

THE EVANGELISTS

M A G A Z I N E

Issue 9 Summer 2012



Protecting the Unborn

**Abiding in
the Vine**

J. C. Ryle's Classic Sermon
'The World'

THE COMMISSION

By Tim Knowling

THE EVANGELISTS MAGAZINE

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SOTC Aims:

Soldiers of the Cross, founded by Tim
and Leah Knowling, is dedicated to
evangelising the lost and seeing the
church become the mighty, mature and
fully-functioning army of God it is meant
to be, in a war that has already been
won through Christ's atoning death and
resurrection.

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Soldiers of the Cross

I recently had the honour of handing out
tracts on a Saturday evening at an event
that starts the Christmas festivities, and
then being in jail on the Sunday.

Okay, so I wasn't in jail for handing out
tracts, but I had the opportunity to visit a
Correctional Centre, and join them for a
church service.

I am thankful for this experience as it brings
some reality to the plight of those who
have been removed from society because
of the crimes they have committed. My
compassion towards these people does not
excuse their actions, but rather heightens
the reality of 2 Timothy 2:26, that they have
been snared by the devil, and held captive
by him.

As we have mentioned in a previous issue,
the best the world can do is to try and
reform; that is, clean us up. It doesn't deal
with our real problem, which is that man
is a fallen creature, dead in his sins and
transgressions. This was also the crux of the
message delivered to the inmates by their
local Uniting Church minister. When we are
born again of the Spirit of God, we become
a new creature, with a new nature and new
desires.

Coming away from that prison church
service I could not help but be reminded
that when it comes to preaching the gospel
we are dealing with criminals every day.
Hebrews 9:27 says that *"...it is appointed
unto men once to die, but after this the
judgment"*.

God will not only judge us in regards to
our actions but even our thought life. *"Ye
have heard that it was said by them of old
time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But
I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on
a woman to lust after her hath commit-
ted adultery with her already in his heart"*.
(Matthew 5:27-28). *"Whosoever hateth his
brother is a murderer: and ye know that no
murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."*
(1 John 3:15)

The Apostle Paul in the first three chapters
of the book of Romans wrote plainly and
clearly about man's condition before God.
Our good works do nothing to
commend us to God. *"Therefore by the deeds of the law
there shall no flesh be justified
in His sight: for by the law is
the knowledge of sin."* (Romans
3:20)

Paul then goes on to show us
the only way sinful humanity
can be reconciled to God. *"[All]
are justified and made upright
and in right standing with God,
freely and gratuitously by His
grace (His unmerited favor and*

*mercy), through the redemption which is
[provided] in Christ Jesus, Whom God put
forward [before the eyes of all] as a mercy
seat and propitiation by His blood [the
cleansing and life-giving sacrifice of atone-
ment and reconciliation, to be received]
through faith...."* (Romans 3:24-25) AMP

When we ourselves have come to the place
of saving faith in Christ, it should naturally
flow that we will desire others to be saved.
This was the testimony of King David in
Psalm 51 who after he repented said, *"Then
will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sin-
ners shall be converted unto thee."* (Psalm
51:13)

Through these pages, we hope to not only
be proclaimers of the Gospel, but also an
encouragement and resource to help oth-
ers who would take up the "irksome" task
of preaching the Gospel. (C.H. Spurgeon's
words, not mine)

In this issue we are featuring the '180
movie', which has been produced by Living
Waters (also producers of The Way of the
Master) to promote the sanctity of the un-
born. Not only has this movie been instru-
mental in saving the lives of the unborn but
in bringing the eternal-life-saving message
to many. If you haven't already seen the
'180 movie' I would encourage everyone to
watch this for themselves and then encour-
age others to do so as well.

Also in this issue we have reprinted J.C.
Ryles article on "The World - A source of
Great Danger to the Soul". The admonition
in scripture is not to be *"...conformed to this
world..."* (Romans 12:2) but *"...to be con-
formed to the image of His (God's) Son..."*
(Romans 8:29).

The article on "Abiding in the Vine", by our
contributing writer, Peter Magarey, shows
us God's pattern for a fruitful life in His
Kingdom.

I trust that for those who have been con-
tinuing to receive this publication that it has
been a source of blessing. After you have
read it, why not pass it on, so that others
may be built up and encouraged to share
their faith with others.



Reader's Letters

Do you have a passion to reach the lost?

Not sure what to say?

Let us help you. We, at Soldiers of the Cross, can facilitate Evangelism Courses in your community. Recently we held a 2- week course in Loxton, SA. See page 13 for details.

To receive a free information package please contact us. Address details on page 2.

If you have been encouraged by this magazine, or have a testimony to share of how God is using you in His harvest field, please let us know, that others may also be encouraged. Write or email us at the contact details on page 2.

Bibles received.... but more needed!



May God bless you. I hope in the Lord that you are well with your family and the ministry. I am well with my family and the work of God. We are still waiting rain, so we need prayers for rain. My Bible Class is going on very well for now I have 36, but they do not have bibles I pray that I may get only 17 bibles so that they may share 1 in two. Also the work in Schools is going on well every week I meet 250 children that is one school. So pray for that. May God bless you.

