



*Reflections on  
Life and Christianity*

# ***INFRASTRUCTURE***

ROBERT H. FLORES

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*Infrastructure: Reflections on Life and Christianity*  
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# Introduction

This booklet is a collection of thoughts over the last 24 years of my Christian life. They have been written on Post-its, napkins, receipts and any other surface I could find (if paper wasn't readily available). They have been written at stoplights, in my room, outside, at work, in church—anywhere that God would inspire me. These random thoughts include a variety of topics including: Jesus' sacrifice, culture, society, Bible lessons, pride, forgiveness, sin, and a host of other topics. Many hours of reflection on life in general, and in my personal walk with Jesus Christ went into these pages. My hope is that you will find these thoughts encouraging, enlightening and edifying and that they may draw you into a deeper relationship with our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” —Proverbs 9:10*

*“But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”  
—Matthew 13:23*

God Bless,

Robert Flores



1998

(This journal starts in March of 1998 because that time period was right before Easter 1998, in which Christ rescued my heart. Sure, there were other Christian sayings I said before this time, but I consider March 1998 the beginning of what would become BibleArtBooks.)

- I think all sin can be summed up as personal gain and personal pleasure (which in turn can be traced back to Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit.

- At Any Time

Jesus said, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:53) That phrase has been quite amazing to me for quite some time. Having recently read them again, my amazement of this fact was renewed. . . At any time. At any time, Jesus could have called for more than twelve legions of angels. At any time, He could have wiped out this planet in one word. At any time, He could have destroyed those who sought to do Him harm. He would not have had to go through the punching of His face, the spit in His eyes, the thorns in His head, the nails in His body, the slice in His side, the dehydration, the sleeplessness, the torture, the whips, the abandonment, the shame, the humility, the pain or the horror of being the Son of God. So, why did he go through with it? Because after this statement, Jesus said, “But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” (v.54) At any time He could have called forth more than twelve legions of angels. At any time, He could have decided not to sacrifice Himself for the sinners of this world. But He didn’t. And I’m glad.

- People are willing to accept the free “gift” of sin (through Adam), but not the free gift of salvation (through Jesus Christ). Man brought death into the world. God brought life into the world.

- Sans-Sight

The other day, I had a disturbing thought: What if I suddenly lost

the ability to see? Vision. Sign. Optics. I've always seemed to take these things for granted. If my eyes were rendered useless, then I wouldn't be able to draw, paint or read. It would be hell on earth. I would no longer be a visual artist. I suppose I could always turn to some non-sight art forms such as poetry or something. But my two-dimensional art career would be concluded. I was depressed. But that would probably be the least of my problems. I'd never see a tree again, or a bird, or my family, or anything! Not a cloud or a sunset or creepy-crawling things. My world would be confined to my other 4 senses, which would have to work overtime. I got more depressed. I started thinking about what I would do. I'd probably just lay around and think and use my imagination. A lot. There's really not too much to do when you're blind. I began thinking about blind men. Specifically, I started thinking about the blind man that Jesus healed. "And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way." (Mark 10:46-52) The blind man was healed by Jesus. His life was completely changed forever. But what if Jesus never came by? He would have been blind until his dying day. I, too, if I was blind, would be blind until my dying day. Then a strange thought—is sight all that important to be depressed about? Is life so wrapped up in sight, that I would just be depressed? Is the lack of vision worth living the rest of your life in depression? Is it? Is anything? Let's evaluate. If I was blind, I would still have the love of Jesus Christ. What else would I need? Sure, it would be nice to have sight, but it's not the end. I would

eventually die someday and meet my Lord. What's to be depressed about? It's weird. To be blind would mean seeing less of the world, but it would also mean seeing more of Christ. I see it all now.

- A free will is naturally a rebellious will.
- On Judgment Day, Life will be the price. You will either pay with Jesus' Life or with your own. It's either His blood or your blood.
- If we could comprehend everything about who God is and why He does certain things, would He be a very great God?

- The Moth

Christians should take a lesson from the moth: The moth, when in darkness, will flock to the brightest source of light. With unfailing perseverance and fortitude, his goal is to get to that light. He pays attention to nothing else. For us Christians, that light is Christ. We must seek Him at all times. When we are surrounded by darkness on all sides, it's comforting to know that Jesus, that Great Light, will keep us from darkness and will not forsake us. Ever.

- The Taste of Evil

I tasted evil at my first job. I worked at Target. There, I saw the evil of other people and the evil of myself. I saw the world as I had never seen before: lust, violence, blasphemy, destruction, torment, rage, hatred, godlessness. These things upset me, but I was part of the trap as well. I was not any better than them. But I realize, now, how terrible these sins were. This little world in which I worked angered me. How much angrier can God be at the entire world for their sins, I can only fathom.

- Sheep are totally dependent on their Shepherd. They are completely lost without a leader and wouldn't know what to do, if it wasn't for God. That sounds just like me.

- I want to somehow be able to glorify God in everything I do. If not, then the work of my hands is laid waste. Obviously, this is impossible for a human to achieve but it is something to aspire to.

- Some people do not want to be saved. They embrace sin and death. They lust after the lies of the devil, the Grand Master of Deception.
- Just as the rising of the sun brings a new day, the rising of the Son brought new life for every person.
- Fighting with others only kindles revenge. According to Romans 8:20, a fight is won only by destroying revenge, meaning – show love to your enemies.
- This life is but a dream; a nightmare for some people. I want to serve God as best as I can in this dream; then I can go to sleep and be with Him.
- It's easy to offend people – just say you believe in Jesus Christ and, well, you'll have less friends (that's for sure).

#### • Miracles and God's Sovereignty

Miracles and God's intervention are meant to speed up man's free will. Just ask Abraham. You think that having a child at 100 years old didn't make him want to serve God? What about Moses? You think if Moses didn't see a burning bush or talk to God that he would've been eager to go talk to Pharaoh? What about Paul? If he wasn't blinded for 3 days (by Jesus' presence), you think he would have turned to Christ? All these interventions by God sped up the free will of man. They couldn't doubt anymore! Basically, all the great people in the Bible have seen a miracle, or a vision or a dream, or talked to God in some way or another. God chose them to see a vision or to talk to them. How come, then, God hasn't shown me any visions or talked to me? I desire to hear God's voice! But He doesn't want to give me one right now– or ever! Maybe God doesn't want me to be like one of the famous Biblical type heroes. I just wish I could hear from my Creator. (Footnote: looking back on this statement, I can see how I just wanted an experience from God. But the ironic thing is that I already had an experience from God. It wasn't but 3 months earlier that Jesus

revealed himself to me and the Holy Spirit came to live inside me! If I had just reflected on what had just happened during the Easter of 1998, then I wouldn't have been complaining. I leave this here to show how, sometimes, Christians seek after an experience when they should be reflecting on what God has already given them— eternal life! What better experience can one ask for than to be saved from hell and then have God living inside of them? No miracle or vision can compare to God's sovereign grace that He freely gives to whoever He wants to.)

- A miracle is still a miracle whether mankind takes it for granted or not. Such as: a birth of a child, a tree growing or a bird flying.

- A Christian that doesn't know the Bible is as useful as a dictionary in non-alphabetical order.

- Stubborn Christian

People think that Christians are stubborn, immovable and not willing to compromise. But I beseech you to tell me if God is any less so. Does He, one day, decide to hold the Earth up and the next day to let it go? No. He doesn't compromise; nor does He waver. Because He alone is good. And good never changes. Only evil does.

- You need to give God the glory for everything good.

- I will not, I repeat, I will not water down the message of Christ for the sake of offendable ears. If people don't want to listen, then they are doomed to hell.

- Genius

How is a genius someone who says or does something that cannot be understood? A genius, to me, would be someone who can break down huge ideas for people who don't understand them. Jesus did just that. In fact, he broke down His theological ideas for children!

- Jesus lives and forgives.

- I am eternally grateful for God becoming Man.

- I bear the name of “Christian” (literally “little Christ”). It’s a huge responsibility and I don’t take it lightly. The world will see how “little” of a Christ you are with its big magnifying glass.

- I’m not going to be on the defensive side of Christianity; I’m going to be on the offensive side. (If you will show me, Jesus.) The world is always attacking me, so why not attack the world with God’s truth?

- **Salvation**

Without renouncing your sinful life and accepting Jesus Christ and what He did for you (read John 3:16), you are damned to hell. As for me, I’m ready to shed this corruptible human flesh and inherit eternal life. Why? Because I accepted Christ, and because God loved me, He accepted me. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for redeeming me.

- The messages, promises and blessings from God carry a common theme which runs like a golden thread throughout His Word: Love.

- Do you think any other great “religious leader” would’ve taken the time to teach and love children? No way! Jesus took the time.

- **Under God’s Rule**

People don’t want to be subject to God’s rule. But it’s like trying to get away from gravity: Impossible. You’re subject to gravity’s rule whether you like it or not. God’s rule and his future, inevitable, impenetrable, eternal earthly kingdom is no less demanding.

- It’s a good thing man hasn’t touched the stars: he’d ruin them. That’s part of their beauty; man hasn’t gotten a hold of them.

- **The Sinless One**

In a sinful world, He who is sinless calls the shots. He is the One who deserves our worship. He’s the One who we should listen to and obey and love. “For God (the Greatest Lover) so loved

the world (the Greatest Disappointment), that He gave His only begotten Son (the Greatest Sacrifice) that whosoever believeth in Him (the Greatest Invitation) should not perish (The Greatest Escape), but have everlasting life (the Greatest Gift).” – John 3:16

- Both Adam and Jesus had their sides opened for their bride.

- Eternal life is like a \$100 bill lying on the floor in a department store: you can be indifferent to it (I doubt it), you could just not want it and walk away, or you could want it and pick it up and keep it.

- Intolerance to Sin

“You’re supposed to be tolerant of other people’s beliefs!” “You should respect everyone’s opinions regardless of what you think!” “You have no right to disregard others’ preferences or opinions!” I hear these statements often (even from Christians), and it’s sickening. I don’t tolerate lies or rebellion or sin! And neither does God. I cannot “respect” other people’s opinions that are based on lies and not the truth! I cannot “respect” the opinion of rapists, murders, child molesters or homosexuals or anyone else who seeks to undermine God’s authority. I cannot “respect” the person who would like to murder, rob, or hurt me! I have no tolerance for rebellious lifestyles, taboos and postmodern philosophies that seek to supplant God’s authority. Should the baby “respect” the mother’s right to kill him in her womb? Should the Jews have “respected” Hitler’s abominable murderous plans against them? Should the United States “respect” the wishes of overseas terrorists? To be tolerant is to be neutral; that’s what these statements are advocating. To be neutral is to have no spine. To be neutral is like being an agnostic—a chicken. Where’s the dignity in saying, “I’m in the middle!”? There’s no dignity in that. Why don’t you stand up for what you know is right in your heart, get off the fence and fight for what you believe in? Stop the tolerance of evil and start the love.

- I would rather have God as a friend than a stalker. For the unbeliever, God is a stalker.

- If your happiness is based on what you have materially, you're going to be a most unhappy person.

- Talking to God

We live in a Telecommunications World. We can communicate with astronauts, unmanned space probes, satellites, underwater machinery, etc. I can talk to anyone in the world with a phone, modem, palm pilot or Fax. But you know what? I can talk with the God who created the heavens and the earth. Now that is communication!

- No Dead Messiah

What good is a "Messiah" if He just died and stayed dead? That would be no Messiah at all. My Messiah, Yeshua HaMashiach did rise from the dead. I don't put my faith into some long-dead "messiah" who's rotting away in a grave somewhere. I put my faith in the God who came back from the grave!

- Death is impotent; his sting has been taken away by Christ Jesus. And, He has imparted life upon me, not by my own righteousness, but by His.

- Don't let the world put a hole in your boat of faith.

- I read about myself in the Bible today, but I didn't realize it. I was reading John Chapter 9: "I was blind! Now I see!"

- The refuge cities in the Old Testament are a type of Christ: You are free and safe as long as you abide in Him.

- Life is not about doing things; it's about the Creator and my relationship with Him and how I love Him and how I know Him. Every moment counts in this life; let us not forget the Giver of the

moments.

- Sacrifice is innocent life traded for sinful life. That's why God can fellowship with us today—His sinless Son gave us His own innocent life for our sinful life.

- God made the first sacrifice (the killed animals for skins for Adam and Eve) and He made the last sacrifice at Calvary.

- If a father and a son are walking and the son falls in the mud, do you think the father will not pick him up? Are you kidding? That father will pick his son up with his own arms and get dirty. That's what God does for us.

- You're either a slave to sin and free from righteousness or you're a slave to righteousness and free from sin.

- The Only Savior

Only God, our Creator, could have saved us. An angel could not have been our Savior, for an angel still has the potential to sin (i.e. Lucifer's rebellion). Not only that, but an angel isn't eternal like God. We need an eternal Savior and One that we can worship: God Himself. Only God could pay a God-sized debt. And He did!

- God's nature is infallible. God's Word is infallible. But the people who interpret those things are fallible.

- Jesus was not ashamed to be crucified publicly for me. His holiness should have been ashamed to even think of my unrighteous rags. How then can I be ashamed of that Great God who was not ashamed of me?

- Satan Tempting Jesus

Why did Satan tempt Jesus in the desert? Because Satan is an idiot. He thinks all men have a sin nature. Well, he's been right for 4,000 years (at this point), however, with this man, he was wrong. He was wrong because this time he was trying to tempt our holy, just and loving God. Was there a possibility that Jesus could have

listened to his temptations and followed them? Absolutely not. Jesus has a perfect, sin-free nature and it is impossible for Him to sin in the slightest of things. He's absolutely holy. There was no chance that He could have sinned. So what was the point of the temptation? To prove that He was sinless. It's one thing to keep talking about how holy you are; it's quite another to actually prove it in the worst, real-time circumstances. Jesus did.

- Beyond the Grave

If you want to know what's beyond the grave, wouldn't it make sense to find an expert on the subject? Wouldn't it behoove you to talk to someone who has gone through death and has come back? Jesus is here and He's willing to teach you all that's beyond the grave. His credentials are His nail-pierced hands and feet.

- People with weak faith have a little God.

- Entering Flesh

Jesus could have entered the world at any time in history. He could have died by shooting, stabbing, etc. But He came at the time of crucifixion. He chose the cruelest method ever devised by men, to die for me. Nothing else could have been so painful. His stigmata will be a reminder for all eternity of the price He paid for my redemption.

- Jesus paid the penalty for the His own Judgment that we would've had to pay. He saved us from His own Judgment.

- God loves you for who you are and sees you as you can be.

- A Christian is a soldier who joins a battle of a war that has already been won.

- God the Father

If you can't call God "Father", then you can't call Him. Period. You can't call Him until you've accepted the Only Way He's given to heaven. God has only given one option. Don't think that you can make more options. God could have chosen 5, 10 or even 500 ways

to get to heaven. But He only chose One; that way is Jesus Christ.

- People always want the newest things: cars, houses, clothes, vacations, movies, DVDs, cell phones, etc. How about a new life? I have one in Christ Jesus.

- Made Sin

Jesus was so made sin for my sake on the cross, that He couldn't even call the Father "Father". He called Him "God". The Father cannot look upon sin. Therefore, Jesus was made the subject of total abandonment by both the Father and the Spirit on that cross.

- Evil men are never satisfied with one of anything (money, gods, wives, ways of salvation, etc.)

- Keeping the Law

If you honestly think that you can keep the 613 Jewish laws, then you're obviously perfect and don't need Christ. Christ is for those who can't keep the law (like me). Christ is the human example of keeping the law. He is the fulfillment of it. The law is the highest standards ever devised in the history of the world. God expects no less than a perfect man who kept the law. Jesus was that Man and whoever believes on Him, will be made perfect like Him.

- The glory I give myself will die when I die. The glory I give God will last forever.

- Tithing Our Time

If we were to tithe our time, God deserves: 10% of every 1 minute (6 seconds), 10% of every 1 hour (6 minutes), 10% of every 24 hour day (2.4 hours), 10% of every 1 week (16.8 hours), 10% of 52 weeks (5.2 weeks) and 10% of every 365 days (36.5 days). I don't know about you, but I fall nowhere near this. God deserves much more than this, however. He deserves every second of our life.

- If your philosophy isn't good enough to live and die by it, then dump it. Christianity is good enough to live by and to die by. 100% guaranteed.

- The longer you are in the dark, the more adjusted your eyes become to it. When you first see the light, it's a shock at first, but is much more enjoyable than the dark, because you see!

2000

- Eternity isn't time that goes on forever, eternity is the absence of time.

- God's Rules

God makes the rules. We should live by them. It's not that He's trying to make us conform to His way of doing things, but He is God: He knows what is best for us. He loves us! He wants to give us life more abundantly—not take it away!

- Rejecting God

It's not like people are rejecting an evil God. They are rejecting a God who loved them so much to die for their sins and rise from the dead for them. They are rejecting a loving God. And that, unfortunately, is the worst mistake anyone could ever make.

- The sexual sin of Amnon (2Samuel 13) mimics the sexual sin of David, his father. Like father, like son.

- Shock the World

If you're living a life to show the world how weird, crazy, obnoxious, psycho, off-the-wall you are: you don't have to dress weird, create weird art, or even talk weird. You don't have to do weird things, do weird things to your body, or have weird beliefs: all you have to be is a Christian! That's right! You want to offend someone? Be a Christian. You want people to think you're weird? Be a Christian. You want people to think you are so off-the-wall? Be a Christian. You want people to hate you? Be a Christian. You want people to persecute you for your beliefs? Be a Christian. You will drive people nuts! They won't understand you. They won't be

able to figure you out! People will be offended by your lifestyle. People will think you're weird, hate you, and persecute you. Because your lifestyle is so off-the-wall that no one wants to be a Christian! People think that cussing, tattoos, nose rings, pink hair, drugs, alcohol, homosexuality, Satanism, and other lifestyles are offensive? You can take all those lifestyles in the world that offend people and add all those who are offended up, and the number of offendees will not even come close to the number of offendees Christianity creates! So, offend some people. Do it today! Do it for Christ! Be a Christian.

- Jesus is the only manly Man. He is more manly than any man who has ever lived.
- The first thing King Solomon did when he first came to throne was to “clean house” just like what Jesus will do in the future. You have to get rid of the bad before you start with the good.
- People think that Christianity is about what you can't do. But it most definitely is about what you can do: have a relationship with the God of the universe!
- God is love; love is God. God abides in me; I abide in God.
- Isaac is the son that never should have happened. By all human reasoning, Isaac should have never been born. Do you think the fact that Gentiles were grafted into Israel was any less of a miracle? Praise be to God!
- Christianity isn't plausible only if you believe that death is the unconquerable enemy.

#### • I Want to Live My Life Uncompromised

The world has never given me anything except pain and grief. The world's teachings on how to be happy is nothing but a lie from hell. The world wanted me to conform to its mold, and, I tried to before I was saved. I tried to fit in with the crowd, but quite honestly, I was an outsider from the outset. I would always be an

outsider. And, when I wanted to become part of the world-clique, my art suffered with it, because it was more about pleasing others in my artistic endeavors than doing the art that I wanted to do. I was saved by grace in the summer of 1994, which made me an outsider even more, but at that point, I could have cared less about being an outsider. Christ had died for me and rose again for me and I was willing to suffer shame for His name. See, the world had rejected me, therefore I rejected the world. I would follow Jesus. They would follow Satan. They would get drunk, get high, have sex, etc. I would not. They could keep hearing the lies of TV, radio and movies; I would not. The world wouldn't affect me with that virus of hell-doomed plague. They couldn't get to me anymore once I locked out all channels of communication into my life. I secluded myself with God and they could not get in. God blessed me all the more when I started using "my" art talent for His glory and not my own. Perspectives seem to change when you realize that the talent you have isn't even due in part to you. "My" art talent was a gift from God. I want to live my life uncompromised. The world tried to get me to use "my" art talent for it, but I would not. The world tried to sway my beliefs away from God, but I would not. They were not willing to change or to compromise; nor was I. The world has nothing to offer me except a pale degenerate existence. I use "my" talent for God now. I live for Him now. God has never given me anything except peace and happiness.

2001

- The world cannot stop the blessings my God showers me with.
- Love is going out of your way to die for a person in need, but who doesn't want your help.
- Faith takes you to places where you have never been before.
- Common Sense  
Common sense isn't faith. Faith in God is more than common

sense in man. However, both faith and common sense can let you down. For example, I know that General Motors makes good cars, but that common sense won't stop my car from breaking down. Also, I can have faith that God will make me a millionaire, but if it's not in His will, it won't happen. In one instance, General Motors failed. In the other, God did not fail. God can never fail doing His will. General Motors, faith and common sense can all fail, but God can never fail.

- Everything I do I want to please my Daddy.

- God doesn't give second-rate gifts.

- People are Users

People will take the world God has given to humans. And they will take the oxygen and the water. And they will take His institutions like marriage and government, but they won't take the one thing He has given humans that He really wants us to have, the one thing that humans need: Salvation in Jesus Christ!

- Bad Situations

It's pretty easy to turn a good situation into a bad one. But try turning a bad situation into a good one. That's hard, if not impossible. However, God did just that. He turned my sinfulness into righteousness. He brought me from death into life. He saved me from hell and brought me to heaven. He's good at reversing a bad situation into a good one.

- Answers

I think God doesn't answer us the way we want, sometimes, is because we couldn't comprehend the answer He would give us. It's like the kid that I heard that asked his dad, "What are cars made of?" His dad could have tried and given his boy the answer, but the boy wouldn't have understood. Answers are the realm of God and are given out as He sees fit.

- The First Move

God always makes the first move in a relationship that He wants.

He always shows His love first before the person does. He always makes Himself vulnerable in asking first, "Do you love me?" Man never makes the first move in a relationship with God; man is too busy loving other things to even know that God loves him.

- Jesus gave up the thing He held most precious: His relationship with the Father. He did it all for me.

- Righteousness hung for us sinners.

- Alive

Just because you're breathing doesn't mean you're alive. Living means so much more than just air in your lungs or your heart beating. Living is beyond the physical. Living is linked to the One who never dies. Life can never be separated from the One who created it, sustains it and holds your next breath in His hands.

- My Salvation

From the Father's perspective, I was saved before the foundation of the world. From the Son's perspective, I was saved 2,000 years ago on Calvary. From the Holy Spirit's perspective, I was saved in the Summer of 1994. And from my perspective, when I leave this world, I will be completely saved, praise God!

- Out of Sarah's dead womb came Isaac. Out of Jesus' dead tomb, came walking out Everlasting Life. Only God can take that which is dead and make it alive again. Only He can reverse entropy.

- There are only three things that change at any given time in history: language, fashion and invention. Man doesn't change; he's still the evil creature that was cast out of Eden.

- The best that the world can offer is hell in a box.

- If God can take a dead branch that Aaron had and make it blossom with buds and almonds, He can take any rotten sinner and use him to bear fruit as well.

- Boysenberries

An analogy for life: We have a boysenberry bush in our front yard. Anyone who knows about boysenberries knows how good they taste and how thorny the bush is. It seems that the biggest and tastiest boysenberries are always in the back, in the shade of the leaves. I always want that boysenberry and am willing to get my hand scraped by the thorns to get it. Most people are willing to accept the other, not-so-quite big boysenberries in the front that are pain-free to obtain.

