



Be Not Deceived (1 Corinthians 6:9)



Establishing the foundation

The title of this message comes from 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 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"

What was Jesus' main concern for His people in the last days?

When asked by His disciples, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3), Jesus stated a long list of events for both the destruction of Jerusalem, which was fulfilled in 70 AD, and signs for the last days. But of the entire list, only one issue is most concerning to Him.

It was not the earthquakes or the wars. They were only mentioned once each. In fact, the first thing on His mind was found in Matthew 24:4 "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you." He was concerned about human deception.

Now when it comes to deceptions, is God concerned that you do or do not believe that we are living in the time of increased earthquakes? Actually, He is not. Is God concerned that you believe the sky is blue and not green? Not really. Is God concerned that you believe in salvation correctly? Absolutely, for if we do not know how we are saved, then we could easily be deceived.

But Jesus was not going to let this most concerning issue slide by with a single statement. He gets more specific in Matthew 24:11. "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." Now a prophet is not some Satanic being with a crystal ball. The Bible calls those people witches and sorcerers. A prophet is associated with religion, either pagan or God's. Now most of us are not going to be deceived by a Muslim prophet speaking on behalf

of Allah denouncing Christianity, but we could be deceived by a Christian rising up claiming to be a prophet of God.

Now keep in mind that we are not to stop believing in modern day prophets. It is clear that only the false prophets are to be ignored. That means there are true modern day prophets. John is clear in recording, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). And Paul wrote, "Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesying. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21).

But Jesus is not done. A third time He gives the last day warning. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if [it were] possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24).

Now it is clear that the most educated and most knowledgeable Christian, if it were possible, could be deceived with the false Christs and prophets. We are definitely referring to imposters inside the Christian community.

With all these false prophets and deceptions, one way Satan can deceive Christians is by lulling them into believing they are all right and secure when they are actually lost. Be careful. This may be a deception. Thinking you cannot lose your salvation and that you do not have to worry about the deceptions sure sounds like a plot of Satan. Even Jesus is concerned about that belief, otherwise He would not have stated, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13).

What are we not to be deceived about?

According to the opening verse 1 Cor. 6:9-11, it is the allowance of Christians, not God, to believe that unrighteous living still permits one to enter heaven. We already know that those who are not Christian and want nothing to do with Christ, known as the ungodly in the Bible, will not be in heaven. That is because "the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). But what of the Christian? What of even the churchgoer? What of even a person that

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Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

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appears to be so committed to Jesus?

Again, look at that first verse in the proper context. It is not speaking of unrighteous people that will not be in heaven. It clearly states that the practice of unrighteousness shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. That means that the ungodly that practice unrighteousness as well as the professed Christian who practices unrighteousness shall not enter into heaven.

And just in case one does not realize this, Paul then lists out specifics. Ungodly or Christian who practice fornication will not be in heaven. That is any sexual act prior to marriage. So if there is a couple living together for the sake of financial purposes, or simply good people who think it is just a piece of paper, or even the boyfriend and girlfriend who feel that they can carry their relationship to the sexual level, even if they profess to be Christian and act so otherwise, Paul says that they will not be in heaven.

But what of the married? Paul covers that one as well. He states that anyone committing adultery will not be in heaven. It does not matter if one is in good standing or not in the church. Being with another person that is not your spouse either sexually or even emotionally without the sex is adultery. But it goes further. This also covers the masturbator, also an unrighteous act. It even goes further. Adultery is committed quite regularly through pornography. But many Christians are appalled by pornography! That may be so, but to enjoy the swimsuit edition of sports magazines is actually soft porn. Watching the hunks and beauties at the beach is a form of pornography. Make no mistake Paul says such shall not be in heaven.

Then we have those that take pride in their material possessions. Should we be laying up funds for material items? That is the modern form of idolatry. Many Christians find it hard to give money to the church, especially in large quantities. Many Christians are taken back if asked to tithe, which is ten percent of gross income. But even in general offering, a dollar or two is dropped in the plate and they feel as if their conscience is satisfied. That gives no Christian the right to gratify themselves with vacations to expensive resorts, collect material items, and living lavishly. The more one makes, the more one is expected to fund the cause.

