

# Reaching Out

Issue #92

Welcome to **Reaching Out**,  
a Christian magazine to serve the community.  
Our goal is to offer Biblical solutions to the  
problems facing our society today.

## What's Inside?

Four regular columns:

<b>What Does the Bible Say</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>The Christian Home</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>The Bible and Science</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>The World Today</b> .....	<b>10</b>

## Feature Article for Youth

<b>The Devil Made Me Do It!</b> .....	<b>5</b>
---------------------------------------	----------



# Official Inspection Station

—Clay Zimmerman

I see these little signs all over at garages: Official Inspection Station. Of course, most of them say Official Vehicle Inspection Station. I suppose most states are like ours. If you don't have an official inspection, you don't get a vehicle license. And no license means this vehicle is not allowed to operate on the highways. If it is not thought to be in good condition, it may not run with the rest. It is too dangerous.

That is pretty demanding! I wonder what would happen if God treated us that way? Once a year we would have to go in for an official inspection. There would be official inspection stations in every town and, of course, a bunch in the cities throughout the whole country. We would have to be run through some sort of a moral, honesty, love your neighbor detector to see how we are doing. If we would not pass the test, we would not be allowed to continue to live with the rest of our fellow human beings. It would be too dangerous.

If a vehicle is in poor condition, it can be repaired and sent on its way. Could that somehow be applied to failing humans? If the detector needle stays in the red, the offender would be taken aside and some serious counseling would begin. "Don't you love the Lord God?" *"This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like, namely this, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (Mark 12:30, 31). All the rest of*

the requirements for a spiritually healthy human come under these. Is this failing human an honest person? This means no stealing, no cheating on taxes, no dishonesty in business, and no telling lies. All these things hurt others, so how can you say you love others as yourself? Oh yes, there is that thing about treating others as you want to be treated. That is also part of the love package. Is the person morally pure? No fornication, adultery, pornography, indecent public undress, or lust is allowed either.

The list does not stop there. Loving others means more than words. Do you give of your time and money to help the less fortunate? Jesus said we would always have the poor with us. What are we going to do about it? The meter will pick up if we are selfish and only spend money on ourselves, or if we have a compassionate heart that truly cares about others.

The serious part is that this is not all fantasy. With repentance and forgiveness through Christ we can be fixed up and ready to go—not only for this life but for all eternity. God's manual for us, the Bible, says we should *"examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves"* (2 Corinthians 13:5). He then says he will do the final inspection at the end of life. *"The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works"* (Revelation 20:12b).

---

*Would you like to receive each issue of **Reaching Out**, or do you know of a friend who might? Send your requests to the church represented on your back page.*

*Do you care to respond to any of the articles?*

*Send your thoughts and comments to:*

## **Reaching Out**

Roger Berry, Editor  
2256 West Dry River Rd.  
Dayton, VA 22821

---

**Reaching Out** Published Quarterly Issue #92, 3-2017

**Editor:** Roger L. Berry

**Board:** Joe Weirich, Wayne Miller, James Yoder, Clay Zimmerman

**Regular Columnists:** Marlin Kreider, Elvin Stauffer, Clay Zimmerman, Roger L. Berry

**Reviewers:** Glenn Kilmer, Lewi Graber



# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## The Deceitfulness of Riches

*by Jerry Martin*

The Bible has much to tell us about riches, their use, and their misuse. Jesus said, in Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The word mammon is simply a term that personifies wealth and material things as a master.

The God of heaven allows no room for serving the god of wealth, and the god of wealth allows no room for serving the God of heaven. It works both ways. We must choose one or the other. If we choose riches, we will find ourselves serving a very deceitful master.

### **Recognizing the Deceitfulness of Riches**

Riches give a false sense of security. The Scriptures have many warnings against trusting in riches. The psalmist wrote, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them" (Psalm 62:10). In Luke 12, Jesus gave the account of the man we call the rich fool. He said, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But God said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

We have a tendency to find our security in riches. Remember Paul's warning to Timothy: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Timothy 6: 17).

