# FOR MY PEOPLE

HAVE COMMITTED TWO EVILS;

THEY HAVE FORSAKEN ME

THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATERS,

AND HEWED THEM OUT CISTERNS,

BROKEN CISTERNS,

THAT CAN HOLD NO WATER.

—JEREMIAH 2:13



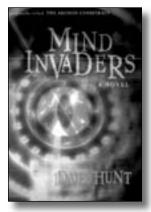
Berean
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**VICTORY IN CHRIST** 

by DAVE HUNT

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**November 2005** 

# **Victory in Christ**

Dave Hunt

Due to his transforming encounter and continual communion with the risen Christ, Saul of Tarsus "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6) and established many of the early churches (2 Cor 11:28). His epistles account for nearly one-third of the New Testament. What an amazing transformation—for the "chief of sinners" (1 Tm 1:15) to become the "chief apostle" (2 Cor 12:11,12)! What could have changed Saul from "breathing out threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1) to becoming one of them, knowing that he, too, would be hated, persecuted, imprisoned, beaten, and eventually martyred? What "recovery program" helped Paul in this remarkable deliverance and consistent, triumphant life, so that he could say, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1)?

Was there a "Murderers Anonymous" or "Persecutors Anonymous" that helped Paul along the path of "recovery" from his wicked past? Was he part of a "small group" of former haters of Christ who found comfort and support in weekly confessing to one another that they were still struggling with impulses to oppose Christ's church? How else could Paul declare in triumph, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20)?

If such questions are absurd, what does that say of today's "recovery programs"?

In fact, neither Paul, nor his fellow apostles, nor anyone in the early church, nor any of the millions who loved Christ so much and were so fervent for "the truth [as it] is in Jesus" (Eph 4:21) followed any "recovery program" at all yet were "faithful unto death" (Heb 11). The early church was made up of former "fornicators...idolaters...adulterers...effeminate...abusers of themselves with mankind [i.e., homosexuals/lesbians]...thieves...covetous... drunkards...revilers [and] extortioners....' After listing these sins, Paul reminds the Corinthians, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor 6:9-11). There is not a word about any special programs to keep them "recovering" from their sordid past.

Is it surprising that such wicked people, without any "recovery programs," were completely delivered from deeply ingrained evil habits to live victoriously in Christ? Of course not! Such transformation is what our Lord promised to *all* who would believe in and obey Him! This is the normal Christian life that missionaries for centuries have seen lived out by converted natives in the darkest and most pagan areas of the world.

Even in the asphalt jungles of today's world, multitudes are being instantly delivered from "addictions" of every kind and are living victoriously and joyfully for their Lord. It all begins with confessing one's guilt before God and believing that Christ paid the full penalty His justice demanded for sin. Immediately follows the glorious new birth—becoming branches in Christ, the True Vine (Jn 15), who becomes the very life of those who know, love, and obey Him. Newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word (1 Pt 2:2), feed upon it, and begin to grow. Then comes responsibility to live out by faith what God is doing in one's heart:

Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue...knowledge...temperance... patience...godliness...brotherly kindness...charity...that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind...and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore...brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall....(2 Pt 1:5-10)

But Christianity has lately fallen into the hands of leaders who have lost confidence in the sufficiency of Christ, His Word, and the Holy Spirit to live the life of Christ through them and others. They have also destroyed the confidence of their followers. That lack of faith spawned "Christian psychology" (borrowed from godless humanists who were themselves drowning in sin), with its multiple therapies that the early church never heard of and, without any of them, triumphed gloriously. From this godless source came the many "recovery programs" that are even more popular among Christians today than simple faith in Christ and His Word.

The victorious new life that Christ promised and will Himself live within all who know and trust Him is available to every Christian and requires no special program—just simple faith and obedience. The problem with all "therapies" is that they inherently deny the sufficiency of Christ and His Word to save, sanctify, and keep the worst of sinners. Thus, it is hypocritical for a "program" to claim to be biblical when its very existence denies what the Bible teaches and what the early church knew and proved to be sufficient.

