

Connecting you to God's never-changing truth in ever-changing times.



CONNECTION

MAGAZINE | WINTER 2009

THE MEDIA MINISTRY OF PASTOR SKIP HEITZIG

Building a Strong Foundation



UNDERSTANDING THE PERSON, POWER, AND GLORY OF JESUS

Connecting you to God's never-changing truth in ever-changing times.



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THE MEDIA MINISTRY OF PASTOR SKIP HEITZIG

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Dear Friend,

Welcome back! It's always good to begin a new year looking to Jesus. Therefore, in this edition of *Connection Magazine*, we'll spend our time focused on our Lord and Savior. This being so, our theme is *Building a Strong Foundation*.

First, I wrote a short article entitled *Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?* Here, you'll be challenged to discover Jesus by really looking at Him: His magnificence, His power, and His glory.

Second, our *Dead Pastor's Society* section includes an article written some time ago by J.C. Ryle. During the 19th century, J.C. Ryle was a pastor and Bishop in Liverpool, England. His piece, *Looking Unto Jesus*, is still a wonderful reminder to keep our eyes focused on Jesus Christ in all that we do.

Third, my friend, Pastor Greg Laurie, has contributed an article. Entitled *A Divine Blockbuster*, it is a superb look at the second coming of Jesus. Of course, His second coming is something we should never lose sight of when looking at Jesus' life.

Fourth, we are introducing a new feature in *Connection Magazine*. Written by my lovely and gifted wife, Lenya, it is entitled *The Treasure Keeper*. I know you'll be blessed to read about how Jesus views us!

In this quarter's *Truth Connect* section, we will study the book of Colossians. Written by the apostle Paul, this letter reminds us of Jesus' preeminence in all things. As you study, I trust that more and more He will take center-stage in your life.

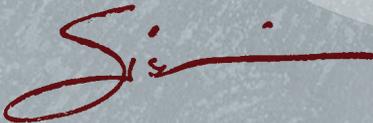
In *Off the Cuff*, I had the pleasure of interviewing well-known author Lee Strobel.

In *From the Blog*, I answer an age-old question about Christ's divinity.

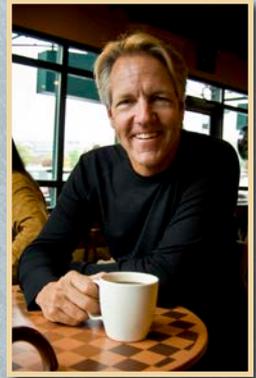
Finally, we've added a new section called *Hot Spots*. These are my own devotional thoughts written solely to ignite your faith in Christ.

As always, we encourage you to examine the resources and contacts found throughout the *Connection Magazine*.

In His Strong Love,



SKIP HEITZIG



Will the *Real* Jesus Please

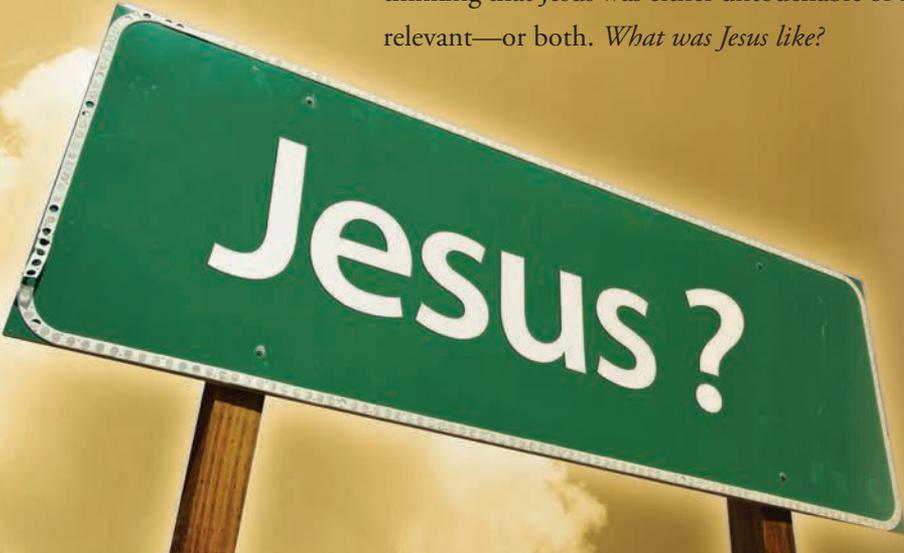
BY SKIP HEITZIG

“Socrates taught for forty years, Plato for fifty, Aristotle for forty, and Jesus for only three. Yet the influence of Christ’s three-year ministry infinitely transcends the impact left by the combined one hundred and thirty years of teaching from these men who were among the greatest philosophers of all antiquity.”

— ANONYMOUS

What was Jesus like—really like?

Some of us grew up with the portrayal the film industry gave us. I was raised seeing my fair share of movies about the life of Jesus Christ. Every Easter and sometimes at Christmas, Hollywood would make a creative concession and “get spiritual” by showing a few films about Jesus. But many portrayed Him as either a soft, almost effeminate loner or as a mystical, glow-in-the-dark caricature. I always came away from such movies thinking that Jesus was either untouchable or not relevant—or both. *What was Jesus like?*



Jesus?

Stand Up?

That question has been pondered and debated since He first walked this earth thousands of years ago. Even during His brief thirty-three years here, people were not sure what to make of Him. Some called Him a prophet, sensing the resemblance between His teachings and those of past spiritual leaders (Matthew 16:14). Others insisted that He was a madman because of His radical claims and unconventional behavior (John 10:20). Those who met Him and got to know Him up close, however, had a different view of Him. To them He was God's unique Son, Israel's Messiah, the world's Savior, and their Lord and God (Matthew 16:16; John 1:41; 4:42; 20:28).

The Jungle of Controversy

Even today the controversy continues. Jesus has been reinterpreted through the lens of selective history and revised by the prejudices of jaded men and women. Some worship Him intensely. Some respect Him standoffishly. And some hate Him passionately. Some Jews dare to respect Him as a first century reformer calling His people back to the God of the Old Testament. Muslims still admit to admiring Him as a unique prophet for His own time. Hindus acknowledge Him as a promoter of nonviolence and as a person who had achieved a high level of consciousness.

Many people believe that nothing good came from Jesus. To them He was an

"impostor-messiah" who was, at best, a renegade clergyman. More modern voices decry Jesus as a low-caste artisan who was illiterate and may or may not have been a carpenter. They insist that His "miracles" never happened and that most of the words attributed to Jesus were not His. So the jungle of controversial opinions thickens with the mists of time.

Profound Transformations

We don't really know what Jesus looked like, although many artists have attempted to paint His likeness. Millions have come to believe that Jesus looked like the figure in Warner Sallman's painting *Head of Christ*, while others opt for the stern countenance given by Leonardo da Vinci in the *Last Supper*. The 1925 Bruce Barton classic, *The Man Nobody Knows*, casts Jesus as the strong "outdoor man", hearty through years of toil and one who enjoyed life to the full.

While the New Testament is virtually silent about Jesus' outward appearance, it clearly describes the many one-on-one encounters that Jesus had with a wide variety of people. People met Him, ate lunch with Him, walked long distances with Him, shot questions at Him, and engaged in long conversations with Him. They saw Him up close. They were face-to-face with God in flesh.

And everyone who met Jesus was somehow changed by the encounter. No one

remained the same afterward. The people who met Jesus up close were profoundly transformed.

What can we know for certain about Jesus?

The Magnificence of Jesus

First, Jesus was a magnificent person. He was not what people expected Him to be. John the Baptist was stunned that He would so readily identify with common sinners. Nicodemus found Him to be much deeper and more personally demanding than simply a “teacher come from God”. The Samaritan woman spoke of her hope for the coming Messiah, while the Messiah she hoped for stood there ready to refresh and restore her broken life. Simon the Pharisee found Jesus to be an unpredictable dinner guest, while the prostitute found Him to be an unprecedented forgiver! Saul of Tarsus thought Jesus was dead but then realized that He was not only alive but also the Lord of life and death—for everyone!

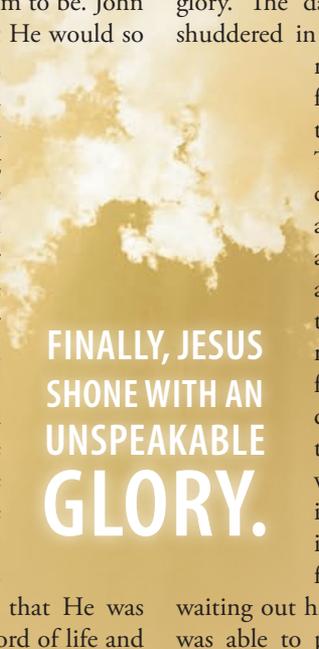
The Power of Jesus

Second, Jesus displayed amazing power. His power was coupled with a strong dose of compassion when He touched an untouchable leper. The power of His word extended over many miles to heal a dying young man and bring a nobleman and his family to faith. The power of His loving call and presence redeemed an outcast tax collector. His forgiving power restored a paralytic’s heart and body. The power of His mercy touched a hopeless cripple and

not only cured his body but also gave his life new meaning. It wasn’t Jesus’ power alone that made the difference. It was the way He used His power that so incredibly altered people’s lives and the way they viewed God.

The Glory of Jesus

Finally, Jesus shone with an unspeakable glory. The dark underworld of demons shuddered in respectful terror before the mighty Son of God and fled from a man they held under their sway for many years. Three of Jesus’ disciples caught a glimpse of His glory and weren’t allowed to talk about it until much later on—an experience that readied them for any suffering that might come their way in the future. Thomas and the other disciples, though once shaken to the core over Jesus’ death, were completely reenergized in faith when they saw Jesus in His resurrected glory. And finally John, an old man waiting out his time on an isolated island, was able to pull back eternity’s veil and glimpse his future and ours in the glory that is to come.



