

# RESISTING SATAN'S SCHEMES

Spiritual Warfare in the Bible - Volume 7

Jonathan Carl

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## RESISTING SATAN'S SCHEMES

### *Spiritual Warfare in the Bible - Volume 7*

God's Answers about the Battle of the Followers of  
Christ against the Unseen Spiritual Forces of Evil

Dr. Jonathan Carl

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Downloadable resources and helpful  
study videos freely available at:  
**[www.SpiritualWarfare.blog](http://www.SpiritualWarfare.blog)**

I am so thankful to God for His strength and truth in Jesus!

I love and am so grateful for my amazing wife Brittney and her loving, tireless support. Together we are blessed with some amazing daughters in Sophia, Lydia, Alia, and Mia! Our church family at South Fork has been incredible in their encouragement :) *Thank you all for putting up with my many hours of studying & writing for this work!*

Ephesians 6:10–12 (ESV) “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. [11] Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. [12] For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

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[www.SpiritualWarfare.blog](http://www.SpiritualWarfare.blog)



Ephesians 6:10–12 (ESV) “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. [11] Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. [12] For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

Life is hard. Life is full of struggles and suffering. We need the reminder that our primary battles are not physical, financial, emotional, or mental, but spiritual. We ultimately are in an ongoing spiritual battle.

What is “spiritual warfare”? Spiritual warfare, based on Ephesians 6:12, is “the battle of the followers of Christ against the unseen spiritual forces of evil.”

This resource is designed to help you find God’s answers about the battle of the followers of Christ against the unseen spiritual forces of evil.

Visit our website to find freedom and victory in your daily battles through Christ’s finished work on the cross. Share our free resources with others to help them as well!

[www.TrustworthyWord.co](http://www.TrustworthyWord.com)

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## TRUSTWORTHY WORD

Titus 1:9 “He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.” (ESV)

Trustworthy Word was born out of a desire to equip churches with free, downloadable handouts as a resource for biblical teaching on various topics. We wanted to see the people of God think deeply about the Word of God and realize the implications that come about as a result.

One of the great things that we have seen happen though is that members of our church (South Fork Baptist Church in Hodgenville, KY) have begun to use the site as a mobile resource when they are sharing the gospel or having bible-centered conversations.

Trustworthy Word has become a digital filing cabinet where with a few taps of the finger, we can quickly locate helpful resources both for our own spiritual growth and to engage those with whom we are having Christ focused conversations.

Our hope is that you too will find Trustworthy

Word as a digital discipleship and evangelism resource you can utilize in moments when you have your phone, tablet, or computer with you. You may enjoy using some of the free handouts to help guide your small group into a deeper walk with Jesus in Bible study. With just a few clicks we hope you begin to think deeply about the Word of God and see how that impacts your life.

## www.Bible.video - “The Video Bible”

@TheVideoBibleChannel



### Bible.Video

“Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.” - 1 Timothy 4:13

Did someone read to you growing up? Did that time impact you? Help you? Grow you? Comfort you?

We feel that reading the Bible visually and audibly to one another is important and helpful too! What a joy it is to see print Bibles reaching the ends of the earth (through amazing groups like the Gideons and The International Bible Society and especially [www.NetBible.com](http://www.NetBible.com)).

How incredible it is that translations are made (Wycliffe) and digitally distributed ([Bible.com](http://Bible.com) and [BibleStudyTools.com](http://BibleStudyTools.com)) all over the world! In the past few decades, audio Bibles have also become numerous and more accessible through wonderful ministries like Faith Comes By Hearing.

Unfortunately, there isn't much of a presence currently of someone visually reading the Bible to another. We hope to help provide this through the “The Video Bible”!

We feel this is a needed resource for evangelism

and discipleship and we pray that it will be extremely effective! The biblical origins of both visually watching someone read and listening simultaneously is important to how we process and respond to the Word.

We hope to have the opportunity to help get complete bible translations free into the ears, eyes, minds, and souls of millions more over the years ahead via video.

[www.Catholic.blog](http://www.Catholic.blog)

The **CATHOLIC BLOG**

[www.catholic.blog](http://www.catholic.blog)

Ephesians 2:8–9 “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (ESV)

What does the Catholic Church really believe? Many people have their opinions, experiences, or second-hand information on Catholic beliefs but a true understanding of the Catholic faith is found in its *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

*The Catholic Blog* simply presents portions of the Catholic Catechism with relevant Bible verses and introspective questions to consider. This free resource will help you on your journey to consider the beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church and examine for yourself, through tough questions, whether The Catechism of the Catholic Church is biblically valid and trustworthy.

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* is a substantial document of significant history and tradition. If you have yet to read it, I encourage you to read it in its entirety. This guide should be a helpful start and reference! As you consider the “essential and fundamental contents of Catholic doctrine” (CCC, 11), I hope you will be like the Bereans of Acts 17:11 who always put the Bible first to test what they were learning.

The Bereans are described as “noble” after hearing the teaching of the Apostle Paul for two reasons:

1) getting into the Bible with “eagerness”

2) testing the teaching of the Apostle Paul in light of Scriptures to verify his truthfulness.

Similarly, may we evaluate what we see in The Catechism of the Catholic Church in the light of the Bible to “see if these things were so.”

Acts 17:11 “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.” (ESV)



**A 3 Part Approach: Here is the approach you will find to this Bible study.**

**1) Interesting highlights and quotes** - Due to the massive volume of writings in The Catechism of the Catholic Church, I have picked quotes from the text that I think you will find most useful and fascinating.

**2) Relevant Scriptures** - Likewise, I selected passages of Scripture that I thought particularly helpful in evaluating and understanding the Catholic teachings. Both The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Bible passages should be considered in their original context and setting. There are many more possible Catholic teachings and Biblical passages to consider but I hope this is a helpful start to your studies.

**3) Helpful Questions** - I have chosen not to insert opinions and assertions but instead propose tough questions that help us to think critically for ourselves about what we are reading.

My end goal and hope is that we all follow God's directive to us in 2 Corinthians 13:5 to "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!" (ESV). May we all have the joy of an eternity in the presence of Jesus!

***Here are the top 10 Catholic questions answered in this book with biblical answers:***

1. What is the Catechism of the Catholic Church?
2. What is Sin According to the Catholic Catechism? Do Different Sins Need Different Sacrifices?
3. Does Salvation Come through Catholic Mass? Does Giving Money to Church Help Us?
4. Is Catholic Baptism Necessary for Salvation? What about Confirmation?
5. Is Catholic Eucharist Necessary for Salvation? What about Penance?

6. Was Mary Always Saved? Did Mary Never Sin? Is Mary the Cause of Salvation? Was Mary a Virgin Her Entire Life? Did Jesus Have Any Brothers? Is It True that Mary Never Died? Did Mary Ascend to Heaven?

7. Are Images of Jesus, Mary, Saints, or Angels Helpful or Harmful? Do Relics & Rosaries have Power?

8. Should We Pray to Mary and Saints? Is it OK to Pray to Angels?

9. Will I Go to Purgatory? Do Indulgences Help Us?

10. Can Marriages Be Annulled? What about Catholic Divorce and Remarriage?

Whether you are Catholic, considering Catholicism, or just curious to understand the Catholic Church better, this Bible study will be a great help to you. Download *A Biblical Study of The Catechism of the Catholic Church* free at [www.Catholic.blog](http://www.Catholic.blog)

# INTRODUCTION

Titus 1:9 “He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.” (ESV)

*This book is different than many others that you might read. The vast majority of the content is simply Bible verses and references.* This approach, with lots of bullet points, is intentional in order to help you clearly hear and see God's truths and not merely human opinion. May this work be a helpful resource for your study of God's Word. May it help you increase in your love and awe of your Savior. If you aren't yet a follower of Christ, may the Lord save you through the reading of His Word throughout it!

I have used these resources in teaching my church, small groups, pastors, seminary students, and doctoral students about the subject of spiritual warfare. The source of these writings has been from my own studies, counseling with church members, and sermons. These subjects have arisen from some of the most important conversations that I have had in pastoral ministry for over a decade. I hope and pray that this work serves as a tool for the Lord to use in helping His children through His Spirit and Word.

Ultimately, I have written this for the Lord. He has grown me so much through the years and I pray that this work is faithful to honor and glorify Him. I have also always told my wife and daughters that I wrote this for them as well. I love them so much and if they were the only ones to read this, then I would count it a success!

I do hope that this is a useful Bible study resource for many around the world. I have made these chapters, videos, and the book (and other books too) in its entirety, freely downloadable and accessible at [www.SpiritualWarfare.blog](http://www.SpiritualWarfare.blog) and also at [www.TrustworthyWord.com](http://www.TrustworthyWord.com). It has been a joy of mine to see so many souls find Scriptural counsel online at The Spiritual Warfare Blog and Trustworthy Word over the years and I pray that it continues to aid many more until the Lord returns!

In Christ,  
Jonathan Carl

Ephesians 6:17 “take the helmet of salvation,  
and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”

# OUTLINE

Here is a brief outline of the sections of this book and Scriptural reminders of their importance. The links below contain video lectures to help you as well!

This book is a compilation of 10 other books you can find here:

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/free-books](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/free-books) and  
[www.amazon.com/author/jonathancar1](http://www.amazon.com/author/jonathancar1)

- *God and Satan: Spiritual Warfare in the Bible*
- *Angels and Demons: Spiritual Warfare in the Bible*
- *Believers & Unbelievers: Spiritual Warfare in the Bible*
- *Heaven, Hell and Salvation: Spiritual Warfare in the Bible*
- *Frequently Asked Questions about Spiritual Warfare in the Bible: God's Answers about the Battle of the Followers of Christ against the Unseen Spiritual Forces of Evil*
- *Putting on God's Armor of Light: Spiritual Warfare in the Bible*
- *Resisting Satan's Schemes: Spiritual Warfare in the Bible*
- *Prayer and Fasting: Spiritual Warfare in the Bible*
- *Biblical Health: Spiritual Warfare in the Bible*
- *Evangelism and Missions: Spiritual Warfare in the Bible*

## 1. God & Satan

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/god-satan](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/god-satan)

Proverbs 1:7 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction." (ESV)

Ephesians 6:10 "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might." (ESV)

The story of the Bible is not a story about spiritual warfare. The story of the Bible is the story of God. As we clearly focus on who God is (His names and characteristic) and what He has done (miracles), our enemies and struggles will seem so much smaller. Although God is the Bible's primary focus, He reveals much to us about our chief enemy in Satan. Don't miss out on what God has to tell us about our enemy's names, character, and tactics that we be best prepared to live lives that enjoy and honor our Creator.

## 2. Angels & Demons

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/angels-demons](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/angels-demons)

Colossians 1:16 "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him." (ESV)

2 Corinthians 11:14–15 "And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. [15] So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds." (ESV)

God's created angels are important in the storyline of history. In Scripture God shares many stories that explain their purposes and abilities. This section will help you to rightly understand the mostly unseen angelic beings, both faithful (angels) and fallen (demons).

## 3. Believers & Unbelievers

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/believers-unbelievers](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/believers-unbelievers)

1 John 3:10 "By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother." (ESV)

Matthew 12:35 "The good person out of his good treasure brings

forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil.” (ESV)

Humanity is divided by those who follow Jesus in faith (Christian believers) and those who follow Satan, the world, and their fleshly sin (unbelievers). It is essential to understand the identities of both groups as well as the evidences of their character and works. There is no neutral ground in this battle of the followers of Christ against the spiritual forces of evil. Here are some truths to help us be aware of who we are and rightly see the world around us with a spiritual understanding.

#### **4. Heaven & Hell and Salvation**

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/heaven-hell](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/heaven-hell)

Romans 10:1 “Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.” (ESV)

Luke 19:10 “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (ESV)

Matthew 7:21–23 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. [22] On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ [23] And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’” (ESV)

God speaks clearly to us both about eternal life (Heaven) and eternal death (Hell). He wants believers to look forward to being in His presence in Heaven and also wants unbelievers to be warned of the danger of eternal suffering in Hell. Salvation is God’s offer and work through Christ and He has much to tell us in the Scriptures. Here are some truths about Heaven, Hell, and God’s work of salvation.

#### **5. Spiritual Warfare Passages in the Bible**

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/bible](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/bible)

Ephesians 6:12–13 “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. [13] Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.” (ESV)

God warns believers about the ongoing battle between His followers and the devil’s followers. He wants us to rightly understand the underlying issues of our struggles that we may daily rely on God’s strength and not our own. Here are some important truths to understand about spiritual warfare.

#### **6. Putting on God’s Armor of Light**

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/armor](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/armor)

Romans 13:12 “The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.” (ESV)

1 Thessalonians 5:8 “But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.” (ESV)

God calls us to go into battle covered in His armor of light and wielding the “sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” This section will help you to hear God’s commands and wisdom of how to live life in a way that takes into account the reality of our spiritual battles.

#### **7. Resisting Satan’s Schemes**

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/schemes](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/schemes)

Ephesians 6:11 “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.” (ESV)

2 Corinthians 2:11 “so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.” (ESV)

James 4:7–8 “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” (ESV)

God wants us to be informed of our enemy’s strategies and tactics. We have a responsibility and urgent call to resist the attacks of our enemies. In this section we will hear many of the ways God shares of how to resist Satan’s temptations and deception.

### **8. Prayer and Fasting**

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/prayer](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/prayer)

Ephesians 6:18 “praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints” (ESV)

God cares for us by growing and changing us through our time with Him in prayer and fasting. As we receive God’s Bible truths, we get to respond to Him and ask Him for knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and help in our times of need.

### **9. Biblical Health**

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/health](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/health)

3 John 2–4 “Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul. [3] For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. [4] I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.” (ESV)

God speaks to us wholistically through the Scriptures, desiring us to be healthy spiritually but also physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, relationally, and sexually. He wants us to fulfill His purposes for us in our homes, workplaces, churches and wherever we go. This section will help you to evaluate your

health, identify strengths and weakness, and walk forward in God’s truths for life.

### **10. Evangelism and Missions**

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/missions](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/missions)

Ephesians 6:18–20 “praying ... also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, [20] for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.” (ESV)

The Christian life is a life called to love in action. We must be on the offense in sharing the hope of the Gospel news of Jesus Christ. This section will encourage and equip you to tell others about the loving life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### **11. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/faqs](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/faqs)

1 Peter 3:15 “but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect” (ESV)

Colossians 4:5–6 “Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. [6] Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.” (ESV)

Ephesians 4:11–14 “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.” (ESV)

JONATHANCARL

There are many other questions you may have that this book has not yet answered. This section will answer a few of those questions but will also challenge you to think biblically through other questions and scenarios you have already faced or that you may face in the future.

## VOLUME 7: RESISTING SATAN'S SCHEMES

Free Video Lectures @  
[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/  
schemes](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/schemes)

Ephesians 6:11 “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.” (ESV)

2 Corinthians 2:11 “so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.” (ESV)

James 4:7–8 “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” (ESV)

God wants us to be informed of our enemy’s strategies and tactics. We have a responsibility and urgent call to resist the attacks of our enemies. In this section we will hear many of the ways God shares of how to resist Satan’s temptations and deception.

*The Christian Martyrs* by Paul Gustave Doré.



## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ENEMIES?

[www.trustworthyword.com/enemies](http://www.trustworthyword.com/enemies)

*In life we face many enemies. We must be aware of the sources, strategies, and solutions to our suffering so that we may live in victory and freedom in Christ.*

### *Sources: 10 Truths About Your Enemies*

Ephesians 6:12 “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” (ESV)

#### **1.They Exist in your Sinful Flesh.**

- Romans 7:5 “For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.”
- Romans 8:13 “For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

#### **2. They Exist in this Fallen World and Fallen Humanity.**

- James 4:4 “You adulterous people! Do you not know that

friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

### **3. They Exist in Fallen Angels: Satan and his Demons.**

- Revelation 12:9 “And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.”

### **4. They Are Powerful.**

- Matthew 24:24 “For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.”
- “the prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2)

### **5. They Are Persistent.**

- Genesis 39:10 “she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.”
- Judges 16:16 “she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death.”

### **6. They Are Persuasive.**

- Genesis 3:1,4 “1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”...“You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman.”

### **7. They Are Defeated.**

- 1 Corinthians 15:26 “The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”
- 1 Corinthians 15:57 “thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Colossians 2:15 “God disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in him.”
- 1 John 3:8 “The Son of God appeared to destroy the works of

the devil.”

- Hebrews 2:14 “Christ took on human nature that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil.”

### **8. They Are Limited in Power.**

- Job 1:12 “And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.” So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.”

### **9. They Are Limited in Time.**

- John 12:31 “the ruler of this world be cast out”

### **10. They Are Enslaved. Blinded. Unrighteous. Captive. Dead. Ignorant. Lost.**

- Galatians 4:3 “enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.”
- 2 Timothy 2:26 “they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.”



# STRATEGIES – 10 TACTICS OF YOUR ENEMIES

2 Corinthians 2:11 “so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.” (ESV)

## 1. Deception with Lies and Accusations.

- Revelation 12:9–10 “And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ... the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.”
- John 8:44 “You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”
- 2 Thessalonians 2:10 “with all wicked deception for those who are perishing”

## 2. Desires of the World, Flesh, and Pride of Life.

- Ephesians 2:2 “in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of

disobedience”

- Matthew 4:3 “the tempter came and said”
- 1 John 2:16 “all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.”
- James 4:1 “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?”
- 1 Thessalonians 3:5 “somehow the tempter had tempted you”

## 3. Defeat by Intimidation.

- 1 Samuel 17:10 “the Philistine said, ‘I defy the ranks of Israel this day’”

## 4. Division.

- 1 Corinthians 1:10 “I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united”

## 5. Distraction.

- 2 Corinthians 12:7 “a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited”
- 1 Thessalonians 2:18 “we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us.”

## 6. Destruction. Sickness.

- John 8:44 “the devil...was a murderer from the beginning”
- 1 Peter 5:8 “Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”
- Luke 13:16 “this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years”
- Acts 10:38 “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good

and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.”

### 7. Depression and Apathy.

- Job 2:9 “Then his wife said to him, ‘Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.’”

### 8. Disguise.

- 2 Corinthians 11:13–15 “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. [14] And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. [15] So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.”
- Matthew 7:15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”

### 9. False Worship

- Consulting the dead (Deut 18:11), divination (Lev 19:26), sorcery (Deut 18:10), mediums (Lev 19:31), seeking ghosts (Ezek 13:20), witchcraft (Gal 5:20), astrology (Isa 47:13-14, Deut 4:19), spell casting (Deut 18:11), and interpreting omens (Deut 18:11)
- 2 Thessalonians 2:9–10 “The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders”
- 2 Corinthians 11:3 “But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”

### 10. Gospel- Opposed

- 2 Corinthians 4:4 “the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the

image of God.”

- Mark 4:15 “And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.”

# HOW TO RESPOND TO YOUR ENEMIES

[www.trustworthyword.com/enemies](http://www.trustworthyword.com/enemies)

## 1. Expect their Presence and Attacks.

- John 15:18-20 "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. [19] If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. [20] Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you." (ESV)

## 2. Prepare for Confrontation and Questions.

- 1 Peter 3:15 "always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect"
- 2 Timothy 2:24-25 "And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth"

## 3. Prayer.

- Ephesians 6:18 "praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints"
- 2 Corinthians 12:8-10 "Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, 'My grace

is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

- Matthew 6:13 "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

## 4. Understand God and His Good Purposes.

- 1 Kings 3:11 "God said to him, 'Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right'"
- Romans 8:28 "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."
- Genesis 50:20 "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today."

## 5. Seek Wisdom Concerning their Strategies.

- 2 Corinthians 2:11 "so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs."
- James 3:13-18 "Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. [14] But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. [15] This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. [16] For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. [17] But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. [18] And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

**6. Love in Action.**

- Philippians 2:3-4 “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”
- Luke 6:27-31 “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.”
- 1 John 3:18 “let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth”
- Romans 12:20-21 “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

**7. Suffer with Endurance.**

- Matthew 5:38-42 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ [39] But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. [40] And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. [41] And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. [42] Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.”
- 1 Corinthians 4:11-13 “To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.”

- 2 Timothy 2:3 “Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”

**8. Truth-Filled.**

- Romans 12:2 “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”
- Romans 10:17 “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

**9. Truth-Speaking.**

- Ephesians 6:17 “and take...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”
- Ephesians 4:15 “speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way...into Christ”

**10. Gospel- Sharing.**

- Zechariah 9:11 “As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.”

**11. Silent Patience When Threatened, Slandered, & Abused.**

- 1 Peter 2:21-23 “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.”

**12. Bold Confrontation against Threats, Words, Lies, and Actions.**

- 2 Corinthians 10:5 “We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ”

**13. Slow to Speak. Slow to Get Angry. Quick to Listen.**

- James 1:19–20 “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”
- 2 Timothy 2:24–25 “The Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness”

**14. Humility. Meekness. Contentment.**

- 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 “he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

**15. Count Your Suffering to be Joy. There is Purpose in your Pain.**

- Matthew 5:10–11 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ‘Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.’”

**16. Sometimes We Flee.**

- 1 Timothy 6:11 “ But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.”
- 2 Timothy 2:22 “So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.”
- 1 Corinthians 6:18 “Flee from sexual immorality.”
- Acts 9:25 “his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall”

**17. Sometimes We Stand Firm.**

- Hebrews 10:39 “But we are not of those who shrink back and

are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.”

- Ephesians 6:13 “Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.”

**18. Set an Example.**

- 2 Timothy 3:10–13 “ You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, [11] my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. [12] Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, [13] while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.”
- Philippians 3:17–20 “Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. [18] For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. [19] Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. [20] But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (ESV)

**19. Seek and Trust the Lord.**

- 2 Timothy 3:14–17 “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it [15] and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. [16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

**20. Follow Jesus.**

- 2 Corinthians 4:7–11 “But we have this treasure in jars of clay,

to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. [8] We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; [9] persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; [10] always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. [11] For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

- Proverbs 16:7 "When a man's ways please the LORD, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him."

### **21. Rejoice.**

- Hebrews 10:32–34 "But recall the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, [33] sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. [34] For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one."

### **22. Forgive and Be Merciful**

- Luke 23:34 "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"
- Luke 6:36 "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."
- Proverbs 24:17–18 "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles, lest the LORD see it and be displeased, and turn away his anger from him."

### **23. Pursue Peace and Trust the Lord for Justice and Vengeance.**

- Romans 12:17–19 "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."
- Romans 12:19–21 "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' [20] To the contrary, 'if your enemy is

hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.' [21] Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

### **24. Don't Join Them in their Evil.**

- 1 Peter 2:23 "When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly."
- Proverbs 1:10 "My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent."

### **25. Seek Your Strength and Protection in God.**

- Ephesians 6:11 "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."
- James 4:7 "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

### **26. Don't Worry.**

- Matthew 6:25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life"
- Luke 12:25–26 "And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest?"

### **27. Don't Envy.**

- Proverbs 23:17 "Let not your heart envy sinners, but continue in the fear of the LORD all the day."
- Proverbs 3:31–33 "Do not envy a man of violence and do not choose any of his ways, [32] for the devious person is an abomination to the LORD, but the upright are in his confidence. [33] The LORD's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the dwelling of the righteous."

### **28. Don't Fear.**

- Joshua 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

- Philippians 1:28 “and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.”

### 29. Listen and Obey.

- Joshua 1:7–8 “Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. [8] This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”
- 2 Corinthians 10:5 “Take every thought captive to obey Christ”

### 30. Grow.

- Philippians 1:6 “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”
- Romans 5:3–5 “Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, [4] and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, [5] and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”
- James 1:2–4 “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, [3] for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. [4] And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

### 31. Reorient Your Mind.

- Romans 12:2 “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

- Philippians 3:13–14 “Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, [14] I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

### 32. Pursue Holiness

- Ephesians 4:27 “and give no opportunity to the devil.”
- 1 Peter 1:14–16 “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, [15] but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, [16] since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’”
- 1 Peter 3:16–17 “having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. [17] For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.”

### 33. Stay Confident in God's Eternal Justice and Judgment

- Revelation 20:10 “the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”
- Revelation 12:11: “They have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.”

### 34. Always Be Ready

- 1 Peter 5:8–10 “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. [9] Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. [10] And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.”

**1 Timothy 1:18–19 “This charge I entrust to you, Timothy,**

**my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith”**

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT HUMAN SIN?

In order to understand, respond to, and appreciate God’s saving and atoning work, we must understand the seriousness of human sin. Also, to understand different specific sorts of sin, through the lens of the Ten Commandments, check out “What Does the Bible Say about Sin?” under the section called “Christianity Questions.” Here are some essential Scriptures on human sin and Christ’s atoning work:

### **Bible Verses on Human Sin**

(Romans 3:10-12) “As it is written: ‘There is no one righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup>there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. <sup>12</sup>All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.’”

(Isaiah 64:6) “All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away”

(Jeremiah 17:9) “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”

(Psalm 51:5) “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”

(Ephesians 2:1-3) “As for you, you were dead in your



transgressions and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. <sup>3</sup>All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.”

(John 3:19) “This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil”

(John 8:34) “Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin”

(John 8:44) “You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

(1 Corinthians 2:14) “The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

(Romans 1:18) “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness”

(Proverbs 14:12) “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”

(Romans 8:7) “the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.”

(1 John 3:10) “By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his

brother.”