Paul refers to the way unsaved Gentiles live as "having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God...given...over unto lasciviousness [and] uncleanness with greediness" (Eph 4:17-22). Addressing the believers, he says, "But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus...." The truth we have been taught must be lived out in our lives. This can only be by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Yet Paul continues in language that makes our responsibility clear:

Put off...the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind...put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour...let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour....Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth...grieve not the Holy Spirit.... Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us....But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting...but rather giving of thanks. For this we know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words...ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light....(Eph 4:22-5:8)

There is not a word about any programs to assist in the above. Methods and techniques not found in Scripture that would supposedly suppress the fleshly desires that plague even Christians seeking to live for Christ had not yet been invented in Paul's day. Why are they needed today? They aren't! Isaiah was very blunt: "If they speak not according to this Word [i.e., Scripture]...there is no light in them" (8:20). But today the Scripture is being denied.

Certainly no one in the early church (or for centuries thereafter) even imagined that there could possibly be a need among Christians for anything but Christ himself—His cleansing blood and power—to triumph over sin, Satan, and the world. A fervent love for Christ enabled millions for nearly 2,000 years to follow their Lord faithfully, even unto martyrdom, with joy. The secret of their victory has and will be declared to cowering demons and rejoicing angels and as a testimony to the universe for all eternity: "They overcame him ['the great dragon...called the Devil, and Satan'] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rv 12:9, 11).

Christ declared, "If a man love me, he will keep my words" (Jn 14:23). Love is the greatest motivating power in the universe. It caused Christ to bear, at infinite cost, the judgment deserved by those who hated and crucified Him-because He loved them. True love would sacrifice anything, including one's own self, for the one loved. No "addiction," lust, or selfish desire can overcome love! Those who claim to be Christians, yet who need some special "deliverance ministry" or "recovery program" to keep their behavior in line with what Christ has commanded, either don't know Him or do not love Him as they ought. So says the Word of God.

To Christians consumed by a passionate gratitude and love for Christ, victory has always come through simple faith in God's promise: "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not [allow] you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor 10:13). So it has been with the redeemed through the centuries—and ought to be today.

Yet in all ages there have always been those for whom Christ alone through the power of His Word and Spirit was insufficient—who said, in lack of love and unbelief, "I've tried, but it doesn't work; I'm a special case; things are different today; I need some additional help." Some of them became monks and tried to suppress the flesh by abusing it, living in caves and depriving themselves of the blessings God gave to all to be freely enjoyed with thanksgiving, even flagellating themselves, in order (so they thought) to become holy. Many well-meaning Roman Catholic and Orthodox priests and monks still do this

today. It's not their sincerity that we doubt but their true knowledge of Christ and their love for Him, which are the only remedy.

Many of the so-called "desert fathers" (See TBC Extra, Oct '05) adopted occult techniques, later popularized as the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits. They thought that if they could visualize Christ and biblical events in their imagination, the Bible would become more real and they would mature spiritually. That delusion is still promoted by many Christian leaders today such as Richard Foster, Calvin Miller, Karen Mains, and others. Foster enticed thousands with the deceitful promise of spiritual maturity through occult methods such as the following in Celebration of Discipline (R. Foster, Harper and Row, Pub., 1978, pp. 24-27):

[Begin] with a daily period of from five to ten minutes...learning to "center down"...[using] two brief exercises.... The first [is] called "palms down, palms up"...placing your palms down as a symbolic indication of your desire to turn over any concerns you may have to God. Inwardly you may pray "Lord, I give to You my anger toward John. I release my fear of my dentist appointment.... I surrender my anxiety over not having enough money to pay the bills...my frustration over trying to find a baby-sitter for tonight." Whatever it is that weighs on your mind...just say, "palms down." Release it....After several moments of surrender, turn your palms up as a symbol of your desire to receive from the Lord... "I would like to receive Your divine love for John, Your peace about the dentist appointment, Your patience, Your joy." Whatever you need, you say, "palms up." Having centered down, spend the remaining moments in complete silence....