**FINALLY, JESUS
SHONE WITH AN
UNSPEAKABLE
GLORY.**

God With Skin On

When my son was still a toddler, I remember coming home from work and calling out to him to let him know that I was home. He would respond to my voice and come to find me, cocking his tiny head as far back as it could reach to look up at me. I could tell he was pleased to see me, but he also seemed a bit overwhelmed by the sheer size difference between us. One day I tried a different approach. Instead

of expecting him to come and find me, I strolled into his bedroom. I got down on the floor at his level to talk and play with him. I was on his turf and in his world, and he related to me in a whole new way. I was no longer a six-foot-plus figure in the doorway; I was a more manageable eyeball-to-eyeball daddy. I was “dad up close”, and it made a huge difference.

Essentially that’s what God did in Jesus Christ. He came down to our level and lived on our turf for thirty-three years. Jesus was God stooping to meet humanity.

Once during a summer thunderstorm, a young boy woke up to an ear-splitting clap of thunder. Darting into his parents’ bedroom, he put a death grip on his dad’s neck. “Hey!” his father cried. “Haven’t I told you that when you hear those noisy old storms it’ll be all right? God will protect you, and you can trust Him.”

The boy’s response was classic. “Yeah, I know that,” he countered, “But when the lightning is that close and the thunder is that loud, I want someone with skin on!”

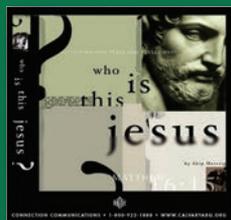
That’s what Jesus was to those who met Him—God with skin on.

This is the real Jesus. Through Him, heaven came near. This was “God with skin on”. Those who met Him knew it. And most of them became loyal followers, committed to His kingdom of transformation. They joined the team. They furthered the cause. The impact on their lives was unmistakable. We must all have our own encounter with the real Jesus. Have you?



SKIP HEITZIG is the author of the upcoming book *Encounter: Face to Face with Jesus* and senior pastor of Calvary of Albuquerque.

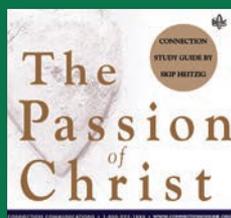
RESOURCES ABOUT JESUS



WHO IS THIS JESUS?

Was Jesus just another prophet or teacher? This has been asked for the last 2,000 years. Skip clarifies who Jesus is, looking at His humanity and deity, giving answers to this question.

CD PACKAGE • 6132 • \$42.00



THE PASSION OF CHRIST

Motivated by love, Jesus’ desire was to do the Father’s will. Skip looks at Jesus’ sacrificial life and death on the cross as He so walked, thus gaining our salvation.

CD PACKAGE • 6127 • \$33.00



THE NIGHT THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

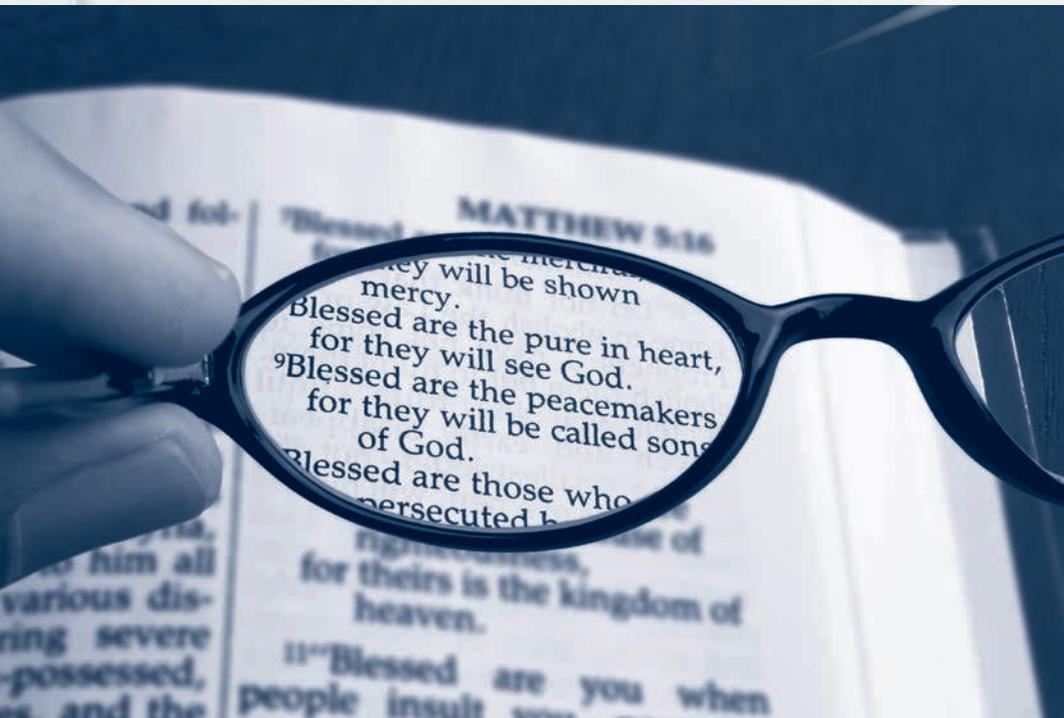
In the upper room, Jesus gave a final message to His disciples before going to the cross. Washing their feet, He showed them how to love and serve one another. Learn from this discourse as we face situations very similar to Jesus’ disciples.

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LOOKING UNTO JESUS, THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH, WHO FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM ENDURED THE CROSS, DESPISING THE SHAME, AND IS SET DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD.

HEBREWS 12:2

LOOKING UNTO



by

J.C. RYLE
(1816-1900)

The Christianity, which the world requires, is Christianity for everyday life.

A RELIGION MAN CAN CARRY

A mere Sunday religion is not enough. A thing put on and off with our Sunday clothes is powerless. Thinking men feel and know that there are seven days in a week, and that life is not made up of Sundays.

The Christianity, which the world requires and the Word of God reveals, is a useful everyday religion. It is a healthy, strong plant, which can live and flourish in every atmosphere except that of sin. It is a religion that a man can carry with

him wherever he goes, and never need leave behind him. Such a religion meets the wants of mankind.

JESUS

A daily round of forms and ceremonies within consecrated buildings is not enough. Wise men remember that there is a world of duty and trial outside the walls of the church, in which they have to play their part. They want something that they can carry with them into that world.

A monastic religion will never do. A faith that cannot flourish except in an ecclesiastical hot-house, a faith which cannot face the cold air of worldly business, and bear fruit — such a faith is a plant which our Heavenly Father has not planted, and it brings no fruit to perfection.

A religion of spasmodic and hysterical excitement will not do. It may suit weak and sentimental minds for a little season; but it rarely lasts, and does not meet the wants of many. It is not the wind, nor the fire, nor the earthquake, but the still small voice, which shows the real presence of the Holy Ghost (see 1 Kings 19:12).

But where is such true Christianity to be found? What are its special ingredients? What is the nature of it? The answer to

these questions is to be found in three words: "Looking unto Jesus".

In the phrase "looking unto Jesus", it is useful and interesting to remember that the Greek word that we render "looking," is only found here in the New Testament. Literally translated it means "looking off,"—looking away from other objects to one, only one, and looking on that one with a steady, fixed, intent gaze.

LOOK TO A LIVING PERSON

The object we are to look to, you will observe, is a Person, — not a doctrine, not an abstract theological dogma, but a living Person; and that Person is Jesus the Son of God. How much matter for thought lies there! Creeds and confessions are the necessary invention of a comparatively modern age. The first and simplest type of an apostolic early Christian was a man who trusted, and loved, a living Divine Person. Of head knowledge, and accurate definitions, perhaps he had but little store. Very likely

he would have passed a poor examination in a latter day theological school. But one thing he did know: he knew, believed, loved, and could have died for, a living Savior, a real personal Friend in heaven, even Jesus, the crucified and risen Son of God. Well would it be if we had more of this simple Christianity among us, and could realize more the Person of Christ.

But, after all, the grand question which rises out of the text is this: What is it that we are to look at in Jesus — if “looking

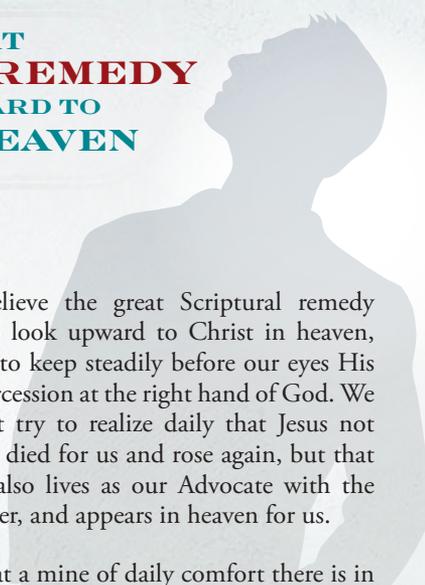
Let us keep to this old path of peace, and never be ashamed of it. Let us boldly go forward, “looking unto Jesus,” and saying daily to Him, “Lord, I have sinned; but Thou hast suffered in my stead; I take Thee at Thy word, and rest my soul on Thee.”

LOOK TO OUR ADVOCATE

In the second place, if we would look rightly to Jesus, we must look daily to His life of intercession in heaven, as our principal provision of strength and help.



THE GREAT SCRIPTURAL REMEDY IS TO LOOK UPWARD TO CHRIST IN HEAVEN



unto Jesus” is the real secret of a healthy, vigorous Christianity, what does the phrase mean?

LOOK TO HIS DEATH

First, and foremost (yes! by far first), if we would look rightly to Jesus, we must look daily at His death, as the only source of inward peace.