Moving on in Paul's list, you may ask what an effeminate is. Webster says it is *"having feminine qualities untypical of a man: not manly in appearance or manner."* This was Paul's softer way to address homosexuals. Even some modern Bible versions use that word instead. Though God loves everyone, including the homosexual, God will not allow the practicing homosexual to enter into the Kingdom of God just as He will not allow the fornicator or adulterer.

Now we turn to the abusers of themselves with mankind. How can one abuse their self and yet

be with mankind? Basically it is believing mankind over God's Word that allows for abuse. For instance, psychologists or mankind say that it is healthy for the youth to masturbate regularly for sexual health, yet it is an overall body destroying practice according to God. Science or mankind say a little use of alcohol each day is good for the body, yet a little alcohol still destroys the most important part of the brain. There is an awful lot that mankind says is good for you despite what God says is not. Who are we going to believe?

Then we get to the strait list. We know thieves will not be in heaven. But then, none of us steal or do we? How are you in keeping appointments or do you steal someone else's time? Do you consistently show up late? That is a form of stealing. Now we are not talking about things out of your control. We are talking the inconsideration of others.

Continuing, even Paul at one point struggled with coveting. We know drunkards will not be in heaven, but just how many drinks does it take to get drunk? Oh, you do not drink. But there are foods and liquids that one ought not to consume because in the stomach they turn into alcohol. How are you doing in avoiding them?

Finally, revilers and extortionists will not inherit the kingdom of God. If we continue to practice these things, even if a Christian, we are fooling ourselves if we think we shall enter the Kingdom of God. No, worse yet. We are deceived. That is what the verse stated.

What is most concerning Jesus?

"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or [if] ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with [him]" (2 Corinthians 11:4).

Did you know that there are different versions of Jesus today? You may have heard it or even be deceived into it. Whenever the phrase, "My God is not like that" or "My Jesus is not like that", it means there are different Jesus beliefs. We are to be *"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. [There is] one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who [is] above all, and through all, and in you all"* (Ephesians 4:3-6).

Are we not deceived on these points? There is a unity forming but it is mostly on surface agreement and then agreeing that we ought not to preach on dividing points. That is not unity. Oh if we could only get all the denominations together and form one true belief or faith based upon the correct understanding of God's intentions, we would turn the world upside down. But we cannot even agree upon where to base our beliefs. With over 92% of Christians believing that the Bible is not God's Word, it leaves us

with believing whatever humans come up with. No wonder we are in such a mess. There has been a great deception in this area. Could the false prophets be all the ministers that denounce the Bible as being the inerrant Word of God?

In addition, Paul brings out that there would be different spirits taught. Some believe in a tongues and healing spirit while others believe in the prophesying spirit as a strong trait while others do not believe the Spirit is active.

And then we come to the gospel. Did you know that there are multiple gospels being taught? The range of gospels being taught include that you can live in sin and still be saved to a gospel that teaches being saved by works and a lot of them. Somewhere in between is the true gospel, but with so many different flavors abounding today, does one see that deceptions are prevalent and even point to the fact we are living in the last days?

Further, the Bible states again what is most concerning to God. *"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"* (1 Timothy 4:1). You see, if one accepts a gospel that is just a little off from the true gospel, that is a seducing spirit. If a gospel is correct in all points but excuses away the condemnation of one sin, it is a seducing spirit at work. Further, you have accepted a different doctrine. And that is what is concerning to God.

So why do we have so many denominations? Doctrines. Spend time finding out what is the absolute truth on each doctrine and then find a church that teaches those Biblical doctrines. If all would do this the denominational walls over different doctrines would crumble and we would have true unity. There is only one truth.

What is the proper response to the gospel?