Another meditation aimed at centering oneself...seated...comfortably, slowly become conscious of your breathing [to] get in touch with...the level of tension within. Inhale deeply, slowly tilting your head back as far as it will go. Then exhale, allowing your head slowly to come forward until your chin nearly rests on your chest. Do this for several moments, praying inwardly something like this: "Lord, I exhale my fear....I inhale Your peace. I exhale my spiritual apathy. I inhale Your light and life." Then, as before, become silent....

After you have gained some proficiency in centering down, add a five- to ten-minute meditation on some...tree, plant, bird, leaf, cloud, and each day ponder it carefully and prayerfully. God ...uses His creation to show us something of His glory and give us something of His life...as Evelyn Underhill [says]...begin with that...contemplation which the old mystics sometimes called the "discovery of God in His creatures."

Having practiced for some weeks with the two kinds of meditation listed above, you will want to add the meditation upon Scripture....Take a single event....Seek to live the experience, remembering the encouragement of Ignatius of Loyola to apply all our senses to our task. Smell the sea. Hear the lap of water along the shore. See the crowd. Feel the sun on your head and the hunger in your stomach.... Francis de Sales [says] "represent to your imagination the whole of the mystery on which you desire to meditate as if it really passed in your presence...." As you enter the story...remember that since Jesus...is not bound by time, this event in the past is a living present-tense experience for Him. Hence, you can actually encounter the living Christ in the event...Jesus Christ will actually come to you.

This is, of course, rank occultism. The visualized "Jesus" often takes on a life of its own and does indeed "speak." This is not the Lord Jesus Christ come down from the right hand of His Father in heaven, but a seducing spirit, exactly as Paul warned would occur: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron..." (1 Tm 4:1,2). There is no excuse for falling into such delusion, which is so contrary to the Word of God.

The early Christians lived in the expectant faith that Christ, "who is our life" (Col 3:4), would live that life through them in victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil (1 Jn 2:12-17). Christ promised: "Because I live, ye shall live also" (Jn 14:19). Then why does the church adopt techniques that come from worldly wisdom in order to gain "deliverance" from so-called addictions?

For Paul, every temptation and carnal desire was swept aside by his overpowering passion: "that...Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death" (Phil 1:20); "that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death...that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus....this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:10-14). Is this not what we ought to hold before ourselves to empower our lives to forsake all for the love of our Lord?

As the chorus says, "After all He's done for me; after all He's done for me, how can I do less than give Him my best, and live for Him completely; after all He's done for me!" This is the response of true love, and it will prevail over all.

TBC

#### Ouotable =====

Now, if you can...give up all competition with respect to other objects, if you can stand aside from the race which too many other ministers are running and say, from your heart, "Let those who choose to engage in such a race divide the prize; let one minister run away with the money, and another with the esteem, and a third with the applause, etc. I have...a different race to run; be God's approbations the only prize for which I run, let me obtain that, and it is enough." If you can, from your heart, adopt this language, you will find most of your difficulties and sufferings vanish.

But...it is almost impossible to persuade any man to renounce the race, without cutting off his feet....This God has done for me; this He has been doing for you. And you will, one day, if you do not now, bless Him for all your sufferings as I do for mine. I have not suffered one pang too much. God was never more kind than when I thought Him most unkind—never more faithful than when I was ready to say, "His faithfulness has failed...."

Anything is a blessing which prevents us from running the fatal race, which we are so prone to run—[anything] which first convinces us we are nothing, and then makes us willing to be so.

Edward Payson, early in the 1800s, letter of advice to a fellow minister, in *They Knew Their God*, Lillian G. Harvey, *Vol Six*, p. 68

#### **Q&A** =

Question: I don't see the requirement in the Bible for the seven-year Tribulation to follow immediately after the Rapture. Most prophecy speakers suggest a time gap between the Rapture and the revelation of the Antichrist. Why do you maintain the "no gap" belief?