Have send to you the photos of those who received bibles.

Pastor Nicholus Munyao
Kenya

Inspired to spread the Gospel

Hi Leah. So good to be in touch. Picked up one of your magazines at the Book Shop. What an amazing mag. Well done... I'm sure people would be inspired to spread the Gospel through it. Take care.

Denise Hill
Rockhampton, QLD

Impacting many lives

I must say a big thank you for the 'Evangelists Magazine' that you sent us.

I know it will impact not just our lives but much more the lives of many that will read it and get to know the blessings that the Lord has packaged in it for them.

Pastor Patrick O. Okwuchukwu
Nigeria

Mag gets you thinking

hey thanks for the mag..it came very quickly...gr8 stories..get ya thinking... im going to pass it onto my new friend/new christian...thanks a bunch

Karen Newman-Simmons
Wellington, NSW (via SMS/Text)

TEM helpful

Greetings to you. Thank you very much for sending me THE EVANGELISTS MAGAZINES regularly. It is helpful.

Johnstone Malinda
Zambia

Kenyan thankful to graduate from SOBE

Thanks a lot Rev. Tim, I got my SOBE [School of Biblical Evangelism] certificate and was so much full of gladness for you since I got to the school through you dear man of God. My heart is full of praises to God just to have graduated online in USA and yet am in Africa. God bless you dear Tim together with your family, hope to hear from you soon, best wishes and hugs in Christ.

Pastor Nicholas Onyango
Kenya



Prayer of blessing

You do a tremendous job with your magazine and your heart for souls. May the Lord truly bless you both and your family and extend your borders of influence in these last days to His glory. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Peter Hall
Cooper Pedy, SA



Abiding

♦ Peter Magarey

Good fruit comes naturally and richly from healthy shoots on good vines. Christians are little different; the sweet fruit of the Spirit is in abundance in the lives of healthy Christians whose lives have grown in union with the Vine, Jesus. But the Lord prunes the branches for more fruit.

For instance, Jesus, the root of David and the stem of Jesse, is the Vine in the Father's vineyard. The Christians of the world are the branches (the arms) of the Vine. Jesus said, *"I am the true Vine and ... and you are the branches"* (John 15:1,5).

The arms are that part of the vine that is laid down, that is, that which has been cultivated, trained, matured and pruned. To live in Jesus means to be cultivated in Him (*"Abide in Me and I in you ..."* John 15:4). He trains us in the way to go (*"... by a new and living way which He has dedicated for us, ..."* Hebrews 10:20) and He calls us to be laid down (*"Truly, truly, I say to you, 'Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die ...'"* John 12:24).

To 'die' in Jesus means to give up one's own objectives and be submitted to the hand of the Father, who is the Vine Dresser (or in modern terminology, the Vineyard Manager).

To die to self, means to live in Jesus.

To die to self means to give up our fleshly desires for growth and *"be grafted in ..."* (Romans 11:23). But as we die to self and are grafted in, we, the wild branch, *"... share in the root and richness of the (Vine)."* (Romans 11:17)!

The branches that live in Jesus are perfected (that is, brought to maturity) through the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:11-13). The fruitful, trained and mature branches are then pruned *"... to produce much fruit ..."* (John 15:5).

"No chastening (pruning) of the Lord, seems to be full of joy, at least at that time, rather it seems to be the cause of much grief." (Hebrews 12:11a). Many Christians have been through difficult and 'grief causing' events. Is this not the pruning of the Lord which *"... later produces the peaceable fruit of righteousness to the ones who have been exercised by it"* (Hebrews 12:11b)?

As we have already noted, the arms of the vine that produce some fruit are 'pruned and cleaned' to produce more fruit. During this pruning process, there are many challenges or offences that are given (by the Lord or by others). Those arms that 'stay (that is, that hang in) with the Lord'

and are not put off by the pain or the difficulty that they encounter, are those arms that *"...remain in (Him) ..."* (John 15:5). These produce much fruit. Those that give up on the goodness of the Lord in the midst of His severity (Romans 11:20-22) fall away. And in falling, they fall away from fruitfulness to remain in sadness.

Remaining in Jesus means sticking with Him, that is, remaining rooted in His supply, abiding in His outlook of love and compassion toward all men (no matter what they have done or left undone toward us). It means letting His life flow in all circumstances.

As the arm of the vine draws sap from the trunk, so the Lord says a *"... well-spring of Life giving water"* flows through deep inside us by the Holy Spirit (John 4:14). Healthy arms draw fully from the health



in the Vine

of the
rootstock and
so are readied for
greater fruitfulness.

It is not coincidental that, in the same verse where Jesus said about 'remaining' in Him, He also says, *"... for without Me you can do nothing"*. Perhaps those arms that have been pruned are they that have been taken through the character building circumstances of enduring trouble (Romans 5:3-5). In Romans 5, the Greek word for trouble or affliction, means 'pressure' from being 'crowded' - by people or circumstances. Suffering trouble often means having our freedom or customary habits crowded or curtailed by others or by events not of our choice.

Trouble for Christians (i.e. the arms of the Vine), seems mostly to come from fellow Christians.

