www.ronniemcbrayer.me.

CONT'D FROM PAGE 12: "6 WAYS TO DEVELOPE INTIMACY..."

share and forgive, you are not in a place to see your spouse or yourself properly. We cannot express love and receive love properly if we do not forgive.

6. Protecting Your Image of Your Spouse

This is the biggest vulnerability to attack you will face when on the road. Intimacy with your spouse must not only be developed, it must be protected! Our images must be real, not make-believe. What we see on per-per-view or over the Internet is not a real source of intimacy. If we look at other images as sources of physical intimacy, we set ourselves back and block our view of seeing things clearly. If we think about them and meditate on them, we

rob ourselves of true intimacy' When you begin to find true intimacy with your spouse, you will lose your desire for substitutes and instead try to protect your relationship. The goal must be to seek and search for those things in your spouse that will grow your love and intimacy. Your spouse must be the most important person in your life.

Excerpted from the book Road Warrior by Stephen Arterburn and Sam Gullucci

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If you would like to experience the peace and transformed life that God can provide through Jesus Christ and you are willing to commit your life to the only one who can truly set you free from your sin, you can pray to the Lord right now and ask Him to forgive you of your sins. Because of what His Son, **Jesus, did by dying on the cross, your sins will not be held against you by God anymore. You can experience freedom for the rest of your life on earth and then have a life in Heaven with God for eternity. God's part of the deal is already done. Your part is to confess your sins, repent (or change your ways) and believe that He is Lord. If your life is out of control, let Him take over control.**

For help, questions, or more information, contact us at The Ambassador or any of the churches listed on page 3.

CONT'D FROM PAGE 4: "THANK YOU JESUS": MY BATTLE CRY"

that God is, but..." attitude? Shouldn't our response always be; "I have troubles but, praise the Lord, I know that God Is!"

When our response to suffering is to praise God and thank Him, we're not whistling in the dark, being trite, unrealistic or simpleminded. We are battle-hardened warrior's engaging the

enemy because we are in a war where the casualty count is high. We are surrounded with broken people, who desperately need the church to lead them to Jesus. We can not fight this fight by giving victory to the darkness. We must lift our voices in praise to God for the battle is ours, and the victory belongs to the Lord!

CONT'D FROM PAGE 8: "GOD OF WRATH OR GOD OF LOVE?"

people enjoying one another in the Lord. The point is that it used to be the truth of God's Word (even the seemingly difficult passages) that turn hearts to God. Today, many churches (not all) rely on a feel-good, empowering kind of messages because they want people leave feeling good about themselves and more importantly to come back next week. This is a shame because there are some mega-churches that you can watch on TV speaking a message of love, that is devoid of truth. Yes, God is Love but He is also Holy, Righteous and Just. The "Love-only" message tells people that God is ok with whatever you do. That's simply not true. Although, you can't earn your salvation or God's love, if you are not seeking to please Him in response to His love for you, then you should examine whether you're in the

family of God.

Now, if we want to be in the presence of God in this life as well as the one to come after we die physically, we need to believe that Jesus paid that price. Then, we need to repent of our sinful ways that don't please God. Galatians 5:24 says that we are to "Crucify ourselves" meaning do what Jesus did on the cross, but do it to our selfish, ungodly desires. As the saying goes, "We are not Free TO Sin, but Free FROM Sin" We no longer are bound to the sinful nature. God has always loved us. A human father disciplines his child to correct him out of love for his child. He doesn't give everything the child wants or he will grow up spoiled and disrespect his father. So it is with God. Yes, He is One and the same God- The Holy God of Wrath and the Wonderful God of Love!