Answer: The church is taken to heaven to remove her, as Christ promised, from "the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world..." (Rv 3:10). There would be no point in doing that even days—much less months or years—ahead of time. Paul declared that Antichrist could only be "revealed in his time" (2 Thes 2:6); and that time would come as soon as he who now hinders has been "taken out of the way" (vv. 7,8)—obviously referring to the Holy Spirit indwelling believers, who are being removed at the Rapture.

The sudden miraculous removal from earth of perhaps 100 million people (it could be more or less) would create worldwide panic and terror. That event is the

only thing that could unite the entire world under Antichrist in abject fear of a common enemy. He may well claim to know where the missing have been taken and may promise to prevent the snatching away from earth of those who take his mark and follow him. Logically, Antichrist's take-over must happen within a very few hours of the Rapture.

Satan would have to act quickly to take advantage of this unique act of "terrorism" that will terrify and unite the world as nothing else could! With no Scripture to specifically support a waiting period, I see no reason for proposing one.

Ouestion: In 2 Corinthians 1:8-10, Paul speaks of the hope he has of his future deliverance from the great trouble he had in Asia, deliverance by "God which raiseth the dead." He expects to be delivered by the resurrection....Paul will rejoice with and over the Corinthians not when he goes to heaven but "in the day of the Lord Jesus," when the saints are resurrected. He says that our confidence is in "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with vou...." Isn't it strange that if we are to "go to heaven" the Bible never explicitly says so? It speaks often of the resurrection... of the...day of our Lord [and] of the dead who are described as sleeping, but never of anyone rejoicing in heaven.

Paul expected to be presented to the Lord on that day...[not] when he died and went to heaven. He says, "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God...eternal in the heavens... our house which is from heaven..." (2 Corinthians 5:1,2). Notice it is a house (resurrected body) FROM heaven, not IN heaven. And when did Paul expect this house from heaven to be given to him?...Verses 6-8: "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord...we are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." From what Paul has said about the resurrection, the day of the Lord, his rejoicing on that day, being clothed with a resurrected body, to be "absent from the body...present with the Lord" is not to be in heaven immediately upon dying but in his new body at the resurrection....In verse 10 he says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." When will that be? When Christ returns, raises our bodies and establishes His Kingdom: "...the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom..." (2 Timothy 4:1)! Paul said he wished to be clothed with a new tabernacle...rather to be present with the Lord than in his present body. The moment after Paul dies, the next thing of which he will be conscious is the return of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the gathering of the saints. In all humility, I would suggest that those who use 2 Corinthians 5:6-8 to "prove" that the dead are conscious in heaven are twisting the scriptures.

Answer: In 2 Corinthians 1:8-10, Paul refers to trouble he had in Asia, from which he was delivered. This is past and accomplished, having nothing to do with the resurrection. He trusts also that the Lord will likewise deliver them from future troubles. His reference to "God which raises the dead" does not mean that deliverance from trouble in Asia will be deferred until he is raised from the dead—it is a recognition of God's great power.

The fact that Paul will rejoice "in the day of the Lord Jesus" because of the resurrection of the body in final victory over death does not even imply, much less say (as you suggest), that he will be in an unconscious state after his death and will not rejoice until that time.

The Bible never speaks of our going to heaven? Are you suggesting that the "Father's house [of] many mansions" to which Christ promised to take us (Jn 14:2,3) is not in heaven?! Paul's declaration that we will be caught up "to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"(1Thes 4:17) does not say that Christ will take us to heaven?! Then where will we "ever be with the Lord"? I know you believe in the Rapture, so perhaps you mean that *other than at the Rapture* there is nothing about taking us to heaven.

Consider this: "...the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom [and] comforted" (Lk 16:22-25). Jesus told the believing thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk 23:43). Clearly, believers before Christ's resurrection were taken to the "paradise," where Abraham (and presumably all other believers) resided in conscious bliss. The fact that before Christ's ascension the place to which the believing dead went is distinguished from heaven is proof enough that upon death believers were always taken to a place of conscious existence. If all were unconscious until the Rapture, there would be no need to distinguish between where they went, then and now. Surely, Paul's declaration, "Absent from the body, present with the Lord [who we know is in heaven]" could only mean that "paradise" was emptied at the resurrection, and, from that time on, believers who died were not taken there but to heaven, as it is today.

