

**Word** on the street  
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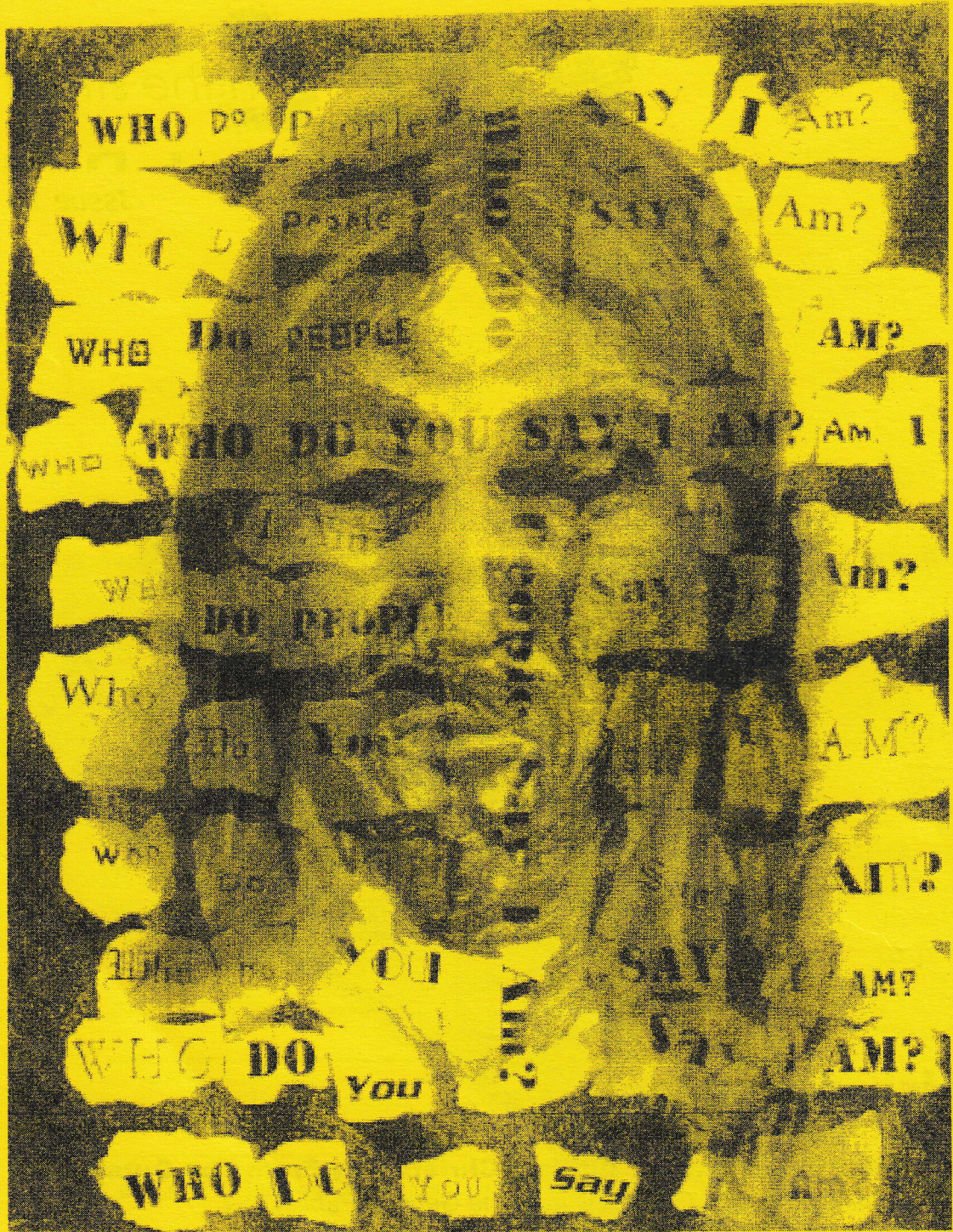
Issue 13

**JESUS  
CHRIST  
IS THE  
ANSWER?**

**THE BIBLE  
IS GOD'S  
WORD?**

## **Misconceptions...**

- **A Look At The View Of Biblical Christianity From The Outside**  
*-Statements and Questions from the General Public*
- **Answers For Those Truly Searching...**



WHO DO People SAY I Am?

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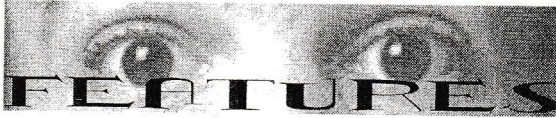
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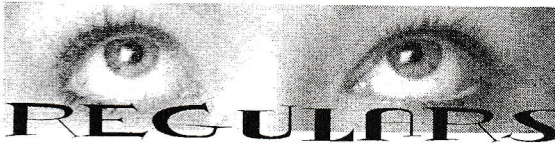
WHO DO YOU Say I AM?

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**Word** *on the street*  
magazine

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Street Level Ministries,  
a UW-Stout student organization.  
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Any comments or suggestions  
please write us:

**Street Level Ministries**

621 Wilson Ave.

Menomonie, WI 54751

or

[streetlevel@charter.net](mailto:streetlevel@charter.net)



# In The NEWS

## Faith over Fear

Voice of the Martyrs  
December 2002

"We want you to pray for us". The Streets of Ho Chi Minh City were crowded when the two pastors arrived. They looked around furtively, trying to spot secret police or informers who might be watching. The men had been out of Vietnamese jails for just a week, and they didn't want to go back.

Their mission was a meeting with Western believers, couriers from The Voice of Martyrs. They darted into the hotel, anxiously waiting in the lobby to be escorted to the meeting.

The men thoroughly searched the room, asking their hosts if they had checked for listening devices. When one of the couriers wanted to record the two men's words, they shook their heads, eyes wide with fear. They only allowed one listener to take notes.

The two pastors told how, two weeks before, they had been with 14 believers for a time of prayer when police raided the house where they were meeting. All the believers were interrogated, and the two men were arrested. The police took their sweaters, leaving them locked in a chilly cell. Their Bibles were taken, and their food was fit only for dogs.

"If you want to go home," the two men were told, "you must pay a fine." The fine was \$100 (U.S), which was not much to most Americans but is between three to four months' salary to a Vietnamese – more money than either had. But they didn't despair. They witnessed for Christ, leading two fellow prisoners to salvation.

At home, Christians pooled their money until they had enough to pay the fines. After seven days, the men were released, but their release came with a warning: "Don't tell your story to anyone, especially not foreigners."

Police also held their documentation papers. Without those papers, their children were not allowed to attend school, and the two men were forbidden to travel. Even their travel to this meeting was a risk: if they were discovered without their papers, they would be arrested. Their worry was not for themselves but for their children. They wondered: *Will our decision to follow Christ cost our children an education?* Without an education, their children had no hope for a better future.

The VOM couriers were moved by the story and quietly took a collection among themselves. Through the translator, they offered the men money to support their Christian work. The two men's eyes flashed with alarm: "We did not come here to risk our lives for an offering. We came so that you would tell others to pray for us." The couriers encouraged them to take the money for their ministry.

"God will provide all we need," the men responded with quiet passion. "Just tell people to pray for us. We need you to pray for us."

The Voice of the Martyrs  
P.O. Box 443  
Bartlesville, OK 74005  
[www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com)

## Iraq War Will Bring Suffering For Christians

*Mission Network News*

BAGHDAD, IRAQ - As a military attack seems imminent in Iraq, an evangelical ministry is asking Christians to pray. According to Open Doors International's President Johan Compañen, there are many Christians in Iraq, and they could face hardship if war breaks out with the United States. "It will be tough because the church the Christians are identified with is the west. Most Muslims, they see Christianity as a western religion, which is very unfortunate because it's not. Jesus was born in the Middle East. That is a misconception that we see and the Christians really fight that every day." However, Compañen believes this could also be a great time for the church in Iraq. He explains. "We have learned in Open Doors - almost 50 years of serving persecuted Christians, that a time of crisis is also a time of opportunity. And that's what we hear often. They say pray for us. Don't pray that it will go away, but that we will be faithful, that we will be strong, trusting the Lord because this is the time that He does things that we've never dreamt of."

([http://www.jesusjournal.com/articles/publish/article\\_383.html](http://www.jesusjournal.com/articles/publish/article_383.html))

## Christians Visit Sudan's Fundamental Muslim Government

Recently, representatives from Safe Harbor International Relief, a ministry of Calvary Chapel of Rancho Santa Margarita, California headed to the Sudan for their first "officially sanctioned" trip. The following excerpt from the *Harbor Watch* newsletter describes, in the words of Pastor Gary Kusunoki, what happened when this group of Christians visited one of the most fundamental Muslim governments in the world:

We experienced mixed emotions as we headed for our first "officially sanctioned" trip to Sudan. What would our reception be? From their perspective, we have been operating illegally in their country for more than five years. I have testified before the United States Congress as to the atrocities and suffering that I have been witness to and my comments toward the Sudanese government have been less than complimentary.

Much thought and prayer had gone into the decision to make this trip. In fact, we had been praying as a church since 1995 for the opportunity to some day share the Gospel with the president of Sudan.

*But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name's sake. It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. So make up your minds not to prepare before hand to defend yourselves; for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute. --Luke 21:12-15*

Armed with this promise from God we proceeded into, "the lions den." We went with much prayer support, as people all over the world were praying and fasting for this trip.

Our first meeting was with the Secretary General of the ruling party. As we talked he began to stress the commonalities shared by both Muslims and Christians, stating, "Mohammed recognized that Jesus was a prophet and that Islam is inclusive of Christianity." As he spoke, the Lord brought a peace over me, and a confidence to share with boldness the truth and exclusivity of the Gospel. I told him that we did share some common values in the areas of morality, abortion and other issues but on the basics of our faith we are quite divergent. I was then able to lay out in great detail the basics of our faith, that salvation is only possible through faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ upon the cross. In that meeting as well as all subsequent meetings we were able to share in great detail the basic tenets of the Christian faith. I stressed in

each meeting that it is only through the recognition of our differences that we can understand each other and form the basis for peace. We met with almost all of the top leaders of the government of Sudan, sharing the Gospel in detail with each one.

Our meeting with President Bashir was very cordial. We were again able to share our faith in Christ as well as our stated purpose of bringing glory to God and sharing the love of God with everyone that we meet. I told the president that this meeting was an answer to a prayer prayed more than 7 years ago. I also told him of another prayer of mine, which was to one day sit before the leader of a country and offer the support of the Body of Christ. I told him that within the Christian community there are doctors, nurses, engineers, architects, and many others that could greatly assist in the development of Sudan. I also wanted to be open and up front about our intentions. Currently, Muslims who convert to Christianity face the death sentence in Sudan. Just as with any of the work we do, our goal is to share the love of Christ and His plan of salvation with any we meet and that they would have the opportunity to believe our message and become a Christian, EVEN IF THEY ARE MUSLIM. We did not want to hide that fact and wanted it known up front. My prayer was that having that knowledge, this leader would still invite us into his country. President Bashir listened carefully to me and then said, "You are welcome to come. You can share your message with anyone that you like and they are free to believe whatever they want." To hear those words coming from the leader of one of the most fundamental Muslim governments in the world was incredible!

We were allowed to speak to President Bashir words that many fundamental Muslims consider to be blasphemy. We told him that Jesus is both God and the Son of God, that He died on the cross and was resurrected on the third day and now sits at the right hand of the Father. We told him that we serve one God, who is a triune God, seen in the person of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We also proposed the airing of the Jesus film on state run T.V. and presented them with a copy of it in Sudanese Arabic. They promised to review it and consider running it during the Christmas season as a way to promote understanding of Christians.

Was our trip successful? In terms of our calling to be His witnesses it was very successful. I thank all of you that prayed and ask everyone to continue to bathe this matter in fervent prayer.

[www.safeharbor.us](http://www.safeharbor.us)



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# Why Would You Ever Want to Leave Homosexuality?

By Dan Puumala

This is a question we're often asked. Some ask it out of genuine interest. They want to understand the ones we minister to, as well as the impetus behind our ministry at Outpost. Others ask it out of ignorance, never having conceived the possibility that it could happen. Still others, wishing to skewer and disparage our efforts, ask out of animosity. In any case it's a question we often wrestle with and we want to give an appropriate response to each person.

We're motivated by Peter's admonition in 1 Peter 3:15-17, **But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.)**

Peter's instructions not only offer motivation for answering, but also suggest the modus operandi by which we go about it—gently and respectfully. This implies masculine strength under control—or meekness (which is a by-product of living by the Spirit). It is masculine precisely because it requires that truth be clearly spoken.

