

A photograph of a man in a black tank top lifting a dumbbell in a gym. The man is shown in profile, looking down at the dumbbell. The background is a bright, slightly blurred gym environment.

# *Forerunner*

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Preparing Christians for the Kingdom of God

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**BUILDING**  
*Spiritual*  
**MUSCLE**



# EATING: *How Good It Is!*

## *Part Six*

**M**ost of us have probably had close acquaintances or family members who smoked. My wife and I have also had experience with smokers in our families. Four relatives, two from her extended family and two from mine, were heavy smokers, and all of them knew that it damaged their health. Three have already died of illnesses directly attributable to smoking. One died at age 44 and another at 49. A third succumbed to lung cancer in his early seventies, fairly young for a member of his family, who regularly lived into their late eighties. The fourth, still alive in her late fifties, suffers from two diseases, either of which could kill her quickly, or more likely, afflict her with drawn-out and painful disability. To her credit, when her doctor recently told her to quit smoking or die, she quit cold turkey.

None of these people needed the Surgeon General of the United States to tell them that cigarette smoking endangered their health. Obviously, deliberately breathing smoke into the lungs clashes with the lungs' need of clean, pure air! Even when I was a boy in the 1930s and 40s, people regularly called cigarettes "coffin nails." They knew they were taking a risk, but they were willing to ignore it. Smoking perfectly illustrates the insanity of human nature and presents a graphic object lesson that captures the essence of the principle that *we ignore truth at our own peril*. Spiritually, we risk destroying our relationship with God, or physically, condemning

ourselves to the slavery of self-induced poor health.

We all know Jeremiah 17:9, but perhaps that familiarity is itself a danger because of its proclivity to produce contempt. When the scripture says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," its ramifications to life are profound. It becomes clearer when we add synonyms: Human nature is dishonest, underhanded, untrustworthy, misleading, crooked, and insincere besides. To appease an appetite or receive instant gratification, it craftily tricks us into discounting plain truths as unworthy or unnecessary.

Proverbs 22:3 adds another thought: "A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished." According to this scripture, smokers are obviously not prudent. Those in the Western world, at least, know significant risk is involved. Human nature, however, is a gambler; it is all too willing to put far off the evil day by rationalizing that it will not happen to the self. Yet punishment looms despite the rationalization. Human rationalizations will not turn aside laws of cause and effect. By contrast, II Timothy 1:6 reveals the Spirit of God is soundminded, that is, self-controlled. It will direct itself in the right path.

It has always been this way. God's Word shows the gambling nature of carnality from the very beginning, establishing the pattern from which we must learn. Adam and Eve ignore the truth God gives them and gamble, based on Satan's persuasions, that they can have what they desire much more quickly and receive pleasure while doing it.

As God's children, He thoroughly warns us of our responsibilities:

Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God. . . . But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you. . . . So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head. . . . Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever. Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things. . . . (Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15, 34-35, 45-47)

Verses 1-2 and 15 state the general parameters, while verses 34-35 deal generally with mental and physical diseases by which He will punish us. Verses 45-47 give God's conclusion and its cause. Whether the blessings or cursings come upon us through the working of natural law or God directly taking a hand is moot. God is instructing us that they *will* happen, and He wants us to choose life. We can hardly complain that God has been unfair.

These principles apply far beyond producing and maintaining good health because what characterizes the sons of God is that they seek and apply truth in *every* area of life. In return, their use of the truth sanctifies them, sets them apart, for what God's laws produce for our good.

### The Importance of Truth

**J**esus says in John 8:32, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Truth sets us free! Among other things, it frees us from eternal death, debilitating mental hang-ups, and diseases of the body.

What kind of message does it send to God if His children, those called by His name, either do not seek truth or carelessly ignore what they have? Perhaps it would be good for us to think of it like this: He is Truth personified. Therefore, to ignore truth is to ignore Him and, by extension, to ignore salvation. Remember, salvation is the *active, continuous process* by which God delivers us from what causes disease in the mental and physical areas of life and eternal death in the spiritual. Is it really worthwhile to ignore truth?

Truth does not come to us all at once. It gradually accumulates in those who ask, seek and knock for it,

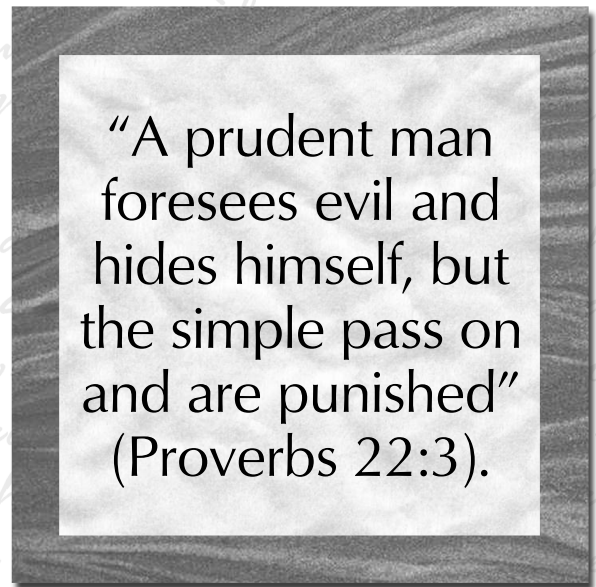
then use it in their own lives to glorify God. We do not always easily find it. Sometimes truth emerges only after a long and confusing search that is constantly impeded by conflicting information. Nevertheless, we must persevere!

### Ignoring What We Know

**W**e can describe the American diet in one brief phrase: "too much and too little." It is comprised of too much of things known to be destructive and too little of the things known to be constructive. We eat too much food and absorb too little vital nutrition. The critical aspect of this for us is not the availability of helpful knowledge but a combination of a failure to take advantage of readily known principles of good health and allowing our appetites to persuade us to gloss over what we already know.

Hardly a person alive does not know that drinking Coke and Pepsi is absolutely no good for one's health. Soft drinks may indeed be refreshing to the taste, but they fail even to quench one's thirst! In the end, they actually make one thirstier than before—and they are diuretics besides!

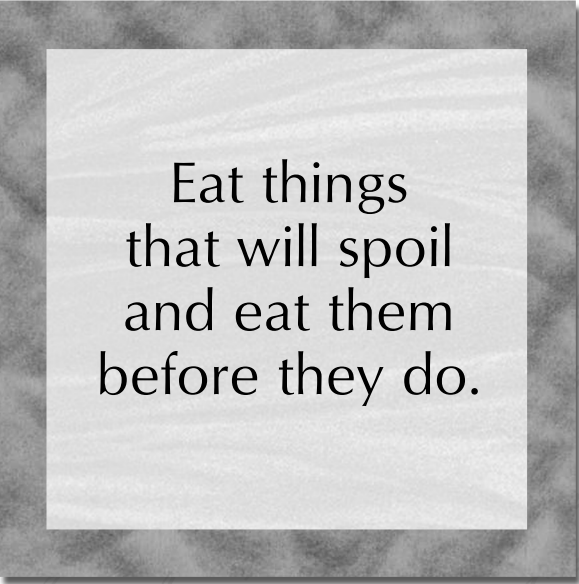
Twelve ounces of Coke contain the equivalent of twelve teaspoons of white granulated sugar and comes loaded with caffeine. A dash of phosphoric acid gives



it fizz. Phosphoric acid, known to corrode a steel nail in short order, is the ingredient that makes Coke a good polish for the chrome on one's car. Does anybody deliberately eat twelve teaspoons of sugar at one sitting? Yet we will if we get it in a Coke because human nature convinces us it is acceptable presented this way. It tastes so good!

The so-called diet drinks sweetened by aspartame are even worse. In the body, aspartame first converts to

formaldehyde then to formic acid, which in turn moves the body toward metabolic acidosis. Aspartame (sold under the brand names Nutrasweet, Equal, etc.) has been found to be disorientating to nerve impulses in the brain, and it is potentially dangerous for people with blood-sugar problems, epileptics and Parkinson's disease. It causes dizziness, headaches, slurred speech, blurred vision, memory loss, depression, joint pain, muscle spasms, and feelings of aggression, cramps, and vertigo.



Eat things  
that will spoil  
and eat them  
before they do.

It even mimics multiple sclerosis and lupus. "But that's okay," human nature says, "because, after all, I am getting such a tiny amount that it can't possibly hurt. Besides that, I still get the kick from the caffeine and far fewer calories, so I can stay on my diet and lose weight."

Benjamin Franklin remarked, "You will observe with concern how long a useful truth is known and exists, before it is generally received and practiced on." Some things are physically far worse for us to consume than the meats forbidden in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. These are things men have concocted to make money, provide convenience and extend shelf life so processed foods will not spoil before they are sold.