- The Lord put His Name on the line when He chose me. Everything we do reflects the Name we hold so dear to us. Magnify His Name.

- The Lost Thief

I don't understand the thief on the cross who was lost. He was condemned together with Jesus. He had the Savior of the world next to Him. Yet he didn't believe on Him. Is that stupidity or what? He went into eternity his own way. The other thief did believe on Jesus and is in heaven for eternity.

- The saddest, most horrific words ever uttered were uttered by Jesus on that cross: "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?" That question answers God's question to man, back in Eden, "Where are you?"

- The Greatest Man in history was a servant to all and He didn't even have to be. Talk about "getting out of your comfort zone".

- It is Finished

Jesus is the only Man that has ever been able to look back on His life and say "It is finished." Every other man's aspirations reach further than a single life span. Jesus finished His work in a mere 33 years; he lived a more abundant life than any other man in history.

- Men love to give each other awards and congratulations and pats-on-the-back. How about a pat-on-the-back from your Savior:

“Well done good and faithful servant”?

- “Your life for My Life.” That’s essentially God’s offer to each of us. It’s hard to imagine God wanting to make a deal like that, but He is more than willing to do so. Sadly, many people are only concerned with losing “their life” rather than realizing the gift of gaining “His life”.

- The summary of the Old Testament is: “Messiah is coming.” The summary of the New Testament is: “Messiah is here.” The summary of the Bible is: “Jesus is the Messiah and He is here.”

- Paul, Servant of Christ

As I study Paul’s life, I never see him selling the gospel. I do see him going out of his way to preach it for people’s sake. I see him making a living doing something else so that he can preach the gospel (i.e. making tents). I see him becoming a Jew to the Jews and a Gentile to the Gentiles to win the more. I see his strong relationship with Jesus. I see his humbleness and self-sacrificing and the limitations he had. I never see him asking for a donation or to pay for the gospel. I see his love and his devotion and his unwavering focus on his Savior. I see him take the criticism and the beatings for the Truth he held dear. I see him running the race and never giving up and always hoping in God. I see him always going to the unbeliever, meeting them where they are. I see his faith in God to supply all his needs and his security in his Savior. I see his inventiveness and his stubbornness and his loneliness. I see his leadership. I see him fellowshiping and giving and helping. I see him defeated yet never really defeated. I see him finishing his course with the utmost enthusiasm to meet his Lord. I see his writings and his legacy. His name lives on because the gospel was more than a strong conviction to him; it was the very basis as to how he lived his life. He is a tremendous example as to how each of us should live our lives in light of Christ.

- It is easy to die for Christ; it’s hard to live for Him.

- God will reinvent this world in love.

- God has so much existence He can give existence away.
- Without God nothing is possible. But with God nothing is impossible.
- The devil's strengths are my weaknesses. The devil's weaknesses are my strengths.
- Easy Destinies  
God doesn't give His children easy destinies that can be accomplished humanly; He gives us destinies that seem impossible, but we have to totally rely on Him to fulfill them for us. God doesn't specialize in human-strength destinies of the world. He has so much planned for our lives than the world would ever think of on their own.
- Real power is not found in having the ability to stop evil, but rather choosing to be merciful.
- Jesus the Mighty One  
Jesus was never so Kingly as when He carried His cross. Jesus was never so servant-like than when they were nailing Him to the cross. He was never so gracious as when He asked the Father to forgive His murderers. He was never so obedient as when He was in Gethsemane. He was never so strong as when the stone rolled away and He walked out.
- The weight of my sins alone was enough for me not to be able to carry; and yet, Jesus carried everyone's sins. How do you even describe something so self-sacrificing as that?
- A prophet represents God to the people. A priest represents the people to God; Jesus is both.
- With every last will and testament, there must come the death of the Testator, before a new last will and testament can come into effect. (Read Hebrews 9).

- Jesus died with His arms reaching out to me.

- God does His best work when people are sleeping (i.e. Adam, Apostles, Abraham).

- Destroying Sin

There are two ways to destroy sin: 1. Take the life of the sinner, or 2. Give a new life to the sinner. God used the first option on Sodom and Gomorrah. God used the second option with Jesus on Calvary. Either way, God hates sin and will destroy it one way or another.

- You could have the most godly parents and heritage and yet, within one generation, that heritage could be corrupted by sin. That's because the heart is exceedingly wicked above all things.

- Atonement is covering over sin; not getting rid of it.

- Do you think the Seraphim in heaven stopped singing "Holy, Holy, Holy" (Isaiah 6:3) to the Lord on September 11, 2001?

- Miracles

People long for and hope for miracles in tragic circumstances. What is a miracle, though? A miracle is God going out of His way to do something extraordinary. So, in every sense of the word, Jesus dying for our sins is a miracle, because God went out of His way to do something extraordinary. When He has done that miracle and we believe in that miracle, we need no other miracle to look to. People complain and ask, "Why didn't God prevent the World Trade Center from being destroyed?" But, how many times do we know of that God actually prevented the WTC from being destroyed? Do we know the answer to that? God still does miracles today, but on His terms; not ours. We need not look for an excuse that God should do this or that. He's done more than I could ever have hoped to have done on my own.

- The Giver of Life

The One who has so much life overflowing from Himself and He gives it to others. The very definition of life is God. That God died and willingly sacrificed Himself for us, when all He ever knew was life. He was Life and is Life. And He continues to live today.

- Job and Jesus

Job, one of the richest men ever, lost everything he owned. He was brought down to nothing; humbled not by his own choice. Jesus, likewise, lost everything He had, physically and spiritually; He was humbled by His own choice. The mileage between what each of them had and what each of them lost, however, cannot even be compared. Job lost all he had including his physical health; Jesus lost so much more than that. Job is a picture of Jesus in the Old Testament. The entire Book of Job is but a hint at what Jesus was going to go through in the future. It's also a reminder to us, that no matter how bad of a day we may have, it could never compare to Job's bad day (i.e. losing everything, losing his children, losing his health and his business). It should also remind us of Jesus' bad day (i.e. six different trials, spit upon, whipped, beaten, sleep deprived, mocked, hated by his own people, suffocation, and finally crucified). Nothing in our lives could ever compare to His bad day. How dare we even complain to Jesus. Now I know why Jesus hates complaints; He's already been through the worst of what we could ever possibly go through in this world. Job hurts throughout this entire book. He has no idea what is going on (for example, count the question marks throughout the book of Job). He's trying to understand why God would allow his troubles to happen to such a "righteous" man such as he. Well, Jesus asked the Father a more horrific question, "My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?" Our troubles pale in comparison to that poignant question.

- Jesus bled love.

- The Unseen World

The only way one can make sense of the world is if he sees the spiritual side of it. The world isn't made up of just stuff that we see. How can one make sense of only half of a photograph? Or,

what if he only saw half of a movie? Life is no different; the whole picture is needed and it's found in the Bible.

- The world has nothing to offer me; it showed me its best and I was still thirsty. Jesus alone quenches my thirst.

- **Betrayal**

Judas wasn't the first or last to betray Jesus. Satan betrayed Jesus long ago. One third of the angels in heaven betrayed Jesus, as well. In fact, for 15 years of my life, I betrayed Him. Betrayal isn't left to the realm of cowards. It is left to those who are so proud that they think that they don't need Jesus.

- God is a God who set the maximum penalty for sin and paid it, Himself, with His own blood.

- I know that I exist. But I also know that God has saved me. That fact, I know more in depth than the fact of my own existence. My salvation is the only thing I'm sure of, if I am to be sure of anything in this life.

- God's will is for you to do the right decision every decision.

- **Jesus is the Fulfillment of the Law**

Romans 13:10 states that "love is the fulfillment of the law". And, Jesus is love (1John 4:9). So, in other words, Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law. Whoever thought that the fulfillment of the Law would be a person (and not a decree)?

- **God's Second Chances**

People say that God doesn't give second chances. Read Numbers Nine. If a person was unclean or away on a journey and couldn't keep the Passover, God said they could keep it on the second month on the 14th day. God wants your offering. He wants your fellowship. He wants you to come to Him. He always gives a second chance on this earth. God is the God of the second chance and third chance and fourth chance. . . How many times did Jesus tell Peter to forgive someone? 70 x 7? Do you think we

should expect any less from God? He wants to forgive us and be with us. But He also can't just ignore our sin. He has provided the Sacrifice. And, He provides as many chances as you need to come to Him. We constantly need to be "passed over". He is our constant Advocate.

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- One good thing about living in an evil world—it's easy to shock people with acts of kindness.
- It would take all the powers of hell to stop one bird from chirping. Billions of birds chirp every day in defiance of all demons and in all glorify to God. Unstoppable.
- "Redeeming the time" means spending more time with the Creator of time.
- Dead grass burns faster than alive grass. If you're not in Christ, you're dead already. If you are in Christ, you're alive and won't burn.
- If you want to succeed, then count the cost. If you can live without God for eternity, then don't accept His son. If you can't, then turn to Jesus.
- Here is Christian liberty in a nutshell: I can do whatever I want, but why would I want to hurt the One I love?
- God Knows Fun  
Does God know what fun is? Does He know how to "have a life"? Follow His example. He gave His all for the joy that was set before Him (Heb 12:2). Think about it: the God of the universe knows what a satisfied existence is and it has to do with giving yourself away.
- The Gospel on Our Backs  
The best and only way that men will believe the gospel is if it is

carried on the backs of God's sons. If writing it in the sky would have made believers, He would've done it a long time ago. But Jesus was a Man and He brought it to us as a man. If there was a better way, I'm sure He would have done it. But people believe what they see. People believe when they see their friends' lives changed. That's God's method; it's the only method.

- Secret Sins

Even though your sin may not have "hurt anyone else" and no one else "even knows about it"—God knows about it. You've still broken His Law. Sin isn't honorable. It doesn't accomplish anything. You hurt yourself. You hurt God. You waste time. You damn yourself. You're laughing all the way to the guillotine.

- God gives men gifts every day. Whether it's His Savior or forgiveness or eternal life or your very next breath. What can we give to God that He hasn't already given to us?

- If you die before you're dead, you'll live before you're dead. John 12:25 says: "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."

- Soldiers, Spouses, Sheep

The Christian life is: Soldier-hood, Spouse-hood and Sheep-hood. Soldierhood, because we are to fight the good fight of faith in God's army. Spousehood, because we are married to Christ and one with Him. Sheephood, because we are to be led and protected by our Good Shepherd.

- The Father's best for Christ was that He would be sacrificed for me.

- God Never Loses

The God who destroyed Sodom, the Amalekites, Jericho, the Philistines and tons of other evil people was the same God on Calvary who became the weakest of men, beaten, bruised, and bloodied and still had yet another victory. God didn't lose to the Amalekites and He didn't lose on Calvary. God never loses.

- Jesus finished His “To Do” list while on this earth (i.e. one-third of the Old Testament messianic prophecies). He’s coming back to finish the rest of His “To Do” list.

- Jesus came to save the underdog by becoming the underdog. Now He is the Victorious One.

- Righteous-Offending

It seems like I get offended a lot these days. A co-worker can take God’s name in vain and it offends me. Or, I could be in a bookstore and I hear something that offends me. Or, I could be in the check-out line and see a magazine cover that offends me. I’m a Christian. You know how it is. You could be walking and see a t-shirt and –BOOM– you’re offended. See a billboard –BOOM– offended. Listening to the radio–offended. See a commercial – offended. See a movie – offended. Read a bumper sticker–offended. Most of the things that offend me have to do with people ridiculing Christianity, or blaspheming Christ, or mocking my beliefs, or undermining my worldview or questioning my opinions or glorifying sin. It seems that we Christians are the “weak ones”, always getting strung-up about “nothing”. Taking offense to things that “aren’t all that important”. Seems like there’s nothing we can do about it, right? Well, I think there is something we can do about it. I think it’s time for the Church to start offending the world more. Oh, I don’t mean in a sinful way, but in a righteous way. See, it’s OK if the world offends us all day long, but how come we can’t offend the world some? I’m talking about living our lives unhypocritically, uncompromised, holy and godly that would put any heathen to shame. I’m talking about using key words in conversations: sin, judgment, hell, accountability, when needed. I’m talking about leaving our Bible on our desk at work or having the courage to tell people why we don’t do certain things. Let them have it between the eyes–just like David did to Goliath. And just like David, I think we can feel outnumbered, overpowered, and overwhelmed by all the stuff that offends us; it seems like the odds aren’t in our favor. But Goliath didn’t win. It was the underdog who won. Let this be a call for Christians to start righteous-

offending people today and get people to think that the Messiah we serve, may in fact, be offended by their sin, too.

- The Victory Yell

After 3 years of teaching people, I think Jesus had the strongest vocal cords on earth. I think the reason He wanted the drink of vinegar on the cross was because He wanted to make His victory yell: “It is finished!” I think His victory yell” was the loudest yell in history and He most certainly had the vocal cords to do it.

- I was born in darkness; I was born again to light.

- Jesus Didn’t Stop

The nails didn’t make Jesus stop. The stick, the crown, the spitting, beating, whipping, bleating, sweating, cursing didn’t make Him stop His mission. His mission was to deliver me from much worse punishment. Mission: Accomplished.

- Busy God?

Why is God so great? It’s not only because He’s absolutely lovely, gracious, perfect, holy, just, patient, good, etc. but because He humbled Himself to even be concerned with a miniscule planet and some sinner named “Robert”. God wasn’t too busy to do all that for us; are we too busy to do things for Him? Are we any more busy than God?

- Jesus wasn’t just a sacrifice on the cross, but He was a living sacrifice His whole earthly life and continues to be a living sacrifice at the right hand of the Father. There is definitely a connection between “love” and “relationships” and “sacrifice”. Love IS sacrifice.

- Daddy’s Footsteps

Follow your Daddy’s footsteps. They are right in front of you. He has done everything that you will do. He has already been through all the pain and joys that you will go through. Get your advice from Him, since He has the experience.

- In Christ

You are either “in Christ” or “not in Christ”. There is no “sort of in Christ”. In the Great Flood you were either “on” Noah’s ark or “not on” Noah’s ark. There was no middle. In Sodom’s destruction you were either “saved” or “killed”. There was no middle ground. I hope that settles the issue of any “purgatory”.

### “Rationalizing“ A Life Without God

Senses are not the most reliable things on earth to prove that God exists: if a blind person (like the athiest, Helen Keller) doesn’t believe in the moon, does that mean that the moon doesn’t exist? Or, if a deaf person doesn’t believe in music, does that mean music doesn’t exist? The fact is, is that people’s senses or opinion doesn’t matter when it comes to truth. Truth isn’t based on a personal preference, it’s based on fact. Or else we’d have 6 billion versions of truth in this world. If you choose to not believe that food will not fill your stomach, it doesn’t take away the fact that you are still hungry. If you choose not to believe in gravity, it doesn’t make you any less susceptible to falling in the mud. Just because you “rationalize” God out of your mind, it doesn’t mean that God doesn’t exist. God exists whether you choose to accept that fact or not! It’s beyond your control or influence. A fact is a fact whether 6 billion people want to believe it or not. You know, God wouldn’t even care if there was a unanimous vote on this earth, denying his existence! It would just be 6 billion people’s opinion—not fact. Being God necessitates that He calls the shots, makes the rules and is uncompromising. If you were God, you’d do no less. But you’re not God. You’re human just like the rest of us. If I were you, I’d quit “rationalizing” God out of existence and repent of your rebellion. You will meet God someday either as your Judge or your Savior. It’s your choice. Let me ask you, What are you gonna say to God in that day? “Oh, uh, hi, God. . . uh, you know, uh, you’re not supposed to be here.” And what do you suppose He will say to you? The answer is found in Matthew 25: 12, 13: “But he answered and said, Assuredly I say to you, ‘I do not know you. Watch

therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” God won’t twist your arm to make you come to Him. He simply knocks at your heart’s door: “Behold , I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”—Revelation 3:20

#### • God Walks The Talk

Would you worship a god who declared himself as love and demanded you to love him and others and yet never showed any act of love himself? I think you would answer “No“. That God wouldn’t be worthy of my worship. He would just be a tyrant, and I think that’s the view many people have today of God—a tyrant. But they haven’t studied history. The God I serve is a God of love and has continually shown it throughout history. One need only to look at the nation of Israel’s history and the numerous occasions He went out of His way to save them. But none of these acts can compare to the Ultimate Act of love God did for us. See, God isn’t just a talker of love and justice and mercy; He is a doer of them. And his Ultimate Act of love was sending His only begotten Son to shed His blood for the sins of mankind. Think about that for a moment. The God of the Old Testament, of Abraham, of Israel, this God who did indescribable miracles and declared Himself love and demanded the same of us, this God who humbled Himself to show that He is indeed love, and wasn’t asking of us anything that He, Himself, wouldn’t do—did it. He was beaten and battered and bloodied — not for a bunch of righteous people (righteous people don’t need saviors), but for sinners! He had a crown of thorns crushed onto His head and was whipped, reducing his back to red ribbons of flesh—not because he didn’t have the power to stop them, but because he freely laid down His life in obedience to the Father’s will. He was crucified—a nail in each of His hands, and one in his feet, because He loved us so much He didn’t want us to be separated from the Father for eternity. He paid the price. He “did the time“ that we would have had to pay separated from God for our sins (eternity). The eternal Son who had never experienced a milli-second of separation from the Father paid the eternal price of separation - the one that we owed—on that cross. Don’t tell me

God isn't willing to do what He asks us humans to do, because He did it Himself. He is our example. The God of heaven and earth humbled Himself to die (and three days later rise again) for hopeless sinners like you and I. Don't tell me you can't humble yourself to accept a righteous God who accepts unrighteous people based on the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Without that blood we'd all still be slipping to hell. But we do have that blood. Hold onto the One who shed it for you and I—just like how Jacob held onto the Angel of the LORD after an all-night wrestling match.

- Everything Changes

There is nothing secure in this world. Don't even bother putting any stock into it. There is no foundation for which to base your life on. Philosophies, tastes and preferences change. Science is ever changing, and art is so relative; nothing is safe and secure. Governments rise and fall. Men and women live and die. The only secure foundation is found in Christ Jesus.

- Cure for Sin

Someone who doesn't know Jesus isn't condemned because of that fact but is condemned on the fact of himself being a sinner. If you are an unbeliever, and you know you are a sinner, wouldn't it behoove you to find a cure to your sin? You're condemned because you didn't bother to accept the God-given cure for sin!

- Jesus' Destiny

I've heard it said by people and pastors, "You know, the reason why Jesus was so distraught in Gethsemane and during the flogging was that He didn't think He would live long enough to make it to the cross." Are they serious? Jesus wasn't distraught because He didn't think He wasn't going to make it to the cross, He was distraught because of what was waiting for Him at the cross (separation from God and man). Let's get this straight: There was no option for Him NOT to go to the cross. Had Jesus not gone to the cross, all the Old Testament prophecies foretelling of the cross would've been made into lies. And we all know that it is impossible for God to lie. So, his destiny was the cross. Another thing: it's not like He could've "tried again later". For

the prophecies were time-sensitive. Since the proto-evangelion (Genesis 3:15) and even before the foundation of the world, the fact of the Messiah's death on the cross and the point in time it was to happen was absolutely and totally fixed. Jesus' destiny had been set before the creation of the universe by the triune Godhead. He locked Himself into this position, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit. With every subsequent prophecy made to the sons of men about the coming Redeemer, it was just more "loops" that the promise would be fulfilled through. It was just one more lock locked onto the inevitable fulfillment of the promise. The promise was immovable, irrevocable and indestructible by either angel or man. It would not only happen HOW He wanted it, but it would happen WHEN He wanted it. It was pinpointed to an exact point in history. God wanted this to happen. He wanted to show His love and His self-sacrifice for sinners like us. He has ALWAYS been self-sacrificing within the triune Godhead. He has ALWAYS been our Savior-Redeemer-Kinsman. He's ALWAYS been the Savior of the world, even before the world was made. He has ALWAYS been "carrying His cross" even before crosses were invented. For God to stop loving would mean that He would cease to exist—another impossibility. Praise be to the God of heaven and earth—my Redeemer! "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away."—Mark 13:31

- Who else other than Jesus, the Creator of life, could have the cure for death?
- A gift from God is irrevocable; especially One drowned in blood.
- God gives to you gifts so that you will draw closer to Him; God takes away gifts so you will draw closer to Him.
- If you have a sin problem, you have a love problem with God.
- Why would I put my trust in mere mortal men, who couldn't save themselves from the grave? I put my trust in the immortal Man, Jesus Christ, who cracked open His tomb from the inside.

- If you don't have absolutes, you have indifference. An indifferent life is a walking death.

- The Dash

Go through the encyclopedia and you will see pages and pages of great men and women who lived different philosophies, but their philosophies couldn't keep them alive. Each of them has a birth date, a dash and a death date. Jesus had a birth date and a dash!

- Jesus Was Made Sin For Us

Jesus is the reason why none of us ever have to die spiritually. He was the Giver of life and so freely gave His life on the cross. He didn't just "dish out" life to animals, people, spirits (even though that life, too, was part of Him), He gave His own Life for us. He gave us physical life first, then He gave us spiritual life (which is life more abundant). Jesus took upon Himself the two most foreign concepts known to Him, the two most hated enemies of Him, the two most undefeatable enemies from man's perspective: Sin and Death. Jesus versus Sin and Death is so opposite in magnitude, such a tremendous battle that took place at Calvary and a tomb, that the antithesis of these two are beyond expression. It's like light and darkness. It's like light wanting to become darkness so He could get rid of darkness. See, once Jesus was "made sin for us", He became sin, thus He could get rid of sin. So how did He get rid of sin? Three days later He rose from the dead (life). He got the wages of holiness (life) and got rid of the wages of sin (death). It's like how Joseph was made to go into poverty in Egypt, so He could get rid of poverty when the years of famine came. It's like when Moses left Pharaoh's house, humbled himself, so he could be in an even greater position in leading his people out of Egypt. I want to say that Jesus moved heaven and earth to be with us, but that is such an inadequate statement. He did SO MUCH MORE THAN THAT! It is beyond description. He left His throne of power to fight His and our enemies (sin and death), to be separated from the Father, just to be with me. He died spiritually before He died physically—just like how Adam did in the garden of Eden. The Second Adam got rid of sin and once that was gone, death never needs to be again. Death died the day

Jesus rose from the dead. Sin died when Holiness became sin for us.

- If every Christian was doing what they were supposed to be doing, this world would be a different place!

- Freedom without love = chaos.

- No Hypocrisy

Jesus practiced what He preached. His three-year ministry was about love. He told people to love one another, love your enemies, love God. His way to Calvary is the culmination of those teachings. He loved His enemies (me) all the way to the cross. Had He not done what preached, He would have been a hypocrite (not to mention a liar). But He did do it. His actions lined up with his teachings.

- Life without God is not a life worth living.

- No one ever says, “Give me your worries. I’ll take care of them for free.” But God does. So how come we don’t take Him up on it?

- Whatever You Want

“Ask and you will receive” is absolutely true. But it assumes that your will is so aligned with God and His will that your will is His will. “The Father’s will be done” is your will be done, at that point. But even Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane wasn’t answered—at least not by “taking His cup away from Him”, but in the “Not My will be done, but Your will be done.” The best for Jesus was that He should be humbled all the way down, eventually dying on a cross and being separated from the Father.