Consider also the rich young ruler, who went away sorrowful because his heart was set on his riches. Afterward, Jesus said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" Why did He say that? It is very difficult to have a lot of riches and not trust in them. When

the disciples asked, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus responded, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). A rich man can be saved, but it is only by divine power that he can trust in God rather than his riches.

Riches cannot fulfill what they promise. After they are accumulated, it is amazing how quickly they can disappear. "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Proverbs 23:5). Riches provide no real security—not in this life, nor when we leave this world to face the Lord in judgment.

*Riches* is a relative term. When we go to Nigeria, we feel very rich because of all the poverty we see there. The comment of a brother from Nigeria who came to visit us was a bit startling. He said, "You Americans have money to play with." We thought we were living frugally, and we certainly endeavor to do that. But we are living in America. When the Bible talks about riches, let us not excuse ourselves. And let us not think that we can handle more wealth than others can, without being affected by it.

Riches tend to make us think we are somebody. Again note the words in 1 Timothy 6:17: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded." Riches have the potential to make us feel superior. Galatians 6:3 says, "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." Riches do not make the man. In fact, they have destroyed many men.

James 2 gives another side of the story. It says that when a rich man comes into a church service, he is honored and is given a good seat. But when a poor man comes in, he is told to sit in the back somewhere. This is respect of persons, which is never right.



Riches can give a false sense of God's blessing. They can steal our hearts away from God, when all the while we may be thinking that we have God's special favor. Concerning those who were "supposing that gain is godliness," Paul gave Timothy some specific instructions: "From such withdraw thyself" (1 Timothy 6:5). If we think our material wealth is evidence of God's blessing in the spiritual realm, we have succumbed to the deceitfulness of riches. Deuteronomy 8:10 says, "When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee." It is right to thank God for our prosperity and our possessions, but we need to beware. The temptation is described in Deuteronomy 8: 17, "And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth." The thought is, "My prosperity is due to my good management." That is a false idea. "But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:18).

### **Keeping Wealth in Its Proper Place**

A Scriptural concept of divine ownership and stewardship is that we do not really own our material things; they belong to God. Remember David's words in 1 Chronicles 29:11: "Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine." That is a Scriptural concept of divine ownership and of our place as stewards of all that we have.

We sometimes say that at least one-tenth of our possessions belong to the Lord. But the other nine-tenths also belong to Him. The challenge is for us to use all that God has entrusted to us as stewards for His glory.

We must use material things without becoming dominated by them. "But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; ... and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Corinthians 7:29-31). In this passage, the Greek word for *abusing* denotes using something full or excessively. It is right to enjoy the good things of life with moderation, but our primary focus must be on higher things.

Not only should we live within our means, but also live on less than our means so that we have something to share with others. If we are blessed with abundance, it should not be obvious by

the vehicle we drive or by our house and its furnishings. Probably all of us know and appreciate certain Christians whose wealth is not evident in their attitude or their possessions. They have a very humble spirit, which is made possible only by the grace of God.

We must lay up treasure in heaven by giving liberally. Jesus told the rich young ruler, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" (Matthew 19:21). Do we really believe that? Let us always remember that we cannot give to others what we spend on ourselves. Giving liberally means giving more than ten percent, especially for the wealthy; and most of us are indeed rich.

The believers in Macedonia provide a noble example of liberal giving. Paul wrote, "In a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift" (2 Corinthians 8:2-4). The Macedonians gave sacrificially. They gave until it hurt; then they gave some more. They were laying up treasure in heaven.

We need to give spiritual things priority over material and financial things. Probably we all know believers who have prospered in their working years, whose children are grown, and whose farms or businesses are paid off. Then, rather than pursuing more wealth, they began devoting their time and money to the Lord's work. That is an excellent thing to do if we find ourselves in that place.

Jesus asked a solemn question, in Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" If we gain just a little empire of our own at the expense of our soul, we will suffer the most terrible loss possible. But if we use our earthly wealth to lay up treasure in heaven, that is where our hearts will be. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21).

**We do not  
really own  
our material  
things;  
they belong  
to God.**

Used by permission of *The Christian Contender*, Rod and Staff Publications, Inc., PO Box 3, Crockett, KY 41413.