We need inward peace. So long as our conscience is asleep, deadened by indulged sin, or dulled and stupefied by incessant pursuit of the things of this world, so long can man get on tolerably well without peace with God. But once let conscience open its eyes and it will make the stoutest child of Adam feel ill at ease.

The only receipt for peace of conscience is to “look” by faith to Jesus suffering in our stead, the just for the unjust, paying our debt by that suffering, and dying for us on the cross.

I believe the great Scriptural remedy is to look upward to Christ in heaven, and to keep steadily before our eyes His intercession at the right hand of God. We must try to realize daily that Jesus not only died for us and rose again, but that He also lives as our Advocate with the Father, and appears in heaven for us.

What a mine of daily comfort there is in the thought, that we have an Advocate with the Father, who never slumbers or sleeps, whose eye is always upon us, who is continually pleading our cause and obtaining fresh supplies of grace for us, who watches over us in every company and place, and never forgets us.

LOOK AT HIS EXAMPLE

In the third place, if we would look rightly to Jesus, we must look daily at His example, as our chief standard of holy living.

We must all feel, I suspect, and often feel, how hard it is to regulate our daily lives by mere rules and regulations. But surely it would cut many a knot, and solve many a problem, if we would cultivate the habit of studying the daily behavior of our Lord.

Like careless children at school, we are content to copy those around us, with all their faults, and do not look constantly at the only faultless copy, the One perfect Man, in whom even Satan could find “nothing” (John 14:30).

Let us beware of this error in these latter days. Let us strive and pray that we may make the tone and temper of Jesus our model and standard in our daily behavior. Let all men see that we love to follow Him whom we profess to love.

LOOK TOWARD HIS SECOND COMING

Fourthly and lastly, if we would “look” to Jesus rightly, we must look forward to His second advent, as the truest fountain of hope and consolation.

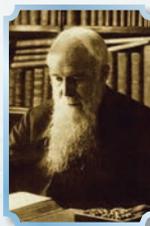
I believe firmly that this second advent was meant to be the hope of the church in every age of the world. And I doubt whether there ever was an era when it was so useful to keep the second advent of Christ steadily in view as it is just now.

Where is the thoughtful Christian who does not often sigh for a better state of things, and ask himself, “How long, O Lord, faithful and true, how long are we to go on weeping, and working, binding up wounds, and drinking bitter cups, and educating, and parting, and burying, and putting on mourning? When shall the end once be?”

Let us learn to fix our chief hopes on the second coming of Christ, and know for a certainty that in the time appointed by the Father, the Sun of Righteousness will arise, with healing on His wings. Then, and then only, we shall not be disappointed.

FIX YOUR EYES ON HIM

Our greatest poet truly says, “We know what we are; but we know not what we may be.” All before us is dark and uncertain, and mercifully kept from our eyes. I cannot tell you where the lot of many of my readers may be finally cast on earth, or what they may be called to do and bear before the end comes. But one thing I say confidently, — let the keynote of your Christianity, be the phrase of my text, — “Looking to Jesus,” Jesus dying, Jesus interceding, Jesus the example, Jesus coming again. Fix your eyes firmly on Him.



J.C. RYLE (1816-1900)

was the first Anglican bishop of Liverpool. He held scores of preaching “meetings”, during which immense numbers of blue collar working men and their families were lead to faith in Jesus Christ. J.C. Ryle was thoroughly evangelical in both his principles and his doctrine. Eventually building over forty churches, he was a prominent writer and preacher and a devoted pastor.

- The Dead Pastor’s Society is a class Skip Heitzig teaches at the School of Ministry in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In this class, he introduces students to preachers of yesteryear.



Bluebird
**THE SECOND ADVENT
COMING SOON!**

A DIVINE BLOCKBUSTER

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven,
and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn,
and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven
with power and great glory.

MATTHEW 24:30-31

AT ONE TIME, newspapermen had an interesting name for the huge, bold letters used only for the most important headlines. They called it “Second-Coming type”. When a typesetter was told to set a headline in “Second-Coming type”, he didn’t have to know what the story was about- he just knew it was a blockbuster.

According to recent surveys, though, most journalists today don’t believe in the resurrection of Christ, let alone in His Second Coming. But that doesn’t change the rock-solid fact that there is a coming day when Christ will come again to establish His kingdom. And what a blockbuster that will be!

Bible students describe this event as His Second Coming. It’s going to interrupt

the battle of Armageddon, which will be the final brawl at the end of the Great Tribulation. John described the scene in Revelation 19:11-12, where he wrote, “I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns.” Matthew says that every eye will see Him coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (24:30). That day is yet in the future.

Though many labor for world peace, doing their best to bring it about, there will be no peace until Jesus returns. I read a statement recently that says, “Visualize world peace.” You can visualize all you want, you can teach peace all you want, you can work for peace

by GREG LAURIE

all you want. But real and lasting peace will not come until Jesus Christ returns.

I've visited an area in Jerusalem they call the Garden of Gethsemane. It features ancient olive trees that date back some 2,000 years. Some think it's possible that this is the very area where Jesus prayed before He was taken into custody.

I don't know if it is or not, but when I visited that particular site and stood on that spot- when I looked at those gnarled,

of this place stands the ancient Eastern Gate of Jerusalem. The Eastern Gate today is sealed. It is no longer in use. But Ezekiel 44:2 says this is the very gate the Messiah will use to enter the city when He returns to the Earth.

History says the gate was sealed in the early sixteenth century by the Turkish conqueror Suleiman the Magnificent. No one knows for sure why he closed it, but one report says he sealed the gate when a rumor swept Jerusalem that Messiah was coming.



It's possible that from Gethsemane, Jesus looked up and saw the Eastern Gate. It would have reminded Him that a day was coming when He would return to the earth, not with a crown of thorns, but with a crown of gold.

old olive trees and thought they might have been around when Jesus prayed some 2,000 years ago- I was greatly moved. If you look up from that place you see Jerusalem elevated on a hill, and you can't help but wonder if Jesus actually stood right where you're standing and gazed upon the city not far away. It's an unforgettable experience.

But I noticed something else when I visited the Garden of Gethsemane. Within eyeshot

Suleiman summoned some rabbis, who told him Messiah would be a great military ruler who would enter the Eastern Gate and liberate the city. This paranoid ruler decided to crush such hopes by sealing the gate and placing a Muslim cemetery in front of it, believing that no Jewish holy man would defile himself by walking over a Muslim cemetery. The gate has been sealed ever since.

That almost changed during the Six-Day War of 1967, when Israel regained control of Jerusalem for the first time in nearly 1,900 years. Several members of one Jewish commando group involved in the assault on the city had hoped to catch its Jordanian defenders off guard by blowing a hole in the gate. But the group's leader, an Orthodox Jew, nixed the idea when he fiercely insisted that the Eastern Gate could be opened only when the Messiah comes. The gate remained closed.

It's possible that from Gethsemane, Jesus looked up and saw the Eastern Gate. It would have reminded Him that a day was coming when He would return to the earth, not with a crown of thorns, but with a crown of gold. Many crowns, in fact. What He did in both Gethsemane and later at Calvary would set the stage for Him to come back and rule in glory.

But His Second Coming will not be much like the first.

His first entry into Jerusalem led to His rejection; His second entry will end in His coronation.

His first entry led to a cross; His second entry will bestow upon Him a throne worthy of the King of the universe.

His first entry left Him horribly alone; His second entry will be a time of rejoicing, when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus is coming again! First in the air for His church at the Rapture, and then at the end of the Great Tribulation to stop the battle of Armageddon and begin His 1,000-year rule of perfect peace and justice on a rejuvenated Earth.

Jesus is coming again! Jesus is coming again! Jesus is coming again! And when He does,

I guarantee that there won't be "Second Coming type" big enough to do it justice.

"There are two ways of looking at the Lord's coming: a looking for it and a looking at it. It is possible to look at it with keen intellect and profound interest, and yet have it mean nothing to us personally. It is also possible to know but little of the theology of the subject, and yet have a deep and holy longing for our Lord to appear. May this theme be not only our study but also our personal hope; for 'unto them that look for Him shall He appear a second time without sin unto salvation.' "

-A.B. Simpson



PASTOR GREG LAURIE is the senior pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship in Riverside, California.

Excerpt from *Everday with Jesus*.

ETERNAL TRUTHS on Christ's Second Coming:

- 1. Christ's return will be personal and visible.*
 - Acts 1:11
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:16
 - Revelation 1:7
- 2. As Christians, we are to anticipate the return of Christ.*
 - Titus 2:13
 - 2 Peter 3:12
- 3. Christ's return will provide peace, holiness, and hope.*
 - Luke 21:34-36
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18
 - 1 John 2:28-3:3



the TREASURE KEEPER



by Lenya Heitzig





LITTLE BOY IN
FLORIDA SAT
ON THE BEACH
LOOKING OUT

AT THE WATER, DESPERATELY LONGING TO GO FOR A SWIM. THEN HE SAW A LADY SITTING ON A BLANKET UNDER AN UMBRELLA AND APPROACHED HER. “ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?” HE ASKED. SHE ANSWERED, “WELL, YES, I AM A CHRISTIAN.” HER ANSWER DIDN’T QUITE SATISFY THE ANXIOUS BOY SO HE PRESSED HER, “DO YOU GO TO CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY?” SHE NODDED AND ANSWERED, “YES, I DO.” THEN HE ASKED, “DO YOU READ YOUR BIBLE AND PRAY EVERY SINGLE DAY?” SHE SAID, “YES, SON, I READ AND PRAY, TOO.” FINALLY THE LITTLE BOY SMILED AND SAID, “GOOD. WILL YOU HOLD MY QUARTER WHILE I GO SWIMMING?”

