



# Truth Matters

*A Publication Discussing Matters Related To Truth Because Truth Matters*

## Scripture Reading Week of October 2nd - 8th

### Monday

- ❖ Isaiah 63, 64
- ❖ Proverbs 25
- ❖ 1 Timothy 6

### Tuesday

- ❖ Isaiah 65, 66
- ❖ Proverbs 26
- ❖ 2 Timothy 1

### Wednesday

- ❖ Jeremiah 1, 2
- ❖ Proverbs 27
- ❖ 2 Timothy 2

### Thursday

- ❖ Jeremiah 3, 4
- ❖ Proverbs 28
- ❖ 2 Timothy 3

### Friday

- ❖ Jeremiah 5, 6
- ❖ Proverbs 29
- ❖ 2 Timothy 4

### Saturday

- ❖ Jeremiah 7, 8

### Sunday

- ❖ Jeremiah 9, 10

## What Is an Incurable God-Lover?

*By Steve Lehrer.*

I am trying to write some more basic material on biblical truths that come from an NCT perspective and reflect the central ideas and emphases that we think are important and often missing from otherwise good introductory material that many use to help other believers get grounded. Here is a beginning of some of my work on this project...

An incurable God-lover is that rare and supernaturally changed person we call a Christian. He is someone who God called out of the darkness of unbelief and self-centeredness to the light of knowing God and living for Him. An incurable God-lover has come to understand that He has rebelled against the God of heaven and earth and that he deserves God's unending wrath. He recognizes that that when He sins against God, it is not simply breaking a rule in God's "cosmic rule-book," but it is a personal offense against God Himself. He understands "in his bones" that sin grieves God. He is not only remorseful over sin, but he desires never to do it again. An incurable God-lover lives and breathes grace. This person feasts on the fact that

God showered His love on an undeserving sinner and rebel. He delights in the truth that Jesus Christ bore the wrath of God in his place. When an incurable God-lover sins, this grace of God is that which causes him to repent of his sin and redouble his efforts to live for Christ. An incurable God-lover has the Spirit of God in his life pushing him to continue to love God more than sin until he dies.

### Is Jesus Expecting Too Much?

I wish we regularly used different terms for someone who has experienced God's saving grace than "believer" and "Christian." These terms are too easily misunderstood today because they have become too common. It is a mistake to simply assume that people are Christians because they go to church regularly, don't commit any crimes or social disgraces in front of us, and they understand and say they believe the facts of the gospel. This is a far cry from the biblical definition of a Christian. The biblical picture of a believer in Christ is one who is so in love with His Lord that He is willing to do anything to obey Him and bring Him glory:

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? (Luke 9:23-25)

To take up our cross daily or to deny ourselves for Christ's sake is the very essence of what it is to be a believer. The word picture is of a daily execution of oneself in order to obey Jesus Christ. Anything short of this radical obedience, according to Jesus, is not authentic Christianity. Jesus has drawn a line in the sand for us. He has set the standard for what a Christian is. But how can you and I read this text in light of our own struggles with sin and not be overwhelmed? How can we place these demands before frail and troubled people? How can we tell a person who is stuck in sin and who has made a mess of his life that if he is not willing to deny himself, even if that means death, then he is not worthy of Christ and may not be a Christian at all? Is Jesus expecting too much?  
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### Salvation Is the Complete Package

Although it seems like Jesus is expecting an unreasonable degree of loyalty from us when He tells us to deny ourselves and take up our crosses, the fact is that Jesus doesn't expect anything from us that He doesn't provide. In Hebrews 10:11-14, the author of Hebrews (the author is unknown) describes the saving work of Jesus Christ as the New Covenant. He begins by contrasting the ineffective work of the Levitical priests (the priests appointed by God during the Old Covenant era) with the effective work of Christ:

Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool (Hebrews 10:11-13).

Christ's work actually accomplished something. His one sacrifice is all that is needed for those whom he represented on the cross. By His work on the cross, He did it all. But, what exactly is the "all" that he did? The answer is found in verse 14: "because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy" (Hebrews

10:14). This verse gives a description of the *two things* that Christ purchased for all those whom He represented. First, he speaks of the forgiveness of sins that makes the believer "perfect" in God's sight. We call this justification. The believer is declared perfectly righteous, or sinless, because Christ paid the penalty for every sin that the believer has ever committed or ever will commit. Then the author refers to believers as "those who are being made holy." That is, Christ purchased a work of the Spirit of God in the life of every believer to progressively make him holy. We call this sanctification. The believer is motivated by God to put off sin and live for Christ. Another way to think about this is that Christ purchased a work of the Spirit to make the believer love Jesus Christ more than anything else in this world.

If God had simply provided forgiveness of sins without a work of the Spirit to make us holy, then Jesus would certainly have been expecting too much of us when He asks us to lay down our lives for Him. But the reality is that Jesus provides everything he asks us to give Him. Every believer gets the complete package of salvation, consisting of both justification and sanctification (or complete forgiveness of sins and an incurable love for God that drives the believer to live for Christ rather than sin).

### Spiritual Slavery

When I was younger I thought I knew everything. My views on the world were passionate, strong, and black and white as only a young man who does not know much about the world or life can hold. But as I got older and had a chance to travel and go to college and graduate school, I realized the multi-faceted nature of many issues and just how vast my own ignorance was. I am now very careful to allow for shades of gray when I speak of politics, love, money and many other issues. But when speaking about true spirituality, true religion, my understanding of the issues has only become more black and white with each passing year. According to Scripture, the world is divided into two types of people, God-haters and God-lovers:

You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend to the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely (James 4:4, 5)?