## Feature Article for Youth . . .

### The Devil Made Me Do It?

The sleek, red sports car zoomed around me then slid to a screeching halt at the traffic light ahead. As I drove up behind, full-volume rock music blasted my eardrums.

The light changed, and then bro-o-o-m, there I sat in a cloud of fumes. I caught a glimpse of the bumper sticker that read, "The Devil Made Me Do It!"

*Whatever did the devil make you do? I murmured to myself. Did he make you buy the red sports car? Or fall for rock music? Or perhaps he made you burn rubber on the road. I'm certainly glad you and the devil didn't cause an accident at the intersection!*

That bumper sticker "stuck" with me the rest of that day. Does the devil really make people do the things they do? When I let an idle word slip or think an unkindness, is it the devil's fault?

"The Devil Made Me Do It!" seems like a plausible conclusion, at first. After all, the devil was responsible for tempting our first parents to rebel against God. But on second thought, "The Devil Made Me Do It!" is often nothing more than an empty attempt to pass the blame, to avoid personal responsibility. The devil tempted that fellow in the red sports car to "do it." The fellow yielded. However, he could have chosen otherwise.

We say that people bound by habits have no choice but to obey their driving urges, but they did choose to yield that first time. Once they had a choice, and they took the wrong road. Now it seems they have no choice. They are bound by the sins they have succumbed to. Now it is easy to blame it all on the devil.

As I mused over the bumper sticker, I began to wonder about myself. Do I use the same kind of reasoning when I do wrong? I probably would not lay the blame on the devil, but have you ever heard: "That's just the way I am," or "That's only the natural thing to do," or "I just couldn't help it"? There are restraints that would probably stop you from doing what you want if it were murder or some other serious crime. However, you need to recognize God's restraints for anything that His Word reveals as wrong.

Such declarations still pass the blame and are little better than "The Devil Made Me Do It!" We are responsible for what we do, and we do have choices to make.

What we do reflects our own desires and not what the devil, Mother Nature, or anyone else has forced on us. *"A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things"* (Matthew 12:35).

Let's face it, our actions tell the world our character and who our owner is, the devil or Christ.

Only what comes out of our own hearts will condemn us or justify us before God. *"For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned"* (Matthew 12:37).

If the devil could make us do something so we had no choice, then God would not hold us responsible. The devil can woo and beg and lie and tempt, but he cannot force us to do evil.

We must admit that the devil's temptations are oftentimes strong, almost overwhelming. That's why some people conclude that the devil is responsible if they fall into sin.

But listen to one of the most dramatic promises in God's Word. *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it"* (1 Corinthians 10:13).

This promise has no exception clause and no loop holes. It doesn't promise you immunity from temptation nor does it promise that your temptations will be light. It does promise you a sure getaway from even the strongest temptations.

Suppose your big temptation is anger. Your temper rages like a stalking lion. God doesn't guarantee a dead lion, but He provides some ways to cope with it. He gives you such weapons as prayer, fasting, and devil-defying Bible passages. He may also help you avoid temper-escalating situations, or He might give you presence of mind to keep your mouth shut until you are calmer.

As for the devil, who wants you to blame it all on him, your weapons are prayer, Scripture, and a determined, *"Get thee behind me, Satan."* This is not easy to do. It requires submission to Christ, obedience to His Word, and a life of prayer.

*"Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart."* He won't let the devil make you do it!



# THE CHRISTIAN HOME SERIES

## Teaching Personal Responsibility

*by Marlin Krieder*

The home is where children first learn the fundamental principles of personal responsibility. The child who is not taught or fails to learn these basics is ill-prepared to fit into society's social structure. Recently one director of a facility to help troubled boys addressed his church-based audience with the following appeal: "Parents, teach your children personal responsibility, and you will put us out of business." So we realize the importance of the home unit being intact and doing its job of teaching the next generation personal responsibility. The deterioration of the home in today's society is the main reason for the growing number of socially maladjusted people who are unable to cope with life.

On the other hand, blessed and happy are the children who learn early that personal choices bring consequences. Obedience brings security and rest, while disobedience and rebellion result in painful disappointments and chaos. So let us consider some basics that must be taught and exemplified in our homes.

