



Christian Ambassadors, Inc.

My Brother's Keeper

Volume 14, Number 4, October-December, 2009

GROWING on the WORD

A scripture study

The Word of God is the source of light, truth and power, for those who seek it's meaning and apply it to their life. Jesus Christ is the word made flesh, and we seek to follow him.

John 8:12 (NIV) – *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

Each issue of “My Brother’s Keeper” features a WORD study. This Word Study is from Sharon K. Griffiee, Co-founder of Christian Ambassadors.

Lovers Of Truth – Haters of Truth By Sharon K. Griffiee

Those who believe in Jesus Christ might be surprised by the ongoing hostility of those who are under Satan’s power. But we should remember that Jesus was *hated* from His birth (Herod sought to kill Him) to His death on the cross. There is a

price to pay for being a Christian. The cost? Friendship with God results in *enduring* the world’s hatred. There is also a price to pay for being friends with the world. The cost? It is to be God’s enemy! **See: James 4:4.** Right now, right where you are, whose side are you on?

Jesus Before Pilate

At the end of Jesus’ ministry He was arrested and brought to Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, with false charges. Standing before Pilate, Jesus told him without apology, that His Kingdom is not of this world. Pilate responded by saying, “*Art thou a king then?*” Jesus, not backing down said,

John 18:37 (KJV) - *Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*

With an air of indifference to the impact of what Jesus had just said, Pilate simply responded by saying,

John 18:38 - *“What is truth?”*

Without waiting for an answer, Pilate suddenly turned away from the One who is “*the Truth*” (**See: John 14:6**). Brushing Jesus off, having displayed a lack of interest in hearing the truth, Pilate turned to the mob to hear their angry shouts.

To turn away from “*the Truth*” is to turn away from Jesus. Though we may not be consciously aware of it, how we respond to truth on a daily basis says a lot about where our heart is. If our heart is right with God, we will love the truth. We will want to hear the truth at all cost. But, if we get angry when we hear the truth, it is not truth we really want. What we really want is to hang on to our lies. That is a disastrous place to be. By rejecting the truth, we cut off all possibilities for spiritual growth. We cut off the very life that Jesus came to give us.

Some of the biggest fits of anger you will see out of people is when you tell them the truth. Consider how violently a crowd of people responded to Jesus after he spoke the truth to them;

John 8:40 (KJV) - *But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.*

Why was the Jewish crowd so angry with Jesus that they wanted to kill Him? What truth had He laid before them? He revealed the truth that people can become truly free by becoming sons of God by faith in Christ, *the Son of God*.

Galatians 3:26-29 (KJV) - *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ*

have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

What lie did the crowd want to hang on to? What was their argument? They argued that because the Jews were *physical* descendants of Abraham, they could claim Abraham as their *spiritual* father. What they really believed is that they could come into God's Kingdom on Abraham's coattails. But Jesus countered their reasoning by stating that *spiritual* descendants of Abraham actually *do* what Abraham did, that is, they believe *and* obey God (**John 8:39**). James stated,

James 2:23-24 (KJV) - And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

Even though Jesus had spoken what He had heard in His Father's presence, the crowd was unwilling to make room in their hearts for His words. Instead, they were ready to kill Jesus. Their *actions* proved they were not Abraham's *spiritual* descendants.

Jesus finally expressed the unavoidable, that if God were their Father, they would *love hearing* the truth. The language Jesus was speaking to them was not clear, for one reason and one reason only - they were listening to their father the devil.

John 8:44 (NIV) 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.

Murder is not just taking a physical life. Jesus goes deeper in his explanation of murder in this verse of scripture. In essence we commit murder whenever we intentionally set ourselves up as an enemy of God and carry out the devil's desires. And his greatest desire is to kill the truth, that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, the Savior of the world. If the devil can succeed in stealing the Word of God out of a person's heart, he can steal their physical *and* their spiritual life, and that is murder!

As we think about the Words of Jesus to those Jews who were trying to kill Him, there are serious questions we need to ask ourselves. Do we really know today with certainty *who* we belong to? Who is really our Father – the one we listen to? Do we know by our intentional actions whose desires we are carrying out on a daily basis?

Are We Lovers Of Truth?

Do we accept and proclaim the message that Jesus brought to the world?

II Corinthians 5:19, 21 (KJV) "...that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation... For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Those who are *lovers of truth* have forsaken the lies of the devil. They have left the kingdom of darkness (under Satan's rule) and have been translated into the Kingdom of God's Dear Son.