- Anything not done in love is a waste of time to you and will never benefit anyone else.

- Almost all our toil in this world is just so we can fill up our stomachs temporarily.

- God uses at least 4 ways to communicate to men: 1. Creation, 2. Conscience, 3. Christ, 4. Scripture

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- There is more to manhood than football, hot rods, sex, sound systems, etc. There is a manhood beyond all that. It transcends space and time and Jesus was that First Man. He's the man's Man. He knows what manhood (and Godhood) is.
- Only those furthest away from God know how far God can reach.
- There are plenty of opportunities in this life to show how much you really love Jesus. Being a martyr is one of those opportunities. Don't miss that one.
- Death is the unseen, inevitable enemy of which we all will face someday. You will either shrink in defeat, or you will conquer to the glory of God. Will you be able to say with Paul, "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55)
- Western civilization cannot be conceived apart from Christianity. Christianity can't be conceived apart from Jesus' resurrection. Both hinge on the fact that Christ rose from the dead.
- The Lord delivered Israel from their outside enemy (Egypt). Then He had to deliver them from themselves. That's what God does for all of us.
- You do not appreciate life until you've experienced death, or close to it.
- Love Prevails  
God's love prevails because He can draw any sinner to Himself. God's love prevails because His love is more satisfying than the life man can create apart from Him. God's love prevails because it

is more powerful than Satan's will to stop a sinner from going to Him. You can't keep two lovers apart.

- The world puts the names of their gods on their cars. What people worship is publicly displayed on their vehicles. So, why shouldn't I put the name of my God—the true God—on my car?

- God has His master plan for this world. You can be a part of it or not be a part of it.

- God's Covenants

God has a list of covenants that He has made with men. Also, God's covenants are irrevocable. If He adds a covenant to the list, the previous ones are still in effect. This is amazing to me, because with each subsequent covenant (i.e. Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic), He limited the possibilities of the Messiah only coming through all of them. Jesus went through each "hoop" all the way to the cross.

- David's Heights

It's easy for people to condemn David for his sins. "He sunk to the depths of unrighteousness" they say. That may be true, but how many of the condemners have ever reached the heights of his relationship with God? He sunk to the depths, true. But how many have soared to his heights?

- Worship of Cars

People worship their fiberglass gods. They may not have gods on a shelf in the living room, but they sure do have one in the driveway. They wash it, ritually, every two days. They shine it up. They even put the god-cover on it at night. They look at it through the window before they go to bed and dream of their god. They go to work to provide for their god. All this for a god who will rust before the owner does.

- Clean

Before God can use someone, it's got to be clean. You don't use a dirty bucket to clean your vehicle and you don't use a dirty glass to

drink from. The Holy Spirit has to bring you (i.e. clean you) into the Kingdom first, then He can use you. But, here's the thing: it's God who does the cleaning; not you. You can't clean yourself up enough before you come to God.

- The smaller you are, the less you have to lose.

- You want to know what power is? Try opening your grave from the inside. Only a God can do that.

- God's Love

Without God in your heart, you have no proof that God loves you. Without ever cracking open a Bible you will never know if God loves you are not. God's love is talked a lot in this culture—but people don't know the first thing about God's love. Try opening your heart to Him, reading the Bible and asking Him to reveal His love to you, then, maybe He will have mercy on you and show you His love.

- The quality of my life is determined by the quantity of time I spend with my Lord.

- Underestimating God

Think of the insults that the Israelites must have had thrown at them by the Jerichoites. Satan will try anything to discourage you. Jericho underestimated—not Israel—but their God. Pharaoh underestimated—not Moses—but his God. Goliath underestimated—not David—but his God.

- God uses small people to do His BIG plans. He can't use BIG people to do His BIG plans, because they get in the way.

- If anyone could have made it, it should have been Adam. No ghetto. No abusive parents. No traumatic childhood. Everything he ever wanted. . . and he still failed. Do you think you could have done a better job?

- Breaking God's Law

If you break one clause in any modern-day, business contract, you are guilty of breaking the entire contract. God's contract (i.e. the Law) is no different. If you break man's law, there is severe consequences. What kind of consequences do you think you will incur when you break God's Law?

- The world isn't subtle about its evil, why should we, Christians, be subtle about our God?
- Calvary isn't pretty to look at. No one said it was. But it's only through that blood (and disgust and that death) that our redemption is made.
- Whether humans realize it or not, everything they do is proving that they are incapable of self-rule. Come quickly Lord Jesus!
- There are so many things (i.e. idols) that tug at my heart, for it to follow. God tugs at my heart from the inside.
- When I gave my life to Christ, I was in it for the long haul. What makes anyone think that they can drag me away from Him? I mean, really, what can anyone offer me that is better than God Himself?

2004

- Rebellion in a Perfect Environment  
If there was no conflict/sin/freewill in the world, would we really turn to God? I don't think so. Even in a perfect environment and with a perfect government, there will still be those who don't want to obey and love God. That's what the Garden of Eden proved, and, that's what the Millennium will prove in the future (as people will still rebel against the Perfect King).
- God has never done anything that He didn't have His whole heart into.
- Jesus gave His blood so I could give my heart to Him.

- A Lifetime with God

I was thinking of how God is with a person throughout their entire lifetime. He's with him in Kindergarten, Junior High, High School, college, Marriage, career, retirement, nursing home and finally, death. God has no favoritism. He can use an 80-year-old just as much as a teenager. He's with each of us continually. How sad it is then when we ignore Him in our lives. Young people think they are indispensable. The Senior Citizen wonders if God can still use him. Why doesn't the young person make the decision now to serve God? He will have a whole life of love ahead of him! Don't ignore Him! God is with you through it all, every day and at any age.

- Jesus has such a beautiful heart. His beautiful heart defines His actions and defines His nature as pure beauty.

- Super Model Judgment Day

I shudder to think the judgment these female models will incur on the Day of Judgment. These super models for cosmetics, Victoria's Secret, Playboy, etc. will be judged by God Almighty for all their paid labor to entice men to sin. God will say, "Why did you tempt men? Why did you use the beauty I gave you for your own sinful gain? Men have enough sin apart from you. To whom much is given, much is required. Depart from me you workers of iniquity."

- Don't Give Up

When do people most often give up? When they are almost there! Don't give up on whatever God has called you to do! What if Jesus would've "thrown in the towel" in Gethsemane? Our redemption never would've happened. Pick up your cross and follow Him!

- Influence the influencers.

- One of my understandings of demons from the Bible is that they are continually in search of a host (someone or something with life in them, to feed off of). The origin of that parasitical nature is when they separated themselves from the Source of Life (God),

they willingly stepped into an eternity of wandering; an eternity of continually searching for other not-so-good sources of life (animals, people; preferably people).

- Who Killed Jesus?

I know a lot of Italians (i.e. Romans). Who's to say that one of your ancestors wasn't one of the Romans who beat Jesus? "Oh, my ancestors would have never killed Jesus. Only the Jews did." Really? Maybe only your family lineage is without sin? Maybe only Italians and Jews sin, right? Wrong. No one has a perfect family ancestry. We are all plagued with the human family's sin nature. Yes, Jews killed Jesus. Yes, Italians killed Jesus. Should we hate Jews and Italians for killing the Savior of the world? No, because if we were there, we would have done the same thing. The gospel is not Anti-Semitic. It's not Anti-Italian, either. The gospel is really Anti-Sin. It's Anti-Human Nature, Anti-Death, Anti-Satan. Don't try to distance yourself from the cross, or from those who killed Jesus. We all put Him on the cross. It was all of our sin that nailed Him there. All our ancestors killed Jesus—not just Jews and Italians. But through that miscarriage of justice, redemption has come to all mankind. The cross is the source of your new life.

- He Took Our Fall

It's through His shed blood that we find life. It's through His blood that we find forgiveness. It's through His pain that we find restoration with our Heavenly Father. He took the Fall—our fall—freely—so we could be with Him in eternity.

- Restoring the Image of God

The Transfiguration of Jesus (Luke 9:28-36) perhaps shows the glory that men had before the Fall. The glory that Jesus has brought back for us. We were made in God's image and we rebelled against Him (and lost much of who we were in the process). Perhaps we glowed in the Garden of Eden. Whatever we looked like, Jesus will restore all human nature back to His original intent: the image of God.

- The price for our redemption was a piece of God's heart.

- Healed by Jesus

Every person Jesus healed was potentially another “vote” for His Kingship. Every person’s life that He touched should have backed Him up when it was time. Where were all the people He healed when He was being condemned to death? Well, most of them went back to their lives and didn’t follow Jesus. How many people do you know who have been miraculously spared in life by death or cancer or averted a tragedy only to turn their back on God later? Healing and miracles don’t make disciples. Only the Holy Spirit does.

- Suffering More Than Jesus?

I’ve heard it said, “You know, there have been other people who have suffered more than Jesus did.” My question for them is, “Name one.” Even if it came close to the physical brutality He suffered through, it in no way acknowledges the spiritual suffering He endured; suffering that no sinful-born human can even begin to fathom. He was absolutely separated from the Father and the Holy Spirit (for our iniquities). Physical pain “wouldn’t have hurt us spiritually, because we’ve never been close to God to begin with. But Jesus—He hurt for us. I am the proud recipient of a God-given grace.

- There is amazing typology in the story of Isaac’s bride (Genesis 24): Abraham (anti-type God) sends his oldest servant (anti-type Holy Spirit) to find a bride (anti-type Church) for his son, Isaac (anti-type Jesus). How beautiful!

- On Jesus ruling this earth: Only a man in David’s lineage has the promise of ruling the nations. But only a God could ever rule flawlessly. Jesus has both natures. Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

- The Laboratory

Jesus’ Passion was the “laboratory” for testing all of His teachings of the previous three years (“love your neighbor as yourself”, “don’t be overcome by evil”, etc.) His Passion (the betrayal, sweat, whippings, beatings, thorns, mockings, crucifixion, separation

from the Father) was to show that His teachings weren't just "hot air". He kept His teachings. He followed His own advice. He never lashed back at His enemies. He has never asked us to do what He hasn't done Himself.

- Jesus was born from a virgin womb and He was laid to rest in a virgin tomb.

- Dipping Bread

About the bread that Jesus dipped and gave to Judas: Why did He dip it? Was Jesus offering Himself—even then—to His betrayer? Did the dipping symbolize Jesus' forthcoming sacrifice? Did it symbolize the blood that Judas was betraying? Would it have had the same impact had Jesus not dipped that bread?

- Lepers and Levites

When you read the word "Levites" in the Bible, try substituting "Christians" in your mind. For both Levites and Christians were "set apart" for the service of God. Also, when you read the word "leper", try substituting "sinner" in your mind. Lepers are but a physical ailment that symbolizes the deeper, darker, hell-bound ailment in a person.

- Personal Examples of Life from Death

You know, the Resurrection isn't without its precursors in this world. Every Spring the world witnesses life coming out of death. Any Christian knows what life from death means. Here are a few other personal examples of life from death: Have you ever had your skin burned? My dad tells the story of my Grandfather having his arm burned to a crisp by an exploding welding tank. There was no check valve on the tank and the flame got sucked back into the tank and it exploded. Well, my Grandfather, to protect his face, had his entire left arm burnt. His skin was all crispy-dead. About 8 months later, the doctor came and cut away that crispy skin and right underneath was vibrant pink skin like a baby. Life from death. Have you ever put a clear, thick, plastic sheet on the grass in 100-degree weather? Well, I did (by accident) and the heat cooked all the underlying grass. But, within a few

weeks, green grass had begun to appear again. About a month later it was 80% green again. Life from death. And finally, a few years ago, there was a massive fire in Yorba Linda, CA. The fire destroyed most of the vegetation along the dry riverbed. And yet, within a few years, vegetation had begun to grow again. That is life from death. Jesus' Resurrection from the dead isn't that hard to believe. Yet somehow, people will not believe it because it is too "extraordinary". How "extraordinary" are the four aforementioned examples of life from death?

- God Makes Room for You

Nehemiah was so upset when Tobias had made a room for himself in the house of God. (Nehemiah 13:4-9) So, Nehemiah chucked all of Tobias' belongings out of the room. People aren't to make themselves rooms in the house of God. It doesn't work that way. God makes a room for you. You don't make room for God in your life; He makes room for you. Jesus said it this way, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you . . ." (John 15:16a)

- I can't stop time, but I can stop wasting time.

- Evil will disappear from this world someday. I pity the person who is on the side of evil when Jesus comes. The volume of blood spilled on that Day (Rev 14:20) will be unlike anything anyone has ever witnessed.

- Forgiving Beforehand

When Jesus forgave the adulteress (John 8:11), He didn't just do it arbitrarily. He did it because He knew without a doubt that He would be sacrificing Himself for her sins on Calvary. There was no possibility that it wouldn't happen, therefore, He could forgive her beforehand.

- Satan disguises death as life.

- Turn Away

Paul talks about ". . . I want you to be wise in what is good, and innocent concerning evil." (Romans 16:19). That means don't

be looking at any violent or sensual books or movies. Don't be looking at any evil things that you know that you shouldn't be looking at.

- Giving Out Jesus

Jesus never promised physical blessings; He did promise irrepressible life (as Oswald Chamber said). You only get out of a life that which you give. You can give out Jesus all day long and never run out. He should be flowing through each of us continually.

- The Law condemned sin in the Spirit (Romans 7:14) and Jesus condemned sin in the flesh (Romans 8:3)

- Jesus wasn't just the Second Adam; He was the Second Noah, the Second Abraham, the Second Moses, the Second David and the Second Robert.

- Moses the Murderer

How do you think Moses felt when he read "Thou shalt not kill" for the first time? Did he think back when he murdered an Egyptian out of anger? Did he remember running from the scene of the crime? God uses people even after their mistakes.

- "Shortcuts" to Blessings

When God doesn't bless people in the way they want to be blessed, they start looking for ways to bless themselves: drugs, theft, gambling, sex, alcohol, etc. They are willing to sin against God in hopes of being more blessed than what God would've given them. That's what sin is: it's a hope placed in something else other than God for the purpose of being a blessing more than God Himself. (i.e. "Let's live together and save money on rent".) Sin is all about taking "shortcuts" to "blessings". Sin is thinking you have a better plan than God has for your life. Sin is thinking you can do a better job of running your life than God can. Sin is a misplaced hope. Sin is a deception of Satan. Sin is the opposite of love, hope, faith. And the wages of sin lead to death itself. (Romans 6:23)

- No one can kill Christianity. They can kill me, but there will be ten more to take my place. Christianity is unstoppable! Christ will rule this entire earth. The sooner you realize that, the happier you'll be.

- Where is America Headed?

The American people need to be informed that this great country that we live in is being destroyed from the inside out. Forget the terrorists, the wars overseas and other international policy—America is destroying itself. Think about the mass killing of 65 million babies to date. Or, the removal of God's Law in public places. America has removed the Holy Bible and prayer in our schools. America has sanctioned the aggressive LGBT agenda. American politicians have sought the socialization of this country at the expense of righteousness. Lawmakers serve themselves. Christians care more about entertainment than laws that show love or hatred towards their neighbor. The outsourcing of American jobs and the importing of overseas goods. America needs to repent before God, or God will let us take our own course to destruction.

2005

- King of Sorrow

Jesus was the King of sorrow. No one knew sorrow as He knew it. He cried over Jerusalem. He cries over this whole world. His creation has turned against Him. You don't think that brings sorrow to Him? When you sin, you don't think that brings sorrow to Him? Jesus knows what sorrow is, but He is also the one who will end all sorrow.

- The world is your enemy in not only taking things from you—jobs, finances, your very life— but also in giving things to you —prestige, acclamation, pats-on-the-back—things that will destroy you either way.

- Love is anti-evil.

- If It is Possible

In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus said, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.” (Matt 26:39) “If it is possible” for what? That there was another way to redeem mankind? No. Jesus knew that if mankind was to be redeemed, which is what the Scriptures promised, that only the Deliverer would be able to do it. Jesus was locked into it. He knew that. So why did He ask, “if it is possible”? Because His flesh certainly didn’t want to go through it. And yet He did. He stayed true to the Father’s will and the unbroken Scriptures of old.

- Completely Dry

Jesus died at His own time; exactly when He wanted to. No doubt about that. But His broken body also lost all of its blood. In 16 hours, His body was completely dry. It even amazed Pontius Pilate. The High Priest’s soldiers and the Roman soldiers beat the blood out of Him before He was even on the cross. I think He lasted as long as He could. He had only one last cycle of heart pumping left and He died before His heart beat its last. He died in the precise time He wanted to. But, let it be known that He did not “wimp out”. He gave ALL His blood. He knew His blood was the answer to our sins and He wanted to give it ALL. Everything He does, He does with His whole heart in it.

- To any man who seeks to betray, subvert, change or distort Jesus into anything other than who He is, take a lesson from Judas: for your future is only death.

- I will try to live by your Law even if it kills me, Lord.

- A universal truth is a true Truth.

- After an earthquake, the news reporters can only ask questions. The preachers are the ones giving the answers.

- No Messiah but Yeshua.
- There are great men, and then, there are great men of God.
- Every time you step out in faith, you are testing God's faithfulness.
- To know God is to obey God. To know God is to fear God. To know God is to love God.
- The closer you are to Truth (i.e. abiding in Christ) the freer you will be from error.
- Satan doesn't want you to be happy. He wants you to have the illusion of happiness.
- Teach the Teachers  
Use your influence to influence. Use your position in life to make disciples of Christ. Use the tools He's given you to teach others about Him. Use your hands, feet and mouth to build up Christians so they can build up Christians. Teach the teachers. Craft the crafters. Mold the molders. Encourage the encouragers. Bring joy to those who bring joy.
- My Better Life  
Jesus freely gave Himself to the cause of making my life better. Jesus died abundantly, so that I could have life abundantly. Jesus identified Himself with sin, so I wouldn't have to. He took my old dead identity and gave me a new identity, overflowing with life.
- Sin is always: a result of pride, self-centered, a lack of faith, destructive, estrangement from God, a waste of time, despisement of Jesus' blood and makes you the god of your own demise.
- Christ is eternal. When you are in Christ, your freedom is eternal. When you are outside of Christ, your freedom is finite.
- God will never do anything that contradicts His nature. He can't.

- I am unwilling to label myself anything other than “Christian”. I think labels are beneficial for creating wars, spilling blood and causing disunity, but really do not benefit the solidarity of the body of Christ.

- Jesus’ Suffering and Death

To say that Christ’s death is the only thing that saved us is too simplified. Technically it was Jesus’ suffering AND death. You couldn’t have the death without the suffering. And you couldn’t be atoned for without the death. Same goes for the death and the Resurrection. You couldn’t have a resurrection without death. And you couldn’t have a new life without the Resurrection. It is all connected. You can’t separate them.

- Separation from God is always man-ordained.

- A spirit cannot separate itself from the Source of Life and expect to still live. That goes for humans, angels and demons.

- Limits of God’s Nature

“Absolute Autonomy” is a misnomer. God’s autonomy is limited by His Nature. He cannot do anything above (or below) His Nature. Take for instance His love for us. It’s not that He won’t turn us into robots to love Him; it’s that He CANNOT. Every decision He makes is limited by His own Nature. Everything God does or allows to happen, He has His whole heart into. He cannot do anything else.

- Solidarity with Israel

Ever wonder why the United States of America is so blessed? I often wonder that myself, especially since we, as a country, have killed over 50 million babies, turned our backs on God, and have promoted every sinful and disgusting lifestyle known to mankind. Nonetheless, God has continued to give us affluence among the nations of the world. I love my country. This is the greatest country ever founded by men. I wouldn’t trade the freedoms I enjoy for anything in the world. So, why are we, as a nation, in

comparison to the 160+ other nations, so blessed? I firmly believe it is because we support Israel. We bless the Israelis and God blesses us because of that. The Bible says in Genesis 12:2 and 12:3: “And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” It’s a very simple concept for the nations and peoples of the world: if you want to be blessed, bless Israel, if you don’t want to be blessed, then don’t bless Israel. Look at Spain and Germany and Britain and any number of other countries of the world—countries that at one time were so affluent—but, because of their anti-semitism have destroyed themselves. None of those countries will ever rise to the heights of power again. God’s promises are just as valid today as they were 4,000 years ago when they were made. So, is America less vain than all the countries of the world? Of course not. Anti-semitism runs deep in the heart of the countries of the world, including this one, and that is why I am writing this. America is not above what other countries have done before in persecuting the Jewish people. And since 9-11, I’ve seen on the media and elsewhere the sentiments that if we want to have peace from the terrorists, let’s let go of Israel. I have news for you, if you let go of Israel, you will destroy this nation. Israel is one of the very few things that have kept this country alive for so long. “But what about the terrorists?!! They hate us because we support Israel!“, someone quips. What about the terrorists?!! They would hate us anyway, with or without Israel. They are just using Israel as an excuse to attack us, because they hate Israel. The sons of Ishmael have hated the sons of Israel for 4,000 years. The situation is not going to change anytime soon. Do you remember what happened in Spain in the spring of 2004? On March 11, 10 bombs on 4 trains exploded almost simultaneously during the morning rush hour. 191 people were killed and 1,800 were injured. After the attack, the terrorists warned that more terror would follow if the current president was re-elected (the one who supported America). Well, the president was defeated by a landslide, because the Spaniards didn’t want any more terror and were willing to succumb to the terrorists demands. But a terrorist is a terrorist. And, a few weeks

(or months later, I can't remember) the terrorists hit Spain again. So much for appeasing the terrorists. Don't think for a moment that if America turns loose of Israel that it would bring about a utopia of peace to this nation. The terrorists can't be trusted. But God can. If we are to be hurt by Muslim terrorists, then let us fight bravely, doing it BECAUSE of Israel and BECAUSE God is faithful. What an honor the history books will give to this great country, that we were the only ones that stood with Israel, through thick and thin, regardless of personal cost to us. But, even better, what an honor God will give to America when the nations are judged at the end of time, based on their treatment of Israel. "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." —Genesis 22:18. Though the Jews are God's chosen people, they are not perfect— no nation is. That is why the Jewish people need to know who their Jewish Messiah was and is. They need to know that Yeshua HaMaschiah came to save their hearts first, then their nation.

- God is not the Author of sin. He is the Author of free will. God cannot be blamed for our taking that free will and doing what we will with it.
- What can man do to me? I'm already dead.
- You don't deal with temptation by submitting to it, nor by fighting it, but by giving it to God to kill it.
- My flesh is too weak, my imagination is too strong, my evil is too great. I cannot be holy apart from the LORD.
- Reaping What You Sow  
"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7) "If you sow it in your mind, you'll reap it in your mind. If you sow it in your heart you'll reap it in your heart. If you sow it in your spirit you'll reap it in your spirit.
- It's easy to fight the devil; you rebuke him in Jesus' name. But,

how do you fight your flesh?

- To be free from God is to be an indentured servant to Satan.

- Backstabbing the Backstabber

Satan taught me the ropes of: lying, cheating, stealing, backstabbing. For years he had me in his grip, doing those things to my fellow man and to my God—the God that he backstabbed many millennia ago. I became a Christian in 1994. Now I use what I've learned from Satan against him. He hates it. I've backstabbed God's backstabber. That makes me a double-crosser twicfold. Thankfully, though, God has forgiven me and I'm now working in the enemy camp.