Furthermore, Paul declares that those who "sleep in Jesus [i.e., who died with

Christ] will God bring with him" (1 Thes 4:14) to be reunited with their resurrected bodies at the Rapture. "Bring with him" from where? Obviously, from heaven, where they must have been with God and Christ. This again clarifies what Paul meant by "absent from the body, present with the Lord."

And no "rejoicing in heaven"? Certainly those in heaven who "shall reign on the earth," as Christ promised His disciples, and who sing the new song in front of the throne unto the Lamb who was "slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rv 5:9) are rejoicing! Will the marriage of the Lamb to His bride (Rv 19:7,8) be a somber affair, with no rejoicing?! The Bible says, "Let us be glad and rejoice...for the marriage of the Lamb is come"! Perhaps you mean there will be no rejoicing in heaven before the Rapture. But David said, "In thy presence is fulness of joy..." (Ps 16:11). That sounds like rejoicing in heaven long before the Rapture.

The statement that our new bodies are "from heaven" doesn't mean they were formed in heaven but that they are created by the God from heaven. Of course, we only get new bodies at the resurrection; but this doesn't mean that our souls and spirits, which are "absent from the body, and... present with the Lord" (2 Cor 5:8), have been unconscious in His presence. What would be the point of being "present with the Lord" in an unconscious state? And why would Paul desire this with such passion? To say that "absent from the body...present with the Lord" means "not in heaven immediately...but in [a] new body at the resurrection" makes no sense. How can we be "absent from the body" and at the same time be in a new body?! Clearly we must be present with the Lord during the time we are "absent from the body."

If Paul, at death, could only look forward to knowing nothing until the resurrection, why did he write: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil 1:21)? To be unconscious and know nothing is gain compared with serving Christ? Why did he have "a desire to depart and to be with Christ" and call that "far better" if he would be unconscious until the resurrection?

Proof that "absent from the body, present with the Lord" means to be consciously in Christ's presence isn't confined to 2 Corinthians 5:6-8. As mentioned above, Christ told the believing thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk 23:43). What would "paradise" mean to an unconscious person? Surely "paradise" was "Abraham's bosom," where the beggar Lazarus went upon dying (Lk 16:22). Abraham was conscious, as was "the rich man in hell." How will "the souls of them that were slain for the word of God [cry] with a loud voice" for vengeance upon

those who killed them if they are unconscious (Rv 6:9-11) until their resurrection?

That Christ "shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom" (2 Tm 4:1) does not refer to the "judgment seat of Christ" for the saints but to a judgment of the lost on earth when "before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them...as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt 25:31-46). The judgment of the saints for reward or loss takes place in heaven. Obviously, that will have to be after the Rapture, when all the saints are there—but it doesn't mean that those who previously died are *unconsciously* "with Christ"!

Question: When I read your comment about the Amalekites being extinct, I wondered about Haman, a descendant of Amalek. Doesn't that prove they were not completely extinct?

Answer: There might have been a surviving Amalekite here and there in those days, but that does not mean that Amalekites survived in any numbers, even at that time. Certainly there is no group today that would claim descent from the Amalekites.

Question: Recently I heard a pastor use the phrase "falling away" (2 Thessalonians 2:3) to mean "departure" or "rapture." This is the subject that Paul is addressing in 2 Thessalonians 2:1. The pastor stated that all of the following references in the New Testament use the word "departure" to mean "turn away or go in another direction" and not "rebellion or apostasy": Luke 2:13; 8:13; 13:27; Acts 5:37,38; 12:10; 15:38; 19:9; 21:21; 22:29; 2 Corinthians 12:8; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy2:19; Hebrews 3:12. So what departure do you think we find in 2 Thessalonians 2:3? J. Vernon McGee stated both views.