At any rate, here's a brief explanation of "the hope that we

In classic Johannine fashion, he calls them his "dear children." Clearly, this is a reference to how he feels about them. It is a term of endearment. But we must also understand that throughout the previous five chapters, he has carefully and lovingly described what the "children" of God are. And that is, those who obey, believe and love Jesus. This obedience, faith and love is particularly evident when they've lost their confidence. And the three of these together describe the true believer. If one is missing, perhaps one is not worshipping the True Christ. Any object of worship who is not True, John calls here, an idol.

Certainly, these days, most Americans don't have little statues they worship, but many do pledge their allegiance to a "god" who cannot possibly be true, and they do this for a number of reasons—most often for convenience. We know these "christs" are false because there is a breakdown in obeying, believing and loving in the life of these believers.

Though we don't have the space to develop these ideas fully, I will summarize three false christs many worship:

1) The pushover Magic Wand is not smart and can't tell what's real. If you say the magic words, he'll wave the magic wand and you'll go to heaven when you die, but he won't touch your real life now. You can keep your gossip, lust and sin. This christ never calls you to obey, love or believe, let alone pick up your cross and follow him. "It's all cosmetic," says this christ. "I won't touch any part of your real life. I



## Which god do you know? the magic wand... the tyrant... the lamb...

have" which is a central component to "our good behavior," which is more about "accomplishing Moral Good" than "behaving well," which tends to focus on not doing certain uncouth things ("bad manners").

Peter rightfully teaches that we first begin with setting apart Christ as Lord. And this is essential to our ministry here at Outpost. We often say, we're not here to turn homosexuals into heterosexuals, we're here to turn men's hearts toward Christ. We assist people in their journey toward imitating Christ more clearly. We want them to be just like Jesus!

But what of this "lordship" that Peter writes about? Lordship implies worship, submission and dependence. My pastor is doing a series of sermons on the "True Christ," and why obedience to Him is so compelling. The series' text is from 1 John 5:21, "Dear children, keep yourselves from idols." Here the Apostle John is writing to believers who have become discouraged in their faith. This is his parting comment.

don't care about the way you treat your neighbor, who you love or how you love. And your sexuality—well, do what you want! It doesn't matter to me!"

The problem with this christ is that we need (and want) a God who knows, sees and cares about the daily struggles of our lives!

2) The tyrant christ is the one who says, "One false move and you're dead." This is like the abusive parent whom one obeyed so that he or she didn't get smacked. But this is obeying out of fear, not love. And by our definition, this is a false christ because, it's obey, believe and love that mark Christianity. There's a disbelief that God's good, gentle or loving, so one guards his heart and anesthetizes himself from this Christ. Unfortunately, then his outsides will look different from his insides. He becomes a hypocrite and God can't touch his heart.

The problem with this christ is that it's not real. The True Christ is a loving father who does not abuse his children, but by "this

divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness." (2 Peter 1:3)

3) The tame christ, "the Lamb of God." Whew. We can live with this. But he is not just a Lamb. And if you live in that, you will be destroyed by the Lion that he is, too. A relationship with the True Christ is an invitation to marriage with him, not just to have and to hold, but for better and worse, for rich or for poor, in sickness and in health. If you don't get this part of what marriage is, you don't get who He is. He's not here to cuddle you, hug you and make you feel safe. Jesus is on a mission to destroy the works of the devil. "Come join me for the ride of your life. Let's do this together. You better bring your faith and courage and love. Comfort? Yeah, but if this is what you want most, maybe you should marry another guy." And if all you got was comfort, maybe you "married" someone other than the true Christ.

Jesus is many things, including love, but he is not tame. Not passive nor predictable. His highest priority and passion is not just that we all be comfortable in the suburbs. This relationship is a marriage—the adventure of a lifetime. This requires tenacious believing, bold loving, etc. This relationship will not teach you how to play it safe. Jesus is not the play-it-safe kind of man. We're the bride, but

tame is that this christ will never turn your muscles into water, never ever stir you at the depth of your soul with passionate desire to love, obey, serve or listen because this christ doesn't ever call you to that. This false christ has light, but no heat. He has no power to change reality. Nothing could be more boring than living a pious life, tipping your hat to this christ who doesn't even exist.

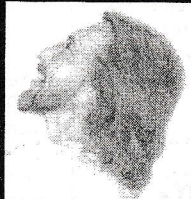
"Let's just hug." "No! I am about destroying the works of Satan, wanna come with me?"

Jesus bids us, "Marry me! Come die with me and I will give you the ride of your life and give you your life back!"

Can you feel the heat, the strength, the passion, the love?

Whom do you want to marry? Someone nice? Some milksop mollycoddle like Casper the Friendly Ghost? Or would you rather marry someone like George Bailey from *It's A Wonderful Life*, who has some passion, who has vision and goals, places to go, people to meet?

Who IS this Jesus? John 5:20 affirms that *He Is the True God!* He has called us to follow him and to partner with him in his quest to destroy the works of Satan. He stirs in us a passionate desire to obey courageously, to



## the lion...or the true Jesus Christ?

do we have any idea who this groom is? Jesus is a bit of a wild man. Do you feel any energy next to him at all? You can't get close to him without feeling some heat.

Dorothy Sayers said that we've tried to tame him by "trimming his lion's claws." But we can't tame him, really, so we simply redefine him—tell ourselves he's different.

In C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, Witch and Wardrobe*, the little girl asks of Aslan, the lion, "is he safe?" "No, but he is good. You can trust him." is the reply.

We have trouble wading into the masculine strength of God, because we've experienced abuse by it from disordered men who crush, abuse, and misuse people.

The real danger of a christ who is

believe tenaciously, love boldly, to follow faithfully, serve gratefully, and, maybe even someday to die willingly for Him.

And it is for this reason, this person, this Jesus the True Christ that I might die to self, leaving behind my false homosexual self.

(All Scripture references, NIV)

This article appeared in the Outpost News June 2001. Outpost Ministries is a branch of Exodus International and was formed to meet the needs of men and women who have made the decision to break away from gay life. Outpost emphasizes obedience to God's Word which begins the healing process. For more info contact Outpost.

Email: [outpost\\_inc@email.msn.com](mailto:outpost_inc@email.msn.com)  
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# THE GATHERING

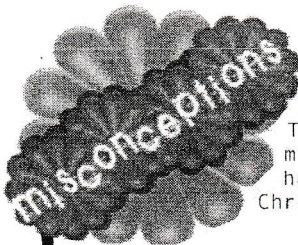
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The following are common misconceptions people have regarding true Christianity:

## Misconception:

There's no way to tell whether or not you are going to go to heaven until you die.

## Truth:

You *can* know for sure that you're going to heaven while you are still alive. You don't have to wait until you're dead to find out. In fact, you need to make a choice before you die. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." The Bible also says in 1 John 5:13, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God."

## Misconception:

God is not very personal or individual and His love is generic.

## Truth:

"Not even a sparrow, worth only half a penny, can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. And the very hairs on your head are numbered, so don't be afraid, you are more valuable than a whole flock of sparrows" (Matthew 10: 29-31). He really loves us, and wants us to know Him personally also. Read the Bible to find the truth about His incredibly personalized and very real love.

## Misconception:

You can't have a relationship... a real, live, active relationship with GOD.

## Truth:

Have you ever seen a kid get on the school bus with a Jesus-patch on his backpack? I always had respect for people who seemed to know about God. I knew God was real, I just didn't know Him. I would tell the scoffers, "Back off man, that's cool." I had a genuine appreciation for these few people that had crossed my path. I remember feeling so sorry for them, though, being Christians and all, how ultimately boring their poor lives must've been. I mean, come on... no guys, no parties = no fun, right? Boy, was I mistaken. If only I had known sooner the deep, rich, super-exciting life that results from a heart melted into captivity by the love of Jesus! The adventure of my life just keeps unfolding piece-by-piece before my very eyes! I GET TO KNOW GOD! There is nothing in this world... no guy, no party, no high that can ever touch the excitement of knowing the real God personally. Nothing else even matters. In the Bible, Revelation 3:20 says, "Look! Here I stand at the door and knock. If you hear me calling and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal as friends." These Christians had it all figured out! My life was the one that sucked! It was always... the "morning after," or the "coming down," etc. Sure, my life was "great" for a night, but the sweetness always ended. Reality remained, and all of the bitterness had piled up around the corner. Now I have no shame, only purity before God! That results in unstoppable peace and joy! I have no need of a high (I can get no higher), or any other desire but this alone... to know my Savior, Lord, Friend and Hero.



## Misconception:

In order to go to heaven, you must be a nice person who, for the most part, does good things in this world for other people. God will accept people who are nice and considered "good, down-home-cookin' people" by the rest of the world.

## Truth:

Eternal life in heaven is a free gift. In Ephesians 2:8-9, it says that we are saved by God's favor when we believe, and we can't take credit for it because it is a gift from God. Being saved from our sins and going to heaven is not a reward for the good things we have done. All we have to do is receive the gift that God wants to give us: The free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:23). Romans 10:9 says, "For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (have eternal life in heaven).

## Misconception:

I grew up having pity on Christians because I thought they couldn't have any fun.

## Truth:

I remember sitting through the Sunday service and feeling bad for the pastor's family because they could not live the life that I had been living of drinking and drugs. Now I realize how wrong I was and what a destructive lifestyle I was living prior to knowing Jesus. I emphasize knowing because I now have a personal relationship with the CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE! I was so wrong in thinking that living my life of partying was more fun than knowing Him. God says that He has plans for each one of our lives, "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope" (Jeremiah 29:11). You have an important choice to make.

## Misconception:

I'm going to heaven because my dad is a pastor and we go to church.

## Truth:

For most of my life my dad was a pastor. I always thought and others assumed that I was going to heaven because of my dad and because we went to church. Then one day when I was in high school my dad decided to leave the church he was at and stop being a pastor. I was completely shocked, the rug had been pulled out from under me. My whole identity was lost. Where did I stand now that we didn't go to church and He wasn't a minister?

The truth is that we are all individuals in God's eyes. Whether your parents are believers in the God of the Bible or haters of Him, it makes no difference to your standing. It is something personal between you and God. No one will be by your side when you die and stand before Him. Romans 14:10b "...for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." 2 Corinthians 5:10 says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ";

You can only ride on one person's coat tails to get you into heaven and that is Jesus. The only way to assure that you are going to heaven is to believe that Jesus is God and He died on the cross to take away your sins. Romans 10:9 says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (KJV)

## Misconception:

The Bible is boring!

## Truth:

Anyone who actually believes this has obviously never read the Bible for any length of time. The Bible is full of accurate accounts of some of the most outrageous events in history including how humans survived when the entire world flooded (Genesis chapters 6-8), a human being swallowed by a huge fish (Book of Jonah), the rise and fall of several empires, and one man giving up everything for a people the He loves (Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John).

**QUESTION:** Based on Christians you currently know or have known in the past, what do you think it means to be a Christian? What kind of lives do they lead, and what is important to them?

**NOTE:** Verses added to back up our response. We hope you will look up this stuff for your own reference.



**Brad Mitchell:** "Not drinking, smoking or partying seems important to them. However, some of them seem judgmental of others, but of all the different things out there, Christianity is probably a good option."

**WOTS:** Have you ever woken up after an evening of drinking and partying, remembered what you did the night before, and then felt ashamed? The Bible explains that, as human beings, we seek to be in bondage to destructive behaviors. It also says that the only freedom from this bondage to sin is Jesus Christ. God's free gift to us is eternal life through Jesus, we only need to receive the truth and follow Christ. The result is that we are free from the bondage of sin; free to do things that lead to holiness and happiness, and free to stop doing things we'll be ashamed of later. Christianity is not about trying to be good (by not drinking, smoking, or partying,) it's about having a friendship with Jesus where our lives reflect this relationship. Think about it, you could be a slave to self destruction and sin or a friend of God freed through Jesus' death on the cross. Free to live in peace and holiness having the freedom to **not sin** by His power.

*(Romans 6:19-23): "...Before, you let yourselves be slaves of impurity and lawlessness, now you must be slaves of righteousness so that you will become holy. In those days, when you were slaves of sin, you weren't concerned with doing what was right. And what was the result? It was not good since now you are ashamed of the things you used to do, things that end in eternal doom. But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."*



**Dan Sosala:** "I hardly knew any Christians in High School, but here most of my friends are Christian, and I see that Christianity is following in Jesus Christ's footsteps, and showing love. I was raised Catholic with a lot of rules, but I learned that there really aren't any rules. It's a way to live, a relationship, and all the answers are in the Bible."