- Jesus is the only one in history who was specifically born so that He may die. All other men were born to live.

- Spending time with family and friends—as good as those things are—does not supersede spending time with the Lord of the Universe.

- “Christian” is the only word that I can use as an adjective, noun, pronoun and verb.

2006

- The love of God defines my existence.

- I have to believe that obeying God is infinitely more gratifying than disobeying Him. You don't think God sees you struggling? You think that God sees you fighting your sin and that He won't reward you? He will reward you more in not sinning than you ever could reward yourself in sinning. Obeying Him is the shortcut to joy-filled life; don't take the fleshly shortcuts.

- I want to grow up into that “perfect man” to the “measure of the

stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph 4:13)

- There is a difference between “compromising” and “being balanced”. Compromising is going to the middle when only one side is true. Being balanced is going to the middle when both sides are true.

- Salvation is a free gift. Not a cheap gift.

- Wasted time is essentially time spent on things I think I need.

- There is not a sin out there that will bring value to my life.

- Getting Something You Don't Deserve

Getting something you don't deserve is more thrilling than if you deserved it. For instance, while driving, making a green light is great, but it's not exciting. Making an orange light is exciting, because you don't deserve it. That's how salvation is. If I deserved heaven how exciting would that be? It's because I don't deserve it and the fact that it has been given to me—that makes it something I long for every day.

- If God can forgive you for things you deliberately did to hurt Him, can you at least try to forgive Him for the things you think He did to hurt you?

- What Adam was not able to do in a perfect garden, Jesus did in a dry wilderness.

- The greatest villains are the attractive ones. Not just physically, but in wisdom, power and cunning deceit. You can forget depicting the devil with horns and pitchfork.

- I'm putting all my stock into Christianity, because it is Truth. Truth doesn't share its reign with falsehood.

- I try to speak the Truth in love, but sometimes it doesn't come out that way.

- You can't outrun death, but you can outwit it with Jesus' wisdom.
- The good thing about evil is that it is finite and will not last forever.
- I'd rather be despised in the world's eyes so that I may be exalted in God's eyes.
- I want to love God and do His will forever.
- The most famous people of today are the most quickly forgotten of tomorrow.
- Sin is distancing yourself from God and the hurting of others. Holiness is the drawing nearer to God and the loving of others.
- God's love is unrelenting.
- Men are born to fight battles. Whether it's on the job, projects, himself, the world, or the devil.
- Loving the Gift  
To love the gift more than the Giver is sin. For example, here is a list of some gifts: a spouse, finances, family, a home, accomplishments, food, talent, education, health, etc. If you love any of these things more than the God who gave them to you, you have a serious idol in your life.
- Controversy will always be evident in your life when you're on the side of Truth.
- Love is always beautiful, no matter what the means.
- The opposite of compromise is standing for the Truth. The opposite of tolerance is passion.

- Not all inactivity is of the devil and not all activity is of God.
- Our salvation was excruciating (lit. “out of the cross”).

2007

- The idolization of youth is inversely proportionate to the disrespect of parents and elders.
- The future isn’t so much as something we “get to” as it is something that is shoved “to us” by God. The future is a gift from God; He is continually feeding it to us.
- My identity is wrapped up in Jesus. If you took Jesus away from me, there would be no me.
- God went above and beyond His “duty”: He not only atoned for our sins (got rid of them) and made us clean. But He put His Spirit in us to actively do good works. It’s not about just stopping sinning; it’s about actively doing good!
- We were once aliens toward God, but now we are aliens towards the world.
- People are so fickle. If God shows mercy, they question His justice. If God shows justice, they question His mercy.
- The world can only have tolerance if all truths are equal. Tolerance, as a concept, is only possible if all truths are equal. But that is not the case. There is only one Truth, the gospel of Christ.
- God had to rule over each man’s heart before He could rule the world.
- Input and Output  
The Christian life can be summed up as inputting and outputting.

You should be inputting: the Bible, good teaching, your conscience, preachers, friends, nature, etc. And you should be outputting: witnessing, working with your hands, relationships with people. The problems occur in a Christian life when you are only doing one and not the other. If all you are doing is inputting and not outputting, consider yourself like Hoover Dam about to break. If all you're doing is outputting, consider yourself a dried-up tree with no more fruit to give.

- Jesus is my peace treaty. He is my covenant.
- God's will comes in pieces. It's a serial.
- You will either love God or love money. You will either hate God or hate money.

- **Completing His Mission**

Jesus didn't prolong His suffering on the cross AND He didn't shorten it. He lasted as long as any man could. He gave it His all. The whipping alone should have reduced His time on the cross; but He persevered. He wanted sin eradicated from the universe. He wanted to please His Father to the utmost. He completed His mission.

- God knows that you are valuable, that you are the image of God and that you belong to Him.
- Worship of God is in the small things.
- Life is either about being your own god or serving the true God. Most people choose the former.
- Infidelity to God is hazardous to your health.
- You can try and please people for your whole life or you can be yourself.
- The heart of the Law is written on our hearts.

- The highest price paid for anything—ever—was Jesus' blood for my soul.

- There is always a cost in defending the Truth. And there is always a benefit.

- You can't have a happy ending until you enter Calvary first.

- The fact that God has created men in His image is the source of man's nobility (both male and female).

- Discontented

Lucifer and Adam, in their own separate worlds, had everything they could have ever wanted. And yet they both fell. It's funny that you can have everything given to you, and you can still be discontented, want more and rebel against God to get more.

- Satan wants to possess or destroy the Throne of God. If He can't have it, he will try and make sure that no one else will.

- I don't want to do things that are not expanding the Kingdom.

- Love exists beyond the physical.

- If you don't love God you can't love anyone. And if you do love God you can't hate anyone.

- God doesn't start something that He is not going to finish.

- Sin = the object of your faith that isn't God.

- Nothing will ever derail the plan of God.

- He Can't Stop Loving

Why would God create us to love if He didn't need us to love? Because God is love. He cannot stop loving or expressing His love. He opened Himself up to heartache for ONE chance to show His

love to another. And what did we do? We ran from Him.

- All Authority

Jesus has ALL authority. You either submit to Him or not. You either do His will or not. You either commit to Him or not. By not making a commitment to Him, you have chosen your side. By saying “I don’t know” or turn agnostic, you have made your decision. He is either your God or you are your own god. And, if you are your own god, you have committed idolatry. Indecision is a decision. The Pharisees, likewise, didn’t want to submit to John the Baptist, Jesus or God the Father and said, “We don’t know.”

- The Only Reason

The only reason my hands are soft is because His hands were pierced. The only reason my face has a smile is because His face had a frown. The only reason I can stand is because His back was bent. The only reason I have joy in my life is because He had sorrow in His. The only reason the earth was created is because of the love that was shown at Calvary.

- All or Nothing

God is an “all-or-nothing” God. He either wants all of you or none of you. There is no “half-way” following God. Can you imagine any coach of a football team saying to his team, “You don’t have to give me your all, just do whatever you feel you need to”? Or, a sergeant to his brigade: “You guys don’t have to put forth your full effort in this battle.” No way! Any football player or soldier who is not giving his all is a liability to the team! God wants you on His side only. Any effort not being used on God’s team is actually helping Satan’s team. That’s why God spits out lukewarm Christians: they are as useful as a Benedict Arnold, Brutus, or a Judas. Who needs them? God wants all of your time or none of your time, all of your talent or none of your talent, all of your riches or none of your riches. Pick your side now, because God is moving His team forward with or without you.

- Other Books

People would rather read thousands of other books over the

course of their lifetime rather than the One Book that will change their life. The Bible is the only Book that I don't have to be on my guard; it is absolute truth that will expose my sin. It's the only Book that I can talk to the Author, while reading. It is pure Truth in literary form, passed down through the ages, by godly men, straight from the Holy Spirit.

- The comforts we enjoy are born from the sweat and sacrifice of others. What are you sweating and sacrificing for so others can build on your work?

- Alternate Christian Universe

Christians are trying to create an “alternate universe” apart from the world. But, I'm not sure that that is all bad. It's not bad to have a home where the Christian life is lived out: where Christian music and movies and books are read. Where God is exalted and sin is punished. How many times did Jesus go and pray by Himself? Jesus would, in fact, detach himself from the world (and then would go back into the world). Going to church, likewise, is a way of detaching ourselves from the sinful world. Christians need their own alternate universe because we weren't made for this place. The problem is when they just “stay” in that alternate universe, like a hermit, and never venture out to the people beyond their borders. When away from the world, you should be edified, because you will be thrown back out into the world soon enough. Read God's Word to build you up. Read good Christian books, comics and blogs. Listen to good Christian music that praises Christ and His redemption. Have Christian couples over for dinner. All these things will help you as you, daily, are put back into the “den of lions”. “Being holy” doesn't necessarily equal “the absence of evil”. In fact “being holy” (especially on Earth) often means “being holy in the midst of evil”.

- Perfect Word of God

Though God chose to write His Word in “street language”, that does not negate the fact that it is still His only written Word to us. That plain, unadorned, language is still God's Word. It is still perfect, is still without mistakes, can still change people's lives for

eternity and is still written by a Perfect Author.

- Aliens or Not?

If God wanted to let us know that aliens exist, then He could let us know. Otherwise, unless there's actual evidence (not blurry crater photos from NASA) then its relevance is zero. But, actually, I think there's a really good Bible verse that puts the possibility of aliens to rest. Philippians 2:10-11: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Paul mentions 3 places – and 3 places only – where living beings are. He also qualifies the beings in those places by the use of the phrases "every knee" and "every tongue". That, to me, sounds pretty exclusive. Paul excludes all other places (besides heaven, earth and hell) as having living beings. But he also says that there will be no living beings (with knees and tongues) that will not confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. So, needless to say, I don't believe in aliens (and certainly not aliens that would not be under the authority of Christ). Ironically enough, I used this exact same verse to prove to my dad that Purgatory doesn't exist.

- God never makes a covenant without blood. Blood is the ink that God writes His covenants with. And, it's His own blood that He writes His covenants with.

- God abides in me like sap abides in a branch. He energizes me; he keeps me alive.

- The Anointed One

1 Samuel 2:10 is the first prophecy of the Bible that says that the Creator will destroy all His adversaries with the help of His "anointed one" (literally, Messiah). It's also interesting to note that most of these messianic prophecies can be seen from a different angle. For example: "the adversaries of the LORD shall be broken in pieces" doesn't necessarily mean just Jesus' physical enemies. It could very well mean demons and Satan, in which case, most messianic prophecies could be looked at as half-

fulfilled since He demolished Satan's forces at Calvary and the Garden Tomb.

2008

- I can't be dogmatic in this, but it could be said that the Father speaks through the Son (Heb 1:2) and the Holy Spirit speaks through the Word.
- Satan would destroy me if he had the chance. Thank you, Jesus for protecting me and all believers from his murderous tendencies.
- "Apostle" means "one who is sent". Jesus is called the "Apostle of God." (Heb 3:1). He is the True Sent One who sends us out among wolves.
- Every blessing is given to give. You are blessed so you can bless others. But don't worry, the harvested will become the harvesters and you will be paid back by God.
- Worship in the Trinity  
The Father worships the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son worships the Holy Spirit and the Father. The Holy Spirit worships the Father and the Son. Always loving. Always giving. Always praising. That's what each part of the Godhead does.
- The greatest blessing God could give us is Himself. He brought us into a relationship with the Godhead.
- The Mob  
Here is real irony: the mob was accusing Jesus of blasphemy when they were beating and mocking and blaspheming their God. At the very moment His prophecies were being fulfilled the mob was denying Jesus was the prophesied Prophet.
- What you're willing to suffer for is what you identify with.

- You defeat temptation by praying fervently. Confess what you're going through to God!
- God's cup of wrath was going to destroy Jesus. That's what the Passion is about. He became my sin. That's why He had to be "destroyed" (i.e. separated from the Father on the cross).
- His justice said "leave". His love said "stay!"
- Love is taking a wrong someone did to you and giving it to Jesus. So He can absorb it to destroy it!
- We use God's image against Himself. We're the identity thieves. We're the evil ones. We've used our freedom against Him. We misrepresent Him. We're the rebellious ones.
- God isn't just love. He is love and justice. He is balanced. Men are the ones that try to push God to the extremes of ALL love or ALL justice.
- You're not selling. You're buying salvation from Jesus Christ with your faith.
- Satan is a pervert. Do you want to worship the Chief of the Perverts? Satan preys on the weak. He's a child-molester.
- The temptations that demons throw your way are useless. Remind the demons of that, and the fact that all their work is for nought and that their future zip code is in the Lake of Fire. Always rebuke demons in Jesus' name.
- Satan says the same thing to us that he said to Jesus: "IF you are A son of God. . . prove it." I don't have to prove anything to Satan! I don't answer to him. I answer to my Creator! I answer to the One who doesn't answer to Satan: Jesus!

- Worry and Lack of Trusting

In Matthew 6:30, Jesus is telling me not to worry and calls me, “O you of little faith.” So—worry is a sign of lack of faith. Paul also says we are to “walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Cor. 5:7) Faith is simply trusting. So, another way to say that is to “walk by trusting, not by sight.” Why does He tell us that? Why would we have issues trusting God? Isn’t God the most trustworthy Person in the universe? Isn’t it obvious: Satan and the world has conditioned us to not trust anything. We are born into a world where people and products made by people cannot be trusted. In this world: friendships, family, contracts and marriages cannot be trusted. And yet God designed us to love Him and know Him through innocent faith.

- Sin is Impatient

Sin is impatient and is unkind. Sin envies; sin parades itself, is puffed up Behaves rudely, seeks its own, is provoked, thinks evil. Rejoices in iniquity and does not rejoice in the truth; Does not bear all things, does not believe all things, does not hope all things, does not endure all things. Sin always fails. (1 Corinthians 13 in the negative tense).

- Both Jesus and the Devil are willing to die for something. The devil is willing to die for his pride and selfishness. Jesus is willing to die for mankind (and already has done so).

- God is omni-humorous. Some of the situations He sets up in this life are really funny!

- The same reason that I didn’t want a woman falling in love with me for my accomplishments (but for who I was as a person), also applies to God. Thank God for Who He is; not just for what He’s done for you.

- I was once an enemy of God. Now, I am a child of God!

- You can never fear doing God’s will. His rules. His universe. Your obedience.

- The first commandment (love God with all your heart, soul and strength) should be done first. It is like the main pole for a big circus tent. Once that is done then everything else comes up with it.
- Whatever you're going to believe, believe it in the throne room of God. Whatever you're going to do, do it in the throne room of God. Why? Because He sees it and knows your actions that intimately anyway.
- All fears disappear when you don't want to disappoint your Father.
- The Helmet of Salvation is the Helmet of Yeshua is the Helmet of Jesus is Thinking on Jesus' nature and His works.

2009

- You need to beat your body into subjection. Paul and Jesus did. Both fasted and worked their bodies hard. Don't treat your body good. It takes things for granted and then your body's pride brings issues or embraces the fiery darts of the wicked one. Treat your body bad until it starts obeying Christ. Starving your body means you will hunger for God.
- My will is to obey Jesus in me.
- Everyone has to grow up sometime. Growing up means trusting in God more. Becoming more mature means, ironically, to become as little children to God. Trusting in God is the true sign of a mature Christian.
- God is the giver of time. It's His; not yours. So, give Him His deserved amount (i.e. all of it).

- Jesus is above, inside and around me. There is true relationship when God is in the midst of you.

- Bitter and Angry

If there is anyone who deserves to be bitter or angry, it's God—not you. God has been wronged by everyone more than you will ever be wronged. He has been blasphemed and mocked by every human He's ever created. God deserves to be bitter and angry (and send us to hell). But, in His lovingkindness, He chooses to show mercy to us.

- Don't grieve the Holy Spirit. He doesn't deserve to be hurt by you.

- The devil tells me, "You'll fail, Robert. It's time to freak out." But God tells me, "You'll succeed, Robert. Put your faith in Me."

- When I don't give God my time, I'm not allowing Him to do His work in me. And that's not pleasing to Him.

- Don't Doubt

Don't doubt God's sovereignty and His power. You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. You are strong in Christ—not weak! God will work out everything! You let Him worry about the details. You worry about taking the first steps He told you to take.

- My Savior Every Day

Jesus isn't just my Savior in 1994 and 1998; He's my Savior every day! He wants to save me from myself every day! And nothing pleases Him more than when I put my faith in Him every day to save me from my flesh, the world and the devil.

- Regardless of the consequences, you need to obey God.

- God has every hair on your head numbered. He will take care of you and your anxieties. Doubts are truths that you make up for yourself, but there is only one truth that you should be believing:

Jesus!

- Like A Bondservant

Keep doing what God wants you to do. Jesus will never fault you for doing what He Himself has done! “He made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant. . . He humbled Himself. . .” (Ph 2:7-8). If God could do that then I could do that. He will never blame me for following in His footsteps.

- Unfaithfulness to God is disobedience to God is obedience to Satan is faithfulness to Satan.

- Satan is not worth serving. He’s not worth my time. God is worth serving because He served me! Satan knows nothing about servanthood. Jesus’ nature is servanthood!

- Other people’s sins are not my responsibility. I need to keep myself in Christ.

- There is counterfeit everything: friendships, Christians, success, love, lovemaking, etc. The Christians’ job is to determine what is real and what is counterfeit (i.e. counterfeit guilt).

- God asks me continually me, “Do you honestly think I don’t know what I’m doing? You think I make mistakes?” Romans 8:28 is very clear that God is sovereign and powerful enough to turn any circumstances to His glory and our good.

- You are supposed to respect your parents, but you are not to love them above God. That is the balance. They are the dispensers of life, but not the creators of it.

- If you have: humility plus fearing the Lord, you will get riches, honor and life. (Proverbs 22:4)

- If you follow: righteousness plus mercy, you will find: life, righteousness and honor. (Proverbs 21:21)

- God only does good. God only says Truth.

- To be content is to be humble.

- He Keeps Us from Evil

It's kind of scary to think that the only One holding you back from doing evil is God— but not if you believe He's powerful enough to do it. He's the only One that keeps you from doing evil; not yourself. Don't fear others, don't fear the government, or your conscience—fear only Him! So put your faith in Him to keep you from doing evil. Jesus says this in Matt 6:13, “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” It should be peaceful (not scary) to believe God keeps us from evil.

- God's Power

My flesh doubts God's power. The world doubts God's power. The devil doubts God's power. So, are you going to doubt God's power to keep you from sinning? Or, are you going to believe the lies and temptations that come into your mind? I choose God and His power!

- The Face of Evil

I've seen the face of evil and I've lived to tell about it. Here is what I have learned: the only thing keeping anyone from doing evil is God Himself. That goes for believers and unbelievers. Evil is man's default. By God's grace and omnipotence, I don't have to think it's all on me not to do evil. I don't have to bear the burden of not sinning. It' on Him only to keep me from sinning. My job is to put my faith in His holiness—not mine.

- I'm confident in God's ability to forgive my sins of doubting Him. He's the only one that keeps me from sin. And, He will give me the power and strength when I need it; not a second sooner.

- Destroy your flesh. Trust in Christ.

- Faith in the Unseen Savior

You put all your faith into a Man whom you've never seen with

your eyes. And, yet you know He's real. You've never seen His scars and yet you know He has saved you. That is trust. And that is the exact trust you need to put into Jesus every second of the day! He will keep you from sinning.

- God hates complaining, because if anyone could change a situation, it's Him. And, He chooses not to. So, when you complain, you're questioning His judgment for your life.
- When you're not doing evil, when you're not sinning or messing up, it's almost like you're "earning your salvation". And, whenever you feel like you've earned your salvation, you become prideful and not thankful.
- Doing good can lead one of two ways: holiness or pride. If it leads to pride, then that leads to being unthankful, which leads to sin.
- It is very important to be thankful to God. Being Anxious for Nothing means being Thankful for Everything (Ph 4:6) To worry is sin. Jesus said three times "not to worry." Paul said it once. To not worry means you keep trusting Jesus and keep trusting Jesus and keep trusting Jesus.
- He Became Sin  
Jesus became sin for ME! He transferred my guilt to Himself. He transferred my pain to Himself. He transferred my evil heart to Himself. Whatever sin I committed, He became it. Whatever guilt I've felt, He turned into it. Whatever evil my heart has thought of, He took it upon Himself. He destroyed all sin and guilt and evil! He destroyed death! So, what am I holding onto? Give your sin up to God. He wants it, so He can put it on Jesus.
- There was never a time that Jesus didn't love me.
- Satan can't stop anything that He doesn't understand. He doesn't understand love and therefore can't stop it. He has no idea of the power of love.

- It's not easy being selfless. But God does it flawlessly. Being selfless just flows out of Him. He's never done anything NOT selfless. He's never asked us to anything that He Himself hasn't already done.

- God can only give the best. He can only make the best. He can only do the best. Because He can only do those things in love!

- Are you close enough to Jesus to get His blood stains on you?

- God has allowed everything to happen in our lives. We can either blame God or celebrate His wisdom.

- God Has Given You the Best

When you realize that God has already given you the best, namely Himself, the silly little things of this world, red lights, car troubles, deadlines, financial problems all fade away! The best doesn't equal things going my way; the best thing is being brought into a relationship with the Trinity! Nothing compares to knowing God. His power, holiness, love, patience contentment, grace is amazing! And, He wants to teach me those things!

- God is the most amazing Being in the universe! No petty blasphemies or sin are going to hurt Him! Go ahead: keep rebelling. You're only hurting yourself!

- If you want to know the evil of your heart, just look at how hard it is to forgive someone.

- No Christian Ideal

"God is no respecter of persons". That doesn't mean that He doesn't give some people the "Christian Ideal" and not others. God doesn't favor anyone. He gives everyone their lot in life; a lot custom made for them and no one else. There is no Christian ideal. You're either in God's plan or you're not. Oh, and you can forget envying others since no one has or is inside of an ideal. The happiest couples are the ones inside of God's will.

- Forgetting God After the Pain

As soon as Pharaoh got what he wanted (the end of a plague) he would curse God in his heart. (i.e. hardened heart, proud, forgetting God) just like the 10 lepers Jesus healed (minus one). Men are just wanting to get out of the painful circumstances they are in. But, as soon as they are out of them, they forget God. This happens all the time in our lives. Rather than praying when things are bad, how about praying when things are good?

- If I'm going to be spending the rest of eternity with Jesus, (which I am) then wouldn't it behoove me to get to know Him every day? It's just me and Him for all eternity. Start spending some time with Him!

- Being Tainted

Something tainted can never make the untainted tainted. Unholiness can never make the holy unholy. The devil's schemes can never overwrite God's full story. Whatever sins or taintedness, or imperfections we think we have, it doesn't matter because Jesus conquers all things. On the cross, He took all the evil we committed, and He became sin for us. Our lives were bought by His sacrifice. I am no longer my own. I want to obey my Lord. Sometimes my story doesn't sound like the best, but because God wrote it, it IS the best story for me. God showed grace to me when I was dirty. All I know is if I hold onto Jesus, I will have the brightest future. And, if I take control, my life will only be pain and loss.

- When someone is dead in sins, you're just ecstatic to see them alive in Christ (if that day ever comes). That's why we shouldn't judge others—forget the sins of the pasts—welcome them to Jesus!