Many Christians have seemingly suffered wrongness at the hands of other Christians who have

'crowded
their views or
dogma' on others.

Perhaps much of this is actually the Vineyard Manager at work, pruning His beloved branches! And perhaps they who have been 'cut off' or 'pruned' of their strength, are those branches that remain in Him. Those that rely on the Lord, know afresh that without Him they can do 'nothing' at all. It is these branches that have learnt what it means to come to the end of their resources to find the beginning of His. Of course they naturally and in gentle abundance, will be very fruitful!

Each year, the Vine through us, gives rise to new growth. From the well-spring of Life within, new life shoots forth. New Christians grow from the Life that effuses from the buds in the branches ... that flows from the praying and preaching, that is from the living in the Word of Life, that others receive.

The shoot

The shoot is interesting. Importantly, the productivity of the shoot determines the productivity of the vine and yet more importantly, without the productivity of the vine, the shoot produces nothing.

Jesus said, *"I am the vine, you are*

*the
branches.*


*He who lives
(abides) in Me and I in him, is
he who produces much fruit; for
without Me, you can do nothing."* (John 15:5).

The shoot is the green annual growth from the branches. In its soft green form, it is present only for one season. We as individuals, are here for a season, just for our life span, like the annual growth of the vine. Our calling is to be fruitful in that time. *"In this is the Vineyard Manager glorified, that you produce much fruit ..."* (John 15:8).

Now the shoot comprises several main items each of vital importance to its productivity.

The apex

For the shoot to grow from the bud or at any time in its life, it must have an active growing tip (the apex). The shoot tip usually grows up, away from the pull of gravity and toward the 'pull' of the sun. So, shoots in Jesus, grow away from the earthly things (the ways of self) and toward the Son of God. The apex follows the sun as Christian shoots follow the Son.



"For God (the Vineyard Manager), who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts, to give the light (Sunshine) of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6).

As we grow toward Him, we grow knowing more of the glory of God in Jesus, the Son.

Hindrances to growth

In our growth and inheritance in the Vine, the holiness of God can be polluted by the self-righteous (I am right)

in our sin.
So, when we walk in the flesh (the earthly ways), we grow toward our sin

and
not toward the Son.

The eternal ways of the Father are replaced by the sin of self-indulgence and self-interest.

Instead of the Son we have sin. Instead of growing up (in maturity), we grow down (in poverty) as Christians. We grow closer to the earthly ways of the old root in the first man, Adam, and less toward the life-giving spirit of the new root in the last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:41-50)!

But the *"light shined in the darkness and the darkness had no authority over it."* (John 1:5). So, the Vineyard Manager has made the way for us. In sending the Son to light the world, He sent the Son-shine to light our darkness and to wash away our sin. He came to take the dead 'I am right' old nature and in its place we receive a new nature, the Righteousness of God. By the power of His blood, He made our sin as nought.

As the shoot grows, it lays down strengthening tissue on the inside. One of these materials, called lignin, is used to give the fragile, green shoot some ability to withstand the rigours of daily living in a world of winds and things that buffet the vine, its branches and its shoots. So the Vine gives us strength of character on the inside as we mature in Him, so that we can withstand the winds that buffet us daily (Ephesians 4:13-14).

It is of interest to note that this lignin, in the normal course of events, does not block the Life giving flow of sap (the river of Life in the Spirit in the inner man) in the conducting cells of the

shoot.