### **Practicing Humility and a Service Mentality**

Humility is a necessary and a beautiful character quality. The Bible, in Romans 12:3, exhorts us not to think too highly of ourselves. This runs counter to the self-love promoted by much modern psychology. Children must learn that they are just one of many others and that the world does not revolve around them. They are here, primarily not to be served, but to serve our Creator God and our fellowmen. To do so requires being personally responsible and accountable to others over them. A few of the authorities we must respect are parents, teachers, policemen, and pastors.

A little children's song "J-O-Y" applies here when it says, "Jesus first, yourself last, and others in between." Yes, blessed are the children who learn early to love and reverence God, along with the authorities He has wisely placed over them to protect and nurture them. Humility is a key for both the authority figure and the child. Parents, be an example and teach your children humility.

### **Accepting Personal Responsibility for Wrong Behavior**

To function smoothly, all of life—home, school, church, and national life—need rules that are to be observed and obeyed. Misdeeds bring consequences. For instance, if we violate a stop sign or exceed the speed limit, the police officer has both the responsibility and authority to pull us aside. Really, when he does so, we should say, "Thank you." Do we as parents and older role-models display good attitudes when we are called into question by those over us for our failures and wrongdoings? If we respond right, we teach a powerful lesson to our sons and daughters about taking personal responsibility. The old saying, "More is caught than taught" applies here.

In fact, we must all learn to obey the rules even when the authority over us is not present. We can really know who and what we are by what we do when we think we are alone. Parents, teach your child to respect authority figures whether they are present or not. This is a great need today, because society has lost a lot in this area the last few generations. Our world suffers for the lack of simple old-fashioned respect. Respect for others and simple honesty are basic ingredients in learning to take responsibility for one's actions. This promotes stability in society.

### **Taking Responsibility in Social and Moral Relationships**

The Bible, in First Thessalonians 4:3-8, is very applicable in this area. Addressing the Christian believers, verse 4 says, "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel [body] in sanctification and honour." These verses are discreet, yet very direct, in addressing moral purity. Our children's personal purity is priceless. Children must be taught moral and social reserve, both by proper clothing of the body and by discreet conduct. Boys must be taught to respect girls, and vice versa. Adults are to protect children and not violate or abuse them. These basics are being lost in our society. The increase of pornography, along with the sexual violation and perversion of children, is just one more

warning sign of the moral degeneracy of these days. The answers are more spiritual than political, so strong remedial words and actions need to be heard from our homes and churches.

We are responsible, as parents, to teach and control our children's behavior, giving them a foundation, a moral compass for a life of purity. Then, when they mature to a personally accountable age, they need to experience salvation by repentance, faith, and the surrendering of themselves to the lordship of Jesus Christ. Upon true conversion, the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in the new believer. Now there is divine power to make right, wise, and pure choices.

First Thessalonians 4:7 says, *"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."* As children grow to become adults and then become Christians by personal choice, the external control of parents is replaced with the internal controlling presence of God's Spirit. When this takes place, then true personal responsibility and accountability has been realized. Responsible Christian living is possible, humanity is benefited, and God is glorified. True Christians want to be subject to God's delegated authority, including being accountable members in a church that follows the Bible.

### **Teaching the Value of Practical Responsibilities**

Even young children should be assigned some chores or jobs which they are responsible to do. Children need to be profitably occupied, not left to be entertained by television or computers. Many today, children and adults, are being mesmerized and brainwashed by mass-media and internet technology.

Past generations were raised with more rural and agriculture exposure than we have today. Families were generally larger. Many learned at a young age to share, to work together, and to make their contribution to others and the welfare of the family. There were animals to tend, gardens to prepare, plant, water, weed, and harvest; along with a host of other wholesome family, church, or community activities to be engaged in. We encourage parents today to make the necessary sacrifices to provide some of the above activities that complement family values. For instance, have a family garden even in a small space, if possible. It is true that in America food is generally reasonably priced. Many times it can be bought cheaper than raised in one's own garden. However, family togetherness, lessons learned, and disciplines earned, cannot be measured in dollar value.

