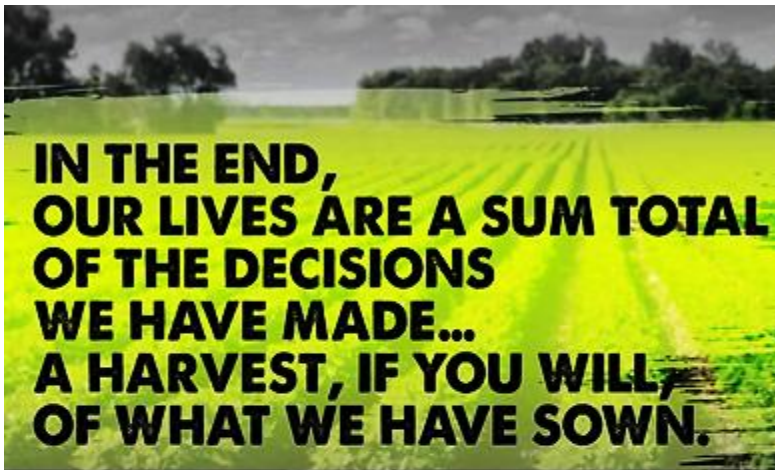


Stewards of Grace Ministries Monthly Newsletter for July 2017



Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Rom 13:1-4

Walking in the spirit. Practical Christianity 101... OK, so how many of you actually DID attempt to write down on paper the things you believe about your Heavenly Father/God? Well, I'm going to ask you again, to write it out. Now, there is "a method to my madness" and it is this: What you believe determines the outcome of your life. Think this isn't important? Without the influence of our God, which you had to come to know, all over again, where would you be today? The things we have been told by our former religious leaders - who have been taught by their religious leaders - who have handed down a "hand-me-down" religion with rules and regulations which were never in the Bible, has proven to be false - or in

today's language: FAKE NEWS! **Rom 10:17 So faith comes from hearing the message, and the message that is heard is what Christ spoke.** Now, if you listen to someone instead of reading it yourself, you have faith in the person you hear. It's not the same as having the Faith of Christ. **Gal 2: we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ.** Not a lot of people are taking the time and effort to read the REAL GOOD NEWS for themselves, and we have relied on the "not-so-accurate" teachings of others. Now I do not claim to be perfect, but if I read my Bible, I can pretty much tell when someone is spinning a tale and trying to change my way of thinking, all in the name of "Christianity." It's the same way that bank tellers and those who handle money are trained in spotting a counterfeit: they study the REAL thing so much that when something shows up with even the slightest mistakes - BOOM!!! They've got it! Ought we not diligently study the Bible often enough to spot a liar? **1 John 4:6 We belong to God, and everyone who knows God will listen to [understand] us. But the people who don't know God won't [comprehend what we're talking about and follow our godly instructions or] listen to us.** So you see, if you don't know what God says, you won't be able to recognize and confront the lies of the enemy. When I want to learn something, it is much easier to just listen to what someone tells me. Unfortunately, you have to hear it at least seven times to remember it. A much better way of learning what is in the Bible is to seek things - facts, statistics, storylines, from the source itself. That way you allow the Holy Spirit to speak things into your spirit so you will understand what you're reading and how it applies to your life at the moment. We also remember better the things we've discovered by ourselves. We've all had moments where we are reading a familiar passage and suddenly the Holy Spirit

shows you a whole new side of a Scripture you thought you already knew. This is how God works in us - He wants to communicate LIFE to us from His Living Word, and the best way is to read it daily. Another thing that the Holy Spirit does as we study, seek, compare and cross-reference Scripture verses, is to allow us to **see through the surface** of the Passages and discover a more personal, "hidden" treasure within the Words written. **Luke 8:9** *..His disciples asked ... "What does this parable mean?" 10 And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables...* But Jesus also gives us a way to get to the answers we are looking for in **Matt 7:7** *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who [incessantly] asks receives, and he who [constantly] seeks finds, and to him who [persistently] knocks it will be opened.* God is telling us that if we really WANT an answer and seek after Him, he tells us in **Jer 29:13** *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you, says the Lord,* Too many of us are looking to the physical world for protection and guidance and are worried about all the things we have that could be taken away from us; but God is more concerned with our spiritual side - **Matt 10:28** *"Don't be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell. All the things we possess will be left behind when we die - not because it is sinful, but because it is so inferior to the spiritual life we take on. We are supposed to be building this "spiritual house" here and now.. Jesus even tells us in **Luke 17:20** *...He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21 nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."* And God makes it so simple that even a child can find and enter God's Kingdom here on earth: it is a state of mind; just like you can bring yourself to see and appreciate things from a child's simple perspective, you must see the simplicity of the Gospel and accept it at face value: **John 18:17** *Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."* If I were to ask you what your understanding of the Gospel is, and ask for your explanation, what would you say to me? Most people would say "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John." But that is not the gospel; they are accounts of incidents and recordings of Jesus as He went around teaching the Gospel - GOOD NEWS of the Kingdom. **The REAL GOSPEL tells us that WE HAVE BEEN SET FREE from sin and the limitations it has put on us; we have been restored to the relationship with God** which Adam enjoyed in the garden and that our dominion over the spirit world, animals, birds, beasts, fish, wind and waves of the seas has been taken back from the devil and returned to us. THAT is the Good News! Now, all this is just talk, studying, pondering in your mind, and it will do no one any good if We do not put FEET to our FAITH! The Blessings come in the DOING of God's will. Paul instructs Titus on how to do this... not in a classroom, but in real-life situations: **Titus 2:1** *As for you, Titus, promote the kind of living that reflects wholesome teaching. 2 Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and patience. 3 Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that honors God. They must not slander others or be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good. 4 These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children, 5 to live wisely and be pure, to work in their homes, to do**

good... Then they will not bring shame on the word of God. 6 In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely. 7 And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. 8 Teach the truth so that your teaching can't be criticized. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed and have nothing bad to say about us. This is the whole Christian life in a nutshell. DO WHAT YOU SAY YOU BELIEVE. Pass on the incredible Truth and Love for all others that is found in the pages of our wonderful Bible. There's an old saying: **"YOU are the only Bible that some people will ever read."** Make sure your life - even your personal, private, hidden life that no one ever sees - lines up with your observable life. There should not be a difference in you whether you are at work, at school, at church or at home. You should be the same person in every instance. Don't let peer pressure change the way you act and react in situations. But, rather, build your "house", your LIFE, on that solid ROCK which is Christ and you will not be moved. **2 Tim 2: 15 Concentrate on doing your best for God, work you won't be ashamed of, laying out the truth plain and simple. 16 Stay clear of pious talk that is only talk. Words are not mere words, you know. If they're not backed by a godly life, 17 they accumulate as poison in the soul.** Be truthful to God and to yourself. You will never regret it. Now, sit down and write out just what you believe, so you won't forget or be tempted to change your mind. **Phil 5:5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...**