Are we any different from this little boy when it comes to our treasures, large or small? We long to find a trustworthy friend to watch our children or find a safe place to keep those things we cherish. Maybe you keep your treasures like jewels, important papers, and family heirlooms in a safety deposit box at the bank so no one can steal them. Maybe your personal treasures like family photos, children’s finger paintings, and love letters are hidden in a shoebox under your bed so you can look at them whenever you desire. The point is that we

all have things we hold dear and long to protect. What’s even more spectacular is that Jesus sees His people as prized possessions to protect and preserve. In the Upper Room Discourse Jesus referred to His disciples—including you and me—as “those whom You have given Me” (John 17:9). In other words, Jesus views us as God’s gift to Him.

In John 17:6-19, Jesus prayed for His treasured disciples. In this text, He repeatedly used the word “keep.” This presents a very important concept: those whom the Father has given to Jesus, He keeps. I pray that as you study this passage you will see yourself as Christ’s treasure and remember that He is your Treasure Keeper.

CHERISHED TREASURE

In this prayer to His Father, Jesus first reveals that His disciples “have kept Your word” (John 17:6). In a Christian’s life, obedience equals holiness. The apostle Peter realized this. He wrote, “Obedient children... be holy in all your conduct” (1 Peter 1:14,15). In other words, Peter encouraged us to *do* the Word. Literally, we should be obedient children. By keeping the Word, we are doing the Word. In this way, we become holy.

Our word “holy” is derived from the Greek *hagios*, which means separated, set apart, or different. When we keep His Word we become different—we are no longer ordinary, we are extraordinary. This isn’t because of anything we’ve done, but because of what God has done for us. When God made Israel a holy nation, He made it different from every other nation. When the Israelites built a holy temple for God, that building became different from any other building. And when God commanded us to remember the holy Sabbath day, that day became different from any other day.

He set it apart to keep it special. As His child, He has set you apart, too. You are holy and separated for His purpose.

One of my own special treasures is a beautiful tea set which my Grandma received on her wedding day. She passed it to my mother who passed it to me. Of course, this set is different from any other china in our home. I never gave peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to my son Nathan on them. I never let my dog clean scraps off of them. Instead, my Grandma's set is regally placed in a lighted cabinet to illuminate its beauty. We use these dishes for special occasions. The china is different from the other dishes in our house; you might say it's holy. So, too, as a believer, you have been set apart

enters your heart and you read His Word, you become more and more holy.

How does this transformation happen? Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth" (John 17:17). Not only are we set apart by His Word, we are sanctified by His Word. Sanctified sounds like a big word thrown around by church people. But it's an important concept to understand. Sanctification is a process

**HE HAS MADE
A COVENANT
PROMISE TO
KEEP US
SAFELY IN HIS
TREASURE
CHEST FOR ALL
ETERNITY.**



for Christ to be holy and obedient in your conduct. He cherishes you beyond measure.

CLEANSSED TREASURE

Not only did the disciples keep God's Word, but they were *kept* by Christ. As we've seen, we become different when we begin keeping His Word. The biblical record shows that the disciples were changed—they were no longer fishers of fish, but fishers of men. They radically changed, and because they did, the disciples became holy. The same can be true for you. Once Christ

where we are separated from the world and set apart for God's ways. In other words, as we are sanctified, we become more and more like God, and less and less like the world around us.

Do you remember growing up and being out on the playground at school? Most of us probably heard another child whisper, "Boy, she's different." It didn't feel like a compliment, did it? I imagine if you put yourself in your childhood shoes, you remember feeling like you were weird, out

of place, or like you didn't fit in. But you know what? We *should* be weird. We *should* be different from the world around us. In verse 14, Jesus prayed: "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world." The Bible even refers to us as "a peculiar people" (Deuteronomy 14:2 AMP). Could it be that we're peculiar because we've taken God's Word to heart? We've allowed God to cleanse us from the inside out. That causes us to stand out from the dull world like shining gold.

COVENANT TREASURE

Do you have special treasures? Maybe you have inherited something from your family like my Grandma's china. One year a dear friend gave me a treasure box. At first, I didn't know what to put inside this box. But one day, I was picking up Nathan's toys and grumbling because he hadn't put his toys away, so I took one of his toy soldiers and put it in my treasure box. Back then I kind of thought, "Finders keepers, losers weepers." Now, I keep it in my box to remember his childhood.

Another afternoon, I was in Michigan at my sister Suzanne's house looking at some really pretty ceramic birds perched on her windowsill. I announced, "Birds are my thing! Where did you get those?" She replied, "Grandma loved to golf. The country club would give her one when she'd get a birdie." I have to admit that I was so jealous that I snatched one of the pretty birds. "Finders keepers, losers weepers," I thought to myself.

As believers, we are God's special treasures. He finds us; He keeps us. And He promises He'll never lose us. He has made a covenant promise to keep us safely in His treasure chest for all eternity. We are His fine china, His soldiers, His beautiful birds. He's made a covenant to care for us and keep us. Won't you make a covenant to keep His Word?

LENYA HEITZIG is an award-winning author and sought-after speaker at conferences and retreats worldwide.

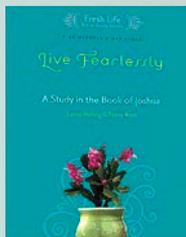
RESOURCES FROM LENYA



HOLY MOMENTS

A spiritual journey full of supernatural surprises. Discover God's fingerprints guiding you- even when you may not see Him.

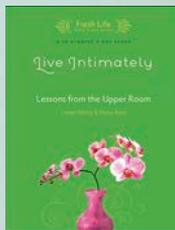
BOOK • B402 • \$12.00



LIVE FEARLESSLY

This study in the book of Joshua reveals Joshua's secret for living fearlessly, pulling lessons from his life that can bring us important truths for today.

BOOK • B428 • \$14.99



LIVE INTIMATELY

Put yourself in the Upper Room with Jesus and His disciples as He gave them His final instructions on loving and serving one another.

BOOK • B429 • \$14.99



SKIP HEITZIG

ON THE CONNECTION

ARIZONA	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Phoenix - CalvaryRadio.com	M-F	4:30 PM
ARKANSAS	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Batesville - KCCJ-LP 102.3 FM	M-F	8:00 AM & 7:00 PM
CALIFORNIA	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Adelanto - KPTG-LP 101.5 FM	M-F	12:30 PM
Big Bear Lake - KWBB 105.5 FM	M-F	7:30 AM & 11:30 PM
Chico - KQIP 107.1	M-F	10:30 AM
Merced - KGDM 105.5 FM	M-F	1:00 PM
Modesto - KEQP 106.9 FM	M-F	5:00 PM
Murrieta - KRMT 88.9 FM	M-F	5:30 PM
Oxnard - KOCC-LP 101.5 FM	M-F	9:00 AM
San Luis Obispo - KLFF 890 AM	M-F	4:00 AM
.....		& 8:30 AM P.S.T
Santa Ana (Zionline) - zol.com	M-F	(On Demand Audio)
Sepulveda - KDOB 92.1 FM	M-F	11:45 AM
Southern - KWWV 107.9 FM	M-F	7:00 AM
Visalia - Crusaderadio.com	M-F	5:00 AM
CSN	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Calvary Satellite Network	M-F	8:30 AM
FLORIDA	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Fort Lauderdale - WREH 90.5 FM	M-F	4:00 AM & 8:30 AM
GEORGIA	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Helen - WTFH 89.9 FM	Sat & Sun	1:30 AM & 2:30 AM
Lilburn - Translator 92.1 FM	Sat & Sun	1:30 AM & 2:30 AM
Thomasville - WJGG 98.1 FM	Sat & Sun	1:30 AM
Toccoa Falls - WRAF 90.9 FM	Sat & Sun	1:30 AM & 2:30 AM
HAWAII	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Hilo - KLHT 103.3 FM	M-F	10:00 AM
Honolulu - KLHT	M-F	11:30 PM
Lihu'e, Kauai- KHJC 88.9 FM	M-F, Th	5:00 AM & 7:30 PM
Lihu'e, Kauai- KHJC 88.9 FM	Sun	5:30 PM
.....		(live from Costa Mesa)
IDAHO	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Pocatello - KRTK 1490 AM	M-F	7:00 AM & 7:00 PM
INDIANA	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Crawfordsville - WVRG-LP 93.9 FM	M-F	7:30 AM & 12:30 PM
Valparaiso - WITW 93.5 FM (LP)	M-F	10:30 AM
MASSACHUSETTS	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Fitchburg - WFGJ 960 AM	M-F	12:00 PM & 9:00 PM
MICHIGAN	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Bay City - WTRK 89.1 FM	M-F	9:30 AM
MINNESOTA	DAY(S).....	TIME(S)
Brainerd - 88.7 FM	M-F	10:30 AM
Fergus Falls - 89.3 FM	M-F	10:30 AM

Grand Rapids - 89.7 FM

M-F

10:30 AM

MISSOURI.....

DAY(S).....

TIME(S)

St. Joseph - KSRD 91.9 FM

M-F

10:30 AM

St. Louis - KJSL 630 AM

M-F

7:00 AM

Tarkio - KRSS 93.5 FM

M-F

8:30 PM

NEBRASKA.....

DAY(S).....

TIME(S)

Scottsbluff - KNIF 107.9 FM

Everyday

4:30 AM & 8:30 PM

NEW JERSEY.....

DAY(S).....

TIME(S)

Medford Lakes

- WVVB - Hope-FM 90.5

M-F

7:30 AM

WRDR The Bridge

- 89.7FM & 103.1 FM

M-F

8:00 AM

NEW MEXICO.....

DAY(S).....