**WOTS:** Christianity is definitely about following in Jesus Christ's footsteps and showing love. If we claim to be Christians, we must grow to be Christ-like. The only way to do this is by being "born again." In this we admit we are without the power to do any good thing. The Bible says that when we are "born again" or born of God, He gives us His Spirit to dwell in us to give us super human power to live as Jesus did. Without Him we'll just continue with false motives and failure.

*(1 John 2:3): "How can we be sure that we belong to him? By obeying his commandments."*

Once again, it is about knowing Jesus and being obedient to Him, not about following homegrown church rules. All the answers are in the Bible and we can truly trust the Bible as God's word. Dig into the Bible and find answers to your questions!

*(2 Timothy 3:16): "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right."*

*(2 Peter 1:20-21): "...no prophecy in scripture ever came from the prophets themselves or because they wanted to prophecy, it was the Holy Spirit who moved the prophets to speak from God."*

*(1 Kings 8:56): "Not one word has failed of all the wonderful promises God gave through his servant, Moses."*



**Trista Lauer:** "Christianity seems stricter, with more rules to follow. Some Christians believe that baptism (in water) is very important. They believe in God, but sometimes aren't very accepting of other religions. Some people go to church because they want religion in their family, and to bring their kids to church. In my opinion, it's a good way to live, but Christians should not threaten others or condemn them if they won't do certain things, such as getting baptized."

**WOTS:** God offers us the free gift of salvation through Jesus by his grace and mercy toward us. There is nothing we can do to earn it (ex. getting baptized, following some strict extra-biblical doctrine, going to church every Sunday). We can't earn it because we don't deserve it! All we can do is receive it with faith and thanks. One error many believers make is expecting those who do not believe in Jesus to act like they do. Christian morals and behavior are impossible for the unbeliever. Jesus never expected this but was hardest on those who "faked" their religion with Jehovah-God.

*(Ephesians 2:8-9): "God saved you by his special favor when you believed."*

*(John 1:16-17): "For the law was given through Moses, God's unending love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ."*

*(Daniel 9:18): "We do not ask because we deserve help, but because you (God) are so merciful."*

*(Hebrews 4:16): "So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it."*



(Romans 2:16): "The day will surely come when God, by Jesus Christ, will judge everyone's secret life..."

This verse explains how, even if our actions look good on the outside, if we hate someone in our thoughts or our secret life, it's the same as hating them in our actions. This is why we need Jesus.

(Romans 19:9): "Don't just pretend you love others, really love them, hate what is wrong, stand on the side of the good."

(Matthew 5:44-45 & 47): "But I say love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you. In that way you will be acting as true children of your father in heaven. If you are kind to only your friends, how are you different from anyone else?"

**Megan Soma:** "It is treating others how you want to be treated. Some are really loyal to their beliefs and some people are really personal or inward about it. They believe in praying and going to church, but some people are really religious and *act* very holy, but then *live* a completely different lifestyle, or they use God to justify their actions."

**WOTS:** Christ definitely wants us to treat others the way we want to be treated, but the truth is that we can't do it without Jesus. Jesus needs to be in control of our lives in order for us to really love people. This is because real, other-centered love comes from God and Jesus was our perfect example of that love here on earth. God is saddened by those who *act* holy, but are not. Acting religious is not encouraged by Jesus.

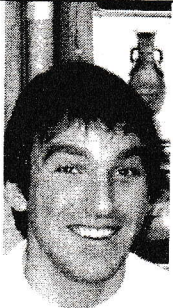


(Romans 1:16): "For I am not ashamed of this Good news about Christ, it is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes...[from eternal death in hell]"

(Romans 10:9 & 13-15): "For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved, for it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved"... "For anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, but how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him, and how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him, and how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go tell them without being sent? That is what the scriptures mean when they say 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the Good News.'"

**Steve Nelson:** "For me, Christianity is, in the literal sense, to be like Christ, and to use Christ as a role model for living. In my life I've met Christians on two separate ends of the spectrum. One group labels themselves as 'Christian' and it becomes like a family tradition. The other group is very gung-ho and can be aggressive or abrasive when interacting with others. There is a balance in there and the way you live and your actions should reflect your Christianity much more than the things you say."

**WOTS:** Your actions and the way you live are extremely important to the Christian walk. As Christians, Jesus gives us a job to do here on earth... (Matthew 28:19) "Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." Christians are called to tell people the truth about Jesus and to be a living example of His love. In order to live like Christ,



we also need to know how Christ really did live. This is found in the New Testament in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, not in church rules or traditions.

## Response: Summary

### What does it mean to be a Christian? What kind of lives do they lead, what is important to them?

Contrary to popular opinion, a true follower of Jesus Christ is not someone who is self-righteous, perfect, and never messes up. A true Christian is someone who knows that they are a hopeless sinner and a screw-up and that they can't do anything holy or righteous on their own. They need the Savior and His Spirit to do so.

(Romans 3:10-11): "No one is good, not even one. No one has real understanding, no one is seeking God."

(Romans 3:23-25): "For all have sinned; and fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed us by taking away our sins. For God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God's anger against us. We are made right with God when we believe that Jesus shed his blood, sacrificing his life for us."

So being a Christian is about knowing Jesus Christ. It's not about being "good enough", doing enough religious things to fulfill some requirements, or using the title of "Christian" as an empty label or as a false membership to a fake, happy church social group. We do not deserve what God gives. He gives us everything and asks only for our love and obedience to His Word in return.

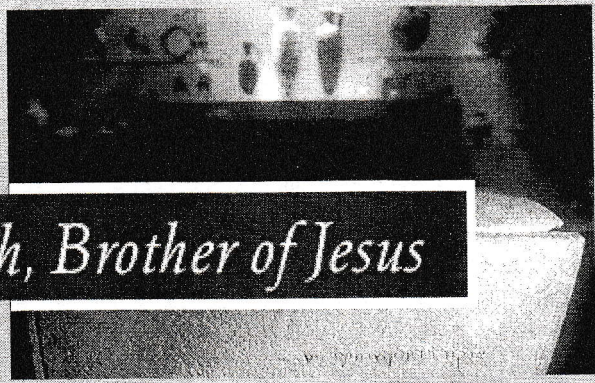
(Romans 7:24-25): "Oh what a miserable person I am! WHO will free me from a life that is dominated by sin? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

Notice that this verse says, "Who will free me?" not "How" or "Why" or "What". The answer to freedom from a life dominated by sin is in the person of Jesus Christ. What kind of a life should a Christian lead? A life that is grateful, set apart from the destructive behaviors of the world we live in, and totally saturated in this truth: (Romans 5:8): "God demonstrates his own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."



# \*feed Science Report

Jer 15:16 [your words were found and I ate them]



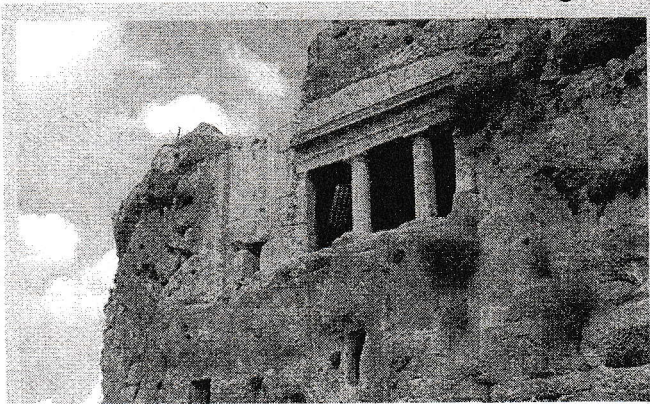
## James, Son of Joseph, Brother of Jesus

The first italicized portion of this article was taken from an article written by DAVID VAN BIEMA in the November 4, 2002 edition of TIME Magazine.

*It is smooth to the touch, cool and solid. It is worn, but not so much that its extraordinary message cannot be read. The small limestone box, the color of sand, nearly 2,000 years old, sits on its Israeli owner's kitchen cabinet. Its inscription, as with most Semitic writing, starts on the right. "Ya'akov, bar Yosef," it begins, carved strong and deep in the stone. James, son of Joseph. Then, slightly more eroded, "akhui di..." Brother of. And at the end, clearly visible from only close up, "Yeshua." Jesus. The language is the Aramaic spoken by Jews in Jerusalem in the 1st century A.D., but the words are so simple that any Hebrew reader would know the meaning. Here, in this bone-box, or ossuary, once lay the earthly remains of "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus."*

*Yes, James, the son of that Joseph and the brother of that Jesus, whom millions of believers know as the Christ. Or at any rate, such was the claim made on the box's behalf last week at a remarkable Washington press conference by the magazine Biblical Archaeology Review. In the publication's cover story, Andre Lemaire, one of the world's foremost scholars of ancient scripts, announced that "it*

- *seems very probable that this [box] is the ossuary of the James in the New Testament."*
- *If the 10-in. by 20-in. by 12-in. receptacle is authentic — and scholars have no reason to believe it's not — and if the inscription refers to the right James — a somewhat dicier proposition — this would be the most important discovery in the history of New Testament archaeology. It would also underscore the fact that early Christians still thought of themselves as essentially Jewish (the use of ossuaries at the time was a Jewish custom) and would pose something of a theological problem for the Roman Catholic Church.*
- *More significant, James' ossuary, if real, could become a kind of trans-denominational, scientifically approved relic. The Roman Catholic and various Orthodox churches, all of which regard James as a saint, would venerate it as a relic. Southern Baptist leader Paige Patterson, while warning against "building faith on archaeological discovery," predicts that even conservative Protestants would probably find it "fascinating" and "enormously useful in evangelizing and shedding light on our understanding of the Scriptures."*



**FINAL RESTING PLACE**  
According to tradition, James is buried in this cave in the Kidron Valley of Jerusalem.

*Almost no educated person these days doubts that Jesus lived. Some accept it on faith, others on the testimony of a brace of ancient chroniclers, both Christian and Roman. Yet there is something uniquely compelling about an attestation in stone. As Lemaire explained to TIME, "The written word is a bit airy. Listen, you can talk about Egyptian civilization, but the day you visit the pyramids, it speaks to you in a different way." Or as Hershel Shanks, editor of the Biblical Archaeology Review, says of the ossuary, "It is something tactile and visible reaching back to the single most important personage ever to walk the earth."*

*For years the ossuary sat in obscurity. Jews in Jerusalem in the hundred years before and after*



#### THE SITE

The ossuary may come from the Kidron Valley where the biblical James died. The boxes, often just long enough to accommodate the femur (the longest human bone) were used to hold remains for a time before they were transferred to another location and buried.

Jesus' birth practiced secondary burial — the transfer of bones of the deceased from a first grave into a container that was then deposited in the family burial cave. Archaeologists have unearthed thousands of such boxes, ranging from ornately carved and painted chests to utilitarian containers devoid of any inscription. The James ossuary fell somewhere in the middle. Its owner says he was familiar with its inscription but, as a Jew, was unaware that the names were special. One day last spring he invited Lemaire — in Jerusalem on a scholar's break from his job as head of the Hebrew and Aramaic philology and epigraphy department at the Sorbonne in Paris — to examine some inscriptions in his collection. As an afterthought, the owner mentioned the names on the James box and showed Lemaire a photo.

"Suddenly, your brain goes, 'tick!'" says Lemaire, now back in France. "My first thought was, 'Is it James, the brother of the Lord?'" A former priest, he knew well that the Gospels of Mark and Matthew credit Jesus with siblings, of whom James was the most distinguished. Several weeks later, at Lemaire's request, the owner produced the ossuary. Weighing about 45 lbs., it was irregularly shaped, longer on its top than at the bottom and just long enough to accommodate the longest human bone, the femur. Lemaire examined the inscription with a photographer's loupe. "My impression was that it was genuine," he says. He contacted Shanks, and together with the collector, they set about testing it more thoroughly.

Science approaches the study of an object like the ossuary from a number of angles, including its physical context, the condition of the stone from which it is made and its style, ornamentation and inscriptions. The James ossuary's undocumented history eliminated the use of context. To assess the

box's composition, Shanks sent it to the Geological Survey of Israel. Survey scientists determined that it was made of a limestone quarried intensively from the Mount Scopus ridge (which includes the Bible's Mount of Olives) in the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. and that the cauliflower-shaped structure of its patina — a mineral sheen that develops with age — indicated that it had spent centuries in a cave. Citing the absence of any modern chemicals or telltale disruptions in the patina and any marks in the stone by modern tools, they confirmed its antiquity and ruled out forgery. Independent scholars have almost unanimously accepted their judgment.