It is wise to remember Herbert Armstrong's one sentence directive concerning nutrition: "Eat things that will spoil and eat them before they do." We should eat foods that are grown as close to the natural way God intended. Raw foods provide the most nutrition; vegetables in particular should be cooked just enough to make them palatable for consumption.

### *The Fruit of Self-Control*

**T**he fruit of the Spirit are listed in Galatians 5:22-23. The last one Paul lists is self-control (NKJV) or temperance (KJV). A principle of interpretation we use when qualities like this are listed is that the most important comes first. However, *why* does Paul list

them in this order? The list begins with "love" and ends with "self-control/temperance." Did Paul arrange this list in this order because it takes love to precipitate all the other characteristics, and if a person truly walks in the Spirit, the fruit will culminate in temperance?

Possibly, but understood this way, self-control is not the least of the fruit of the Spirit but a major goal. Most of the time, we do not sin because we are in ignorance, but because we simply will not make the sacrifice to control ourselves. Were Adam and Eve in ignorance when they sinned? Of course not! They sinned because they did not control themselves to obey what they knew. If this principle were not so, God could not hold the uncalled, the spiritual Gentiles of this world, guilty based on natural law. Romans 2 makes it clear the uncalled know a great deal, but even with that knowledge, they still do not submit. Temperance is the fruit that, when applied to life, provides the right balance to glorify God.

Temperance, in modern English, usually refers only to restraint toward alcoholic beverages, but the biblical application is much broader. The Greek word, *engkrateia*, is the noun form of a verbal root that means "strong in a thing; strength; power; dominion; having power over; being master of." Its true biblical application, then, is synonymous with "self-mastery" or "self-control." Paul uses it this way in relation to the general demeanor of a bishop in Titus 1:8: ". . . but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled." He applies it to sex in I Corinthians 7:9: ". . . but if they cannot exercise self-control let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion." In I Corinthians 9:27, this word describes his discipline of his body in following this way of life.

*Barnes' Notes* on Galatians 5:23, p. 388, comments:

It denotes the self-rule which a man has over the evil propensities of his nature. Our word temperance we use now in a much more limited sense, as referring mainly to abstinence from intoxicating drinks. But the word here used is employed in a much more extended signification. It includes the dominion over all evil propensities, and may denote continence, chastity, self-government, moderation in regard to all indulgences as well as abstinence from intoxicating drinks. . . . The sense here is, that the influences of the Holy Spirit on the heart make a man moderate in all indulgences; teach him to restrain his passions, and to govern himself; to control his evil propensities, and to subdue all inordinate affection. . . . A Christian must be a temperate man; and if the effect of his religion is not to produce this, it is false and vain. . . . Nothing does more scandal to religion than such indulgences; and, other things being equal, he is the most under the influence of the Spirit of God who is the most thoroughly a man of temperance.

II Timothy 3:5-7 makes a helpful point about the importance of self-control in the use of truth:

... having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

The word “self-control” does not appear in these verses, but its lack is a major part of these women’s problem. Their exact problem is unknown, but what we see here makes a good illustration.

Many modern versions change “the knowledge” in verse 7 to “acknowledge.” Spiros Zodhiates says regarding this Greek word, “In the New Testament, it often refers to knowledge which very powerfully influences the *form* of religious life, a knowledge laying claim to *personal involvement*.” Put another way, this word indicates not mere agreement with or admission of truth newly found but of truth already affecting the

has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”—therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

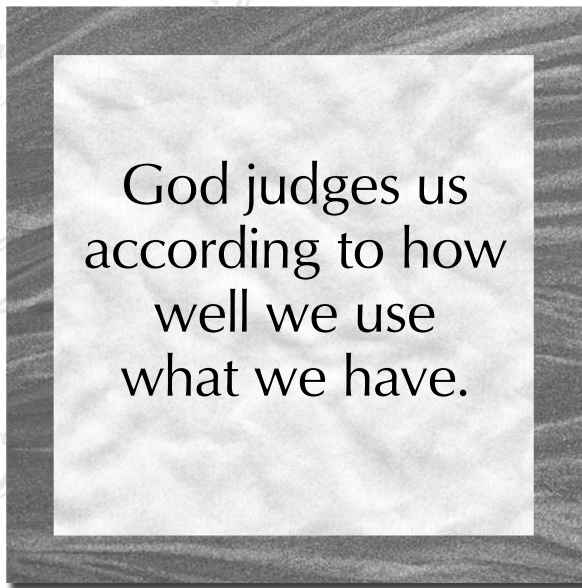
History records a never-ending succession of man’s poor leadership choices. This passage relates the immediate aftermath of the very first one.

As mentioned earlier, Adam and Eve cannot control themselves to use the truths God gave them. Instead, they reject God’s counsel, choosing to believe the Serpent’s persuasions of quick reward, and he becomes their leader. The curse God gives includes forcing them, and therefore us also, to live with the choice they made. This is the earliest biblical mention of one of its major rules: Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap (Galatians 6:7). It also alludes to yet another principle: The effect of our choices does not stop with us. They continue to reverberate beyond us affecting others, especially our children. (See “Little Things Count!” *Forerunner*, June 1996.)

Thus, the sins of the fathers pass on to the children (Exodus 20:5-6). They in turn, like Adam and Eve’s children, continue the string of bad choices that have produced this world and all its evil systems and tragic results. This whole rotten mess began because two people did not believe truth freely given them by God! Instead, feeling that it did not matter all that much, they did not control themselves to make the right choice of whom they would follow. This greatly encapsulates events, but the point is valid.

God has given us the opportunity to break away from Satan’s leadership. The Adversary’s leadership influences the world to produce processed foods that are stripped of much of their natural nutrition to give them a long shelf life. These products do indeed fill us, but they do not support vibrant, good health. Satan’s ways are the ways of death in every area of life, not just moral and spiritual ones. We must make an effort to return to the more healthful, natural foods God has provided. To some extent, they are still available, and it is our responsibility to seek them out.

Early in this series, we saw that virtually all the ingredients necessary to prepare us for the Kingdom of God are things already within our immediate environment: God Himself, the church and the spiritual resources He makes available through it, spouse, family and employment—and then there is food and eating, which we usually do three times a day. Three times a day we have an opportunity to make choices, exercising control over our spirits and our bodily appetites, using



seeker’s life. The knowledge these women received was not affecting their lives for the better.

Our challenge in life is not to become a tremendous reservoir of information that indeed may be true, but to control and rightly use what we already have while continuing to seek yet more. We acknowledge truth only when we use it in our lives, something these ladies were not doing. Considering the flood of information we have at our fingertips in this computer age, it is vital for us to understand that God judges us according to how well we use what we have.