Colossians 1:13-14 (KJV) - Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us

into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

Redemption, forgiveness of sins - Christians *know* what Jesus has done for them. They respond by putting their belief into *action*. By studying the journeys of Paul and his companions we learn from the Bereans what it truly means to be *lovers of truth*.

The Bereans – Lovers Of Truth

As the Apostle Paul traveled on his missionary journeys to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, he often encountered two separate groups of people. One group consisted of those who loved the truth and the truth bearer; the other group consisted of those who hated the truth and the truth bearer.

While Paul was sharing the gospel in Thessalonica, he experienced the hatred of some of the Jewish people who opposed him. The Christian converts in Thessalonica were so concerned for Paul's safety, that under cover of night they sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. Berea was located about 50 miles southwest of Thessalonica.

Acts 17:10-11 (NIV) - As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

The Bereans, unlike the Thessalonians, welcomed Paul's message

whole-heartedly. *Lover's of the Truth* were so great that they listened to the words of Paul with eagerness. But their learning didn't stop with the messenger of truth. They continued examining the scriptures in their private time to ensure that what Paul had said was true. Because Paul's words were confirmed in their own scripture study, they liked the message even more! They liked it so much that there were many conversions of both Jews and Greeks.

Like Paul, when we send the message of truth out, we do not know how people will respond. But this much we know. There will be lovers of truth and there will be haters of truth. Jesus sums it plainly in John;

John 3:20-21 (NIV) - Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."



Sharing the Good News

"We are therefore Christ's Ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

II Corinthians 5:20-21

**From: Roy R.
Idaho State Correctional
Boise, Idaho**

Dear Brother Alan, I hope all is well with you. I am particularly interested in your article, "**The Love of God**" in [July-Sept. 2009, "My Brother's Keeper"]. Excellent article! A lot of people don't truly know the love of God. It's one thing to know *of* God's love, but it's another thing to *know* God's love. God bless you both, and thank you for your spreading the Word of God.

In His Service, Brother Roy.

**From: Chris H.
South Hampton County Jail
Courtland, Virginia**

Dear Sharon and Alan, Thank you kindly for all that you sent to me. Your dedication is heartfelt and very much appreciated. I thank God that dedicated servants like you both, are not ashamed to claim and speak the truth boldly without restraint to all! Praise God!

In **John 14:6 (NIV)**, Jesus said, "*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*"

I'm in total agreement with all you write within all the material you sent to me. I'm now going to be on alert, waiting to receive my next mailing of your material. My ears will listen closer and my life is touched, due to your love to all of us who are locked up. God is working in all our lives and I'm proud to share and serve God with your ministry. The work that God is doing in both yours and our lives is so precious! Let us continue to praise Him and continue to receive guidance from the Holy Spirit! In Jesus Name, Chris.

**From: Douglas S.
California State Prison
Corcoran, California**

Dear Sister Sharon, Thank you for your Letter and Spiritual Growth Lesson #46 [**Temptation – Its Real Source**] you sent me on August 15th. What a blessing! It's definitely an issue that I, unfortunately, have to deal with. Lesson #46 was very beneficial to me. I look forward to the next Spiritual Growth Lesson.

Your Brother in Christ, Douglas.

**From: William E.
Southern State Correctional
Springfield, Vermont**

Dear Reader, Jesus Christ has helped me in so many ways. He has always been there for me, even when I rejected Him. This is my story;

I have always believed in God, but never really gave my life to Him and never trusted Him enough to guide me. Not until I was incarcerated did I truly accept Christ as my personal Savior. It didn't happen over night either. In my lifetime I have attempted suicide...I was nearly successful four times. I now know the Lord was watching over me.

I began doing Bible Correspondence courses in early 2005. At first it was just to make myself look good to others. However, the Holy Spirit was in me and slowly I became closer to Christ. I am currently recovering from anorexia and it was Christ who made me realize that I had to change or die. It was time for me to do His work and His will.

I want to stop here and say one thing. If you are suicidal as I was, or in a self-destructive situation, please seek help from Christ and get professional

help immediately. Please. God loves you and has a purpose for you. You are worth living. Thanks to Christ and the Holy Spirit, and of course my family and therapist, I am a better, more loving person. I'm certainly not perfect, nor is anyone else besides God. We all are sinners.

I will close with a prayer;

Lord, thank you for suffering on the cross for the cleansing of my sins. Please give strength to anyone reading this, so that they can receive you as I did, and live a "Christ like life". Lord, we await your glorious return to be King of the earth. I love you Lord! I pray that we as believers, and all prisoners in the world, have the will to do your will and love each other as you love us. Amen.

With loving prayer, William.