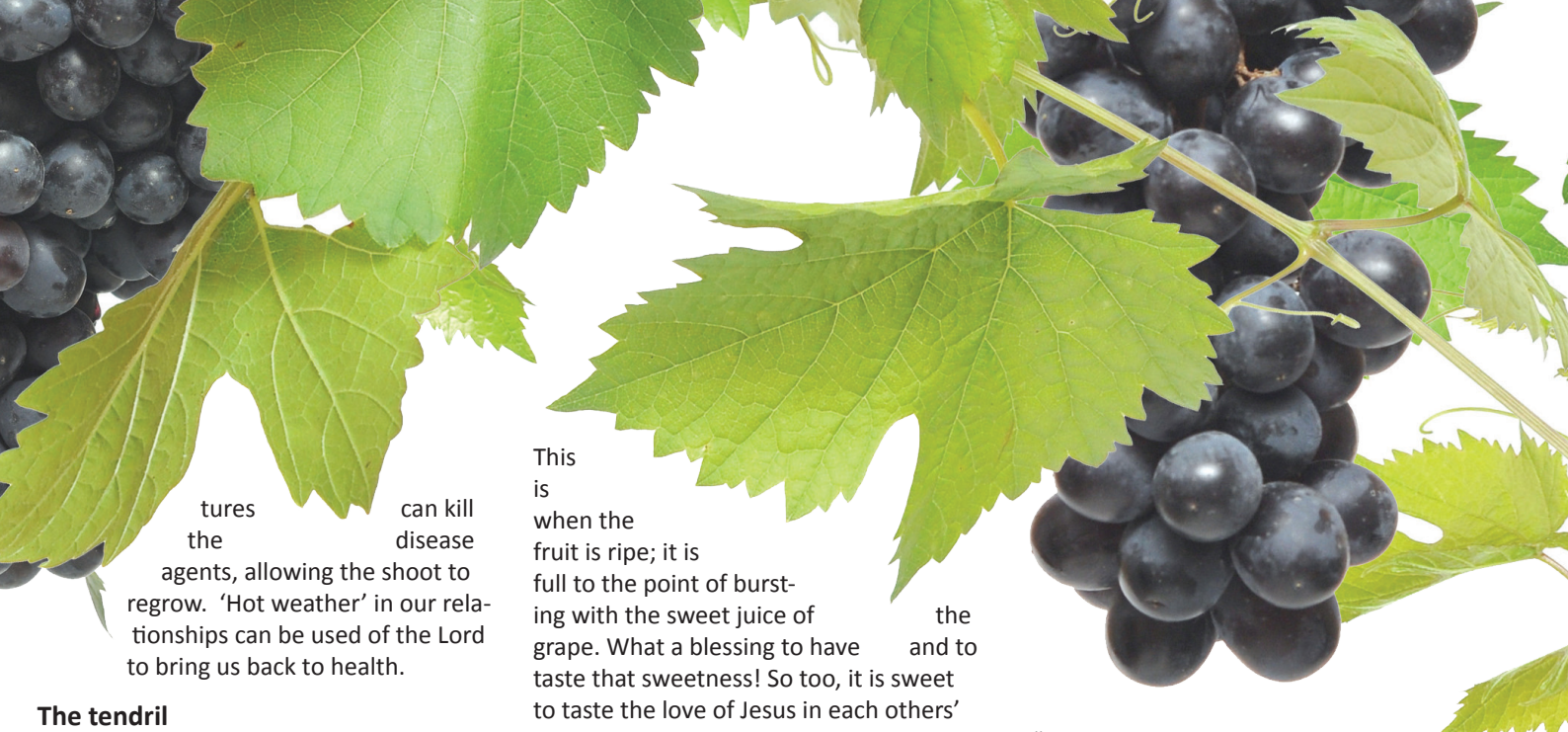
The material is rightly placed in cells especially designed for it. It does not block, it builds.

There are many things that can block the flow of sap in the shoot. Tiny organisms called phytoplasma are some. They can invade the cells of the shoot and produce a substance called callus. This is laid down in the conducting cells and blocks the flow. The sugars are not carried effectively to the growing parts of the shoot, so the shoot quickly loses its green colour and drops its fruit. It becomes barren!

"Remaining in Jesus means sticking with Him, that is, remaining rooted in His supply."

These agents of disease, multiply within the shoot. How like the life of Christian shoots. Agents of disease, small particles of sin, can invade our lives and cause us to respond with callus that is laid down inside. Things like resentments and unforgiveness, fear and sin can block our relationships, restrict our flow in the Spirit. When we become callused to someone or to something, we are at risk of being blocked not built. We lose our colour and our character. We die back rather than grow up.

Similar testings in our lives can lead to goodness being built that strengthen and not strangle, that build and not block. These work strength of character in the life of the shoot and this hastens maturity and stability. Interestingly too, hot tempera-



tures the agents, allowing the shoot to regrow. 'Hot weather' in our relationships can be used of the Lord to bring us back to health.

The tendril

As the shoot grows, it produces a fine, short side-branch that seeks something to grow around, something to hang on to. The shoot uses these soft green threads, the tendrils, to cling to some supporting structure. Without the tendrils, the naturally growing vine would collapse and fall to the ground just as soon as any weight of fruit grew on its branches (if it even lasted that long). To the Christians (especially the young who are in need of support), we read that *"Barnabas ... exhorted them to cling to the Lord ..."* (Acts 11:22-23).

Paul said to the Romans, *"Hate evil, and hold fast (cling) to what is good ..."* (Romans 12:9). Moses and Joshua both said to the children of Israel, *"... love the Lord your God, (grow) in all His ways, and cling onto Him, ..."* (Deuteronomy 11:22; Joshua 23:8-11). The older shoots have already clung to the Lord and have their support in Him.

Interestingly, the tendril is produced from the shoot, like the fruit. That is the tendril is like a fruit of the shoot. The fruitfulness is of steadfastness, faithfulness, self-control (Galatians 6:22-23).

The fruit

The shoot fruits and grapes are produced. *"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples."* (John 15:8) The production of fruit on the branches shows forth the reality of life and strength in the vine (Jesus).

The grapes ripen and the maturity of the fruit is evident. The colour changes and the fruit softens: *"Be ye tender hearted toward one another..."* (Ephesians 4:32).

Maturity in the Christian is evident in gentle relationships with others— especially when under pressure. The time when the fruit is tender is the time of harvest!

This is when the fruit is ripe; it is full to the point of bursting with the sweet juice of the grape. What a blessing to have and to taste that sweetness! So too, it is sweet to taste the love of Jesus in each others' lives, especially when we are trodden on. Especially when we split under pressure of circumstances (an act of God) for others to taste what is really inside of us. This is the time of true harvest, when the real us is exposed. Here is where true love and sweetness counts.