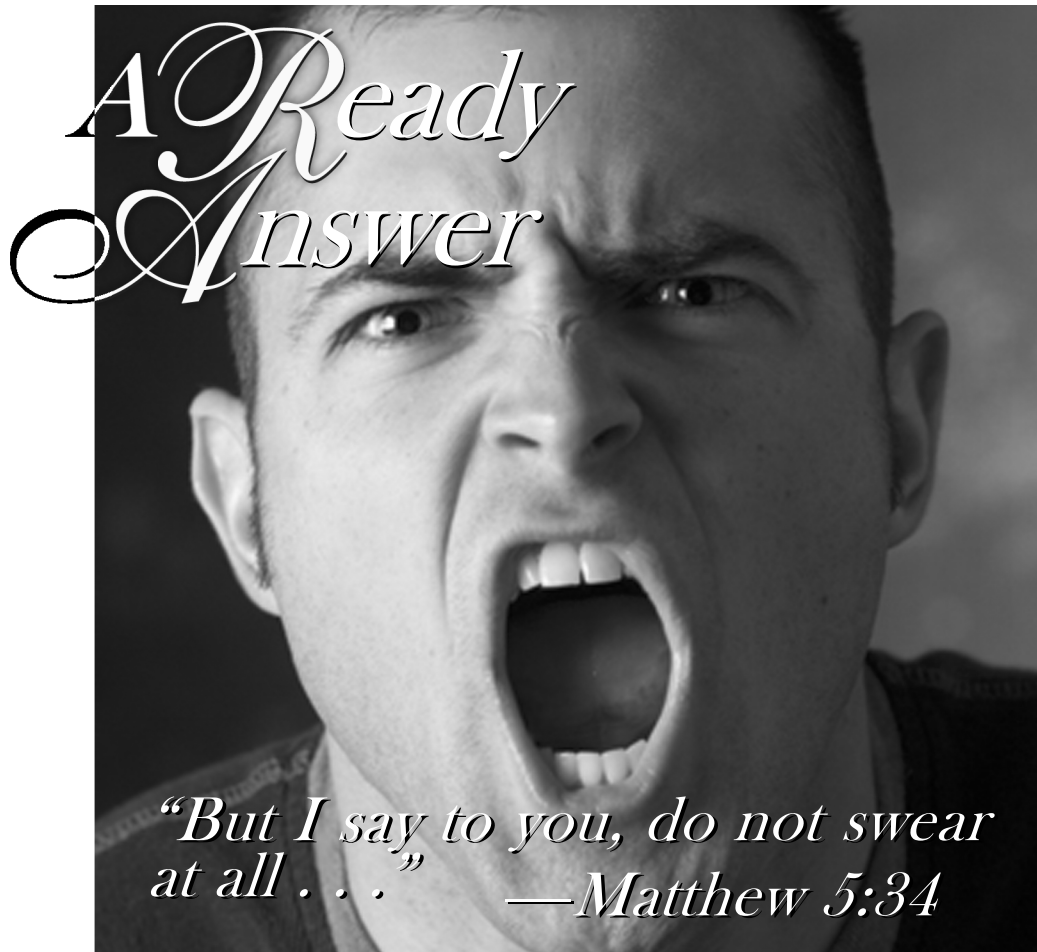
### *Whom Are You Following?*

**G**enesis 3:22-24 briefly describes mankind’s separation from God’s direct leadership:

Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man

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**Continued on page 17**



# Swear Not at All!

**“W**hat really bugs you?” During the Tabletopics session on a memorable Spokesman Club ladies’ night some years ago, the Topicsmaster asked this question. I racked my brain for the duration of the topic, but I could not come up with a worthwhile response. Thinking about it later, after the club session had finished, it came to me!

What really bugs me, Mr. Topicsmaster, is swearing.

More particularly: swearing in public, swearing in mixed company, and swearing in the media. I am not talking about the type of swearing such as an oath in a court of law. That

is a different subject altogether. I am talking about cursing, blasphemy, and profanity—in simple terms, bad language:

- ◆ Bad language on TV, radio and in the movies.
- ◆ Bad language in newspapers, magazines and books.
- ◆ Bad language in music.
- ◆ Bad language in our workplaces.
- ◆ Bad language in public places.
- ◆ Bad language in the world.
- ◆ Bad language in God’s church!

Bad language in God’s church? Surely not!

It appears that some differences of opinion exist regarding certain coarse words that some church members judge to be acceptable and others find offensive. Despite our varied backgrounds, Scripture tells us that this should not be (James 3:10; I Corinthians 10:32).

God’s people should not be using bad language. God says so, plainly, in His Word, the Holy Bible!

## Sick of Obscenities

**T**he following is part of a *Readers’ Digest* article entitled “I’m Sick of the F-Word” by Anita Bateman. The author prefaces her article by saying, “What was once taboo is now the trend. It’s time we said, ‘enough’”:

Recently some friends who hadn’t been to a movie for years treated themselves to a picture that had received rave reviews and several Academy Awards. I asked how they had enjoyed their night out. “It was a good movie,” Judy said. “An excellent story line and great acting, but. . . .” When she hesitated, I had a good idea what she would say next. “But the language was foul! The foulest I’ve ever heard, and I’ve been around. Things sure have changed.”

Yes, they have. Words once reserved for restroom walls are now common stuff in films, plays, books and even on television.

The “F-word,” long taboo, is now high fashion. As columnist John Leo noted recently in *U.S. News and World Report*, stand-up comedian Eddie Murphy tosses out hundreds of four-letter words in a single performance; New York Mets baseball star Lenny Dykstra, in a book snatched up by many a young fan, uses the F-word the way others use punctuation; and David Mamet’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, is littered with the you-know-what word.

Moviemakers are in the thick of the expletive explosion. But, whatever the medium, the message

seems to be that foul language is in, so get used to it.

I realize there are those who contend that entertainment merely depicts life as it is. "It's the real world," they say. "It's how people talk!" Indeed, my friend noticed that others in the theatre hadn't appeared offended by the on-screen obscenities. In fact, the people behind her were using much the same language. "Is it us?" she asked. "Are we the different ones?"

I admit that sometimes it seems to be the case. Not long ago, I was sitting on a bus behind two women who apparently believe that no noun is complete without an obscene adjective attached. And many of us have worked in offices that can best be described as a locker room after a big loss.

Basing an impression on looks can be risky. Words reveal much more about a person. Wise employers know this. A business manager told me of an attractive job applicant who not only "dressed for success," but had the background and training to land a job with the organization. Why wasn't he hired? His language. Said the manager, "If he felt no qualms about using expletives in our interview, he'd probably use them with our customers."

Sadly, this applicant may have thought that profanity would make him appear tough and aggressive—leadership material. Not so. Such language implies an inability to communicate well and to discern what is inappropriate.

"But they're only words," we hear some people say. Only words? Words are the way we communicate our most precious thoughts—our feelings about ourselves, about each other, about life. No wonder they can inflict so much lasting pain. I will never forget the young woman whose mother once called her foul names during an argument. She later confided, "It would have hurt less if she had slapped me. I'll never get

over those things she called me."

A friend told me about a commuter who grew so tired of the stream of obscenities coming from members of his car pool that he planned to quit the group. He tried to think up excuses, but they all sounded phony. Finally, he decided that the others should know his real reason. He leveled with them. To his surprise, the two worst offenders immediately promised to clean up their act, and insisted he continue with the car pool.

I still regret that a number of years ago I failed to speak out as language pollution became the norm in a writing class I was taking. It began when one of the students asked our instructor if it was permissible to use a certain word in his story. "By all means," he said. "It's real life; it's how people talk." Soon others began lacing their prose with "real life." Of course, it wasn't real life at all, but what the students thought was expected.

I copped out by not objecting. I was afraid of what the others would think of *me*, fearful that if I spoke up I would appear unsophisticated.

What happened in that classroom probably reflects what is happening in society at large. Isn't language pollution increasing because we are too eager to follow what others tell us is fashionable? Because we are not exercising our right—and obligation—to speak out against it?

When a filmmaker I know put together a short documentary about his young son's soccer heroics, his mother was appalled to find the script riddled with profanity. "But Craig," she objected, "my grandson just doesn't talk this way. He never has."

"Oh, Mom, I know that," Craig replied. "But you've got to put that kind of thing in nowadays. People expect it. It's the *trend*."

I rest my case.

These are wise words from a lady with enough courage to speak out against the growing acceptance of bad language in today's world.

## What Is Bad Language?

**B**ad language comes in several forms: cursing, swearing, blasphemy, profanity, and probably even more types. Because these first four cover most of the ground regarding bad language, we will home in on them:

**Cursing** is to call upon divine power to cause injury to another. It is related to damning someone.

We know what Jesus' thought of such curses by His response to James and John, the sons of Zebedee, when they desired to call fire down from heaven on some Samaritans who did not welcome Him:

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, just as Elijah did?" But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village. (Luke 9:51-56)

**Swearing** is to use profane or obscene language.

Swearing may have had its origins in Old Testament times when people sincerely called on God's name to back up an oath or a vow. In these times, the people of modern Israel have discarded God as well as the practice of making sincere promises, vows and oaths before Him; but they have retained His holy name to throw around as a common exclamation!

**Blasphemy** is the act of expressing a lack of reverence for God.

Surprisingly, blasphemy is still technically a civil crime in some U.S. states and in Britain. However, we understand that, with each passing year and the steep slide in morals, both charges and convictions of the crime of blasphemy have become fewer and fewer until today they are virtually nonexistent.

**Profanity** is the use of profane language, serving to debase what is holy.

It seems that many types of foul language are related to God or to holy things. The modern Israelite seems to think he is a real big shot if he can say foul things about God or what is holy and sacred without being struck down on the spot. The ancient Greeks called such overweening pride—the kind that drove Satan to defy God and try to replace Him (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-17)—*hubris*. How far from God our nations have fallen!

## Euphemisms

**C**ertainly, church members are not using four-letter words or blaspheming or profaning God's name. In part, the Third Commandment—prohibiting taking God's name in vain—deals with such matters. Rather, the words that some complain about are of another type: mild or watered-down versions of God's names or crude words for certain body parts or bodily functions. Though this sensitive theme may embarrass or offend, it needs to be covered.

For those who might be new to this subject, it is necessary to give warning about “substitute” swearwords such as “gosh,” “golly,” “jeez,” “shoot,” “shucks,” and others. Such words are called *euphemisms*, literally “good speech.” It does not take much thought to figure out what words these exclamations are substitutes for. We do not need them! The English language contains thousands of benign yet descriptive words and expressions that convey the same feeling or reaction.