(Ephesians 2:1-10) [1] And you were dead in the trespasses and sins [2] in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—[3] among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. [4] But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—[6] and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

### **Bible Verses on Christ's Atonement**

(2 Corinthians 5:21) For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

(Colossians 2:14) by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

(Romans 10:14-15) How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? [15 ] And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

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(John 10:15) just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

(Isaiah 53:8-12) By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?...[11b ] by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities...[12b ]because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

# UNDERSTANDING OUR SIN THROUGH THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

## *Commandments #1-4 - Love the Lord*

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" [29] Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. [30] And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

(Mark 12:28-30 ESV)

### **New Testament Listings of Sin Identities**

Romans 1:26-32 · 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 · Galatians

5:19-21 · 1 Timothy 1:9-11 · Revelation 21:8

"the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so." (Romans 8:7)

- 1. "You shall have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3)**
  - They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)
  - drunkards ... revilers (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ESV)

- . the faithless, the detestable (Revelation 21:8 ESV)
- . drunkenness (Galatians 5:19-21 ESV)

**2. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. [5] You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, [6] but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.” (Exodus 20:4-6)**

- . haters of God, insolent ... inventors of evil ... ruthless. (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)
- . idolaters (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ESV)
- . cowardly ... sorcerers, idolaters (Revelation 21:8 ESV)
- . idolatry, sorcery (Galatians 5:19-21 ESV)

**3. “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.” (Exodus 20:7)**

- . Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’ [34] But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, [35] or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. [36] And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. [37] Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil. (Matthew 5:33-37 ESV)
- . And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, [9] but the one who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God. [10] And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. (Luke 12:8-10 ESV)

- . haughty, boastful (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)

**4. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. [9] Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, [10] but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. [11] For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” (Exodus 20:8-11)**

- . You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. (Deuteronomy 5:15 ESV)
- . Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. [17] These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. (Colossians 2:16-17 ESV)
- . for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. [11] Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. (Hebrews 4:10-11 ESV)
- . foolish, faithless, heartless (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)

### *Commandments #5-10 - Love Others as Yourself*

The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Mark 12:31 ESV)

**5. “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.” (Exodus 20:12)**

- . disobedient to parents (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)

- for those who strike their fathers and mothers (1 Timothy 1:9-11 ESV)

#### 6. “You shall not murder.” (Exodus 20:13)

- You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ [22] But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matthew 5:21-22 ESV)
- malice. ... murder, strife ... maliciousness. (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)
- enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions (Galatians 5:19-21 ESV)
- for murderers (1 Timothy 1:9-11 ESV)
- murderers (Revelation 21:8 ESV)

#### 7. “You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)

- You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ [28] But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28 ESV)
- It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ [32] But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Matthew 5:31-32 ESV)
- For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; [27] and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. [28] And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. (Romans 1:26-28 ESV)

- sexually immoral ... nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ESV)
- sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality ... orgies, and things like these. (Galatians 5:19-21 ESV)
- the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, (1 Timothy 1:9-11 ESV)
- the sexually immoral (Revelation 21:8 ESV)

#### 8. “You shall not steal.” (Exodus 20:15)

- nor thieves, nor the greedy ... swindlers (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ESV)

#### 9. “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (Exodus 20:16)

- deceit ... They are gossips, slanderers (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)
- enslavers, liars, perjurers, (1 Timothy 1:9-11 ESV)
- all liars (Revelation 21:8 ESV)

#### 10. “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.” (Exodus 20:17)

- covetousness ... They are full of envy ... (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)
- envy (Galatians 5:19-21 ESV)

### *Judgment Is Sure: Seek Christ's Atonement*

- And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment (Hebrews 9:27 ESV)
- As it is written: ‘There is no one righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup>there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. <sup>12</sup>All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.’” (Romans 3:10-12 ESV)
- Though they know God's righteous decree that those who

practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them. (Romans 1:29-32 ESV)

- Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? ... And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ESV)
- Now the works of the flesh are evident ... I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21 ESV)
- understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane ... and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, [11] in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted (1 Timothy 1:9-11 ESV)
- their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death. (Revelation 21:8 ESV)

**“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. [10] For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.” (Romans 10:9-10 ESV)**

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT IDOLS?

[www.trustworthyword.com/idols](http://www.trustworthyword.com/idols)

Exodus 20:3–6 “You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.” (ESV)

### Characteristics of Idols - What are they like?

#### Man Created

- Acts 7:41 “And they made a calf in those days, and offered a sacrifice to the idol and were rejoicing in the works of their hands.”

#### Part of the Creation, Inanimate (without life)

- Isaiah 44:15 “Then it becomes fuel for a man. He takes a part of it and warms himself; he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Also he makes a god and worships it; he makes it an idol and falls down before it.”
- Jeremiah 10:5 “idols...Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good.”
- 1 Corinthians 8:4 “Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that ‘an idol has no real existence,’ and that ‘there is no God but one.’”

#### Dedicated to Demons, Continuing to the Last Days

- Revelation 9:20 “The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk”

#### Counterfeit of God-Worship and God-Directed Sacrifices

- 2 Corinthians 11:14–15 “And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. [15] So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.” (see Matthew 4:9, Satan’s desire to be worshiped)

### Purposes of Idols - Why are they made and worshiped?

- **Fake Religion**
- **Self-Control**
- **Self-Worship**
- **Ancestor Worship**
- **Fearful Avoidance of Suffering**
- **Covetous Desire for Pleasures**

## Examples Of Idols

1 Corinthians 8:5–6 “For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—[6] yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist”

- **Ancestor Worship** - dedicated to family members who have died as a form of worship & respect
- **Animism/Spiritism** - crafted in tribal religions in varying forms dedicated to either named or unnamed spirits for specific purposes or protections
- **Polytheism** - common in formal religions to named deities, sometimes particular “gods” are assigned to certain families, villages, or people groups
- **Occult** - more overtly connected to demonic worship with the desire for demonic wisdom, empowerment, or protection
- **Atheism** - objects of materialism or self-knowledge that bring temporary comfort or relief from the fear of death or for a greater

- sense of self-identity, self-satisfaction, or self-empowerment
- **Nominal Christianity** - health, wealth, status, materialism, family, sports, entertainment, substances, appearance, work, education, food,

## Dangers Of Idols

#### Evidence of Lostness, Destined to Hell

Galatians 5:19–21 “Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

#### Connected to the Demonic

1 Corinthians 10:14–22 “Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. [15] I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. [16] The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? [17] Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. [18] Consider the people of Israel: are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar? [19] What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? [20] No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. [21] You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

#### Provoking the One, True God to Anger

- 1 Corinthians 10:22 “Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he”

#### Just Wrath and Punishment

- Acts 7:42 “But God turned away and gave them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets”

#### Cycle of Enslavement

- 1 Corinthians 12:2 “You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led.”

## Commands From God About Idols

### Avoid Idols & Idolatry-Connected Items & Practices

- Acts 15:20 “but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood.”
- 1 John 5:21 “Little children, keep yourselves from idols”
- 1 Corinthians 10:14 “Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry”

### Be Bothered By Them: Cannot Serve Both Idols and God

- Acts 17:16 “Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.”
- 2 Corinthians 6:16 “What agreement has the temple of God with idols?”
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9 “how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (see Eze 23:29)

### Share the Gospel with Idol Worshipers

- Acts 17:22–23 “Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.”

### Avoid Behaviors Similar to Idol-Worship: Avoid Hypocrisy

- Romans 2:22 “You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

### Destroy Your Idols

- Colossians 3:5 “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”

### Food Sacrifices - Be Careful and Wise

- Acts 15:29 “you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols”
- 1 Corinthians 8:9–13 “But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother

for whom Christ died. [12] Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.”

- 1 Corinthians 10:27–28 “If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. [28] But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience”
- Revelation 2:14, 20 rebuke for “eating food sacrificed to idols”

### Worship Services - Avoid Them Altogether

1 Corinthians 10:21 “You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.”

## Run From The Most Common Form Of Idolatry Today: The Idol Of Self

As a child, I remember learning the Ten Commandments. When I heard of the second commandment, about not making, serving, sacrificing to, or bowing down to idols, I thought that would be the easiest commandment to obey.

Exodus 20:4–5 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath...You shall not bow down to them or serve them.”

As I grew older, I traveled across America and to Asia, Latin America, Europe, the Middle East and Africa and saw many instances of devotion, veneration, prayer, and sacrifices to images, icons, relics, sites, statues, charms, the dead, and idols in Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Mormonism, ancestor worship, Catholicism, and tribal religions. These practices seemed so

foreign to me that I continued in my confidence that I would never struggle with the sin of idolatry.

Deuteronomy 4:16–19 “beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female”

But then, when I read the definition of an “idol” (“an object of extreme devotion; a greatly loved or admired person”) I realized that I may be more guilty of idolatry than I cared to admit. What is the most common form of idolatry today? The idolatry that you and I have all been guilty of?

The idolatry of self.

Colossians 3:5 “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and *covetousness, which is idolatry.*”

Why is covetousness equated with idolatry? Idolatry happens when we treat anyone, including ourselves, as a replacement to God. When we desire something that God hasn’t provided, and seek to obtain it apart from His sovereign hand, we commit idolatry. When we treat something that God has provided with greater love, trust, and commitment than towards our Creator, we commit idolatry. When we try to find a way out of suffering, or avoid it altogether, apart from seeking the Lord’s deliverance, we commit idolatry. When we love, trust, and obey ourselves more than God, we commit idolatry.

Isaiah 2:8 “Their land is filled with idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made.”

Our culture encourages us to worship and trust ourselves. You be you. You only live once. Your truth. Our culture daily feeds the idol of self: health, wealth, status, image, vanity, reputation, materialism, family, sports, entertainment, substances, appearance, work, education, & food. Billboards. Commercials. Ads. Social Media. Entertainment. Everywhere we

look we see the encouragement to prioritize and love ourselves.

Romans 1:22–25 “Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man”

Many “good things” can become “God things” in our life if we are not careful. The book of 1 John, which distinguishes true faith from false faith, ends with an important warning to born-again followers of Jesus: “Little children, keep yourselves from idols” (1 John 5:21).

May we repent of and run from the idolatry of self.



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT SECRET SIN?

All of us face a common temptation to sin, especially in secret. Our particular temptations may be different, but our struggle with sin is real. God has a lot to say to help us as we struggle with secret sin.

Romans 7:15 "For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate."

**Secret Sin Is Common.** In the story of Moses, before he commits murder, he looks around to see if he is alone. His hope, as he sinned, was to keep his sin secret. Do you have a struggle that you are seeking to keep secret? You are not alone in this temptation and struggle.

Exodus 2:12 "He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand."

**Secret Sin Gets Exposed.** Even if we feel we have hidden our sin from others, God wants us to know that He knows. God warns us because he wants us to confess our sin, change direction with our life, and to find healing and restoration with Him and others. Ultimately all sin is against God, so we must take it seriously and take proper steps of repentance towards Him.

Numbers 32:23 "behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out."

**Secret Sin Has External Consequences.** When Moses murdered, very real consequences followed with him being forced to flee the home and people he had known for his whole life. Our sin has real, life-impacting consequences. The quicker we confess and repent, the quicker the healing and relief can occur.

Luke 12:2 "Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known."

**Secret Sin Has Internal Consequences.** When you carry around your sin, it tears you up on the inside. When you confess your sin and carry it to Christ, you realize and enjoy such a relief from the burden. Are you ready for relief?

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

**Confession Leads to Healing.** Secret sin Has relational consequences. When we sin, our relationships with God and others are damaged. Our God is so merciful and gracious to offer us a way back to Him and, as best as possible for us, to try to restore our human relationships.

James 5:16 "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed."

**Repentance Leads to Restoration.** Without confession to, repentance towards, and trust in Jesus we remain under condemnation. In Christ, we will be convicted to confess and repent in such a way that we experience and enjoy His goodness in an amazing way. Is there a sin you need to confess? Go to Jesus and go to those you've hurt and experience the goodness of Jesus.

Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

# HOW TO RESPOND TO THE MOST COMMON ARGUMENTS FOR ATHEISM AND MORAL RELATIVISM

*If you haven't seen these short films, they are worth your time (each has 3+ million views) and walk through many of these conversations below: [www.fullyfreefilms.com](http://www.fullyfreefilms.com)*

*"Evolution vs. God" -*

*[www.EVOLUTIONvsGOD.com](http://www.EVOLUTIONvsGOD.com)*

*"The Atheist Delusion" - [www.AtheistMovie.com](http://www.AtheistMovie.com)*

*"Ten of the Top Scientific Facts in the Bible"*

Some touchy conversations may be best conducted with effective questions. On the topic of atheism and moral relativism, here are some of the most common arguments. The links above include many helpful bible verses and truths. Some of the questions below might be useful in keeping a conversation moving forward. Good questions help us to think through what we really believe and why we believe it. Sometimes such a line of questions helps us to see errors and truth more clearly.

Some basics tips when speaking to someone on a touchy topic:

**Show Love** - be kind, compassionate, gentle, and respectful - avoid anger and arrogance

**Speak Truth** - be convictional, clear, prepared, and honest,

**Listen Well** - be patient, don't interrupt, actively listen with reflective statements

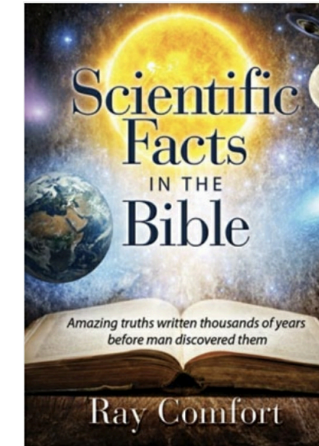
**Share Jesus** - ultimately anyone affirming, practicing, or identifying as an atheist or relativist does simply have a merely moral issue, they have a sin issue, the solution to which is Jesus and the Gospel. Share the Good News of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and point them to salvation.

- [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian)
- [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian)
- [www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-for-jesus](http://www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-for-jesus)
- James 1:19-20 "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God."
- 1 Peter 3:15 "in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect"

## 1. The “That’s Your Truth” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “you do you, I’ll do me”, “you only live once”, “my truth, your truth”, “who are you to tell me what is right and wrong”, “I don’t agree with you”
- What do you believe about God? How did you come to that understanding? Could you be wrong?
- What if I say I don’t believe you are who you say you are. Is that not an insult against you? How serious is it if we disbelieve who God says He is? If we argue against His Word?
- How did you come to your understanding of right and wrong? How do you know you are right?
- How will you teach your children the difference between right and wrong? What if they disagree with you? Should you discipline or punish your children?
- What will you teach your children about God and eternity? Are you confident that you are correct? What if you are wrong, how would that affect your children?
- Should a government have laws? Police? Judges? Jails and prisons? Why or why not? How should they decide what is right and wrong?
- Who gets to set the rules in a classroom? A home? A sporting event? A workplace? Why?
- Who gets to set the rules in the creation? Why? What happens if those rules are ignored, rebelled against, or twisted?

## 2. The “The Bible Was Written by Men” Argument



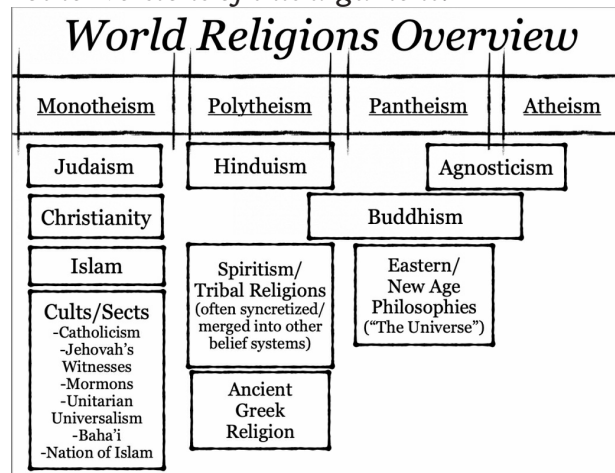
- *other versions of this argument:* “the Bible is full of errors”, “that’s your interpretation”, “I don’t think the Bible is literally true”, “that is just man-made religion”
- Would it make a difference if I showed you some evidence that the Bible is true?
- Have you read the Bible? You are right the Bible was written by men. When you write a letter, do you write, or does the pen? Men are God’s instruments to write the Bible. The Bible is the most accurate piece of literature in all of history... scientifically, historically, prophetically, archaeologically, and documentary or manuscript evidence. Can you find an error?
  - See [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org) to understand some apparently difficult passages or answers to seeming contradictions.
  - Which stories are true? Which stories are false? How do you know? Are you open to evidence?
  - Have you seen the scientific evidence within the Bible? Check out these resources:
    - “Scientific Facts in the Bible” [www.livingwaters.com/scientific-facts-in-the-bible](http://www.livingwaters.com/scientific-facts-in-the-bible)
    - Have you seen the internal, external, manuscript, archaeological, and historical evidence for Jesus?
      - “Evidence for Jesus” [www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-](http://www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-)

for-jesus

- Why don't you like the Bible? Answer: It's not intellectual objections ultimately, it is a moral objection ultimately. We don't like the idea of answering to a moral authority of accountability.

### 3. The "All Religions Are the Same" Argument

- other versions of this argument:



"as long as you are sincere in your faith", "there are many ways to Heaven", "Christianity is narrow minded"

- How are all religions the same? How are they different?
- Why does every religion claim to be the right/only way for salvation? Can they all be correct if they all make exclusive truth claims?
- If someone jumps out of a plane without a parachute, why would they die? Because they didn't have a parachute? Or because they violated the law of gravity? Is ignorance an excuse? Likewise, with God's law, is ignorance an excuse for breaking it? What are the consequences of breaking God's law?
- Isn't it important to figure out which world religion is correct?

- The Bible is clear that there is only one way. Jesus says in John 14:6, "I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me." In Acts 4:12 we learn that there is only one "name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." I you don't have the Son, don't have the Father. You're right, without Jesus, no hope for your transgression of the law. Jesus has the power to forgive sins... He openly offers that exclusive path to salvation to all who hear...would you reject Him? Put your faith in Him?

#### 4. The “I Don’t Believe in Hell” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “God is love and forgives”, “there is nothing after death”
- What is your opinion is wrong? Are you willing to bet your life on it?
- Where is Adolf Hitler today? If no Hell, then why not do whatever you want to do?
- What does the Bible call it when you make up your own version of God? Answer: Idolatry, a violation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment. Why is it so serious to have a wrong understanding of God? Why is it so concerning to misrepresent who God really is?
- Why did God send Jesus to earth to die on the cross? Read 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” What does this mean?
- See: “What Does the Bible Say About Hell?”  
[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-hell](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-hell)

#### 5. The “I Am a Good Person” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “I’m not that bad”, “I don’t deserve Hell”, “I say I am sorry all the time for my sins”, “I am already saved”
- Consider civil law. If someone is guilty of a serious crime, when they come to trial, if they just say “I’m sorry” to the judge, do you think he’ll just let her go? That’s not fair. Only a corrupt or unrighteous judge would let a guilty person free without a penalty. The law has been broken. Justice demands a punishment. We can’t just say we are sorry. We can’t be “good enough” to overcome our crimes. We need Jesus to pay for the penalty for our sin.
- What does the Bible say about salvation? How has God

changed you? Have you examined or tested the genuineness of your faith according to 2 Corinthians 13:5?

- God tells us to test ourselves to see if we are in the faith. Have our lives changed? Do we desire to hear God’s voice through the Bible? Are we obedient to God’s commands? Do we see the fruits of God’s Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) in our lives? (Galatians 5:22-24) Or do we see the works of the flesh in our lives (sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these)? (Galatians 5:19-21) Do we desperately seek Him in prayer? Do we see righteousness being produced by God in our lives? Are we quick to forgive? Do we love others?
- SEE “How Can I Be Sure I Am a Christian?”  
[www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian)
- When you see a doctor and you are sick, what does he do? He assess the symptoms, shoots straight with you, and tells you about your disease and any possible cures. The Bible clearly speaks to any symptoms of ongoing, unrepentant sin in our lives. Matthew 7:21 “I never knew you.” Test yourselves.
- On moral issues...how many crimes does it take to be labeled a criminal? One murder = a murderer. One lie = liar. One theft = a thief. One lust = adulterer. It is human nature for us to trivialize sin, but sin is serious. God tells us in James 2:10 that anyone who is guilty of one sin is guilty of all sin. Are you taking your sin as serious as God wants you to?

#### 6. The “There Is No God” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “I am an atheist”, “I trust science”
- Are you an atheist? When did you start to believe in atheism? Do you believe in evolution? Are you a strong believer?
- What is the scientific method? Answer: “the collection

of data through observation and experimentation”, must be observable, repeatable, and testable

- Can you scientifically prove evolution? Can you give me some observable evidence that Darwinian evolution (not microevolution (small adaptive changes between species, speciation), but macroevolution (Darwinian evolution, large changes, between kinds/groups)) is true? What can be observed of a change of kinds? Not merely accepted by faith? So Darwinian evolution isn't scientific?
- Look at this building. How do you know there is an architect? A builder? Look at this book. How do you know there is an author? Look at this artwork. How do you know there is an artist?
- Imagine that I told you that over billions of years molecules of wood arranged themselves into thin sheets of paper and bound themselves into a book. Then molecules of ink deposited themselves onto these pages in organized manner to communicate an important message. What would you say to me after I told you such a story? What would you call me? How then was such an infinitely more complex universe able to come into being?
- Can a book write itself? Answer: No, it's impossible. What is DNA? Answer: It is known as the “instruction book of life.” Can DNA make itself? Could DNA happen by accident? Or must there be an intelligent source and designer?
- If the “Big Bang” theory is true, where did the first two atoms come from? How did happen to direct their paths at each other and strike each other instead of missing and passing by each other for all eternity future?
- How can you prove there is no God? What if you are wrong?
- Can you make something from nothing? Why not? Do you believe in the scientific impossibility of creating something from nothing? Where did you come from?

#### General Questions:

- What do you believe about the universe? Why?
- Do you ever think about your own death? Does it concern you? Do

you think you are in danger?

- What do you believe about God? Are you certain about your beliefs? Are you willing to bet your eternity on it?
- Do you know what God did so you don't have to go to Hell?
- You have to do two things to be saved, repent and believe in the Gospel. When are you going to do that?
- See: “How Can I Become a Christian?” [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian)
- Do you have a good reason for putting Jesus off any longer?

*If you haven't seen these short films, they are worth your time (each has 3+ million views)*



*and walk through many of these conversations below: [www.fullyfreefilms.com](http://www.fullyfreefilms.com)*

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT FALSE TEACHERS?

Ephesians 4:11-14 “that we may **no longer be children**, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.”

Colossians 2:8 “**See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition**, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.” (ESV)

**What is a prophet? How can I recognize a true prophet from a false prophet?** A prophet is a messenger of God who carries a message directly and personally related and is held to 100% consistency with Scripture and 100% fulfillment of any predictive statements. (Deuteronomy 13:1-5, 18: 15-22)

**What is the difference between a prophet and a teacher?** Both roles include the element of teaching, but a prophet claims a direct encounter with God (dream, vision, meeting, voice, event, etc.) where God revealed or spoke a particular message to him.

**How can I recognize a true teacher from a bad teacher? A bad teacher from a false teacher?** A bad teacher may misunderstand issues in Scripture or just do a poor job at instructing and exhorting people. A false teacher teaches “a

different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Timothy 6:3) and goes against “sound doctrines” (Titus 1:9) specifically with an understanding towards who God is, what salvation is, and what the Scriptures say.

**Isn't it wrong to publicly call out preachers, teachers, Christians, etc.?** The issue of “opinions” between Christian brothers is different from the issue of “false teachings.” Paul warns “not to quarrel over opinions” (v.1) in Romans 14, pointing out the dangers of “passing judgment” on a brother in Christ and how it can “destroy the work of God” (v.20). However, God commands us to “judge” those inside the church when their lifestyles (1 Corinthians 5:9-13) do not line up with God's Word. God also commands us to watch out for and confront false teachers who “teach a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Timothy 6:3). Pastors are specifically tasked to 1) “give instruction in sound doctrine” and 2) “rebuke those who contradict it” (Titus 1:9).

**Should a false teacher be called out by name? If so, when?** When a specific false teaching or teacher is affecting a body of believers (i.e. family, small group, church, denomination, region, nation), that false teaching and teacher must be named and confronted. Paul does this with both false teachings (1 Timothy 1:3-20 ; 6:2-10, Jude 1, 2 Peter 2, & many more) and with particular names (Alexander, Hymenaeus, & Philetus in 1 Timothy 1:20 and 2 Timothy 2:17)

**What are some examples of false teachings? What are some characteristics of false teachers?**

There are many examples of false teachers with common descriptions (Galatians, 2 Peter, 1 & 2 Timothy, 1 & 2 John, Jude) that they may look and sound like Christians but that their teachings and lifestyle are not consistent with Scripture.

*False Teachers: Watch Out!*

(2 Peter 2, ESV)

**Believers Mature At Different Paces**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Level Issues: Allowable Individual Differences** “As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ...So then each of us will give an account to God.” (Romans 14:1-12)

**Less Faithful Teachers: Believing Christians, in Error**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Level Issues: Denominational Differences** “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.” (James 3:1)

**False Teachers Misrepresent God & the Gospel**

**1<sup>st</sup> Level Issues: Christian vs. Non-Christian: Essential Teachings** “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:20)

- *Who is God? What is the Gospel? What are the Scriptures?*
- **PREPARE!** Their Presence is Guaranteed but is not Obvious to All – v.1
- **WATCH!** False Teachers Are Characterized by: False Words – v.3 ; Speaking Ignorantly – v.12 ; Endorse Sin – v.2, 13-15, 18 ; Greedy v.3, 14 ; Proud w/no accountability – v.10, 18 (Jude 8) ; Make Empty Promises – v.19 ; Rely on Experience/ Dreams (Jude 8) ; Speak Flippantly To Satan/Demons (2 Pet 2:10-13; Jude 8-10) Have Some Scriptural Knowledge, But Wander from It – v.20-22
- **CORRECT & WARN** Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. (Jude 1:3)
- **Their Teachings Are Dangerous – v.1-3 – “destructive heresies”**
- **False Teachings Are Characterized by: (Example,**

**Pergamum, Revelation 2:12-17)**

*Positive Thinking* (self-focused prayers, name it/claim it, declarations)

*Partial Truths* (highlight the “positive”/easy, ignore the “negative”/difficult)

*Promises* (worship the gifts, not the giver)

*Health, Wealth, & Prosperity* (worldly-focused: good things into god things)

*Legalism* (works-based salvation, self-righteousness)

*License* (freedom to sin) “pervert the grace of our God into sensuality” (Jude 1:4)

*False Religions* “deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:4)

- **Their Punishment Is Guaranteed – v.1-10 (Jude)**

**The Lord Knows How to Rescue the Righteous**

(v.7-9) The Righteous Are... “distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked”... “as that righteous man [Lot] lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard”

**Matthew 15:1-9** “Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, [2] “Why do your disciples **break the tradition of the elders?** For they do not wash their hands when they eat.” [3] He answered them, “**And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?** [4] For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ [5] But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, “What you would have gained from me is given to God,” [6] he need not honor his father.’ So **for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God.** [7] You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: [8] “**This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; [9] in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**” (ESV)

**Mark 7:1-13** “[7] **in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**’ [8] **You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.**” [9] And he said to them, “You have a fine way of **rejecting the**



**commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! ... [13] thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do.” (ESV)**

Galatians 1:13–16 “For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. [14] And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, **so extremely zealous was I for the traditions** of my fathers.” (ESV)

**How can you call them false teachers when some of these people have doctrinal statements on their website and do many good things in getting the Bible and gospel into the hands of so many?** Christianity is not a salvation of works and although some “good fruits” may seem exist in these ministries, they only mask the lies. The ends of a ministry (salvations, missions, good works) do not justify the means (a false gospel).

