

JUNE 2008 (ISSUE # 2)

HOT TOPICS THIS MONTH:

-A Godly Man And A Godly
Woman Should Stand
Together As One!

-CHRIST Being Glorified
Through A Clothing Line?

-Is It Possible To Be Both
Ministry Minded And
Business Minded?



Sophisticated
Open-minded
Understanding
Loving
Full In Spirit
Uniting Cultures
Learning Always
Life Abundantly

*If you look close at the
beginnings you get the
message!

"DIOS TE BENDIGA AMIGOS"
or in English
"GOD BLESS YOU FRIENDS"





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A GODLY MAN AND A GODLY WOMAN SHOULD STAND TOGETHER AS ONE! (Article By J.O.T.)

It is common in the world today for Christian men and women who are supposed to be standing as one in marriage to be at odds with each other and end up divided. Both married Christian men and women are supposed to be a light to the world, for we may be the only Christian example someone sees when it comes to being a married couple standing together as one.



I pondered about the situation between Juanita Bynum and her husband and asked myself “how did they even get to the point where their marriage would make Christian married couple’s relationship look phony in the world’s eyes?” Both Christian men and women **must reflect CHRIST** in their marriage by putting aside egos and standing together as one if they are to be effective witnesses of CHRIST.



I cannot comment accurately on what led up to the Bynum's drama, but I can say that ego many times has a lot to do with it. Many Christian men and women do not act accordingly to GOD'S will and act off of ego instead. I've heard some Christian men say to women they are married to "women have no place out in front in the pulpit as pastors"(Even if it is clear that the women were called by GOD to do so).



That is a perfect example of a chauvinistic ego, and that ego will do nothing but cause divisiveness between Christian men and women. I also hear many Christian women in the church say that they are looking for a Christian man for their husband. That's good but these Christian women need to understand that when GOD blesses them with a "real" Christian man that is undoubtedly being led by CHRIST they need to be a helpmate to his ministry.



Much of this has to do with these particular women's egos. A spiritually mature woman knows when her man is being led by CHRIST to carry out a certain ministry because the HOLY SPIRIT will reveal it to her crystal clear. The devil wants women and men to be divided so they can fall spiritually. *Christian married couples who look to CHRIST shun their egos and stand together as one! -(*SOUL-FULL)-*



CHRIST BEING GLORIFIED THROUGH A CLOTHING LINE (Article By J.O.T.)

Many of today's youth and young adults like to wear stylish fashions. An abundance of these fashions tend to reveal too much of the body, or even if the body is covered adequately the clothing has symbols that signify something negative as far as the Christian community is



concerned. That is why I chose to do something about the problem by creating a clothing line that glorified GOD, since I am a Christian, yet still was very stylish and fashionable. Many things in clothing can be used to glorify GOD. Since I also wanted to wear a variety of fashion that gave CHRIST the praise I started designing Christian clothing for the entire body. Everything from



outer wear garments like sweat hoodies, t-shirts, baseball caps, toboggans, etc.. These pieces were made in a variety of colors, some subtle and some loud, so to have mass appeal to all potential customers. I even started incorporating the Spanish language so to appeal to the to the Latino culture (When GOD gave me the vision for my ministry he showed me that it would cross over into cultures to spread CHRIST to people).



CHRIST was even glorified in undergarments I had made. Many of the young males like to wear the boxer style shorts so I thought it would be good for me to design those too. I did not want to leave out the young women who liked to wear stylish and fashionable undergarments so I, and a female partner of mine, designed female undergarments that represented what was in demand.



The item we designed was a thong undergarment (we both knew that some people might say “is that really a good idea to make a clothing line piece like that for Christian women?). An undergarment like that would be worn underneath Christian women’s pants or dresses out of visual sight of the public’s eye, unlike the way some worldly women wear their thongs (visible above their waistline along with revealing low cut jeans). To put it all



into perspective, the clothing line pieces that I previously mentioned all have the SOUL-FULL PRODUCTIONS logo. I spell SOUL-FULL with a hyphen because my **SOUL** is **FULL** because I am spreading CHRIST through what I do. Most of us already know many of the worldly fashions worn by male and female youth and young adults have things such as drugs, guns, or explicit sayings on them. SOUL-FULL WEAR and LADY SOUL offer alternative clothing lines that show CHRIST can be glorified while wearing them. -(*SOUL-FULL)-



IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE BOTH MINISTRY MINDED
AND BUSINESS MINDED? (Article By J.O.T.)