"You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My name, he may give it to you." (John 15:16)



Peter Magarey

Peter Magarey is a Plant Pathologist who has been working on grapevine diseases for 35 years at Loxton in the Riverland region of South Australia. Along with wife, Carla, they currently operate Magarey Plant Pathology.

Peter is an elder in the Loxton Christian Fellowship and is a foundational member of the Soldiers of the Cross Inc., the ministry which produces this magazine.

As a Christian and a Scientist, Peter is constantly reminded of the wonderfully creative power of the Heavenly Father and the power of His saving grace in his life.

Peter and Carla live in Loxton, SA and have four grown daughters.

"The production of fruit on the branches shows the reality of life and strength in the vine (Jesus)."



180

◆ Ray Comfort



Many years ago, I learned that a young woman I knew was about to have an abortion. I sped to the facility and found that she had already been given the pre-op medication. But with God's help, she changed her mind about abortion and decided to keep the baby.

Two years later, I was at a picnic and saw a cute little toddler crawling in the grass. It was this young woman's daughter. It then dawned on me that I had been used in a small way in the saving of a precious human life.

The Parallel

Did you know that over 50 million people were killed in the Second World War?

Think of it— 50 million people—in one war! It was started by the leader of Germany, Adolf Hitler. For some reason, Hitler hated Jewish people, and when he rose to high political power he made it legal to kill them. He then systematically had six

Pro

million Jews—men, women, and children—murdered in the cruellest of ways.

There is a reason that I would like you to know what happened to the Jewish people. I want you to see that there is a parallel between what happened in Germany during those years and what is happening now.

The following are common pro-abortion arguments (in italics) taken directly from pro-choice websites:

"Pro-choice (abortion) refer to the political and ethical view that a woman should have complete right over her fertility and that she should have the freedom to decide whether she wants to continue or terminate her pregnancy. The pro-choice movement entails to guarantee a woman her reproductive rights."

Hitler's rise to power came about because he seemed to care about the German people.

The nation was in economic chaos after the First World War, and he promised to restore its glory and bring in full employment. When he rose to a place of supreme political power and instigated laws so that he could kill Jewish people, he did it saying that it was for the

good of Germany. Consequently, Hitler gave the German people the freedom to decide whether to continue or to terminate the life of a Jew. That right was guaranteed.

“Control over her body and the freedom to decide the course of her life is critical to a woman’s civil rights. When a woman is pregnant it is her body that goes through all the stress of pregnancy. If she decides not to have a pregnancy she should be able to do so. Denying her the right to her body is violating her most basic freedom.”

The law that allowed the killing of Jews was critical to the benefit and happiness of all Germans.

Hitler painted Jews as the scum of the earth, blaming them for the economic plight of the German people. The existence of Jews violated German civil rights and caused economic stress. Denying the German people the right to enjoy life violated their most basic freedom.

“One of the most pertinent questions

hence should not be considered a separate entity.”

The way Hitler began the killing of millions of Jews was to isolate them. They were put into “ghettos” and starved of food. They were completely dependent on the German people for survival and thus became an economic drain.

So, killing them off became the final and most sensible solution.

“A lot of care and precautions are taken while carrying out an abortion. Most of the abortions are done during the first trimester when abortions are most safe. As a result, abortions pose only 0.5% risk for the woman to develop serious complications. This certainly does not affect women’s health gravely or their ability to conceive in future.”

A lot of care and precaution were taken when killing Jews. They were systematically and very efficiently herded into box cars that were normally used to transport animals. When they were removed from

the quality of German education. This certainly spelled a bleak future for Germans.

“While some believe that life begins at conception, there are others that do not believe in this. There are different theories regarding when life begins. Unless every one can be made to agree to the one point when life begins, laws prohibiting abortion would be forcing one theory on all.”

While some believed that Jews were human, others didn’t. Unless everyone could be made to agree to the one point about whether they were human, there shouldn’t be laws prohibiting the killing of Jews.

“Making abortion illegal does not stop unwanted pregnancies from taking place. In case abortion is made illegal, many women may get it done from unauthorized entities. This would pose a greater threat to their life and health.”

Germans would have killed Jews anyway—if it wasn’t legal for them to kill them. If they went ahead and murdered them

ecting the Unborn

regarding abortion is when does life begin? A fetus may be alive but so are sperms and eggs. It’s true that life in every form should be respected. However, should the right of a fetus be greater than that of a woman who in a majority of the cases would bear the responsibility of the unplanned child? “

One of the most basic pertinent questions regarding the killing of Jews was their humanity. Were they human beings or were they something else? Hitler said that they weren’t human. In a speech in 1923, he declared, “The Jews are undoubtedly a race, but not human. They cannot be human in the sense of being an image of God, the Eternal. The Jews are the image of the Devil.” Jews were a life form, but so were dogs and cats. Every form of life should be respected; however, should the right of a Jew be greater than that of a German, who, in the majority of cases, had to bear the responsibility of those who weren’t human?

“One of the important abortion facts is that most of the abortions take place in the first trimester when the fetus cannot live independent of the mother. It depends on the mother through the placenta and the umbilical cord for nutrition and health and

the trains, the killing machine ran with precision and safety. Older people, weaker men, women, and children were separated from those who could work. They were quickly stripped of clothing, their hair was removed, and they were told that they needed to be showered. They were then quickly herded into “showers” and gassed to death. Gold was removed from their teeth and the bodies were burned. No Germans were put at risk during this procedure, nor did the killing of Jews affect their health.