TIME(S)

Albuquerque - KNKT 107.1 FM

M-F

4:00 AM & 8:00 AM

Roswell - KWFL - 99.5 FM

Saturday

6:30 PM

Silver City - KKSC - 100.1 FM

M-F

4:00 PM

NEW YORK.....

DAY(S).....

TIME(S)

Albany/Troy - WPGJ 93.9 FM

M-F

10:00 AM

Auburn - WZVX 101.1 FM

M-F

3:00 PM

Binghamton -

WIFF 90.1 FM / 104.9 FM

M-F

9:00 AM

Corfu - WZVX 97.5

M-F

3:00 PM

Dansville - WZVX 97.5

M-F

3:00 PM

Elmira/Ridgeberry - WREQ 96.9 FM

M-F

9:00 AM

Geneva - 90.7 FM

M-F

9:00 AM

Glens Falls - WLJH 90.9 FM

M-F

10:00 AM

Grand Gorge - WGRK 105.3 FM

M-F

10:00 AM & 8:00 PM

Hudson - WHVP 91.1 FM

M-F

10:00 AM

Lake Katrine - WFGB 89.7 FM

M-F

10:00 AM & 8:00 PM

Lancaster - WXZV 102.9 FM

M-F

3:00 PM

New Hartford - MMV 1150 AM

M-F

6:00 AM

Penn Yan - WZVX 102.5 FM

M-F

3:00 PM

Rochester - WZVX 99.7 FM

M-F

3:00 PM

Saratoga - WSSK 89.7 FM

M-F

10:00 AM & 8:00 PM

Schenectady - WPGJ 90.7 FM

M-F

10:00 AM

Syracuse - WZVX 103.5 FM

M-F

3:00 PM

Voorhesville - WPGJ 98.9 FM

M-F

10:00 AM & 8:00 PM

NORTH CAROLINA.....

DAY(S).....

TIME(S)

Black Mountain - WMIT 106.9 FM

M-F

9:00 PM

Elizabeth City - WFMZ 104.9 FM

M-F

10:30 PM

Franklin - Translator 100.9 FM

Sat & Sun

1:30 AM & 2:30 AM

Washington - WTOW 1320 AM

M-F

1:05 PM

Winston Salem - WBFJ 1550 AM

M-F

10:00 AM

OHIO.....

DAY(S).....

TIME(S)

Hamilton City - WZFR 99.7

M-F

(check local listing)

Zanesville, OH - WTLN-LP 98.9

M-F

3:00 AM & 5:30 PM

>> STATION LISTINGS

MAKING THE CONNECTION

OREGON	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Jacksonville - KAPL 1300 AM	M-F	2:30 PM
PENNSYLVANIA	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Center Valley - Translator 103.5 FM	M-F	1:00 PM
Chambersburg - WZXD 88.3 FM	M-F	1:00 PM
Hawley - WBYH 89.1	M-F	1:00 PM
Morgantown - WZZD 88.1 FM	M-F	1:00 PM
Reading - WYTL 91.7 FM	M-F	1:00 PM
Sellersville - WBYO 88.9 FM	M-F	1:00 PM
Stroudsburg - WBYX 88.7 FM	M-F	1:00 PM
SKY ANGEL RADIO	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
CSN International -		
Satellite 9762, IPTV 230	M-Sat	M-F - 11:30 AM
.....		& Sat - 9:00 PM
Voice of Jerusalem		
- Satellite 9772, IPTV 238	M-F	7:30 AM & 7:30 PM
SOUTH CAROLINA	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Belton - WEPC 88.5 FM	Sat & Sun ..	1:30 AM & 2:30 AM
TENNESSEE	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Ashland City - WQSV AM 790	M-F	4:30 PM
Knoxville - WIAM 101.1 FM	M-F	8:30 AM & 5:30 PM
TEXAS	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Decatur / Ft. Worth KDKR 91.3 FM	M-F	9:30 AM
VIRGINIA	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Cedar Bluff - WYRV 770AM	M-F	12:30 PM
Emporia - WJYA 89.3 FM	M-F	8:00 AM
Fredericksburg - WJYJ 90.5 FM	M-F	8:00 AM
Waynesboro - WPPVA 90.1 FM	M-F	8:00 AM
WYOMING	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Buffalo - KSLW 99.5 FM	M-F	TBA
INTERNATIONAL		
AFRICA	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Africa - TOP 104.9 FM	M-F	TBA
Jinga, Uganda		
- KIIRA Radio 88.6 FM	M-F	5:30 AM; 9:30 AM;
.....		2:25 PM
BELIZE	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Belmopan - 93.7 FM	M-F	9:00 AM
San Ignacio - 91.9	M-F	7:00 AM
San Pedro Town - 101.3 FM	M-F	9:00 AM
CANADA - BRITISH COLUMBIA	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Prince Rupert - CFIRM 100.7 FM	M-F	TBA
Prince Rupert - CFIRM 720 AM	M-F	TBA
CANADA - SASKATCHEWA	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Caronport - CJOS 92.7	M-F	11:00 AM

ECUADOR	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
CC	M-F	8:00 AM
ENGLAND	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Birmingham - RADIO CV 106.2FM	M-F	TBA
MICRONESIA	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Pohnpei - 88.5 FM, SW 4755	M-F	7:00 AM
NEW ZEALAND	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Dannevirke - 106.7 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM;
.....		5:30 PM; 11:00 PM;
.....		& Sat - 2:30 PM
Glenfield - 106.7 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM; 5:30
.....		PM; 11:00 PM;
.....		& Sat - 2:30 PM
Lower Hutt - 106.8 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM; 5:30
.....		PM; 11:00 PM;
.....		& Sat - 2:30 PM
Mangawhai - 107 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM; 5:30
.....		PM; 11:00 PM; &
.....		Sat - 2:30 PM
Manurewa - 107.3 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM; 5:30
.....		PM; 11:00 PM;
.....		& Sat - 2:30 PM
Nelson - 106.8 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM; 5:30
.....		PM; 11:00 PM;
.....		& Sat - 2:30 PM
Rotorua - 106.7 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM; 5:30
.....		PM; 11:00 PM;
.....		& Sat - 2:30 PM
Taupo - 107 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM; 5:30
.....		PM; 11:00 PM;
.....		& Sat - 2:30 PM
Te Awamutu - 106.8 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM; 5:30
.....		PM; 11:00 PM;
.....		& Sat - 2:30 PM
Wellington - 106.9 FM (LP)	M-Sat	M-F 11:00 AM; 5:30
.....		PM; 11:00 PM;
.....		& Sat - 2:30 PM
SAINT MARTIN	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
Grand Case - RM 92.5 FM	M-F	TBA
SOUTH AFRICA	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
East London - BACOG (SW) 0	M-F	TBA
WORLD WIDE	DAY(S)	TIME(S)
His Channel Radio	M-F	9:00 PM (MST)



TRUTH CONNECT

PUTTING GOD'S WORD INTO ACTION

MAYBE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO EXPLORE GOD'S WORD but just don't know don't know where to start. *TruthConnect* is a road map for your spiritual journey. Each quarter we'll help you "unpack" what God has to say to you. You can use this personal Bible study in any way that meets your lifestyle:

1. For instance, on Monday: Read the passage; Tuesday: Review the passage; Wednesday: Reach Up to God; Thursday: Reach Out to others; Friday: Reach In to believers; Saturday: Remember the Scripture passage.
2. Complete the study one day during the week; then take the rest of the week to memorize the Scripture and ponder the lessons learned.
3. Gather with some friends and complete the study together.

TruthConnect is divided into six simple steps:

Read: Your journey begins when you study the Scripture passage. 2 Timothy 3:16 explains that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God", and is therefore worth in-depth exploration.

Review: This section offers insight into the historical context of the passage as well as teaching you key words, concepts, or phrases that add meaning to the message.

Reach Up: At this time, you'll want to ask yourself: "How does this Scripture enhance my relationship with God? How does it cause me to reach up to Him?"

Reach In: Here, you'll see how the passage encourages you to use your gifts to "be of real help to the whole church" (1 Corinthians 14:12 NLT).

Reach Out: This section focuses on the portion of the passage that exhorts Christians to help people in need.

Remember: Here, you're encouraged to memorize a Scripture passage so that you will have it at your disposal whenever you need it.



FAST FACTS: COLOSSIANS

Author: Paul identified himself as the author of the book in the greeting when he wrote that it was from “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God” (Colossians 1:1).

Date: This epistle is one of Paul’s prison letters. Most scholars agree that Paul wrote this and other letters from a Roman prison between 60 and 62 A.D.

Audience: Paul wrote Colossians to the church in the city of Colosse and to believers everywhere.

Themes: False teaching had infiltrated the Colossian church. Some believers were trying to “mix and match” false teachings with the truth of the gospel. Paul countered the counterfeit claims of relativism, heathenism, and secularism by pointing believers to who Jesus really is and what He expects of His followers. Paul countered the false claims about Christ with these important truths:

- Jesus is divine (1:15)
- Jesus created all things (1:16)
- Jesus is God (1:19)
- Jesus fulfills the law (2:11)
- Jesus unlocks the mysteries of God’s plan for humanity (2:3)

COLOSSIAN WORD STUDY

CHAPTER 1:

Firstborn (Col. 1:15): defined as, “first begotten”. The term “firstborn” in context here does not mean “one who is born first”. Rather, it is a designation of “priority and rank”. Jesus, as God, has eternally existed. As the “image of God”, He is the rightful heir over everything that exists; Jesus is supreme in priority over all creation.

Fullness (Col. 1:19): defined as, “completion”, or “that which fills”. Jesus is fully God and fully human. As a human, Jesus is the complete embodiment of God. “For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell.”

CHAPTER 2:

Dwells (Col. 2:9): defined as, “reside”, “to house permanently”, and “inhabit.” In Jesus Christ, the fullness of the Godhead dwells. Even more, as Christians, we are “complete” in Christ, since Christ “dwells” in us. When we are “complete” in Christ, we are in need of no other thing for salvation (works, philosophies, etc.) We need only to trust in Jesus, and then obey His word.