- There is a similarity between the high priests' garments (Exodus 28) and the Armor of God (Ephesians 6). I challenge you to study this more.

- Slavery to Idols

Slavery is not abolished in America! There are many slaves today—they are enslaved by masters called “addictions”. These include: workaholicism, drugs, pornography, education, gossip, money, etc. An addiction is something you can’t stop doing without God. An addiction is an idol, a master that has enslaved you! But, you’re a bondservant of Christ! You asked Christ to pierce your ear against the doorpost— not these other masters! Turn to Him as your true Master and leave these other masters in the dust!

- Depression

The absence of joy is not holiness. The absence of living life is not holiness. The absence of enjoying God’s creation is not holiness. The absence of love for your woman is not holiness. The absence of passion and praise to God is not holiness.

- The Father is Holy

The Father only wears one “set of glasses”, and that “set of glasses” is named Jesus. Without Jesus, He doesn’t see anyone. He never takes them off. You are either in Jesus (and the Father can see you), or you’re not in Jesus (and the Father doesn’t even know you exist). The Father is perfectly holy and can only see holiness. The Son is perfectly holy, too, but He tasted sin and death. The Son can see you and He is the only one that can see the Father. So, you need a Savior who can get you to the Father, but you also need a Savior who can help the Father see you.

- The Father is in Jesus. That is why Jesus can call us His children. It is the Father speaking through Him. That’s why we are also called Jesus’ brethren, because Jesus’ Father is God and our Father is God.

- I submit my love only to You, Lord. I submit my body only to You.

- The only thing that should be bolstering my pride is the fact that God desires me! He is the One that pursues me and wants me so bad that He gave His only begotten Son to have me!

- I enjoy comfort too much, Lord. Please take the god of comfort out of my life, Lord.

- God's Word = Absolute, Immutable, Never-Changing Truth.

- The Offering of God-hood

All I want is God (not "be" like God like how the devil tried to offer me). The devil pushes my pride and my selfishness and makes my desire for godhood even more apparent. But that is evil. The devil has nothing to offer me! My whole life is in God. My pleasure is in God. My breath is in God. My cells staying together are only because of God. Nothing Satan offers me can ever compare to God's love, peace, joy, purposefulness, grace, forgiveness, hope, faith and love.

- God's Holiness

"Holiness" and "Holy" are good terms to describe God. It encompasses both His love AND His justice. Holiness doesn't mean just the absence of doing evil; it means the righteous judgment of evil. God pours out love and His judgment in a perfectly holy manner.

- God's Longsuffering

God is just, but He is also longsuffering. That's why it's hard to wait when God is going to judge the enemies in our lives. We want justice now! But, if He wasn't longsuffering, I certainly would never have been saved by Him. He was patient with me, therefore, I need to be patient with my enemies. He will judge them in time. There is no doubt about that. But it will be in His time— not yours. 2 Peter 3:9 says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

- Evil Circumstances and Evil People

When God brings evil circumstances or people into your life, that's His way of telling you what to pray for. Pray for your circumstances and for the salvation of evil people. Don't just pray

to get out of the situation. Ask God to use the situation to glorify Him.

- Fasting

Fasting is truly a spiritual experience. You give up something that you have (food) for a higher good: drawing closer to God. God should be more satisfying to you than a filled belly. It is about humbling yourself, giving up, just like how Christ did. You draw closer to Him by following His example.

- Psalm 37 says, “do not fret” 3 times. So, how much are we to fret in this life? None.

- Temptation

Is God’s love for you weak? No! Is He not strong enough to keep you from sinning? No! Will God inside you lead you to sin? No! Is He anticipating you fall into sin? No! Is faith in Him weaker than your temptations? No! Is anxiety the way that He wants you to live? No! Does He want you to be ruled by your fears? No!

- God is our scapegoat, not because He is the problem, but because He is the solution.

- If love is action (which it is), what makes people think that they will be just sitting around heaven doing nothing? The Garden of Eden was a place of joyous, fulfilling work; so heaven will be also.

- Never Extinguished

God’s love cannot be extinguished, even in this evil world. Even though I have to struggle to make a living in this world, even though I have to live with evil neighbors in this world, I can still experience God’s love. His love isn’t made impotent, just because bills can’t be paid, the car is broken down, and family members have health problems. His love keeps on shining through the darkness of my circumstances.

- True to Yourself

Is it better to go somewhere and be fake or to not go somewhere

and be true to yourself? Those kinds of questions can be applied to every aspect of life. But there is always a balance, a middle ground. And, the middle ground is: go somewhere and be true to yourself.

- Giving and Taking God's Grace

I am a recipient and a dispenser of God's grace. A benefactor and a progenitor. A consumer and a producer. A giver and a receiver. I MUST take God's grace and I MUST give it to others. I know what grace is. I've experienced it because of God! Now, I must share it with others. My showing eternal grace with others proves that grace exists and that it really my life.

2010

- Professional Loser

Satan is a professional Loser. He knows what losing is all about. He could write a book on "How to Lose at Everything". He could give seminars on "The Top 7 Ways to Lose in Life." He could preach his gospel on losing and evangelize people to convert them to "Loserdom". God, on the other hand, is the Winner! He has shown us how to win in Christ. It is up to you which author/speaker you are going to believe.

- "I can do ALL things through Myself who strengthens me." Is this what the Bible teaches, or is it through Someone else that you can do all things?

- The love that I give to others is in Your hands, Jesus.

- Parable of Talents

The parable of the talents is a parable of grace. God gave grace to all three men and only one of them didn't share that grace with others. His grace was meant to bear fruit. So, don't be selfish with the grace God has given you. He has forgiven you, therefore you need to forgive others. "Whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven."

- Preferences as Idols

An ideal or preference is not sin. In fact, those ideals point to what heaven ultimately will be. But ideals become sin when God's will has been revealed to you and you keep holding onto your ideal. Ideals become idols when you place them above God and what He has already given you. It's supposed to be "thy will be done, Father" not "my will be done".

- The Law of Letting Go

Deuteronomy 24:19-22 says "When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing." What this is saying is that you are not to take all that is your from your fields. You are to leave some for the stranger, fatherless and widows. For example, when I am in an argument with someone, I particularly like to go over every one of my points to bolster my point of view. I tend to also rehash and make sure I didn't miss a single point for my defense. Well, that is pride, and that is where the "Law of Letting God" comes in: you are to let go of some of your arguing points for the sake of not hurting the other person. You don't need to hit all your points in an argument (and by argument, I mean anything that is not of essential Christian doctrine). Say a few of your points and end it. Give a little. Let go for Christ's promised peace. Winning an argument is not everything. Show grace and remember you were a bondman, too (v. 22).

- Why do I hold back the thing I should give (i.e. compliments, loving others, etc.) and give the things which I should hold back

(i.e. insults, selfishness, etc.)? O Wretched man that I am!

- Widows, Fatherless and Aliens

Whereas the Old Testament protected widows, orphans and aliens, Jesus also protects us when we voluntarily become those things for His sake. A woman (who accepts Christ) can lose her husband in the process. A child (who accepts Christ) can lose his parents. Even as a citizen of a country, turning to Christ can sometimes mean being turned away from your own countrymen. All these people kick you out of their lives and Jesus takes you in. But, in the Old Testament, God made provision for the widow, fatherless and the alien. Today, the Church is to carry on that tradition and to be a husband, a parent and a brother to those who kicked out of other areas of their lives for Christ's sake.

- The Law's Holiness

Being married to the Law is like a snail being married to a pile of salt. The salt can't change its nature, but it inadvertently destroys the snail. Likewise, the Law's holiness inadvertently destroys us because of its holy nature and because of our unholy nature. The Law never died—we did. The Law, the “schoolmaster” is written on our hearts now. We can obey the Law now because of the Holy Spirit inside of us. If He wasn't inside of us, the Law would still be killing us every day. Not so now. Our old husband—Justice (the Law)—is still around, but we've died and married a new Husband—Grace (Jesus).

- Living for What?

Everything is going to melt away. Indeed, the whole earth will be burned up (Deut 32:22). So where is the comfort in living this life? Why should I even take pleasure in this vapor of a life? Nothing will last: not my works, not my bones. . . So why do we live in this vain existence? What comfort do I have? Well Jesus addresses this very question by saying, “He who is faithful in little will be faithful in much.” In other words, the Parable of the Talents is the reason why we are here. It answers the why and the what and the who: Jesus. We live for Him; not for things. We live for increasing His Kingdom; not our own. We will give an account of our short

time here on earth. This parable is one big answer to the question, “What is my purpose to life?” It is the answer to Ecclesiastes (where all is vanity). It is the answer that this whole generation needs (as they try to fill up their empty lives with things that will never satisfy).

- **Burned Up**

Whether you loved God or you loved yourself, everything you did for yourself will be burned up. Everything you did for God will last into eternity. 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 says, “Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” Build on God’s foundation; not your own. Only a foundation made of God will last during a God-sized fire of judgment.

- Jesus will give you a thousand-fold for whatever you gave up in this life for Him.

- **Bitterness to Those Closest to You**

If you have bitterness and hatred against those furthest away from you (colleagues, acquaintances, co-workers, politicians, mechanics, etc.), it’s not long after that that bitterness can turn on those closest to you. You have to love your neighbor unconditionally, so that your closest neighbors (your spouse, friends, family, church) are also loved.

- **Openness with Struggles**

You need to share (with family and friends) your troubles and struggles in life while you are going through them, so that when God blesses you in the future with a blessed conclusion, you glorify Him to all the people you told. You need to be more open with the troubles now so that you can glorify Him later.

- **God is Understandable**

Sometimes God is really hard to focus on. He seems so uncontainable, huge and nebulous (which He is). But God also became man—Jesus—so He could be God in flesh: narrowed down to a point that we could understand. Don't take it for granted that God became man. His man-nature and God-nature are meant for us to fellowship with every day.

- **Remembering Sins**

God has blessed me with a very good memory. I can remember faces, comments, situations, etc. But my good memory can also be a curse as I remember most of my sins. But if God, who has an infinitely greater memory than me, won't remember my sins, then why am I remembering them for?

- I am a citizen of heaven first, before I am a citizen of earth. I am a spiritual man first, before I am a physical/sexual man.

- **Beauty Defined by God**

Jesus says flowers are beautiful. (Mt 6:28). But more than that, Psalm 96:6 says, "Honor and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary." God, Himself is the definition of beauty, but He also brings His beauty into the heart of a person when he says, "beauty is in his sanctuary". We are His sanctuary, therefore if Christ is in us, we are beautiful.

- **Faithful and Just**

One of my favorite Bible verses is 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is FAITHFUL and JUST to forgive us our sins, and (He's FAITHFUL and JUST, again) to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He is faithful to forgive, and He is just to forgive. He is faithful to cleanse and He is just to cleanse. But these four things are contingent upon our "confession" of sin. Something else to consider, who is Jesus faithful and just to? Answer: To the Father and to us.

- To despair is to have no faith, hope or love. Don't despair. Psalm 43:5 says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou

disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.”

- Fasting is the reliance upon God to give you strength that is not from food. It is a strength that is beyond food-derived. And the benefits and nutrients are beyond food-derived.

- 1 John 1:3b says, “And truly our fellowship (same word as “communion”) is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” In other words, we, as believers, are intimately involved in the things of God. We work together for our common good. We submit our free will to Him.

- More Dependence on God

Growing up doesn't mean becoming more and more independent, it means putting your trust in God more and more. Mark 10:15 says, “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” As a child, we are to come to God and put our faith in Him that He will provide for our every need. Matthew 7:11 says, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” God will always give us what we need.

- Love keeps no record of wrongs, especially when Jesus has paid both your sin debt and others' sin debts. Justice has already been paid. Why bring up debts that are already paid? Love doesn't delight in the evil things of the past.

- Show mercy to me, Lord, that I may show mercy to my neighbor. Show love to me, Lord, that I may show love my neighbor. Show compassion on me, Lord, so I may show compassion on my neighbor.

- 1 John 2:12 says, “. . . your sins are forgiven you for HIS name's sake.” Who's namesake? Ours? No, Jesus'! The only reason I am forgiven is because of Jesus' name, Jesus' blood, Jesus' obedience, Jesus' sacrifice, Jesus' humbleness, Jesus' strength and Jesus'

grace.

- No Regrets

I will never regret obeying God. It may be difficult, but it will be worth it in the end. Obedience to God, though it may look strange to the outside world sometimes, is something that only God can truly know. He tests man's heart. He knows if a person is truly obeying Him or not. Following God's Law = no regrets. You will be able to look back on your life and say, "Man, I am so glad I followed God's Law." His Law is what He has told you to do on this earth. He wants you to live a life regret-free. Obedience to Him will allow that to happen.

- Judgment Has Fallen

God, in His perfect sacrifice for sin, has taken away: 1. My punishment and guilt and 2. My rights to judge or extract judgment on others. I'm judged already, therefore every other Christian is, too. I'm not the defendant, nor the judge. I'm not on trial, nor is any other Christian. We are in Christ, therefore, we are free to live in Him. He shows us how to live this life of freedom now. As the Law guided the newly-freed Israelites, the Holy Spirit guides us in the our new-found freedom. He produces in us: grace, patience, love, joy, peace, comfort, knowing Him, etc.

- Sanctification is "teaching a man how to fish". Redemption is "giving the man a fish".

- 1 John 2:17 says, "He that does the will of God abides forever." My putting my faith into God's authority, provision and grace IS obedience to God.

- 1 John 2:22 says, "Who is a liar, but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? (and all His majesty, holiness, perfection, strength, love, forgiveness, etc.) He is antichrist, who denies the Father and the Son."

- 1 John 2:23a says, "Whosoever denies the Son (and His authority, provision and grace and ability to make me holy, his

good plan for our lives, etc.) the same has not the Father.”

- God’s Plan

When you start thinking you have a better plan than God does, watch out! When you start demanding your rights in life, get ready for more pain. When you don’t want to submit to God, you’re a slave to your own desires and ideas. Do you have what it takes to run your life? You know what to do to stay out of trouble, right, as well as getting yourself out of messes, correct? A life lived away from God’s rule only leads to death. A life lived apart from God’s wisdom and strength is foolish indeed. Submit to Him. Obey His Word and your life will be more satisfying.

- Jesus to the Extreme

Jesus took poverty to a whole new level—he had no place to lay His head. He took hunger to a whole new level: he had no food for 40 days. He took justice to a whole new level: toppling the tables of the corrupt temple money-changers. He took love to a whole new level: loving the destitute, forgiving the prostitutes, healing the lame, sick and invalid. No one can ever say they were hungrier than Jesus, lonelier than Jesus, worked for justice more than Jesus and is in pain more than Jesus. He lived and died to the absolute extremities of the humanity.

- Man doesn’t live by what he puts in his mouth (food) but by what comes out of God’s mouth (every Word He speaks).

- Knowing the will of God isn’t the missing ingredient to living a fulfilled life. It is obeying the will of God that is missing. You already know what God’s will is for your life: walk in the light you already have, and your life will be fulfilled.

- God not only tells you what to do in life, but He gives you the means to fulfill it.

- His Ways VS. Our Ways

Rather than looking at what God has given you in life as an insult, you should be looking at it as a privilege. What He has given you

is only an insult when you don't get your way. It's a privilege when you finally do realize you are in the center of God's will. It's only an insult when your ideals rule. God is the One who deals out blessings, not you. What He gives you is, by definition, a blessing. What you hold onto and grasp and take for yourself is, by definition, a curse. What God does is always just, right and good. What you do apart from God, is always unjust, sinister and evil. You don't understand God's ways and He doesn't understand yours. You don't understand His, because they're so holy; He doesn't understand yours because they're so evil. God doesn't understand why you cut yourself off from Him, why you think your ideas are better, why you're smarter and more just than God. It's foolishness to Him.

- How Clean is Clean?

Imagine the cleanest thing you can think of (i.e. a clean room, an operating table, hydrogen peroxide, Lysol, etc.) Now, that cleanness is nothing compared to what Jesus does to a human soul. His physical blood was so holy and precious that it cleaned my soul! How can something spiritually clean, clean up something physically dirty? That's the power of Jesus' blood. His blood makes a soul so clean that it can never be dirty again. It's not tainted by sin, entropy, destruction or death, ever again. A person's soul, once touched by Christ's blood, is perpetually clean. You can't get any cleaner than that.

- Proverbs 3:34 says that God "gives grace to the humble". So, your job is to be humble. Your job is not to be the keeper of your own happiness. That's God's job. He defines happiness, sustains it and creates it. Your job is to put your happiness into His hands, humbly.

- Being God's Tool

What does it mean to be "a tool" in the hands of God? You wouldn't have to worry about your life or control it or fear what to do. You would be free to love whoever He told you to. You would be free from your sins and your ideals. You would be able to be at peace and satisfied, knowing He had the best interest for you. The

culture would no longer have its grip on you. Family and friends could no longer control you. Your idols would be destroyed: money, fame and glory. Your pride would be gone. Your life would be His life. He would be your Master. He would be your ALL. But He should already be your ALL. So, how come you're not being a tool for Him?

- Some Christians are so “respectful” of God’s Word and “revere” it so much that they don’t even want to crack it open. They “reverently” let it gather dust on the shelf.

- 1 John 3:12 talks about how Cain was “of that wicked one” and “slew his brother”. How many times have we, as Christians, been “of that wicked one” and have slain our brother with deeds, words or thoughts? Don’t be a murderer or a backbiter. You’re supposed to love the brethren.

### The Local Community

- Why wouldn’t one get involved in the local church community? Isn’t a Christian supposed to “love brethren” and “not forsake the gathering of yourselves”? Isn’t the body of Christ supposed to be unified and make a difference in the world, by preaching the gospel together? Are Christians afraid to grow in holiness? Because they won’t grow studying the Word of God by themselves. The local church community is essential to a Christian’s walk with Christ.

- The will of God is that you do that holy thing in your life that you’re not doing. His will is for you to be holy, loving and faithful to Him alone!

- I would rather wrestle with God (like Jacob) than have no relationship with Him (like Esau).

- None Seeking After God

Romans 3:11 says, “There is none who seeks after God.” In other words, no one wants God, and yet we all need Him. We need Him whether we think we do or not (for air, water, holding our

molecules together, sunlight, etc.) We humans have it completely reversed! God is the one who doesn't need us, and He is the One who wants us.

- The Best Sacrifice

God has offered a bigger and a better sacrifice for my sins than I have. His sacrifice is so beyond anything I could have offered myself. My measly sacrifices will never wipe away the guilt and shame out of my heart. 1 John 3:20 says, "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."

- Loving in Deed and Truth

1 John 3: 18-19 says, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." This passage basically is a proof that states: "If you are loving in deed and in truth, that equals the fact that you are of the truth." Another proof is found in 1 John 3:23-24 which says, "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." This passage could be summarized as: "If you keep God's commandments, that equals the fact that the Spirit dwells in you."

- God gave us this life to know Him. He gave us our bodies to know Him. He has allowed everything good and evil to happen to us, to know Him more.

- Sin is Not Manageable

"Sin" has been redefined as "sins" is this modern age. The world wants to attack "evil" from the outside, not the inside. They attack the effects, not the cause. Without God's definitions of evil, the world can define anything as "evil". However, God's definition of evil—sin—brings God into the discussion. The world says we can change because "on the inside, we're good all the

way through”. And, if we are good all the way through, then “we can change for the better through the use of books, seminars and self-improvement”. The world loves to eliminate God from the discussion by making “sins” manageable. Man’s sin-nature is not manageable. It is a soul-killing disease. There is only one cure for sin: Calvary.

- God multiplies your time as He sees fit. Give Him His time first and you will see. Hoard onto your time and you will also see that you will never have enough time.
- It is possible to change Spider-Man’s motto from “With great power comes great responsibility” to “With great blessings comes great giving.” Responsibility is the same as giving.
- Love kills sin. The love of something destroys the affection for something evil.
- This life is but a Handi-Snak® compared to the 7-course meal of heaven.
- Christians Bowing to Christ  
Make this world a better place by falling on your face to Jesus first! That’s the best thing you can do to help your fellow man. You’ll be helping him with a pure heart (God’s Spirit inside of you). The world will never change because they see even Christians not willing to bow their knee to Christ. Until the world sees the Christians submitting to Christ wholeheartedly and serving others out of a Christ-like heart (and not just a checklist), the world will never look our way for God.
- Everywhere I look, I see men with a lack of commitment to God, family, career and life in general. And, yet men (and women) are committed to the stupidest of things—their sports teams, movies, music, pornography, NASCAR, etc.
- There is a strength I get from flipping through random verses of the Bible (usually looking for a particular verse) that I don’t get

any other way.

- If someone isn't loving towards you (because they have not been loved their entire life), will not loving them solve their problem (even if they don't deserve it)?

- Your past is the geode that was cracked to reveal the beautiful gems inside.

- If you don't love your brothers and sisters in Christ, then who can you love?

- Why do people's affections come out in sports or politics when they don't show those same affections for Christ?

- The world wants unity their way; not Christ's way. They want a God who is just like them: sinful, selfish, proud, etc. They define God by how they want Him to be. They think God is relative. But He is not! He defines Himself in the Bible. He is un-bendable to anyone's fickle, wishy-washy feelings.

- Pray for Missionaries

An American missionary who gives up his riches and freedoms and gives his life to foreign peoples is doing what Christ did for us. But that missionary also becomes a continual target for Satan. Pray for missionaries to persevere and to not fall into sin. There is nothing worse than a missionary family whose children have turned away from Christ. It's a shame when missionaries have served Christ their whole lives and somehow have lost their own children in the process.

- Be chained to Christ—not your denomination, family traditions, cultures or prejudices. Be chained to Him!

- You can't forgive until you know what forgiveness is.

- God's Power in Us

God doesn't just show us His power and tease us and say, "Nyah

Nyah Nyah—look what I can do, and you can't." God doesn't show us His power to make us envious. He reveals it to us as an example of how He can empower us to do the same—love people like He does, forgive people like He does, do good like He does, have faith in Him like He does, etc. He not only shows us the path, but He enables us to walk the path.

- Satisfied Payment

Jesus' crucifixion was the worst punishment ever pronounced on anyone. It was the worst pain anyone has ever had to go through. But it is also the most satisfying payment of all time. Justice was satisfied. The Father's wrath was quenched perfectly. To say Jesus' payment of our sins was inadequate is blasphemy. In fact, it was more than adequate! He bled his very last drop of blood for us. He took his last breath for us. He went above and beyond what we needed. It was a perfect payment. Untarnished. Mint-condition—for what? Our sins. He bought us back. Now we will love Him for the rest of eternity.

2011

- No Hiding Place

You have no hiding place to hide from God. There is no rock you can hide under where God does not see you. He sees everything you do, say, and think. That's right He know what's in your heart. He knows that the reason you do all your good deed is—not out of love for other—but out of obligation. He knows the lustful, sexual thoughts you have towards the women you work with. He knows the house you've been coveting and your hatred for your parents and how you lie to those you love. He knows all about you. . . where are you going to hide? What good deeds can you do, out of your heart, that He knows that you're not just trying to buy His favor? You can't hide your multiplicity of sins, nor can you do good deeds out of a pure heart (not just to nullify your sins). You're stuck and you have no rock to hide under. He knows where you're at and He has to judge you for your unrighteous acts. What

are you going to do? There is only one rock you can hide under. His name is Jesus Christ. He is the only rock that can hide you from God's wrath. Why? Because God's wrath—His hammer—fell on His own Son. The Father's blow fell on Christ. He took the hit for you. You are safe because Christ took your blow, and you'll only know that when you crawl out of your hole and through Christ's broken pieces. When you shake off the remnants of what Christ did for you and look around at the beautiful new world around you, you'll realize that you have been born again. You are free in Christ.