“Unwanted teenage pregnancy can have serious complications if the pregnancy is continued. An adolescent is neither mentally nor physically ready to continue a pregnancy. Besides health related complications, a minor mother isn’t psychologically ready to handle the responsibilities of a child. With a life to support, many such girls drop out of school and start working in order to fend for the child. This certainly spells a bleak future for such girls.”

Allowing Jews to live could have had serious complications for the German people. It meant that millions would have to be educated and then they would compete for jobs. Allowing them to live would affect

themselves, it could have posed a threat to their life and health. It was far better to legalize their killing and have it done properly.

What God’s Word Says About Abortion

(Reprinted from The Evidence Bible)

God speaks very clearly in the Bible on the value of unborn children. God’s Word says that He personally made each one of us, and has a plan for each life. *“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart”* (Jeremiah 1:5). *“Even before I was born, God had chosen me to be His”* (Galatians 1:15).

“For You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother’s womb. . . Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be” (Psalm 139:13,16). *“Your hands shaped me and made me ... Did You not clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews? You gave me life”* (Job 10:8–12). *“This is what the Lord says—He who made you, who formed you in the womb”* (Isaiah 44:2). *“Did not He who made me in the womb make them?”*

“In His hand is the breath of every living thing and the breath of every human being”
(Job 12:10)

Did not the same One form us both within our mothers?” (Job 31:15).

Because man is made in God’s own image (Genesis 1:27), each life is of great value to God:

“Children are a gift from God” (Psalm 127:3).

He even calls our children His own: *“You took your sons and daughters whom you bore to Me and sacrificed them ... You slaughtered My children” (Ezekiel 16:20,21).*

The Bible says of our Creator, *“In His hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being” (Job 12:10).* God, the giver of life, commands us not to take the life of an innocent person: *“Do not shed innocent blood” (Jeremiah 7:6);*

“Cursed is the man who accepts a bribe to kill an innocent person” (Deuteronomy 27:25). “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13).

Taking the life of the unborn is clearly murder—*“He didn’t kill me in the womb, with my mother as my grave” (Jeremiah 20:17)*—and God vowed to punish those who *“ripped open the women with child” (Amos 1:13).* The unborn child was granted equal protection in the law; if he lost his life, the one who caused his death must lose his own life: *“If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined . . . But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life” (Exodus 21:22,23).*

But He tells us clearly the only acceptable choice to make:

“I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.” (Deuteronomy 30:19)

For Your Information:

A baby’s heart is beating at only 3 weeks after conception; brainwaves can be measured at 6 weeks after conception; a baby can move and respond to touch at 6 weeks and can suck his or her thumb at 8 weeks.

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www.heartchanger.com



Ray Comfort

Ray Comfort is the best-selling author of more than 60 books, including ‘You Can Lead an Atheist to Evidence But You Can’t Make Him Think’, ‘Nothing Created Everything’ (with special cover-condemnation by Richard Dawkins), ‘God Doesn’t Believe in Atheists’, and ‘Evolution--the Fairy Tale For Grownups’.

His booklet ‘The Atheist Test’ has sold more than a million copies. He is the co-host of an award-winning television program (with actor Kirk Cameron), blogs daily to hundreds of atheists at ‘Atheist Central’, has debated atheistic evolution on ABC’s Nightline and on the BBC, and was a platform speaker at American Atheists, Inc. at their annual convention in 2001.

He is a New Zealander, who lives with his wife, Sue, in Southern California where they have three grown children.



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J. C. Ryle's Classic Sermon

The World

A Source of Great Danger to the Soul

By 'the world,' I do not mean the material world on the face of which we are living and moving. When I speak of 'the world' in this paper, I mean those people who think chiefly of this world's things, and neglect the world to come - the people who are always thinking more of earth than of heaven, more of time than of eternity, more of body than the soul, more of pleasing man than of pleasing God. It is of them and their ways, habits, customs, opinions, practices, tastes, aims, spirit, and tone, that I am speaking when I speak of 'the world.' This is the world from which Paul tells us to 'Come out and be separate.'

Now 'the world,' in this sense, is an enemy to the soul. There are three things which a professing Christian must renounce and give up, and three enemies which he must fight with and resist. These three are the flesh, the devil, and 'the world.' All three are terrible foes, and all three must be overcome if we would be saved. Let us then turn to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures. If the texts I am about to quote do not prove that the world is a source of danger to the soul, then there is no meaning in words.

Let us hear what the Apostle Paul says, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Romans 12:2);

"We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God." (1 Corinthians 2:12)

"Christ gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age [world]." (Galatians 1:4)

"You were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world." (Ephesians 2:1-2)

"Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me" (2 Timothy 4:10)

Let us hear what James says, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." (James. 1:27)

"Don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God." (James. 4:4)

Let us hear what John says, "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is

not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.” (1 John 2:15-17)

“There is utter opposition between the friendship of the world and the friendship of Christ.”