CHAPTER 3:

Set your mind (Col. 3:2): defined as, “affections”, “to entertain”, and “to exercise the mind”. Because of the false teachers, Paul wrote the Colossians and told them: “set your mind on things above”. In essence, Paul is saying that Christians should “put your attention to”, or “entertain the thoughts of” eternal things, and not worldly pursuits.

CHAPTER 4:

Perfect...Complete (Col. 4:12): defined as, “limit”, and “fulfillment” (perfect), and “to finish”, “verify”, and “accomplish” (complete). Jesus is the “complete” fulfillment of the Old Testament law (Rom. 10:4). In Colossians, Paul uses the same word to speak of Christians being in the “perfect and complete” will of God. In short, we are to make Christ our goal - modeling our life after Him. Only then will we be truly “complete”.





Colossians • CHAPTER I • CHRIST AT THE CENTER

Connection—Week 1 • January 1st-10th

Read: Colossians 1:1-8

Review: Paul heard that false teachers had infiltrated the church at Colosse, so he wrote this letter to affirm the absolute deity of Jesus Christ. Though Paul had never been to the town, he wanted to ensure that the people's faith revolved around Christ: God who became man. Today, this letter is just as important for believers. As you study this epistle, ask yourself how much of your life orbits around Jesus.

Reach Up: In verses 4-5, the Colossians are described as possessing faith, love, and hope because they heard the "truth of the gospel". Would this describe you? Why or why not?

Reach In: Because of the believers' faith, they bore fruit (v. 6). According to Galatians 5:22,23 what is spiritual fruit? What type of fruit do you bear and how do you think it helps others?

Reach Out: Epaphras brought the Christ-centered message to the people in Colosse. In your circle of influence, who needs to know how important Christ is to you? How do you exhibit this in your daily life?

Remember: "The gospel...is bringing forth fruit...since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth" (Colossians 1:5,6).

Connection—Week 2 • January 11th-17th

Read: Colossians 1:9-18

Review: Martin Luther said, "I am so busy now that if I did not spend two or three hours each day in prayer, I would not get through the day." In this week's verses, we'll read Paul's heartfelt prayer for the church. Then we'll see his insightful portrait of Christ. As you study this passage, pause when you see the personal pronouns: "you" and "He". These are the keys to unlocking Paul's prayer for you and for who Christ is to you.

Reach Up: Paul prayed that believers would be filled with knowledge of God's will (v. 9), walk worthy of the Lord (v. 10), and be strengthened with all might (v. 11). One commentator noted the progression: be filled, fruitful, and fortified. Which spiritual attribute do you most need and why?

Reach In: Scan verses 14-18 and underline the pronouns "He", "His", and "Him". Now list what you learn by focusing on these descriptions of Christ. Which of these truths is new to you? How does it deepen your faith?

Reach Out: Paul gave thanks to the Father for delivering believers "from the power of darkness...into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (v. 13). How do you see the power of darkness at work in the world today? Spend time praying that God will deliver those in your sphere of influence into the kingdom of light.

Remember: “Walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:10).

Connection—Week 3 • January 18th-24th

Read: Colossians 1:19-23

Review: Last week, we saw who Christ truly is: God’s image, the Firstborn, the Creator, the Sustainer, and the Head of the church. This week, we’ll learn more about who He is and why He came - to bring reconciliation. The word reconcile comes from the word *apokatallasso*. This word means to transform from one condition to another; here, from enmity to peace with God. This work was accomplished on the cross and is available to you. Have you allowed this change to begin? If not, why not?

Reach Up: Review verses 19-20 and describe how God made peace through His Son. Why might it seem counterintuitive for the Father to be pleased by the process of reconciliation? How do you settle this in your mind?

Reach In: Verses 21-22 contrast what you “once were” before salvation with what you “now” are as Christ’s follower. According to this text, what were you and what are you now?

Reach Out: According to verse 23, what will help you continue in the faith? How do you think being “grounded and steadfast” in your faith impacts those around you?

Remember: “For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell” (Colossians 1:19).

Connection—Week 4 • January 25th-31st

Read: Colossians 1:24-29

Review: After reminding the Colossians (and us) of the spiritual transformation wrought by Christ’s death on the cross, Paul moves to the theme of rejoicing. Many of us would rejoice over fame and fortune, prosperity and peace. But Paul rejoices over suffering and affliction, service and stewardship. How is it possible to rejoice in these circumstances? Because God let Paul in on a secret - the greatest mystery of all: “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (v.27). When you are suffering, rejoice knowing that Christ lives in your heart.

Reach Up: In verse 24, Paul said he could “rejoice in my sufferings”. Describe your sufferings and how God has comforted you. Ask God to turn your times of distress into delight in His faithfulness.

Reach In: In verses 26-27, Paul revealed a two-fold mystery to the Colossians: 1) The gospel is available to Gentiles as well as Jews, and 2) Christ Himself will indwell believers’ hearts. A mystery is an open secret; a truth waiting for the right time to be revealed. Which part of this mystery is new to you? Why might this mystery have surprised people living in Paul’s day?

Reach Out: Verse 28 reveals that Paul’s goal was to preach to everyone he encountered. Write your spiritual goal for the unbelievers you encounter. How will Christ “in you” help you reach out to others?

Remember: “I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.” (Colossians 1:29).



Colossians • CHAPTER 2 • COMPLETE IN CHRIST

Connection—Week 1 • February 1st-7th

Read: Colossians 2:1-7

Review: We've learned that Paul wrote this letter to warn believers about the false teachings that threatened the church. He wanted to ensure that no person or philosophy would come between the church and Christ. As their spiritual father, Paul felt the need to encourage believers to stay true to their faith and to stay away from false doctrine. This warning still holds true today: Don't let anyone "deceive you with persuasive words" (Colossians 2:4).

Reach Up: One of the heresies Paul combated was Gnosticism, which insisted that there was secret knowledge hidden from believers. According to verses 2-3, what reassures you that you can understand the things of God?

Reach In: In verse 5, we learn that Paul rejoiced because of the "good order" and "steadfastness" of the Colossian's faith in Christ. What do you think Paul means by these attributes? How do you exhibit them in your daily walk?

Reach Out: According to verses 6 and 7, once you receive Jesus how are you to continue your Christian walk? What word pictures does this bring to mind? How might this affect the people around you?

Remember: "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him" (Colossians 2:6).

Connection—Week 2 • February 8th-14th

Read: Colossians 2:8-15

Review: In this text, Paul remarks on the specific errors looming against the churches of Colosse and Laodicea in the Lycus Valley. He specifically warns them against the world's traditionalism and legalism. Here, Paul refers to religious teachings that have no foundation in Scripture, but are instead the invention of humans. Think of some ways you've replaced tradition with truth saying, "We've always done it this way." These subtle traditions can take hold and weaken the foundations of your faith. "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit" (Colossians 2:8).

Reach Up: "In Him" and "with Him" are key prepositional phrases in this portion of Scripture. Underline the words and then record what you discover about Christ in these phrases.

Reach In: Paul again does a "before and after" contrast for the believers to remind them of the work Christ has done on their behalf. According to verses 13 and 14, what were you once and what are you now because of His sacrificial death?

Reach Out: Why do you think man-made philosophies become so popular when the living God offers such true forgiveness? How will this passage help you "disarm" (v. 15) the

false doctrines you see in the world?

Remember: “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.” (Colossians 2:9,10).

Connection—Week 3 • February 15th-21st

Read: Colossians 2:16-19

Review: George Burman Foster said, “Jesus blew everything apart, and when I saw where the pieces landed, I knew I was free.” Paul, the “prisoner of Christ” (Ephesians 3:1), continues his warning against the heresy that was invading the church. He realized how dangerous these false teachings were, and that their seemingly subtle messages could hold believers hostage. In these few verses, Paul urged the church to be liberated from judgment and false humility.

Reach Up: What things did Paul warn against judging about? What things did he warn against delighting in? Have you seen this type of pettiness at work? In your church? In your own heart?

Reach In: According to verse 19, describe how the church is truly held together. Who supplies the increase? How do you think this could fight the problems facing the church?

Reach Out: All of the Old Testament feasts and festivals pointed to Christ. He is the fulfillment of God’s promises. Because the “substance is of Christ” (v. 17), how can you point others to Him in a meaningful way?

Remember: “Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels” (Colossians 2:18).

Connection—Week 4 • February 22nd-28th

Read: Colossians 2:20-23

Review: No ritual or rule will earn salvation. Thus, we conclude this chapter with Paul reminding us to be on guard against man-made religions. We should remember to seek the true wisdom that comes from the living God. We can guard against these types of heresies by asking: 1) Does it stress laws over love? 2) Is it critical or cautious? 3) Does it value wonders over the Word of God?

Reach Up: Oftentimes, Christianity gets a bum-rap as the “do-not” religion. In verses 20-21, how does Paul dispel this notion?

Reach In: In verse 23, why do you think the “do-nots” are described as simply an “appearance of wisdom”? According to this text, what is this “self-imposed religion” really worth?

Reach Out: Billy Graham said, “Knowledge is horizontal. Wisdom is vertical - it comes down from above.” How does possessing God’s wisdom cause you to want to live according to God’s laws? Does this seem to contradict what Paul is writing here?

Remember: “If you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations?” (Colossians 2:20).



Colossians • CHAPTERS 3,4 • CHRISTIAN LIVING

Connection—Week 1 • March 1st-7th

Read: Colossians 3:1-11

Review: We've read Paul's warnings about man-made religions and philosophies. We've also focused on the fact that Christ was God made man (Colossians 1). We've also been warned against self-imposed rules and self-righteous behavior (Colossians 2). Now, Paul turns his attention to our practice: How should we live as believers in Christ the Lord?