GOD has provided CHRISTIANS with substantial means to spread THE WORD OF JESUS CHRIST today. Music, Literature, and Clothing are extremely huge media outlets that reach people all over the globe (via the internet). For example, CHRISTIAN's who have the gift



of music can spread their message of CHRIST through things like a wireless mobile device (my blackberry for instance), a website, or a myspace page and can even acquire financial increase from these things. For all of the

CHRISTIANS that would say they cannot afford a wireless mobile device or do not have money to maintain a website I would say to them a myspace account is free.

Not only is it free, you can sell your music on myspace

without any fees being paid. CHRISTIANS should sell their music for a price because their ministry has to be supported financially. That financial support is necessary for CHRISTIAN ministry increase (That is the business part of being a CHRISTIAN) which allows more souls to be reached (That is the ministry part of being a CHRISTIAN). By utilizing either free myspace pages, or other things like wireless mobile devices and websites that cost money, CHRISTIANS are not only spreading THE WORD OF JESUS CHRIST to people all over the world, they are also generating funds so their ministry can sustain and grow. This thus supports the question is it possible to be both ministry minded and business minded?

(Article By J.O.T.)

*The following article was written by a guest writer by the name of Vicki Stennis, B.A.;M.B.S, D.D.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

In today's society , it is obvious that we have done a poor job of passing on our Christian heritage. Families that have had strong faith for generations find it difficult to convince their children to attend church and believe in God. One problem is the failure of the generation of the 60's and 70's to pass on their knowledge of God, their experience with the Master. Somehow grandma's faith has been lost, grandfather's reverence for God has gone away. Too many in today's society equate Church membership with salvation, walking forward and shaking the preacher's hand does not save you. Working around the Church, cleaning, cooking, keeping up the grounds, being in the choir, will not bring salvation. Many are relying on their parent's relationship with God, but this

does not bring salvation either.. We must know God for ourselves, but we cannot know

Him apart from knowing and understanding His Word.

So what is the Church's problem today. A lack of Bible knowledge among

Christians. We have forgotten the Word of God. Nothing supersedes the Word.

Some churches seem to be more interested in promoting their choirs, producing CDs,

and self-help seminars, than having a good Bible study. And let's not forget how

the pastors, with their names and pictures on everything, are lifted up more than Jesus.

There is little time for serious Bible study at Church or in private life. Most Church

services have cut down on the amount of scripture reading. John Wesley, founder of

the Methodist Church, would have passages read from each section of the Bible during

a Sunday morning service; from the Law, the Prophets, the Writings (poetical books),

the Gospels, the Epistles and Prophecy (Revelation). Churches would not stand for that

**today, but God's Word states in Psalm 138:2b, "... for thou hast magnified thy Word
above all thy name.**

**Churches have fallen prey to the overall dumbing-down of American society. This
downward trend began on June 17, 1963, when the Supreme Court extended It's school-
prayer decision by barring government sponsored recitation of the Lord's Prayer and
Bible reading. When the Bible got the boot, test scores (SAT&ACT), began to plummet.
The late 80's showed a slight increase in scores, but they have never returned to the levels
before 1965. This "religious cleansing" has produced the present day school system with
police patrolled hallways, gun carrying student, sex crazed teachers and barely educated
students. Without the Bible's influence we have the following:**

- 33% of high school students involved in shoplifting, stealing from parents
and other relatives.**

- **one out of eight college students admitting to a fraudulent act, including borrowing money with no intentions of repayment.**
- **one third of high school and college students saying they would lie to get a job (maybe this comes from parents who lie on resumes in regard to education and work experience).**

America has become a moral wasteland, where hardly anything disturbs us anymore, but

it should because it disturbs God.