**When false teachers lead people to Christ, are these converts false believers?** Not necessarily. If these believers have understood the gospel falsely, then their trust and faith in Jesus may be out of a greater love of Jesus’ gifts rather than Jesus. Even if they have become true followers of Jesus, they need to study the Word of God, test their teachers, and be extremely cautious before recommending a teacher to someone else.

**What is the Word of Faith movement and “prosperity gospel”? Why is it a problem?** The Word of Faith movement and “prosperity gospel” teaches several false doctrines such as (quotes of summary issues from <http://www.watchman.org/profiles/pdf/wordfaithprofile.pdf>, p.2-4):

- **“There are ‘anointed’ apostles and prophets today.”**
- **“God speaks words of faith with his mouth.”**
- “Human beings were created to be gods.”
- “Jesus Christ is God incarnate – and so are we.”
- “Jesus died spiritually and was born again.”
- **“We should speak words of faith like God does”**
- **“God wants us to be healthy and wealthy now”**

Why are these wrong? Here some short summary corrective statements:

- **“Modern revelations should be viewed with skepticism”**
- **“God does not need to speak ‘words of faith.’”**
- “Human beings were never gods and never will be gods.”
- “Jesus is uniquely God incarnate.”
- “Jesus did not die spiritually and was not born again.”
- **“Faith means trusting in God for the future, not claiming rights for the present.”**
- **“Christ’s redemption assures us of perfect health and wealth – in the resurrection.”**

[www.gotquestions.org/prosperity-gospel.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/prosperity-gospel.html)

[www.gotquestions.org/Word-Faith.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/Word-Faith.html)

**What are some examples of Scriptures that are commonly misinterpreted and misapplied by the Word of Faith movement and “prosperity gospel”?** References are to *Health, Wealth, & Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* By David Jones and Russell Woodbridge

#### HEALTH-FOCUSED

- **3 John 2 – “Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.”** – “Prosperity teachers interpret this verse to mean that God wants all believers to ‘prosper in all things.’...John’s purpose in writing 3 John 2 was not to teach doctrine; rather, he was simply opening his letter with a greeting. ...the Greek term translated ‘prosperity,’ which is only used four times in Scripture, does not connote prosperity in terms of gaining material possessions. Rather, the word means ‘to grant a prosperous expedition and expeditious journey’ or ‘to lead by a direct and easy way.’” (Jones & Woodbridge, 99-100).
- **Isaiah 53:4-5** “Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions;

he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and **with his wounds we are healed.** Prosperity preachers will reference the later part of verse 5, “with his wounds we are healed” and will focus on God’s atonement (sacrifice on the cross) being focused on our physical healing. “First Peter 2:24 further clarifies the meaning of Isaiah 53:4-5. Peter writes, ‘He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we may die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ...the context of Isaiah 53:5 indicates that the healing cited by the prophet is spiritual in nature – that is, the remission of sin.’ (Jones & Woodbridge, 91).

#### WEALTH-FOCUSED

- **Malachi 3:10** “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.” “One of the most prominent characteristics of prosperity theologians is their seeming fixation with the act of giving...often promot[ing] a give-to-get mentality. All believers need to do is sow a seed of faith – that is, donate money to the ministry- and God will bless their marriages, finances, or whatever help is desired. Within the prosperity system, the goal in giving is ultimately to serve oneself instead of others.” (Jones and Woodbridge, 100-101). Prosperity teachers misunderstanding of prayers to God for provision shows itself when they emphasize greedy wants instead of basic needs (“give us each day our daily bread” in Luke 11:3, “if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content” in 1 Timothy 6:8, & “no more need” in Malachi 3:10).
- **Galatians 6:7** “Do not be deceived, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.” Prosperity gospel preachers emphasizing “sowing” in order to “reap” using this verse,

missing the context that this passage is about reaping eternal life verses reaping corruption, not about reaping temporal/earthly rewards.

- **2 Corinthians 9:6** “The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” The greater context of this passage (v.6-15) is that what we reap is spiritual fruit for the purpose of meeting one another’s needs (not greed...see 2 Corinthians 9:11-12, ‘the needs of the saints’). Prosperity gospel preachers will often redefine their wants/desires as “needs.”

#### PROSPERITY-FOCUSED

- **John 10:10** “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” Life that is abundant is synonymous with “eternal life” or “the life to come” which is ultimately focused on God and heavenly things, not on earthly/temporary things. Prosperity theologians like to emphasize “abundant living” here and now, redefining it as material and worldly success, ignoring the warnings of Scripture such as 1 John 2:15-16 “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.” Abundant life is all about an eternity with Jesus, not an accumulation of material possessions.
- **Philippians 4:19** “And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” Prosperity gospel preachers will point to God’s desire to satisfy us here and now with his “riches,” ignoring the countless Scriptures warning against wealth, embracing a right understanding of suffering and perseverance, and overlooking the fact that our “rich” inheritance is found

only in Christ.

- **2 Corinthians 8:9** “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.” “Paul is not teaching that Christ died on the cross for the purpose of increasing one’s material net worth. In fact, he is actually teaching the exact opposite. Contextually, it is clear that Paul was teaching the Corinthians that since Christ accomplished so much for them through the atonement, they ought to empty themselves of their riches in service of the Savior. This is why just five verses later Paul urges the Corinthians to give their wealth to their needy brothers, writing “your abundance at the present time should supply their need...that there might be fairness.” (2 Corinthians 8:14).” (Jones and Woodbridge, 90).

#### WORDS OF FAITH

- **Proverbs 18:21** “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.” “Prosperity gospel teachers stress that there is power in our words. In support of their claim they quote verses such as Proverbs 18:21. ...Yet, a look at the full context of this verse [including v.20] sheds more light on its meaning... Old Testament scholar Duane Garrett writes, “The purpose of these verses is to warn against being too much in love with one’s own words.’ ...this verse does not suggest that words have creative power, but rather that words can have both positive and negative effects upon people. As the Bible exhorts elsewhere, then, use your tongue wisely (see James 3:1-12).” (Jones & Woodbridge, 96)
- **Romans 4:17** “as it is written, ‘I have made you the father of many nations’—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and **calls into existence the things that do not exist.**” This passage is often used to explain that Christians have “creative power” as “little

gods” with their “faith-filled” words. The context of the passage shows that it is God who “calls into existence the things that do not exist” and that it is not a power that has been given to people. Unfortunately prosperity preachers use this passage to encourage people to pray self-focused prayers.

- **James 4:2** “**You do not have, because you do not ask.**” – “Prosperity gospel preachers often note that we ‘have not because we ask not’ (see James 4:2). They encourage believers to pray for personal success in all areas of life. ... but the prosperity gospel’s overemphasis on people turns prayer into a tool that believers can use to obtain their desires from God. Within prosperity theology, people - rather than God - become the focal point of prayer. Curiously prosperity gospel preachers often ignore the second half of James’ teaching on prayer, which reads, ‘You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your own passions.’ (James 4:3). God does not answer selfish requests that do not honor His name.” (Jones and Woodbridge, 96-97)
- **Philippians 4:6** “do not be anxious about anything, but **in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.**” We are called to make all of our requests known to God...but these are requests, not demands, not “claimed promises,” and not “declarations.” The problem is that the “prosperity gospel focuses so much on people’s desires that it can lead us to pray selfish, shallow, superficial prayers that do not bring God glory ...when coupled with the prosperity doctrine of faith, the teaching about prayer encourages people to try manipulating God to get what they want – indeed a futile task. This is far removed from praying to God to see His will accomplished.” (Jones and Woodbridge, 99).

Many more Scriptures are twisted for the sake of health and wealth. Here is a great resource to understanding

more: [www.watchman.org/articles/other-religious-topics/how-the-health-and-wealth-gospel-twists-scripture/](http://www.watchman.org/articles/other-religious-topics/how-the-health-and-wealth-gospel-twists-scripture/)

**Who are people associated with the Word of Faith movement?**

Some of the most commonly known Word of Faith movement and prosperity gospel leaders are: Joel Osteen, Creflo Dollar, Kenneth Copeland, TD Jakes, Joyce Meyer, Joseph Prince, Kenneth Hagin, & many more. Some may deny their connections to WOF & the PG, but their teachings demonstrate their connection and justify such labeling.

**What is “positive profession,” “name-it claim-it,” and declarative/claiming prayers and why is it a problem?** Positive thinking/profession/confession was popularized by Norman Vincent Peale in 1952 through his book *The Power of Positive Thinking* (publisher of *Guideposts* and an endorser of many New Age, Mormon, and Occultic teachings, writers, and leaders). Some of the leading teachers and authors on the subject are: Joel Osteen (*I Declare: 31 Promises to Speak Over Your Life, Your Best Life Now, Become a Better You*), Joyce Meyer (*Power Thoughts, Change Your Words, Change Your Life, The Power of Being Positive*). A modern day summary of the “positive confession” movement is “the belief that if a believer speaks ‘spiritual’ or ‘faith-filled’ words then he can have what he says (Watchman.org on “Positive Confession”). A good Christian response is found in understanding that truth is the focus and sometimes it is negatively focused (confronting us in our sin, putting off our old self, negative confessions in the Psalms) and at other times positively focused (practicing righteousness, putting on our old self). Positive confessions often devolve into declaring/claiming/telling God what to do instead of saying “thy will be done” (Matthew 6:10, 26:42) and asking “according to His will” (1 John 5:14).

<http://www.gotquestions.org/power-positive-thinking.html>

<http://www.gotquestions.org/positive-confession.html>

<http://www.watchman.org/articles/other-religious-topics/>

positive-confession/

<http://www.watchman.org/articles/other-religious-topics/norman-vincent-peale/>

**Why are the “prayer rebukes” of Satan and his demons a problem? Why is this connected with false teachers?**

Prayer rebukes can be best described by those who practice naming particular spirits/demons (demon of falsehood, spirit of adultery, etc.) or speak towards the demonic ('I rebuke you' or 'I bind you'). This problem is scripturally seen in Jude 8-10 and 2 Peter 2:10-12.

**Is it possible for false teachers to turn to truth and become true teachers?** Yes, until we die, it is possible for anyone who is separated from God to turn to Him in salvation. Pray for their repentance and turning to the true Gospel of Christ.

**If I have been following a false teacher, should I be embarrassed or ashamed? What does God want me to do in response to realizing that I was following a false teacher?** If you find that you have been following a bad or false teacher, repent of believing the lies that you heard/read and put on God's truths. If you have led or encouraged others towards those teachings/teachers, guide them into the truth.

**Why did you pick *Heaven is for Real* and *Jesus Calling* as examples of false prophecies?** These are highly influential and popular titles that many Christians do not realize are false claims of prophecy.

**Why is *Heaven is for Real* by Colton, Todd, & Sonja Burpo an example of a false prophecy?** The authors claim that Colton went to heaven and that what is shared within the book is a description of heaven. Since this is claimed to be a divine experience with God the Father, Son, & Spirit, it must be 100% accurate and consistent with what is already presented in Scripture about heaven (i.e. Isaiah 6, Revelation). Here are

some errors within the books that demonstrate inconsistencies with Scripture, thus making *Heaven is for Real* an example of false prophecy and its authors false prophets: Jesus on a rainbow horse (p.63, vs. white horse in Rev 6 & 19), people with wings (p.72, 87, 121 vs. no biblical description that matches, only seraphim and cherubim are described with wings), Colton deceived by dad (p.87 vs. Deut 18:22), Gabriel described sitting next to God's throne (p.101 vs. never being described in the Scriptures), angels with swords to "keep Satan out of heaven" (p. 133 vs. Job 1 & 2 – Satan's access to heaven, Jude 9 – Satan confronted by Michael with "the Lord rebuke you" and not a sword, 1 Chronicles 21 & Numbers 22 showing angels using swords vs. people not Satan), no bodies in Hell (p.136 vs. Matt 10:28, John 5:29, Luke 16, Daniel 12:2, Mark 9:43-48, Rev 20:13).

**Why is *Jesus Calling* by Sarah Young an example of a false prophecy?** Sarah Young claims in her introduction to have had a personal revelation with Jesus on multiple occasions (ix-xv). She states that the devotionals within her book have been directly given to her by God. Even though she claims her writings to not be on the same level of Scripture, she simultaneously claims her book to be divine revelation with God, making it necessary for her writings to be 100% accurate (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). She says "I have continued to receive personal messages from God as I meditate on Him...so I want to share some of the messages I have received." (xiii-xiv). She places her experiences and messages ahead of Scripture, weaving Scripture into her devotions as an almost afterthought. Her writings present an inaccurate and shallow view of Jesus, that is therapeutically focused on peace and comfort and ignores Christ's commands towards obedience (descriptive rather than prescriptive). Her theology is also wrongly influenced by Keswick piety (higher/victorious life, second blessing) through Andrew Murray's *The Secret of the Abiding Presence* (xi).

**Why did you pick the Word of Faith movement and "prosperity**

**gospel" as false teachings to highlight?** Although many Christian cults could have been highlighted for their false teachings, the Word of Faith movement and "prosperity gospel" is a problem within my church congregation and friends. As a loving friend and pastor, it is my responsibility to rebuke false teachings in order to shepherd my flock and lead friends away from dangerous teachings.

**Why are you so concerned with TBN (the Trinity Broadcasting Network)?** Although TBN is a Christian station seeking to reach the world with the gospel, its messages are not always consistent. On one given Sunday (12/9/13) there were at least four faithful sermon broadcasts on TBN (James Merritt, Ed Young Sr., Adrian Rogers, Michael Youssef), but there were many more heretical, unfaithful broadcasts (Joel Osteen, Creflo Dollar, Kenneth Copeland, TD Jakes, Joyce Meyer, Joseph Prince, Kenneth Hagin, & many more...). The vast majority of broadcasts were from the Word of Faith movement. My concern is that a Christian may tune in to a faithful sermon and then continue to watch while unfaithful messengers "teach a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Timothy 6:3).

**Why did you pick Joel Osteen and Joyce Meyer as false teachers to highlight?** Joel Osteen and Joyce Meyer are two of the more influential speakers and authors among my church congregation and represent a spectrum of the Word of Faith movement (little Scripture used to no Scripture used) that helps warn us about the spectrum of heresies.

**Why do you state that Joel Osteen is a false teacher?** Mr. Osteen is an entertaining and encouraging speaker but fails to share the Gospel completely and uses Scripture out of context. Mr. Osteen makes these errors: (1) The Bible is about me and my glory rather than God's glory (2) Minimizes and ignores sin, thus failing to present the Gospel (3) Disregards a biblical understanding of suffering (4) Places the object of faith

on oneself (5) Makes salvation more about my life now than an eternity with Christ (6) Consistently uses Scripture out of context (7) Ongoing association and endorsement of other Word of Faith leaders (8) Misrepresents what “need” is, characterizes it being okay to want more (9) He ignores a biblical understanding of suffering, that sometimes such suffering is God’s will (10) Many of his teachings follow the Word of Faith and “prosperity gospel” misunderstandings of who God is and what salvation is ultimately all about.

- “When you say of the Lord you are healthy, you are whole, you are free, you are blessed, you are prosperous – when you say it, God has promised He will do it. ...If you are not sharing in His favor, you might want to watch your words. Here's the key: If you don't unleash your words in the right direction, if you don't call in favor, you will not experience those blessings. Nothing happens unless we speak. Release your faith with your words.” (*It's Your Time*, 121-23.)
- “Our thoughts have tremendous power. Remember, we draw into our lives that which we constantly think about. If we're always dwelling on the negative, we will attract negative people, experiences, and attitudes.” (*Your Best Life Now*, 109)
- “Our words have tremendous power, and whether we want to or not, we will give life to what we're saying, either good or bad... Words are similar to seeds, by speaking them aloud, they are planted in our subconscious minds, and they take on a life of their own.” (*Your Best Life Now*, 122)
- “I've come to expect to be treated differently. I've learned to expect people to want to help me. My attitude is this: I'm a child of the Most High God. My Father created the whole universe. He has crowned me with favor; therefore, I can expect preferential treatment. I can expect people to go out of their way to want to help me.” (*Your Best Life Now*, 38-39).
- “there is a miracle in your mouth. If you want to change your world, start by changing your words...If you'll learn how to speak the right words and keep the right attitude, God will

- turn that situation around.” (*Your Best Life Now*, 125)
- “Everything I put my hands to prospers and succeeds! Friend, when you make those kinds of bold declarations, all heaven comes to attention to back up God's Word.” (*Your Best Life Now*, 130)
- “with our words, we can prophesy our own future” (*Your Best Life Now*, 114)
- “God has breathed His life into you. He planned seeds of greatness in you. You have everything you need to fulfill your God-given destiny....It's all in you. You are full of potential. But you have to do your part and start tapping into it...You have the seed of Almighty God on the inside of you...We have to believe that we have what it takes.” (*Becoming A Better You*, p.5)
- “We have to conceive it on the inside before we're ever going to receive it on the outside. If you don't think you can have something good, then you never will.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p. 3)
- “I can guarantee you that your difficult situation will never improve as long as you stay in a negative frame of mind. But if you'll develop an attitude of faith and expect events to change positively, then at the right time, that situation will turn around.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p. 16)
- “God wants to increase you financially, by giving you promotions, fresh ideas, and creativity.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.5)
- “God wants you to live an overcoming life of victory. He doesn't want you to barely get by. He's called *El Shaddai*, 'the God of more than enough.' He's not 'El Cheapo,' the God of barely enough!” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.33)
- “No, God wants to give you your own house. God has a big dream for your life.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.35)
- “God wants to make your life easier. He wants to assist you, to promote you, to give you advantages.” (*Your Best Life Now*, p.38)
- “You don't have to dwell on every thought that comes to your mind. The first thing you need to do is ascertain where that thought is coming from. Is that thought from God, is it your

own thought, or is it a destructive thought from the enemy? How can you tell? Easy. If it's a negative thought, it's from the enemy." (*Your Best Life Now*, p.109)

- "Forgive the people who did you wrong. Forgive yourself for the mistakes you have made. You may even need to forgive God." (*Your Best Life Now*, p.144).
- "I am blessed; I am prosperous; I am healthy; I am continually growing wiser." (*Become a Better You*, 131)
- Beginning of messages, claiming his messages are rooted in Scripture: "This is my Bible. I am what it says I am, I have what it says I have, I can do what it says I can do. Today I'll be taught the Word of God. I boldly confess my mind is alert, my heart is receptive, I will never be the same, in Jesus name." (Sermon online, December 1, 2013)
- Typical "Gospel presentation": "We never like to close our broadcast without giving you an opportunity to make Jesus the Lord of your life. Would you pray with me? Just say, 'Lord Jesus, I repent of my sins, come into my heart, I make you my Lord and Savior.'" (Sermon online, December 1, 2013)

**Why do you state that Joyce Meyer is a false teacher?** Mrs. Meyer is an articulate speaker with a great knowledge of the Bible. My concerns with Mrs. Meyer that make me warn others that she is a false teacher are: (1) Claims of personal revelation from God and angels that she shares verbatim her audience (2) Years of financial improprieties and greed within her ministry organization (3) Failing to distance or deny her association with the Word of Faith movement and "prosperity gospel" (4) Continued emphasis on God's blessings through health, wealth, and prosperity instead of presenting a biblical understanding and balance (5) Ongoing misunderstanding on the essence of faith through the "power" of words (6) Improper descriptions and actions towards the demonic (naming of spirits and rebuking) (7) Ongoing association and endorsement of other Word of Faith leaders (8) Misrepresents what "need" is, characterizes it being okay to want "as much as I can

handle properly" (Power Thoughts message, part 4) (9) She ignores a biblical understanding of suffering, that sometimes such suffering is God's will (10) Many of her teachings follow the Word of Faith and "prosperity gospel" misunderstandings of who God is and what salvation is ultimately all about (see <http://carm.org/joyce-meyer>)

- "I don't want to spend my whole life talking about the promised land without ever getting there. I want to live in it" (Joyce Meyer, "What Does Your Future Hold" May 21, 2004)
- "Words are containers for power" (*The Name, The Word, The Blood*, p. 37)
- "I prosper in everything I put my hand to. I have prosperity in all areas of my life – spiritually, financially, mentally, and socially. I take good care of my body. I eat right, I look good, I feel good, and I weigh what God wants me to weigh. Pain cannot successfully come against my body because Jesus bore all my pain. I lay hands on the sick and they recover. I receive speaking engagements in person, by phone, and/or by mail every day. I walk in the spirit all of the time." (Joyce Meyer, "List of Confessions")
- "If you stay in your faith, you are going to get paid. I am now living in my reward." (Jones and Woodbridge, 67)
- "The key to partaking of the life and healing energy in the Word is feeding on it until it penetrates your spirit where it deposits that life and energy." (Joyce Meyer, "Healing Scriptures")
- "I will' is the strongest assertion that can be made in the English language. God is speaking to me now saying 'I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.' God is watching over this Word, performing it in me now. He is taking sickness away from the midst of me. Good-bye, sickness! The Lord is taking you away from the midst of me. Thank you, Father, for taking sickness away from me. I thank You for doing what You said...I'm abiding under the shadow of Jehovah-Rapha, the Lord that healeth me. No plague shall

come nigh my dwelling or my body. I resist sickness and disease. I refuse to accept it! It's not mine! I refuse to be sick in Jesus' Name. Sickness cannot trespass in my body. Sickness, (name it), you can't come nigh my dwelling. I refuse you! I resist you!" (Joyce Meyer, "Healing Scriptures")

- "By His stripes I was healed. Healing belongs to me. ...I've already got healing, because by His stripes I was healed!" (Joyce Meyer, "Healing Scriptures")
- "Will help you to take inventory of what you've been saying and begin speaking faith filled words that will bring to pass God's good plan for your life" (May 14, 2000 LeSea broadcasting)
- "But you cannot throw out positive confession, and you cannot throw out all the faith teachers, and you cannot throw out positive thinking. And you cannot get rid of those kinds of things because they're in the Bible from one end of it to the other" (Joyce Meyer, PFO Quarterly Journal, April-June 2002, p. 6., Witchcraft and Related Spirits, pt. 1, sides 1 and 2).
- "Romans 4:17 says God gives life to the dead and speaks of the nonexistent things as if they already existed. He created the world with faith-filled words (see Genesis 1). We are created in His image, and we can also call things that are not as though they are. We can speak positive thoughts about ourselves into the atmosphere and thereby 'prophesy our future.'" (Joyce Meyer, "Your Mouth is a Weapon," Life in the Word March 1997, p. 4.)
- "You got a storage bin, a storage locker in heaven that has a lot of stuff in it that needs to be claimed." (Joyce Meyer, "What Does Your Future Hold" May 21, 2004)
- "Even though she had had the problem for twelve years, and the crowds looked impossible to penetrate, she pressed through and received her miracle. Her faith was released through her words. What a powerful example for you and me" (Joyce Meyer, Enjoying Everyday Life Magazine, "Crossing Over to the Other Side," May 2004).
- "Sowing and reaping is a spiritual law... Sow generously

and you will reap generously... We need to claim as much of that inheritance as we possibly can... One of the things you can do right now is speak positive things about your future right now" (Joyce Meyer, "What Does Your Future Hold" May 21, 2004).

- "Remember whatever you are willing to do for God, God is willing to do for you" (week of Sept. 20-26, 2005 LeSea broadcasting)
- "Now spirits don't have bodies, so we can't see them. Okay? There probably is, I believe there is, and I certainly hope there is several angels up here this morning that are preaching with me. I believe that right before I speak some anointed statement to you, that one of them bends over and says in my ear what I'm supposed to say to you." Joyce Meyer ("Witchcraft & Related Spirits" (Part 1) - 2 A-27 Audiotape)
- "There is no hope of anyone going to heaven unless they believe this truth I am presenting. You cannot go to heaven unless you believe with all your heart that Jesus took your place in hell" (Joyce Meyers, *The Most Important Decision You Will Ever Make* 1991).
- "We laid hands on the check and prayed. I went and got all of our checkbooks and my pocketbook and Dave got his wallet and we laid hands on them and put the blood on them, asking God to protect our money, to cause it to multiply and to see to it that Satan could not steal any of it from us" (p. 111 *The Name, The Word, The Blood*).

**I still don't believe \_\_\_\_\_ is a false prophet/teacher, so how does this message matter for me? What should I do next?**

If you haven't been convinced from this outline, you need to be very concerned about your understanding of God, the Gospel, and His truths. Invest some time in reading the Scriptures, the included links, and *Health, Wealth, and Happiness: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?* to make sure you understand the teachings of Scripture. Even if you haven't become convinced that one of the individuals mentioned is a



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false teacher, you need to begin to listen very closely to what you hear and read in the future. You need to make sure that who you listen to is trustworthy and is teaching the whole counsel of God accurately.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT PREACHING SOMEONE ELSE'S SERMON (PASTORAL PLAGIARISM)?