From: Mike W.
Riverside Regional Jail
Hopewell, Virginia

Dear CA, I hope this note finds all well. I am writing to thank you for your wonderfully enlightening Bible Studies [Spiritual Growth Lessons]. I share them with others in here when I'm done reading them. They love how they are written.

I look forward to your next lesson.
In Christ, Mike

From: Enrique A.
Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice
Woodville, Texas

Christian Ambassadors, Please keep sending me your Newsletters. They are helping me a lot. I'll be waiting for the next one!

God Bless you two. Keep the good Word. It helped me a lot in my Christian walk. Enrique

From: Sonny M.
Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice
Gatesville, Texas

Christian Ambassadors, Greetings from Texas! I've been receiving "My Brother's Keeper" for awhile now and you all have helped me more than you'll ever know.

You see, I was in Super Lock Down on High Security. And your teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ brought peace into my heart and soul and I've changed. ☺

As you can see from my new address, I'm out of Lock Down and doing great! Just wanted to say thank you to you all there!

Love in Jesus, Sonny.

From: Philip B.
Washington County Detention
Jonesborough, Tennessee

Christian Ambassadors, I would like to thank you for adding me to your mailing list and sending me the welcome letter and the issues of "My Brother's Keeper". I enjoyed reading the Newsletter, especially the inmate testimonies and their views. I like hearing other inmates viewpoints on subjects that are in the Bible. It is nice to know I am not the only one who is occasionally confused about some scripture.

I enjoy reading "My Brother's Keeper" because you take Scripture that can be confusing and you explain it in plain terms that show how it applies to our every day lives. Life in Jail is hard enough without trying to find some peace and ending up confused by what we read to help us.

I especially liked "God's Shank". How you talked about the shanks inmates make to attack someone,

then talk about how the Bible is God's Shank. I can say this, "The Bible and its Word definitely attacked my way of life after being incarcerated."

I picked it up one week after being placed here and have read it every day since (14 months now). I have turned my life to God and am waiting for my release to be baptized.

Again, I enjoy your Newsletters and I will pray for you all who do good works.

Thank you for everything.
Faithfully, Philip.

From: Robert M.
Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice
Lubbock, Texas

Dear Sharon, Thank you for your letter and the Studies and Newsletters. They really lifted my spirit and made my day. I hope you and brother Alan are doing well. I look forward to getting the Newsletters and Self Study and Reflection material.

Now for a little about me; I have been doing time now for almost 17 years off and on. I was a drug addict for 23 years till God freed me from them. People do not have to live the life of addiction today if they do not want to, because God can and will free us from it, if we allow Him to. I know because He has done it for me, for a little over eight years.

In Christ's love, Robert.



Bring God Back

By: Merissa Lee Kelley

Written on Sept. 16, 2001 (and just as timely today)

Bring God back into our lives...bring Him back into our schools
Bring Him back so we can live the "#1 Golden Rule"
He's blessed our country over and over; He's given us many gifts
But only repentance will turn the tide...lest His hand completely lifts

Bring God back into the government...He was there in the beginning
Quit calling sin "my little problem" and repent from willful sinning
Excuses are rampant for ignoring God's Word and justifying all we do
But there will come a day of judgment...when excuses just won't rule

We've kicked God out, closed the door and removed Him from the equation
When all the while, His intention has been to provide for our salvation
God is merciful...full of grace...but He will not overlook
The blatant disregard for His commandments that are written in His book

We mustn't presume and make our plans, then expect God to go along
Just like Samson, who wasn't aware that his strength was totally gone
We must turn back and humble ourselves and lip service is a waste
For if we don't...what we've endured...is only a little taste

Bring God back, for He is waiting with arms that are open wide
If God is for us, no weapon will prosper that is brought against our side
The Bible says there will be a day when EVERY knee shall bow
If there was ever a time to be on our knees...that time is here and now.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14 – NIV

The Truth About Consequences

By Eva Fry

[*Eva Fry resides in California and is an author, singer/songwriter and motivational speaker. She had a ten-year volunteer program at Juvenile Hall called "Be a Winner in Life". Her goal is to encourage seniors and young people to reach their potential. Though this article was written primarily for young people, all of us can learn from it. Regardless of our age or current situation, every choice we make has consequences.*]

There is a consequence for every choice you make! It is important that you always think ahead and recognize the consequences of the choices you make, because if you make the wrong choice you can't always go back and fix it.

A scientific study was done on the brains of young people. They discovered that the ability of our brains to see and understand consequences, does not fully develop until we are 25 years old. This means that most young people do things without thinking. They just impulsively make choices and don't think about how that choice will affect their future life. Actually, they often believe nothing bad will ever happen to them. I saw this with kids locked up in Juvenile Hall, when I had my volunteer program, "Be a Winner in Life". One boy said,

"I did something dumb and then before I knew it, I was locked up and I don't even know how it happened!"