Yet for those whose speech habits are deeply ingrained, it can be hard. Many of us have used bad language freely and frequently before conver-

sion. Many of us are surrounded by foul language at work every day. A friend told me that, upon starting a job “in the world” after spending four years at Ambassador College, he was plagued by swearwords constantly coming to the tip of his tongue for the least little problem!

I do not wish to appear self-righteous in discussing this sensitive subject. I am not pointing a finger at others. Like many church members, I work in an office where I cannot even enjoy a cup of coffee with my coworkers because the air so frequently turns blue with bad language and filthy subject matter. Some of the women are as bad as the men—in some cases, worse! It can rub off on us and, like the proverbial frog in hot water, we can gradually come to accept gutter-language as the norm. We can become calloused to it, and we can allow it to creep into our everyday conversation.

## How Do We Quit?

**A**lthough the Old Testament verses dealing with swearing permit a certain amount of respectful and sincere swearing of oaths and vows, they repeatedly and soundly condemn swearing of the coarse-language kind. As previously mentioned, the Third Commandment warns against blasphemy and profanity in Exodus 20:7: “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.”

The prophets frequently cite cursing and swearing, along with other broken commandments, as contributing causes of the captivities of Israel and Judah. For example:

Hear the word of the LORD, you children of Israel, for the LORD brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break all restraint, with bloodshed after bloodshed. Therefore the land will mourn; and every one who dwells there will waste away with the beasts of the field, and with the birds of the air;

even the fish of the sea will be taken away. (Hosea 4:1-3)

History is repeating itself. Our nations rush pell-mell toward a worse captivity than those suffered by ancient Israel and Judah in Assyria and Babylon, and our foul language is partly to blame!

What does the New Testament have to say on the subject? Jesus Christ gives clear instruction in Matthew 5:33-37:

Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, “You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.” But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No.” For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

Jesus says that His brothers and sisters should not even be using such *seemingly* mild exclamations as “Good heavens!” They are unnecessary, and more than that, Satan and his anti-God attitudes influence them.

The epistle of James has a great deal to say about sins of the tongue, including swearing:

Therefore put away all filthiness and rank growth of wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. . . . If any one thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this man's religion is vain. (James 1:21, 26 RSV)

For we all make many mistakes, and if any one makes no mistakes in what he says he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. . . . [N]o human being can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we

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Continued on page 14

# GLOBALISM

## Part Three: America

The glitzy flagship of globalist websites, [www.theGlobalist.com](http://www.theGlobalist.com), advertises the global economy as the “earth’s last true frontier.” To its builders, today’s globalism in scope and sweep is akin to yesterday’s “Manifest Destiny,” but even bigger than America’s nineteenth-century nation-building. Yes, globalism is a big movement, energized by the ideologies of many Shemitic nations—Israelite and non-Israelite alike, the European and North American nations that constitute the Occident. Clearly though, the epicenter of current globalism is Israel, specifically Manasseh. Today, “globalization is made in America.”<sup>1</sup>

God is orchestrating in detail His carefully devised plan to institute globalism in these last days. From the beginning, He planned that Ephraim and Manasseh would ramrod that globalism, promising them as He did great national wealth (Genesis 49:25-26)—globalization’s grub-stake—but then *delaying* His bestowal of that wealth until about AD 1800 (see Leviticus 26:18). Not coincidentally, the beginning of the nineteenth century is about the time the first stage of globalization began, when Ephraim started to push the nations into a one-world government—an empire upon which the sun never set.

God knew, as well, that carnal Israel would come to hold the worldview of Babel’s rebellion: Lack of faith in God mixed with the fear of death drives people to integrate. He knew that Israel, powerful yet forget-

ful of Him, would come to use his wealth and concomitant prestige and power in any movement *against* Him. This is not new to God, for He experienced Israel’s rejection of His own leadership; Israel’s call for a king in I Samuel 8 showed Him that, as a nation, Israel was not content to be ruled by Him.

In Genesis 49:22, within the chapter that records Jacob’s final words to his sons, God prophesies that Joseph will be growth-oriented, restive, not content with the status quo:

Joseph is a fruitful bough,  
A fruitful bough by a well:  
His branches run over the wall.

This is a difficult passage, so many of its words having more than one meaning. Young, in his literal translation, renders the Hebrew this way: “Joseph [is] a fruitful son, a fruitful son by a fountain: daughters overstep the wall.” Here certainly is a description of the fecundity of Joseph: both his immense population and his material abundance. Here too, however, is almost certainly a description of the inclination of Joseph’s daughters—the modern nations of Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States—to overclimb walls. Like an ivy plant not content to remain in its place, Joseph grows up wall and chimney, invading walkway and gazebo, re-rooting itself all over lawn and garden.

Where are Joseph’s walls in general, Manasseh’s in particular?

### Joseph’s Walls

Numbers 23:9—God’s vision of Israel as spoken by the mouth of Balaam—sets us on the right path to finding Joseph’s walls, the bounds of his habitations. God describes Israel as “a people dwelling alone, not reckoning itself among the nations.” Clearly, God does not envision Israel integrated into the world. Rather, He has always wanted Israel to be *separated* from it. This vision has a number of applications, one certainly pertaining to the moral sanctification God intends Israel to display in the Millennium. God’s vision for Israel is a people distinct from all others—His people, not partaking of the curses of this world’s international intrigues, imbroglios, poverty, disease, etc. As we know, those days are yet to come.

Relevant to national Israel today, however, the passage likely has geographic significance. God fulfilled His vision of an *isolated* Israel by situating some Israelites in England, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand—on islands. (Australia is a continent-sized island.) He located America and Canada in the New World, effectively isolating them from other major nations by vast oceans. *By doing so, God insulated Israel from the world.*

In other scriptures, God is more specific about modern-day Israel’s boundaries. When he addresses Israel in prophecies that have clear, latter-day application, He refers to

# a Runs Over the Wall

Israel as residing at the coasts (or coastlands) and in the isles. Additionally, Israel dwells in the north and west. Taking Jerusalem as the geographic starting point, Israel will reside to the north and west of the Middle East in the time of the end. Here are a few passages.

◆ **Hosea 11:10:** In context, God is prophesying about Ephraim's return—from the *west*—to his inheritance. (Often God uses *Ephraim* as an emblem for all Israel, much as the word *Washington* often refers to the United States as a whole.)

They shall walk after the LORD.  
He will roar like a lion.  
When He roars,  
Then His sons shall come trembling  
from the west.

◆ **Isaiah 49:1, 8-13:** Again, God is describing His re-gathering of Israel. The “coastlands” and “people from afar” (verse 1) may refer to the lands of Israelites living in the southern hemisphere (see also Isaiah 41:1). Others will return “from the north and the west” (verse 12).

Listen, O coastlands, to Me  
And take heed, you peoples from  
afar! . . .  
Surely these shall come from afar;  
Look! Those from the north and  
the west,  
And these from the land of Sinim

[Vulgate: Australi]. (verses 1, 12)

◆ **Jeremiah 3:12:** God tells Jeremiah to

Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say,  
“Return, backsliding Israel. . . .”

This cannot refer to the ancient Kingdom of Israel, north of Judah, for it was already in captivity long *before* Jeremiah's day. God is telling Jeremiah to go *further* north and warn His apostate people.

◆ **Jeremiah 31:7-10:** God promises He will save His people residing in the north (verse 8). Those of His people in the “isles afar off” (verse 10) are probably those of New Zealand and Australia.

Sing with gladness for Jacob,  
And shout among the chief of the  
nations;  
Proclaim, give praise, and say,  
“O LORD, save Your people,  
The remnant of Israel!”  
Behold, I will bring them from the  
north country,  
And gather them from the ends of  
the earth . . . .  
Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,  
And declare it in the isles afar off,  
and say,  
“He who scattered Israel will gather  
him. . . .” (verses 7-8, 10)

*Joseph runs “over the wall” when  
he attempts to extend his influence*

*beyond the isolated lands God gave him.* This extension of influence can be cultural, economic and even military. From a modern policy perspective, America stays within her walls as long as she follows a national policy of *isolationism*—remaining isolated from foreign nations as much as possible. When America follows a course of *internationalism*—the doctrine that it is proper to intervene (passively or even militarily) in other nations' affairs—she usually starts to overclimb the walls God established for her.

It is fair to see American history as a slow march from isolationism to internationalism. That is, America started out isolated, purposefully distinct from other nations. Ever so slowly, though, she began to take an internationalist stance, overclimbing the wall, until she finally became deeply entangled in the military and economic affairs of the world's nations. We will briefly trace this out.