Many homes are paying a high price in pursuit of the so-called "American Dream." But it may go down in history as a "nightmare" with so many broken homes and wayward children. Material prosperity must never take the place of family togetherness and learning. This article is an appeal to return to Biblical values of faith and personal responsibility

that will bless our homes, the church, and society. God richly rewards all who choose and take His way.

## **Go Straight Home**

*by Dallas Witmer*

It's five in the evening and even the shabbiest taverns are doing brisk business. Why don't these men go home? To drop by for a drink with the boys on the way home from work is escapist. Home responsibilities are calling. But some would sooner not hear.

It's somewhere between six weeks and nine months since conception and mothers are thinking about staying home. But it takes a homemaker to make a home. The prospect disinterests some and scares others. Like the men they may not go straight home. They might drop by at a child-care center, an adoption agency, or, (God forbid) an abortion clinic.

School's out for the day, but Johnny's not going straight home. The attraction characteristic of home is not there. The glow of the television does not warm the heart like a mother's love. Nor can the best of babysitters fill the role of disciplining parents.

Homemaking is hard work. The things we call values are won by blood, sweat, and tears. Like every successful venture, homes are built by the principled and disciplined. The commonest man and most ordinary mother can have a good home. That's because homes are built by such ordinary disciplines as **going straight home**. Facing, rather than avoiding, tough decisions, and making them on the basis of what's right, rather than one's own selfish interest.

Marriage and home was God's idea. He made us to need homes. He put a spirit within each that can only be nourished in the home setting. God will work through the institution of the home. But he has chosen to co-labor there, with such ordinary individuals as you and I. He cannot build a successful home unless we cooperate upon His terms. *"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it"* (Psalm 127:1). The character and self-discipline necessary to co-labor with God in home building can only be found in the new birth and Christian discipleship. Really, to build your home, you must be part of God's home, His faithful church. Brothers and sisters in Christ lend invaluable help to our own efforts and insure our success.

The best of home ties in this life must be severed at death. But our sacrificial love and service to our children will be rewarded in eternity. Surely when God calls us to come straight home no one will want to loiter around, or escape that happy summon.

**To build  
your home,  
you must be  
part of God's  
home.**





# THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE

## Threescore Years and Ten

by Elvin Stauffer

*"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow . . . so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:10a, 12).*

At man's first fall into sin, the penalty of death became part of human experience. He was also put out of the garden of God, lest he would eat of the tree of life and live forever in his sinful condition (Genesis 3:22-24). God preserved hope for future righteousness in the innocence of new beginnings. When man takes a course into sin, he hardens into a state where God does not speak to or use him. Young Samuels, Davids, and Daniels are instruments that will take God at His Word and do His will.

### Death Came by Sin

Thus it was of the mercy of God that He said to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). And so "as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). (Evolution's hundreds of thousands of years of death before man is false.)

All humanity now needs cleansing before a just and righteous God. We have received this sin nature at birth and we have each committed sins of our own which need to be atoned for. The Psalmist David said, "In sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5) and "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Jesus, in the end, will rule "till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:25, 26).

### Life is Shortened

Recently as I heard Psalms 90, verse 10, read it struck me that I had passed the average allotted time for man on the earth. Human life span is not what it used to be. In the beginning, some men lived nearly a millennium. But as time went on, the length of man's life was reduced. Adam lived 930 years, Seth 912, Methuselah 969, Noah 950. After the flood, Shem lived 602 years, Eber 464,

Peleg 239, Abraham 175, Jacob 147, Joshua 110, King David 70 (three score years and ten) (Psalm 90:10).

Life expectancy in the United States for men is close to 77 years (2015) and 81 years for women. However sin is shortening the life expectancy for many. In South Africa, where AIDS is rampant, a statistic was given that a high percent of the twelve-year-old youth will never reach twenty. For three countries in Africa the average length of life for men was 33, 36, and 37 years old because so many died young.

Since the time before the flood, man's life span and the time of his accountability has become shorter. Jesus indicated that infants and children are safe with their sins covered under His atoning blood. He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16). The accountable age of youth would be around twelve years when Jewish boys come to the Temple for manhood ceremonies. For some it is sooner, others later, when the conscience is awakened and they become sensitive to right or wrong. In cultures without Christian teaching it may be later.