Reach Up: Knowing you were "raised with Christ" (v.1), why should you "seek those things which are above" rather than "things on the earth"? (vv.1-4).

Reach In: Because we are new creatures, we should "put on" and "put off" certain characteristics. List the things we should put off and on. Describe how this will change your relationships with those around you.

Reach Out: Paul wrote that there is "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all." (v.11). Try to think of a people group in your community who don't know about Jesus. How can you connect with them to share Christ's love?

Remember: "Put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him" (Colossians 3:10).

Connection—Week 2 • March 8th-14th

Read: Colossians 3:12-4:1

Review: Last week we learned that, as believers, we must put off our tattered old lives and put on fresh lives in Christ. Warren Wiersbe wrote, "God wants you to wear the graceclothes, not the graveclothes!" These new lives include new ways of dealing with people. In this passage, we learn how to treat one another—with love. We also learn why: "Christ forgave you, so you also must do." (v.13).

Reach Up: Verses 15-17 speak of God's transforming power. What happens when you "let the peace of God rule in your hearts" (v.15)? Why should you let "the word of Christ dwell in you richly"? (v.16)? According to this passage, in whose name should you perform your words and deeds? Why do you think this makes sense?

Reach In: Just as we were instructed to "put off" our sinful traits, we learn to "put on" holy habits. What should we put on and why? What is the greatest attribute believers can wear?

Reach Out: Describe how your love for Christ should change your relationships in a practical way from the home to the workplace (vv.18-22). Which of these relational changes will be most difficult to make? How might these changes witness to the transformation you've embarked upon?

Remember: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts" (Colossians 3:15).

Connection—Week 3 • March 15th-21st

Read: Colossians 4:2-11

Review: Earlier, Paul prayed for the Colossians and asked for prayer for his ministry. E.W. Kenyon said, “I am convinced that the most outstanding enemy in prayer is the lack of knowledge of what we are in Christ, and of what He is in us, and what He did for us, and of our standing and legal rights before the throne.” This letter reminds us who we are in Christ: “elect of God, holy and beloved” (Colossians 3:12), and more important, what Christ is in us: “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). As loved ones, we discover His power for holiness and the privilege of intercession.

Reach Up: We are encouraged to “continue earnestly in prayer” and to be “vigilant in it” (v.2). Would you describe your prayer life using these words? If not, what words would you use? What steps can you take to be more vigilant in prayer for yourself and for those in ministry?

Reach In: Paul mentions co-workers in the ministry. List some of the people you know in your church. Follow Paul’s example and write about them through the lens of brotherhood (ex. John Smith; a beloved brother, faithful greeter on Sundays, and fellow kinship leader). How does this help you view your church family differently?

Reach Out: What do you think it means to be “fellow workers for the kingdom of God”? (v.11) How can you and those you listed above come together to further God’s kingdom on earth?

Remember: “Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.” (Colossians 4:5).

Connection—Week 4 • March 22nd-31st

Read: Colossians 4:12-18

Review: Paul ends on a personal note. He mentions Christ’s servants by name, and records their service for the kingdom. It’s a reminder that the church is not a building, but individuals. Jesus said, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst” (Matthew 18:20). Be comforted. He knows your name and labors. If Paul wrote today, would your prayers, hospitality, or zeal be mentioned?

Reach Up: Epaphras, the founder of the Colossian church, prayed that the people would “stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” (v.12). What do you think it means to be “perfect and complete”? How are you seeking this in your personal walk with God?

Reach In: Paul told Archippus to “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.” (v.17). What particular ministry have you received from God? How are you fulfilling it?

Reach Out: Paul instructed that this letter be read to their sister church in Laodicea (v.16). What key truth did you learn from the study in Colossians? Do you have a friend, colleague, or family member in another town that needs encouragement from the book of Colossians? Write a note, e-mail or make a phone call to share something you learned through this study.

Remember: “Stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” (Colossians 4:12).

The Case for Christ



SKIP HEITZIG had the privilege of talking with Lee Strobel, a former journalist, and best-selling author.

A one time skeptic, Lee set about to disprove Christianity using his journalistic skills.

Surprisingly, what followed was his conversion to Jesus Christ. Since then, Lee has written and spoken extensively on compelling reasons for the Christian faith.

Skip: As a legally trained journalist I know that you spent a few years trying to disprove Christianity. At the start how certain were you that you would be successful at doing that?

Lee Strobel: I started out with mixed motives. I was living a very immoral lifestyle and so I sure didn't want there to be a God. On the other hand, having been trained as a journalist and in law, I really wanted to honestly evaluate the evidence and let it lead me wherever it will, even if it's to a very uncomfortable conclusion that God exists. So that's kind of the approach I took, and I went into it with a lot of skepticism, with a lot of doubt. But, the more I investigated Christianity the more it really stood up to scrutiny.

Skip: Was there one major area that began to convince you that the claims of Christ were true? What was it exactly?

Lee Strobel: The number one area was the resurrection of Jesus. Anybody can claim to be the Son of God, and certainly it's pretty undeniable that Jesus made incredible claims about Himself and His being the Messiah, and being the unique Son of God. Anybody can claim it, but if you can actually return from the dead, that's pretty good evidence you're telling the truth! So, I really saw, as Paul did, if the resurrection isn't true- cash it in, you know, you might as well forget the faith because everything hinges on whether Jesus really did overcome the grave. The evidence for His execution is overwhelming. There's not only multiple accounts of that in the New Testament, but there's five ancient accounts outside the Bible that say that Jesus was executed. So we knew He was dead. We have early

accounts of His resurrection that are so early that they cannot be legend. We have an empty tomb that even the critics of Jesus admitted was empty. The question wasn't whether it was empty, but how did it get empty? And then we have eyewitnesses— in over 515 individuals who encountered the resurrected Jesus, many of whom's lives were changed 180 degrees against their theological beliefs. They became convinced that Jesus did return from the dead and thus established His divinity. So, it really was the resurrection that I found to be the most compelling evidence that Jesus is really who He claimed to be. You've got lots of people through history who have investigated this

Christianity has a good answer for this, but that's not what they're looking for. People who themselves are in the midst of suffering, they really need the presence of Jesus, they need someone to be Jesus to them, they need the love and the grace. But a lot of people raise it as an intellectual objection. OK, let's put it into perspective — where does the evidence overwhelmingly point us? Toward the truth of Christianity. And I think the Christian worldview has an explanation for why there's pain in the world. You know, God wanted to create people who were able to love each other and to love Him, just as love existed from eternity past in the Godhead. And, in

IT REALLY WAS THE RESURRECTION THAT I FOUND TO BE THE MOST COMPELLING EVIDENCE THAT JESUS IS REALLY WHO HE CLAIMED TO BE.

themselves and come to the conclusion that the resurrection is not mythology, it's not legendary, it's not wishful thinking — it's an actual historical event for which we have excellent evidence.

Skip: Lee, I know that with what you've written and where you've spoken, you've been asked a lot of tough questions about the Christian faith. What was the toughest question you've ever been asked?

Lee Strobel: I think the number one question, in terms of an objection to Christianity, is the question of how can a loving God allow pain and suffering in the world. I once commissioned a national study in which I asked a cross-section of Americans, "If you could ask God any one question and you knew He'd give you an answer, what would you ask Him?" And, by far, this was the number one question. And, it's a question that some people ask out of their own personal pain. I think

order for love to be expressed, in order for us to experience it, the greatest value in the universe, then we must have free choice. And to have free choice means that we can abuse that free choice and open the door to evil and hurting each other and so forth. So, I think the Christian worldview does have a good explanation for it.

Skip: Lee Strobel, you're a great asset to the kingdom of God. We thank God for you.

Lee Strobel: Thank you, Skip. God bless you and what you're doing. Man, I hear all the time about what God's doing through your ministry so I'm very excited about that.

Skip: Well, thanks for taking the time to be here. God bless you.

For the complete interview with Pastor Skip Heitzig and Lee Strobel, go to www.connectionradio.org and click the First Friday segment on the content bar.



Q&A
with PASTOR SKIP

Pastor Skip,

Question: A Jehovah's Witness recently came to my door. After a brief discussion with the man, I became confused about the divinity of Jesus. According to this man, Jesus was not divine. He showed me Scriptures that seemingly demonstrate that Jesus was not God Himself, but only the Son of God.

My question is: How can Jesus be both God and man at the same time?

Answer: First of all, let me thank you for the question. It is a good one, and sadly many cults try to trip-up Christians with this question. The issue is, does the Bible teach that Jesus is both God and man?

To answer this question simply – yes. Unequivocally, the Bible teaches that Jesus, as the second person in the Godhead, is both God and man.

This false teaching espoused by the Jehovah's Witness is not a new one. As a matter of fact, back in the late second century, men such as Justin Martyr (c. 100-

Truly Human

c. 165), Origen (c. 185- c. 254), and most notably, Athanasius (c. 296- 373) battled the same counterfeit claims. Back then, Athanasius, a pastor in Alexandria, fought a teaching called Arianism (led by a man named Arius).

Arius taught that Jesus was only a created being just like you and me. As a consequence, he instructed that Jesus could not be divine like the Father. This teaching is very similar to that of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Using the Bible, Athanasius showed how wrong Arius was. Athanasius demonstrated that if Jesus were not God, then He would be unable to save people. Only God can save someone eternally. The Bible is clear that Jesus came to seek and "to save that which was lost." (Matthew 18:11). Thus, Jesus is not a created being, but also the Creator who came to save His lost people.

The second point Athanasius used from Scripture is that Jesus was the “Word became flesh” (John 1:14). As such, he is worshiped as God.