**Is it wrong to preach someone else's sermon?** Intentionally using someone's sermon or sermon outline/structure is plagiarism, even if the author allows it, unless you clearly and specifically communicate that it is someone's sermon/outline. In every other field of employment/work education, media/journalism, politics, academics, writing, the arts, etc. plagiarism is condemned as stealing & misrepresentation...so why would the pastorate be justified for such a practice?

**We need to be careful not to justify a practice that God speaks quite clearly to.** The issue of plagiarism is not merely offensive to the person you take your sermon/outline from, or merely an offense to the congregation to whom you misrepresent your sermon preparation, but plagiarism in preaching is a direct offense to God.

**"Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and like a**

**hammer that breaks the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, declares the Lord, who steal my words from one another.” (Jeremiah 23:29-30, ESV)**

D.A. Carson summarizes the issue of plagiarism well in “When Has a Preacher Crossed the Line into Plagiarism in His Sermon?” “Taking over another sermon and preaching it as if it were yours is always and unequivocally wrong, and if you do it you should resign or be fired immediately. The wickedness is along at least three axes: (1) You are stealing. (2) You are deceiving the people to whom you are preaching. (3) Perhaps worst, you are not devoting yourself to the study of the Bible to the end that God's truth captures you, molds you, makes you a man of God, and equips you to speak for him.

If preaching is God's truth through human personality (Phillips Brooks), then serving as nothing more than a kind of organic recording device in playback mode does not qualify. ...Taking over the structure, perhaps the outline in exact wording, and other significant chunks, while filling in the rest of the substance yourself, is not quite so grievous but still reprehensible.”

“So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.”  
(James 4:17, ESV)

May pastors be men who intentionally encounter God through His Word in sermon preparation and humbly lead His sheep into His presence. Do not steal God's words from one another, lest the Lord come against and discipline you.

Other helpful resources:

- “What is plagiarism?” by Matt Perman
- “On Ghostwriters” by John Piper

“To base the structure of your sermon on someone else's sermon, but to use your own words, is plagiarism. ... The central problem with plagiarism is twofold: (1) it is stealing; and (2) it bears false witness. Obviously, both of these are unacceptable for Bible-believing Christians (see Exodus 20:15; Mark 10:19; Matthew 15:19, etc). Stealing and bearing false witness fail to love your neighbor as yourself (Romans 13:9).” Matt Perman

# SHOULD CHURCHES COMPARE GIVING, BAPTISM AND ATTENDANCE NUMBERS?

It is a common occurrence in Western church contexts to see the public displays and announcements of baptism, attendance, and giving numbers in churches.

Have you noticed any such or similar practices?

- Evangelists or pastors talking about how many they've "saved" or "baptized"
- Giving plaques attached to every "donated" or "funded" item in a church.
- Funded accounts or buildings with the names of givers attached.
- Sunday school attendance pins, awards and ribbons.
- Churches recognized for rapid attendance or baptism growth.
- Associations listing and comparing the attendance, baptism, or giving records between churches.
- Denominations awarding and recognizing high givers, baptizers, or giving milestones among churches.

Such means may have originated and be common and helpful in the business, entertainment, or sports worlds and the end goals

and intents of such practices may be good, to encourage and promote growth.

*The question we should be asking is whether these practices are biblical?*

At best, the practice of making baptism, attendance, and giving numbers public or comparative can be unwise and dangerous.

At worst, the practice of making baptism, attendance, and giving numbers public or comparative can be worldly and demonic.

*"But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth.*

*This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.*

*For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice."*

*James 3:14–16 (ESV)*

While not everyone who has been part of such practices has been tempted towards jealousy, covetousness, or pride we should still evaluate such practices within churches and denominations.

*"All things are lawful,' but not all things are helpful.*

*'All things are lawful,' but not all things build up." 1 Corinthians 10:23 (ESV)*

Here are some Scriptures to consider regarding the practice of counting, publicizing, and comparing baptism, attendance, and giving numbers in churches or believers:

- **Boast Only In Knowing the Lord** - Jeremiah 9:24 "but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD." (ESV)

- **David Pridefully Counts Numbers, Incited by Satan, Warned by Joab** - 1 Chronicles 21:1–3 “Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel. [2] So David said to Joab and the commanders of the army, “Go, number Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, and bring me a report, that I may know their number.” [3] But Joab said, “May the LORD add to his people a hundred times as many as they are! Are they not, my lord the king, all of them my lord’s servants? Why then should my lord require this? Why should it be a cause of guilt for Israel?”
- **David Repents for the “Foolishness” of Numbering Israel, Israel Suffers 70,000 Deaths as a Consequence** - 2 Samuel 24:10 “But David’s heart struck him after he had numbered the people. And David said to the LORD, “I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very foolishly.”
- **Caution Against Publicizing Righteous Works** - Matthew 6:1 “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.”
- **Give in Secret, Command to Let Your Giving be Private** - Matthew 6:2–4 “Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. [3] But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, [4] so that your giving may be in secret.”
- **Motivation for Generous Giving to be God’s Reward & Recognition** - Matthew 6:4 “And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”
- **Pray in Secret, Watch for Hypocrisy** - Matthew 6:5–6 “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. [6] But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in

- secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”
- **Fast in Secret, Watch for the Temptation to Get Attention** - Matthew 6:16–18 “And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. [17] But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, [18] that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”
  - **Small Amount of Individual, Secret Giving Is Praised, All She Had to Live On** - Mark 12:41–44 “And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. [42] And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. [43] And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. [44] For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”
  - **Public Praise of Generous Giving Is Given to a Region of Churches, Out of Severe Affliction and Extreme Poverty** - 2 Corinthians 8:1–4 “We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, [2] for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. [3] For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, [4] begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints”
  - **Paul Confronting and Rebuking Believers for Boasting in Particular Groups, Followings, or Leaders:**
    - 1 Corinthians 1:10–17 “I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. [11] For it has been reported

to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. [12] What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." [13] Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? [14] *I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,* [15] so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. [16] (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) [17] For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power."

- **Commands Not to Boast** - 1 Corinthians 1:29–31 "so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ... 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'"
- **Reminder that All Spiritual Growth is From God** - 1 Corinthians 3:5–7 "What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."
- **Command Not to Boast in the Names of Men** - 1 Corinthians 3:21 "So let no one boast in men."
- **Warning of Pride** - 1 Corinthians 4:6–7 "that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another. ... What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?"
- **Reminder that All Spiritual Gifts, Service, & Activities are Empowered by God** - 1 Corinthians 12:4–6 "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone."
- **Instruction to Understand Rightly Who Is Honorable** - 1 Corinthians 12:22–24 "On the contrary, the parts of the body

that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor ... But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it"

- **Love Does Not Envy or Boast** - 1 Corinthians 13:4 "love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant"
- **The Danger of Seeking the Approval of Others** - Galatians 1:10 "For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ."
- **Jealousy & Selfish Ambition Is Earthly, Unspiritual, and Demonic** - James 3:14–16 "But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice."

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT DEPRESSION?

[www.trustworthyword.com/depression](http://www.trustworthyword.com/depression)

NOTE: Special thanks to Savannah Clemons, a professional Christian counselor, for her help in putting this chapter together. Her wisdom and experiences were invaluable!

**What is depression? Why does depression happen?** Depression affects millions of people around the world and is characterized by several weeks of a low/saddened mood, persistent throughout one's day and situations. Depression often has a variety of spiritual, psychological, physiological, relational, and environmental contributing factors (learned behavior, rejection, abuse, trauma, sickness, medicinal side effects, poor health, lack of sleep, negative thinking, anger, guilt, etc.). Treatment of depression thus necessitates a wholistic approach to gain lasting solutions.

Psalm 42:5-6 "Why are you cast down, O my soul,  
and why are you in turmoil within me?  
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,  
my salvation and my God.

My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you"

**What are the differences between discouragement/disappointment and depression?** Discouragement/disappointment is usually temporary, related to failure in a

specific relationship or a goal and is overcome or put into proper perspective. Depression is lasting, difficult to overcome, and becomes a significant and defining perspective in all areas of one's life.

Psalm 34:18 "The LORD is near to the brokenhearted  
and saves the crushed in spirit."

**What is it like to suffer depression? What are the signs of depression?**

No motivation. Difficulty in explaining one's situation to others. Sense of overwhelming darkness. Dramatic change in personality. Lost Hope, hopelessness. Non-communicative, quiet. Withdrawal from life. Low joy and high negativity. Low self-esteem, derogatory remarks about oneself. Verbalization and signs of suicide. Lethargic and tired. Presence of pain without a clear cause. Inability to function with the normal activities of life.

"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious  
about your life" Matthew 6:25

**Is depression described in the Bible?**

Yes, depression as a temptation and as a sin is described in many places in the Bible...here are some examples:

- Abraham - hopeless for a child in his old age, trusted the Lord in the midst of overwhelming darkness (Genesis 15:3,12)
- Job - in intense emotional, physical, relational, & financial suffering came to points where he hated life and was encouraged to die by his own wife (Job 2:9, 3:11, 3:26, 10:1, 30:15-17)
- Moses - broken and burdened by the suffering of others to the point he was willing to give up his own salvation and life (Exodus 32:32, Numbers 11:14-15)
- David - seen in many of the Psalms and in his loss of his sons (Psalm 38:6-8, Psalm 56:8, 2 Samuel 12:15-23, 18:33)
- Psalm 42 & 43 - powerful Psalms walking through depression

- Elijah - even after a great victory and protection by God, runs away and hides in fear and depression (1 Kings 19)
- Jeremiah - was mocked, persecute, and ignored to the point he wished he wasn't born (Jeremiah 20:14,18)
- Jonah - angry with God and mad at God (Jonah 4:3 & 4:9)
- Jesus - was sorrowful unto death, sweating blood in his suffering (Mark 14:34-36, Luke 22:44)

Proverbs 3:5-8 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. ...It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."

#### **Is it ok to be depressed? What are the dangers of depression?**

We must be careful not to minimize, justify, or excuse depression because of its severity, commonality, or frequency. There are definitely some people who experience seasons of depression more frequently than others. We should have compassion on those who experience depression but we should also love them enough to show them how to fight for joy and resist the temptation of depression. If depression is a struggle of yours, reach out for help, it is deadly dangerous and you need friends, pastors, and professionals to help you.

"Half our fears arise from neglect of the Bible." Charles H. Spurgeon

#### **Is it a sin to be depressed? Can a Christian be depressed?**

Depression is a form of temptation. It is a temptation to believe a lie about one's self, one's situation, about others, and about God. Since it is a temptation it must be resisted actively. When depression is embraced, entertained, acted upon, or chosen as an identity it becomes sinful. Ongoing unrepentant sin is dangerous and must be confronted with truth. "For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" Hebrews 10:26

"We cut the root of sin by being more satisfied in God." John Piper

**What about mental illness?** It is important to understand that some people struggle with worry, anxiety, fear, and depression to such a degree that it paralyzes them while others only have occasional struggles. Mental illness is real, just like a physical illness, and Christians should not neglect to consider medicines and medical solutions that God has provided to help treat and relieve the symptoms of mental illness. Adequate research should be done concerning the side effects and potential dependence on medicines.

Simultaneous to any medicinal usage, Christians should be reminded that we have a volitional responsibility to know and believe God's revealed truth and actively follow Him in obedience (mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually), regardless of our feelings (Mark 12:30-31). Christians should demonstrate sympathy and compassion towards those dealing with mental illness, even if they do not fully understand or have not experienced similar struggles or mental bondage.

Worry, fear, anxiety, depression, and mental illness should never be looked at from a mere physiological approach. We should be reminded that we have a real, supernatural enemy in Satan who seeks to "kill and destroy" (John 10:10) us (mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually) from loving God and loving others. God's truths are described as the "sword of the Spirit" which is one of our weapons in spiritual warfare as we stand firm in our faith, prayerfully resisting the enemy of our souls (Ephesians 6:10-20). Non-believers who struggle with mental illness should be reminded that their only hope for everlasting peace will be found in Christ Jesus.

- "How Can I Become a Christian?" - [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian)
- "How Can I Be Sure I am a Christian?" - [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian)

"When anxiety strikes and blurs our vision of God's glory and the greatness of the future that he plans for us, this does

not mean that we are faithless, or that we will not make it to heaven. It means our faith is being attacked.” John Piper Christians who struggle with mental illness should not doubt their faith, but should be reminded that they are not helpless or hopeless. They should desperately petition God for relief, but simultaneously see their weakness as an opportunity to grow in faith and dependence on Christ (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). If Jesus chooses not to remove your mental struggles from you, you must trust His grace to be sufficient for you.

“Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:8-10 ESV)

**Is it wrong to take psychiatric medicines like antidepressants?** Oftentimes medicine is necessary for mental illness the same as is necessary for physical illness. Psychiatric medicines can be a key component of a wholistic solution when an individual seeks and is ready to receive help. Unfortunately, some discount or discredit the need for medicinal treatment while others abuse and overly-depend on a medicinal aid.

In biblical times, alcohol was used and biblically described & prescribed for medicinal purposes in ways similar to an anti-depressant (Ecclesiastes 9:7, Psalm 104:15, Proverbs 31:6-7, Luke 10:34) but was simultaneously warned about concerning the dangers of misuse, abuse, and over-dependance (Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; 31:4-5, Romans 14:21).

Proverbs 31:4-7 “it is not for kings to drink wine,  
or for rulers to take strong drink,  
lest they drink and forget what has been decreed

and pervert the rights of all the afflicted.  
Give strong drink to the one who is perishing,  
and wine to those in bitter distress;  
let them drink and forget their poverty and  
remember their misery no more.”

#### **What are some myths about depression?**

- True Christians never struggle with depression.
- Nothing bad happens to God's people.
- God doesn't care about or love me.
- People don't care about or love me.
- Depression has a simple solution, just have faith.

Daniel 3:17-18 “If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

**Will I ever be able to overcome my depression? How can I overcome my depression?** Seek the God of comfort. All things are possible to Him. Make all of your requests known to Him, but finish your prayers with a heart of trust in His will and plan. Be like Paul, seeking relief from demonic torment,

2 Corinthians 7:6-7 “But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.”

- **Recognize Your Situation** - ID your problems, causes, feelings, beliefs, and situation
- **Recognize Your Enemies** - Satan, the world, & humans (yourself included) fight against you  
We destroy arguments & every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God (2Cor10:5)



- **Right mind** - believe the truth and repent/turn from wrong belief about yourself & your situation and take every thought captive to obey Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5)
- **Right action** - avoid sin and act in obedience to God, discipline yourself  
Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)
- **Right feelings** - avoiding false feelings and embrace true feelings  
Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?"
- **Right suffering** - seek relief from suffering but trust God in your suffering
- Mark 14:35-36 "And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said, 'Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.'"

Hebrews 13:6 So we can confidently say,  
"The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

*Become as healthy as possible, addressing all areas of your life, see the truths linked below!*

**Spiritual Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/spiritual-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/spiritual-health)

**Mental Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/mental-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/mental-health)

**Physical Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/physical-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/physical-health)

**Emotional Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/emotional-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/emotional-health)

**Relational Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/relational-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/relational-health)

**Home Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/home-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/home-health)

**Workplace Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/work-place-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/work-place-health)

**Marital Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/30days-improve-marriage](http://www.trustworthyword.com/30days-improve-marriage)

- [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-marriage-roles](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-marriage-roles)

**Sexual Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/sexual-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/sexual-health)

- [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sexual-sin](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sexual-sin)

**Financial Health** - [www.trustworthyword.com/financial-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/financial-health)

- [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-money](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-money)

#### **Tips for those in a season of depression:**

- Force yourself to get out and about with people who care about and know you.
- Ask for help from a faithful pastor, an experienced, biblical counselor, and a trusted doctor.
- Sing, memorize, pray & trust God's truths, don't just study them. Hope in Jesus.
- Be thankful to God for the blessings in your life, no matter how small they seem at the time.
- Desperately and dependently ask God's help regularly through His Word.
- Ask Jesus daily for joy and healing. Confess your sinful failures daily and let them go.

**God's Spirit produces the fruit of patience and peace which oppose and replace depression.** Seek the Spirit's fruit by staying in fellowship with other Christians, staying in the Word of God, desperately seeking God in prayer, and walking in holy living. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness..." Galatians 5:22

“At first blow, our belief in God’s promises may sputter and swerve. But whether we stay on track and make it to the finish line depends on whether, by grace, we set in motion a process of resistance — whether we fight back against the unbelief of anxiety.” John Piper

**How can I help someone who is depressed? What should I do? What should I not do?** Not helping is not an option. Be compassionate and sympathetic, even if you do not understand. Be like the friends of the lame man, using your faith and love to carry your friend to Jesus.

**DO:**

- Be present, even when the depressed wants to be alone.
- Listen and let the depressed process out loud verbally.
- Even if you don’t understand, validate their feelings as genuine.
- Love practically - acts of kinds, encouraging notes/emails/texts
- Send encouraging verses as the Lord lays them on your heart
- Let them know when you are thinking, praying, and fasting for them.
- Speak truth in a humble, loving, and compassionate manner.

Proverbs 27:6 “Faithful are the wounds of a friend”

**DON’T:**

- Give trite/short/simple statements to tough/complex/overwhelming problems.
- Try to solve all their problems as they verbalize them.
- Think the solution will be quick or easy.
- Add to their overwhelming guilt.
- Avoid them or give surface level interaction when you are uncomfortable.

1 John 3:16 “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us,

and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.”

**What does the Bible say about suicide?** If you’re considering suicide...

Don't. Stop. Please call out for help. Your life matters, even if you don't think it does at this moment. Your pain and distress is temporary. There is hope and strength here for the pain you are in right now! There are people that do care about you. Suicide may seem like the only answer to your problems at the moment. Don't believe that. In truth...

- Suicide doesn't "fix" problems or relieve pain. It creates more problems and pain.
- Suicide isn't a cure for suffering. It creates more suffering.
- Suicide isn't an escape from this world to heaven. It may take you immediately to Hell.

[www.trustworthyword.com/suicide](http://www.trustworthyword.com/suicide)

**What does the Bible say about worry, fear, and anxiety?**

Truths about worry are found in several places but two good places to begin our focus are Matthew 6:25-34 and Luke 6:46-49. Just take these two verses (below) and we can see that God commands us not to worry so whenever we disobey him we are acting like we are God at that moment and that we are in charge.

- "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life"  
Matthew 6:25
- "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"  
Luke 6:46

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-worry](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-worry)

**What does the Bible say about Christian identity?** The greatest gift of Christianity is not merely a future existence in Heaven, but is the present and eternal reality of a relationship and unity with Christ (John 15:1-11, 1 Corinthians 6:17). As Christians we must realize that we are not products of our past or present decisions, failures, or successes. Our identity, value, & worth are rooted in our new name and identity in Christ. We focus

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on knowing God first and foremost and simultaneously discover our amazing nature as God's forever adopted children.

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-christian-identity](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-christian-identity)

#### HELPFUL RESOURCES

**GotQuestions.org**      **www.412teens.org**

"Is It wrong for a Christian to be depressed?" -  
[www.gotquestions.org/Christian-depressed.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-depressed.html)

"What does the Bible say about depression?" -  
[www.gotquestions.org/depression-Christian.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/depression-Christian.html)

"Should a Christian take anti-depressants?" -  
[www.gotquestions.org/Christian-anti-depressants.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-anti-depressants.html)

"Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

Luke 24:38

TrustworthyWord.com is an international resource, but for those living in the United States of America, here are some suicide hotlines and helpline ready for you now. If you do not live in the USA, please call your local authorities or medical treatment centers for help immediately.

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- National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-CHILD
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT SUICIDE?

[www.trustworthyword.com/suicide](http://www.trustworthyword.com/suicide)

Suicide is a heartbreaking and touchy topic. Everyone reading this has likely been touched, or will be touched, by suicide. Maybe you are having thoughts of, or are considering suicide yourself. Maybe you have lost a loved one due to suicide. Maybe you are concerned for someone who has previously talked about or attempted suicide. *This resource is designed to help you to find God's answers for some of your toughest questions.*

#### **If you're considering suicide...**

Don't. Stop. Please call out for help. Your life matters, even if you don't think it does at this moment. Your pain and distress is temporary. There is hope and strength here for the pain you are in right now! There are people that do care about you. Suicide may seem like the only answer to your problems at the moment. Don't believe that. In truth...

- Suicide doesn't "fix" problems or relieve pain. It creates more problems and pain.
- Suicide isn't a cure for suffering. It creates more suffering.
- Suicide isn't an escape from this world to heaven. It may, in fact take you immediately to Hell.

These statements may sound harsh or "unloving," but they are the truth. If you are in the depths of a depression that is so dark

and deep that you see no other way out than taking your own life, the truths you are reading now are the very thing you need. If your pain seems inescapable with no end or relief in sight, you need true hope that is rooted in reality. You don't need false hopes or "feel good" statements that temporarily distract you from your situation or pain. You need to know what God has to say to you. He loves and cares for you. He has much to say to you about your pain and suffering. So keep reading to discover His truths...

"What Does the Bible Say about Suffering, Worry, Death, Life & Heaven?"

- [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-suffering-worry-death-life-and-heaven](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-suffering-worry-death-life-and-heaven)

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4)

**Is suicide really that serious? Don't I have the right to take my own life whenever and however I see fit?** Suicide is murder, self-murder. Murder is a sin. (Exodus 20:13) God cares about you. The same God who made the universe made you, formed you, and knew you (Jeremiah 1:5, Psalm 22:10; 139:13; 147:3-4). You are not an accident or mistake. God has a purpose and plan for your life. Listen to Him. Trust in Him. Receive His love. Let Him forgive you, heal you, and rescue you.

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names." (Psalm 147:3-4 ESV)

**Aren't there stories and examples of suicide in the Bible?**

Yes. There are several examples in the Bible of suicide (Judges 9:54, 1 Samuel 31:4-6, 2 Samuel 17:23, 1 Kings 16:18, Matthew 27:5). However, the men that took their own life in the bible

were considered wicked and ungodly. Examples of suicide are *described* to us, but suicide is not *prescribed* for us. In other words, they are told as examples and lessons as how NOT to act or react to our troubles in this life. God does not support or allow suicide as a response or option for us, even in the most desperate of situations. Suicide is always condemned by God as sin in the Bible.

Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Isaiah 35:4

**I feel so useless and such a burden on everyone. Won't the world be a better place without me?** Absolutely not. God has a specific purpose for your life. Even before He created the universe, He already knew us. He already had planned our life. (Psalm 139:16, Ephesians 1:4). Your existence was no accident. Even in your pain and distress, God still has a plan for your life (Jeremiah 29:11).

**Is suicide the "unforgivable" sin? If someone commits suicide, will they go to Hell? Is it possible to commit suicide and go to Heaven?** There is only one unforgivable sin; the ongoing rebellion and rejection of Jesus as Lord (Matthew 12:31). All other sin is forgivable. Jesus talks about the "unforgivable sin" in Mark 3:22-30. *Suicide is so serious because it is a final act of rejecting God as being in charge of your life, choosing to end your life on your terms and timing. Dying in this state of open rebellion as a non-believer gives you no opportunity afterward to be forgiven of all your sin by trusting in the work of Jesus on the cross* (Luke 16:19-31).

As earlier stated, suicide is murder. Murder is sin. An authentic Christian has been pardoned from all sin, past and future (Romans 8:1); including murder. While it is possible for a Christian to commit suicide, it should be cause for serious concern for the genuineness of one's faith if he doesn't see any other way to deal with life's troubles and struggles other than

suicide (1 Corinthians 10:13).

**“How Can I Be Sure I am a Christian?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian)

**“How Can I Become a Christian?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian)

**“What Does the Bible Say about Heaven?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-heaven](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-heaven)

**“What Does the Bible Say about Hell?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-hell](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-hell)

**What about “assisted suicide” or “active euthanasia”?**

Assisted suicide and active euthanasia are terms used to describe the intentional act of ending one’s life in light of a medically declared untreatable or incurable condition (medically diagnosed as eventually ending in the death of the individual). It is often considered and acted upon as an avenue for “speeding up” the apparently inevitable.

Assisted suicide is usually referred to as PAC (physician assisted suicide). PAC involves a physician’s prescription of some sort of lethal medication to the patient. The patient is then responsible for taking this lethal medication themselves. Active euthanasia is similar; however, the treating physician is much more active in the process by administering the lethal medication to the patient himself.

Both of these processes are initiated by the patient’s desire and decision to end their life due to their seemingly incurable and terminal disease or condition. This is not the same as being on life support in an unconscious state. Making such a decision based on medical advice ultimately, however, doesn’t consider the truth that God can heal anyone He chooses to from any illness or otherwise hopeless physical condition, if

He wills.

The Bible contains stories and examples of those that express their desires to God for Him to end their life because of extreme mental or spiritual anguish from troubles and suffering (1 Kings 19:1-14, Jonah 4:3, Job 6:8-11). None of these requests are granted by God, however. The Bible tells us that God is the One that determines the day of our death, and not us (Deuteronomy 32:39, Psalm 90:3, 1 Samuel 2:6).

While there may be times that we experience extreme distress and trouble in our life, even to the point of wanting to die, God tells us in His Word that there is always a solution to our problems here on earth, and suicide is not an option for us to consider (1 Corinthians 10:13). Therefore, regardless of the circumstances, assisted suicide and active euthanasia are still considered murder.

And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?”

Luke 24:38

Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.” Isaiah 35:4

**What about cutting, and self-harm?** The Bible talks about cutting and self-mutilation in the Old Testament concerning pagan rituals while worshipping false gods. In the New Testament, cutting was mentioned in a story concerning demon possession (Mark 5:2-5).