As I considered this, my view changed from this world being mostly people destined for eternal punishment. The vast majority of souls, including the spirits of aborted children and those mentally damaged by sin, go to heaven. Satan cannot get them!

### Our Biological Clock

Scientists today have made many helpful medical advances by studying the genetic code. Gene therapy has been used to retard the progress of various diseases. The question that has come up, "Is there a gene that speeds up or slows down our biological clock?" This internal clock seems to run faster in some than in others. Of course if a



gene could be found in centenarians (those living over 100 years) that causes their longevity, a way would be sought to give this to others who had a shorter life family history.

Medical advances can keep people living longer, but centenarians still die of natural causes. Their body functions just finally fail. Scientists believe the fault is in the aging of the DNA. Aging DNA was what affected the cloning of the first mammal, a sheep. In 1996, a team in Scotland took an egg from one adult sheep, destroyed the nucleus, and injected the nucleus from a second adult into it (containing that sheep's DNA information). They then implanted the egg in a third ewe (no ram involved). The surrogate mother successfully gave birth to a lamb which they named "Dolly." Dolly was an exact copy of the mother that contributed the nucleus. One of the things that makes this tampering with life unethical in humans is that many possible lives are destroyed to get one successful clone.

This was a great success and has been used to replicate high producing milk cows and such like. But Dolly didn't live many years until her body

---

*"It is appointed unto men  
once to die,  
but after this the judgment."*

---

functions began to break down. She became lame and had to be "put to sleep." Evidently her DNA inherited the age of the previous sheep.

One report says human life expectancy will probably never exceed 115 years. Scientists find that after multitudes of duplications, the ends of the DNA strings wear out. The ends called telomeres, like caps on a shoestring, get shorter and shabby, and the string cannot replicate itself accurately anymore. Without new cells and old cells dying, body systems stop working.

### **Why Stop the Aging?**

There are some futurists who think they can stop the aging process. And a few (with the money) have chosen to have their bodies frozen until the time advancing science can restore them to life again. All such efforts and the presumption of bypassing death are bold affronts to God who said, *"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"* (Hebrews 9:27).

But realistically, as we look around and see all the sin and decay, handicaps, social unrest, bondage, and extortion, who would want to live here forever? *"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now*

*... even we ourselves grown within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body"* (Romans 8:22, 23b). The psalmist said, *"I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness"* (Psalm 17:15b).

In the Christian community there is a happy fulfilling place for each one. The elderly are respected and their wisdom is valued. *"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness"* (Proverbs 16:31). *"Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD"* (Leviticus 19:32).

### **Waiting for the Morning**

There is a difference between accepting the present lot of man and those in rebellion against where and how God has placed them. Some have made their *"calling and election sure"* (2 Peter 1:10) by accepting God's way of salvation from all of this. That is by repenting and accepting Jesus' blood atonement for their sin. These do not need to have that *"certain fearful looking for of judgment"* (Hebrews 10:27) that causes some to seek unrealistic and unethical methods to avoid death and God.

The child of God can say with Jesus about the trials of life, *"Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight"* (Matthew 11:26). Acceptance is our acknowledgement that God is Lord of heaven and earth (v. 25a). We accept the effects of the curse and God's course for us in life (Genesis 3:17). Yet we do what is within our power to prolong and make life comfortable for ourselves and others.

The world is moving toward relief from bondage and corruption of the curse of sin on creation. *"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body"* (Romans 8:22, 23).

Aging is an enriching experience as we grow older and depend more on God. *"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom"* (Psalm 90:12). *"We [the saved] shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, ... for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ... then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory"* (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

Resources: *The Bible*,  
Answers Magazine—January-February, 2017  
World Book Encyclopedia—Clone



# THE WORLD TODAY

---

## Eroding Religion

by Roger L Berry

We all no doubt have heard about the trends in American society away from religion. Polls have noted that in 1972 the number of Americans who said they adhered to no particular religion was 5%. A recent poll says that number has increased to 25%. Some of these people would say they believe in God even though they identify with no particular religion. Studies have been done of the "Nones" (people who say they have no religion affiliation). One study says that of those adults who were raised religious, sixty percent say they simply don't believe what their religion taught them.