- When you realize that nothing you have is your own (your body, your salvation, etc.) you can safely trust God to use those things how He chooses to. You must submit those things to Him. They are His trophies; not yours.
- The law of the Spirit of life has made me free from the law of sin and death. (see Romans 8:2)
- The law was weak in the flesh. It made us not want to reach out to sinners, help others, or grow in God. The law was stagnant. It couldn't change our hearts—only God can. Now His spirit is in me. I'm free in Him. (see Romans 8:3-4)
- Jesus Became His Enemy  
Jesus made me cry at lunch today when He allowed me to see but a glimpse of what He did for me on the cross. On the cross He became God's own enemy. Jesus became what He hated most—death and sin. For what purpose? So, He could save those (like me) who absolutely hated Him. Could I ever become my enemy to help my enemy? Would I ever even want to become my enemy for one second? Of course not! Jesus' love for me is absolutely beyond my comprehension.

• Worshiping False Idols  
Do not worship idols like “Molech”, “Chemosh”, “Financial Security”, “Accomplishments”, “My Ideals”, “Baal”, “Dagon”, “Family”, “Education”, “Ashtoreth”, “Good Works”, etc. These are

all impotent gods that will not save you. These are gods that will not help you in your day of need. These gods will actually destroy you and leave you for dead. Just because the world worships these gods doesn't mean you have to. Turn to the One Living God who holds the universe in His palm.

- Death and Sin

God saw death and sin as a threat against us (even if we didn't). God didn't need to save us, but perhaps death and sin were threats to His rule. Think about it. It is His kingdom, why should there be any rebellion in His kingdom? Why should there be death or sin in His universe? There shouldn't be; not even in the furthest corner of His universe. His death at Calvary makes sure that death and sin will not last indefinitely.

- Tornadoes take away material things. Jesus takes away our sin.

- The Cross

Jesus could raise dead people to life (in His earthly ministry) even though He hadn't conquered death yet. The reason He could do this "in real time" is the same reason why He could forgive the adulteress before conquering sin "in real time." That is because there was NO way Jesus was NOT going to the cross. The cross was GOING to happen. And Jesus saw it and knew it. He could therefore give life and forgiveness because of the cross. Time and space are held by Jesus. Our redemption and resurrection, yes, even life itself is based upon Christ's finish work on the cross.

- Those who gave up are the ones who drowned in the details. The details were stronger than the Lord Jesus. Don't get drowned by the details of life. Jesus knows all the details. Give them to Him.

- The Past

Jesus says, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62). Likewise, Paul says "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before" (Ph 3:13). Both statements indicate that the past should have no bearing where we

are now as Christians or where we are going as Christians. Your past, or the past of your spouse, has no effect on where you and where your spouse is now: in Christ. It's the fact that you both are "in Christ" that the past was crucified on Christ's cross. The past was pulled up by the roots, stomped on and thrown into the fire. The past is NOT something to reshape, idealize, give you an unforgiving spirit, fantasize about, take the joy out of your heart, take you away from God, etc. The past has helped make you who you are, but you don't have to stay imprisoned in that cell. The past is like the fallen walls of Jericho. You use those stones as stepping stones to a better future with your spouse and with God. Jesus also tells us to "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32). In other words, "don't look back and worship your past or it will kill you."

- The Fall of Mankind

Eve's first sin wasn't eating the forbidden fruit; it was the doubt she had for God's honesty. Her first sin was when she started not trusting God and His words. After she doubted him, the fruit was all ready for the picking. Adam's sin could have been envy when he saw his wife eating something that he had not yet experienced. Either way, when he saw her not die on the spot from disobedience, he, too doubted God. He probably thought, "Hey, God has been holding out on us. Eve ate the fruit and didn't die. Why can't I eat it, too?" But God wasn't holding out on mankind. He only had the best in mind for them. They died spiritually that day (i.e. "dying you shall die") and their hearts and minds were opened. That was the moment of death. But I wonder why Eve's heart wasn't opened before Adam's? Why the delay between Eve's eating the fruit and Adam's eating the fruit before they realized that they had sinned? It is possible that because they were one flesh, they both fell together. Remember, they were married by God Himself. It could have taken both to sin before they both realized they had sinned. I also wonder at what point did the earth start dying. Did the earth start dying at the moment of their sin, or at their realization of their sin, or later, when God cursed the ground for man's sake? Just some things to consider.

- The Number One reason for depression is that the person is not

helping others and not loving God.

- God is more beautiful than sin.
- Forget your past sins, so you can move forward. You are forgiven, now you can press toward the goal!
- The body of Christ is composed of believing Israel and believing Gentiles. But God also has a salvific plan for unbelieving Israel. God's grace towards unbelieving Israel is to be a witness to unbelieving Gentiles.

- Sermon on the Mount

The Sermon on the Mount is the bridge between the Ten Commandments and Salvation by Grace alone. Within the Sermon on the Mount, the Ten Commandments are magnified more than they ever have been before. And, in that magnification is a sense of loss as one realizes that he cannot keep those Ten Commandments. That's why it is a bridge—it points towards grace and salvation that only Jesus can offer you.

- God first died for the ungodly, His enemy (Romans 5:6). Technically, the church didn't exist until Pentecost. So, who did Jesus die for? His Bride. He technically died for His enemies who would later become His bride.
- The problems in your life are not external, it's internal; your sin.
- There was a quiet whisper in a Bethlehem stable. The Savior made His entrance into the world.
- I'm not the brightest star. Jesus is.

2012

- We Christians (a.k.a. forgiven sinners) aren't any better

than child molesters, abortion doctors, Muslim terrorists, etc. Therefore, we should be reaching those people for Christ. We were dead in trespasses and sins as well.

- Reading the Bible is like receiving a spiritual massage; it relaxes and renews you.

- The Evil Tongue

The tongue gets everything handed to it for free. The tongue doesn't have to work for all the tasty food it enjoys; it just receives. That being the case, why, when it is time to give does the tongue only give evil? Why does the human tongue not show grace to others, say kind words, give encouragement, praise God—as it has been shown grace? The tongue likes to be the recipient of grace, but not the dispenser of it.

- Jesus brought you into the world. He can take you out of the world at any time.

- The Future Kingdom

Isaiah Chapter 11 describes Jesus and his future Kingdom. He is the stem of Jesse that the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon. He is the Branch who will have the spirit of wisdom and understanding. He is the root of Jesse that will have the spirit of counsel and might. He will have the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

- Philosophical Jerks

All “isms” produce philosophical jerks. For example, Calvinism produces Christian jerks. Creationism produces scientific jerks. KJVism produces scholarly jerks. Baptist-ism produces religious jerks. Anything that supplants Jesus as one's Savior—will produce negative heart reactions (namely, jerky people). However, if these ideologies are submitted under Christ's authority, then these ideologies won't produce jerks. In fact, God will honor these biblical ideologies and bring many to Him.

- The fear of the Lord could possibly be a title for Yeshua. For

example, Isaiah 33:6 says, “And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation (Yeshua): the fear of the LORD is his treasure.”

- Death had a birth in Genesis 3, but it will also have a death in the future as there “shall be no more death”. (Rev 21:4). Death will be defeated by Christ as “the last enemy that shall be destroyed.” (1 Cor 15:26)

- I want to be “the friend of God” like Abraham was. (“Abraham my friend” Isaiah 41:8). If I live by faith in God, like He did, I will be.

- Heaven is God’s bedroom; it’s where He makes love with His Church for all of eternity.

- Survival is all about striving to exist. So why not ask God to help you survive? He’s YHWH, the Self-Existent One. Who else would know how to exist other than Him?

- All music is worship music. It is just a matter of who is being worshiped.

- People think they can buy a happy future with money. They put so much faith in a piece of paper: their diploma. God is bigger than an education. He is the one who gives happy futures. Not universities who enslave you in debt.

- Following God’s Law profits your life, accrues interest and reaps dividends. Isaiah 48:17 says, “Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.”

- The fact that you really love God would be shown if you really loved sinners.

- Video Games

To waste your time shooting things that don't exist, driving cars that don't exist, stomping on turtles that don't exist and playing sports that don't exist is ridiculous. Video games are a waste of time. There is so much life outside of a video game console. People are being robbed of the beauty of this world—the nature that God created—by artificial video games.

- I take comfort in knowing that God knows that flesh is weak. I'm weak and He knows it and still loves me.

- Israel collapsed because they didn't believe that God had spoken. Faithlessness kills your relationship with God.

- Crushing

God cannot allow sin in His universe. He had to put His wrath on someone. He had to crush someone for justice to be served. Christ was that person who was crushed. No other crushing would have done any good. It was Jesus' crushing that allows us to a) live, b) be forgiven and c) live spiritually.

- He came back to resolve all things. Not just us, or creation, or Israel, but ALL Things! Jesus doesn't do anything that He doesn't put His whole heart into. Jesus follows the motto: "Go bold or go home!"

- Worst of Circumstances

If God is God, then you can enjoy Him in the worst of circumstances (i.e. the worst of work-environments, the worst of home environments, the worst in relationships, the worst in finances, the worst in health). God is always with you while you are going through the worst.

- Patience means you're waiting on the LORD, not for the circumstances to pass.

- God sent Israel to Babylon but promised they would be brought back. God sends us to certain jobs and promises that we will be brought back. (Read 2 Cor 4:16-18, James 1:2-4, 2 Cor 4:8-11).

- Men: working from the sweat of their brow for 6,00 years.
- Women: giving birth to babies painfully for 6,000 years.

- God's Image

When God made man in His image, He had only good in mind for His creation. He knew, beforehand, how man would try to destroy His image with tattoos, drugs, alcohol, homosexuality, adultery, etc. But God made us in His image anyway. He didn't stop doing His good pleasure just because future evil would seek to destroy His image. Likewise, today, He continues to do His good pleasure despite evil.

- If chopping down 1,000 trees would save 1,000 babies' lives, I would get my chainsaw right now. Saving trees is nowhere near as important as saving babies.

- Our Pellets

Your sin-nature is like a shot gun burst: not any one pellet will kill you, but all the pellets working together in unison, is what kills you. It's the small things that will kill you. Murder and adultery will kill you, too, but even those start with the small, insignificant, fleeting daily commonplace sins of hate and lust. It only takes one pellet to define you as a sinner, but often the physical consequences are not seen by only one pellet. Like the art movement, Pointillism, it takes many pellets to create the picture of why your life has fallen apart.

- There's a difference between freedom in Christ and freedom to sin. Too often the latter is masked as the former, but it really is still sin.

- The bigger you are, the slower you are to get moving (i.e. corporations vs small businesses). The little guy, like David, often has the advantage of speed.

- Just because salvation is free to you, doesn't mean it cost God nothing.

- **The Growing Gospel**

There is a gospel that initially gets heard by an unbeliever. “You are saved by Jesus’ blood.” That is the gospel. Once accepted in the unbeliever’s heart, that person is a Christian. The gospel then grows in a person’s heart and to include: sanctification, drawing closer to God, becoming holy, desiring to see your loved ones in heaven, etc. The gospel doesn’t stop there, though. God blesses you with the fruits of the Spirit, spiritual gifts, witnessing opportunity, learning how to apply God’s Word to your life, to serve God in different circumstances, etc. But then the gospel doesn’t stop growing there either. The gospel grows in your heart as you minister to not only believers, but unbelievers. You witness to your neighbors. You rely on the gospel for the simplest of daily tasks. You lead others to Christ. You lead your children to Christ. You lead your parents and siblings to Christ. But it doesn’t stop there either. You love your enemies, give to your enemies and yes, even die for your enemies. That is the growing power of the gospel. It is essentially limitless in its growth and can bear fruit beyond imagination. The gospel keeps growing into the question, “What can I give up for a certain person to come to Christ?”

- Jesus doesn’t care if you’re rich or poor, slave or free, black or white, male or female. He loves you regardless of any label you have put on yourself or others have put on you.

- The things that you want for your life—riches, fame, pain-free life, peace—isn’t what Jesus wants for your life. He wants your heart. So, sometimes he takes away riches, fame, a pain-free life and peace to get your focus on Him.

- Rebels can never get right with God. What are you going to do? What can you do better than Jesus, so that you don’t need Jesus? If you were crucified, could it wash the sins of the world? No. It wouldn’t even wash your sins.

- God is rich in everything good. He is poor in everything evil.

- No matter how much you sin (or have sinned), your sins cannot supersede God’s love and grace towards you.

- Jesus is raw power.

- Love Creates Worlds

God created the world in love. Love’s power created the world, or, to put it another way: love to the fullest extent can create worlds (not just move mountains). That’s why when the fall came, the natural world fell with men. When everything exists on the power of love, nothing can exist when sin enters. Sin and love are mutually exclusive. When there is sin in someone’s life, it’s almost as if God just doesn’t see them. Not because He doesn’t want to, but because sin hides the sinner from God’s view. Sin is the cutting off of the life that God is giving you—the only kind of life that exists. Sinning, or being cut off from the source of life, can only be called “death”.

- Is it justice or mercy that the poor in spirit will someday reign over everyone? It’s both. God will show both justice and mercy to the poor in spirit. One way to tell if something is of God is when the lines of justice and mercy are blurred into one.

- When people (like my co-workers) call others “retards” in various daily activities, I find it amusing that they are, in fact, the retards, for not worshiping God and choosing death over life, sin over righteousness, hell over heaven, they are the true retards who reject Jesus.

- God allowed sin because He wanted to allow grace.

- Psalm 2:4 says, “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.” I don’t know about you, but the last person I would want laughing at me would be God.

- You can’t frustrate the mighty plans of God.

- Our righteousness is not of ourselves. If we have any

righteousness, it's only because God has blessed us with it "... and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD" Is 54:17

- The fear of the Lord = the beginning of wisdom.
- I'll have my day in the SON.

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- "God with us", because our "transgressions are with us" (see Isaiah 59:12).
- If you act like the enemy of God (i.e. Satan), and if you lie, cheat, steal and murder like he does, do you think God will judge you any differently? He doesn't respect persons. God will judge and hunt down every enemy of His. (see Psalm 5)
- "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." Is that pre- or post-conversion? It's both. We should always be drawing near to Christ. We will never be in a place (not even in eternity) where we can stop drawing nearer to Christ.
- Blessings in a World of Lies  
Satan, through his evil followers (politicians, teachers, doctors, actors, parents, bosses, lawyers, etc.) is always trying to make God's promises too incredulous to believe. Any casual reading of the Bible will reveal that God has made a lot of promises. He has a lot to live up to – if we do our part. On the other hand, Satan has made a lot of liars – people who haven't lived up to anything they have promised. Men and women can't be trusted, but is God like them? Does God not deserve our trust because men and women don't deserve our trust? We grow up, from infancy, in a world full of lies. Who has created this world of lies? Satan has, because if he takes away our willingness to trust anyone, or to put our faith in anything, then he could take away our ability to put our trust and faith in Jesus. If he could make Jesus like the rest of

humanity—someone not worthy of our trust—then he has won. Are God’s promises real, or are they just another bunch of lies? That is the question. Is God willing to do what He has said He will do? Or, is He a hypocrite like the rest of us? Well, I know who Jesus is and He is no liar. He has promised and He has fulfilled in my own life many times. He is able and willing to do what He has promised, despite the evil world we live in. His promises are all the more powerful because they accomplish their goal despite the world’s lies they have to work around. God’s promises are always fulfilled despite the maze of lies that construct this world. “Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.” (Rom 3:4a)

- Were all people groups present at Peter’s first sermon (Acts)? What does “every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5) mean? If “every nation under heaven” means the 70 or so basic people groups of the world (Genesis 11) then, yes, all people groups were present.
- Do you want to know what deep is? God’s love for us. Do you want to know what big is? God’s grace toward us.
- When you turn off the lights, you can’t see the junk. Satan’s job is to turn off the lights in your heart. On the other hand, God’s law illuminates your heart.
- “The Church” is not a noun. It is a verb.
- I’m a Pro-Life when it comes to babies. I’m Pro-Choice when it comes to cockroaches.
- “Trust” is just another word for “respect”. When you don’t trust someone, you don’t respect them.
- Marketing is all about making yourself look less-ghetto than you actually are. Satan has great marketing of sin. He makes it seem like sin is what will make you happy. However, the short-term benefits of sin are soon overshadowed by the long-term consequences of it.

- Numbers don't lie, people do. Therefore, we should get rid of guns and mathematics.

- People justify their crudeness about others by saying, "Well, it's true what I said about the other person." But the Bible says we are to speak truth in love. (Ephesians 4:15)

- Our Generic World

We live in a generic world. How may logos use sans-serif fonts? How many of the cars on the highway look exactly the same—with the same window stickers? How come everyone parrots the philosophies of talk show hosts? America's opinions are shaped by the evil media-elitists and the education cabal. No one thinks for themselves anymore. We all are even looking alike. Americans can't tell what a real man is from a fake one. One can't tell a real non-profit organization from a fake one. What's the difference between someone who needs food stamps vs. those who just want food stamps? Can you tell the difference between a real church and a fake one? In all of these examples, it would, upon close examination reveal who is the authentic person and who is not. But, on the outside, everyone looks the same. America has become so generic, there is no personality left. There is no uniqueness left. Everyone wants to be everyone else. And, in the process, we have become nothing. We have taken God out of our schools, our government, our families, our media and our churches. We are to blame for being boring and generic. We stand for nothing (righteous) and we are nothing. it's sad when America's identity (and stock market revolve around Apple's latest iPhone® release. It's sad that more Americans watch the Super bowl once a year than go to church once a year. The NFL has made men weaklings. it's sad that men will cheer for their favorite team (at the top of their lungs) more than sing worship songs at church (at the top of their lungs). America has given itself over to any god but God. And, in the process has lost its personality. America has turned her affections to other things besides God and has devalued herself. God has been put to the sidelines and America is reaping the generic fruit of such decisions. Jeremiah 2:19 puts it best: "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings

shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.”

- All Marketing Points to Christ / Idols Steal God’s Promises

You can always tell an idol by the claims that it (or its advertisers) make. For example, this new (insert product name here) will provide excitement and fulfillment to your life.” Doesn’t God do that? Another example, that the California Lottery advertised: “Make all your dreams come true”. Really? Money doesn’t do that. I’ve known people with plenty of money in my life and they aren’t happy. Only God can make all your dreams come true. The claims and promises of an idol always parrot God’s claims—except the idol’s claims never pay up; God does. The idols can’t live up to the wicked claims because only God can fulfill the deepest desires of men. Why would an idol steal God’s promises and try to make it its own? Because the idol has to. What else would the idol offer if it didn’t steal God’s promises? The idol can’t tell the truth: “I’m going to offer you slavery, depression, heartache and grief”. No, the idol has to take God’s promises of love, joy, peace, happiness, then take God out of the picture and use it to sell itself. The idol doesn’t care what happens to the person after they already bought the idol. Any idol has to sell itself of plagiarized promises.

- Abortion Has Murdered Our Friends

Why is there so many depressed people in the world? One of the reasons, I think is that that have no friends. The people who suffer from depression have no friends because their would-be friends were never born. By the means of abortion, their friends never saw the light of day. So, why are there so many depressed people in the world? Abortion. Abortion doesn’t just take one life; it destroys countless lives in its wake (all under the guise of freedom).

- Spending time with God, while reading His Word, won’t make you any money. However, the dividends that such time brings is infinitely more than what money could ever hope to buy.

- God Celebrates Diversity

If you make a general statement about men or women you're considered "sexist". If you say something about Mexicans or Asians, you're considered a "racist". Terms like these make Americans generic. The Progressives want all the lines blurred so we can be one "happy family". But God created different sexes for a reason. He created tribes. He celebrates diversity. He created diversity for a reason. And all diverse people can come to know Christ as their Creator-Redeemer. (Gal 3:28)

- Jesus' robe was seamless. Jesus' mercy and justice are seamless. His deity and his humanity are seamless.

- It's sad that the Roman soldiers would gamble more for some clothing than for the Christ himself. They saw more value in a piece of fabric than in the Son of God.

- Encourage means to put courage "into" someone.

- Root Out and Destroy Evil

Jeremiah 1:10 says, "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." This is the mission of a Christian: to root out (evil), to pull down (anything that stands up next to God), destroy (the works of the devil), to throw down (godless philosophies), build (encourage one another) and plant (evangelize).

- Made in God's Image

Gen 3:4-5 "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." If men are made in the image of God, then why would they need to be as gods? That's the lie. Adam and Eve had to have known that they were made in God's image (Gen 1:26-27). So, why would they need to be as gods as well? Was being made in God's image not good enough for them? Were they not satisfied with that? Were they not content? Were they thinking, "Why was God giving us the short end of the stick? Was God holding out on us?"

Whatever they were thinking, Satan used their discontentment against them and now we live in a fallen world because being made in God's image just wasn't good enough.

- There is a difference between "Thank God" and "Thanks, God". One is an edification and the other is a prayer.

- Love does not equal tolerance, despite what western culture wants to say. Justice does not equal works-based religion despite what eastern culture says.

- What's the difference between adopting a child and adopting a pet? One is hated by the liberal/socialist/anti-family feminists and one is loved by the liberal/socialist/anti-family feminists.

- Those Who Crossed and Those Who Didn't

There were only two types of people at the crossing of the Red Sea event: those who crossed and those who didn't. Just like any hard event in life, there are those who cross with God's grace or those who don't cross without His grace. There is no purgatory or middle of the road options, either.

- Superman and Batman

What can actually hurt Superman? Nothing really (Kryptonite isn't real). He is un-relatable. Batman is relatable. What hurts him would hurt any normal person. Batman is more popular than Superman, but I think the differences don't end there. Batman actually looks like the people he's trying to save. He is dirty, dark and rugged—just like us sinners. God also did that for us. He was made to look like us to save us from ourselves. Superman really doesn't relate to us. And he doesn't relate to us. We like him because he's cool and can save us, but he's not one of us.

- Sinners need the law like children need structure. You wouldn't want your children running in the street, would you? Neither would God. Likewise, sinners need the Law to protect them from hurting themselves and hurting others.

- When God gives you the land, you take it! You take the opportunity. If you don't, you forsake it to your own detriment.
- Change the World. Accept Christ.
- The Gifts of God: Creation, Marriage, Government, Law, Prophets, Priesthood, Old Testament, Christ (the biggest gift of all).
- Jesus loves sinners: not because they sin, but because He can keep them from sinning.

- The Church's Shape

When something exists, like the Church, but one can't point to the shape of it, that's a scary entity. Because the Church can't be measured or numbered, and yet can be seen in her actions, that is a terrible foe to try and stop, that is, if you hate Christians. The Church cannot be seen as a whole, and it can only be stopped in parts. It can't be stopped as a whole. That is a frightening entity—one that can only be seen in parts, but the real shape is really 100 million times larger. All you can do is try to stamp them out whenever you see them. It's like trying to kill all of the ants of the world with a single rock. Sure, some will be killed, but the others are multiplying and escaping and enjoying freedom and living life. The rock may come to them someday and they may lose family members or even their own life, but until then, Christians will be living life for God. A shapeless power is a scary power.