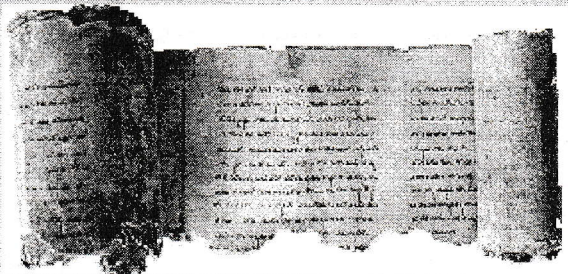
Lemaire, of course, wanted to ascertain the date more exactly than a 200-year window. He points out that Jews in Jerusalem, primarily Pharisees, used ossuaries only from roughly 20 B.C. to A.D. 70. The style of the inscription conforms to the same period. Moreover, Lemaire, one of whose specialties is Aramaic writing,

● contends that three characters written in cursive, a script developed only around A.D. 25, date the box to within 40 years of James' death in A.D. 62. With the exception of his countryman Emile Puech of the Ecole Biblique et Archeologique Francaise in Jerusalem, other epigraphers, working from photographs, have agreed.

● Soon the bone-box will leave Israel for the first time to go on display at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. But the bone fragments will not go with it, nor will the owner allow them to be displayed or analyzed. He brandishes a Tupperware container. They will stay right here. Who needs trouble with the rabbis or with Israeli customs? The ossuary has delivered enough mystery into the world for now. 1

● The discovery of this ossuary is one of several significant archeological finds that has offered further evidence to the validity of biblical Christianity. Another well known discovery, on exhibit at the Library of Congress in Washington DC, is the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

● The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in caves along the western shore of the Dead Sea from 1947 to 1956, are considered by many to be the single most important archaeological find of



the twentieth century. They comprise about 800 documents, some complete or nearly complete, but most quite fragmentary. In fact about 100,000 fragments have been found in all. Most of the scrolls were found in caves near Qumran, where a community lived which some scholars identify as Essenes, a Jewish sect known to have existed elsewhere in Israel during the Second Temple period, which includes the time of Jesus. The scrolls comprise, among other things, the oldest copies of the Bible in existence.

The Qumran scrolls date from approximately 250 B.C. to about 65 A.D., and at some other locations to about 135 A.D. This means that the Dead Sea Scrolls give us texts of the Bible which were copied more than 1000 years earlier than any others now in existence!<sup>3</sup>

How great it is to behold with our own eyes a 10" by 20" by 12" box that once held the bones of Jesus' brother. And it is remarkable to see the accuracy of texts from the Bible span a 1,000 years in which the only form of copying text was with a steady hand, through many tedious hours. But the man that these findings point to is *not* interested in wooing people into religion through historical evidence. The God of the Bible desires for us to walk by faith instead of by what we see.<sup>4</sup> "What is faith? It is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen. It is the evidence of things we cannot yet see.<sup>5</sup>" We see a picture of this after Jesus had risen from the dead. It was at this time that Thomas, one of Jesus' followers, approached Jesus and put his fingers into Jesus' hands and had touched Jesus' pierced side. Then Jesus spoke to Thomas and said "Thomas, because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."<sup>6</sup>

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1) Brother of Jesus? By David Van Biema, TIME Magazine Nov 4, 2002.

(<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1101021104-384797,00.html#>)

2) Early Reference To Jesus Discovered by Art Toalston, Jesus Journal Oct 22, 2002.

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3) Italicized Dead Sea Scroll portion of this article from THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS FOUNDATION.

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4) New King James Bible, 2 Corinthians 5:7

5) New Living Translation Bible, Hebrews 11:1

6) New King James Bible, John 20:29

# PSEUDO-INTELLECT

**mis-conception** \ˈmɪs- + ˌnɛpʃən\]: the act or result of misconceiving : a wrong or inaccurate conception

<such popular ~s as the belief that interplanetary space is of a sub-zero frigidity –J.F. McComas>

I've never misconceived anything. This I know to be true... except for that one time... and that other... But I've never denied the truth to be the truth except for once... and that other thing... and...

We've finally reached a stage in this world where the idea that nothing is truth coexists with the idea that everything is truth, where there are no absolutes save for the fact that we can absolutely state that "there is no absolute truth". This statement contradicts the very point it is claiming. Is there anything left that we can be sure of? Is there anything left to stand on? All that is left for us to cling to is nothing at all. You can never be right in anything you think. And you can never be wrong.

How is it though, that a person can state absolutely that there are no absolutes? The statement itself indicates that there are, in fact, absolutes. Are we limited in this time of "ultimate freedom" to follow what the rest of the world says is true? If you follow without questioning their opinions, then, yes. But if you look closely at all they claim, all they teach, you will see that the answer is no.

The university that I attend claims to be teaching us to think thoroughly. Yet, we are only taught to question those things that people have known to be true for years, and we are expected to accept without question all the new fads that are thrown to us. No questions are to be asked concerning this "new" thinking. And even though it is considered new, it is as old as time itself. Many people claim to be able to achieve a sort of godhood for their thinking, where they define their own morality, but are completely unwilling to accept any other thoughts or ideas on morality, leaving us at war with each other in a world of gods that are all soon to die.

To be a god is to be ultimate and supreme. But this faux godhood leaves us all with nothing. Everything still remains beyond our control: you cannot change your genetic make-up, you cannot prevent yourself from aging, etc. You may be able to combat elements of your humanity, but you will never win. You are not God.

***But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, loves of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; avoid such men as these.***<sup>2</sup>

For thousands of years it has been known that the mind of man would turn to pudding, where we would create clever, interesting tales and explanations in order that we might destroy all that is good, and, ultimately, ourselves. How long will we have to war about this meaninglessness? Society is completely unable to function when there are no absolutes. We have all encountered groups that supposedly desire anarchy, yet have a new system of government built within their ranks. Modern thought has come to be built on nothing of substance. But classic thought is built on absolutes, where the world works together, we can agree on what is right and wrong. The absolutes will endure. The non-absolutes will fail. Pursue the truth. It's all we've got in this world of lies.

#### Sources:

1. Webster's Third New International Dictionary. G. & C. Merriam Co. 1981.
2. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 NASB

# MISCONCEPTIONS, MISUNDERSTANDINGS, AND MISINTERPRETATIONS

"Dear Believer, I can't accept the Bible as God's Word because it contains hundreds of problems and contradictions that can't be solved, only rationalized. I only ask that you read what follows in line with James' teaching that Christians should be "open to reason" (James 3:17 RSV) and Isaiah's belief that we should "reason together" (Isa. 1:18) to see just a few of the Book's many shortcomings."

**THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD?**

Actual pamphlet found at UW-Stout. Questioning Christian Beliefs.

Greetings. This article is a clear attempt to answer the questions of a local who seemingly has issues with Christianity. We picked up the small brochure, pictured to the left, off of one of our Word On The Street news stands and gave it to six of our ministry students to tackle the answers.

This column's contents are responses to the questions posed by the unnamed one.

The questions are not unusual. Sadly, many hang their hat on these questions as reasons to not believe but, as you will see, they are simply excuses. Believe me, I've lived both sides (believing and not) and used all of these excuses. I'm a Christian now and I have no regrets. Enjoy...

## Their Questions

- 1 If you must accept Jesus as your Savior in order to be saved (John 14:6), what about the billions of beings that die as fetuses, infants, mental deficient, etc.? For them to accept Jesus would be impossible, so they are condemned to hell because of conditions over which they had no control. Deut 32:4 says God is just, but where is the justice?
- 2 Why are we being punished for Adam's sin? After all, he ate the forbidden fruit, we didn't, it's his problem not ours, especially in light of Deut. 24:16 which says the children shall not be punishment for the sins of their fathers.
- 3 God created Adam so he must have been perfect. How then, could he have sinned? Regardless of how much free will he had, if he chose to sin, he wasn't perfect.
- 4 How can Num. 23:19, which says God doesn't repent, be reconciled with Ex. 32:14 which clearly says he does?
- 5 How can 2Kings 8:26, which says Ahaziah began to rule at age 22, be reconciled with 2 Chron. 22:2 which says he was 42?
- 6 How can Ex. 33:20, which says no man can see God's face and live, be squared with Gen. 32:30 which says a man saw his face and life was preserved?
- 7 Rom. 3:23 says ("ALL have sinned"). All means all. Yet, Gen. 6:9 says Noah was a just man and perfect in his generation. Job 1:1 & 1:8 say Job was perfect. How could these men have been perfect if all have sinned?

## Our Answers

- 1 Deut 32:4 states that God is just, perfect, and true. In this is the answer to your question. What the Bible says is that His justice is pure, holy and perfect. No one will end up in Hell by accident. God's perfect justice is judged by His lovingkindness. It's not as our imperfect system today where an innocent man could be falsely accused. God knows *all* things and is *not without* all the evidence at the time of judgment. How do you cheat or get screwed by that?
- 2 I am forced to conclude from this question and statement that you have never done any wrong. Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever cheated? (Are you sure? You just admitted you are a liar.) We are, without Jesus, punished for our own sin. Adam's sin just affected us like ours affects others.
- 3 Going back to the original language we see that "perfect" is the KJV translation for the Hebrew word *tawm* which means "complete" or "whole". Therefore Adam, being complete and whole, had the ability to make choices with a free will. Adam chose to disobey God. Yet God provided himself a remedy to our disobedience through Jesus Christ who was "without sin." (Hebrews 4:15, 9:28)
- 4 The KJV was translated in the 1600's. Connotations of words have the ability to change a great deal over 400 years. In this passage, Ex 32:14 refers to God "redirecting" His wrath, not turning from sin. The word repent literally means "to turn away from" or "redirect." Sinners are to repent from sin as drivers are to repent from going the wrong way on a vacation.
- 5 It is true that 2 Chron. 22:2 contains a copious error. However, determining the way things were is not difficult. We know from 2 Chron. 21:20 that Ahaziah's father dies at the age of forty. So, Ahaziah was likely only 22 and not 42 when He began to reign.
- 6 One needs to read the whole context to see what happened. In Gen.32:24, Jacob is wrestling with a man, but in vs. 30, Jacob declares that he has seen God and was preserved. Was Jacob with a man or with God? Did the writer get confused in just four verses? Jacob realized this was God in the form of a man. This is an ability God is known for in Jesus Christ, God in flesh. There is no consequence for seeing the face of Jesus.
- 7 See answer 3.

8 How could Moses have written the first 5 books in the Bible (the Pentateuch) when his own death and burial is described in Deut 34:5-6 ("so Moses the servant of the Lord dies there in the land of Moab... and he buried him in a valley...")

9 Did Solomon have 40,000 stalls for his horses (1Kings 4:26) or 4,000 (2Chron. 9:25) and did Solomon's house contain 2,000 baths (1Kings 7:26) or 3,000 (2Chron. 4:5)?

10 Paul says Christianity lives or dies on the Resurrection (1Cor 15:14,17). Yet, why would it be of any consequence when the Widow at Nain's son, Jairus's daughter, Lazarus, and many others rose before Jesus. By the time he rose this was actually a rather common occurrence. I would think it would have been met by a resounding yawn rather than surprise. Adam's act of coming into the world as a full-grown man is much more spectacular.

11 Was Jehoiachin 18 years old when he began to reign in Jerusalem and did he reign 3 months (2Kings 24:8), or was he 8 years old and reigned 3 months and 10 days (2Chron. 36:9) and did Nebuzaradan come to Jerusalem on the 7<sup>th</sup> (2Kings 25:8) or 10<sup>th</sup> (Jer. 52:12) day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month?

12 How do we follow the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment, even if we wanted to, when the authors of the various versions of the Bible can't even agree on whether the key word is "kill" or "murder"? Surely they recognize a difference.

13 We are told the Bible has no scientific errors, yet it says the bat is a bird (Lev. 11:13,19), hares chew the cud (Lev. 11:5-6), and some fowl (Lev. 11:20-21) and insects (Lev. 11:22-23) have four legs.

8 Very few ancient writers actually penned their own writings. They commonly dictated them to scribes. Likewise, even today, it is not uncommon to write an addendum to the autobiography or the life works of a deceased person. To attribute the writing of Moses' death to scribes, and the previous chapters to Moses is no stretch of the imagination.