Answer: I do not understand the distinction the pastor was attempting to make. Is not "to turn away or go in another direction" the same as "rebellion or apostasy"? With all due respect to this pastor and McGee, I don't see why anyone would leave an opening for two opposing views. A falling away is something that people do, not something done to them. The Rapture is done to us, not something we do. We can depart from sound doctrine, but we cannot depart from this earth to heaven—Christ must catch us up. The word apostasia (translated "falling away" in 2 Thes 2:3), which means to defect, forsake, or depart from, could not mean the believer's defection, forsaking, or departure from earth to heaven. Nor by any stretch of the imagination could apostasia mean the Rapture!

#### News Alert ====

www.ninesteppagans.faithweb. com/main.htm: NINE-STEP PAGANS: RECOVERY WITH A DIFFERENCE-Initiated as a Pagan-friendly (but not other-exclusive) alternative to Judeo-Christian-oriented recovery groups, Nine-Step Pagans...is an organization of individuals who recognize in themselves a tendency toward addiction or unhealthily compulsive behaviors and a desire to overcome this tendency. For the purpose of the organization, Nine-Step Pagans, the noun "Pagan" refers to a person whose faith and worship includes a deep, abiding respect and love for the Creation of which humans are a part, and a desire to live in well-balanced relationship with self and the rest of the natural world.

The Nine-Step Freedom Trail: 1) We came to feel enslaved by excessive behaviors which were harmful to us, throwing our health and relationships out of balance through addictions, compulsions, or both. 2) We realized that resources were available to help us win our freedom, if we were willing to use them. 3) We became willing to reach out for help, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. 4) We sought help from our Deities, fellow humans, healers, clergy, groups, or whatever source necessary, to aid us toward freedom and health. 5) We established a pattern of life-affirming behaviors, avoiding the sorts of isolation which would make us vulnerable to relapses, creating a foundation of supports which could help us recover from whatever lapses we might have. 6) We considered, acknowledged, and took full responsibility for the harm we had done to others and ourselves in the time of our slavery. 7) We considered and discussed with a neutral adult, the harm we had done, and how we might make restitution or otherwise restore balance, facing the fact that in some situations no direct redress was possible. 8) Where possible, and using whatever supports necessary, we endeavored to restore balance in those situations and relationships previously harmed by our servitude to addiction or compulsion. 9) Remaining constructively vigilant in our self-regard, we continued to grow strong in health and freedom, eventually becoming a source of support for others seeking to bring their own lives into healthy balance.

The invaluable influence of Alcoholics Anonymous, and the 12 Steps of that organization, is gratefully acknowledged.

[TBC: What can we conclude? The 12-Steps (even reduced by 3!) therapy works for Pagans seeking help from their "Deities." However, there is no evidence that any 12-Steps program works any better than no therapy at all, no matter what "higher power" is invoked.]

#### Dave & T.A.'s Itinerary

Nov 6 Candlelight Fellowship (Dave) Hayden ID 208-772-7755

Nov 12-13 Keizer Community Church (Dave) Keizer OR

503-393-0222

Nov 16 Calvary Chapel Chino Valley (Dave) Chino CA

909-464-8255

Nov 20 Calvary Chapel Rialto (Dave) Rialto CA

Rialto CA 909-820-7300

Jan 11-15 Calvary Chapel Finger Lakes (Dave) Farmington NY

Farmington NY 585-398-3550

Jan 27-29 Calvary Chapel TriCity

(Dave & TA) Tempe AZ (480) 345-6200

Feb 6-7 Fellowship of Bible Churches

Men's Retreat Mercersburg PA 301-739-4245

Feb 24-25 Bible Skeptics Conference

Oshawa ÓN (905) 655-8381

#### Letters =

(TA)

(Dave)

Dear Berean Call,

I just read the [October] article about Rick Warren's 12-Steps program. I have been a Christian for 34 years and [believed]...that 12 Steps were OK....After 12 years in them, being very successful in the eyes of other 12-Steppers, the Lord Jesus Christ showed up in my life in a powerful way by, after me confessing my sins in deep repentance, forgiving me of my sins, and I was healed of so-called addictions in an instant. When I showed up at the next 12-Steps meeting, I could feel I was spiritually different than what was in that room and I have never gone back....The Holy Spirit led me to scripture after scripture that contradicted what I had learned and taught as a sponsor and speaker for years in "Christian" 12-Steps programs. No matter what anyone says....Those men [who started AA] never professed to be Christians, never taught anyone they were Christians, and the organization Bill Wilson belonged to was not Christian....I am set free from 12-Steps programs! DF (email)