Compassion: 10 Ways to Help People in Crisis

By Steve Arterburn

1. Be there! Even better than sound advice or financial aid is the physical presence of someone who is genuinely concerned.
2. Listen! It's important that people in crisis are able to verbalize their story. It helps them process the situation – mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Encourage delaying any non-essential decisions until crisis has passed ... There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. ~ Proverbs 12:18.
3. Don't take any rash statements or harsh words too seriously. People in crisis often vent emotional stress in the most convenient direction. Don't react, respond in love ... Love is patient, love is kind. ~1 Corinthians 13:4
4. Know when to back off! Often, well-intentioned expressions of concern can cross emotional and practical boundaries. Watch for subtle signals that it may be time to give the person in crisis some space ... The plans of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. ~Proverbs 16:1
5. Pray and alert others to pray too! In addition to the supernatural power of prayer, people in crisis often find great comfort in knowing that they're being prayed for ... pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. ~James 5:16
6. Find practical ways, however small, to help the person in crisis maintain routine functions. Simple things like bringing meals, doing laundry, taking the kids to soccer practice, etc. relieve enormous pressure during difficult times ... And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices God is pleased. ~Hebrews 13:16
7. Help the person in crisis maintain a realistic perspective. People in crisis are often overwhelmed by their situation. Remind them of life's truly important issues and help them weigh their situation in the light of a realistic, eternal perspective.
8. Link them with helpful resources. People in crisis often don't think clearly. Be an objective third party who can point to crisis agencies, clergy or other assistance.
9. Don't think you're not needed just because the crisis has passed. Crisis situations often have long-term consequences. Make yourself available for continuing care and concern.
10. What would Jesus do? Jesus encountered people in crisis regularly. Examine Scripture to glean wisdom from His example.

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Bible Search Word "Names of God" Part 3

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Alpha	King of Kings	Savior
Christ	Lamb of God	The Rock
Good Shepherd	Living Water	The Vine
Great I Am	Messiah	Yashewa
Holy Spirit	Omega	

ANSWERS ON PAGE 17

Do You Know The Bible? "God's Provisions"

Place the correct word on the right line.

- 1 Kings 17:13-16
 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy _____. For thus saith the Lord God of _____, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of _____; and she, and he, and her _____, did eat many days. And the barrel of _____ wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.
 _____ meal _____ house _____ Elijah _____ Israel _____ son _____
2. Nehemiah 6:9
 For they all made us _____, saying, Their _____ shall be _____ from the work, that it be not done. Now _____, O God, strengthen my hands.
 _____ therefore _____ afraid _____ hands _____ weakened _____
3. Psalm 37:25
 I have been _____, and now am _____; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his _____ begging _____.
 _____ old _____ bread _____ young _____ seed _____
4. Matthew 6:31-32
 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be _____? (For after all these things do the _____ seek:) for your heavenly _____ knoweth that ye have need of all these _____.
 _____ Father _____ things _____ Gentiles _____ clothed _____
5. Matthew 7:11
 If ye then, being _____, know how to give good gifts unto your _____, how much more shall your _____ which is in _____ give good things to them that ask him?
 _____ heaven _____ evil _____ children _____ Father _____

ANSWERS ON PAGE 17

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4 MYTHS CHRISTIANS SHOULD STOP BELIEVING ABOUT DEPRESSION

By Debra Fileta -

There are so many myths about depression Christians should stop believing—for example, “True believers don’t suffer from depression.”

His false statement rang in my ear like a noisy gong—and then hung in the air like smoke, waiting to be cleared away. I wasn’t exactly sure how this conversation had started, but one thing led to another and here I was with this visitor and a small group of men and women discussing the existence of depression among Christians.

It would have been a hard conversation for anyone to have, but for me—it was even harder still because little did this visitor know that I was only now emerging from the terrible pit of depression myself. Little did he know, that for me, this conversation was personal—because I’d felt like I’d just been to hell and back. Little did he know that my heart had wrestled, and my body had collapsed under the pressure of depression, but that Jesus had held me the whole way through.

As a professional counselor, this was a conversation that I was glad to be a part of. For over a decade, I’ve worked with men, women, children and teens struggling with mild to severe depression. I’ve seen first-hand the pain and paralysis it can bring. But more so, I’ve experienced it in my own life. I know the sinking quicksand that can drain your body, burden your heart and eat away at your mind.



Christian Myths About Depression

It breaks my heart to hear the myths about depression Christians believe—and the shame that can be felt surrounding this topic. As I’ve interacted with more and more people on this topic, I’ve noticed that there are a few false ideas that continue to be perpetuated among believers.

1. Stop Believing Depression Is a Faith Issue.

Like the visitor had falsely said, “true believers don’t suffer from depression.” I think this is the worst of all the lies, because not only is it false, but it’s the antithesis of the entire message of Christ. As believers, we are never promised a pain-free, disease-free, struggle-free life. But we’re promised a Savior, a Comforter and a Friend. I look back at the hardest moments I have faced with depression and I see Jesus right by my side. I remember crying out

one night and feeling all alone, and just then—God’s presence overwhelmed me in that moment. Just when I needed it the most. Depression has nothing to do with lack of faith, in fact, for me—it has been the catalyst for even deeper faith. Because some days, in the hardest moments, faith was the only thing I had.