9 It is possible that the number of stalls recorded in 1 Kings was the number at the beginning of Solomon's reign, whereas the number recorded in 2 Chronicles was the number of stalls at the end of his reign. We know that Solomon reigned for 40 years; no doubt, many changes occurred during this period. It is quite likely that he reduced the size of the military his father David had left him and increased the size of his bath. This would imply that Solomon was less of a "man of war" which coincides with 1 Chr. 28:3,6 (KJV) "But God said unto me [David], Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because *thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood...* And he said unto me, *Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts:* for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father."

10 Those who believe will not perish but have everlasting life (John 3). The believer's true home lies with Jesus in the Kingdom of heaven. Planet earth is finite. Heaven is not. The examples you give are all examples of those who Jesus brought "back to mortal and finite life from the grave." The "resurrection" Paul speaks of in 1Cor 15 refers to life immortal and eternal as he speaks of just a few verses later in 1Cor 15:35-49. Read further.

11 The age of 8 is unusually young to assume governmental leadership. However, when Jehoiachin was eight years old, it is likely that his father made him co-regent, so that he could be trained in the responsibilities of leading a kingdom. Jehoiachin then became officially a king at the age of eighteen, upon his father's death. Also, the author of the Chronicles was more specific with his numbering, whereas the author of Kings was simply rounding off the number of months, assuming that the additional ten days is not significant enough to mention. Lastly, the visual difference between 8 and 18 in Hebrew handwriting is so very slight that a scribe copying manuscripts could very well have missed it. Either way, a minor detail.

12 The Hebrew word used in the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment is "*rātsach*". It means: to dash to pieces, to kill another man, murder, put to death, slay. The truth of the matter is we are never required to fulfill the Ten Commandments. They instead show us that we are not perfect and therefore cannot go to heaven on our own merits. You may say, "I never killed anyone!" but Jesus says that if you hate your brother, you are guilty of murder. There is no way out but by admitting our guilt to sin and repenting (see ans. #4) from our sin.

13 Well you must be from the city, and have never raised rabbits, because they actually DO chew their cud. Of course if they are only fed pellets of processed grain and the like you will never see it. But if you feed your rabbits a diet that includes grass, clover, hay, straw and coarse vegetation, and you watch them, you will see that they *regurgitate* this matter for a second chewing to aid in digestion, hence "chewing the cud." On the other hand the bat is something of a complexity, because you see, it wasn't all that long ago, perhaps a hundred and fifty years ago or less, that our "scientific" world **THOUGHT THE BAT WAS A BIRD.** But in the Bible if you look at the *Hebrew word* that is translated in this text for fowl, you see that the word *ōwph* simply means "*flying creatures*", and the last time I saw a bat, it was actually *flying*. And this definition is also for the



14 Matt. 27:9-10 quotes a prophecy made by Jeremy the prophet. Yet, no believer in the Bible has ever been able to show me where it lies in the Book of Jeremiah.

15 Heaven is supposed to be a perfect place. Yet, it experienced a war (Rev. 12:7). How can there be a war in a perfect place and if it happened before why couldn't it occur again? Why would I want to go to a place in which war can occur? That's exactly what I'm trying to escape, aren't you?

16 Believers are told in Mark 16:17-18 that they can drink "any deadly thing" and "it shall not hurt" them. But I don't think you would be naive enough to drink any arsenic offered. Perhaps I'm wrong and you would be willing to test the Book's veracity- "Lay it on the line" so to speak.

17 We are told salvation is obtained by faith alone (John 3:18,36) yet, Jesus told a man to follow the commandments- -Mt. 19:16-18 (saving by works) if he wanted eternal life.

18 According to the text there are 29 cities listed in Joshua 15:21-32 (RSV). One need only count them to see that biblical math is not to be trusted. The total is 36.

19 Surely you don't believe Eccle. 1:9 (RSV) ("What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun")? How many cities had an atomic bomb dropped on them prior to 1945 and how many people walked on the moon before 1969?

20 If the Bible is our moral guide, then how can it make pornographic statements such as: "...they may eat their own dung and drink their own piss with you" (2Kings 18:27)? Is that what you want your children reading on Sunday?

word used in Lev. 11:20-23, that you question. Again, if we keep things in the context in which they are used, we will gain a greater understanding of the entirety of the thought. Read the whole verse for clarity.

14 Matthew 27:1-10 describes in detail the events that happened in regard to Judas' betrayal of Jesus, and their significance in terms of the fulfillment of the Scriptures. In particular, he quotes from the prophet Zechariah 11:12-13 which many think are clarifications of the prophecies found in Jeremiah 19:1-13 and 32:6-9.

15 This "war" spoken of in heaven is when the enemy (Satan) was cast out of heaven. God tells us that He will create a new heaven and new earth when He returns. Old things will pass away and all things will become new (Rev 21:1-8).

16 The error of this statement is summed up in your question: "Perhaps I'm wrong and you would be willing to test the Book's veracity?" This question is strangely familiar to the devil's statement toward Jesus in Matthew 4:5-7 (NKJV) "Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and 'In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, 'It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'" Note that the word test and tempt both come from the same Greek word *ek-pi-rad'-zo*. With this in mind, it seems likely that the protection from serpents and deadly drink spoken of in Mark 16:18 is not to be put to the test before God but are possible through His power in accordance to His will.

17 Jesus was testing this man's heart. (See ans. #12 on The Commandments) In verse 21, Jesus points out the man's failure to love his neighbor as himself. The man had a heart problem. He loved his riches more than God. If he wished to follow the Commandments, he needed to follow them all, but we cannot follow them all. One transgression of the law renders guilt. For all of us it is too late.

18 It is possible that several of the towns listed are the surrounding villages (Joshua 15:32) that are mentioned with the 29 cities. A better translation, like NKJV, reads "all the cities are twenty-nine, *with their villages.*" -36.

19 The book of Ecclesiastes is a representation of man's doings without God which culminates to the conclusion in Eccl. 12:13 (AV), "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." With that in mind, Eccl 1:9 follows some general statements made in Eccl 1:1-8 (NKJV). These statements include "one generation passes and another comes", "the sun also rises and the sun goes down", and "all the rivers run into the sea." I think it is safe to say based on the context that the author is *not referring to a specific event in time, but to the heart of man and law of nature.*

20 The scripture (2 Kings 18:27) you are referring to is a quote from an Assyrian, Rabshakeh, to God's children Israel prior to an attack by the Assyrians upon Israel. It *represents the vulgarity of those that are an enemy to God's children*, not God's moral standards. In fact, verses found in scripture like this validate its accuracy in that nothing was left out due to "taste" or "morality." Song of Solomon speaks of a marriage relationship in detail. There are people sleeping with other people's wives, gruesome deaths, spilled guts, rape, homosexual gang rape, seduction and

21 If God created everything, (Col. 1:16, Eph. 3:9, Rev. 4:11, John 1:3), then he did create the world's evil (Isa. 45:7, Lam. 3:38). Thus, he should be held responsible.

22 In Psalms 139:7-11 we are told God is everywhere. If so, why would God need to come down to earth to see a city (Gen 11:5) when he is already here and how could Satan leave the presence of the Lord (Job 1:12, 2:7)?

23 For justice to exist, punishment must fit the crime. No matter how many bad deeds one commits in this world, there is a limit. Yet, hell's punishment is infinitely greater.

24 And lastly, in Acts 20:35 Paul told people "to remember the words of the Lord Jesus how he said 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'." Since Jesus never made such a biblical statement, isn't Paul guilty of deception?

the like found within its pages all because it happened. It's the ultimate reality story because it's real. In fact, God recorded it so you and I wouldn't get some idea that Christianity is all about self-righteous, "holier than thou" types who don't live in reality. It's real, man.

21 Because God gave man free will, he provided the opportunity for man to choose sin. Just because you buy flour, eggs, oil, salt, sugar and yeast does not mean that you have made bread. Why then did he create free will? True, it provided the freedom to do evil, but, more importantly, it provided us with the freedom to choose Him, to love, to be joyful, to be sorrowful. Without free will we would live in a world of automata. We would be nothing more than machines.

22 God is not a man. Man was created in the image of God but not as an exact replica. Therefore, God is, to us as human beings, in a state of existence we do not and cannot fully comprehend. It is logical that he knows more than we do and that He is a greater being than we are. True? We cannot even pretend to know more or as much as God does. He made us. We didn't make Him. Is He really an old balding man with a fifty-foot beard as the cartoons depict? Doubtful. God can be everywhere and live inside us at the same time. He can be everywhere and fully dwell in the body of Jesus. It just is that way. Water can be in our air and in a pool at the same time. If water is in the humid air of July, why do we need to drink water to quench our thirst? They are simply two forms and applications of the same substance.

23 First, you are correct in writing the "punishment must fit the crime." But saying that our bad deeds *do not* deserve the punishment of hell is a personal opinion that contradicts the Bible, not a contradiction within the Bible. The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 3:23-25 (New Living Translation), "For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed us by taking away our sins. For God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to satisfy God's anger against us." Besides, is there really a limit to punishment of crime in this world? What is the limit? How can life imprisonment pay back a murder? How does a few thousand or million dollars and some jail time pay back the lost emotional stability of a rape victim? How does getting a few days and a fine pay off the verbal torture of abusive peers or spouses? The difference between you and me is I know that I am fully capable of causing pain to other people and I have moved to seek our Creator for a better way of life. You simply believe you are above doing something evil and are innately good. In this pride you will undoubtedly fail.

24 You don't know that Jesus never made such a statement. You only know that it wasn't recorded in the Gospels. John 21:25 states that if all the things that Jesus did were to be written down, that even all the world could not contain the books. Paul's statement is Biblical. We know this because Jesus actually lived it out.

Look for the next *Word On The Street* to see the answers to the second pamphlet entitled, "Jesus Christ Is The Answer?". We will tango with those questions then and any more that may come in the future. Honestly, if we in Menomonie, WI, can come up with reasonable answers to these questions, are they really that "controversial"? ...until next time-good bye.

## Misconception:

Jesus doesn't love me because I'm such a loser!

## Truth:

Growing up, I attended a typical midwestern Lutheran church. I quickly grasped the idea of an all-powerful, all-knowing God. I feared God and prayed to Him often. Each night I would lie completely depressed in my bed as I realized how much of a mess up I was. I saw myself as a loser, not acceptable in God's sight. The truth is that I am a mess-up, but what I didn't realize is that God chooses the losers and does great things in their lives. In the Bible, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 says, "Remember, brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes, or powerful, or wealthy when God called you. Instead, God deliberately chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose those who are powerless to shame those who are powerful. God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important, so that no one can ever boast in the presence of God" (NLT).

I didn't realize that Jesus loves me so much that He would do anything to bring me closer to Him. In fact, Jesus even used my mistakes to bring me closer to Him.<sup>1</sup> Paul gives us a good example of this in Romans where he writes about God's love toward the Jews, who couldn't stop screwing up either. He writes, "Did God's people (the Jews) stumble and fall beyond recovery? Of course not! His purpose was to make his salvation available to the Gentiles, and then the Jews would be jealous and want it for themselves."<sup>2</sup> God loves His people so much that He would entice us to jealousy for Him. This passion of His love toward me has shown me a new level of intimacy with Jesus. I now see myself as being made "right" by trusting in Jesus and His love for me to take away my sins.<sup>3</sup>

1 - Romans 3:22 We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done.

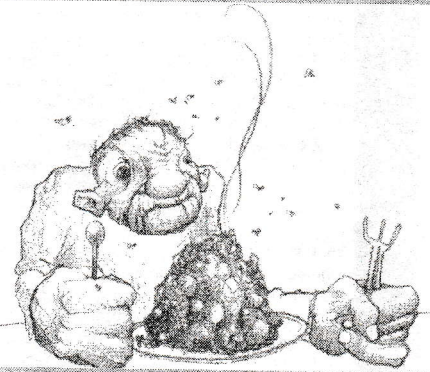
2 - Romans 11:11

3 - Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

## CONGLOMERATE FAITH

Conglomerate faith is abundant in our day. That is, the inclusion of many different ideas, some of which are in line with Christianity and some that are contradictory to Christianity. I find it similar to and equally disgusting as a handful of dung pebbled with the remains of several different lunches and forced together into one single, repulsive clump.

We are too often consuming only those words and ideas that are sweet and pleasing to us, neglecting to properly



nourish our spirituality with the sustenance of the truth found in scripture. We degrade the message of Jesus Christ by including it in a recipe of deceit, and packing it together with ideas from other religions and beliefs whose ingredients and nutritional value we know nothing of. Thus proving that we believe not at all in the message of Christ, or anything in particular, but that we believe in the entire menu. So then we find ourselves continuing to feed only on those things that taste good to us and are pleasing to our tongue. We digest a skewed and confusing idea of truth that is in fact, absolutely disgusting...and the product of our spiritual bowels are a meaningless conglomerate faith.