Cutting and self-harm is something practiced today by some individuals that are dealing with depression, anger, or pain that hasn’t been properly dealt with or addressed. Often, they have had traumatic experiences in life, severe stress, ongoing anxiety, or other difficult life events. As a result, physical pain to oneself in the form of cutting and self-harm serve as an outlet for emotional pain. Self-harm produces a

type of temporary relief from mental and emotional stress, and sometimes even serves as self-punishment for feelings of guilt and self-condemnation.

The Bible doesn't specifically talk about cutting and self-harm as a result of anxiety, stress or depression. However, God does remind us that as Christians, our body does not belong to us anymore, and we should treat it with care (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). A person practicing cutting and self-harm has a false view of themselves and their identity and self-worth. God wants us to know that our worth is found in the love of Jesus Christ and His work on the cross. A personal relationship with Jesus through this work is absolutely necessary to truly understand our actual and full worth. This is the ultimate cure for self-harm and cutting; to see how valuable we are to Christ who sacrificed His life so we may live!

#### **“What Does the Bible Say about Christian Identity?”**

- Check out [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-christian-identity](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-christian-identity)

**What about mental illness?** It is important to understand that some people struggle with worry, anxiety, fear, and depression to such a degree that it paralyzes them, while others only have occasional struggles. Mental illness is real, just like a physical illness, and Christians should not neglect to consider medicines and medical solutions that God has provided to help treat and relieve the symptoms of mental illness. Adequate research should be done concerning the side effects and potential dependence on such medicines.

Simultaneous to any medicinal usage, Christians should be reminded that we have a volitional responsibility to know and believe God's revealed truth and actively follow Him in obedience (mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually), regardless of our feelings (Mark 12:30-31). Christians should demonstrate sympathy and compassion towards those dealing with mental illness, even if they do not fully understand or have

not experienced similar struggles or mental bondage.

Worry, fear, anxiety, depression, and mental illness should never be looked at from a mere physiological approach. We should be reminded that we have a real, supernatural enemy in Satan who seeks to “kill and destroy” (John 10:10) us (mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually) from loving God and loving others. God's truths are described as the “sword of the Spirit” which is one of our weapons in spiritual warfare as we stand firm in our faith, prayerfully resisting the enemy of our souls (Ephesians 6:10-20). Non-believers who struggle with mental illness should be reminded that their only hope for everlasting peace will be found in Christ Jesus.

“When anxiety strikes and blurs our vision of God's glory and the greatness of the future that he plans for us, this does not mean that we are faithless, or that we will not make it to heaven. It means our faith is being attacked.” John Piper

Christians who struggle with mental illness should not doubt their faith, but should be reminded that they are not helpless or hopeless. They should desperately petition God for relief, but simultaneously see their weakness as an opportunity to grow in faith and dependence on Christ (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). If Jesus chooses not to remove your mental struggles from you, you must trust and seek out His grace to be sufficient for you.

Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. [9] But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. [10] For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:8-10 ESV)

*For more on mental and emotional health see:*

#### **“What Does the Bible Say about Mental Health?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/mental-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/mental-health)

### **“What Does the Bible Say about Emotional Health?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/emotional-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/emotional-health)

### **What can I do to help a family grieving from loss of a loved one to suicide?**

Families and individuals that have lost a loved one to suicide will deal with ongoing and intense emotions. Along with normal feelings associated with loss, those dealing with suicide can also be dealing with guilt, anger, and shock. Many times, loss to suicide can be unexpected when an individual doesn't share his personal troubles or pains with others as not to “burden them.” Guilt can be felt as a result of thinking of the lost opportunities to talk the deceased about those pains and struggles. Here are some very practical and truth-filled ways of loving and assisting those that have experienced loss due to suicide:

- *Be praying and fasting*, they need healing and strength that only God can provide.
- *Be present with them*, even in silence, lovingly showing you care.
- *Be silent and respect their privacy*, don't ask for details you don't have the right to know.
- *Be sensitive*, think before you speak out shallow, ineffective sayings that hurt more than help.
- *Be helpful*, meals and routine, practical help makes a difference as life goes on.
- *Be patient*, healing can take a long time and things will never be the same.
- *Be a friend*, don't abandon or forget them in their time of need, no matter how awkward or difficult it may be.

“The Lord is near the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit” (Psalms 34:18, ESV)

Ultimately, the family and loved ones of those experiencing such a tragic loss need to be loved. They need to be loved in the way

that Christ loves them. Be an example of the that love by being present in their time of need. This process of grieving can be long and painful, so be patient with them and their emotions. Always be prepared to answer their questions and doubts in love and truth (1 Peter 3:15).

### **5 TRAGIC STATISTICS CONCERNING SUICIDE**

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death in the U.S. for the age groups of 10-14 year olds, 15-24 year olds, and 25-34 year old age groups. ([cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov))
- Suicide is the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death overall in the U.S. Homicide ranks 17<sup>th</sup>. ([cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov))
- There is one death by suicide every 12.3 minutes in the U.S. ([cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)), and one every 40 seconds in the world. (World Health Organization, AAS)
- There are 800,000 suicides per year worldwide. (World Health Organization, AAS)
- 90% of adolescents that receive treatment for depression are treated successfully (TADS Study)

### **HELPFUL RESOURCES**

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[www.412teens.org](http://www.412teens.org)

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- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT WORRY?

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-worry](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-worry)

"Half our fears arise from neglect of the Bible." Charles H. Spurgeon

**Worry is sin.** Truths about worry are found in several places but two good places to begin our focus are Matthew 6:25-34 and Luke 6:46-49. Just take these two verses (below) and we can see that *God commands us not to worry* so whenever we disobey him we are acting like we are God at that moment and that we are in charge.

- "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life" Matthew 6:25
- "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?" Luke 6:46

**Ongoing unrepentant sin is dangerous and must be confronted with truth.**

"For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" Hebrews 10:26

**God's Spirit produces the fruit of patience and peace which oppose and replace worry.**

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness..." Galatians 5:22

**Calling Jesus 'Lord' must be evidenced through faith-produced works of obedience.**

"So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." James 2:17

**What about mental illness?** It is important to understand that some people struggle with worry, anxiety, fear, and depression to such a degree that it paralyzes them while others only have occasional struggles. Mental illness is real, just like a physical illness, and Christians should not neglect to consider medicines and medical solutions that God has provided to help treat and relieve the symptoms of mental illness. Adequate research should be done concerning the side effects and potential dependence on such medicines.

Simultaneous to any medicinal usage, Christians should be reminded that we have a volitional responsibility to know and believe God's revealed truth and actively follow Him in obedience (mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually), regardless of our feelings (Mark 12:30-31). Christians should demonstrate sympathy and compassion towards those dealing with mental illness, even if they do not fully understand or have not experienced similar struggles or mental bondage.

Worry, fear, anxiety, depression, and mental illness should never be looked at from a mere physiological approach. We should be reminded that we have a real, supernatural enemy in Satan who seeks to "kill and destroy" (John 10:10) us (mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually) from loving God and loving others. God's truths are described as the "sword of the Spirit" which is one of our weapons in spiritual warfare as we stand firm in our faith, prayerfully resisting the enemy of our souls (Ephesians 6:10-20). Non-believers who struggle with mental illness should be reminded that their only hope for everlasting peace



will be found in Christ Jesus.

- “How Can I Become a Christian?” - [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian)
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“When anxiety strikes and blurs our vision of God’s glory and the greatness of the future that he plans for us, this does not mean that we are faithless, or that we will not make it to heaven. It means our faith is being attacked.” John Piper

Christians who struggle with mental illness should not doubt their faith, but should be reminded that they are not helpless or hopeless. They should desperately petition God for relief, but simultaneously see their weakness as an opportunity to grow in faith and dependence on Christ (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). If Jesus chooses not to remove your mental struggles from you, you must trust and seek out His grace to be sufficient for you.

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#### **Why do Christians worry? Is it ok to worry sometimes?**

We must be careful not to minimize, justify, or excuse worry because of its commonality or frequency. There are definitely some people who experience seasons of worry more frequently than others. We should have compassion on those who experience worry but we should also love them enough to show them that worry is a sin.

Even if we are inclined to believing that worry is merely a

temptation towards sin, we must not neglect God’s warning of the serious danger of temptation. Just because we experience or feel worry is right or justified at times does not make our feelings right or good. We must not also not think ourselves powerless against worry or resign ourselves to an “I can’t help it” attitude. All temptation and sin, to include worry, can be resisted through the power of Christ within us.

“At first blow, our belief in God’s promises may sputter and swerve. But whether we stay on track and make it to the finish line depends on whether, by grace, we set in motion a process of resistance — whether we fight back against the unbelief of anxiety.” John Piper

***Worry is closely intermingled with doubt, fear, and anxiety.  
God has much to say about these subjects:***

And have mercy on those who doubt; 23 save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh. Jude 1:22-23

So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?” Hebrews 13:6

And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. Matthew 28:17

And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?” Luke 24:38

He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” 31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” 32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.” Matthew 14:29-33

But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. Romans 14:23

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. James 1:5-8

for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. 2 Timothy 1:7

And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. 25 And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." 26 And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. 27 And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?" Matthew 8:24-27

It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep. Psalms 127:2

Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Isaiah 35:4

He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit." 9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? Jeremiah 17:8-9

And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? 26 If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? Luke 12:25-26

Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. 34 "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." Matthew 6:31-34

When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. Matthew 10:19

But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42 but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:41-42

I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. 33 But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, 34 and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband. 35 I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord. 1 Corinthians 7:32-3

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all

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understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:5-7

**Nowhere in Scripture do we find a positive command towards or justification of worry, fear (except fear of God), doubt, or anxiety. Let's flee from these temptations and sins!**

*If you find yourself commonly tempted towards worry, here are some truths to memorize and guide your prayer during those moments and seasons of temptation.*

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
Matthew 6:13

Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Mark 14:38

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. 1 Corinthians 10:13

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. James 1:13-15

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death. Proverbs 14:12

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Galatians 6:1

*"We cut the root of sin by being more satisfied in God." John Piper*

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE?

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-divorce-and-remarriage](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-divorce-and-remarriage)

**"If your opinion about anything contradicts God's Word, guess which one is wrong?" Rick Warren**

**"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death."  
(Proverbs 14:12 ESV)**

**An Introduction and Personal Note.** The topic of divorce and remarriage is both a touchy and difficult conversation to have. Many people have been hurt by divorce. Others are offended by such discussions because they perceive the teachings on such issues to be a personal attack on their identity (as a "divorcee" or "remarried") or plans to pursue remarriage. Many godly Christians have different convictions on this issue. The below convictions are mine alone and not expressive of the convictions my church family.

As a pastor, I have a unique calling to officiate over marriages. In such a capacity I always want to ensure that I follow God's explicit instructions for the institution He created

in marriage. I want to be obedient to His commands and to offer the best counsel to those who are likewise seeking to walk in His wisdom. I have prayed over and studied the Scriptures diligently on this topic and hope that this resource is helpful to you on your own journey of obedience to the Lord.

When I speak with those who have divorced and are pursuing remarriage, I encourage them to read this article (and mainly the Scriptures at the end) and to soak their studies in prayer. May you consider the whole of Scripture on the topic and not simply seek an understanding that appeals to your past experiences, feelings, or future hopes.

If you find yourself reaching conclusions different than mine, or your own pastor, I hope you will show grace towards us. Although I think I am correct on this topic, I acknowledge that I may be wrong in my conclusions. If I encountered a vegetarian who sincerely felt divinely called to not eat meat, I would never demean them or force them to eat meat. Likewise, I hope you will not look down upon nor criticize any pastor with such biblical convictions against officiating certain weddings. May we show grace towards one another in our differences and faithfully follow the convictions that the Lord has given us on this important issue.

James 4:17 "So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin."

**What does the Bible say about marriage?** Marriage is created by God as lifelong institution between a man and a woman, rooted in creation, with a significance that shows in its comparison to Christ's relationship with the church (Ephesians 5:22-33). Today marriage is often defined by the emerging trends, understandings, feelings, and opinions of the culture rather than the transcendent, immutable, and eternal truth found described by the God who created it. This change in understanding and practice has led to an overwhelming number of marriages ending in divorce and resulting

in remarriage. Although many sociological, psychological, economic, emotional, and man-centered rationales may be created to explain and justify the practice of divorce and remarriage, the Christian perspective and practice must be rooted in a balanced and holistic application of biblical theology.

The overwhelming practice in today's churches is to allow remarriage in most cases of legal divorce. This is problematic in a society that frequently allows no-fault divorce, thus eliminating most standards or requirements for divorce. In the few churches that do choose to discriminate in the practice of remarriage, it is often confusing and complex to determine accurately the circumstances surrounding the divorce as well as the guilt or innocence of each party involved. In evaluating the Scriptural texts in regard to marriage, divorce, and remarriage the Bible points to the marriage bond as ending only in death, not merely being severed by legal divorce, thereby prohibiting remarriage following divorce no matter the circumstance (Matthew 19:6, Romans 7:1-3, 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,39).

**What does the Bible say about divorce?** Jesus very clearly says that divorce is not part of God's plan for humanity (Matthew 19:3-12) but was only permitted by Moses because of the hardness of mankind's hearts. As Paul gives guidance to the Corinthians in regard to marriage, he very clearly states in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 that the Lord commands couples not to divorce or separate, but that if they do, they "should remain unmarried or else be reconciled."

God does share that there are occasions when divorce is permitted as the only option and that the believer is "free" from continuing to try to reconcile their marriage with their unbelieving spouse. Examples of such situations may be when an unbelieving spouse is persistent in sexual or adulterous behavior, continuing to abuse their spouse, or abandoning their spouse. Although such divorce situations are allowed for, there is never the implication or approval for remarriage even in situations of "biblical" divorces.

**What the Bible say about remarriage after the death of a spouse?** God clearly permits remarriage after the death of a spouse and actually encourages remarriage for younger widows (Romans 7:1-3, 1 Corinthians 7:8-9,27-28,39-40; 5:11-16). The only qualification for the remarriage of a widow is that the new spouse must be a Christian (1 Corinthians 7:39, 2 Corinthians 6:14).

**What does the Bible say about remarrying the spouse you previously divorced?** God clearly allows for remarrying your previously divorced spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-11) unless either spouse had subsequently remarried someone else (Deuteronomy 24:1-4).

**What does the Bible say about singleness?**

**What about my happiness? How can I be happy if I am divorced and never remarried?**

**How can I resist lust if I am divorced and not remarried?**

God actually speaks very highly of singleness as a gift and a joy (1 Corinthians 7:1, 7-8,26-34,38). We have often idolatized our happiness and ease of life above the glory and holiness of God. We cannot justify a sin (remarriage after divorce) merely as a means towards avoiding another sin (depression, lust, etc.). God is sufficient for our needs. If we find ourselves divorced and single, we must trust in the Lord's strength, provision, and fellowship to sustain us no matter the temptations we face in our single state (1 Corinthians 10:13).

**What does the Bible say about remarriage after divorce?**

**Is a remarried person in a continuous state of adultery?**

Remarriage after divorce is always labeled by God as a sin or specifically as an act of adultery (Deuteronomy 24:1-4, Malachi 2:14-16, Matthew 5:32, Matthew 19:3-10, Mark 10:1-12, Romans 7:1-3, 1 Corinthians 7). God says clearly in Romans 7:3 that a woman "will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive," explaining that only

the death of her husband releases her from the law of marriage and permits her to be remarried.

Christ came to satisfy the penalty of our law-breaking. When we confess Christ as Lord of our life, and believe that He died on the cross and rose from the grave, we know that we "have died to the law" (Romans 7:4) and thus are set free from the eternal consequences of our sin (Romans 6:23). It is important for Christians to understand that "there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

Although Christians no longer bear eternal condemnation for their sin, they still recognize that God's laws are "holy" and His commandments are "righteous and good" (Romans 7:12). Christians should desire to avoid what God calls sin or "evil" and to practice what God calls righteous or "good" (Romans 7:18-25). When Christians are convicted by God for any sin, to include a past sin of an unbiblical divorce or remarriage while a previous spouse is still alive, they should confess their sin to God and a trusted Christian friend (1 John 1:9, James 5:16). When such confession occurs, God provides healing and affirms His eternal cleansing and forgiveness. Although such sin is forgiven eternally ("now no condemnation" Romans 8:1), some of the earthly consequences of such a sin may linger. Christians should remember and obey God's ongoing command to walk in holiness in their present marriage or singleness, and accordingly not seek an unbiblical divorce or remarry after a divorce.

Many God-loving Christians have justified remarriage after divorce on the basis of a flawed assumption, that "it is assumed in the Bible that wherever Scripture allows divorce, remarriage is also allowed." Over and over this is shown to be the backbone of their defense, but they fail to show this to be a biblical truth. This is dangerous territory to be in as it is an exegetical fallacy (false way to understanding the meaning of the bible) that you can make an argument from biblical silence.

**What if my divorce was based on biblical grounds?**

**What is my divorce was before I was a Christian?**

**Doesn't Matthew 5:32, 19:9, or 1 Corinthians 7:15 imply that remarriage after divorce in certain circumstances isn't sin? That when someone is "loosed" or not "bound" it implies the freedom to remarry?**

Scripture never speaks positively about or encourages remarriage after divorce. Scripture does not distinguish any sorts of allowance for remarriage based on a "biblical" divorce or based on a divorce occurring before someone was a Christian. Paul recognizes that divorce may physically and legally end a marriage, but in the eyes of God's law, the marriage bond and "one flesh union" only ends in death (Matthew 19:6, Romans 7:1-3, 1 Corinthians 7:10-11,39).

The word chosen by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:15 is *luo* in Greek or 'free' in English. It is important to note that this is not the same word that he uses for divorce, *chorizo*, (1 Corinthians 7:10,11,15 and Matthew 19:6) or *aphenai* (1 Corinthians 7:11,12,13). The conclusion of this differing word choice is summed up as meaning "that the Christian is not bound to fight in order to preserve togetherness." Is it also significant to note that the "the word used for 'bound' (*douloo*) in verse 15 is not the same word used in verse 39...Paul consistently uses *deo* when speaking of the legal aspect of being bound to one marriage partner (Ro 7:2, 1 Co 7:39) or to one's betrothed (1 Co 7:27)." Paul uses a different word because he is not giving them the same right to remarry. In contrast, in verse 39 Paul clears speaks to how the marriage bond ends in death by saying "free to marry" which is a phrase that is noticeably absent from 1 Corinthians 7:15, Matthew 19:9 and 5:32.

**Is remarriage after divorce an "unforgivable" sin?** *No, the only unforgivable sin is ongoing rejection of Jesus as God as revealed by His Holy Spirit (Mark 3:28-30).* Although divorce is a sin (when not biblically allowed, see 1 Corinthians 7), it is not

unforgivable. However, the forgiveness of the sin of divorce does not relieve the earthly consequences of that sin and thus permit remarriage since the previous spouse is still alive. Even if someone's divorce was "biblical" or they were the "innocent" party, Scripture still labels remarriage as a sin since the previous spouse is still alive. Regardless of the circumstances, the sin of remarriage after divorce is not "unforgivable."

**Isn't it hypocritical to say divorced men can serve as deacons while saying remarriage after divorce is a sin?**

No. Although we may want to personally exercise "grace" and say remarriage after divorce is not a sin, the Bible clearly calls remarriage after divorce a sin because marriage only ends in death, not in divorce. We cannot condone what God clearly calls sin (Romans 1:32, Isaiah 5:20).

Although we may want to uphold "righteousness" by excluding divorced and remarried men from serving as deacons, the Bible upholds God's grace and faithfulness in the life of believer, showing that no sin is unforgivable. Christians are no longer identified by their past sin and thus do not live under condemnation (Romans 8:1, 1 Corinthians 6:11, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21). The standards and qualifications for deacons and pastors all point to present faithfulness not past sin (i.e. "Who are they now?" NOT past-tense, "Who were they?", see Acts 6:1-7, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9).

**What about \_\_\_\_\_ (example of a godly couple that is remarried after divorce), should they have not gotten married?**

The ends (a godly remarried couple) do not justify or rationalize a sin (remarriage after divorce). A remarried couple is not in the ongoing state of adultery, but the sin of adultery (which Jesus explains also happens in our hearts with lust (Matthew 5:27-30)) is serious and should not be ignored, justified, or excused.

**I struggle with lust. I need a father/mother for my kids. I am lonely. Isn't remarriage a better solution to these issues than**

**being divorced and single? Won't Jesus forgive me?**

Being divorced and single is complicated and not without its own difficulties, struggles, and temptations. Despite these challenges we cannot ignore God's truths on divorce and remarriage. We must seek God in our weakness and seek His strength, grace, and peace to carry us and guide us (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). Although it is true that Jesus can and is willing to forgive all sin, we should not abuse His grace or ignore His truths concerning what is best for us in both singleness and marriage and His warnings of the earthly consequences of sin (Romans 6, 1 Corinthians 7).

## Please Do Not Take Our Word Solely On This Issue.

*Please consider the Scriptures and resources below so that you may personally understand and seek God's wisdom on such a delicate issue.*

### SCRIPTURES ON DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

**Genesis 2:23-24**

"23 Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

**Deuteronomy 24:1-4**

"When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, 2 and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, 3 and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce

and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, 4 then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance."

**Leviticus 21:13-15**

"13 And he shall take a wife in her virginity. 14 A widow, or a divorced woman, or a woman who has been defiled, or a prostitute, these he shall not marry. But he shall take as his wife a virgin of his own people, 15 that he may not profane his offspring among his people, for I am the LORD who sanctifies him."

**Malachi 2:14-16**

"14 But you say, 'Why does he not?' Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. 15 Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. 16 'For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.'

**Malachi 2:16**

"For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless." (ESV)

"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith." (NIV)

"For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously." (NASB)

"For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the LORD of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously." (NKJV)

**Matthew 5:32**

"32 But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

**Matthew 19:3-12**

"3And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" 4He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." 7They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?" 8He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. 9 And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery." 10The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry." 11But he said to them, "Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. 12For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves

eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it."

**Mark 10:1-12**

"1 And he left there and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan, and crowds gathered to him again. And again, as was his custom, he taught them. 2And Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" 3He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" 4They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away." 5And Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. 6But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 7 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, 8and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. 9 What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." 10And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. 11And he said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, 12and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

**Luke 16:18**

18"Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery."

**1 Corinthians 7**

"1Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." 2But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own



body, but the wife does. 5 Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6 Now as a concession, not a command, I say this. 7 I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.

8 To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am. 9 But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion. 10 To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband 11 (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife. 12 To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. 13 If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. 14 For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. 15 But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. 16 For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? 17 Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches. 18 Was anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. 19 For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God. 20 Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. 21 Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can

gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) 22 For he who was called in the Lord as a slave is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise he who was free when called is a slave of Christ. 23 You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men. 24 So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God. 25 Now concerning the betrothed, I have no command from the Lord, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. 26 I think that in view of the present distress it is good for a person to remain as he is. 27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. 28 But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a betrothed woman marries, she has not sinned. Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that. 29 This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, 30 and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, 31 and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away. 32 I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. 33 But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, 34 and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband. 35 I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord. 36 If anyone thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his betrothed, if his passions are strong, and it has to be, let him do as he wishes: let them marry—it is no sin. 37 But whoever is firmly established in his heart, being under no necessity but having his desire under control, and has determined this in his heart, to keep her as his betrothed, he will do well. 38 So then he who marries his

betrotted does well, and he who refrains from marriage will do even better. 39 A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. 40 Yet in my judgment she is happier if she remains as she is. And I think that I too have the Spirit of God."

#### **Romans 7:2-3**

"For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress."

#### **1 Timothy 5:14**

"So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander"

#### **Ephesians 5:22-33**

"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is

profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. 33 However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

*"Be killing sin or it will be killing you."* John Owen

#### **Recommended Resources for Further Study**

Piper, John. "Divorce & Remarriage: A Position Paper." (July 21, 1986), available online from: <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/divorce-remarriage-a-position-paper> .

Piper, John. "On Divorce & Remarriage in the Event of Adultery." (January 1, 1986), available on-line from: <http://www.desiringgod.org/all-resources/by-topic/divorce-remarriage> .

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ADDICTIONS?

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-addictions](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-addictions)

*Romans 14, ESV*

## **Understand the Difference between Truth and Opinion**

v.1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions.

### **Exercise Grace towards Others**

v. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him.

### **Make a Truth & Spirit-Filled Decision**

v.5 Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.

v.21-23 But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

### **Be Prepared to Stand Before God**

v.12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

### **Care More about Others than Your Personal Pleasures/Freedoms**

v.13 Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.

v.15-19 For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. ... So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual up building.

## **10 Questions to Ask When Evaluating a Possible Addiction:**

- The Word's Work: What does the Bible say?
- The Prayer Test: Have I sincerely, openly, honestly prayed about it?
- The Spirit's Work: Am I ashamed? Convicted? Should I be?
- Godly Counsel: What do my godly friends and family think?
- Government's Work: Is it legal or illegal?
- The Transparency Test: Am I hiding this behavior from anyone? Why?
- Gospel-Harm: Does it harm my Gospel witness to others?
- Others-Harm: Is it helpful or harmful to others? Put others at risk?
- Self-Harm: Is it helpful or harmful to me? Use of time/talent/treasures?
- Offensive: Does it offend others around me? Set a good example?

### **Areas to Consider:**

Alcohol, Marijuana, Coffee/Caffeine, Shopping, Thrill-Seeking/Adrenaline, Sleeping, TV, Video Games, Medications, Cutting, Gambling, Sexual Sin, Over Eating/Sugar, Eating Disorders, Smoking/Dipping, Sports, Vanity

*“All things are lawful for me,’ but not all things are helpful. ‘All things are lawful for me,’ but I will not be dominated by anything”. (1 Corinthians 6:12)*

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ALCOHOL?