2. Stop Believing Depression Can Be Prayed Away

I prayed more during the days and months of my depression than I ever did in my entire life. But my depression didn’t magically disappear. I believe in prayer, and I believe in a God who can heal all things—in fact, I genuinely believe it was HIS hand that lifted my depression. But freedom from depression requires prayer AND treatment. Whether in the form of support, therapy or medication—as believers we have to have a “next steps” approach as we interact with people

struggling with depression. God has given us wisdom, and loads of research, to help us understand the multifaceted disease of depression. It’s time for us to pray—but to also be prepared.

3. Stop Believing Depression Isn’t Physical

Just as we would never shame a cancer patient or a diabetic for their hurting bodies, we need to shift our perspective to see depression as a struggle of the brain. Only then will we be able to treat it in a proper way. Depression is a disease of the body, that in turn impacts our emotions, our thoughts and even our spirit. There are many causes to depression, and whether it’s rooted in trauma, hormones or stress—it almost always effects our body. Our perspective of depression needs to change so that we can learn to embrace and support those in it, instead of pushing them away.

4. Stop Believing Depression Shouldn’t Be Talked About

Though I still see hints of this myth among Christians, I am grateful to see this myth slowly dying in the church. There is no shame in feeling depressed, and we should learn to talk about it, to preach about it and to sing about it when it’s all said and done. Scripture is filled with passages of men and women who have struggled through the pit of depression, and their response was to cry out! And crying out is always the first step to healing—because

CONTINUE ON PAGE 17

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depression is a disease that THRIVES in isolation. It wants to pull us into the prison of loneliness, where it can break us down in weakness. By talking about depression, we slowly begin loosening its grip—allowing us to move in the direction of treatment, of support and of healing.

My deepest prayer is that as a body of believers, our attitudes would shift and our hearts would change as we work through this important issue. May we create an environment where we embrace those who are struggling and in pain—rather than push them away because of believing these myths about depression. May we learn to be transparent—but more so, to accept the transparency of those around us. Because at the end of the day, our

weakness will always, always, always point us to the one who can make us strong. And isn't that what Christianity is really about?

Debra Fileta
<http://truelovedates.com/>
 Debra is a Licensed Professional Counselor, national speaker, relationship expert, and author of *Choosing Marriage and True Love Dates*, and *Love In Every Season*. She's also the host of the hotline style *Love + Relationships Podcast*. Her popular relationship advice blog, *TrueLoveDates.com*, reaches millions of people with the message of healthy relationships. Connect with her on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter or book a session with her today!

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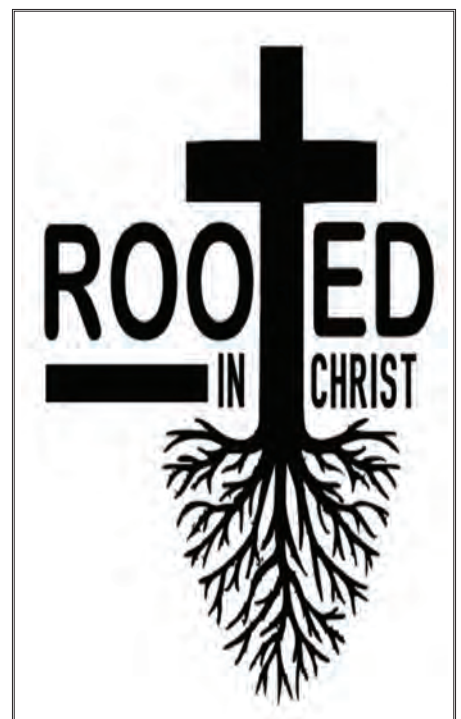
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**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15:
 "DO YOU KNOW YOUR BIBLE"
 • ANSWERS •**

Place the correct word on the right line.

- 1 Kings 17:13-16
 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.
- Nehemiah 6:9
 For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.
- Psalm 37:25
 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.
- Matthew 6:31-32
 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.
- Matthew 7:11
 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

**Continued from Page 15
 Bible Word Search Answers**



OP/ED

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FURNACE OR INCINERATOR

By Jon Skillman

I have become a fan of one-line wisdom. You know those snappy little one-liners that grab your consciousness and cause your head to bobble in agreement... those succinct sayings that pack complexity into a few well-chosen words.