Do not love the world or anything in the world. For if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes

not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever (1 John 2:15-17).

Notice the clear contrast that these Scriptures bring out concerning believers and unbelievers. If you love the world, you must hate God. If your loyalty lies with the world you must be God's enemy. Jesus tells us this same truth in Matthew's Gospel in the terms of both a love/hate and a slave/master relationship:

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money (Matthew 6:19-24).

The point Jesus makes is that the one you serve is your master. But the world (that is the pursuit of self satisfaction and all that that entails) is opposed to God (who is pursuing His glory, honor, and power) and God is opposed to the world. We need to pick a master and we need to pick wisely because the masters are at war with one another. The danger is that we will be like the Jews of Jesus' time, not knowing that we are enslaved:

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know .....continued on page 3

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the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" (John 8:31-33).

Not only were the Jews rather oblivious to their political history and surroundings (having been constantly enslaved by various people politically and living under Roman rule at the time), but also they did not understand that Jesus was speaking about their spiritual state. Jesus proceeds to have an extended dialogue with them on the topic:

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word. I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father." "Abraham is our father," they answered. "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did. As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the things your own father does." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The

only Father we have is God himself." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God" (John 8:34-47).

Jesus is telling these Jews that they are unbelievers. They are slaves of sin and they are children of the devil. Regardless of their pedigree, Jesus knows whose children they are and what master they serve by their actions. They characteristically sin and therefore they emulate their father and master, the devil. This is exactly what is said by John in his first letter to help us understand the difference between believers and unbelievers in his letter when he wrote:

No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either

seen him or known him. Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother (1 John 3:6-10).

An unbeliever is a slave to his sin. He will live a life characterized by self-centeredness and lack of concern for glorifying the true God of heaven and earth. He is helpless and dead in His sin without God through Christ setting him free from sin. In the same way, once he has been set free from sin, as John says, "he cannot go on sinning." That is, he cannot go on living a life characterized by the quest for self-satisfaction. He cannot go on living a life that is disobedient to His new master. He is a slave of God now. This is exactly what the Apostle Paul says in his letter to the church in Rome:

Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Don't

you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness (Romans 6:15-18).

Paul makes it clear that Christians and non-Christians are in the same spiritual state. They are both slaves. They are slaves to different masters, but they are both equally enslaved. I think this is a hard concept for us to grasp because we typically think of slavery as a master forcing his slave to do labor against his will. But when we are talking about slavery in this context, we are referring to a slave willingly serving his master, and at the same time unable to do otherwise.



**October Birthdays  
& Anniversaries**

Jeremiah Jackson	1
Aimee Moran	3
Christina Nulty	5
Martin Maas	8
Sandy Douglas	9
Aaron Yuskis	10
Don Landis	11
Dan and Brenda Rabideau	12
Bradley Meissner	13
Ron Uecker	13
Julie Owen	14
Ryan Hawk	15
Amy Harkleroad	19
Jefferson Harkleroad	19
Ryan Mikul	19
Joe and Donna Meissner	20
Sarah Jackson	22
Kel Bacon	26
Jonathan Uecker	26
Gary Hassler	27
Donette Zempel	27
Jeff Moll	27
Mary Maas	29
Ruth Hawk	31

**SPECIAL POINTS OF  
INTEREST**

**Fall Bible Conference**  
Speaker: Jim Elliff  
November 3, 4, & 5

**OCTOBER  
UPCOMING EVENTS**

<b>Men's Prayer Breakfast</b>	<b>7</b>
• Begins at 8:30 a.m.	
• See Kent Millen or Ryan Hawk for more information	
<b>Fall Bonfire</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Growth Group Leaders Meeting</b>	<b>8</b>
• 5:00 p.m.	
<b>Members Meeting</b>	<b>8</b>
• 6:00 p.m.	
<b>Ladies Bible Study</b>	<b>21</b>
• Begins at 8 a.m.	
• See Suzy Krebs for more information	

**Corporate Arsenal Passages**

**God is Faithful to All His Promises**

Promise 28: The Lord will keep you from spiritual harm

**Proverbs 2:7-8**

he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, [8] guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints.

**Weekly Stewardship Report**

General Fund Budget	\$ 3,745.38
General Fund	\$
Other	\$
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>

**Parking Lot Report**

Parking Lot Budget	\$45,000.00
Amount Raised	\$37,484.28
Left to Raise	\$ 7,515.72

**Let's Get Acquainted Class  
October 27 & 28**

For those interested in finding out more about the church or becoming members. This is a two day class and will be held: Fri. 7-9 p.m. & Sat. 9-noon.

This class is a prerequisite for membership.

**Plan to stay  
for our  
Koinonia Kook-out  
following the  
morning  
service today.**

**FALL BONFIRE  
AND CHILI DUMP  
OCTOBER 7<sup>TH</sup>**

- Football 4 p.m.
- Chili Dump 5 p.m.
- Bonfire 7 p.m.

EACH FAMILY IS ASKED TO BRING A POT OF CHILI & BREAD OR DESSERT TO SHARE.

PLEASE SIGN-UP ON THE BULLETIN BOARD. WE ARE ALSO LOOKING FOR INDIVIDUALS TO HELP IN THE KITCHEN.