## Early American Restraint

The early Puritans were by definition isolationists, wanting nothing to do with Europe, whence they had fled, or with the secular world at large. For example, so enamored were some of these Puritans with the idea that America was the “Promised Land”—to be ever separated from sinful “Egypt”—that some of the early instruction at Harvard University, founded in 1636 as a school for ministers, was in Hebrew!

Generally, the Puritan predilection to isolationism vastly influenced American thought for decades.

Americans slowly but surely forsook this way of thinking. Even many of the Founding Fathers undertook an effort of “bridge building” across the Atlantic that continues to this day. Education is one example. Early on, a curriculum pivoting around the classic literature of Greece and Rome, in which Jefferson and others were steeped, displaced the Bible-based education of the Puritan fathers.

Nearly every high school boy studied Latin, not Hebrew. Architecture provides another example. The builders of banks and government buildings aped the design features of classical Athens and Imperial Rome. Indeed, how many artists draped the founding fathers in togas!<sup>2</sup> Even in the early seventeenth century, America had begun her love affair with Babylon!

Do not be deceived by popular notions to the contrary: The nation’s father, George Washington, had a clear vision that America would even-

tually *abandon* her isolation and take her place leading the international community. Alexander Hamilton, Washington’s chief aide and protégé, spoke with his Commander-and-Chief in Washington’s Farewell Address in 1796. Both strategic realists, they advised the young, under-populated Republic to exploit her “detached and distant situation.” Their day, they argued, was not the time to become entangled in “permanent alliances and enmities.” However, they both

# Napoleon, Hamilton, and God’s Sovereignty

George Washington, grasping the lack of population in the United States of his day, restrained himself from hegemonic ambitions. Hamilton, whom John Adams termed the “bastard brat of a Scotch peddler [sic],” grew up in the rough-and-tumble world of the West Indies. A realist, he was highly suspicious of French and especially Spanish intentions in North America; he felt war was “just around the corner.” Seeing America’s strength in an industrially-based economy and in a strong military, he was the prime mover in the launching of the American navy in 1794. As early as 1798, he

had himself appointed inspector general [akin to today’s chief of staff] of an army that he intended to lead, *in cooperation with the British*, in the conquest of the Floridas, Louisiana and possibly parts of Latin America.

In a sense, Hamilton was a man for a *later* age, an age of international alliances.

John Adams, the President at that time, saw Hamilton’s moves as “pro-British” and scuttled the whole idea. In the end, Hamilton’s army was used to “round up a handful of tax evaders in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, then disbanded in disgrace.” In 1804, Hamilton died in the suicidal duel with Aaron Burr. Many do not realize that he was buried with full military honors, with visiting British *and* French warships firing salutes in New York harbor.

Many also do not realize the level of God’s protection of America. For Hamilton was right: War was just around the corner. Near the end of 1800, France’s First Consul, Napoleon Bonaparte, devised a strategy to halt the westward expansion of the United States

dead in its tracks and, at the same time, to ensure French control of the heartland of the North American continent. To facilitate his plans, he commissioned *two* large armies. The mission of one was to secure the region of the lower Mississippi River. The other was to move north, with the probable aim of ultimately wrenching Canada from British control.

God had other ideas: Neither army ever saw the Louisiana Territory. One became involved in putting down a slave revolt in Haiti, where it suffered heavy losses. A very rare late freeze in Amsterdam’s harbor damaged and, in some cases, destroyed, the ships that were to bring the second army to North America. Frustrated by under-fed slaves and expanding water molecules, Napoleon sold Louisiana to the United States, using the money to fund his European campaigns.

The fight between Hamilton and Adams epitomizes a tension that has lasted throughout American history. It is the tension between internationalists, *à la* Hamilton, who sought aggressively to enmesh the Republic in international affairs, and isolationists, *à la* Adams, who held that a wiser course is that of nation-building. Adams quintessentially understood what has come to be called “the American *exceptionalism*.” It derives from the peculiar genius of America as a nation driven by capitalism, morality, and patriotism, all under the rule of law rather than of privilege. Adams wanted to avoid alliances with Europe, because he saw in its hierarchical institutions (both clergy and nobility) an innate contradiction to individual liberty, majority rule, and minority protection, all under the rule of law.

(See Karl-Friedrich Walling, *Republican Empire: Alexander Hamilton on War and Free Government*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999.)

[f]ully expected that, as the country became stronger, as distances grew shorter due to improvements in ocean transport, [America] would join the ranks of the world powers. One had only to look at what the British had managed to achieve, and at America's power base compared to theirs. . . . Hamilton presumably foresaw that the United States, by virtue of its commercial and naval might, would come to exercise hegemony . . . over wide areas of the globe.<sup>3</sup>

God ensured, though, that America would not be quick about extending her influence outside North America. He did so by catching the under-populated Republic in the crossfire of the Napoleonic wars. They "spilled over" into America in the form of the War of 1812, during which even the White House was gutted by fire. In the course of the war, the United States lost most of her wooden-hulled merchant marine fleet (an incredible 1,500 sailing ships!) to French and British forces.<sup>4</sup> With that, America also lost her ability to trade with Europe for quite some time. Consequently, she was forced to look *inward*, that is, westward, to develop her continental resources. This inward view, this nation-building, came to be called "Manifest Destiny." Credit for the term goes to a Danite, John L. O'Sullivan, a New York editor, who wrote in 1845 that it is

the right of our manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent *which Providence has given us* for the development of the great experiment in liberty and federative self-government entrusted to us.

"From sea to shining sea" lie America's proper boundaries.

## Isolationism and Manifest Destiny

Isolationism was well entrenched,

and nation-building carried the day for much of the nineteenth century. When revolution was ripping apart the very fabric of European society, especially in France, John C. Calhoun (1782-1850)<sup>5</sup> admonished Americans to keep out:

Far better is it for ourselves . . . and for the cause of liberty, that, adhering to our wise, pacific [that is, peaceful, passive] system, and avoiding the distant wars of Europe, we should keep our lamp burning brightly on this western shore as a light to all nations, than to hazard its utter extinction amid the ruins of fallen or falling republics in Europe.<sup>6</sup>

Calhoun's words are remarkable. His reference to "this western shore" reminds us of God's use of the words "coasts" and "west" in Isaiah and Hosea.

Henry Clay (1777-1852), like his contemporary, Calhoun, was cut from the same cloth on the issue of American involvement in foreign affairs. Like Calhoun, Clay saw America's influence springing from her *example* rather than her *intervention*. Calling for a "masterly inactivity" toward Europe, Clay said,

If we remain quiet . . . and let our destinies work out their own results, we shall do more for liberty, not only for ourselves but for the example of mankind, than can be done by a thousand victories.<sup>7</sup>

Clay's and Calhoun's statements are remarkable for the vision they express. Both statesmen saw America as a *witness* to the nations, a light to the rest of the world. The belief that America is an example to the world is called *exemplarism*. Presidents from George Washington to William Clinton have argued that America is the world's exemplar. In fact, globalists have adopted exemplarism as a centerpiece to their advocacy that America assume a leadership role in world government. We will see, in Part Four, how globalists changed

the concept of example from one of "pacific," "masterly inactivity" to down-right military intervention. In a strange perversion of intent, exemplarism has become the rallying call of the most dyed-in-the-wool internationalists.

Revisionist historians have tried hard to turn nineteenth-century America into an empire, calling our march to the Pacific an example of unmitigated imperialism. Against that view, Pat Buchanan stands staunchly: Many American leaders of the period recognized a clear "distinction between naked aggression and Manifest Destiny." We *grew* into the lands God gave us, as illustrated by our spread into the American Southwest. "Annexation of Texas, the Southwest and California was Manifest Destiny, not imperialism. These lands were contiguous [to the existing United States] and largely empty [of population and development]."<sup>8</sup>

Acquiring these lands involved us in a war with Mexico. We invaded Mexico, taking control of her capital. After the appropriate treaties had been signed, America *withdrew* from Mexico proper. Our leadership understood the distinction between aggression and destiny. In fact, Buchanan continues:

. . . [M]ost Americans recoiled at the idea of colonizing Mexico or making Mexicans a subject people. Warned Calhoun, "Mexico is to us the forbidden fruit; the penalty of eating it would be to subject our institutions to political death."<sup>9</sup>

Probably a statement we should remember today.