Whenever I read in the Bible about the Pharisees, I always comforted myself with the fact that I knew I was not one of them. After all, Pharisees were fat, bald men who wore long robes and were self-righteous. This obviously was not something that concerned me. As I started to think honestly about whom the Pharisees were, I started to see a lot of Pharisee type behavior in my own life. So, don't comfort yourself with the idea that you couldn't be one too. This is the official "Are You a Pharisee?" checklist. (And, no, it doesn't mean that you're safe if you are not fat, bald, or not wearing a robe. It might actually be kind of cool if you were fat, bald and wearing a robe, but that has to do with style, and I don't want to talk about that now, maybe later.)

**1. DO YOU USE A DIFFERENT VOICE WHEN YOU PRAY?** Have you noticed that in a group everyone prays like the leader? I mean, if he prays really enthusiastically and says Hallelujah a lot, then everybody does that. Once, I went to a group where the leader was really mellow, as if he were on drugs or something, and you could hardly stay awake when he prayed. Everybody prayed just like him, really quietly, as if they were on drugs too. It was really relaxing, and I got a lot of sleep during the prayer times.

**2. DO YOU PRAY TO GOD?** You're in a prayer meeting and a guy, whom the leader thinks is really cool, begins to pray. When he prays, he becomes more worked up. He starts sweating and shouting, and it's one of the coolest, most powerful prayers, and everything fits together, and it just amazes you. You're sitting there thinking to yourself, "Oh man, how am I going to beat that? I'm not going to pray after that because my prayer will sound so wimpy." Suddenly, it occurs to you that everyone in the room is praying to each other and God isn't even there. It's like this: You pray, and afterward you think, "Hey, that sounded quite good. I'll bet people were really impressed with what I just prayed."

**MATTHEW 6:5-6**

And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

**MATTHEW 6:7-8** And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

**MATTHEW 23:1-4** Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey

them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

**3. DO YOU CHANGE YOUR WORD ORDER WHEN YOU PRAY?** Can you imagine if I talked to my wife like I sometimes talk to God? "Well, it's been a nice day today, Jodi, so be it. And I really would like to say that I've had a good day, and I've enjoyed the meals, so be it. And I just want to thank you so much for this great meal, so be it, so be it, so be it." She'd say, "What's wrong with him?" And what if I didn't wait for her to talk to me? If I asked her things, but then I would leave before she could answer me. "Jodi, would you tell me what you think we should do tomorrow? So be it, so be it, so be it, hallelujah." Then I'd leave. She'd be ready to tell me and then I'd be gone. We do these formulas and we wonder why God doesn't speak to us; but we really don't want him to speak to us, and we don't really believe he's going to speak to us.

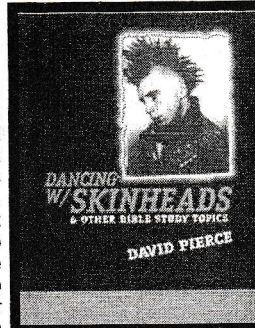
**4. DO YOU NOT MAKE A CONNECTION BETWEEN YOUR PRAYERS AND YOUR ACTIONS?** I was watching a band on TV. They were in a back room getting ready to go out on stage. They were getting all psyched up and shouting. The leader said, "Okay, we gotta pray now." Then a guy

prayed (I don't know if he was in the band or what.) He could have been a Baptist minister. (If you don't know what that means, don't worry about it. I'm not being negative about Baptists.) He prayed, "Be with us now, help us to go for it, and give you the Glory, in Jesus' name," or something like that. Then the singer went out on the stage in his yellow underwear and sang an obscene song. So, there is a lot of religious stuff going on. Or if you've seen "Rocky," before he fights, he crosses himself. Then he goes in and bashes his opponent's head.

**MATTHEW 23:5-7** Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.'

**5. DO YOU DO THINGS SO THAT YOU WILL GET RECOGNIZED?**

When I was six years old, one of the most coveted



positions in my school was that of the toilet boss. The toilet boss got to wear a badge and lead all the boys to the toilet and make sure they washed their hands. This was a very prestigious thing to be. When I worked with YWAM, Youth With a Mission, they had a group of leaders in Amsterdam called The Council. I thought to myself, this is like being a toilet boss, only there are no badges. So I made it my goal to be on The Council so that I could have the prestige that went with the office. Ask yourself this question: Are you able to do something for God without telling anyone about it, or is it important for you that everyone knows about it? My father once told me that real service for God is doing something for him that nobody knows about except you and God. This is unacceptable for a Pharisee. He wants the approval of people.

**6. DO YOU FIND YOURSELF SITTING IN A RESTAURANT TALKING ABOUT ALL THE THINGS THAT YOU ARE DOING WHEN IN REALITY YOU ARE SITTING IN A RESTAURANT TALKING ABOUT ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE DOING?** Let's imagine that an angel appears in your room and puts a piece of tape over your mouth. Could anyone tell by your actions that you follow Jesus? Would anyone know by your behavior in your school, or in your work, or in your neighborhood that you are different from everyone else? Because a Pharisee is not concerned about actual behavior, but about form and words.

**7. DO YOU GO FORWARD AND ASK JESUS INTO YOUR HEART EVERY TIME YOU HEAR A GOOD SPEAKER?** Do you get scared when you hear people talking about Jesus coming back, and you've had experiences where you come home and no one is there, and you think the rapture's taken place and you've been left behind? If you are a religious person, you are always trying to earn God's love. I really didn't want to go to Hell, so I figured if I told somebody about Jesus, he would certainly not send me to Hell. **See, I didn't want to follow God, but I didn't want to go to Hell.**

**8. DO YOU PRAY EVERYDAY THROUGH THE 10-40 WINDOW? \*SECRETLY, YOU DON'T REALLY CARE, BUT YOU DO IT ANYWAY BECAUSE YOU KNOW YOU SHOULD.** There is a Tarzan movie where these natives are in a village, and they have dug a big pit. A giant ape lives in it, and every once in a while, the giant ape jumps up and down and makes all kinds of noise. The natives start to panic because they know they need to find someone to feed to the ape or else the ape will jump out of the hole and eat them. They go into the jungle and find Jane and take her back to the village to be fed to the ape. Just as they are throwing her into the hole, Tarzan comes and saves Jane. Meanwhile, the ape gets out of the hole and eats everyone in the village. Pharisees are always making sacrifices to God because they think they need to earn his love.

\* The bulk of the unreached people in our world live in an area bounded by a rectangle that sits 10° north

to 40° north of the equator.

### **9. YOU DEFEND WATCHING MOVIES LIKE PULP FICTION.**

No explanation necessary.

A wonderful tour with our band was set up for us in Budapest, Hungary. We were going to be playing in some of the biggest clubs in the city, and I was excited about it. Just before we were going on the tour, I started to feel sick. When I went to the doctor, I learned that I had picked up hepatitis from a restaurant in Amsterdam. We would have to cancel our tour, and I wouldn't be able to do anything for a month. This was the first and only time that we ever had to cancel a tour, so I started to pray and ask God why. I was sure that it had to be because of some kind of sin in my life that God allowed me to be sick. I prayed and said to God, "What did I do wrong that you allowed me to get hepatitis? So many people would have heard about you in these clubs in Budapest. Show me what sin I have committed so I can repent and

m a k e  
t h i n g s  
r i g h t." As I  
was crying  
out to God  
in my bed,  
I felt like  
God spoke  
to me and  
said, "The  
reason I  
allowed  
you to get  
hepatitis is  
n o t  
because of  
any sin,  
b u t  
because I

wanted to spend time with you. I knew that this was the only way I could get you to slow down enough so that we could spend some time together." "Well, do you want to show me some new things? Is there some new revelation that you want to give to me?" I said, "No, I just want to spend time with you," I felt God say, "God, you must be kidding. You just want to spend time with me? You don't want to rebuke me? You don't want to tell me where I am doing something wrong? You don't want to give me a new vision?" I said, "No, I just want to spend time with you." "Okay, I'll spend time with you." So that's what I did a lot during that month. I just spent time with Jesus. **He doesn't want us to be religious. He wants our friendship.**

Excerpt taken from *Dancing With Skinheads and other Bible study topics* written by David Pierce.

**Real service  
for God is  
doing  
something for  
him that  
nobody knows  
about except  
you and God.  
This is  
unacceptable  
for a Pharisee.**

# music station



**Soul Junk –  
1956 – Sounds  
Are Active  
Records**

Refusing to be caged-up, locked-down, and hung-up into categories and specific genres, Soul-Junk has, over the band's eight year existence and many member changes, explored indie-rock, garage rock, funk, jungle, hip-hop, experimental electronics, and free jazz. The band always keeps the public on their toes, blasting through their speakers and bringing freedom to their ears with, "the inspiration [to] blow the lid off the old stagnation nation" ("Pumpfake", Soul-Junk, 1956).

[www.souljunk.com](http://www.souljunk.com)



**Dumpstar –  
Dumpstar –  
Unsigned**

At the forefront of the midwest rock music scene, Dumpstar is making a name for themselves in the Chicagoland area. Dumpstar is a Nu-Metal band that blends monstrously heavy guitars, with driving drums and catchy vocal melodies. With hook-filled songs, and a commanding live show, crowds are taking notice of this hot new band.

[www.dumpstar.com](http://www.dumpstar.com)



**Headnoise –  
No  
Compromise –  
Grrr Records**

Genuine old-school punkers with a flare for Jesus, the latest offering from Headnoise is a feast for the hungry ear. Each song takes you on a wild adventure spinning you out of control, flipping you up side down, whipping you around, and back again. All the while keeping your attention focused on topics such as Jesus, government, and suicide.

[www.headnoise.org](http://www.headnoise.org)



**Band  
Blindsight**

**Album  
Silence**

**Song  
Pitiful**

**Website**  
[www.blindsight-silence.com](http://www.blindsight-silence.com)

## Pitiful

as I recall when my stomach turned  
and I was hiding away from myself  
away from you  
like nothing but something was terribly wrong  
and I admit that I was only waiting for the right  
time  
(right time)  
right moment for you to look away  
though you never did I pretended for a while  
so I could walk where I don't belong

I remember every word you said  
come back in time come back  
and I remember I was too beaten  
pitiful so pitiful

but I know as they hammered those nails  
into your beautiful hands  
your eyes they tried to search for mine  
but I look away  
now your eyes are the only thing that can save me  
I'm still afraid of them piercin'  
you break into my prison  
just pretended for a while  
my soul is sad and I walk away

I remember every word you said  
come back in time come back  
and I remember I was too beaten  
pitiful so pitiful

pitiful  
pitiful  
pitiful  
pitiful  
so pitiful

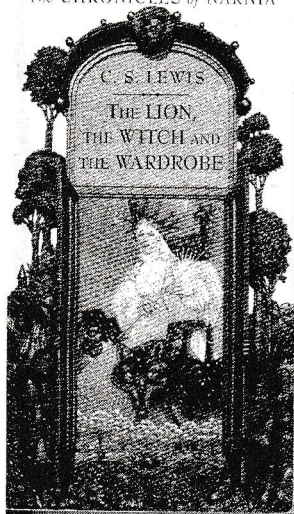
and I remember every word you said  
but this time I won't look away  
and I remember every word you said  
and this time I won't look away

and I remember every word you said  
come back in time come back  
and I remember I was so beaten  
pitiful so pitiful

and I remember every word you said (pitiful)  
come back in time come back (pitiful)  
and I remember I was too beaten (pitiful)  
pitiful so pitiful

# BOOK REVIEW

The CHRONICLES of NARNIA



## The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis

Okay, so some of you might be asking, "Why would I read this now that I'm in college? I read it when I was a kid." Well, the first reason I wanted to do a book review on this novel was simply because I'd never actually read it. I'd heard about it, but I never had to read it for school. It didn't interest me all that much until

recently. Secondly, I saw an interesting concept in this book that a lot of you might have missed when reading it in junior high.