Yes the Churches too have experienced a dumbing-down. Members want entertainment with only a small amount of biblical teaching presented in sound bites, (commonly know as church-lite). Some cannot live with the truth of God's Word that states "repent and be holy", so they only want an emotional experience (a good shout) in their worship to "cover up" their true lifestyle. They want to be thought of as holy. Others come for the self-improvement, financial prosperity, career and health programs. Reading the Bible from Genesis to Revelation should give one all the self-improvement they can handle.

Financial prosperity comes through a lifetime commitment to good stewardship principles, and God's dietary plan in Leviticus will keep one healthy and out of the doctor's office.

Even Churches that are Bible-centered are watering down their messages, not stressing private devotion and study at home. But the lack of understanding the Bible is not new. Jesus in Matthew 22:29 told the Sadducees, "You are mistaken, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God", when they question Him on the resurrection. These were the ones who visited the Temple daily, worshipped God and sang His praises, yet they knew so little about God's Word. Many today attend Church several times a week, but ask them a deep theological question and you get a "deer in the headlight" stare or a "let me pray about it". There's no need praying about some things, you either have the answer or not.

Bibles have also been dumbed-down. The classic King James text is 12th grade reading level, the New American Standard 11th grade, the New King James 9th grade, the English Standard and New Revised Standard Version 8th grade, the New International 7th grade, the New Living Translation 6th grade, the Contemporary English Version and New Century Version 5th grade, the Message 4th grade, and the latest New International Reader's Version 3rd grade reading level. But we still are not consistent students of God's Word with all this simplification. It was learning to read from the classic King James that helped many high students understand Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar and Macbeth. Now our children need the hip-hop or rap versions of classic literature.

The prophet Amos must have looked into our day when he stated, "Behold, the days are coming , says the Lord God, that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos

8:11). That famine is here, with all of our physical and financial prosperity, high tech state of the art sound systems, the Church has become spiritually anemic and biblically illiterate. The prophet Hosea echoes Amos in his statement, “My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge”(Hosea 4:6a). A lack of Bible knowledge has led to the largest group of functionally illiterate Americans in our history. No Bible knowledge has for the first time led to the divorce rate among Christians being higher than the secular world. No Bible knowledge has led to school shootings, stabbings and rapes. No Bible knowledge as even led to the rape of a 15 year old girl in a classroom during Sunday morning worship service in an Atlanta church.

So whose to blame for our lack of Bible education? Pastors bare some of the blame, because many of them are not properly trained in God’s Word. You may be called, but you have a responsibility with that call to equip yourself to serve God’s

people. Pastors should always continue to educate themselves in God's Word, not just attending conferences where they hear others preach, but put yourself in a classroom situation, take notes and spend time alone studying. The seminary rule is "for every minute you speak, you should spend one hour in study". Thus a 20 minute message, 20 hours of study. Remember if you are not a good Bible student, you cannot expect your members to be either. What you have in the pulpit you will have in the pew. I was conducting a Bible Study for a pastor who asked where to find the "Olivet Discourse" in scripture. My first thoughts were, why are you pastoring? But he's not alone. Many cannot find the Olivet Discourse, the Magna Charta of the New Testament, the Magnificent or the Benedictus. Too many go into the ministry for the titles, prestige and money. We have a boat load of bishops, prophets and apostles, with a new crop springing up everyday, and yet the crime rate rises, while morality goes down. Pastors

should at least teach one of their Church School classes, especially the children. They are so thrilled when Pastor teaches their class and this is an excellent way to get them off to a good start as lifelong Bible students.

The greatest blame falls on parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 states, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

The family, God’s first institution, is responsible for the Church’s Bible illiteracy. Many families have no time for devotions and Bible study, so they relegate that duty to the Church. The Church should only reinforce what is taught at home. The Bible needs to be part of the family’s conversation and applied to each member’s life.

In Jewish homes, the Torah has always been taught to the young for centuries.

When Jewish boys and girls reach their thirteenth birthday, a celebration commemorating their religious training of fulfilling the commandments takes place. The bar-Mitzvah for boys and the bat-Mitzvah for girls, is the public ceremony where they are called to read from the Torah, have discussion, followed by the Kiddush (prayer over a cup of wine) and a social banquet. This is why at age twelve, Jesus was found in the Temple, because He knew next year He would cross-over into manhood and be tested on His recall of the scriptures.. This included reciting all 176 verses of Psalm 119.