If one believes we are saved by the gospel that is true. But if one does not hear the proper gospel, one may not have the proper response. Did you know there is a response?

Peter states, *"For the time [is come] that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if [it] first [begin] at us, what shall the end [be] of them that obey not the gospel of God?"* (1 Peter 4:17). Did you catch it? Said straightly, the proper response to the gospel is obedience. We are to obey the gospel. In other words, the gospel is more than saying, "Jesus died for you so that you may live."

How much of the gospel is to be obeyed?

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching

them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20).

Too many denominations simply say, "Do you believe that Jesus died for you so that you may live in eternal life?" And if the respondent believes, they are baptized. Such denominations fail to take into consideration the whole gospel.

Jesus said, *"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have [it] more abundantly"* (John 10:10). How is that possible? That is because *"ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"* (John 8:32).

You see, it is more than just Jesus saves. We are to grow in knowledge and not only optionally choose what to believe but to believe specifically. And not only specific things that set us free, but everything that was taught of Jesus.

In other words, too many denominations are focused upon what is called justification and hardly teach sanctification. Justification is truly an act of heaven that a human hardly participates in while sanctification is a daily dying to self (1 Cor. 15:31). It is holy living.

Look at it this way, Jesus died for us and justifies us as if we never sinned giving us the free ticket to heaven. Then we must act as if we are citizens of heaven by the power He promises to give to us (Jude 1:24). So even in holy living, it is not all us.

For example, we are justified by God as if we never smoked in our life, destroying the body. Though the physical ramifications may still exist, we are to live sanctified and set free from sin by not lighting up again.

We are justified by God from our gluttonous ways, which also destroys the body. But we are then to live in a non-gluttonous manner, which is the sanctified life. We are free from gorging ourselves with food.

But we do not pick and choose the sins to give up. We are to be set free from it all.

What is the role of the pastor?

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we [henceforth] be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, [and] cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth

THINK ON THESE THINGS

(Philippians 4:8)

I Am The True Vine (John 15:1)

I am the vine, ye [are] the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. (John 15:5)

With Jesus being the true vine and we the branches, why do we have so many different versions of Jesus?

We are to abide in Him, including in thought and action, so why do we practice so differently from one another?

There are many different understandings of what Jesus taught on baptism, what happens when you die, even if Jesus was or is God?

Since there is only one Jesus, should we not be one in doctrine? We are not the only ones that ask this question. *"How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying"* (1 Corinthians 14:26).

Could it be that what divides was actually to be used to help us be unified? Maybe we need to look closer at how we come to the conclusions we do. Maybe it is the amount of scripture or lack thereof that is used to prove a doctrine and that is what divides. Maybe we ought to use all the references on a given subject instead of just a verse here or there or in contradiction to others.

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in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, [even] Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Do you think church is the place to evangelize the unchurched? It is not, although it is portrayed that way today. Church is the gathering together so as to become better Christians. In other words, a good pastor is one that identifies sin in the church and preaches about gaining the victory over it, but today, we may be deceived in thinking a good pastor is one who entertains us. Remember, Moses was not a very good speaker (Exodus 4:10), yet he was a good leader.

Again, what is the issue? Deceptions in doctrine. We ought to know solidly what we believe from the Bible, otherwise, we are just being tossed in the wind. Society eventually dictates church doctrine.

We may feel good about the church service, but what has that done for the Christian growth and knowledge?

What does Jesus want for our lives?

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Yes, my friends, preach perfection. Because "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Hebrews 10:26).

And just in case you do not know that we ought to be teaching that we are to be perfect in all that we are aware of, Paul makes it very plain. *"Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and [I pray God] your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:22-23).*

The unchurched ought not be able to point to a single Christian and say, "I am not a Christian because that Christian cheats!" Or "that Christian steals." Or "that Christian has a foul mouth." Or... the list goes on.

But is this encouraged in church? No. In fact many condemn those that preach perfection. Websites are dedicated to destroying such teachers and preachers.