Of course, none of this is to suggest that America maintained *no* relationships with other nations throughout the 1800s. Of course she did, but at arm's length, maintaining a fairly strict isolationism. The Monroe Doctrine, promulgated in 1823, was no hegemonic scheme. "The American continents . . . are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European power." That is quite an audacious statement for a nation without many

gunboats at the time. The Monroe Doctrine, far from being hegemonic, simply aimed to promote the *defense* of the American homeland; it was at heart quite isolationist in philosophy.<sup>10</sup>

Change, however, was in the air. By the early 1900s, America's foreign policy had turned quite internationalist. Next month, we will examine how the internationalist view of *assertive* exemplarism—being an example through force, if necessary—gained ascendancy over the *passive* exemplarism of Clay and Calhoun. What we will see is Manasseh assertively overclimbing walls.

—Charles F. Whitaker

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, "Globalization and American Power," *The National Interest*, Spring 2000, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Evan Cornog, "American Antiquity: How DeWitt Clinton Invented Our Past," *The American Scholar*, Autumn 1998, p. 53. His

book, *The Birth of Empire: DeWitt Clinton and the American experience, 1769-1828*, is must-reading for students of early American cultural history. Note especially Cornog's comments about the American aborigines:

While it was a common conceit that the Indians of North America were the degenerate remnants of the lost tribes of Israel (William Penn and Roger Williams both espoused this view), [DeWitt] Clinton rejected the theory in favor of Asiatic origins and a possible link to the ancient Scythians. Citing Herodotus's description of the Scythians' cruelty as warriors, he believed that from them "we may derive the practice of scalping . . . and it is not improbable, considering the maritime skill and distant voyages of the Phoenicians and Carthaginians, that America derives part of its population from that source by water, as it undoubtedly has from the northeast parts of Asia by land."

*The American Scholar* is the quarterly organ of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.

<sup>3</sup> John L. Harper, "Mentor for a Hegemon," *The National Interest*, Fall 2000, p. 49. Harper is professor of American foreign policy at the Bologna Center of the Johns Hopkins University.

<sup>4</sup> The British, who arguably "won" the war, were so preoccupied with their new leadership responsibilities in post-Waterloo Europe that

the Foreign Office did not press its American prerogatives, largely because of the intervention of Arthur Wellesley, First Duke of Wellington. In a famous letter to the Foreign Office, Wellesley, apparently seeing the potential of America as clearly as Hamilton had before, argued that Britain's best course was one of reconciliation and alliance rather than of disenfranchisement and alienation. The Foreign Office agreed, and was more than magnanimous to the young American Republic in the ensuing Treaty of Ghent.

<sup>5</sup> Calhoun was Vice-President of the United States from 1825-1832.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted by Pat Buchanan in his book, *A Republic, Not an Empire: Reclaiming America's Destiny* (Regnery: 1999). Buchanan's book makes wonderful reading for older children as well as adults, and would be enlightening to church youth. While not always accurate, it presents an important picture of American history not taught in the public schools.

<sup>7</sup> Pat Buchanan, *ibid*.

<sup>8</sup> See the chapter entitled "Jimmy Polk's War," in *A Republic, Not an Empire: Reclaiming America's Destiny*.

<sup>9</sup> Pat Buchanan, *ibid*.

<sup>10</sup> Note, however, that James Monroe's bold move to protect American soil from European adventurism became a useful tool for American internationalists later on.

## A Ready Answer

# Swear Not at All!

Continued from page 9

bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brethren, this ought not to be so. (James 3:2, 8-10 RSV)

But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath, but let your yes be yes and your no be no, that you may not fall under condemnation. (James 5:12 RSV)

A swearword does not have to actually come out of a person's mouth verbally to be a sin. If we allow these words continually to come, unchecked, to the forefront of our minds, then we are sinning! But what can we do about it? How can we stop ourselves from even thinking swearwords?

Using James 1:14-15, some have determined that sin develops in four stages. However many stages there are, we need to cut off the potential sin of swearing at the earliest stage possible by guarding what comes into our minds. Notice Paul's instruction to the church at Philippi:

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. (Philippians 4:8)

Through His apostle, God tells us our minds should be dwelling on things that are true, noble (or honest), just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy. As much as possible, we should avoid things that do not fit into these positive, uplifting categories. If we focus our minds on good subjects, we will not have time or opportunity to sink into the gutter. Let the light drive the darkness out (John 1:5; Ephesians 5:8-16)!

In addition, we should ask ourselves these questions, all of which have a great effect on our thoughts and our words:

- ◆ What kind of movies and television shows do I watch?
- ◆ What kind of music do I listen to?
- ◆ What kind of books and magazines do I read?
- ◆ What kind of company do I keep?

Do they all pass the test of God's instruction in Philippians 4:8? Or are they, among other works of the flesh, liberally sprinkled with foul language? If they are, it is time to give them up, replacing them with material that is more wholesome. It may be difficult, if not wrenching, to do this, but if we truly want to be holy and pure as God is (I Peter 1:13-16; I John 3:3), we need to overcome these kinds of habits.

Jesus Christ is leading His church to prepare for His return, and by all appearances, that time is very near. We have many areas of our Christian lives to be working on, and this is a very important one.

Swear not at all!

—John Plunkett

# FASTING

## BUILDING SPIRITUAL MUSCLE

**S**ome people may find it hard to believe—or even remotely consider—that fasting is a dynamic, vital exercise to put spiritual meat on the bones. Paradoxically, it is exactly that. Though fasting deprives the physical body of nutrition and strength, a proper, biblical fast adds conviction and depth to the inner, spiritual man.

In Ephesians 3:16-17, the apostle Paul desires “that He would grant you, according to riches of His glory, to be *strengthened* with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.” Strengthening the inner man requires some intense effort on our part. Many professing Christians would recoil in horror at the mere suggestion that God requires anything like work to enhance spiritual strength. However, God states plainly that He created us “for good works” (Ephesians 2:10), and that He will judge us “according to our works” (I Peter 1:17). Obviously, though our works cannot save us (Ephesians 2:8-9), they play an important part in our salvation. James explains that works justify us, that is, prove and exhibit our faith (James 2:14-26). We will see that works help to strengthen us too.

We cannot consider spiritual exercise passive—a no-effort, no-struggle, no-hassle situation. Exercise is meaningless without the expenditure of effort. Our Elder Brother Jesus Christ and the apostles Paul, James, and Peter all insist that struggle and effort are vital parts of the conversion and maturity process. Jesus goes so far as to say that only the violent—suggesting those who are willing to strive fiercely—will “take [the kingdom] by force” (Matthew 11:12).

### CONTINUOUS STRUGGLE

**I**n Galatians 5:22, the last fruit of the Holy Spirit mentioned is that of self-control, yet we have discovered complete self-control as undoubtedly the most difficult spiritual characteristic to attain. The apostle Paul graphically describes the life-and-death struggle in Romans 7:14-24, which he sums up in verse 23: “But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.”

In this continual struggle with the pulls of the flesh, God Almighty is absolutely exonerated of any participation in tempting us. Jesus’ brother, James, reminds us that “God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by *his own desires* and enticed” (James 1:13-14).

God has designed us with the capability of sinning; we, because of our fleshly human nature, are subject to intense downward pulls. Though He did not create carnal human nature (Romans 8:7), God has allowed us to be like this deliberately. Paul writes in Romans 8:20 that “the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope.” God knew that man’s continuous struggle against corruption would mature and perfect the character needed to be in God’s Family. Because we possess the capacity to sin, when it is coupled with the determination to resist temptation to sin, the resultant effort becomes a spiritual exercise. Like a man training with dumbbells, the repeated resistance builds strength over time.

Dr. Viktor Frankl, psychologist and survivor of Auschwitz, cautions that it is a dangerous misconception to believe that man needs a continuous equilibrium or a tensionless state. He insists, “What man actually needs is not a tensionless state, but rather the striving and struggling for some goal worthy of him.” The stress of attaining to a high standard or achieving a seemingly impossible quest betters a person. The bland, satisfied life means little, accomplishes little and is remembered little.

It never was God’s intention that we drift along in a blissful, tensionless state. Built into God’s plan to reproduce Himself is the element of personal choice and effort (Deuteronomy 30:15-20). Herbert Armstrong repeatedly said that God will never save anyone He cannot rule. It is equally important to realize that God will not give His Holy Spirit to anyone who does not desire it. Thus, when He calls, we must respond by beginning to obey Him (Acts 5:32).

God Almighty has given man the power to make choices regarding his ultimate destiny. As a free moral agent, man has the awesome responsibility to choose between a hapless, physio-chemical existence with a dead end or a

rich and rewarding eternity as a member of God's Family. Though the choice appears easy, the challenging road to the Kingdom of God dismays many because they are unwilling to undergo the rigors of the journey.