[www.trustworthyword.com/alcohol](http://www.trustworthyword.com/alcohol)

The drinking of alcohol is an issue that is particularly touchy within modern America, much less so in many other countries and times in history. The influence of prohibition and the temperance movement in American history has probably shaped more Western Christian views on the issue more than Scripture has, even to the point of misinterpreting the Bible. Tradition and opinion can be dangerous (Romans 14:1 & Colossians 2:8) apart from God's wisdom, so let's discover together what the Bible *really* says about alcohol...

**Alcohol brings some good.** God allows for and describes several positive aspects to alcohol. It can serve as a tool for the relief of physical, mental, and emotional pain (Proverbs 31:6-7). In contexts where clean water is unavailable, alcohol can serve as a hygienic drink and has medicinal value (1 Timothy 5:23, Luke 10:34). Alcohol can be responsibly used for the special purposes of celebration and socialization (John 2:1-11).

**Alcohol brings a lot of dangers.** Arrogance. Combativeness. Impaired judgment. Abuse. Anger. Increased sin. Decreased job performance. Poverty. Damaged health. Broken relationships. Diminished Christian witness (Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; 31:4-5, Romans 14:21).

Many of us have seen and experienced the irreversible damage caused by drunkenness. We've witnessed firsthand the destruction of lives, marriages, families, and friendships from the misuse of alcohol.

**Is it wrong to drink alcohol?** Not usually. In moderation and at appropriate times, alcohol drinking is described in either neutral or positive ways at several places in the Bible (Ecclesiastes 9:7, Psalm 104:15, Amos 9:14). Jesus' first miracle was the creation of wine from water (John 2:1-11). Jesus used wine at His last supper to symbolize His life-giving blood sacrifice and then pointed forward to Heaven with the inclusion of wine as a beverage (Matthew 26:27-29). But God also points out valid reasons to abstain from alcohol even when it is permissible (Romans 14).

**Is it wrong to get drunk?** Yes. In excess, whether drunk, tipsy, or slightly impaired, alcohol harms yourself and others. Drunkenness (whether drunk, tipsy, or slightly impaired) is universally prohibited and warned against by God...for a reason. Drunkenness leads to earthly and eternal destruction (Isaiah 5:11; 5:22, 1 Peter 4:3, Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:21). God loves us enough to command us away from it and lovingly warn us of its dangers.

Is it wrong to sell and serve alcohol in our community? No, not if it is legalized. Proper protections and enforcement are needed. But...just because something can be done, doesn't mean it should be done (1 Corinthians 6:12).

**Is it wise to sell and serve alcohol in a community? To bring it into your home? To drink it at all?** Maybe. Maybe not. Many can handle the freedom of alcohol responsibly, but many cannot. There may be some local financial advantages and advantages of convenience and pleasure, but the financial cost of alcohol misuse is actually higher than the gain (<https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/overview-alcohol->

consumption/alcohol-facts-and-statistics ). It could be wise for a community to avoid alcohol because of its many dangers but it could also be unloving to prohibit what God allows. Ultimately the drinking of alcohol is a personal preference or individual choice allowed by the Scriptures. Some believers who choose to drink see the substance as a gift from God and find themselves not tempted towards drunkenness. Others who choose to abstain see temptations and costs as too high to justify their own personal usage.

- Wisdom tells us to distance ourselves from danger (Proverbs 6:27-28).
- Wisdom tells us to distance ourselves from destructive temptations (Romans 13:14, 1 Corinthians 10:12-13).
- Wisdom tells us to seek the good of others and our community (Jeremiah 29:7, Philippians 2:3-4).

If alcohol has many implicit dangers, and many destructive possibilities, we must consider if we truly want to bring it closer to our community, families, and self, weighing out the benefits with the risks?

**What about other addictions?** When considering an addictive substance, we need to consider 1) its legality 2) its potential benefits 3) its potential harms to self 4) potential harms to others and 5) its potential for control. Romans 14 is a great passage and here is a helpful handout on that passage and topic: [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-addictions](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-addictions)

- A food addiction can lead to obesity, which can damage one's heart and so much more.
- A smoking addiction can quickly harm one's lungs and those breathing the air around you.
- A shopping, hobby, or gambling habit can quickly consume one's finances and time.
- Workaholicism leads to family neglect. Laziness leads to

poverty.

- Pornography is adultery and can short circuit a healthy sexuality within marriage.
- Alcohol abuse can damage one's liver, affect one's decisions, and endanger others.
- A marijuana or drug addiction quickly damages one's brain and ruins lives.

With any potentially addictive substance we need to consider the potential harms in light of the potential goods and make decisions that take into account the impact on our witness and the effect on the lives of others around us. In such discussions we need to avoid temptations to self-righteousness or moralism, realizing we are not saved by our own good works and it is only by God's grace we are not dominated by Satan and our own addictive inclinations.

**Did Jesus make some sort of non-alcoholic wine? Some sort of different, less-alcoholic wine? Did Jesus drink alcoholic wine? Did the disciples drink alcoholic wine?**

Jesus' first miracle involved making "good wine" that was complimented by the master of the feast and not complained about (John 2:1-11). The same greek word used here (οἶνον) is also used in other passages referring to alcoholic wine ( [http://biblehub.com/greek/oinon\\_3631.htm](http://biblehub.com/greek/oinon_3631.htm) ). Another greek word is used for wine in four other places by Paul but is described similarly (οἶνον [http://biblehub.com/greek/oino\\_3631.htm](http://biblehub.com/greek/oino_3631.htm)) with the emphasis being on moderation (Paul to Timothy to use a little for his health, 1 Timothy 5:23) and not too much or being addicted.

In Luke 7:33-44 Jesus ("The Son of Man has come eating and drinking") is distinguished from John the Baptist ("drinking no wine") and accused by the Pharisees as both a glutton and a drunkard. This distinction and accusation makes a strong suggestion that Jesus did drink alcoholic wine. There is another word used for wine (sometimes translated "sweet" or "new"

wine) only in Acts 2:13 (Γλεύκουσ [http://biblehub.com/greek/gleukous\\_1098.htm](http://biblehub.com/greek/gleukous_1098.htm)) but it is in similarly referenced as alcoholic in an accusation drunkenness.

On the cross Jesus refuses “wine mixed with myrrh” (Mark 15:23 that could have eased his pain) but receives a “sour wine” on the cross (Mark 15:36, John 19:30 that prolongs his pain and fulfilled Psalm 69:21: see - <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-wine-jesus-drank>) but he had already told his disciples he would not taste the “fruit of the vine” again until He was in His Father’s Kingdom (Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:25, Luke 22:18). What is “fruit of the vine”? Could it be grape juice? Ultimately, without pasteurization or refrigeration, grape juice begins to ferment and become alcoholic. So a freshly squeezed juice may have little or no alcohol, but otherwise outside of grape harvest time (June-September in Israel <https://www.gci.org/law/festivals/harvest>) any drink of fruit would involve fermentation and alcohol. Jesus’ crucifixion would have been late March and early April so any fruit of the vine drink preceding his crucifixion would have certainly been fermented and alcoholic.

It is wise to note that the alcohol of Jesus’ day was probably much less alcoholic by content so anyone who feels the biblical and faith-formed freedom to drink alcohol today should be extra cautious as it can lead to drunkenness more quickly than the alcohol of Jesus’ day.

**Should pastors not be allowed to drink alcohol?** While there is much wisdom in those who feel personally led to abstain from wine, the Biblical qualifications for pastors and church leaders doesn’t advocate for abstinence from alcohol but rather from drunkenness or addiction to alcohol (1 Timothy 3:3,3:8 & Titus 1:7 [http://biblehub.com/greek/paroinon\\_3943.htm](http://biblehub.com/greek/paroinon_3943.htm)). Some may point to biblical wisdom and commands against alcohol to kings and priests but ignore that this was most often connected to a voluntary (not forced) Nazarite vow (Numbers 6:1-20 or set

aside similarly like John in Luke 1:15) after which they can drink wine again, serving in the inner court or on duty (Leviticus 10:9 & Ezekiel 44:21), or with warning against drunkenness because of the need to clearly make decisions (Proverbs 31:4). While some seminaries, denominations, and churches may require abstinence from alcohol as an act of wisdom, the Bible does not. Can pastors drink alcohol? The Bible says yes. Should pastors drink alcohol? The Bible seems to leave that up to the individual conscience of the pastor (Romans 14).

We must be consistent. Some point to Romans 14:21 (“It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.”) as a reason for pastors or Christians not to drink alcoholic beverages but then steer away from the offense of meat-eating to the vegetarian. However, the next verse indicates the focus on personal faithful conviction from and accountability to God on the issue of food and drink (Romans 14:22 “The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God”).

**Why is drunkenness so serious?** Unlike some other addictions (gluttony, gambling, smoking, shopping, hobby-ism, workaholism, etc.) alcohol misuse presents a more sudden and direct harm to others through vehicular accidents, abuse, and neglect. Even more concerning, ongoing & unrepentant drunkenness is pointed to as an identification of those without salvation who are headed towards an eternity in Hell (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 & Galatians 5:19-21).

**Does the Bible say alcohol is evil? Did Jesus say alcohol is evil? If alcohol is so dangerous, why are we biblically allowed to drink it?** Throughout Scripture blame is not attributed to a substance or object, but the sin of our heart is the main concern.

- Food is not the main concern, the love of food seen in gluttony is the sin (Proverbs 23:2 & 23:20-21 and Philippians 3:19).
- Money is not the main concern, the love of money seen in greed or covetousness is the sin (1 Timothy 6:9-10).
- Carved images (idols) are not the main concern (they are

nothing but wood ultimately, Isaiah 44:19 & 1 Corinthians 8:4), the love of idols seen in the making, retention, and worship of idols that is the sin (1 John 5:21 & Revelation 9:20).

- Alcohol is not the main concern; it is the love of alcohol seen in drunkenness is the sin.

So what? There is biblical wisdom in avoiding tempting substances and in avoiding it as a stumbling block in the lives of others...but the application of those truths are more personal practice than universal prohibition or universal allowance.

**Doesn't Proverbs 20:1 call wine and strong drink a sin?** This passage is often quoted out of the context of the type of literature: a proverb. A proverb is a general truth statement and observation from which to derive wisdom. Accordingly, the emphasis again is not on the substance but on not being led astray by them to where one's judgment and behavior (mocking and brawling) is influenced by the substance.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise." Proverbs 20:1 (ESV)

**What should I do if someone I love has a strongly different opinion than me on this issue?** Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry (James 1:19-20). Study the Scriptures together on the topic but don't let a difference of opinion become a source of division. Love the person more than winning an argument. Prioritize the Gospel and the Scriptures as you talk. Reconsider your own traditions in the light of the Word. Realize the Bible grants freedom of differences on issues like food (not gluttony) and drink (not drunkenness).

**Should we use wine with the Lord's Supper/Communion?** Jesus did. The Early Church did. The vast majority of churches today still do. It wasn't until 1869 that the pasteurization of grape juice was discovered by Thomas Welch, a dedicated Methodist and Prohibitionist, who made "Dr. Welch's Unfermented Wine" (grape juice) that was used primarily by churches as

for its first twenty years. Is there wisdom in offering a non-alcoholic "fruit of the vine" since it is now? Could be. Is wine a better symbol and more accurate to the original Lord's Supper? Yes. Individual churches must come to their own conclusions based on their culture and the Scriptures. Consider Paul when writing to the church at Corinth on the Lord's Supper/Communion. He rebukes them for using the bread and the cup for gluttony and drunkenness, warning that their misuse has led to sickness and death and a consequence, yet he never advocates for alcoholic abstinence or for the change of the cup to a non-alcoholic substance (1 Corinthians 11:17-34).

### Here are some of the relevant Bible passages:

#### Alcohol brings some good:

- Psalm 104:14-15 (ESV) "You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart."
- Proverbs 31:6-7 "Give strong drink to the one who is perishing, and wine to those in bitter distress; let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more."
- Ecclesiastes 9:7 "Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do."
- Amos 9:14 "I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit."
- 1 Timothy 5:23 "No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments."
- Luke 10:34 "He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him."
- John 2:1-11 "On the third day there was a wedding at Cana

- in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. [2] Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. [3] When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." [4] And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." [5] His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." [6] Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. [7] Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. [8] And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. [9] When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom [10] and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." [11] This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him."
- Matthew 26:27–29 "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'"

### **Misuse of Alcohol brings a lot of dangers:**

- Proverbs 20:1 "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise."
- Proverbs 23:29–35 "Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who tarry long over wine; those who go to try mixed wine. Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. In the end it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart utter

- perverse things. You will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, like one who lies on the top of a mast. "They struck me," you will say, "but I was not hurt; they beat me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake? I must have another drink."
- Proverbs 31:4–5 "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to take strong drink, lest they drink and forget what has been decreed and pervert the rights of all the afflicted."
  - Romans 14:21 "It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble."
  - Isaiah 5:11–12 "Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may run after strong drink, who tarry late into the evening as wine inflames them! They have lyre and harp, tambourine and flute and wine at their feasts, but they do not regard the deeds of the LORD, or see the work of his hands."
  - Isaiah 5:22 "Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink"
  - 1 Peter 4:3–5 "For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead."
  - Ephesians 5:18 "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit"
  - Galatians 5:19–21 "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."
  - 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves,



nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

### Use Wisdom in Your Preferences and Practices

- 1 Corinthians 6:12 “All things are lawful for me,’ but not all things are helpful. ‘All things are lawful for me,’ but I will not be dominated by anything.”
- Proverbs 6:27–28 “Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched?”
- Romans 13:14 “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.”
- 1 Corinthians 10:12–13 “Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. [13] No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”
- Jeremiah 29:7 “But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”
- Philippians 2:3-4 “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Check out [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org) for some helpful perspectives on this and many other issues!

For statistics on alcohol use and misuse in America visit: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/overview-alcohol-consumption/alcohol-facts-and-statistics>

- Alcohol generates \$223 billion annually in the US but costs \$249 billion from misuse. 10% of all kids live with a parent with alcohol problems. 88,000 people die from alcohol related

causes every year. 15 million Americans have an alcohol use disorder, affecting many through neglect, abuse, and assault. Alcohol is the leading “gateway drug” into illicit drugs.

### 10 Questions to Ask When Evaluating Your Personal Practice with Alcohol:

- The Word’s Work: What does the Bible say?
- The Prayer Test: Have I sincerely, openly, honestly prayed about it?
- The Spirit’s Work: Am I ashamed? Convicted? Should I be?
- Godly Counsel: What do my godly friends and family think?
- Government’s Work: Is it legal or illegal?
- The Transparency Test: Am I hiding this behavior from anyone? Why?
- Gospel-Harm: Does it harm my Gospel witness to others?
- Others-Harm: Is it helpful or harmful to others? Put others at risk?
- Self-Harm: Is it helpful or harmful to me? Use of time/talent/treasures?
- Offensive: Does it offend others around me? Set a good example?

“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful.  
 “All things are lawful for me,”  
 but I will not be dominated by anything.  
 (1 Corinthians 6:12)

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT SEXUAL SIN?

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sexual-sin](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sexual-sin)

“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.” (Hebrews 13:4, ESV)

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality” (1 Corinthians 6:9)

“Be killing sin or it will be killing you.” John Owen

## Where in the Bible does it talk about sexual sin?

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

**Amiantos (Greek) – UNDEFILED (English)**, free from that by which the nature of a thing is deformed [Heb 13:4 (marriage bed), 7:26 (high priest), James 1:27 (pure religion), 1 Peter 1:4 (spiritual inheritance)]

**Adikos (Greek) - UNRIGHTEOUS (English)**, wicked, unjust (1 Cor 6:1,9)

**Akatharsia (Greek) – IMPURITY (English)**, uncleanness, lustful (2 Cor 12:21, Gal 5:19, Eph 4:19, 5:3, Col 3:5, 1 Thess 4:7)

**Epithumia (Greek) – LUST (English)**, desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden (37 times in NT!)

**Porneia (Greek) – SEXUAL IMMORALITY (English)**, illicit sexual intercourse, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, w/animals metaphor: the worship of idols (Matt 15:19 and Mark 7:21 ‘out of the heart’, accusation against Jesus’ birth John 8:41, Acts 15:20,29, 21:25, 1 Cor 5:1, 6:13,18, 7:2, 2 Cor 12:21, Gal 5:19, Eph 5:3, Col 3:5, 1 Thess 4:3, Rev 9:21)

- *Pornos* – sexually immoral, a man who indulges in unlawful sexual intercourse, a fornicator, a male prostitute (1 Cor 5:9-11,6:9, Eph 5:5, 1 Tim 1:10, Heb 12:16, 13:4, Rev 21:8, 22:15)
- *Porne* - any woman indulging in unlawful sexual intercourse, whether for gain or for lust, harlot, prostitute (1 Corinthians 6:15-15, Babylon (Revelation), Rahab, Prodigal Son (Luke 15:30), Parable of the Two Sons (Matthew 21:28-32))

**Moicheia (Greek) – ADULTERY (English)**, (Matthew 15:19 and Mark 7:21 ‘out of the heart’)

- *Moichao* - to have unlawful intercourse with another's wife, to commit adultery with (used four times, all regarding remarriage after divorce - Mark 10:11-12, Matthew 5:32, 19:9)
- *Moichos* – an adulterer, metaphor: one who is unfaithful to god, ungodly (Luke 18:11, 1 Corinthians 6:9, Hebrews 13:4)

**HOMOSEXUALITY** – Where does the Bible talk about homosexuality?

- Romans 1:24-32, Genesis 19, Leviticus 18:22, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:3-3, 1 Timothy 1:9,10, Jude 7
- 1 Corinthians 6:9 – ESV “nor men who practice homosexuality” (refers to passive & active partners in homosexual acts)
- *Malakos* (Greek) – effeminate, of a boy kept for homosexual relations with a man, submits his body to unnatural lewdness
- *Arsenokoites* (Greek) – homosexual, one who lies with a male as with a female, sodomite, homosexual (1 Tim 1:10, 1 Cor 6:9)

And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:11 ESV)

*“If your opinion about anything contradicts God’s Word, guess which one is wrong?”* Rick Warren

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.” (Proverbs 14:12)

### **Living in a Sex-Saturated World: Our Response**

“But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ... 5 For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.” (Ephesians 5:3-6)

“Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” (Colossians 3:5)

## **BASIC INSTRUCTIONS**

**Unmarried?** Stop Choosing & Embracing Sexual Activity/Thoughts, Wait Until You Are Married

**Married?** Stay Married, Sexual Activity/Thoughts Only With Your Spouse, “Best defense is a good offense,” have a “Song of Solomon,” passionate, regular, loving sex life in your marriage!

## **HOW CAN I LIVE PURELY IN A SEX-SATURATED WORLD?**

**MEN & WOMEN** – GUARD your eyes, ears, mouth, mind, heart, hands, fingers, & feet

“I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?” (Job 31:1)

### **Cautions & Safeguards In Marriage**

- Open sharing of all communication avenues (email, Facebook, text messaging, IM, Twitter, etc.)
- Never be alone with someone of the opposite sex
- Are you hiding something? Not telling the whole story? Why?
- Talk with your spouse & share any struggles or needs that you feel aren’t being met.
- Bounce your eyes. If you find yourself looking at someone lustfully, bounce your eyes another direction.
- Understand the needs and love language of your spouse.
- If someone is attractive to you, put up safeguards in your interactions with them.

### **Cautions & Safeguards Outside of Marriage**

*What is the Bible’s stance on sex?* Sex is good, when it is done God’s way. Sex is designed by God for a picture of the Gospel union, for pleasure, and for procreation...but His plan is for it to only happen in marriage....and marriage is always defined by God’s

voice as between a man and a woman, for life (Romans 7:1-3, 1 Corinthians 7:39).

*“If anyone says that sex in itself is bad, Christianity contradicts him at once.” C.S. Lewis*

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. [16] For all that is in the world - the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life - is not from the Father but from the world. (1 John 2:15-16)

For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. (Hebrews 10:26-27)

***Is sexual sin really that serious?*** Yes, it is much more serious than we realize. 1 Corinthians 6:18 tells us to flee sexual immorality. Sexual sin is different because it is a sin against our body, inside our body. We are not designed by God for multiple sexual partners or relationships. We must acknowledge and confess that we are all sexual sinners.

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.” (Proverbs 14:12)

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 describes God’s plan for us...to please Him and not ourselves. His will is for us to be sanctified, to be made more holy. One main avenue of sanctification is seen, or not seen, in how we control our bodies sexually. God warns that He is the avenger of sexual sin and how it harms not just you, but others. Ignoring the seriousness of sexual sin is not a matter of personal opinion. It is not simple opposition to a particular viewpoint, pastor, Christian, church, or denomination, but ignoring God’s plan for sex means ignoring God himself & His Holy Spirit that He gives to Christians.

*“While sex is not the only aspect of physical relationship in a*

*marriage, it is in most cases the most important one, the touchstone for everything else from smiles and daily gestures of tenderness to deeds of kindness and sacrifice...the whole challenge of marital life is simply to catch up in all other departments with the pure rapture of the physical relationship at its best.” Mike Mason*

***How do I know is something is sexually immoral? How much can I do?*** Are you at peace with what you are doing? Are you ashamed? Do you hide it? Do you justify or minimize it? Does it affect your witness? Do you have doubts? (and Romans 14:23)

- “But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.” (Ephesians 5:3)
- “But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.” (Romans 14:23)

***Is it right to “force” biblical beliefs on a nation that is primarily non-Christian?*** The Bible is described as God’s voice. Even though our nation and others are not primarily Christians, God is sovereign over them. When a nation’s leaders or people disregard, disrespect, and disobey God, there are consequences. When we ignore the Bible it shows we are ignoring God by shutting our ears to His voice.

God tells us through the prophet Samuel that: (1 Samuel 12:14-15) “If you will fear the LORD and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well. [15] But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king.”

We (Christians) want it to go well for America, its people and its leaders. We don’t want our God against our nation. Moralism will not save our nation. A God-centered heart will rescue our

nation from further consequences of our sin. We need to pray that our nation begins to fear, serve, and obey the Lord and stop rebelling against His good plan.

*“A married couple gives a severe blow to the head of that ancient serpent when they aim to give as much sexual satisfaction to each other as possible. Is it not a mark of amazing grace that on top of all the pleasure that the sexual side of marriage brings, it also proves to be a fearsome weapon against our ancient foe?... Marriage at its exquisite peak of pleasure speaks powerfully the truth of covenant-keeping love between Christ and his church. And that love is the most powerful force in the world.”* John Piper

**What should Christians do right now as our beliefs continue to be attacked and legislated against?**

**Pray.** Our problem is not ultimately with our government. Our problem is with our hearts. God is in the business of changing hearts so we need to fervently, passionately, and continuously beg our God to change the hearts of Americans away from self-love and towards Christ.

**Model.** Walk in God’s commandments. Let people see the Gospel in your marriages, your lives, and your words. When people see and hear of God’s working in you, they will hopefully be changed from the inside out.

**Love.** We are to model Christ-like love. That means loving people with our thoughts, words, and actions even when they don’t deserve it. Sometimes love is patient, gentle, and kind, but Proverbs 27:5 tells us that “open rebuke is better than hidden love.” Let’s lovingly shower people with God’s truths in our words and actions.

**How should we treat family and friends who are in heterosexual or homosexual sin?**

Love them. Do not hide the truth from them. Do not avoid them,

but be careful not to be drawn into whatever sins they are in love with. Show them you care for them. Be compassionate. Be humble. Be prepared to give answers to the questions they may have about God and His good plan of sexuality. Pray for them. Intercede to God on their behalf, that God changes their hearts.

**What should I do if I am struggling with heterosexual or homosexual sin?**

- Trust in Christ if you never have. Moralism, or being good, does not save you. Only an ongoing, trusting relationship with Jesus can save you.
- Test yourself to ensure you are in the faith. If you have a habitual, ongoing sin read the book of 1 John. If you say you are a Christian, but you continue to walk in sin and show you love the darkness and the world more than you love the light & Christ, you may not be a Christian at all.
- If you are a Christian and are struggling with sin seek help:
  - Confess – Confess your sin. Be honest and open with God.
  - Repent - Turn from the evil you’ve been practicing.
  - Be In God’s Word – It has all the answers. Discover them.
  - Be In Prayer – Ask God for help. You have God’s Spirit alive in you. Stop grieving Him and start talking to Him.
  - Be In Church – Connect with a local, Bible-teaching church. Outside of the church is referred to “Satan’s realm.” Be connected with Christ through a local body of believers.
  - Be With Believers – Confess your sin struggle with a Christian. Ask them to pray for you. Ask them to help you. Seek their encouragement.

God “desires that all people to be saved and to come to the

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knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:4)

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

#### HELPFUL RESOURCES

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

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

- “10 Myths About Lust” by Jared Moore (<http://cbmw.org/men/manhood/10-myths-about-lust>)
- *Intended for Pleasure: Sex Technique & Sexual Fulfillment in Christian Marriage* Ed & Gaye Wheat
- *A Celebration of Sex: A Guide to Enjoying God's Gift of Sexual Intimacy* By Douglas E. Rosenau
- *For Women Only: What You Need to Know about the Inner Lives of Men* By Shaunti Feldhahn
- *For Men Only: A Straightforward Guide to the Inner Lives of Women* By Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn
- *Winning the Battle Within: Realistic Steps to Overcoming Sexual Strongholds* By Neil T. Anderson
- *Sex Is Not the Problem (Lust Is): Sexual Purity in a Lust-Saturated World* By Joshua Harris

## HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM PORN

[www.trustworthyword.com/protect-from-porn](http://www.trustworthyword.com/protect-from-porn)

**Understand the Dangers for Everyone**  
from: Pornography Statistics” - [www.covenanteyes.com/pornography-facts-and-statistics/](http://www.covenanteyes.com/pornography-facts-and-statistics/)

*When a child or adolescent is directly exposed to pornography the following effects have been documented:*

- Lasting negative or traumatic emotional responses.
- Earlier onset of first sexual intercourse, thereby increasing the risk of STDs over the lifespan.
- The belief that superior sexual satisfaction is attainable without having affection for one’s partner, thereby reinforcing the commoditization of sex and the objectification of humans.
- The belief that being married or having a family are unattractive prospects.
- Increased risk for developing sexual compulsions and addictive behavior.
- Increased risk of exposure to incorrect information about human sexuality long before a minor is able to contextualize this information in ways an adult brain could.