Please note that we are only to be perfect in what we know. *"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).* This means that we are not held responsible for things we do not know. In other words, we could be sinning and not know it, but this is taken into consideration and God overlooks that. It is made plain in Proverbs 24:12, *"If thou*

sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider [it]? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth [not] he know [it]? and shall [not] he render to [every] man according to his works?"

But before the Christian keeps the Bible closed and says to themselves, "I don't want to know anything more", Jesus said, *"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).* It is a sin to stay ignorant.

What do we need to keep us from deception in addition to Jesus?

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matthew 24:42). We need to be aware and watch.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). We need to be studying but studying rightly implies that there is a wrong way. Could there be many wrong ways? We believe so.

And if we are serious about not being deceived, keep in mind that *"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" (2 Timothy 3:16).* And please note that the end result is a perfect person going about doing good works.

What is the deception of the last day?

And finally, the Bible reveals the concerning aspect for the very last days. *"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into [your] house, neither bid him God speed" (2 John 1:7-10).*

Do you have the doctrines of Jesus Christ or antichrist? There are only two choices. And antichrist does not refer to the final antichrist. It is anyone working against Christ. Therefore one could re-ask the question, do you have the doctrines of Jesus or are they man-made?

The only way to have the doctrines of Jesus Christ is to have it come from and be well supported through God's Word. Doctrines from any other source are from antichrist or man-made. It comes from the false prophets and false teachers.

Do not be deceived! And do not deceive.

DO YOU HAVE A TSTL FOR THAT?

The purpose of these Bible studies is to help you seek for a TSTL—"Thus Saith the Lord..." for all that you believe. May you go forward in this study with that goal.



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES (John 5:39)

The Great Temptations (Deut. 29:3)

1. What ought we to do to be protected from temptation? **Matthew 6:13**
2. In addition to prayer, what else ought we to do? **Matthew 26:41**
3. What can happen to a Christian who is not rooted in Jesus? **Luke 8:13**
4. What are we doing when we suffer temptations? **Acts 20:19**
5. During a temptation, what ought we to look for? **1 Corinthians 10:13**
6. What are we to consider temptation as? **James 1:2**
7. What are we if we endure temptation? **James 1:12**
8. Who is not responsible for our temptation? **James 1:13**
9. What is the root of temptation? **James 1:14**
10. If we keep God's Word, what shall God do for us? **Revelation 3:10**

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S STUDY:

Moses' Law (Hebrews 10:28) A continuation of last month's study

1. In receiving mercy from God, what shall we not do with Moses' Law? **Hebrews 10:28** "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses"
2. What does God do with Moses' Law? **Hebrews 10:30** "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance [belongeth] unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people."
3. What does God use in this process? **James 2:12** "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."
4. What law is this? **James 2:11** "For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." [Both of these are commands found in the Ten Commandments.]
5. But if we do the law, what are we not? **Romans 3:20** "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."
6. At the same time, who does receive that part of salvation from God? **Romans 2:13** "(For not the hearers of the law [are] just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."
7. How do the two verses not contradict? **1 John 2:3-4** "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." [Through the commandments we know we need God because we have fallen short but the law is inanimate and unable to save us.]
8. What is involved with it? **Revelation 14:12** "Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."
9. Who lives by it? **Habakkuk 2:4** "Behold, his soul [which] is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.", **Romans 1:17** "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
10. How do we show it? **James 2:18** "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."

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**WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR REPORT?
AND TO WHOM IS THE ARM OF THE LORD REVEALED?**

(Isaiah 53:1)



▶ **Catholic News Service, October 13, 2009 - Poker-playing priest wins big for parish on TV game show**

A poker-playing priest from South Carolina is one step closer to winning \$1 million for his church's building fund. Father Andrew Trapp, parochial vicar at St. Michael Church in Garden City, won \$100,000 on "PokerStars Million Dollar Challenge," a new poker-themed game show that debuted on the Fox television network Oct. 11.