You must be smart enough to think of the consequences of your choices so you can avoid ruining your life. We must all find ways to recognize and think of consequences *before* we make a choice.

Some of you are [were] fortunate enough to have good people in your life that teaches [taught] you about consequences; parents, grandparents, religious leaders, and teachers. Even good friends will help you make good choices. You must listen to them! If you don't have others to teach you, you must be smart enough to learn the consequences of your choices, yourself. It has been said that if you don't learn *discipline*, which helps you make good choices, you will eventually learn it from a judge or prison guard.

There is one way to avoid the consequences of bad choices. You must make a commitment or promise to yourself before you are faced with a choice. For instance, you can choose right now to avoid alcohol, drugs, breaking the law, telling lies, etc. Once the choice has been made you never have to think about it again. It becomes your way of life and will help you avoid bad choices and consequences.

Proverbs 6:23 (NIV) – *"For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life..."*

If you want a happy life, look around and see the bad consequences others are experiencing because of their choices. Be smart enough to choose not to do the things that are ruining their lives.

Proverbs 13:20 (Amplified Bible) - *He who walks [as a companion] with wise men is wise, but he who associates with [self-confident] fools is [a fool himself and] shall smart for it.*

Isaiah 32:6 (NIV) – *"For the fool speaks folly, his mind is busy with evil: He practices ungodliness and spreads error concerning the LORD;"*

We must be smart if we want to be happy and reach our God given potential. Each of you was born with gifts, talents, abilities, a life's purpose, a life's mission and exciting potential, but there is a negative [evil] force which desires to take that all away from you. You must be smarter than the negative [evil] force and always make good decisions. Use your intelligence! You must use your brain and think *before* you do things. Remember this truth, when you make a choice, there is always a consequence. In the end, bad choices bring bad consequences, good choices bring good consequences.

You may think you can do bad and get away with it, but in the end, that choice always comes back to get you! Making foolish choices only ruins your life. Be smart and always make the good choices which bring good consequences.

A Written Prayer To The Father

By, Justin Blaine
Jefferson City Correctional
Jefferson City, Missouri

Dear Father,

I write to you in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, keeping my faith sure that you will answer the cries of my heart, according to your perfect will.

I thank you for your loving mercies to me in times past. Surely I am not worthy of your boundless grace; for while I was yet a sinner, you sent your only Son to pay my ransom, that I might have eternal life with you.

Father, forgive all my sins. Hold not my imperfection against me. Save my soul according to your own righteousness and grace. Daily draw me closer to you, as a hen does her chicks. For where you are, there I want to be.

Take my heart and break it. Take my mind and change it. Take my body and nurture it. Lead me; use me, for your Kingdom. Give me strength and courage that I might go forth boldly and accomplish your will. Grant me a discerning heart and wisdom that I might always choose the paths of truth and righteousness. Grant me understanding that I might always be able to live according to your Word. Grant me a heart full of compassion for those who do not know you. Lead me to those lost sheep who do not yet know your voice, and let them hear not my words, but yours alone when I speak to them.

Allow my faith to be tested that I might learn, moment by moment, to put my trust in you. Give to me always your Holy Spirit that it may burn within me as an all-consuming fire, cleansing me and ridding me of all the dross within my heart. And when the world sees this fire inside of me, let it not be my own, but your light that they see in me, that they might give all the glory to you.

Father, I give you all the praise and glory. I thank you for this opportunity to talk to you, and I eagerly wait for you to speak to my heart.

Thank you always,

Your child, redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb,

Justin Blaine

My Prince

By: Terrance White
Robert Presley Detention
Riverside, California

I long to give you the keys to be free from the things that bind you; and see you break through to a blessed life in Me, but your freedom is a choice...your choice. You can be totally free in Me, or try to set yourself free.

I promise, My prince, I am the only One who can give you the life-giving keys you need and want. The keys are hidden in My Word, empowered by your prayer, and completed by the work of My Holy Spirit living in you. Choose the way, My love...choose Life.

With Love,
Your King and your freedom

My Brother's Keeper

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Vision Statement - Christian Ambassadors exists to bring the ministry of Jesus Christ into the lives of people, demonstrating how the gospel teachings can help a person live a more abundant life, filled with joy, hope, and purpose.

If you, a member of your family, or a friend, are imprisoned, wanting to find new hope, purpose, and direction in life, please contact us at Christian Ambassadors. Our website can be visited at:

<http://www.christian-ambassadors.org>.