- The Loss of All Things

Everyone is one step away from homelessness. I know this personally. Anyone can lose a job at any time, or get injured, and your whole dream is over with. Which, taken to the next logical step means everyone is one step away from widowhood or orphanhood. That's why God tells us to take care of the widows and orphans. Why? Because you and I are one step away from being one of them. He tells the Church to take care of them—not non-profits or insurance companies— but the CHURCH! The Church is the Protector of the innocent, the marginalized, the

outcasts.

- Prisoners on Both Sides

The only difference between those in prison and those outside prison is the fact that the ones in prison got caught by the authorities. Everyone is a sinner. Everyone has broken man's law and God's law. There are punishments for both realms of law: prison for man's law and hell for God's law.

- True Freedoms

Barbarianism is disguised as Freedom. Murder is disguised as Freedom. Slavery is disguised as Freedom. The way you can tell if a "freedom" is a real freedom, is by looking at the fruit of it. Just look at the fruit of any "choice", "option" or "freedom" and you will cut down to the core of whether or not it makes a person free or happy or satisfied. For example, Homosexuals say they are free—but they are depressed, angry, violent, suicidal people. Fornicators say they are free—but they are angry, depressed, never-satisfied, violent people. Pro-Choice people say they are free—but they are depressed, suicidal, angry people. Not to mention all these groups leave in their wake tragedy, broken homes, broken hearts, hurting children, etc.

- What people mean by freedom is "control". Those who want to give "freedom" to the masses is simply tightening the noose on the masses. Give the people what they want, and they will do whatever you ask them to.

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- Pleasure from God

There is nothing wrong with seeking pleasure in life. Believe it or not, Christians like pleasure, too. The problem is in how you seek it. According to the Bible, God is pleasure. He equals pleasure. So, when we are pleased by things here on earth, we should be seeing God in them. However, if we seek pleasure apart from

God (or don't care to see Him in the things of life), then pleasure becomes sin. It's weird: pleasure, the very thing that is supposed to turn you to God, very often becomes the thing that turns you away from God. Pleasure becomes an idol to people. They begin to worship it rather than God. Self-seeking becomes a way of life. They don't care if their seeking after pleasure hurts others. Idols hurt other people. And pleasure is an idol. Therefore, pleasure hurts others (but only if God is not in the picture). If God is in the picture, pleasure points towards Him, glorifies Him and builds community among His people. Pleasure is God's gift to us—a wonderful gift; a gift so wonderful that even in a fallen world we can still feel it. Every Christian knows this. The pleasure you feel before Christ is but a shadow of the pleasure you feel after Christ. Christ illuminates all of creation. He bestows upon us so much! Are we to take His gifts and refashion them into idols to destroy ourselves and hurt others? No. Take pleasure for all it's worth and give God the glory.

- Faith's Substance

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb 11:1). What does that mean? Let's try putting it another way: faith is the reality of what no one else sees except for you and God. Faith is the glasses that allows you to see what God is going to make happen. Faith is a vision to live by, because God has given you that vision. Faith is the hope that needs to be expressed in your actions.

- Jesus Sets You Free

To think that my (non-physical) spirit was set free by Jesus' (very physical) spilled blood is amazing to think about. To think that my “free” spirit was actually imprisoned or that my dreams were just idols shows how dark I was. Christ shows you the truth of your desires, wishes, actions and freedoms. All the things in your life that you think were good, He shows you for what they are: idols that were enslaving you. And He has come to set you free.

- Putting Our Sin Away

“And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD.

And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.” (2 Samuel 12:13). Isn't it wonderful when God “puts our sin away”? Where does He put it away to? Well, He puts it away at the cross. He puts it away on Jesus. He puts it away, deals with it and destroys it so we don't have to.

- Stray Dog

Resilient is the face of the homeless dog that I've seen for the last year, up and down the street (at the place I work). He searches for food, lives and will probably die on this street. He is strong though. Honestly, I thought he would have been hit by a truck by now, but he hasn't. Likewise, Christians should be like that homeless dog: living every day as if this place isn't our home, resilient and not being broken by the world.

- Do you want the iron furnace (Deut 4:20) or the consuming fire (Deut 4:24)? Either way you are going to get burned. I would rather get burned by man than by God. Man's punishment is but for a moment, but God's punishment lasts for eternity.

- Anyone who thinks that they don't have the best (fill in the blank) shows that they have an idol in their heart. Too often, “follow your dreams” is the impetus needed to “follow your idol”. Any dream that dethrones God is an idol. Anything that a person “needs to have” has taken the place of God in your life. But these idols will never satisfy.

- Witnesses and Martyrs

Jesus said in John 20:21: “As my Father has sent me, so I send you.” Again, in Acts 1:8 Jesus says, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me...unto the uttermost part of the earth.” The word “witness” is the same as “martyr”. So, based on this passage, missionaries = witnesses = martyrs.

- God has overturned my heart, but then He gave me a new one.

- Name Above All Names

Jesus and YHWH (the Father) are alike in many ways (though

they aren't the same person). Jesus' name and YHWH's name demand respect. Jesus is the name above all names as is the tetragrammaton. Both names will be bowed to. Both names command and deserve our respect. The misuse of these names is cause for death. To use these names in jest or in any disrespectful manner is to beg for condemnation from God. God is above all and in all and He will not allow the trifling of His name to go unpunished.

- Telling God What to Do

In Matthew 16:21-28, we have an interesting exchange between Peter and Jesus. Jesus is explaining to Peter what is going to happen in the future and Peter starts denying it. In other words, because Jesus' prophecies didn't fit into his way of thinking, Peter started saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." Peter starts trying to "shake some sense" into Jesus' talk that He is going to be murdered, as if God needs an adviser. It boggles my mind that Peter actually thought that he could comprehend a be "better" idea than what Jesus had. Jesus didn't take too kindly to this rebuke. He told Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." That was the end of the conversation: Peter publicly humiliated for trying to tell God what to do. It's easy to point fingers at Peter and say, "Yeah, that was pretty audacious Peter. How could you do that?" But I ask: how many times do we try to tell God what to do? How many times are we in a situation and we are tired, hungry, beat down, depressed, angry, emotionally drained and we look up to heaven and yell/scream/cry/shout out our woes to God? We do it every single day of our lives. We, as humans, like to think that we have life figured out. Then, God throws us something unexpected and our whole faith in Him disintegrates. We are extremely frail/lazy/wavering/hypocritical believers. Instead, we need to trust God's plan for our lives and submit to Him regardless of our circumstances.

- God's Gold Medal

Olympic athletes compete for a gold medal. God also competed

and won a prize. The prize that He wanted was His Kingdom. He won His Kingdom and won our hearts. Our hearts would not be held from Him. He would fight for them. God can have anything He wants, and our hearts were (for some mysterious reason) valuable to Him. Our hearts and our own value usually aren't even perceived of by us, and yet God looked at us and said, "You're valuable to me. You're the trophy. You're the championship title. I want you, because I love you."

- Popular Teachers' Words

Not that I have anything against popular conservative pastors such as John Piper, Mark Dever, David Platt, Tim Keller, Francis Chan or any of these other popular pastors. . . but, if they're getting their ideas from the Bible, why not cut out the middleman and go straight to the source: the Bible. Too often, Christians will follow these popular pastors and almost forget the Bible. They will read and listen to everything that has been published by these pastors, thinking that if they follow them, then their wisdom will coagulate into their own wisdom. However, Jesus didn't say "Follow popular pastors". He said, "Follow me." Jesus wants His words in your head; not pastors' fading words. I've seen popular preachers/authors come and go in my own life. I remember the heyday of the likes of Lee Strobel, Max Lucado, John MacArthur, Hank Hanegraaf, Bruce Wilkinson, etc. Before them were the likes of Bill Bright, James Dobson, Walter Martin, J. Vernon McGee, Josh McDowell, Charles Stanley, Chuck Colson, Chuck Smith and Henry M. Morris (my personal favorite). Though some of these pastors are long gone, some are still publishing. But their 5-seconds of fame are gone. Following popular pastors is not really worth your time. The popular guys today will be gone tomorrow. Don't base your thinking on these guys because they won't last. Only God's thoughts and His words, which will lead to your thoughts and your actions, will last. A cup of cool water given in the name of Jesus will last longer than your bookshelf filled with popular books. God is able to open up His Words to you without the need for pastors. That is not to say don't listen to pastors' wisdom (they do have lots of good things to say). Just don't follow them. I think we have to cut out the middleman more

and go straight into the Word ourselves.

- Decoder to the World's Terms

In this world of lies from the media, internet, talk shows and culture, it almost seems like Christians need a Thesaurus to decipher what is really being said. I have created a quick decoder reference guide to the lies of the world (read it in this order: Lie = Truth) Art = Porno; Choice = Murder; Love = Sexual Deviancy; Freedom = Credit; Education = Indoctrination; Entertainment = Sex; Provider = Workaholic; Intellectual = Atheism; Business = Cutthroat; Gaming = Gambling; Christian = American; Soldier = Mercenary ; Tolerance = Laziness.

- Refurbished Dreams

God takes your dreams, refurbishes them and gives them back to you as OEM (Original Equipment Manufactured) parts. Before Christ, you had dreams, but after Christ, you will be dreaming His dreams, which are much richer.

- Losing My Religion

The band, R.E.M., had a song in the 80's called, "Losing my Religion". In it, the singer sings about being in the spotlight and losing his religion. The lyrics go like this: "Oh life, it's bigger. It's bigger than you. And you are not me. The lengths that I will go to. The distance in your eyes. Oh no, I've said too much. . . That's me in the corner. That's me in the spotlight. Losing my religion." I would argue that the singer has not lost his religion but has, in fact, gained his religion. At some point, he began to worship himself rather than God. Maybe it was the lure of riches or fame or pleasure; whatever it was, he began to worship the creation rather than the Creator. When the singer cares more about the "lengths that I will go to" and "that's me in the spotlight" that says a lot. In short, that's the emergence of religion; not the loss of it.

- Dogs and Babies

When a stray dog is in the middle of the road, how many drivers actually try to hit the dog? No one does. Not even atheist drivers try to hit the dog. Why? Because people know that life is valuable.

It's so valuable that scientists still can't create it in the laboratory. It's so valuable that our technology can't sustain life indefinitely (by medicine and machines). Now, if a dog is valuable—how much more valuable is the baby in the womb? If drivers are willing to protect a stray dog from being killed, then why not protect the baby from the abortionist's knife? That is the hypocrisy I see in society.

- Heads I Win

Heads I win, tails you lose. You can never win. My Dad loved that game. He used to trick me when I was little. I never understood why he always won. It took over a decade to finally figure it out. But that game is exactly like the lies that Satan tells you: he will always win, and you will always lose.

- Cursing Your Creator

How can you curse Jesus (i.e. take his name in vain) when He is the one that created you? In other words, how can someone curse their Maker? If someone's Maker created you, then he can un-create you. It's the height of rebellion to curse your Creator. To curse your Maker is to say, "I have a better plan for my life than you did!" But your Maker is the One who saw everything before you were on the scene. In fact, He sees everything in the universe. How can a creature think that he knows more than the One who created him?

- Lies Give Peace

The world gives peace to their guilt only by means of lies. For the mother who aborted her baby, the world says: "It was only a blob." For the divorced couple, the world says: "You just weren't in love anymore." For the homosexual, the world says: "You were born that way." For the murderer, the world says: "Some people don't deserve to live according to Darwin." For the person who wants to be euthanized legally, the world says: "That is a loving thing to do to yourself so you won't be a burden to your family anymore." These are man's philosophies (abortion, divorce, homosexuality, murder and euthanasia) and they always lead to death. These actions are seeds for an unfulfilled life. In contrast to these lifeless

philosophies is God's gospel which brings life, joy, peace, love and understanding. The gospel remakes the world in joy and man's philosophies remake the world in disgust.

- Godly Thoughts

Lest anyone think that I'm a godly man that thinks so many godly thoughts, forget it. For every one of these godly thoughts I have, I have another 10,000 thoughts that I'm sinning in. I'm a sinner. But, I'm forgiven by grace in Christ. That's why I write these thoughts down: to help myself and others; not to create a portfolio.

- Living Life in the Moment

Jesus lived such a perfect life that he had no regrets. Jesus never had to think, "Man, I wish I would've done X,Y and Z." Or , "Man, I wish I didn't do X, Y and Z." Nope. Jesus lived every moment to its fullest. Isn't that the philosophy of the world: to live in the moment? Why don't they look to Jesus as the one who actually lived out their philosophy? He lived/laughed/loved. He "Lived for now". But when Jesus lived in the moment, He lived it in righteousness. When the world "lives life in the moment" it almost always means sinning

- Real Options

Any option that you choose that disobeys God really isn't an option. Any choice that rebels against God's wishes really isn't a choice. Any option that destroys you (even a little bit) is not really an option. See, options and choices—the concepts of them—were disfigured in the Garden of Eden by Satan himself. He brought a new meaning to the words, choice and freedom. He brought about autonomy. He brought about a life without God; a life where you can live as you please. But a life away from God really isn't a life. It's not optional to separate your life from the source of life. God defined life, because He is Life. God's laws are the only laws that matter. Break them and you become broken. Rebel against God and all you have is your own kingship and your own fragile kingdom. Rebellion is not a choice if it destroys you in the end. It's not an option any more than driving on the wrong side of the

street. But Satan would have you believe that both sides of the road are up for grabs when driving. Satan's way always leads to short thrills and short lives because rebellion against the Almighty only leads to those two things. Choices that you think are choices are just treacherous acts against God. Today's culture has a lot to talk about choices and options an alternative lifestyles. An alternative life away from God (which, by the way, is nothing new) is not really an option in the sense of it leading to a quality of life filled with love and happiness and enjoyment. Rebellion against God is always the antithesis of happiness, life and enjoyment. In fact, all that you think you will gain by living out your new-found choice, you will reap exactly the opposite. You will set out for riches and you will wind up with nothing. You will seek happiness and find none. Satan will laugh at you and say, "What a fool!" He loves to see people suffer. That's why he invents choices and options out of thin air and people start nodding their heads: "Yeah that sounds good." Only those who don't know what God's Word says think rebellion is an awesome idea.

- Starbucks and Productivity

Starbucks is popular because it helps to facilitate the American value of work and production. America's values are on people's production capabilities. Caffeine gives people energy to produce, thus leading to people's value. However, people's value is not based in what they produce, or what they get accomplished or how much money they make. No. Their value is in being made in the image of God. Production-value is low-bearing fruit. God, not Starbucks, gives value. God, not Starbucks, allows you to be productive.

- It Never Lasts

There is no lasting experience from a crazy drunkfest weekend (i.e. a weekend at Lake Havasu, Vegas or the Casino). It is only a moment of time. People will sell their souls for a moment of ecstasy. The problem is that they have to keep having moments of ecstasy because it doesn't last. God, on the other hand, gives everlasting ecstasy. The joy He brings doesn't run out. Following His Laws and His way of living is what fulfills one's life.

- Perfectionism makes you lazy. Perfectionism always leads to procrastination.

- It is up to the Christians to stand firm and educate people with the truth of God's Word—the unchanging word that will bring freedom to all. If the Christians don't teach the world Truth, who will?

- Living Life Like You are Living

There's a popular song, "Live Like You Were Dying", by Tim McGraw that is such a joke. We all are dying anyway! But it doesn't mean wasting your life away doing stupid things or buying stupid things. Jesus puts new life in you—not just some fleeting experience. People chase their feelings like a moving target. It's a joke. Chase after God. If you draw near to Him, He will draw near to you. If you're alive in Christ, you don't have to live like you are dying, for you will always be alive.

- Conquering Death

Men don't rise from the dead. That should be obvious. Our whole lives are spent trying to conquer death. Death can't be conquered by men. So, if a man were to rise from the dead, what kind of man would that be? He would be strong. What kind of things would he say? They would be wise sayings. How did he do it? These are questions that should be asked about Jesus. Is He truly who He said He was? If He was God, then there should be no hypocrisy in His life. There should be consistency in his words and in his actions. Study Jesus' life and His sayings. You will find a consistency that is miraculous (and missing in every other person who has ever lived.)

- The LORD is not accountable to you. He answers to Himself, not any other creature. He is completely sovereign and all He does is Holy.

- When Jesus speaks, you better listen up. The thing is, He's always speaking to us. He's very interested in having a

relationship with each one of us. He speaks to us through His Word, and in His Spirit. Why should we ignore Him?

- Being Liked

Who doesn't want to be liked? Everyone wants to be liked by their peers. It's prevalent in High School and in the workplace alike. Who doesn't want to be liked by others? There's nothing wrong with that, except when "being liked" is what you're after. Being liked is not a good way to live life. If you are going to be liked by someone, you should be liked by God. We should do things to please him; not others. We should talk and act to have Him like us; not our friends. But the ironic thing is that God likes us (i.e. loves us) regardless of what we do. We want to please Him not because we want to earn His favor; but because we already have his favor in Christ. Living life pleasing to Him is so much more enjoyable because it's not a works-based relationship. Seeking after being liked by others, on the other hand, is a works-based relationship. If you perform, people like you; if you don't perform; they won't. It's quite the opposite of love which says: "I love you regardless". God's love says: "I love you even if you deliberately hurt me". There's really no point in having others like you in this life. In 100 years, we'll all be gone anyway. Everyone reading this, in 100 years will be gone someday as well. What is the point of having these people like you? My value is not in having people like me. Being liked is an idol for so many people. But if they realized that being liked by God is so much more valuable than others' opinions, they would certainly run to Him. Don't seek after the approval of men. Or, as Jesus says, ". . . fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28). Fear God and seek His approval.

- The "Cool" One

To be "cool" is to be untouchable. For someone to be "cool" means that person is self-sufficient and doesn't need anybody. Think of a teenager worshiping a rock star: "Oh, he's so cool". So, if that's the definition of cool, then God is the coolest Person ever. He is untouchable and self-sufficient. You can't get near Him

without being humbled (i.e. destroyed). His holiness makes Him unassailable. But, unlike a rock star, God can be known and wants to be known. He wants us to seek Him and get close to Him, via Christ's blood.

- Being Bought Off

A boxer who throws a fight for more money than he would have gotten (had he won the fight) loves money more than himself. He is willing to lie and deceive all his fans and the public, just so that he can have money. His idol is money. He loves money more than the title. In his mind, the end justifies the means. It's this kind of mentality that typifies corporations across America: "who cares if it's not the right thing to do if, in the end, we have more money?" It's the ideology of government: "Who cares if people get hurt if, in the end, we have more things". It's lying for the purpose of theft. God, on the other hand, would never throw the fight. He would never lose. He puts His whole heart into the fight. Not only that, He does it for me and You. He does it for His own beautiful glory. He can never be bought off with our good works and false humility. He also believes the end justifies the means, but at great cost to Himself.

- The cross affords salvation as it looks like an anchor from a rescue helicopter.

- The Impossible for God

Scholars are always trying to shrink God down to do the "impossible". There are several things our loving God won't (and can't do) as I've noted elsewhere. One of those things is hating His creation. Another of those things is making an entity more powerful than Himself. But I think one of the most amazing impossible things God can't do is: He can't love you more than he already does. He loves you with His whole heart already. He has and does give His all to you. His all is all there is in the universe. There is no more. But His all is also eternal. God can't give more than an eternity of love. His is long and it's wide and deep and thick. It's long in space and long in time. It's quality and quantity. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being

rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” (Ephesians 3:17-18)

- Trucks are Masculine

I know that the feminists want to take over the whole world. I know that the feminists are in every industry: but their ridiculousness really comes out in the automotive industry. Some design basics first: straight lines are masculine. Curved lines are feminine. That goes for font shapes, architecture, art and yes, cars. So, why is the new F-150 from Ford so, well, curvy? It’s disgusting. A work truck is built by men and for men. A truck is supposed to be a rugged piece of equipment, but instead they have made it into a feminine bubble that looks ridiculous. In the quest for equality, egalitarians have turned trucks into something feminine. It’s such a joke. Ford must have realized their mistake and they redesigned the F-150 a few years later to be more square. Squares are more practical. Squares are masculine. Curves are not masculine, especially for a truck.

- A Real Man

Do you want to know what a real man is? A real man is a man who, after years of praying, takes his wife and three children and travel to a foreign land to share the gospel with those who have never heard it. That man, from my church, just left this past week to the Middle East. He will spend the rest of his life sharing Christ with those who desperately need Him. There is no guarantee of safety, success or the lack of problems, but he was willing to go to obey Christ. That’s a real man: obeying Christ no matter how hard it is.

- You can’t preach the gospel apart from helping the hurt in this world.

- You can’t have prejudice and be able to preach the gospel to every tribe, tongue, and nation. If you must have prejudice, have it against sin and not sinners: “rightly dividing the word of truth” (2

Tim 2:15b). God requires us “. . . to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Micah 6:8b)

- **Undefinable Gospel**

The gospel can't be defined any more than God can be defined. The gospel (literally, good news) has many different aspects to it: historical, personal, social, God-centric, etc. The gospel is eternal, just as God is eternal. For example, the creation itself is part of the gospel. Redemption, too, obviously is part of it. Consummation of the creation will also be part of the gospel. Jesus came “preaching the gospel of the Kingdom” (Mt 4:23) for example. How could He preach something that hadn't yet happened? Because history is but one aspect of the gospel. Another part of the gospel is the effect it has had in my own life. I have my own “good news”, so to speak. The gospel always points back to God.

- When you ground something that is electrical, it needs to be deep or you will be electrocuted. Roots, also, have to be deep if a tree is to grow. Our lives in Christ have to have deep roots in the Scriptures for when the storms of life come.

- Hope without Christ is not really hope. Or, to put it another way, Christ is the only One that gives true hope. There is no hope offered apart from Christ.

- God wants Your First, Your Best, Your All.

- Anything that you miss more than Bible reading is to be considered an idol. Anything that you miss more than spending time with the Lord is an idol.

- Humanity is divided into two parts: those who “help others” and those who “hurt others”. Unfortunately, Jesus is the only One who has ever been on the side of “helping others”. Everyone else has always been on the other side.

- Friends should help you to live out your purpose in glorifying God (not hinder you from it). Any “friend” that stops you from

glorifying God is not a true friend.

- Who Do You Follow?

If you look at the people surrounding Jesus just before He was crucified, you will notice everyone had an idol that they chose to worship other than God. For example, Judas, one of the twelve, followed Jesus, followed money and followed the anti-Roman movement. In the end, we see what idol, he really “followed”: money. Peter, another one of Jesus followers, chose, in the end, to save himself. His idol was self-preservation. In fact, all the disciples chose to follow their own lives rather than follow Jesus. Further away from Jesus, we see the high priests “followed” God, but in the end, crucified Him. They served their own pride (i.e. religion). Pontius Pilate, the governor examining Jesus’ case, chose to serve his own political self-interests rather than stand up for justice. Everyone had an idol that they chose to follow, rather than to follow the true God in the flesh: Jesus Christ. The ironic thing is, is that Jesus was dying for them, even as they were following their deaf and dumb idols. Jesus actually addressed Judas, Peter, Pontius and the high priests—if they were even listening— at the beginning of His ministry: “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Matthew 6:24)

- O Ye of Little Faith

Jesus asked his disciples (in the middle of a violent storm), “Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?” (Matthew 8:26) It’s a rhetorical question, because the answer is in the question (It’s not like Jesus didn’t know why they were fearful). Here is the answer: those of little faith are fearful. People who have little faith are defined by their fear. That’s why Jesus marveled at their little faith; Jesus doesn’t operate in “little faith mode”. He never has. We need to exhibit more faith like Jesus, but our faith has to be based in Jesus and not anything else.