*Pornography consumption is associated with the*

*following six trends, among others:*

- Increased marital distress, and risk of separation and divorce
- Decreased marital intimacy and sexual satisfaction
- Infidelity
- Increased appetite for more graphic types of pornography and sexual activity associated with abusive, illegal or unsafe practices
- Devaluation of monogamy, marriage and child rearing
- An increasing number of people struggling with compulsive and addictive sexual behavior

“Your Brain on Porn: 5 Ways Porn Warps Your Brain and Biblical Ways to Renew It”

- [www.covenanteyes.com/brain-ebook/](http://www.covenanteyes.com/brain-ebook/)

“When Children View Pornography”

- [www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/sexuality/when-children-use-pornography/when-children-view-pornography](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/sexuality/when-children-use-pornography/when-children-view-pornography)

### **Recognize the Prevalence of the Problem**

- 64% of self-identified Christian men and 15% of self-identified Christian women view pornography at least once a month (compared to 65% of non-Christian men and 30% of non-Christian women).
- The average of first time pornography exposure is estimated to be down to 8 years old.
- 93% of boys and 62% of girls were exposed to pornography before 18.
- 66.5% of young men and 48.7% of young women said viewing pornographic materials is an acceptable way to express one’s sexuality.
- Men who admit to masturbating once a week or more: Single Men - 48%, Married Men - 44%, Divorced Men - 68%
- The following percentages of men say they view

pornography at least once a month: 18-30-year olds, 79%; 31-49-year-olds, 67%; 50-68-year-olds, 49% (Barna, 2014)

- 63% of adult men and 36% of women have looked at pornography at least on time *while at work* in the past 3 months
- “Pornography Statistics” - [www.covenanteyes.com/pornography-facts-and-statistics/](http://www.covenanteyes.com/pornography-facts-and-statistics/)

### **Admit the Seriousness of the Sin: We Must Answer to God**

- “33 Reasons I Need to Abstain from Porn” - 33 Reasons Why I Need to Abstain from Porn” by Jason George - [www.covenanteyes.com/2013/05/29/33-reasons-to-abstain-from-porn/](http://www.covenanteyes.com/2013/05/29/33-reasons-to-abstain-from-porn/)
- (Hebrews 13:4 ESV) Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.
- (1 Corinthians 6:9) Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality
- (1 Corinthians 6:11) And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
- (Ephesians 5:3-6) But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ... 5 For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.
- (Colossians 3:5) Put to death therefore what is earthly

in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

• (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8) For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, 5 not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. 7 For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. 8 Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.”

### **How to Protect Yourself and Your Family**

- “Before the Birds and the Bees” [www.challies.com/articles/before-the-birds-and-the-bees](http://www.challies.com/articles/before-the-birds-and-the-bees)
- “The Porn Free Family Plan” [www.challies.com/articles/the-porn-free-family-plan](http://www.challies.com/articles/the-porn-free-family-plan)
- “Protect Your Family with the Circle” [www.challies.com/resources/protect-your-family-with-circle](http://www.challies.com/resources/protect-your-family-with-circle)
- **Have an Internet Filtering Plan - Covenant Eyes** - [covenanteyes.com/signup/](http://covenanteyes.com/signup/)
- **Buy & Use this App!** “Overcome Porn: 40 Day Challenge” by Covenant Eyes
- [www.covenanteyes.com](http://www.covenanteyes.com)
- **Read and Find Help** - Covenant Eyes - E-Books - a wide collection of helpful resources! [www.covenanteyes.com/singles-guide/](http://www.covenanteyes.com/singles-guide/)
- “What Does the Bible Say about Sexual Sin?” [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sexual-sin](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sexual-sin)
- “What Does the Bible Say about Homosexuality?” [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-homosexuality](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-homosexuality)

### **Cautions & Safeguards In Marriage**

1. Open sharing of all communication avenues and conversations
2. Never be alone with someone of the opposite sex
3. Are you hiding something? Not telling the whole story? Why?
4. Talk with your spouse & share any struggles or needs that you feel aren't being met.
5. Bounce your eyes. If you find yourself looking at someone lustfully, bounce your eyes another direction.
6. Understand the needs and love language of your spouse.
7. If someone is attractive to you, put up safeguards in your interactions with them.



# HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT THE TOUGHEST TOPICS

[www.trustworthyword.com/tough-topics-kids](http://www.trustworthyword.com/tough-topics-kids)

## 6 Tips on “The Talks”

- **Just Do It** - Yes this is a tough (and super awkward!!!) topic. But if you don't teach your child, someone else will. If you don't protect your child, someone may harm them. So don't wait for your kid's friends, teachers, TV or the internet to “educate” your children. Take the initiative. The best offense is a good defense! So stay ahead of the game with age appropriate books and resources as shared below.
- **Speak Simply & Shortly** - See what questions your kids ask and give brief, easy to understand answers. Think through short answers. Use good clarifying questions to create dialogue. Here are some free (from FocusOnTheFamily.com), age-appropriate biblical responses, questions, wisdom, and prayers to help prepare to respond on the issues of:
  - *Transgender*: <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/socialissues/sexuality/talking-to-your-children-about-transgender-issues>
  - *Homosexuality*: <http://media.focusonthefamily.com/free-downloads/pdf/2017-htttycah-online.pdf>
  - *Sex*: <http://media.focusonthefamily.com/free-downloads/pdf/The-Talk.pdf>
  - *Marriage*: <http://media.focusonthefamily.com/fotf/pdf/channels/social->

[issues/2017\\_tv\\_htttycam\\_printready.pdf](#)

- **Tell the Truth** - Try to incorporate Bible truths wherever you can. You may not remember all the details of a Bible story or verse, but start with what you remember. Be honest if you don't know but commit to help find a good answer later on. Try [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org) or [GQkidz.org](http://GQkidz.org)
- **Keep the Conversation Going** - Be sure not to shut down the conversation. Use open ended questions. Thank your kids for bringing up tough situations and tell them how much you enjoyed talking with them. Share that you hope that you want to continue to safely answer their questions anytime they desire. Affirm how proud you are of them for wanting to know God's answers.
- **Be Nice** - Encourage your child. Be kind in your tone of voice. Don't be defensive or argumentative. Don't insult or condescend to others. Avoid anger when you hear what your child may have seen, heard, or experienced elsewhere. Help your child to see people's main need as Jesus, not moralism (being a good person).
- **Pray, Pray, Pray!** - Preparing for, starting with, and ending conversations with prayer is crucial. We need God all the time, but asking for His wisdom and help in such difficult discussions is essential. Praying in such situations models godly humility and God-dependence to your kids, showing them that Jesus and the Bible are our authorities and not merely human opinions.

## Top 6 Parenting Resources for “The Talks”!

*To Guide & Equip Your Kids On Gender, Sex, & Purity*

- “The Talks” by Barrett and Jenifer Johnson (on RightNow Media)
- “How and When to Tell Your Kids About Sex” – by Stan and Brenna Jones
- “Six Ways to Keep the “Little” in Your Girl” (SecretKeeperGirl.com)
- “Six Ways to Keep the “Good” in Your Boy” by Dannah Gresh
- “Raising a Modern-Day Knight” – by Robert Lewis
- “Raising a Modern-Day Princess” - by Pam Farrell and Doreen Hanna
- “Stepping Up: A Call to Courageous Manhood” – by Dennis Rainey
- “Letters to My Daughters: The Art of Being a Wife” - by Barbara Rainey

## Top Resources For Children (By Age)

### Ages 3-7:

1. *The Princess and the Kiss* and *The Squire and the Scroll* by Jennie Bishop
2. *The Story of Me* by Stan and Brenna Jones (“God’s Design for Sex Series #1”)
3. *Before I Was Born* by Carolyn Nystrom (“God’s Design for Sex Series #2”)
4. *Good Pictures Bad Pictures Jr.: A Simple Plan to Protect Young Minds* by Kristen A. Jenson

### Ages 8-12:

- *Good Pictures, Bad Pictures: Porn-Proofing Today’s Young Kids* by Kristen A. Jenson and Gail Poyner
- *What’s the Big Deal? Why God Cares About Sex* by Stan & Brenna Jones

(“God’s Design for Sex Series #3”)

- *The Ultimate Girls’ Body Book* by Walt Larimore & Dr. Mari Wohlever
- *The Ultimate Boys’ Body Book* by Walt Larimore, MD
- *It’s Great to Be a Guy* by Jarrod Sechler with Dannah Gresh
- *It’s Great to Be a Girl* by Dannah Gresh and Suzy Weibel
- *Passport2Purity* by FamilyLife
- *So You’re About to Be a Teenager* by Dennis, Barbara, Samuel, and Rebecca Rainey

### Ages 13+:

- *Facing the Facts: The Truth About Sex and You* by Stan and Brenna Jones (“God’s Design for Sex Series,” #4 )
- *Every Young Man’s Battle: Strategies for Victory in the Real World of Sexual Temptation* by Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker
- *Every Young Woman’s Battle: Guarding Your Mind, Heart, and Body* by Shannon Ethridge and Stephen Arterburn
- *Passport2Identity* by FamilyLife
- *Aggressive Girls, Clueless Boys & Interviewing Your Daughter’s Date* by Dennis Rainey

## Top 6 Most Helpful Online Resources

- [www.familylife.com](http://www.familylife.com) - Biblical resources especially focused on strengthening marriages.
- [www.focusonthefamily.org](http://www.focusonthefamily.org) - Biblical equipping with an excellent emphasis on parenting.
- [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org) - Biblical answers to over 500,000 life questions.
- [www.familymatters.net](http://www.familymatters.net) - Great small group resources for marriage and parenting.
- [www.covenanteyes.com](http://www.covenanteyes.com) - Pornography accountability software.
- [www.livingout.org](http://www.livingout.org) - Biblical help to those experiencing same-sex attraction.

**Circle Home & CircleGo** - [www.meetcircle.com](http://www.meetcircle.com) - This is

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the best way for families to manage content and time online, on any device. (\$99 for home version & \$5/month for up to 10 devices on CircleGo)

- **CircleGo** - Your family's mobile devices, now managed across all networks. Everything covered, now everywhere. Apps are the new Internet, and managing them wherever your kid goes is a must for parents. Filters and Time Limits apply anywhere and everywhere, even for apps like Snapchat, Instagram, and YouTube.

**Bark:** [www.bark.us](http://www.bark.us) The best way to have your child's text messages, images, emails and social media communications scanned and categorized for concerning content. Includes many other features with controlling access, managing time online, and providing location updates.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY AND GENDER IDENTITY?

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-homosexuality](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-homosexuality)

“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.”

(Hebrews 13:4, ESV)

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality”

(1 Corinthians 6:9)

“If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination”

(Leviticus 20:13)

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”

(Proverbs 14:12)

**Is God anti-gay?**

*No, but God is against everyone who lives for and values themselves more than God* (Ezra 8:22). For those who embrace the identity of “homosexual,” “lesbian,” “gay,” “bisexual,” “transgender,” or “queer,” they have chosen an identity apart from God (1 John 3:9-10). God is against their sin (Romans 3:10-12,23), and they are storing up His wrath for themselves (Romans 2:5). The good news is that God is patient towards us, “not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance” (2 Peter 3:9, 1 Timothy 2:4). God shows us His amazing love through the sacrificial, substitutionary death of His Son Jesus on the Cross while we were still choosing to live life our own way (Romans 5:6-11). God wants everyone who has chosen the identity of gay to admit and turn from their sin, believe He lovingly died on the Cross and rose from the grave, and confess Christ as Lord (Romans 10:9-10).

God “desires that all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:4)

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

**What does the Bible say about homosexuality?**

*Homosexuality is repeatedly condemned as sin without qualification or nuance.* Romans 1:24-32, Genesis 19, Leviticus 18:22 ; 20:13, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:3-6, 1 Timothy 1:9,10, Jude 7.

For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; [27] and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. [28] And

since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. (Romans 1:26-28)

Homosexuality is the embracing and practice of same-sex lusts, desires, acts, pride, and identity. Homosexuality is contrary to God's portrayal of the Gospel in marriage and is contrary to His creation of nature, physically, anatomically, reproductively, and a perversion of His plan for sexual pleasure.

- 1 Corinthians 6:9 – ESV “nor men who practice homosexuality” (refers to passive & active partners in homosexual acts)
- *Malakos* (Greek) – effeminate, of a boy kept for homosexual relations with a man, submits his body to unnatural lewdness
- *Arsenokoites* (Greek) – homosexual, one who lies with a male as with a female, sodomite, homosexual (1 Tim 1:10, 1 Cor 6:9)

This is not a new or modern-day issue. Paul writes to Christians in Corinth, saying (to include reference to the sin of homosexuality), “And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:11).

**Is someone born gay? Does God create homosexuals?**

*No, someone is not born gay or created by God to be homosexual.* God does not tempt anyone with sin or evil (James 1:13-15), such as the sin of homosexuality (Romans 1:24-32, Genesis 19, Leviticus 18:22 ; 20:13, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:3-3, 1 Timothy 1:9,10, Jude 7). Just as there is no genetic excuse for anger, murder, lust, adultery, greed, theft, or lying, there is no genetic excuse for homosexuality or any other sin.

Everyone is born with inherited sin with both guilt of and

inclination towards sin (Romans 5:12, Jeremiah 17:9, Psalm 51:3-5). We all then choose to sin against our Creator by failing to treasure and value God above any other thing. We all morally rebel against God's commands and will be held accountable according to His perfect, Holy standard (Romans 3:10-12, 23).

Our family and cultural environment may influence us toward a particular type of sin, but sin is ultimately a personal choice of law breaking that we make. We should not be surprised or shocked when non-believers do not understand God's truths or yield to obey His plans. Such ongoing submission to and choice of sin as their practice and identity reveals their lost state.

#### **Is same-sex attraction a sin?**

*No. Same-sex attraction describes the temptation towards choosing the sin of homosexuality. When homosexual attraction is embraced as an acceptable desire, action, or identity, then it becomes sinful intent. When same-sex attraction is recognized as leading towards sin, dishonorable passions, and unnatural actions, it can be resisted through the power of a relationship with Christ. Thus, same-sex attraction is not a sin in itself, but is a temptation that must be resisted. Accordingly, it is often more helpful to refer to people as experiencing same-sex attraction rather than to identify them by the sin of homosexuality.*

In a similar way, heterosexual attraction is not sinful in itself. When heterosexual attraction is embraced as an acceptable desire, action, or identity outside of God's plan of marriage between one man and one woman for life, it becomes lustful and adulterous sin (Romans 1:24-32, James 1:12-15, and Matthew 5:27-32).

#### **Can someone be a gay Christian?**

*No. It is not possible to simultaneously embrace or identify with a sin while simultaneously claiming to have yielded their lives to Christ's lordship. It is possible to be a Christian who struggles with same-sex attraction yet recognizes homosexuality as sin*

and actively resists their fleshly desires.

No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. [10] By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:9-10 ESV)

For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. (Hebrews 10:26-27)

#### **Should Christians be for or against homosexual marriage, unions, and adoptions? Is it right to "force" biblical beliefs on a nation that is primarily non-Christian?**

*The Bible is described as God's voice. Even though our nation and others are not primarily Christians, God is sovereign over them. When a nation's leaders or people disregard, disrespect, and disobey God, there are consequences. When we ignore the Bible it shows we are ignoring God by shutting our ears to His voice.*

God tells us through the prophet Samuel that: (1 Samuel 12:14-15) "If you will fear the LORD and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well. [15] But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king."

We (Christians) should want it to go well for our country, its people and its leaders. We don't want our God against our nation. Moralism will not save our nation. A God-centered heart will rescue our nation from further consequences of our sin. We need to pray that our nation begins to fear, serve, and obey the Lord and stop rebelling against His good plan.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. [16] For all that is in the world - the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life - is not from the Father but from the world. (1 John 2:15-16)

### **How should we treat family and friends who are in homosexual sin?**

*Love them.* Do not hide the truth from them. Do not avoid them, but be careful not to be drawn into whatever sins they are in love with. Show them you care for them. Be compassionate. Be humble. Be prepared to give answers to the questions they may have about God and His good plan of sexuality. Pray for them. Intercede to God on their behalf, that God changes their hearts. It is never too late for the Gospel.

### **What should I do if I am struggling with same-sex attraction or homosexual sin?**

- Trust in Christ if you never have. Moralism, or being good, does not save you. Only an ongoing, trusting relationship with Jesus can save you.
- Test yourself to ensure you are in the faith. If you have a habitual, ongoing sin read the book of 1 John. If you say you are a Christian, but you continue to walk in sin, you show you love the darkness and the world more than you love the light & Christ, and you are not be a Christian at all. (1 John 1:6)
- If you are a Christian and are struggling with sin, seek help.
- Recognize that your sexual feeling is not your identity, you are much more than your sexuality.
- Confess – Confess your sin. Be honest and open with God. (1 John 1:9)
- Repent - Turn from the evil you've been practicing.
- Be In God's Word – It has all the answers. Discover them.

- Recognize that singleness is a gift from God (1 Corinthians 7). Ask God to remove your same-sex attractions and to change your desires and attractions towards the opposite-sex.
- Be In Prayer – Ask God for help. You have God's Spirit alive in you. Stop grieving Him and start talking to Him.
- Be In Church – Connect with a local, Bible-teaching church. Outside of the church is referred to "Satan's realm." Be connected with Christ through a local body of believers.
- Be With Believers – Confess your sin struggle with a Christian. Ask them to pray for you. Ask them to help you. Seek their encouragement.

### **What about gender identity issues?**

Similar to same-sex attraction, gender confusion itself is not a sin. When someone embraces a gender identity apart from their biological, genetically verifiable, God-given identity, it is sin. God created mankind "male and female" (Genesis 1:27, Psalm 139, 1 Corinthians 6:9). When someone identifies, acts, or dresses contrary to their biological gender, they have rebelled against God's creative plan.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27)

Promoting gender as a choice does great harm with both earthly and eternal consequences (Jeremiah 7:23). Rejecting God's plan and instead choosing to trust in one's feelings (Jeremiah 17:9-10) and following one's fleshly desires (1 John 2:15-16) results in eternal death (Proverbs 14:12).

"A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God." (Deuteronomy 22:5 ESV)

"But this command I gave them: 'Obey my voice, and I will be

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your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.” (Jeremiah 7:23 ESV)

### **What about polygamy? Pedophilia? Bestiality?**

Although these issues may not be widespread in our current days, there has been both previous cultural embracement of such sin and clear biblical condemnation of such sin (Deuteronomy 17:17, Genesis 2:24, 1 Timothy 3:2,12, Titus 1:6, Ephesians 5:22-33; Galatians 5:16-21, Romans 1:31, 2 Timothy 3:2, Matthew 18:1-14; Exodus 22:19, Leviticus 18:23, Leviticus 20:15-16, Deuteronomy 27:21). We are warned by Scripture that history repeats itself so we must be prepared for such a repetition of unlawful and unholy sexual activity.

“What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 1:9 ESV)

### **HELPFUL RESOURCES**

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

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

- “10 Myths About Lust” by Jared Moore (<http://cbmw.org/men/manhood/10-myths-about-lust>)
- *Is God Anti-Gay? And Other Questions about Homosexuality, the Bible, and Same-Sex Attraction* by Sam Allberry
- *God and the Gay Christian? A Response to Matthew Vines*, Edited by R. Albert Mohler, Jr.
- *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert : An English Professor's Journey into Christian Faith* by Rosaria Champagne Butterfield
- *Openness Unhindered: Further Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert on Sexual Identity and Union with Christ* by Rosaria Champagne Butterfield

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT GENDER?

What is a man? What is a woman? We would be wise to consider these God-assigned and defined identities. We might ask, why does God create us male and female? Why does He describe repeatedly our responsibilities in gender-based terms such as mother, father, husband, wife, son, and daughter?

Genesis 1:27, 31 “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. . . And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (ESV)”

Our world continues in its attempt to redefine, diminish, and confuse the role of gender from an objective, static, God-created reality to a subjective and ever-changing base of feelings, preferences, and self-identification. When someone embraces a gender or sexual identity apart from God’s creative plan, it is sin. God created mankind “male and female” (Genesis 1:27 and Psalm 139) and marriage for one man and one woman, for life (Genesis 2:24 and Matthew 19:1-12). God calls His created plan for humanity and gender “very good.” In response we should take care to hear and lovingly share God’s warning towards those who disregard or rebel against Him:

“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!” (Isaiah 5:20-21 ESV)

Woman. Girl. Mother. Wife. Daughter. Grandmother. She. Her.

Man. Boy. Father. Husband. Son. Grandfather. He. Him.

Words have meaning. Let us not minimize or confuse the beauty and identity of these words. May we celebrate godliness in obedience to God’s clear, loving instruction of how to model godliness through our God-given gender. Let us read and respond to God’s wisdom in passages such as Ephesians 5-6:4 and Titus 2:2-6 for our roles.

Deuteronomy 22:5 “A woman shall not wear a man’s garment, nor shall a man put on a woman’s cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.”

Many may be confused, frustrated, or even angered by the increasing rhetoric and actions in support of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender) movement. Biblical Christians must be reminded that our response should be gracious and loving, yet convictional and truth-filled. We must remember that LGBT sin is primarily against God, and their problem is not merely a sexual or gender-based sin. Their problem is a rebellion against God’s authority and their solution is only found in the Gospel. LGBT individuals are not our ultimate enemy and we are not theirs.

1 Corinthians 11:14–15 “Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering.”

Rebellion against God’s created plan is serious. While the Bible describes men who have been ritually castrated (eunuchs) under

pagan beliefs or practices (such as cult prostitutes Deuteronomy 23:17, 1 Kings 22:46), God prescribes that it is a serious sin to emasculate oneself in opposition to God given manhood and sexuality (Deuteronomy 23:1 “whose male organ is cut off”). Additionally, intentionally misrepresenting one’s God-assigned gender externally through clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms, and behavior is presented as sinful by God (Deuteronomy 22:5, 1 Corinthians 11:14-15, 1 Corinthians 6:9 *malakos* “effeminate”). While people may try to modify their bodies and appearance through surgeries, hormones, clothing, and more, the reality of their God assigned sex and gender cannot be changed. Changing a pronoun or choosing name to misrepresent one’s genetic sex/gender is likewise a serious act of rebellion against the Creator. One’s sex and gender continues to be evidenced by one’s biology, anatomy (reproductive organs, mammary glands, endocrine systems, skeletal and muscular structure, and more), and genetic makeup (presence or absence of a Y chromosome).

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.” (NAS)

LGBT sin is ultimately a whole-hearted rebellion against their Creator God, not merely sexual or gender deviance from historical norms. Satan, the world, and their flesh has deceived them, just as we were once ourselves deceived (1 Corinthians 6:9-11) in our own sin. May biblical Christians pray, share, and show forth an eternal identity, not rooted in gender or sexuality, but in a Gospel love rooted in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to His revealed truth.

“And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says ‘I know him’ but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, [5] but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is



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perfected.” (1 John 2:3-5 ESV)

**Helpful Resource:**

- . “Is it wrong for men to be effeminate or women to be masculine” [www.gotquestions.org/effeminate-men-masculine-women.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/effeminate-men-masculine-women.html)

## A BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO PRIDE MONTH

Have you noticed the increased emphasis on validating, affirming, and encouraging LGBTQ+ in America, especially during “Pride Month” (June)? Rainbow flags at U.S. Embassies. Company logos changed to a rainbow pattern. An onslaught of advertising campaigns. Products created to celebrate a sexual revolution. Such rapid and radical changes in our society can often overwhelm us. How should a biblical Christian understand our culture? What should followers of Jesus do?

1 Chronicles 12:32 “Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do”

**1. Love God - Understanding False Religion.** Read 1 John. Just because someone calls themselves a Christian doesn’t make them a genuine believer. Rebellion against God’s authority and Biblical commands reveals both a false religion and a false conversion. If God’s voice in Scripture is not one’s authority, Jesus is not one’s Lord and Savior. A true love of God is evidenced in obedience and submission to His Word.

Matthew 15:8 “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me”

**2. Practice Self-Control - Understanding Cultural History.** Be slow to speak. The sexual revolution in America didn’t happen overnight, and was overwhelmingly found in heterosexual sin before LGBTQ+ sin. Decades of sensuality, pornography, no-fault divorce, serial marriage, fornication,

adultery, prostitution, abuse, and more have led us to the LGBTQ + rebellion against God. We are all broken sexually in our sin. This cycle of sexual sin has happened repeatedly in many other cultures. We are on a historical and moral path towards even more destructive sexual immorality: polygamy, polyamory, pedophilia, bestiality, virtual sex, and sex bots.

Ecclesiastes 1:9 “What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.”

### **3. Be Kind to LGBTQ+ People - Understanding Relationships.**

Many who identify as lesbian, gay, transgender, bi-sexual, queer, or any number of evolving labels have suffered intense hatred, insults, abuse, and attacks. Get to know your LGBTQ+ neighbors. Listen to their stories. Weep with their hurts. Find ways to show them genuine, Christian love without condoning or approving their sinful choices and self-identification.

Luke 6:27–28 “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.”

**4. Exhibit Faithfulness - Understanding Spiritual Truths.** The increasingly rampant heterosexual, homosexual, and gender identity sins are “false to the truth...earthly, unspiritual, demonic” (James 3:14–15). Validating, affirming, approving, accepting, endorsing, encouraging, supporting, promoting, and celebrating LGBTQ+ is foolish, unnatural, dishonorable, impure, and offensive to our Holy God (Romans 1:18-32). Watch out! Before you form or share your opinion on LGBTQ+, examine the Scriptures in the pursuit of faithfulness to God’s truth (Romans 1:24-32, Genesis 19, Leviticus 18:22; 20:13, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:3-6, 1 Timothy 1:9-10, Jude 7). Do not bend the knee to the false god of LGBTQ+ pride.