COMMENT: There is a principle that God has in Proverbs 13:11 *"Wealth [gotten] by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase."* Gambling is a sinful practice. It has been condemned for centuries, but little by little it has entered into churches. And now to exploit it on TV. This makes the church appear hypocritical.

▶ **Sandusky Register Online, September 20, 2009 - 'Cheater' wants to reunite with boyfriend**

It's the modern-day equivalent of the scarlet letter -- a young woman standing on the street corner with her mistake scrawled in black permanent marker. The Sandusky High School graduate said Wednesday was her one-year anniversary with her fiancé, and he took back the ring that same day after she confessed to having cheated earlier this summer. She said she got the idea for her act of repentance online. "I just want a chance to redeem myself," she said. "I honestly feel bad. If I have to stand out here in the rain for him to take me back, I will."

COMMENT: Hebrews 13:4 *"Marriage [is] honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."* As usual, the media finds the bleeding heart angle of the story and presents an unequal view. The only representation of the man's side is what you have read -- he took the ring back. In this situation, we personally do not want to follow to see if he does or does not take her. We are using the story for a different point. There are too many Christians that have the attitude that all should be forgiven and forgotten. That is not Christ's method at all. Sure, he should forgive her and not hate her for the rest of his life. That would be the Christian way. But to get back together is a separate matter. Sin has consequences. If a murder happens and the murderer says that they are sorry, the victim is still dead. And not to get back together does not mean the man is not Christian or unforgiving. One can forgive without taking the fiancé back. To listen to her words and simply say, "OK. Since you said you are sorry, let's get

back together" would be a great misunderstanding of God's love. There are other things to consider. First, the story simply states she confessed. Is that a confession after being caught or is that one morning waking up and confessing? That right there is the most important thing to consider before ever thinking of getting back together. Second, to have committed this act well less than one year of dating reveals that she is not ready for a serious commitment. A couple months later since the affair does not reveal that she is ready now or not. Third, what circumstances lead up to the affair? Could other circumstances create the same result in the future? In other words, the trust has been broken. In reading Proverbs, which contrasts the wise and the fool with no other choices, this man would be foolish just to act as if nothing happened. Further, is it not better to know now before children enter into the family? If the man learns that she cannot stay faithful that would create a more difficult situation than what is happening now. Can the potential relationship be saved? Sure. But it is going to take a lot more than what has been exposed. And if neither are religious, then they have a greater struggle ahead if they are to get back together.

▶ **The New York Times, September 19, 2009 - Belatedly, Egypt Spots Flaws in Wiping Out Pigs**

Pigs were the champion garbage consumers in Cairo. Goats just don't seem up to the task. When the government killed all the pigs in Egypt this spring -- in what public health experts said was a misguided attempt to combat swine flu -- it was warned the city would be overwhelmed with trash. The pigs used to eat tons of organic waste. Now the pigs are gone and the rotting food piles up on the streets of middle-class neighborhoods like Heliopolis and in the poor streets of communities like Imbaba.

COMMENT: Who says we can eat all meats and that there is no difference between the clean and unclean? God certainly did not. There is a physical difference. Pigs, as well as many other creatures, are God's garbage disposals. And what clean animals eat that is considered garbage, is passed out of the system unlike unclean animals that retain it as poison. Remember, at the second coming as Isaiah saw, it is recorded, *"For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one [tree] in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the*

LORD" (Isaiah 66:15-17).

► **NewsOK, September 19, 2009 - Nightline examines Bible laws**

Are the Ten Commandments relevant in these modern times? ABC News' "Nightline" is embarking on a series that seeks to answer that question. It's titled "Born to Cheat?" and will tackle the commandment "Thou shall not commit adultery."

COMMENT: It does not matter if we are born to

cheat or not. The Bible says, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 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: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:2-4).

ART THOU IN HEALTH (2 Samuel 20:9)



When Water Is Not Good (1 Timothy 5:23)

The Bible says, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (1 Timothy 5:23).