“The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.” (1 John 3:1)

“They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them.” (1 John 4:5)

“Everyone born of God overcomes the world.” (1 John 5:4)

“We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.” (1 John 5:19)

Let us hear, lastly, what the Lord Jesus Christ says, “The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life [this world] and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.” (Matt. 13:22)

“You are of this world; I am not of this world.” (John 8:23)

“The world cannot accept Him [Holy Spirit], because it neither sees Him nor knows Him.” (John 14:17)

“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated Me first.” (John 15:18)

“If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.” (John 15:19)

“In this world you will have trouble.

But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

“They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.” (John 17:16)

CONCLUSION

I make no comment on those texts. They speak for themselves. If anyone can read them carefully, and fail to see that ‘the world’ is an enemy to the Christian’s soul, and that there is an utter opposition between the friendship of the world and the friendship of Christ, he is past the reach of argument, and it is a waste of time to reason with him. To my eyes they contain a lesson as clear as the sun at noon day.

I turn from Scriptures to matters of fact and experience. I appeal to any old Christian who keeps his eyes open, and knows what is going on in the Churches. I ask him whether it is not true that nothing damages the cause of Christianity so much as ‘the world?’

It is not open sin, or open unbelief, which robs Christ of His professing servants, so much as the love of the world, the fear of the world, the cares of the world, the business of the world, the money of the world, the pleasures of the world, and the desire to keep in with the world. This is the great rock on which thousands of young people are continually being crushed against and destroyed. They don’t object to any of the truths of the Christian faith.

They do not deliberately choose evil, and openly rebel against God. They hope somehow to get to heaven in the end; and they think it is proper to have some religion. But they cannot give up their idol: they must have the world.

“It is not open sin, or open unbelief which robs Christ of His professing servants, so much as the love of the world.”

And so after running well and longing for heaven while boys and girls, they turn aside when they become men and women, and go down the broad way which leads to destruction. They begin with Abraham and Moses, and end with Demas and Lot’s wife.

The last day alone will prove how many souls ‘the world’ has slain. Hundreds will be found to have been trained in Christian homes, and to have known the Gospel from their very childhood, and yet missed heaven. They left the harbour of home with bright prospects, and launched forth on the ocean of life with a father’s blessing and a mother’s prayers, and then turned from the right course through the seductions of the world, and ended their voyage on the reef and in misery. It is a sorrowful story to tell; but it is all too common! I can clearly see why Paul says, “Come out from them and be separate.”

Excerpt from ‘Practical Christianity’



John Charles Ryle
(1816-1900)

J.C. Ryle began his service to the Lord as a minister of the gospel in parish churches within the Church of England, for almost forty years. He then became Bishop of Liverpool in 1880, and came to international prominence as preacher, Bible expositor, and author.

Today he is best known for his plain and lively writings on practical and spiritual themes, in a style deliberately used to reach ordinary people. His great aim in all his ministry was to encourage strong and serious Christian living. His tracts and books sold in the millions in the late 1800s, and many have been republished in modern times.

Ryle’s successor as Bishop of Liverpool commented, “The words of such a man acquire new force as we read them. Ryle lived near God, and God lived through him.”

CONQUER YOUR FEAR SHARE YOUR FAITH

Recently, we, at the Soldiers of the Cross, facilitated a 'Conquer your Fear, Share your Faith' Evangelism Course in Loxton, South Australia. This 4-session course, produced by Living Waters/Way of the Master, was conducted over two weekends.

The last session coincided with the Loxton 'Lights Up' festival. So, after we finished, participants went 'on the street' handing out Christmas Card tracts and sharing the Gospel where there was opportunity. The following week, a Christmas parade in a neighbouring town, proved to be another good opportunity to put what was learnt in the course into practise. (See pictures of participants and some of the witnessing opportunities.)

Below are some testimonies from course participants. For course information, please contact us.

"I thought it was very real and natural, especially having the examples of street interviews. The DVD course is easy to follow and has some meaningful illustrations explaining the Way very naturally including reasons and references from the Bible. The pamphlets and book are very useful also."

Fiona, Loxton, SA

"The Way of the Master course shows scriptural examples and principles of how to share our faith. The teaching was easy to understand and it makes sense; that if you reveal to people God's holy and righteous law, the Holy Spirit and their conscience will help them realise their guilty state before God. Then Jesus' sacrifice is Good News indeed."

Sharon, Loxton, SA



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WHAT IS TRUTH?

◆ Leah Knowling

In John 18:37, Jesus answering Pilate said, "For this I came into the world, to testify to the truth." Pilate then asked, "What is truth?" (John 18:38). Today many are asking the same question.

To try to answer that question, let me first start by defining what truth is not.

Truth is not opinion

If a number of people saw a crime being committed and were called up to be witnesses at the trial, they would all be told to swear to tell "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God." These people would all give their version or opinion of what they saw and believed to be the truth. However, each one may give a slightly different view of what they saw and in fact, none of them may be the 'real' factual truth.

Truth is not relative

Relativism is the complete opposite to truth. Relativism says that there is no absolute truth. Therefore everyone's

version is the truth for them. However, for truth to be truth, it must be absolute. Otherwise it is not truth.