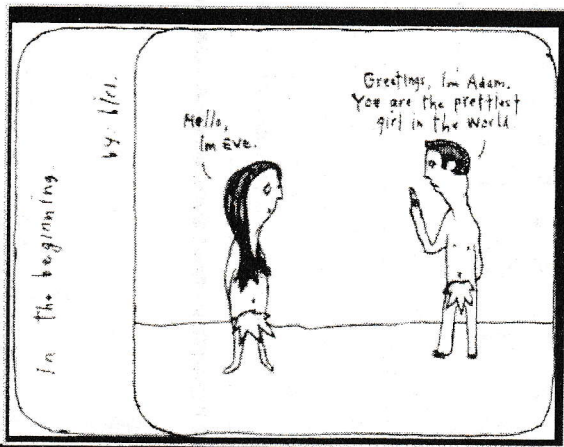
I myself had the misconception that this book was only for children. But there are things in this book that apply to adults also. Basically, this novel is for anyone, young or old, male or female. It is the classic story of good versus evil. But in most good versus evil stories, the hero wins out because he is strong, fights valiantly, and rescues himself from the evil by defeating it. In this book, however, the children don't defeat the evil by themselves. They have a helper.

Most of you know the story, but to refresh your memory, there were four brothers and sisters, Peter, Edmund, Susan, and Lucy who happened upon a secret world called Narnia through a wardrobe in their uncle's large old house. The youngest brother Edmund got himself into trouble, though, by succumbing to the temptations of the evil White Witch. She offered him a tasty helping of "Turkish Delight" and he agreed to bring his brothers and sisters to her. He pretty much sold himself to the Witch. By the time Edmund realizes his mistake, though, it's too late. He's already with the White Witch and has given away his brother's and

sisters' whereabouts. The race is on to get to the children and turn them into stone. Then the great lion and king of Narnia, Aslan, returns to the country to aid the children in the fight against evil. Here is where the concept of sacrificial love comes in.

Edmund was being held by the Witch, but he wanted to be returned to his brothers and sisters. He had messed up and wronged them. A price had to be paid for his freedom. He couldn't pay the price, though, because he had nothing. So Aslan, the great king stepped in. He agreed to pay for Edmund's freedom with his life. Aslan let himself be killed so that Edmund could live. Edmund couldn't rescue himself, so Aslan made the ultimate sacrifice to save Edmund's life. Now, that's real love. Aslan gave up his own life, so Edmund could live.

Sound like someone you know? Maybe a lot of you are saying, "I wish I knew someone like that!" You can. His name is Jesus and most of you know the story, but have you let that change your life? Jesus didn't die for one person; He died for all people. He died for you. And that's how you can know that He loves you—He proved it. I challenge you to think about this over the next week. I encourage you to read this book again, viewing Aslan as Jesus and the White Witch as the devil. You'll see a lot of interesting things. If you want to know more about Jesus than the things you've heard growing up or in church, pick up a Bible and start reading the New Testament. You'll be able to learn a lot about the wonderful things Jesus has done for you.





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**“What is a Cult?”**

Tape excerpt from Ron Carlson

“We even have a lot of people in Christian churches today who are going around claiming to have a vision from God, claiming to have a revelation from God, having a prophecy from God. How are we to know whether those are from God or not? Well it’s very simple.

God has already told us in Malachi 3:6 that He is immutable, he does not change. Hebrews 6:17-18 tells us that he does not lie, he is consistent in truth, he will never contradict himself. God will never communicate one truth to one generation and another truth to another generation. He will always be consistent in truth. He will never contradict himself. He’s already told us that. He’s immutable. He does not change. Therefore, we must test all younger revelation by God’s earliest revelation, the Bible, to see if they are consistent and in harmony. And if we find that the younger revelation is consistent with God’s earliest revelation, then there’s no problem. But if we find that it contradicts, at any point, then we must throw out the younger revelation and hold fast to God’s oldest revelation, because God does not change, he is consistent in truth. He will never contradict himself.”

**Calvary Chapel Appleton Women’s Conference  
Gisela Yohannan’s Testimony**

Gisela Yohannan teaches us through her testimony that God has a “calling” for each one of us. There is a divine purpose for us existing on planet earth today. She also challenges us, with her encouraging and soft-spoken voice, to place the calling of God far above all else; friends, jobs, and marriage. This is the relationship/commitment God desires for all of mankind as a natural result of the great love Jesus has shown for us. He has paid the ultimate price for all of our sin at the expense of his own suffering and priceless blood on the cross. Check it out.



# MINI-MOVIES



**Lord of the Rings:  
The Two Towers**

**Rated: PG-13**

**Director:** Peter Jackson

**Screenwriter(s):** Peter Jackson, Frances Walsh, Philippa Boyens

**based on:** the novels by

J.R.R. Tolkien

**Filming Location(s):** New Zealand

**Studio:** New Line Cinema

***"God is the Lord of angels,  
and of men, and of elves."***

**-J.R.R. Tolkien**

**T**his fast paced epic adventure Lord of the Rings comes alive again in the second of the infamous trilogy by J.R.R. Tolkien, The Two Towers. This is an incredible movie with about a hundred thousand movie reviews out there that will tell you why. I want to give you something to look for, a different angle.

Unknown by the average movie-goer, this fantasy action adventure is packed full of faith and truth. From the battle for middle earth being the last battle similar to Armageddon to Gandalf's transformation and ride in on a white horse.

### The Ring

Tolkien's Ring is an image of a consuming, evil power that

few can resist. It reveals what is truly in the depths of someone's heart and what would become of them with it on their finger. It seeks to overtake and destroy. We see it gnawing at Frodo's soul in this second part of the trilogy. It becomes harder and harder for him to resist. This is just what sin does to us in the world today. Greed and power seduce people bringing them under their control. The

apostle James described it like this: "Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death" (James 1:14-15).

### The Battle

Middle Earth is the place of this last battle, similar to Armageddon, the last battle that will happen on earth according to the Bible. Revelation 16:14,16 says, "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue *Armageddon*."

It is also similar to the spiritual battle that we face as believers in the God of the Bible. As everyone is presented with the battle we all have to make a choice.

### Gandalf

Gandalf the Grey, as he is called in the first part of the series, shows us a picture of Jesus. "Gandalf (Ian Mckellen) has been reborn as Gandalf the White following his cataclysmic fight with the Balrog."<sup>1</sup> Firstly, when he falls into the pit of Khazad-dum in the Mines of Moria after the Balrog pulls him down, he falls with his arms wide spread just as Jesus was positioned on the

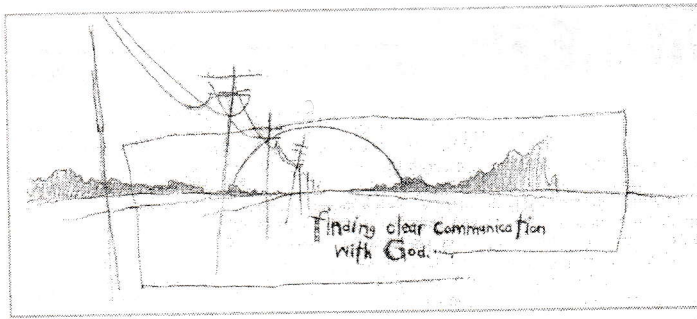
cross. Secondly, when Gandalf is seen again in the Fangorn Forest the hobbits don't recognize him. He is glowing and dressed in white; his hair no longer gray but white as snow. This is reminiscent of when Jesus was crucified on the cross and was dead for 3 days. During those three days he went into Hades and to hell. When he rose from the dead and returned, he was transformed with a new body, and people barely recognized Him. Thirdly, Gandalf is the one that comes to the rescue during the battle for middle earth on a white horse just as Jesus is going to do during the events of the end of this world.

This is just a taste of the spiritual glimpses and symbolism that J.R.R. Tolkien portrays in the trilogy. Many are unaware that he was a believer in the God of the Bible, yet these three books are some of the most popular fantasy books ever.

**More to Come:** Check back here in January 2004 for a full review of the spiritual references J.R.R. Tolkien makes throughout this entire trilogy.

**Source:**

1. [www.lordoftherings.net](http://www.lordoftherings.net)



A lack of faith is something that can also become a reason for unanswered prayer. Our faith can be made stronger through the empowering of the Holy Spirit, and without faith our prayer life will suffer. "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the LORD, he is a

double-minded man, unstable in all he does" (James 1:5-8 NIV). It makes me wonder why we would ask for things that we were already convinced could never happen. It would be foolish for me to ask the LORD that he turn my father into a gorilla. I already am convinced that it isn't going to happen, so there isn't even any reason for me to ask. Even if I did ask I can be sure that it wouldn't be given to me because my faith is still weak in that area. (Or possibly the prayer wouldn't be answered because my motives would be selfish, for everybody knows that I've always wanted a monkey for a father).

A common misconception among people today, Christians and non-Christians alike, is that God hears and approves of our every prayer. Many of us will admit that God doesn't always answer our prayers, possibly because we've taken notice to the lack of divine response after we've asked for one hundred dollar bills to rain from the sky. Many of us will, however, be appalled and offended at the suggestion that God will not listen to, or is greatly angered by, prayers that are offered in a certain way or spoken by a particular sort of person.

Consider the child who stands among 600 women, one of whom is the child's mother, asking to be carried. Who is likely to respond? One of 599 strangers, or the child's true mother? The answer is simple when the question is delivered in this context, but so many people fail to understand that for God to hear our prayers and to listen to our requests we must first be one of his "children." Some are fooled into believing that we are automatically God's "child" just because we decide that we need a higher wage bad enough to kneel down and pray for it. God is God, not a vending machine. He is not to be treated as a convenience store. Prayer is meant to maintain and to nurture a healthy communication with God. It is a provision from God himself, offered to us as an opportunity to keep a consistent and personal relationship with him. This consists not only of "askings," but also of "thanksgivings." It includes pondering, pouring out your every thought, and simply listening to what He is telling you, all of which are fruitless unless we are already a "child of God." The mere suggestion that one must acquire this "label" before being heard by God is such a seemingly ignorant and narrow-minded idea that some will not even bother to finish reading these words, but Scripture gives us insight into these bold claims.

If we are truly a child of God we will be given the desire to serve Him. This desire is not of our own accord, but of the Holy Spirit within us. We will want to serve God and others, gradually becoming less selfish and more selfless. If our motives remain self-centered our LORD will not hear our prayers. "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with the wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures" (James 4:3 NIV). It is quite obvious in this verse that many of our prayers are left unanswered because we ask foolishly for things that serve no one other than ourselves.

When we pray we are told to be persistent in our prayers, and a lack thereof can be a determining factor in whether or not they are ever going to be answered. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7 NIV). Too many times I find myself forgetting to pray for things that only yesterday were of highest priority. I need to ask myself how important these things are and if I can be a little more persistent. We can't expect to climb the mountain and enjoy the view from the summit if we are only willing to take one or two small steps. Persistence is a key ingredient in a successful prayer life.

Yet another thing that can prevent our prayers from coming to fruition is a lack of action on our part. "Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead" (James 2:17 NIV). I can pray all day long that God would take me from off of the couch, but how likely is it that I will be lifted from it unless I actually make the effort and take action? We need to understand that in some cases we have already been given the ability to bring what we have prayed for into existence, but a failure on our part to act is what hinders those very requests.

Simply put, there are many reasons why the LORD might not be answering your prayers. We can spend our lives wondering if we have failed to act, or if our faith was weak. Maybe we ask ourselves if our motives were impure, or if we have been persistent enough, but we must understand that if we are a child of God and are diligently following the LORD's guidance, that we will be taught to have faith and right motives. We will be persistent and willing to act. Therefore, the most important question that we should be asking ourselves if we are unable to see that our prayers are effective is, "Am I really a 'child of God'?"



Recently Wes Bentley, director of Far Reaching Ministries, attended Calvary Chapel in Menomonie to

share what is happening with this ministry. Far Reaching Ministries' mission is to take the good news of Jesus Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth by ministering to the afflicted, the starving, and the dying. Far Reaching brings aid to their physical needs while making it a priority to meet their spiritual needs with the love of Jesus Christ. Jesus stated in Matthew 28:18-20, "I have been given authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Far Reaching Ministries has developed the Christ for Continent program to train and equip men from every tribe and tongue in order to reach the entire continent of Africa in this generation. They do this through several facets of ministry including the establishing of churches, Bible schools, chaplain training, women's and children's ministry in the South Sudan, and Saving Grace, a ministry for the children who have lost their parents through war, famine, and disease in Uganda.