Most of our high school graduates cannot do that. As evidenced by one high school senior (who graduated in the top 5% of his class from a private Christian school), when asked, “What was Golgotha?”, answered, “Golgotha was the giant who killed the apostle David.” This embarrassment to the young man’s Church, school, pastor

and parents could have been avoided with proper Bible education and understanding.

What has caused Bible illiteracy and the trivialization of God? The rapid

process to eliminate God from the public square. This trend has grasped the whole

American culture since the removal of prayer and Bible reading from public schools, and

the addition of evolution instruction to the curriculum. The explosion of the electronic

age has produced people who longer read anything, much less the Bible. Americans

no longer spend lazy afternoons with a good book. If it is not on film or DVD they do not

care about it. Television (America's babysitter) now sets our values. Each day we

sit in front of the TV, our thinking and values become more like Paul's statement in

Galatians 1:4 "like this present evil age". Most four to six year olds would rather watch

television than be with their parents. The average high school student spends four to five

hours a week on school work and seventeen or more hours watching TV(no wonder test are

low). With computers and cell phones, people no longer visit, write letters or postcards.

We text message and e-mail now. As we practice these habits, each generation continues

on the downward spiral in reading and writing skills.

We have become a post-modern, post-Christian world, where everything is possible and

nothing is certain. We need the discernment of the sons of Issachar (I Chronicles 12:32),

who had an “understanding of the times”. The pre-Modern age began with the fall of the

Roman Empire until the start of the Renaissance. The dominant worldview was Christian.

There was a strong belief in God and great influence from the Bible. Modernism started

in the fourteenth century when people began to think less about God and more about them-

selves. Everything became suspect; God, history, tradition, etc. People that once

trusted God and His Word, began to doubt God and the authority of His Word over their

lives. God no longer had a place in mankind’s heart and mind. Modernism produced

the scientific revolution, secularism and naturalism. By the middle of the nineteenth century post-Modernism arrived with it's technological marvels and a loose set of attitudes.

Post-Modernism really took off in the 60's, with the sexual revolution, rejection of reason and the self-fulfillment ethic. God and the Bible were no longer on the back burner, as in Modernism, but now was completely off the stove. With post-Modernism we have:

- **No authority or hierarchy.**
- **No valid rules , make up your own.**
- **Obey what you feel is right for you .**
- **Style is more important substance (A \$100 hat on a 10 cent head).**
- **Morality is a matter of choice.**
- **Sin is out , potential is in.**
- **Hollywood and the Bible are equal sources of the truth for one's life.**

Sadly the Church has let this happen, because within our reach we have the very

essence of truth in God's Word. No wonder the Holy Spirit is grieved.

How do we turn things around? We go back to the Bible. America is much like

Israel during the reign of king Manasseh, who according to 2Kings 21:9, “seduced them to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel.” God’s people were at their lowest point spiritually. But the next generation would produce revival. Manasseh’s son king Josiah began to rule at only eight years of age. He was trained carefully by the priests. As they were cleaning up the Temple , which Manasseh had boarded up, Hilkiah the high priest discovered the Book of the Law right in God’s House (2Kings 22:8). By the way that is where Mary and Joseph lost the living Word (Jesus) in God’s House. We come to church and refuse to let the Word change and renew us, we lose sight of God’s blessing and grace, we come “Just as I am” and leave “Just as I came”.

How do we turn things around? We do as Israel did in Josiah’s day, we re-discover the Word. We celebrate the Bible (Bible Sunday, the Sunday before Thanks-

giving, also known as Commitment Sunday). We join a good Bible Study. We commit to

read through the Bible in a year or at least two. We need a revival of the Word of God and

a return to edifying and equipping God's people through biblical education to promote

God's Kingdom. After all; It's God's Kingdom, Christ's Church and the Holy Spirit's

Ministry. Selah, (meditate, ponder, consider) this.

In Nomine Domini Nostri Iesu Christi,

Vicki Stennis, B.A., M.B.S., D.D



I hope that this first issue of the magazine has been enlightening and spiritually nourishing. On that note I will say dios te bendiga which is simply Spanish for GOD BLESS YOU!