Finally, Athanasius discussed the truth that Jesus is divine by showing all His attributes of divinity: His ability to heal, to forgive sins, to work miracles, etc.

The same Biblical points made by Athanasius are still true today. Jesus is called God, has the qualities of God, and came to save the lost.

Therefore, the Jehovah’s Witnesses’ line of reasoning is not unique to them. It has been around a long, long time. And over and over again it lacks biblical support.

interpretation. Nestorius was wrong.

Like Jesus’ divinity, Jesus’ humanity is based upon the biblical record. He had all the characteristics of a real man - not a man shrouded in divinity or a divine being disguised as a human. No, Jesus was a man. Yet He was also divine. Simply stated, Jesus is God in bodily form— you might call Him the God-Man. Jesus is not 50% God and 50% man; He is fully God and fully man. Think of it this way: Jesus holds the full attributes of divinity as well as the full attributes of humanity.

Clearly, the modern teachings of the Jehovah’s Witnesses are both unbiblical and historically untenable. In 2 John 7-10, we are told that: “many deceivers have gone

man, Truly Divine

But the question is: How can Jesus be both divine and human?

Believe it or not, early Christians dealt with this issue as well. Shortly following the debate between Athanasius and Arius, there was another debate between two fellows named Nestorius (died c. 451) and Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444). The issue at hand was what is now known as the Nestorian Controversy.

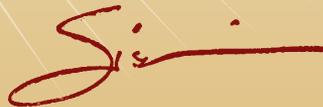
Basically, the Nestorian Controversy dealt with whether Jesus was both divine and human. Nestorius took the position that Jesus could not be divine and man at the same time. Cyril took the biblical position that Jesus is indeed both human and divine, giving Scriptural references for both qualities.

Both history and the Bible have proven that Cyril was correct in his biblical

out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh... If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him”.

The Apostle John is clear: watch out for these false teachers! I encourage you to get some good books on basic Bible doctrine or books that combat the Jehovah’s Witness’ teachings. Many cults are sneaky and dishonest with the people they approach. They manage this by not giving the full biblical teachings on the subject, ultimately leading people into a trap. Be on guard by arming yourself with the truth.

In His strong love,



To read more of Pastor Skip’s personal blog, go to www.SkipHeitzig.com.

PROOF

BY SKIP HEITZIG

ONCE UPON A TIME, there was a little goat that wanted more than anything else to be a lion. The goat guessed that if he could learn to walk like a lion and talk like a lion and go where lions go that he would eventually become a lion. So, he practiced and studied and watched them. The little goat tried to stalk through the jungle - a stalking goat! Then, the little goat started swishing its stubby tail majestically and tried to change his pitiful bleat into a deep roar. And he finally managed to convince himself that he actually looked like a lion and sounded like a lion. The only thing left was for him to go where lions go. So one day he discovered where all the lions hung out and he went in among them. Say... around lunchtime.

End of story, end of goat.

Like the goat, there are people who believe that if they can talk like Christians talk and go where Christians go, they will be a Christian. So, they go to church and listen to sermons and read the Bible and sing songs and get the “feeling” that they deserve to go to heaven because of their deeds, the *act* of being something they are not. Now, will good works get someone into heaven? Is busyness what Jesus requires? No! Only faith in Jesus can provide our justification. Good works are what follow a life already submitted to Jesus - but they are *not* the factor that saves us. This is crucial: faith in Christ is what saves a person. Not our works. A Christian is somebody who knows Jesus, follows Jesus, listens to Jesus, and obeys Jesus.

So, let’s look at ourselves to ensure that we are truly Christians. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith.” (2 Corinthians 13:5). Or as one translation puts it, “Examine yourselves to see if your faith is really authentic”. What do you think?

A large percentage of Americans claim that they’re Christian. And 35% of Americans claim to be one step above Christians: born-again.

Are 35% of Americans truly Christians? I don’t know. But I do know that you aren’t a Christian just because you say that you are. Or because you think that you have the right “talk” or look the right “part”.

One day, I met Charlton Heston. I’d always wanted to meet him. I mean - he was Moses! So he came to town and I half-expected him to say, “Let my people go”.

Now, he was a nice guy- but he was not Moses. Just because you have played the part doesn't automatically make you the person you play. This is the same thing for Christians - 'playing' the part and actually being a Christian are two vastly different things.

So, are you a follower of Jesus Christ or a fake? A fake Christian is one who has the eternal language without having eternal life. A fake Christian is someone who might say that "Jesus is Lord", but doesn't submit to Jesus as Lord.

One Christmas Eve, we had an altar call. And one of the people who came forward was an elderly gentleman with tears in his eyes. We introduced ourselves to each other and he said, "I have been an elder in a church for years, but I've got to tell you, Skip, I have not known Jesus Christ 'til just a few moments ago when I asked Him into my heart. I knew all the right words, I did all the right things, but I didn't know Him." This Christian man was fake - until he submitted his life to Jesus. His was a life of busyness, of works- but not of true faith.

Once, I read about a doctor – or so people thought. For years, he practiced medicine. He was only a third year medical student and had never finished medical school. But, he put 'M.D.' at the end of his name, hung up the little plaque on the door, and treated patients. When some of his "treated" patients became worse and died, people became suspicious and investigated. Although he held the profession of being a doctor, he really only had the practice of a third-year medical student. He was not what he claimed to be. And so it is with the supposed Christian.

Then, the most important question is: "Am I truly a Christian?" Begin by asking: Have I received Jesus as Lord? Then ask: How

is my walk? Am I living obediently to the will of God? Do I yearn to please God and follow Him? Is there fruit in my life?

Notice, I didn't ask if you're perfect. Only One is, and He is the One we are to follow. So, examine your life. Is your life one of obedience to God's will, or a life frustrated by sin and obedience to your own will?

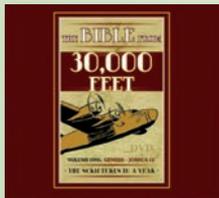
Obedience demonstrates that a relationship is strong and real, proving that you are a child of God. Again, I said obedience *proves* the relationship - it doesn't produce the relationship. You don't get saved by being obedient. You come to Christ by faith. Obedience, through works, proves that you belong to Christ - that you're already saved by faith.

And, anyone who is continually practicing sin gives evidence that they do not belong to Christ. What? You may be thinking, "Umm... Skip- wait a minute- don't Christians struggle with sin?" Yes, we do. "Don't Christians fall into sin?" Yep, we do. "Well, don't Christians ever deliberately sin?" Yeah, sometimes we do.

But *when* we do, our reaction as Christians is different. As in Psalm 51: it will be brief, we'll hate it, we're going to turn from it, and we'll loathe it. As Christians, we're not going to sit in it and stay there. And, though our lives may be marked by occasional sin, it will not be marked by perpetual sin. You see, a Christian is somebody to whom sin clings. An unbeliever is somebody who clings to sin. See the difference?

So, let's examine ourselves in the light of this eternal truth: being a Christian requires faith in Jesus Christ. But real faith leads to a life of obedience. Again, faith doesn't produce the relationship – but it *does* prove the relationship.

HOT SPOTS are thoughts designed to ignite your faith by Skip Heitzig.



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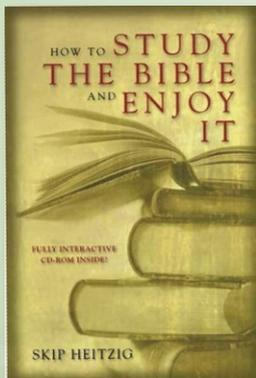
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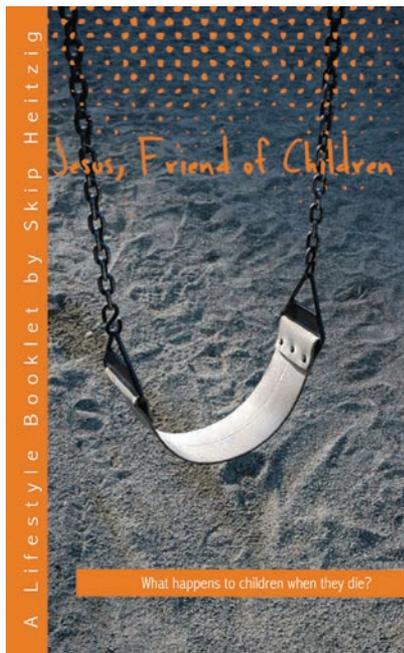
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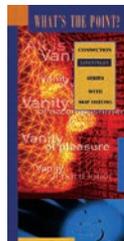
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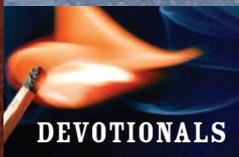
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>> CONNECTING THE DOTS

- 1.} In His life, Jesus demonstrated certain, definite characteristics:
 - a. He is magnificent.
 - b. He holds amazing power.
 - c. He holds unspeakable glory
- 2.} Jesus walked on this earth as our “God with skin on.”
- 3.} Jesus should be our everyday ideal. As Christians, we must look unto Jesus: at His death, as our Advocate, at His example, and toward His second coming.
- 4.} Christ is coming again. As Christians, we are to be expectant of His return.
- 5.} As Christians, we are God’s treasure. He looks at us with love and grace, infusing His mercy and His Word within our hearts.
- 6.} Jesus is both truly human and truly divine. He has two natures – He is both God and man.
- 7.} Jesus desires a relationship with you. He wants to make you a child of God. *

* If you have not already accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal Savior – do it now. Please don’t wait. With a sincere and repentant heart, simply pray:

“Father, I know I am a sinner. I repent of my sin, and turn away from it. I turn to Jesus. I believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again, saving all who believe in Him. Fill me with your Spirit and come into my life. Transform me. Make me into a new creation. I pray this in Jesus’ name.”

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