Currently in the Sudan there is a "holy war" going on where the Muslims are attacking the Christians and those who will not profess Islam. Wes told us that two Islamic radicals tried to attack their children's village. They shot the guards and then tried to go after the women. They cut through the boarded windows with machetes but the girls managed to escape. One of the missionaries came up to the

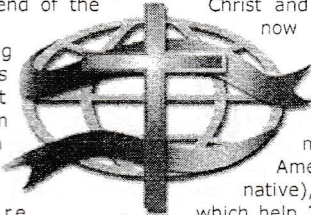
two men and rebuked them in the name of Jesus Christ. The two men were astounded at the boldness of this man that it made their knees shake. They ended up running away and leaving their address book behind which allowed the authorities to arrest them.

Wes also told us about a woman in Kenya named Faith. She runs an orphanage with 350 street children. She witnessed a lady who was insane bite off the toes of her son. The authorities were too afraid to stop her so Faith went in and fought off this lady and rescued the little boy.

The workers do not have an easy life; they face a life of physical, emotional, and spiritual hardship, lousy food, months without a hot shower, and work that may result in death. There have already been four deaths and eight wounded within Far Reaching Ministries' staff but still God is doing amazing work: many people are coming to know the love of Jesus Christ and His peace. They now have four Calvary Chapel Bible Schools in Africa, six church plants, 200 missionaries (25 American, the rest native), 300 orphanages which help 3,000 children, and have Bible studies on two radio stations.

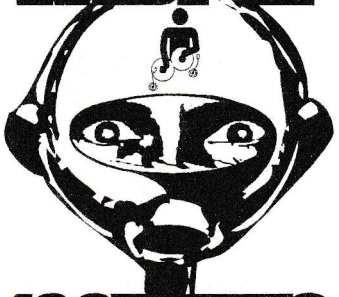
Wes also left us with some advice to not always look at the outward circumstances because if we do, we may lose out on living the full life that God has planned for each one of us. If Wes would have been disobedient to God he would have missed out on God using him to save many people's physical and spiritual lives. God has a plan for each one of our lives that we may know of His love personally. It is His will that none should perish (2 Peter 3:9) but come into a relationship with Him and have eternal life—This is why Jesus came to earth and gave up His life in order that we may find true life.

[www.farreachingministries.org](http://www.farreachingministries.org)



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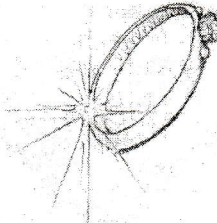
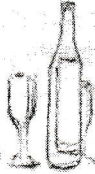
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## Beatnik's Corner

Miss Conception



Billaby Leever bought a ring,  
 And tried his luck on bended knee,  
 But Ms. Conception turned away,  
 'Cause  
 "Christian men make  
 boring mates."

So Billaby Leever tried once more  
 And came to Ms. Conception's  
 door,  
 And all to be denied again,  
 'Cause  
 "there's no charm in  
 Christian men."

So Billaby Leever one last time,  
 Tried candlelight and cherry wine,  
 But Ms. Conception won't be wed,  
 'Cause  
 "Christian men are dull in bed."

## C'mon I'm A GOOD PERSON

Fruit of the Spirit: Goodness

C'mon I'm a good person. There seems to be an ongoing misconception concerning the belief that if you're "good enough" and lead a "good life" that "it will all work out in the end" and you will go to heaven. How do you know that? Where did that information come from? Or does it just "seem right" and "everybody else" believes it so it "must be" true? Oddly enough, this misconception is just as prevalent among people who believe in the God of the Bible, as it is among non-believers.

The American Heritage Dictionary states that goodness means "a state or quality of being good." It also states that the

word good means "complete, superior to the average, valuable, correct, living up to your name or what you say." Now after that definition I think it would be a stretch to say that even if you could get to heaven by "being good" that very few of us would make it. The Bible does state in Romans 3:10, "no one is good, no not one." In Philippians 3:8-9,

Paul the Apostle states that he can no longer count on his own goodness: Paul writes, "Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have

discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ and become one with Him. I no

**"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Romans 7:18**

longer count on my own goodness or my ability to obey God's law, but I trust Christ to save me. For God's way of making us right with Himself depends on faith."

The Bible is very clear that it is not that "good people go to heaven and bad people go

to hell", rather "people who accept Jesus go to heaven and people who reject Jesus go to hell."

The only way to really have goodness is to know the God

of the Bible. Goodness is actually a fruit or product of the Holy Spirit dwelling inside you. "But the fruit of the Spirit is Love: joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control..." The Holy Spirit brings these

**"Not all people who sound religious are really godly.**

**They may refer to me as Lord but they still won't enter the kingdom of heaven. The decisive issue is whether they obey my Father in heaven." Matt 7:21**

gifts to empower you. This can happen only after you have accepted the fact that Jesus dying on the cross is payment for your sins and you want to accept His free gift of eternal life.

Marilyn

In the month of November, you may have noticed posters, signs, and sidewalk chalk advertisements bearing a single name: Marilyn, wishing her last name to

be kept a secret so as not to reveal her identity. She spoke for the first time to share with our campus how God, through Jesus Christ, had healed and rescued her from the horrors she endured as a child growing up in the occult.

Her earliest memories are those of a troubled and confused child being forced to live a dual life. During the day at her Catholic School she was taught that God was love, but at night her parents and relatives dragged her into the dark world of the occult, where she was taught that Satan was Lord, and that God cared nothing for her. At a very young age, through various rituals and ceremonies, she was taught to be submissive by being severely physically and sexually abused. As she grew older, she longed for an end to this confusion. So she picked up her Bible, and challenged God by asking if He was real and if He was a God of love. She flipped through the pages and opened to the book of first John,

If you feel that you've been living  
a dual life ...  
know that Jesus loves you and longs  
for you to know Him ...

which immediately explained to her clearly that God is indeed a loving God. She was astounded that God had answered her question so clearly, and shocked to realize she had been lied to by her family and the occult about the truth of who God is.

Though she caught a glimpse of the truth, this led to many questions and a long period of searching for answers in a multitude of religious belief systems, drugs, and relationships. But none of these options could offer her the answers, hope and healing that she needed. She once again picked up her Bible, realizing this time that Jesus is the only way. Since that time, God has healed her both physically and spiritually. God sent her to Stout to share His love, and to let others know there is no situation so bad that Christ's love won't cover it. If you feel that you've been living a dual life, and you struggle searching for answers and truth, know that Jesus loves you, longs for you to know Him, and find peace and hope in Him. We challenge you to ditch any misconceptions about who you think Jesus Christ might be, and find out who He really is in the Bible.

## What the Lord has done in my life ...

Testimony of a Jail Inmate

The Lord has done a lot in my life. When I was growing up, there was very little Christianity in my life. In fact, I didn't have any idea what it was really like to be a Christian until about a year ago. Growing up I had a pretty loving family, yet they were all drug users except for my grandma. She raised me off and on for half of my childhood. She had friends who were Christians and they brought me with them to church sometimes. This was pretty much the extent of my religious background, and as I said before, I really didn't know what it was all about.

I guess I never really cared about God, or Jesus, or anything pertaining to religion until the day before my eleventh birthday. That was the day my Dad died. That was when I started to ask questions like, "Why?" I loved my dad very much and his death hurt me more than I knew. But instead of turning to God, I rebelled. As I stated before, my mom and almost all of the rest of my family were drug users. Drugs turned into a crutch to get me through life. That in turn led to many more problems, which led me into my current situation. I made very poor choices and blamed everyone else, including God, for the consequences of those choices.

I had to hit rock bottom hard before someone gave

me the answer to my problems. That someone is a correctional officer whom I am very fond of now. He gave me a Bible when no one would give me anything, even a smile, and told me how much God loved me. At first I wanted to throw the Bible in his face, but his kindness to me made me think twice.

Jonathan really opened my eyes that day. God used him to get me, and it worked. I'm not saying it was an instantaneous response, but it was the seed. Since then I've read

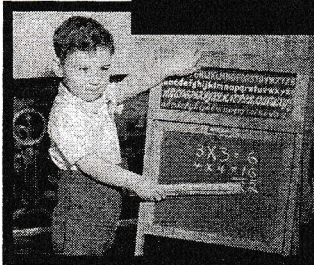
I guess I never  
really cared  
about God, or  
Jesus, or  
anything  
pertaining to  
religion...

the new testament and also attended classes and Bible studies to help me understand His word and how to apply it to my life. I think I finally have the Holy Spirit working in me now because of the changes He has made in my life. I'm a lot happier now even though I'm not free, and I believe Jesus is the Son of God, He died for my sins, and He rose again. I look forward to life in heaven with Him now. That is what the Lord has done for me.

# JARGON

Here's Christianese 101 for people who wish they knew what some Christians are talking about when they use these buzz words.

**Buzz word #1:**  
**"salvation" or "being saved"**



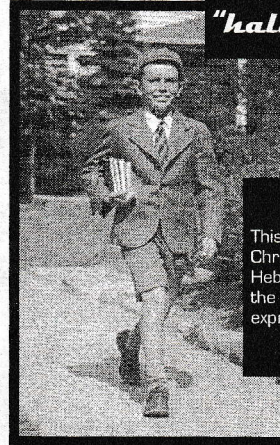
The act of being saved (salvation) isn't as complicated or mysterious as some people might think. The definition in Webster's Dictionary for saved is as follows:

- to redeem from sin
- to rescue from danger
- to preserve or guard from destruction or loss
- to put aside as a store or reserve

So how does being saved in the Christian sense differ from these definitions? It doesn't! It is

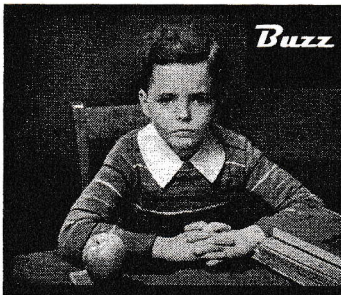
exactly the same thing. Jesus Christ wants to rescue you from danger (hell) and redeem you from your sin (pay a price so you are not a slave to sin). The Bible says: "For God so loved the world [you] that He gave his only Son [Jesus] that whoever would believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life [in heaven]" (John 3:16). So, to be one of those "saved" people (noting the definition above), all you have to do is believe that Jesus died on a cross for your sins [see Buzz word #3] and came back alive on the third day. How easy is that?

**Buzz word #2:**  
**"hallelujah"**



This word, highly used in Christian circles, is simply the Hebrew word for "praise [ye] the Lord" and is used to express praise, joy, or thanks.

**Buzz word #3: "sin"**



This term actually originated from the sport of archery. When one would aim for the bull's eye and miss the mark, it would be called a "sin". The literal meaning is "missing the mark." The way this word is

used in Christian circles is exactly the same. When someone is trying to aim his life in the correct direction, yet still falls short and "misses the mark" by doing something wrong, it is called sin. This makes the one committing the wrong a "sinner". The Bible says, "For all have sinned, all fall short of God's glorious standard (Rom. 3:23).

**Buzz word #4:**  
**"transgression"**

This term and the previous term (sin) are often confused. The difference between a sin and a transgression is the intent. A sin (as previously discussed) is to aim for doing well and falling short. To transgress, on the other hand, is to realize that what you are about to do is wrong, and still do it anyway. Webster's Dictionary puts it, "to go beyond the limits set by <the divine law>".



Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary [www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com)

El Shaddai All-sufficient One, Lord God Almighty  
El Elyon The Most High God Elohim God,  
Adonai Lord, Master Judge, Creator

Jehovah Nissi The  
Lord My Banner  
The Lord my  
Miracle

Jehovah Raha  
The Lord  
My Shepherd

Jehovah Rapha The Lord That Heals

Jehovah Shammah  
The Lord is there

Jehovah Tsidkenu  
The Lord Our Righteousness

Jehovah Mekoddishkem  
The Lord Who Sanctifies  
you, The Lord Who  
Makes Holy El Olam

The Everlasting God,  
The God of Eternity,  
The God of the Universe

"LET THEM PRAISE THE  
NAME OF THE LORD,  
FOR HIS NAME ALONE IS  
EXALTED;  
HIS GLORY IS ABOVE THE  
EARTH AND HEAVEN."

PSALM 148:13

***Do you think maybe He said  
something worth checking out for  
yourself at least once?***

*He claimed to offer abundant and  
eternal life for free.*

*—Or is everything just “great” in your  
life these days? Really?*

We'd like to offer you a free copy of what He  
said. Cut this out, fill it out and send it to the  
address below. We will mail you a free copy of  
God's word, The Bible.

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He died for all so that  
all who live—having  
received eternal life  
from Him—might live  
no longer for  
themselves,  
to please  
themselves,  
but to spend  
their lives pleasing  
Christ who died and  
rose again for them.

*2 Corinthians 5:15 (TLB)*