Romans 1:24, 26-27, 32 “Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their

bodies among themselves...For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; [27] and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. ...Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”

The world says “love is love,” but God explains that “God is love” (1 John 4:8,16); He is the definition and definer of true love.

The world encourages “love yourself” while God warns of the danger of being deceived to follow “the course of the world” in pursuing the “desires of the body and the mind” (Ephesians 2:1-3).

The world advertises “you be you”, but God says “You shall be holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16).

The world teaches you to follow your “own truth” and understanding of god, while God proclaims “whoever says ‘I know him’ but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him”(1 John 2:4-6).

Isaiah 5:20 “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”

### **5. Be A Joy-Filled Presence - Understanding Eternal Consequences.**

Those who continue in sexual sin, whether heterosexual or homosexual, have chosen a path to Hell. When surrounded by cultural evil, may be choose to be like Noah, Daniel, Paul, the church in Philadelphia, and so many more faithful saints, keeping God’s Word and not denying His name (Revelation 3:8). We must choose to be an evangelistic, joy-filled presence among those who are perishing.

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1 Corinthians 6:9 “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality.”

**6. Endure - Understanding God’s Plan.** Don’t be surprised when people hate you for standing on God’s Word concerning the sinfulness of LGBTQ+ (1 John 3:13–14). Some might falsely accuse you of being homophobic or a bigot. Others may threaten and attack you (Matthew 5:10-11). Stand firm (Ephesians 6:10-20). Turn the other cheek (Luke 6:29). When possible, speak truth, with humility, as an act of love. Live in righteousness, evidencing the bright light of true love to a dark world. Practice genuine love.

Romans 12:9 “Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.”

## HOW TO RESPOND TO THE MOST COMMON ARGUMENTS FOR LGBTQ+

Handout available online here:

[www.trustworthyword.com/lgbtq](http://www.trustworthyword.com/lgbtq)

### *Helpful Resources:*

- Watch this film: [www.audacitymovie.com](http://www.audacitymovie.com)
- Listen to the conversations on this YouTube Channel: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCmrVJGUS1u5-Hsm\\_BFS\\_1YA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmrVJGUS1u5-Hsm_BFS_1YA)
- Dozens of good questions on LGBTQ+ with Bible answers @ [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)
- “What does the Bible say about LGBTQ+?” - [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-homosexuality](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-homosexuality)
- “What does the Bible say about gender?” - [www.trustworthyword.com/gender](http://www.trustworthyword.com/gender)

Some touchy conversations may be best conducted with effective questions. On the topic of LGBTQ+, here are some of the most common arguments. The links above include many helpful bible verses and truths. Some of the questions below might be useful in keeping a conversation moving forward. Good questions help us to think through what we really believe

and why we believe it. Sometimes such a line of questions helps us to see errors and truth more clearly.

Some basic tips when speaking to someone on a touchy topic:

**Show Love** - be kind, compassionate, gentle, and respectful - avoid anger and arrogance

**Speak Truth** - be convictional, clear, prepared, and honest,

**Listen Well** - be patient, don't interrupt, actively listen with reflective statements

**Share Jesus** - ultimately anyone affirming, practicing, or identifying as LGBTQ+ does simply have a merely sexual issue, they have a sin issue, the solution to which is Jesus and the Gospel. Share the Good News of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and point them to salvation.

- [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian)
- [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian)
- [www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-for-jesus](http://www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-for-jesus)

James 1:19–20 "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God."

1 Peter 3:15 "in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect"

### 1. The "God Made Me This Way" Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* "I was born this way", "I can't help the feelings I have", "It feels right therefore it is right to me", "not a lifestyle or a choice, it is who you are",
- Do you think people are born with tendencies to do right or wrong? Adultery & fornication? Liars? Thieves? Or is it a choice? A following of an urge or feeling?

- Does feeling something is right make it right? How do we know right from wrong?
- Doing wrong comes naturally to us? Is doing wrong part of human nature?
- Is there a genetic excuse for anger, murder, lust, adultery, greed, theft, or lying? Is there a genetic excuse for homosexuality or any other sin?

### 2. The "This Is Love" Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* "does no harm", "two consenting adults",
- How would you define love? How would you define hate? Is love subjective? Or is there an objective sense that is important?
- If love is defined by strong affection or pleasure, doesn't the object of our affection and pleasure matter as well? Do determine if it is a helpful or harmful form of love?
- Are our feelings trustworthy? Does our intuition always lead us in the right direction?
- Has anyone ever told you they loved you, only to hurt you later on? Do you think they really meant they "loved" you at some point? Was their definition of love ultimately accurate?

### 3. The "Gender Is Fluid" Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* "sex and gender is different", "I choose my identity", "I identify by \_\_\_ pronouns"
- If gender is fluid, can race or nationality be fluid?
- If gender is fluid, how frequently may I change my gender? What requirements are there to know for certain what gender I am at any given moment?
- What is a man? What is a woman? How do you know? What do anatomy, biology, and genetics tell us?
- What does God create both humans and animals as male and

female? How are they similar? How are they different? Why do you think men and women are designed so differently?

- What is the main purpose of our reproductive organs?
- Can gender be altered biologically? Genetically?
- Why are sports teams separated by boys and girls, men and women? Is it fair and just for a biological woman to compete against a biological man even if they have “transitioned”?
- Why do words have meaning? If the definition of a word is holistically subjective, how well will communication function?
- How would you describe me? How is identity established? Can I be mistaken about my identity? Should I be able to force you to identify me by a false identity?
- What would you consider child abuse? What should be the consequence for causing permanent, lasting harm to a child?
- Why does a government set certain ages to determine: alcohol consumption, gambling, smoking, marriage, military service, commercial driving licenses? If such ages are relevant to these important decisions, what should be the age of consent to something like mastectomies, hysterectomies, genital removal, and chemical intervention with puberty and natural development?
- Do you think “transitioning” helps lower a suicide or self-harm rate? Answer: transitioning increases the risk of self-harm & suicide. Did you know that people who went through “gender-affirming” surgery or chemical treatment have a 19x higher rate of suicide than those who do not? (<https://www.transgendertrend.com/the-suicide-myth/> )
- Did you know that “75 percent of patients with gender dysphoria have other psychiatric problems” which are often the underlying causes of self-harm and suicide rather than their gender identity? (<https://www.transgendertrend.com/the-suicide-myth/> ) Such studies suggest that non-permanent

treatments for the psychological concerns would be more helpful than the permanent medical/chemical and surgical treatments that create irreversible harm and increased likelihood of self-harm or suicide.

#### 4. The “Equal Rights” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “marriage equality”, “equal rights”, “people who love each other should have the right to be happy and be married”, “separation of church and state”
- What is the purpose of government? How is the “common good” best determined?
- What is the purpose of government recognizing marriage? Incentivizing marriage?
- When should something be a crime? Why and how should it be punished?
- How was the United States government and law formed? What role did the Bible play?

#### 5. The “God is Love” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “there are many ways to interpret the Bible”, “God will forgive me”, “there are many ways to God”
- Does the Bible say anything about God’s judgment? Wrath? Hell? Justice? Why?
- Does a loving parent have rules? Why? Are rules hateful or helpful?
- What does God think about homosexuality? What does the Bible say?
- What does God think about gender and sexuality? What does the Bible say?
- If my opinion about God is different than the Bible, then who is wrong?
- If you believe in another source of authority other than the

Bible, why do you believe it? What exclusive truth claims does it make? How do you know it is right?

## 6. The “Bible Hates Gays” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “the Bible is hypocritical... encouraging abuse, harems/concubines, women as property, polygamy, marrying your rapist, women as spoils of war, female slaves”, “marriage preexisted Christianity”, “the Bible didn’t use the word ‘homosexuality’ until recent translations”, “the Bible also uses the word “abomination” for shellfish”, “the Bible says homosexuals should be stoned”
- What is the difference between moral law, governmental law, and religious law in the Old Testament?
- If something is “described” by history, does that necessarily mean it is “prescribed”?
- If a government regulates a harmful practice/behavior, does that mean it approves of it? Or that it sees dangers and problems within the practice and is trying to minimize the harmful effects?
- Do you know how the Bible speaks of sexual purity? Monogamy? The purposes of sex and gender?

## 7. The “Christians Hate Gays” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “Christians are bigots”, “Christians are homophobes”, “if you don’t celebrate, you hate”, “Christians are closed minded”, “Christians are stuck in the past”
- Can you disagree with someone and still love them?
- If something is dangerous, shouldn’t we speak up?
- If a Christian believes something leads to Hell, shouldn’t they warn them? Wouldn’t it be hateful to remain silent?
- If a Christian believes there is only one way to Heaven, wouldn’t it be loving to share it? Wouldn’t it be hateful to not share the Gospel?

- What is idolatry? Why do people make up a god in their own image?
- What is self-deception? Why is it dangerous? How can we know what is true?
- According to the Bible will adultery get into Heaven? Fornicators? Liars? Thieves? Idolaters? Should I warn them? If I care about homosexuals, should I warn them?
- If two people agree to shoot fireworks at each other, how have they wronged the other? By putting their lives and health in danger. If a third person sees the danger that they are putting themselves in, should that person speak up? Intervene? Petition a government worker (police) to protect them from themselves? When should someone stop trying to help?

“Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.” (1 Corinthians 3:18 ESV)

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9–10)

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; [4] that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, [5] not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; [6] that no one transgress and **wrong his brother** in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. [7] For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. [8] Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.” (1 Thessalonians 4:3–8)

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ABORTION?

## 14 Scriptural Reasons Abortion is a Problem

1. (Exodus 20:13) You shall not murder.
2. (Proverbs 31:8) Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute.
3. (Jeremiah 1:5) Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.
4. (Psalm 22:10) On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God.
5. (Psalm 139:13) For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
6. (Exodus 21:22-25) When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. [23] But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, [24] eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, [25] burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.
7. (Proverbs 6:16-19) "There are six things that **the Lord hates**, seven that are **an abomination to him**: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and **hands that shed innocent blood**, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make

- haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers."
8. (Deuteronomy 27:25) "Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood."
  9. (Psalm 106:37-38) "They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons; they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood."
  10. (Genesis 50:20) "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives"
  11. (Jeremiah 22:3) "Thus says the LORD: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place."
  12. (Luke 1:41) "And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit"
  13. (Isaiah 5:20) "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!"
  14. (Romans 1:28-32) "And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. ... They are full of ... murder ... inventors of evil ... Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them."

## Three Statistical Reasons Abortion is a Problem in the United States

1. # of American deaths in US military conflicts, 1776-present(236yrs)= 1,326,626; # of American lives aborted from 1973-2008(35yrs)=~50million

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2. # of homicides in US from 1973-2008 = 589,945; # of abortions in US from 1973-2008, ~50,000,000
3. # of homicides in 2008 in US = 16,442, # of abortions in 2008 in US = ~1.21million

### **Three Statistical Reasons Abortion is a Problem in Kentucky**

(the state I live in...for perspective)

1. In Kentucky in 2005 the #1 cause of death was heart disease (10,572), #2 was cancer (9,943), & #3 cause of death was abortion (3,870).
2. In Kentucky (2005) there were 3,870 abortion deaths; more than due to stroke (2,103), accident (2,264), flu/pneumonia (996) or suicide (548)
3. In Kentucky in 2005, there were 3,870 deaths due to abortion; more than all of the combined deaths of those aged 0-44 (3,361).

#### **HELPFUL RESOURCES**

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

### **3 Short But Powerful Films To Watch:**

- [www.180movie.com](http://www.180movie.com)
- [www.7ReasonsMovie.com](http://www.7ReasonsMovie.com)
- **“When It’s Okay to Kill Your Mother”:**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxjCdBmCCVQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxjCdBmCCVQ)

“Those who forget history are destined to repeat it”

## **HOW TO RESPOND TO THE MOST COMMON ARGUMENTS FOR ABORTION**

*If you haven’t seen these short 30 minute films,  
they are worth your time and walk through  
many of these conversations below:  
[www.180movie.com](http://www.180movie.com) and [www.7ReasonsMovie.com](http://www.7ReasonsMovie.com)*

Abortion is a difficult and touchy topic. Many have struggled with their past choices and regret them. Others try to mask their guilt by their advocacy and passionate defense of abortion. As Christians we should avoid arrogance, harshness, and the temptation to be argumentative. Our goal is not to win an argument. Our goal is to win a soul to the love of Jesus and to advocate for and protect babies in the womb. We need to be prepared to give an answer for what God says through the Bible. On touchy topics, asking good questions can promote dialogue and reasonable thinking rather than emotional defensiveness. We should always look for ways to bridge such conversations to share the love, hope, and forgiveness of Jesus.

#### **1. The “My Body, My Choice” Argument**

- *other versions of this argument: “their choice”, “every situation*



is different”, “it’s the women’s choice”, “bodily autonomy”, “it’s her body

- When is it “not her body”? When does the baby have its own body?
- What makes you unique as a human? Your DNA? Heartbeat? Brain? When does a baby develop these? DNA @ fertilization, heartbeat @ 3 weeks, sucks its thumb at 9 weeks, brainwaves at 16 weeks.
- Are moral values subjective to one’s feelings? What about theft? Murder? Pedophilia? Why do we know it is wrong to harm others?
- Was Hitler wrong to kill 6 million Jews and people with disabilities? Even though it was legalized in Nazi Germany?

## 2. The “Lesser Evil” and “Bad Timing” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “incompetence of parents”, “born into a bad situation”, “I’m not ready”, “it’s inconvenient”, “they can’t take care of the baby”, “they don’t have the finances or support”
- Which is best, to kill your own child or give it away to someone else?
- Are you thankful that your mom did not abort you?
- Was Hitler right to kill those he thought were “unworthy of life”? Even though it was legal?
- If a mother had to kill her baby with her own hands, seeing the child with their own eyes, do you think that would change her decision? Why or why not?
- What sacrifices did your parents make for you? Were they inconvenienced to care for you?
- Was your baby ready to die? Was it convenient for your baby?
- Finish the sentence, “it is ok to kill a baby within the womb when \_\_\_\_\_”

- Consider is my pet dog was pregnant but it was inconvenient for me to raise the puppies. Is it ok for me to kill them? Why not? What is a better option?

## 3. The “Separation of Church and State” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “churches shouldn’t get involved”, “churches who speak up are violating tax law”, “Christian morality has nothing to do with political issues”
- What is the purpose of a government? Answer: “to provide and protect those under their care.” Who are those needing the greatest care and protection? Answer: the vulnerable and weak. Who are weaker and more vulnerable than children in the womb? Answer: “no-one, they need our protection from the American holocaust”
- Does American IRS tax law prohibit churches for advocating on issues? Answer: “no, it only prohibits church promoting a particular candidate or party” If IRS law violated God’s law, which one should be obeyed?
- Should churches have spoken up more in Nazi Germany during their holocaust of 6 million Jews, non-whites, and disabled children? Should American churches speak up more during the American holocaust of 63+ million innocent babies in the womb?

## 4. The “Rape or Incest” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “not fair to continue their suffering”
- Which is worse, murder or rape? Do two wrongs make a right?
- Is it right to punish an innocent child for the sin & crime of their father?
- Which is better adoption or abortion? Have you ever thought

about that? Isn't a child worth the inconvenience and sacrifice of pregnancy?

- If you saw a child locked in a car on a hot day, what would you do? Why wouldn't you let the baby die for the sin or crime of its parent? Would you let the parent kill a child on purpose? Isn't that the same as abortion?
- If you found out that you were the product of rape, would you be mad at your mom for not aborting you? Or would you be amazed by her courage and love to carry you to term and give birth to you?
- If you found out that I was the product of rape, what would you say to me? Should I have been aborted? Should I be thankful for life?
- Have you ever heard or read the testimony of someone who was conceived by rape? Maybe you should consider their point of view. Here are a few to consider:
  - <https://baptistcourier.com/2022/01/a-life-conceived-through-rape-still-worth-saving/>
  - [www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/first-person-i-was-the-product-of-a-rape/](http://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/first-person-i-was-the-product-of-a-rape/)

### 5. The "Life At Risk" Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* "ectopic pregnancies"
- How rare are ectopic pregnancies? Answer: "1-2% of all pregnancies but is responsible for 4-10% of maternal deaths"
- Did you know that both doctors and state laws recognize that treating an ectopic pregnancy with surgery is not an abortion?
- What is the goal of a surgery for a woman with an ectopic pregnancy?
  - Answer: "to save both the mother and child when possible"
- What is the goal of an abortion?
  - Answer: "to kill the baby 100% of the time"

- Can you give an example of a doctor or mother who was prosecuted for a surgical procedure to treat an ectopic pregnancy or other medical emergency where the pregnancy threatened the life of the mother?
  - "In fact, no abortion law in any state in America prevents lifesaving treatment for women with ectopic pregnancies and other life-threatening conditions. That was true of abortion laws in 1972, and it's true of abortion laws in 2022." (<https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/stop-lying-about-abortion-laws-and-ectopic-pregnancies/>)

### 6. The "Lesser Suffering" Argument (special needs)

- *other versions of this argument:* "they are going to die anyhow", "more merciful", "severe disabilities", "it's about quality of life"
- How do you know their overall quality of life for someone not yet born?
- If a child with medical disabilities was lying on a table in front of you, how would you kill it? What is the difference between a newborn child on a table and a child in the womb?

### 7. The "Women's Healthcare" Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* "family planning", "preserve women's health", "dangerous and unsafe abortion techniques if abortion is illegal", "just a medical decision", "a woman should have the same right as men to not be pregnant", "it is just another form of birth control"
- How is it good "women's healthcare" to kill female children? Who is supposed to care for life and health of those in the womb?
- "First do no harm" (*primum non nocere* in Latin) has long been a principal of medical care. How is tearing, cutting, poisoning, burning, or suctioning the body of a human child not doing

“harm” to that human body?

- If someone punches a pregnant woman in the stomach and the baby dies, the man can be charged with murder. Why?
- What about mental, emotional, and spiritual health? How do you think post-abortion men and women do long term with the guilt of their past decisions?

### 8. The “Fetus is not a Baby” Argument

- *other versions of this argument:* “it’s just a clump of cells”, “it’s only life outside the womb”
- Why are the eggs of bald eagles protected in America? When are they protected?
- What did people do in Nazi Germany? Do you know how they justified the killing of humans? They declared them “life unworthy of life.” Is that right? Who has the right to declare a “life unworthy of life”?
- What does “fetus” mean? Answer: offspring of two humans. When is a “fetus” alive? Answer: at the point of fertilization. Therefore the “fetus” is a living human. When is it ok to kill a living human?
- Why do women and grieve after a miscarriage if the loss is only a “clump of cells”?
- Why do women and men celebrate a pregnancy if the gain is only a “clump of cells”?
- ***If a child in the womb is not a human life, then why do you have to kill it?***
  - “Rose’s claim that there is scientific consensus that life begins at fertilization appears to stem from a survey conducted by the nonpartisan “Brief of Biologists as Amici Curiae in Support of Neither Party.” The survey was submitted to the Supreme Court before the ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization. The

- survey found that 96% of the 5,577 biologists from 1,058 academic institutions surveyed affirmed that a human’s life begins at fertilization. Furthermore, 85% of the 5,577 biologists self-identified as pro-choice, 89% self-identified as liberal, and 95% claimed that they held a Ph.D.” (<https://www.foxnews.com/media/pro-life-activist-clashes-dr-phil-audience-member-abortion-you-keep-speaking-over-me>)
- How can you tell someone is a living human? (see a more detailed timeline at [www.ehd.org](http://www.ehd.org))
  - ANSWERS: DNA, heartbeat, brainwaves, dreams, movement, body
  - At fertilization/conception, a child has its own, complete, unique set of DNA. Is it ok to kill a child with 100% human DNA? Why are adult humans identified by DNA?
  - At 3 weeks, 1 day the heart begins beating. Is it ok to kill a baby by stopping its heart? Why is human death certified by the stopping of a heartbeat? Why do healthcare workers try so hard to maintain or restart a heartbeat?
  - At 9 weeks a child begins to suck its thumb and has taste buds and ears. At 11 weeks, all organs of an infant are formed. Is it ok to kill a thumb-sucking baby by destroying its organs? When is it ok to involuntarily remove an organ from an adult human?
  - At 13 weeks, a baby in the womb can hear. She makes her own noises, kicking and moving about within the safety of her mother’s womb. Is it ok to kill a baby when it can already hear its mother’s heartbeat? When someone is dying, they retain the ability to hear beyond their own ability to communicate. Why do people talk to humans on their deathbed?
  - At 16 weeks, a child’s nervous system and brain are more active. She can flex her muscles, move her fingers and toes, shows awareness to her environment, and is sensitive to touch and pain. Is it right to kill the brain waves of a brain-

alive child? When an out-of-the-womb human is brain dead, why is that so serious? Is it ok to kill a brain-alive human adult?

- At 18 weeks the baby is now able to be felt by its mother, but it has been active for quite some time already. Is it ok to kill a baby that isn't strong enough to be felt? Is it ok to kill an adult that is weak?
- At 22-24 weeks a baby is sufficiently developed that life outside the womb is possible with proper medical care. Is it ok to kill an infant that is able to survive outside the womb? What is the purpose of a hospital or nursing home? Is it ok to kill adults who can't survive outside of it?
- [www.kentuckyfamily.org/why-pro-life-science-opens-window-into-womb-reveals-complexity-of-living-unborn-child/](http://www.kentuckyfamily.org/why-pro-life-science-opens-window-into-womb-reveals-complexity-of-living-unborn-child/)




**Other Questions to Ask:**

- How do you feel about abortion?
- Do you value human life?
- When does life begin?
- Define fetus. Define child. Define baby. What makes human life human?
- Finish this sentence: "It's ok to kill a baby in the womb when, \_\_\_\_\_"?
- If you had to kill a baby, how would you go about it? Do you know how abortions are performed? Could you explain it to me?
- Did you feel guilty when you killed your child? How old would your child be today?
- When is it ok to kill someone in self-defense? What has a baby done to its mother to deserve death?
- Please take a look at this picture (show an image of a 9 week

old baby in the womb). When is it ok to kill this child?

**Helpful resources:**

- "How can I become a Christian?" - [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian)
- "How can I be sure that I am a Christian?" - [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian)
- "Evidence for Jesus" - [www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-for-jesus](http://www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-for-jesus)
- "What does the Bible say about forgiveness?" - [www.trustworthyword.com/forgiveness](http://www.trustworthyword.com/forgiveness)
- "What is an abortion?" - [www.abortionprocedures.com](http://www.abortionprocedures.com)

HELP		
 <b>Forgiveness</b> To find God's forgiveness and everlasting life: <a href="http://www.NeedGod.com">www.NeedGod.com</a> TOLL FREE: 1-800-437-1893 Email: <a href="mailto:email@livingwaters.com">email@livingwaters.com</a>	 <b>Pregnancy Phone Line</b> For guidance or help regarding a pregnancy: Option Line TOLL FREE: 1-877-791-5475	 <b>Adoption</b> For information about adopting a child: Bethany Christian Services <a href="http://www.bethany.org">www.bethany.org</a> TOLL FREE: 1-800-BETHANY (1-800-238-4269)

The Endowment for Human Development (great videos & photos) - [www.ehd.org](http://www.ehd.org)

SECTION 8: PRAYER AND FASTING

**Free Video Lectures @  
[www.spiritualwarfare.blog/  
prayer](http://www.spiritualwarfare.blog/prayer)**

Ephesians 6:18 "praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints" (ESV)

God cares for us by growing and changing us through our time with Him in prayer and fasting. As we receive God's Bible truths, we get to respond to Him and ask Him for knowledge,

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understanding, wisdom, and help in our times of need.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Jonathan Carl



Jonathan Carl grew up in the great state of Texas as the oldest of six kids. He graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point and served in the U.S. Army as a tanker with a combat tour in Iraq in the early 2000s. He had the joy of journeying to Kentucky where he met and married his wonderful wife, Brittney. Several years later he became the lead pastor at South Fork Baptist Church where he has served for over a decade. He enjoyed the opportunities to study and earn his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Evangelism & Missions from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Jonathan & Brittney have four daughters (Sophia, Lydia, Alia & Mia) with whom they enjoy

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spending every spare minute they can.



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I would love your feedback on this book and your Bible reading journey and resulting small group discussions. Your **genuine Amazon review** can be a great help to others who are seeking to encounter God through Bible reading and listening plans.

In addition to Amazon reviews, **social media sharing** is also a great way to encourage and resource others. As the Lord teaches and grows you in this journey, please consider telling others about any help this book was to you.

As always, this book and 10+ more are available for **free download (PDF)** and sharing on any of my below websites. I'm praying for Jesus' work in and through you!

In Christ, Jonathan Carl

God's answers about the battle of the followers of Christ against the unseen spiritual forces of evil. [www.SpiritualWarfare.blog](http://www.SpiritualWarfare.blog)

Get answers to some of life's toughest questions!  
[www.TrustworthyWord.com](http://www.TrustworthyWord.com)

Getting the Bible into people and people into the Bible via video!  
[www.Bible.video](http://www.Bible.video)

A place for Catholics to find biblical answers to their most common questions about the Catechism of the Catholic Church!  
[www.Catholic.blog](http://www.Catholic.blog) - helping people to answer the question: "Does the Catholic Catechism agree with or contradict the

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Bible?"

Free book downloads at the above links & kindle/print versions  
on Amazon @ [www.amazon.com/author/jonathancarl](http://www.amazon.com/author/jonathancarl)

Sermons & teaching videos: [www.youtube.com/@SouthFork](http://www.youtube.com/@SouthFork)  
and [www.youtube.com/@trustworthyword](http://www.youtube.com/@trustworthyword)



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