God has set before us the choice to obey or disobey, hoping we will choose obedience and giving us reasons and promises that persuade us to that end, but He wants us to make sure that it is our intention, without coercion or brainwashing on His part. It takes a free moral agent, making the right choices, to create the mind of Christ in us. Though He has a good idea how we will choose, God ultimately does not know what we will decide when given the choice. He will do all He can—short of rescinding our freedom to choose—to convince us to choose Him.

## SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

**W**e should regard fasting as a vigorous spiritual exercise in which we personally fight and combat the Devil's most intense temptations. As previously stated, God Almighty is exonerated of tempting us (James 1:14), but Satan the Devil is not. He is the Tempter (Matthew 4:3; I Thessalonians 3:5). Satan is aware of our tissue needs—of hunger, thirst, sleep, sex, etc.—all he has to do is amplify these desires. He knows that our appetites dictate to us, that we serve our cravings. Of ourselves, we seem not to have control over certain pulls of the flesh, but this lack of self-control is only apparent, not real, especially when we have the gift of God's Spirit to give us strength and motivation to overcome them (Galatians 5:16-25).

We are not truly free until we can fight off these carnal pulls of the flesh and begin to imitate Christ in our daily life. We are in a hot war against carnality, and this war includes a constant struggle against Satan the Devil and his minions (Ephesians 6:11-12). No wonder Jesus speaks of violence!

Fasting provides active affirmation, through our refusal to yield to the fleshly appetites, that we are doing our part in exercising spiritual control. By it, we actively affirm to God Almighty that we indeed opt for a spiritual future over a physio-chemical, dead-end existence. We are choosing life over death.

Fasting brings us face to face with our carnality, and we feel compelled to cry out for both physical and spiritual energy—the physical, to endure the privation, and the spiritual, to endure the temptations to satisfy our desires. The psalmist writes in Psalm 138:3: "In the day when I cried out, You answered me, and made me bold with strength in my soul." Fasting forces us to cry out to the only real Source of strength, and He promises to give us what we need to overcome the temptation (I Corinthians 10:13).

## BUILDING MUSCLE

**L**ike the building of physical muscle, godly character (the strength of the inner man) strengthens by counteracting or resisting the downward pulls human nature

makes on us. As in the aforementioned example of a man working with dumbbells, the resistance of the weights provides the necessary force against which the muscles of the arm strain. Over time and with repetition, the muscle fibers bulge and build up strength.

The process of building physical muscle, however, begins with tearing down existing muscle tissue. Fasting depicts a process of tearing down old, familiar habit patterns that have enslaved us, as we read in Isaiah 58:6: "To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, . . . and that you should break every yoke." Before building the good, we must destroy the evil.

When we tear muscle down, we must wait patiently for the new muscle to form during a resting or refractory period. Paradoxically, muscle regenerates when we rest. Likewise, spiritual muscle regenerates or forms when we have totally submitted to God—after we have done our part in tearing the old tissue down. Through fasting, we become a full partner with God in building and developing our spirituality.

Fasting requires us to do something, while God also promises to do something in our behalf. When we fast, we not only take a firm stand against our own fleshly pulls, but also against the one who amplifies these pulls, Satan the Devil. James 4:7 gives us the instruction: "Submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." Notice the two sides of this process, ours and God's.

Fasting demonstrates to God our acknowledgment of our helplessness, dependency, and vulnerability. We, at this point, admit to God that we do not have the wherewithal to overcome, but at the same time, we acknowledge that we choose to follow Him. God then replaces the torn-down carnal pulls with a fresh reserve of His Holy Spirit. God's Spirit combined with our will to control ourselves according to God's law then begins to build holy character in us. As long as this process continues, strength in character grows.

In Matthew 4:2, our Elder Brother Jesus Christ received strength for His confrontation with Satan the Devil through a 40-day period of fasting. In verse 4, Jesus puts "the god of this [present, evil] age" (II Corinthians 4:4) on notice that He has no intention of letting His fleshly appetites rule over Him as our first parents in Eden did. We must follow this example in fighting our lesser temptations. Fasting is a tool we must use on occasion to put us in the proper frame of mind to resist evil and do good.

Jesus warns us that, in our spiritual wrestling match against familiar spirits, certain kinds do not leave "except by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:21). In our life-and-death spiritual struggle, if we really desire to defeat "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2), we will find it necessary to draw close to God in a regular program of fasting and prayer. It will give us the strength necessary to resist Satan's way as well as to grow in God's image.

—David F. Maas

# EATING: *How Good It Is!*

truth and glorifying God in dressing and keeping our bodies.

In addition, eating gives us a wonderful and frequent opportunity to show God that our redemption—at the cost of His Son’s life—has not been in vain. We can demonstrate that we are breaking from the sins of the fathers and from the systems that those sins created and sustain.

What is involved here are major principles that parallel each other in both spiritual and physical areas. On the one hand, we are all generally the same; the same Designer and Creator created us all according to similar patterns. At the same time, however, all are different to some degree. Each of us is responsible to become a scientist seeking truth about himself, believing what he finds, and then overcoming excesses in his appetites and desires by using vision and self-control in applying the truth he discovers.

Each must begin where he is. We cannot afford to stand around, frozen in place like a deer staring into headlights. We cannot afford to waste time justifying ourselves and blaming everybody else, feeling overwhelmed because we feel we have been victimized by life. Everybody has been victimized by life! Everybody has been caught in the same entrapping slavery to Satan and sin. The very reason God redeems us is to set us free to overcome our spiritual, mental and physical victimization.

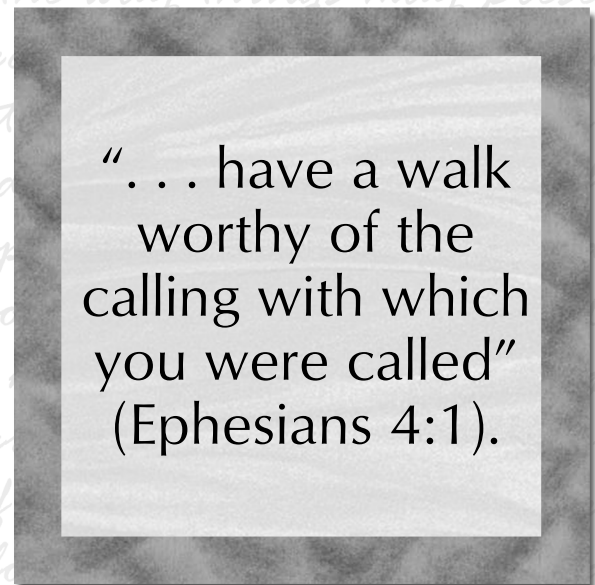
This does not suggest that this is easy to do. Israel’s trek through the wilderness after being redeemed from Egypt was not easy. Breaking from the effects of wrong choices is hard enough to do, even when we know we are dealing with the absolutes of God’s Word. When looking for truth among the scientific researches of men, it becomes exceedingly difficult. This is not because the researchers do not mean well, but because they generally reject the absolutes of God’s Word and cut themselves off from the source that would balance out and give true direction to their conclusions.

This is especially noticeable in the area of health. So many books and ideas are available in the public market that it presents a formidable challenge just to keep from falling into absolute confusion. There is truth out there, but it requires patient perseverance.

It also requires us to be aware how our body reacts to things. Many people simply do not want to do this, and they end up paying a price because they are not following through on one of God’s first commands to mankind: to dress and keep. God’s laws work inexorably. What we sow, we will reap.

Ephesians 4:1 contains an interesting principle hidden within the Greek word translated as “worthy.” The word includes a dimension that relates to health issues and is something we should strive for in our relationship with God. Paul writes, “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.”

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, in his commentary on Ephesians, tells us the word has two basic ideas, and both are important to this subject. The first is that of “equal weight.” Imagine a scale with objects of equal weight on opposite sides so that it does not tilt. The scale balances perfectly; it is “worthy.” If it tilts, it is “not worthy.” In context and in practical application in



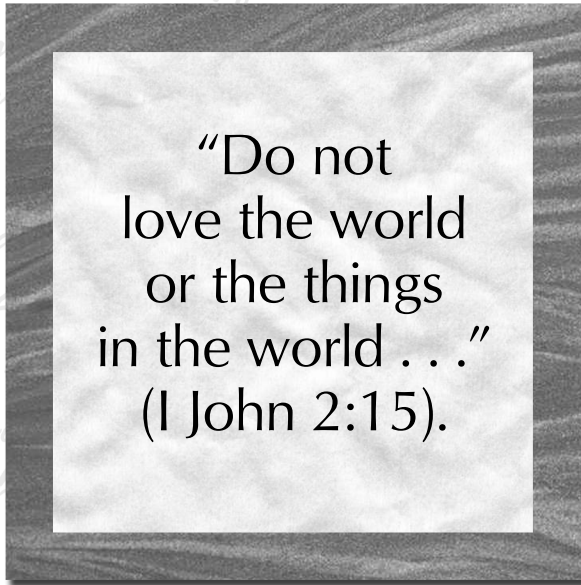
life, Paul is saying that doctrine must perfectly balance with practice for us truly to walk worthily of our calling. However packed one’s head may be with truth, if it is not being used, he is unbalanced—he is not walking worthily. It is equally true that, if one says that Christianity is no more than living a good life and that learning other truths is not important, and thus he fails to search and expand his understanding of truth, he is also walking unworthily.