Morally, relativism means that if *you* think it is okay to steal, lie, murder or lust, then for *you* it is okay and truth. If I, on the other hand, think it is not okay to do those things, then for *me* that is truth.

Spiritually, this means that whatever you believe, or don't believe, about God, Heaven, Hell, death and religion is okay for you. Everyone's beliefs are accepted as 'truth'... for them.

As one preacher said "Everyone is searching for truth, but criticise the person who believes he's found it." This actually proves that relativism does not work, because if someone is intolerant of someone else's 'truth', then it means that 'truth' is not relative and is therefore 'absolute'.

In schools, children are taught that truth is relative and that they must learn to think for themselves, and yet they are only taught what the government wants them to learn. The indoctrination of evo-

lutionary teaching is one prime example. If a student was to question the theory of evolution in a public school, because they believed creation to be true, they would be called 'intolerant'. Therefore truth is not relative.

Morally and Spiritually relativism is destroying the fabric of society. However, when relativism infiltrates the 'church', that is when it is the most dangerous.

Recently, I saw a quote on the internet that quite alarmed me and, I believe, illustrates the point that relativism in the church is dangerous. It was giving a view of the 'process' of someone becoming a Christian.

The quote was as follows:

*"Sin ---> Punishment ---> Repentance
---> Transformation*

(99% theology/history)

Sin ---> Unconditional Love ---> Transformation ---> Repentance

(Jesus)

'With Jesus acceptance precedes repent-



ance; for the Pharisees - ancient and modern - it's the other way around."

Please note: I have removed the sources of the original quote, as my issue is not with the character of the men themselves, but that there was no scriptural reference to substantiate such statements.

My response was this:

"Godly sorrow ---> Repentance ---> Salvation/Transformation ---> No Regret (2 Corinthians 7:10)"

Additionally, it appeared that most people commenting agreed with the quote, as this was their 'experience'.

Now, while I agree that we should not just believe everything that we are taught; biblically, we are encouraged to be as the Bereans, who *"examined the scriptures... to see if what [was] said was true."* (Acts 17:11)

And this is my whole point.

Over the years, as we have travelled around the nation, we have talked with

various Christians who have claimed that 'God told them' this or that or that they believed certain things about God or the Bible because it was their 'experience'. In essence, it was truth for them.

Now, I am not saying that God doesn't speak to believers today. Of course He does. Jesus said *"But when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth."* (John 16:13)

However, how do we know that what we are hearing is the 'truth' and truly from God's Spirit or whether it is just our own imaginations or even from the enemy.

If truth is not opinion, and truth is not relative, then truth must be absolute and must therefore be able to be known.

The key is found in scripture. Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." He, Who is TRUTH, said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32

Jesus said 'If you hold to my teaching'. Where do we find Jesus' teaching? In the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures. This must be our authority.

Therefore, everything we hear, everything we experience, must line up with the Word of God. Holy Scripture must be our standard against which everything else is measured, otherwise we will be double-minded, tossed like the waves in the sea (James 1:6-8)

If we do not believe that God's Word is final authority, or we believe that Scripture is true only as it lines up with reason and experience, then anything goes, and the quote I mentioned could be true (for them).

But the truth is, the Word of God IS our inspired final authority on truth. It is *"living and active."* (Hebrews 4:12) and is *"God-breathed... useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."* (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

And that is the TRUTH.

Seeking

After God

◆ R. C. Sproul

How many times have you heard Christians say (or heard the words from your own mouth), "So-and-so is not a Christian but he's searching"? It is a common statement among Christians. The idea is that there are people all over the place who are searching for God. Their problem is that they just haven't been able to find Him. He is playing hide-and-seek. He is elusive.

In the Garden of Eden, when sin came into the world, who hid? Jesus came into the world to seek and to save the lost. Jesus wasn't the one who was hiding. God is not a fugitive. We are the ones on the run. Scripture declares that the wicked flee when no man pursues. As Martin Luther remarked: "The pagan trembles at the rustling of a leaf. The uniform teaching of Scripture is that fallen men are fleeing from God." There is none who seeks after God.

Why is it, then, despite such clear biblical teaching to the contrary, that Christians persist in claiming that they know people who are searching for God but have not yet found him? Thomas Aquinas shed some light on this. Aquinas said that we confuse two similar yet different human actions. We see people searching desperately for peace of mind, relief from guilt, meaning and purpose to their lives, and loving acceptance. We know that ultimately these things can only be found in God. Therefore, we conclude that since people are seeking these things, they must be seeking after God.

People do not seek God. They seek after the benefits that only God can give them. The sin of fallen man is this: Man seeks the benefits of God while fleeing from God Himself. We are, by nature, fugitives. The Bible tells us repeatedly to seek after God. The conclusion we draw from these texts is that since we are called to seek after God it must mean that we, even in our fallen state, have the moral capacity to do that seeking. But who is being addressed in these texts? In the case of the Old Testament, it is the people of Israel who are called to seek the Lord. In the New Testament, it is believers who are called to seek the kingdom.

Are you seeking the benefits God can give you or seeking after God alone?

From Ligonier Ministries, the teaching fellowship of R.C. Sproul.

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