Dear Berean Call,

Having grown up going to Al-Anon meetings with my mom, AA and NA with my dad, and forced to go to ACA and a shrink a few times (as early as five years old), your October issue really struck a nerve....By the grace of God, He spared

me and protected my mind from believing all the junk they taught....Unfortunately, it helped destroy my parents' marriage, with all the unbiblical ways to deal with life....My dad [finally] figured out that he didn't need AA anymore, just Jesus. The sad thing is, I have heard pastors recommend AA *all the time*....Hopefully, your letter will reach people and the scales will be removed from their eyes! SE (NV)

Mr. Hunt,

For about the past 1½ years you have been bellyaching about Calvinism. You even wrote a book about it, and now, in your last "newsletter," you went on a tirade telling about all the terrible doctrines of Calvinism. But *nothing* you said is true—there is not one word in what you *claim* I believe (as a Calvinist) that I do believe! Nor do I know any other Calvinist who believes these things....Jesus believed and taught Calvinism and so did Paul. What is your problem, and why preach against the truth? If you don't mind, please send my next "newsletter" to the dump where all good garbage belongs. AP (OR)

Dear Sirs,

For the last year or so, I have not been attending church...though I had for my whole life. I am convinced and reassured by our Lord Jesus Christ of my salvation, but the verse that says [not to] give up meeting together has been on my mind. It has been a rough year...because of my reasons for skipping church...pastors and elders who have only their own greedy or "feel good" agendas in mind, and not the pure truth of the Bible or the good of their congregation. MV (Canada)

Dear Tom, Dave, and Staff,

I was saved last year through your ministry and came out of a cult church and religion....[I am] incarcerated and many of the other men began asking me questions about the Bible. This led us to having Bible studies...each weeknight, and since then over 60 men have been saved....I now have between 30 and 40 men attending my Bible studies each night right here in jail....Four of the guards came to my cell asking questions [who] have received the Lord Jesus Christ right there in my cell....I have had men write me after being released to tell me how they are now going to church and God has put them and their families back together. I give God the praise and glory. DF (prisoner, SC)

Gentlemen,

Thank you for continuing to declare the truth in love. While you who are not of the world must expect persecution by the world, it must be disappointing to realize how much of the "church" is of the world. Your clarity is appreciated; it stands in the light of the *Word*. DL (FL)

Dear Dave,

From a tender age, I knew Jesus Christ as my Savior; however, throughout my life, I realized that something was missing. I wanted to be like Paul and Silas, who could sing and praise God even while incarcerated. I wanted "rivers of living water to flow from within me" (John 7:38). I sought God with all my heart and all my soul and all my mind, and He answered my plea and gave me the desire of my heart....I have never ceased to bless, praise, and glorify Him since then. Your article, "Bless the Lord" (Sep '05) reminded me of all this. NG (TX)

Dave and Tom,

Thank you for keeping us informed on crucial issues. Praise God, His Word is settled in heaven and man cannot destroy it. It grieves my heart that faithful men of God are being taken in, as you stated in the last newsletter. EK (PA)

#### **TBC Notes**

*Keeping the Temporal Cart Behind the Spiritual Horse* 

In a world beset by what sin has wrought, there seems to be an endless list of problems crying out to be solved. As believers tackle some of them, their efforts often provide opportunities to share God's Solution for every person's most critical problem: his or her eternal destiny. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world [by solving all his temporal problems], and lose his own soul?" (Mt 16:26).