Well I came upon such a line the other day that really set me to thinking (not always a good thing). It read: "If you are in the furnace, it's easy to catch fire." Now on the surface, it makes perfect sense, but my question is, in which context was it written? Was it positive, or negative?

My first take was that it had a negative connotation. For example: It's like a recovering addict returning to the same environment (furnace) that made him an addict in the first place. He has, in effect, placed himself in a position to catch fire again. Or, it's like someone continuously returning to the fire (furnace) of an abusive relationship, odds are pretty good that they will, once again, get burned. I tend to look at these types of situations not so much as entering a furnace, as it is throwing yourself into an incinerator... the difference being, an incinerator is strictly for destroying things, whereas a furnace can be used in more productive ways.

With this in mind, the thought struck me that this one-liner could also have a positive message. For instance, how

many times have you heard someone say: "Oh so-in-so is on fire for the Lord." Well that's probably because so-in-so has entered The Lord's Furnace and has caught fire. This is a good thing because God will use so-in-so to fuel his furnace for the good of others. And the really cool thing about The Lord's Furnace is... it is not governed by Einstein's Theory of Relativity, it is ruled by God's relativity to us. This means so-in-so has become fuel for God's furnace, but like the burning bush, he will not be consumed.

In Isaiah 43:2, God tells us: "... When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze."

Now you may be saying, isn't this a contradiction; how can you have one person blazing away and another not getting burned? Well, and this is strictly my opinion, one is ablaze in the spirit, while the other is being purified through the flames of trial and affliction. In other words, one is radiating the heat of faith, while the other is being cleansed by it. God's purpose is to purify us not destroy us.

So I guess the message in all of this is: If you find yourself in trouble, don't throw yourself into the world's incinerator and be consumed... Step into God's furnace and be cleansed, saved and set ablaze in God's glory.

CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

This infamous question of Rodney King has become a catch phrase of modern day culture, referring to racial tension and division. Unfortunately, it seems tragic to have to ask this same question when it comes to the Body of Christ. You might think that I'm speaking of the theological differences between denominations. I'm not. Maybe the conservative vs. liberal type of difference? Again, No. This is the "division" that comes between "sold-out" followers of Christ! "How so?" you might ask. I have seen, heard, and experienced committed Christians showing intolerance of other Christians purely because of personal or spiritual preferences. Let me point to a few examples. First, worship styles: Some conservative worshipers might have a problem with those that feel the need to express themselves emotionally through lifting their hands, dancing or shouting. On the other hand, those inclined to more "active" worship might judge the more reflective, quiet, reverent worshiper as not being "led by the Spirit". What about evangelism? Are you more inclined to "street witnessing" and handing out tracts? Or do you tend to build relationships with neighbors and co-workers so that they can see how you live your life? Which way is right? Both. Then there is discipleship: Are you more "grace-oriented" offering continual encouragement and forgiveness, or do you see the need to challenge people to honor God through "holy living"? Both are characteristics of our Lord, but do you "lean" to one side? Finally, What is your "hot button"? Are you focused primarily on pro-life issues, marriage & family issues, politics, the homeless? All are important. So what



Seth Halpern - Editor

is the bottom line here? After asking a lot of questions, it's really about what I refer to as Celebrating "Biblical" Diversity. The terms "tolerance" and "diversity" have been hijacked by the liberal community. I'm talking about "Biblical" diversity. God has given different gifts and different callings but the same Spirit. Paul makes this clear in 1 Cor 12. I thank God for those committed Christians involved in politics, because I am personally not called to go there. However, I do need to vote and be an informed citizen. I'm not gifted specifically in street witnessing, yet it is my responsibility to share my faith as God gives opportunities. The point is that we are each given a calling and a purpose, so we need to do SOMETHING. Although I pray for and encourage people to help me with my calling (The Ambassador Ministry), the Holy Spirit has called some to help and others to do something else. I cannot "evangelize" my ministry, calling, or "pet-peeve". God calls each of us for HIS purposes. Let's respect each other's Biblical callings and gifts and perhaps "we will all be able to get along"!

The Ambassador accepts opinions and editorials (op-ed's) as long as they are well-written and less than 450 words. Op-ed's will be published purely at the discretion of the editor. If you would like to submit your op-ed, please email it (written in MS Word) to editor@ambassadornewspaper.com.

The deadline for submission is the 15th of the month for the next issue.

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