Sadly enough many professing Christian churches and groups have so compromised their beliefs and have adapted to the anti-God, anti-Bible trends of the culture around them, that there is not much difference between them and those who are not "religious" at all.

One study of these trends reported in *The Washington Post* investigated the way people have been raised in recent years and whether or not they stuck with the religion they had been taught. What changes in society have been parallel to the drop in religious faith? The study especially focused on the subject of divorce. Divorce rates reached high levels in the 1980s with around half of marriages ending in divorce. The rates peaked in the year 2000 and have been dropping slightly since. However, the divorce rates do not take into account those who simply live together and separate or the rates of separation.

The study noted that children of divorced couples are less religious than people raised in homes where the parents stayed together. The study said that when the divorce rates climbed many pastors and churches stopped speaking out against divorce so as not to alienate people. They basically went silent on the issue and left people and their children without answers and

often without help. They offered little comfort and help to the children caught in the middle of divorce.

Now that these children have become adults, they do not feel that the church will help them in other areas of their lives. The conclusion of the study of divorce and religion is that "divorce has eroded religion."

\*\*\*\*\*

While all of this is true, it is also true that the compromise in churches in the last century has led to many problems in our society including the retreat of belief and trust in God and His Son

---

On the road to apostasy  
and spiritual downfall,  
*there is no convenient stopping place.*

---

Jesus Christ. Rather than teaching, promoting, and living what the Bible teaches about divorce and other trends in society, churches have followed the trends away from God, sometimes only a step behind the "world" and now it seems almost in tandem with the corruption of society. In the 1900s churches and church groups gave in to the divorce trend in spite of what the Bible says. They tried to stand against other trends such as abortion and same sex relationships, but now many are caving in on those issues as well. On the road to apostasy and spiritual downfall, there is no convenient stopping place.

People forget or ignore the words of Jesus on divorce. "*Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery*" (Luke 16:18). Paul then reconfirmed them in 1 Corinthians 7:10, 11: *Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:*

*But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."*

Further, many churches fail to teach their people Bible principles on husband and wife relationships and how they need to relate to one another and be loyal to each other. *"Let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband"* (Ephesians 5:33).

We need to get back to the Bible and its sure foundation or we and our children will become not only irreligious but even agnostic and eventually atheistic. This leads to God's judgment now and eternally. We need to identify with and become part of a church that take a firm stand on the Bible that can give us and our families a stable foundation in dangerous times.

### Free Devotional Guide!



Daily devotions are a must in the Christian life. Here is a dated devotional guide that will lead you to a closer walk with the Lord. *Beside the Still Waters* is a bimonthly publication (two months per booklet) written from a conservative, Bible-based view. Each page has a writing for that day with a chosen Bible reading of fifteen to thirty verses, a key verse, a quote, and a read-through-the-Bible plan.



For a free two-year subscription, complete the information below and mail this coupon to:

**Still Waters Ministries**  
**285 Antioch Rd.**  
**Clarkson, KY 42726**  
 or call: **270-242-0459**  
 In Canada:  
**4180 Line 61 RR 1**  
**Milverton, ON N0K 1M0**  
 or call: **519-595-3533**

**Yes, please send me *Beside the Still Waters*!**

Name

Address

City  State  Zip

## Is There Only One Way?

You may have heard people proclaim that there are many ways to God. Even followers of some religious beliefs, such as voodoo, see nothing inconsistent in mixing their practices with other religions, including Christianity. But what does the Bible say about itself? Are there many ways to God?

### THE ONLY WAY ...

Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"* (John 14:6).

*"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name [than Jesus Christ] under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12).

*"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"* (Proverbs 14:12).

### THE ONLY TRUTH ...

*"The Word [Jesus Christ] was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth"* (John 1:14).

*"Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth"* (John 18:37).

*"Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding"* (Proverbs 23:23).

### THE ONLY LIFE ...

Jesus said: *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life"* (John 5:24).

*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16).

Jesus said, *"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"* (John 10:10).

*"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent"* (John 17:3).