When we are rolling up our sleeves for the needs of our fellow man, we dare not miss the welfare of his soul. The order of Ephesians 2:8-10 is God's order: "...saved through faith...not of works...[then] created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

T. A. McMahon Executive Director

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# The Sufficiency and Authority of the Word of God

In this month's article, Dave Hunt stated, "Christianity has lately fallen into the hands of leaders who have lost confidence in the sufficiency of Christ, His Word, and the Holy Spirit to live the life of Christ through them and others. They have also destroyed the confidence of their followers." To believe in Christ as Savior and Lord should produce a love for His Word and a desire to obey Him in one's life. What does God tell us in His Word about His Word? And what does His Word say about mankind?

#### GOD'S WORD TO MAN

2 PETER 1:3—According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue...

2 TIMOTHY 3:15-17—...thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

PSALM 19:7-10—The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

PSALM 119:9—Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

**DEUTERONOMY 12:32—**What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

**JOHN 17:17**—Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:13—...thank we God...because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

1 PETER 1:23—Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

JAMES 1:18—Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

HEBREWS 4:12—For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

**ROMANS 10:17**—So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

**DEUTERONOMY 8:3**—And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not... that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

**MATTHEW 4:4**—But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by

bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

**PROVERBS 30:5—**Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

**PSALM 119:160**—Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

2 CORINTHIANS 6: 4-7—But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God...

**EPHESIANS 1:12-13—...**we...who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise...

2 TIMOTHY 2:15—Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

colossians 1:5-6—For the hope... whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day

ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth...

**PSALM 1:1-3**—Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.... His delight is in the law of the LORD...and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

**PSALM 119:105** —Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

**PSALM 25:5**—Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation

**PSALM 40:11—**0 Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9—And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:5—Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8—And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

**DEUTERONOMY 4:2**—Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

#### MAN'S RESPONSE TO GOD

JEREMIAH 6:16—Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

**NUMBERS 15:31—**Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.

**MATTHEW 15:6-9—**Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people

draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

JEREMIAH 2:11-13—Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, 0 ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

JEREMIAH 18:15—Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up [paved]...

**LEVITICUS 10:1-2**—And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

PSALM 78:10-11—They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law; and forgat his works, and his wonders that he had showed them.

JEREMIAH 50:6—My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace.

2 PETER 2:19—While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

# RADIO MINISTRY & PROGRAM GUIDE









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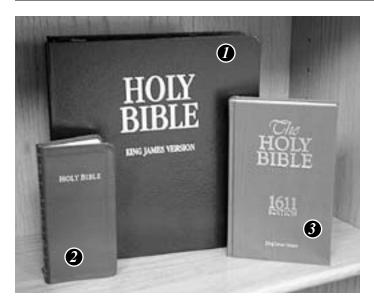
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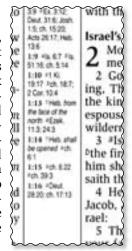
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DEEP SENSE OF GRATITUDE will nourish Christian zeal. Looking to the hole of the pit whence we were digged, we find abundant reason why we should spend and be spent for God.... [Zeal] looks with tearful eyes down to the flames of hell, and it cannot slumber: it looks up with anxious gaze to the glories of heaven, and it cannot but bestir itself. It feels that time is short compared with the work to be done...and it is ever strengthened by Christ's example. —C. H. Spurgeon, Morning & Evening

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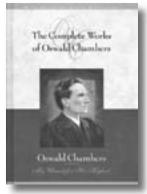
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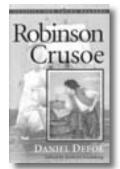


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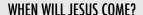
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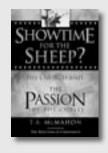


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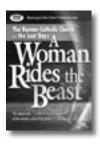












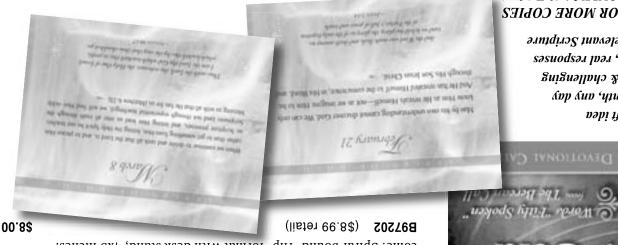


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