Water is not the best in certain situations. If the water is of a poor quality and susceptible to disease, drink a little wine instead. Some times during an illness, water is just not staying down, but a little wine may help.

No, we are not referring to alcohol. In fact, studies show that alcohol, especially that of wine, causes one to vomit instead of heal. On the other hand, grape juice, the 100% kind, seems to calm the stomach, loosen the cough, and aide in healing.

Though it is still considered eating between meals, sometimes exception to water is nec-

essary, but let us not make the exception be the rule.

Water between meals is all that one should drink. And if you think Timothy was counseled to drink alcohol, let us read the following paragraph:

Fermented liquor confuses the senses and perverts the powers of the being. God is dishonored when men have not sufficient respect for themselves to practice strict temperance. Fermented wine is not a natural production. The Lord never made it, and with its production He has nothing to do. Paul advised Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake and oft infirmities, but he meant the unfermented juice of the grape. He did not advise Timothy to take what the Lord had prohibited. {The Signs of the Times, September 6, 1899 par. 2}

FOR MY THOUGHTS [ARE] NOT YOUR THOUGHTS, NEITHER [ARE] YOUR WAYS MY WAYS, SAITH THE LORD.

(Isaiah 55:8)



Is Jesus Equal To Or Lesser Than The Father?

Some people are just hung up on words and are not allowing the intent of the verse to be considered.

John 10:30 *I and [my] Father are one.*

John 14:28 *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come [again] unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.*

When Jesus said that He was one with the Father, it was in regards to thought and purpose, but when He said that the Father was greater than He was, it was in ability.

Jesus and the Father agreed in the plan of salvation, but the final decision of accepting Christ's sacrifice was ultimately the Father's. There was no disagreement. They were one on purpose, but the ability to make the final decision rested upon the Father.

Another way of looking at it is that both Jesus and the Father were one in thought and purpose, but when Jesus said the words that meant His Father was greater, Jesus was in human form. He restricted the use of His ability to work as God. Therefore, His Father was greater.

In either way, the first is in thought and purpose while the second statement was not about thought and purpose.

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Be Not Deceived!

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ANSWERS FOUND IN THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH

(Daniel 10:21)



QUESTION: It is very discouraging conducting Bible studies, watching them come step-by-step,

and then all of a sudden they become lax on what they were convicted on or simply close up. Do you have any advice?

ANSWER: The following texts may help.

Psalms 19:7 *The law of the LORD [is] perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD [is] sure, making wise the simple.*

1 Thessalonians 2:10 *Ye [are] witnesses, and God [also], how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe.*

Ezekiel 36:26 *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*

1 Peter 3:20 *Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.*

Now putting it together, we are just the

instruments in God's hands. It is not our duty to convert anyone. Jesus said that we are to be *"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"* (Matthew 28:20).

We are to hold the Bible study, do our best, and hope and pray for the souls, but the conversion is left in God's hands as long as the souls are open to Him. No one can control another. Though it is frustrating, we simply do not have control, and there is nothing we can do.

In many cases, there seems to be a single issue that someone will not let go. The soul is not converted despite showing signs that they accept all the different teachings. That is only because those issues are not really issues to them. But one is bound to eventually hit the issue that they do not want to give up. And we need to let it with that person and God.

Overall, we need to live by Ezekiel 3:18-19 *"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked [man] shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked,*

and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

Do not get caught up in the use of the word "wicked". Anyone living in disobedience to God is considered wicked no matter how nice they are. Our duty is to give the warning or Bible study and let the soul decide for their self. Just because others appear to be more successful does not mean they really are. In quite a few cases, many have joined the church out of argument and not love for the truth. So do not be jealous of another's ability. The last days will prove that out, and besides, we are just to treat each soul we study with as if you were the only two on the planet. The same logic used at other times is not necessarily going to work with this soul. Just because another person is more successful does not mean a thing because this person is not one of those other souls.

Continue to give your all and continue to pray even after they discontinue the relationship, but leave the conversion to God.