Hebrews 6:9-11 provides us with an example:

But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end.

These people were in trouble because they were failing to maintain the balance. In this case, they had apparently been diligent at the academic level, but their practical application of truth had declined drastically. They had become unbalanced and poor witnesses of God and were falling away.

The second idea in the Greek word rendered “worthy” is the sense of “becoming.” The translators could have translated Ephesians 4:1 as, “I . . . beseech you to walk in a manner becoming the calling with which you are called.”



The same word appears in the first phrase of Philippians 1:27: “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ. . . .” The King James translates “worthy” as “as it becomes.” The basic idea is of matching. It is similar to a person adorning himself with clothing or accessories that are suited to him or match.

Thus, Paul is saying that our doctrine and our practice must never clash, just as the colors or patterns in our dress should not clash. Much of modern music and art perverts this principle. The very heart of true beauty is the central idea of balance, harmony and congruity. Things of beauty match; a cacophonous clash of discordance, color or symbols jar the senses.

Titus 2:9-10 helps to demonstrate this principle: “Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.” Paul’s metaphor is that doctrine is the basic garment of God’s way of life, and the way we live it is the adornment that complements it. Life has to match, be balanced and congruous with, the doctrine, making it attractive and causing people to admire it and gravitate toward it.

The vivid picture Mark 9:20-22 paints may help us understand:

Then they brought [the demon-possessed boy] to

Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.”

Herbert Armstrong, commenting on demon influence, said that demons reveal themselves by influencing people toward extremes of human behavior. He did not mean that the people were necessarily possessed but certainly influenced toward that manner of conduct.

This influence has affected all of us to some degree. Has this world influenced us to do certain things? If so, we have been influenced by demons. This is not God’s world; Satan and his horde of minions created the system and govern it. They are the principalities and powers we wrestle against (Ephesians 6:12). Their influence permeates the entire system from top to bottom. Thus John warns, “Do not love the world or the things in the world. . . . the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—[are] not of the Father” (I John 2:15-16). This is why we must be so careful about who and what we are following.

Think of anything extreme, things that are foolish and unbalanced, unbecoming to God or man—and demons are behind it. They influence people to excesses of anger, violence, depression, paranoia, schizophrenia, asceticism, hermitism, alcoholism, drug addiction, voyeurism, fetishes, cannibalism, anorexia, bulimia and any other form of behavior that is destructive of the self and divisive of relationships.

Demons, the principalities and powers of Ephesians 6:12, will do whatever they can to keep our life from matching the truths God has given us in doctrinal form. Working toward improving and maintaining our health is an effort toward balancing what we believe with what we do. It is an adornment to God and His way; it is a stewardship responsibility. Demons will attempt to convince us to do nothing. They will put discouraging thoughts like, “It doesn’t really matter”; “There is so much information out there. It is so confusing”; or “My grandfather broke every law of good health and lived to be a hundred!”

There might be scores of such arguments, and every one of them is nothing more than pressure to accept this world’s lies. Each of them essentially and completely leaves out of the picture God’s leadership and influence to help our efforts succeed, which is the whole reason for the demons’ efforts. Undeniably, God’s Word provides the balance we need to walk worthily in this physical area of life, as well as in the spiritual. We will continue to show this as we progress through this series.

In Christian love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John W. Stenhouse". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



# BIBLE STUDY:

## THE SECOND RESURRECTION

Today, large bodies of people claiming the Christian faith sincerely believe that this is the only day of salvation. They believe that, if a person does not repent and believe in Jesus Christ as personal Savior before this physical life ends, he will be lost forever to burn in torment in a fiery hell. Is this true? It surprises many to learn that the Bible reveals more than one resurrection.



1. Will God resurrect all the dead in the same resurrection? Revelation 20:4-5; Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29; I Corinthians 15:23-24.

**COMMENT:** “This is the first resurrection” in Revelation 20:5 refers back to the events of verse 4, which describes those who are raised to immortality at Christ’s second coming to become rulers with Him as kings and priests on the earth during the Millennium. The Bible nowhere says God will resurrect all the dead in the same resurrection. The apostle Paul affirms that both the “just” and “unjust” will be resurrected, and Jesus speaks of a “resurrection of life” and a “resurrection of condemnation” or judgment. However, these do not occur simultaneously. God has an orderly plan whereby He resurrects different groups of people at different times, “every man in his own order.” This implies a succession of resurrections. Regarding the resurrection of the unjust, “the rest of the dead,” who have not understood God’s way of life, they must wait in their graves until the thousand years are over.

2. Are the unjust dead eternally lost? Acts 4:12; John 10:1, 9; Revelation 20: 7-12.

**COMMENT:** The unjust dead are not eternally lost and without hope of having an opportunity to obtain immortality. God will not resurrect them merely to throw them into the Lake of Fire! Salvation only comes through one Person; only by learning of the life and work of Jesus Christ and accepting His supreme sacrifice in payment for our personal sins can human beings be saved. No one can obtain salvation except through Christ, who is the door. Anyone trying to enter another way is a thief and a robber. Therefore, we can enter the Kingdom of God only one way, through Christ.

3. Can a person have a second chance at salvation? II Peter 3:9; I Timothy 2:4-6; Ezekiel 37:1-14.

**COMMENT:** In resurrecting humans to mortal life, God will *not* give them a second chance for salvation—He will give them their first chance! At that time, He will raise those who were deceived and never understood His way, and reveal His plan of salvation to them. God wants all mankind to receive the gift of salvation, but He requires repentance and righteous living. He is responsible to grant people the knowledge of the truth, and only when He calls them do they have their first real opportunity to hear, understand and follow His way of life.

4. What is “the resurrection of judgment”? John 5:29; I

As we saw, at Jesus Christ’s second coming, truly faithful Christians will be raised to immortality, but what will happen to those who are not resurrected then? Are all those who died in sin fully accountable for their actions in this life, or will God ultimately give *everyone* a chance for salvation? In this continuing study of resurrections, we will see that the Bible reveals a second resurrection.

Peter 4:17; Hebrews 2:3; 6:4-6; 10:26-29; Matthew 10:15.

**COMMENT:** Most modern translations correctly render the last word in John 5:29 as “judgment” rather than “damnation” or “condemnation.” God is now judging Christians; we are having our opportunity for salvation now. He holds every Christian accountable for his actions, but the vast majority of mankind today does not understand or believe the truth of God. By “the resurrection of judgment,” Christ means that, in a future time, God will raise many from their graves to learn the truth and have their opportunity to walk in it. Based on how they live, God will then decide their fates. Most He will save, but some, in stubborn rebellion against Him, will condemn themselves to eternal death.

5. Will God resurrect physical Israel? Romans 11:2-3, 7-15, 25-27, 30-33.

**COMMENT:** God Himself has kept Israel from seeing and hearing (understanding and applying) His truth, giving Israel a spirit of slumber to make possible the salvation of the Gentiles. He has determined to call and choose only a limited number from Israel in this age, allowing the rest to remain blinded. With the rest of humanity, they will rise in the second resurrection and have the opportunity for salvation.

6. What is the Great White Throne Judgment? I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:53-54; Revelation 20:11-15.

**COMMENT:** The resurrection of the righteous takes place at Christ’s return, but that of the uncalled—the second resurrection—will occur in the Great White Throne Judgment after the Millennium. God is merciful, loving and kind, not willing that any should perish. He desires all to come to the knowledge of the truth and to true repentance at the proper time. He has determined that most will receive this opportunity when He has set up His Kingdom on the earth, an environment most conducive to salvation.

These people will be raised up to physical existence. The “books” that are opened at this time are the books of the Bible in which are revealed true knowledge and understanding. The “Book of Life” will also be opened so their names can be written in it when they repent of their sins, accept Christ as personal Savior, and receive the Holy Spirit. During this time, they will be judged according to their works. Thus, we see most of humanity standing before God to be judged. God in His wisdom has determined that this is the best way to bring the most sons to glory and eternal life in His Kingdom.