- Whatever you stress over equals your idol. Idols create stress. Jesus creates peace.

- Jesus' Father is God the Father. And, God the Father is also our Father. However, Jesus, as the Second Person of the Trinity, created men and women. That makes Jesus our Father-Creator as well. That explains Jesus' fatherly title in Isaiah 9:6, "... everlasting Father".

- Two Blind Mens' Faith

"According to your faith be it unto you." (Matt 9:29). That statement by Jesus is scary for people like me who have little faith. I would have only had half an eye healed (or no eye healed) if Jesus' healing was "according to my faith". But, these two blind men followed Jesus for a while, crying unto Him. They even followed Him into the house asking Him to heal them. How long did He make them follow Him before He healed them? I don't know, but it may have been a while. These blind men had to work to get to Jesus, using their staffs to guide them, all the while crying to Jesus. Did Jesus do it for the people around, so the miracle would have the most people to experience it? Did He do it to test these blind mens' faith? Well, whatever faith they had, and the mercy that God showed them, allowed both men to be healed. "And their eyes were opened" (v.30). Everyone that heard the cries of these blind men must have been in the vicinity of where they were healed. And, if they weren't they certainly heard about it later, because: "when they were departed, they spread abroad his fame in all that country." (v.31) Their faith and their persistence certainly paid off. People with great faith in Jesus can't help but share with those around them.

- Worthy Converts

Matthew 10:11 says, "And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence." Inquire who is worthy. What does that mean? It means that there are worthy people and not worthy people to accept the gospel. Notice I didn't say "worthy and unworthy to hear the gospel". We are to seek out those, by asking, who has already been prepared by God. Worthiness is based on a seeking out for God already. Worthiness is a hunger, already inside of a person,

to accept the Good News. Who is hungry around you? Who needs to hear the Good News? Those are the people who you need to tell the gospel to. When these disciples entered new cities, they were to ask who was worthy. One way of doing this was probably asking, “Who keeps the Law around here?” or “Who goes to temple?” They were to go to those already following (or trying to follow the Law). Just like John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, by having many come to repentance, the Holy Spirit, too, prepares the hearts of those ready to accept the gospel. We just need to be faithful to preach it to them, and specifically seek out those who are ready. Jesus said, “but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.” (v.13) So, don’t worry about sharing with the wrong people; you’ll soon know if they are worthy or not.

- The Gospel is a Cup of Cold Water

Jesus says in Matt 10:42b, “whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.” As Christians, we need to be giving cups of cold water to anyone who is thirsty. And the ones that are thirsty happen to be the ones that don’t know Christ. The cup of cold water—the gospel—needs to be given freely, broadly and at all times. Once someone drinks of that water, it will refresh that person with new life and he will never be thirsty again. Jesus said in John 4:14, “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” The gospel, which allows the Holy Spirit to live in you, becomes an eternal well inside you, that you can always go to get refreshed. Let’s face it. This world is dry. It is dry of substance and fulfillment. But the people are thirsty. What can quench the dry tongues of those that are thirsty? Only Jesus’ gospel. We take cold water for granted these days. We just turn on a faucet, and out it pours. It wasn’t like that in Jesus’ day. If you wanted water, you had to physically walk to the local well, bring your own pot, lower your pot, pull up your pot and then carry that heavy pot home, just for it to be consumed again. It was a hard ordeal to get water. But here is Jesus saying that the Holy Spirit gives you your own well, inside you, to drink from. We

don't have to work for it. It is a freely given gift. That is amazing. Likewise, we must also freely give a cup of cold water to those in Christ and those outside of Christ.

- Bikers and Heaven

I've never met a Biker who didn't like skulls. Most bikers love death and skulls. They like to ride around. They like their freedom to go wherever they want. However, there is one place bikers (who don't love Christ) cannot ride to. Revelation 21:27 says, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." No motorcycle gang or biker will ever get into God's Kingdom, unless they fall on their face to him first. That's a hard thing for a biker to do. No biker wants to submit to authority. They are rebels by nature and proud of it. They hate cops and laws and anyone else who tells them what to do. They run from the law and fight the law. But they can't run or hide or fight God's Law. His Judgment is coming and there is nothing they can do about it. There is no isolated desert oasis to ride to and hide from God (Jonah learned that lesson). What is going to pay for their sins? Their ride shop? Their bike club? None of those things will matter on that day. All the people they surrounded themselves with will have their own worries that day. It will just be the Biker and God, face to face. The Biker will have to pay for his sins with his own blood. The only hope for a biker is Jesus. He is the truly free one. He is the powerful one that can go wherever He wants. Trust in Jesus, for it is only His blood that will cover all sins.

- ADD and Laziness

As long as someone has a medical condition, they are excused by their behavior. For example, millions of ADD and ADHD cases are diagnosed each year. But, those terms only excuse laziness in a child. In other words, ADD is just another word for laziness. No one wants to call a child lazy (it's not politically correct), but if you slap an ADD label on them, then they are excused to have no attention span and not to clean up their toys or do their homework. It's still laziness. And laziness is the problem with

children and all humans. It is part of our sin nature. We are born with it. We just want a life of ease. The Bible has a lot to say against laziness. Laziness can only be conquered by Jesus inside your heart.

- The Alternative

When God allowed the Fall to happen, He opened the floodgates of what a “life without God” would look like. It was never really a possibility before the Fall (fallen angels, notwithstanding). What would absolute freedom look like? What would a life look like if one were to not obey God? These were questions that the angels probably had after the rebellion of Lucifer and before the Fall of man. Well, God allowed the Fall to happen. And the alternative to loving and obeying God is only sin and death, pain and frustration. Any angel who thinks that he could have had it better if he would have gone over to Lucifer’s side, only has to look at mankind right now to know that a life without God is a walking death. To live without God inside you is foolishness and will end in foolishness. Mankind has a freedom never before enjoyed by any other creature, including angels. Angels could be somewhat envious of the freedom God laid upon us. However, though freedom is a great gift, it can be totally abused. And, that is what history has shown us. What has man done with the freedom that God gave him? He has only used it to break all of God’s commandments, to hate God and to hate his neighbor. History has shown us what mankind has done with freedom. There has not been a single man in all of history that has never sinned—except Jesus Christ. He is the only One that obeyed and loved God in His freedom. And, He came to show us how. Don’t dismiss Jesus as a weakling; He has lived a life that no one else ever could. He has loved God and His neighbor more than anyone else. That is not a weakling. That is the LORD of the universe.

- God’s Face Shining Upon You

What is the opposite of God’s face shining upon you? Answer: God’s face hiding from you! Who wants God to hide his face from you? He can and He hide it if you aren’t didn’t pleasing to Him. Numbers 6:25 says, “The LORD make his face shine upon thee,

and be gracious unto thee.” And in Psalm 31:16 it says, “Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies’ sake.” Please, don’t hide your face from me, Lord!

#### • Meeting Your Neighbor’s Need

Loving your neighbor as yourself means you think from their perspective (i.e. what is best for them?) For example, if my daughter wants to play, I should be thinking what does my daughter want. (Rather than doing what I would like to do) In love, I should be doing what my daughter wants or needs. She needs time with her Daddy; not time looking at the back of my head. That is love; thinking of the other person’s need and how to fulfill that need. Now, obviously, that is easier said than done. Some people, though needy, are very hard to show love to. Naturally, those people would be pushed further and further to the brims of society. But those people are exactly the people Christians should be reaching. Christians are the only ones capable of loving the unlovable. If the Christians don’t love the unloved, then no one will. Christians should leave no one behind in love, in this world. That is atrocious to think that the Church would be on this earth for 2,000 years and would effectively only love themselves and not those outside of the Church. We cannot do that. God has the Church here for a reason and it is to reach the unloved. Who knows, maybe that unloved person, that you show love to, will become a Christian that will reach millions of other unloved people. You don’t know. Therefore, every unloved person, needs to be loved. Every neighbor of ours should be thought of in our minds as, “What does my neighbor “need”?

#### • Christians’ Prejudice

It’s hard to imagine some Christians reaching the world, when right within our small Church community people who are not like everyone else are shunned. For example, think of a church where most of the members are skinny and therefore push the heavier people to the sidelines. Or, think about the popular people hang out together and the unpopular people are shunned. Think about the cliques of people bad-mouthing the other cliques. That is ridiculous, but it happens all the time. It is just evidence that

the Church is full of sinners that live by the flesh. The Church, if following Christ, needs to be loving everyone within the church, regardless of skin color, weight, sex, career choice, college major, interests and popularity status. I'm saying this as much to myself as I am to others. How did Christ say we would show our love to the world? By loving each other first. When the world sees us loving each other, the world will say, "Wow, I never thought imperfect people could love other imperfect people so well."

- Comfort Out of The Uncomfortable

Everything we do in life is about making it liveable and comfortable. It's because of the curse that we live in a fallen world. For example, we work in industrially loud/dusty/dirty environments so we can have a clean and liveable living environment at home. We trade pain for peace. We trade noise for quiet. We work hard so we can just (sigh) relax. On the other hand, Jesus traded joy for suffering so He could have greater joy. Hebrews 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." There is nothing wrong with relaxing and having the comforts of life, if they don't become an idol. How we do that is that, sometimes, we need to be like Jesus and give up our comforts so that other people can have comfort.

- God's Mercies

Just because God is merciful does not mean that He endorses your sins. Nor, does it mean that He doesn't exist. No, God's mercies are shown to you so that you will turn to Him. He allows you to enjoy the good things in life so that you look up someday and turn to Him. His mercies are not to be taken for granted. Judgment will fall someday on you; that will be the Day that He asks you, "Did you turn to me when my mercies were great?"

- Sometimes, one's day job isn't great at all (from experience). Jesus tastes good (from experience). Which experience will you follow? Is the pain of your day job more powerful than the strength God gives you?

- Jesus is the living embodiment of the Law. If the Law—the Ten Commandments—could start breathing, stand up and start talking— it would look like Jesus.
- Do you know how much mercy God has for a person? More than they will ever realize. He values the person; not what they've done.
- You have to have a love for the people you are trying to reach (rather than a sense of coolness) if you ever want to finish a project.

- Was Moses Schizophrenic?

The following are some comments Christian Bales' statement on his role as Moses in "Gods and Kings": "Moses is one of the most schizophrenic individuals I've ever read about." Is Mr. Bale a psychologist now and not just an actor? What qualifies him to make such an assertion? What is the difference between a schizophrenic and a hypocrite? If Christian Bale is so against schizophrenic individuals, then why did he take the role of Moses? Personally, I would rather be a schizophrenic than a hypocrite, taking roles only for money. The other thing about this comment is that Mr. Bale is going to reap judgment on himself. He disqualifies the living God as only a figment of Moses' imagination. That is dangerous territory to be treading upon. To ignore the living God and/or to criticize one of his servants is deadly. Moses' own sister, Miriam, criticized Moses and she got leprosy immediately. Mr. Bale's comments aren't even original though. Let's be honest here: these comments have been going around in academic circles for the last 100 years. I'm also pretty sure I've heard the schizophrenic comments in regards to Jesus and Paul's ministries. So, what are we to take away from this? Forget Mr. Bale; he has to answer to God for his sins. But Let's look at his assertion: schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a medical condition that is dangerous and unpredictable and harms the individual and allows someone to live in a non-reality world. This term is being applied to people like Jesus and Paul and Moses. Do you not think that this term will not be applied to all

Christians? How do you think Christians are going to be kicked out of America? Well, first off you have to make them 1) a threat, 2) unpredictable, 3) delusional for a God who “isn’t there”. Science can kick God (and Christians) out of America because of a medical term that they can apply at will: schizophrenia. Therefore, no Christians should be taken seriously. And, when they are taken seriously it should only be taken as threatening to your safety. My question is: if Moses was so schizophrenic, how did he pull off the biggest escape from slavery in history (about 2 million people)? If Jesus was so schizophrenic, how did he create the most loving religion the world has ever seen? And if Paul was so schizophrenic, how did he manage to overturn Gentile Europe to Christianity? This isn’t schizophrenia.

- James 1:2-3 says, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.” So, to summarize, one of faith’s end results is patience. And, faith is simply trusting God. So then, trusting God will lead to patience.

- Why Are Godless People Happy?

Happiness without focus is a mental insanity. Why are non-Christians happy or rather, fake happiness? There is no point to their happiness. There is no rhyme or reason to why they are “happy”. Some people hide behind their laughter and their smile, but underneath lies a huge devastated life of guilt and shame. They think masking their pain with their “happiness” will make it all go away. But it won’t. All their “happiness” will die when they die. All their “happiness” will die the moment they have a flat tire, get cancer or lose a loved one. What then? What good is their happiness if, in one moment, it can be shattered? Joy, on the other hand, is something that endures through all of life’s circumstances. Joy is something only a Christian can have. Joy isn’t rooted in in-the-moment feelings. Joy is rooted in Christ’s finish work on the cross. Joy can be experienced in all of life’s experiences.

- Anger

Some of the angriest people in the world are the quiet ones. You don't have to be loud and boisterous to show your anger; many people bottle up their anger and let it destroy themselves. Whether letting it out or keeping it in, the Bible is against unwarranted anger.

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- You will never find your dreams looking into your LCD screen. The world doesn't exist in an LCD screen. The world is outside it. Experience the real world outside of your LCD screen (the world God created).
- Smoking is usually excused as: "I need cigarettes to relax", but have you ever met a smoker? The last thing they are is "relaxed". They're fidgety and anxious and always need that smoke. Sure, they may be relaxed in that 5-minute smoke break, but at what expense? The whole day they are irate and angry. Smoking is not for relaxation; it's for an addiction to nicotine.
- God gives grace in the chaos.
- Because I am a very private person, my greatest enemies are busybodies: loud, boisterous people that put me on the spot in public. I can't stand people like that. People like that don't care if they are annoying others. They have no love for their neighbors who may want to be left alone.
- What and Who You Are?  
If a boy's actions are considered "nerdy" then he will be called a "nerd". If a girl's actions (or dress) is considered "slutty" then she will be called a "slut". A person's actions determine what the person is (and what others will think of that person). A name is just an identifier of what that person does. In other words, what descriptor is used on a person simply equals that person's actions. Consider God's actions: If God's actions are considered

“loving” then He is “Love”. He is the epitome of all that love has to offer. His actions define who He is. Also, He sacrificed all He had to be with us. That makes Him a “Savior”. Actions speak louder than words. It’s true. Calvary speaks louder than the Ten Commandments. So, the question is: how do others around me perceive me to be? Do they consider me to be loving, gracious, merciful, just, etc.? How do my kids consider me to be? Our actions on and off “the set” will determine what descriptors people use for us.

- Opinionated

I’m very opinionated. Being opinionated isn’t bad; it just means that you care about a lot of different topics. But, as important as those topics are, there is one topic I need to be constantly reminded of being opinionated about: my relationship with God. Having a real, honest and loving relationship is the most important thing in life, so do I believe it? Do I live it out?

- Women with Guns

One of the anomalies of the egalitarian-feminist movement has been in women taking on men’s roles. For example, think of a woman military soldier, a woman policeman or a woman prison guard. I saw a woman deputy pulling over a truck the other day. Seriously? Is the truck driver really going to take that woman seriously? It’s a joke. The government thinks if they give a woman a gun then that makes them just as efficient as men in stopping criminal activity. A gun doesn’t make a soldier. Women are driven by emotions and emotions is no place for a woman with a gun. I know, I’m just so backwards in my thinking that I believe in any justice/law situation that a man should be in charge; not a woman. Men are heads of the households, and, by extension should be heads of cities, counties, states and countries. Never do we see a queen over Israel (Jezebel still had to answer to King Ahab, though she manipulated him).

- Good Friday

Good Friday is the death of God. It is also the death of sin. But, rarely, is it discussed that it is the death of justice. Justice died

that day. Have you ever known of a creature to kill its creator? Can you fathom the injustice in that act? Yes, God allowed it to happen, but it is still injustice on mankind's end. The death of justice, though, truly is the death of mankind (for if man can't exhibit justice there is no life in him). Eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden was the beginning of the end for mankind. Killing our Creator at Calvary was the end. Mankind, as a creature deserving mercy, ended that day, for we had killed our Creator/ King. To kill the One who gave you life is rebellion to the fullest. 4,000 years of rebellion had finally paved the way to actually, physically kill our Creator in A.D. 33; not exactly something to be proud of. Once you kill your Creator— now what? How do you live? How do you navigate through life? He's the One that laid out everything about this world; without Him you are completely lost. Maybe mankind should have thought through the repercussions before killing Him on the tree. The death of mankind is on Calvary. Once mankind murdered God, everyone is up for grabs. What a terrible existence. What a terrible life to live; not what God intended for it to be. That's why God, three days later, rose from the dead. Resurrection Sunday is the death of Death. It validates all of Jesus' teachings and Godhood. When has anyone ever walked out of their own grave? It doesn't happen. Jesus did. And His Resurrection gave us new life— whoever believes in Him. He used our rebellion to pave the way for the ultimate sacrifice (that cures our rebellion). He saved the rebels. He forgave mankind for his sedition. The death of mankind turned out to be the life of mankind— new life in Christ. Only God could do something so wonderfully gracious as this. We owe our lives to Him.

- The Public Witness

Those who just agree to get along really have no spine or opinion. They would rather feign a fight in the shadows but it's against no one. The battle is in the public setting. Fail at that and all other efforts are minimalized. It means you are a hypocrite in the public setting and a true Christian in private. But you can't separate those. Your opinions should be known to all.

- Death, the Enemy

I see a lot of roadkill on the road, to and from work. The other day, I saw a little kitten in the road, dead. Death is ugly. Anyone who has ever been to a funeral knows that. Death is the thing we, as men, spend our whole lives fighting (with diet, exercise, nutrition) and, in the end, still succumb to it. Death is patient. He knows that he has all of us. He may not get you today, but he knows that he will get you eventually. Death is strong and seemingly invincible. He has all of us earmarked. You can't run from death; you can only prolong it. That's why Jesus saw our enemy, Death, and came to destroy Him, 2,000 years ago, after being crucified and experiencing the pain of death, he rose out of his tomb and walked out. Death had no power over the One who didn't sin. Death didn't know what to do with the One called Life. Death has no grip on Life. Life slipped right out of Death's tight fist and Life escaped. He was the only One ever to escape Death's power. Now, Jesus lives to show us how to escape Death's power. Jesus is here, now, among us, always near to show us how to live and defeat Death. He came to defeat physical and spiritual death. Right now, physical death still has some power, but even that will go away. In the meantime, follow Jesus to escape spiritual Death.

- America's Love with Death

Have you noticed how much America loves death? Just walk through any movie aisle at the store and you will see that most of the movies' covers show blood, gore, someone holding a gun or some ugly-horror-like Photoshop picture. America loves death and ugliness. She loves those things because her heart is sinful. America loves watching the ugly and experiencing the ugly and doing the ugly. Even little girls' toys are now zombie-dolls with their own zombie-pets. How many purses and wallets have skulls on them? How many blouses and shirts have skulls on them? What is this, the 1600's pirate-age, where everyone is a pirate out for everyone else's stuff? America is a pirate culture—hence all the pirate movies and cartoons. OK—just to state the obvious: pirates aren't heroes. Let's just get that out there. Pirates are thieves and robbers and murderers who lust after wealth. Pirates are terrorists. So, can someone please tell me why there is so much love for pirates in this culture? It's because pirates are anti-heroes.

Pirates are ugly. America loves that which is ugly. America loves those people/heroes/anti-heroes who are close to death because they are “shamans” to bring us closer to Death. Death is really what America is after. And those who live ugly lives and self-destructive lives usher us into the great unknown called, Death. America murders her own Pre-Born babies in the womb, the ultimate worship of Death. The movies are just showing America who she is and what she does behind closed doors. She is a murderer at heart and the culture is simply a mirror of America’s ugly lifestyle. For any Christian immersed in culture and movies: get out. We are to be in America, but not of America. America’s love for death has consequences and that is why she is falling apart today. Turn to Christ, the giver of life and see how sweet and beautiful and lovely life is as opposed to the death-culture America has to offer.

- John the Baptist Upheld God’s Law

Is it stupid to die for God’s Law? Say, would you die for calling someone out because they are an adulterer? Would you die for calling someone murderers and liars according to God’s Law? Well, John the Baptist did. He died because he preached that adultery was sin. He held the concept of faithfulness in marriage (God’s Law) so high, that he was willing to confront the leader of his land (Herod) and say, “It is not lawful for thee to have her.” (Matthew 14:4) John was essentially saying, “You are a sinner in need of a Savior. Repent of your sins and follow God’s Law”. God’s Law wasn’t trivial to John the Baptist. It wasn’t something to just say, “Aw, well, follow it if you like, but if not, oh well. I’s no big deal.” No. God’s Law was willing to be died for and the basis for which to fight evil in his land. John realized that God’s Law points out sin. It’s a heat-seeker missile that goes around all the gobbledygook and lands right in your heart. God’s Law is without mercy; it will find your sin wherever it is at. It’s like a bunker buster missile. John the Baptist counted the cost in confronting his leader and was put to death for it. He was willing to call out sin publicly and say, “No, this is not right; this is sin”. He realized that if everyone had a casual attitude towards God’s Law, it would affect everyone in the community. God’s Law to John,

wasn't something just extra to add to someone's bag of tricks. It was the very foundation by which all morality and society is held together. It is the mocking of God's Law that rips society apart; that rips families and neighborhoods apart. So, let me ask you something: God's Law is important: are you willing to stand up for God's Law? If you know something is going on in America, or in your own neighborhood that is contrary to God's Law—are you going to confront it, or just look the other way? There are several sinful movements that have gained so much traction in America because Christians have looked the other way. John the Baptist didn't look the other way—he confronted sin head on and took the consequences. Let's get one thing straight: it's man's "progressive ideas" for society that is destroying the moral fiber of this nation. It's happening slowly but it will be the destruction of America. Without God's morality, America is headed towards an Aztec, human-sacrifice mentality. God's Law preserves and protects—just like the police force (minus the corruption). We need some John the Baptists in this society to call out sin, point people to God's Law and in doing so, point people to Jesus, the Savior.

- The Wages

“For the wages of sin is death”. (Romans 6:23a) So, if you want to sin, you are going to die. It's that simple. When Adam and Eve disobeyed the Lord of the Universe, they died. The wages of sin is death. But praise God that the verse doesn't end there. The verse continues with “but”: “but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23b) So even though we deserve our wages (death) because we sin, God gives us an everlasting gift—eternal life through His Son. This is the kind of God doesn't let us go and will make a way to keep us, even if it hurts His own Son.

- Truth needs to be lived out and preached to this dead world. Truth needs to be seen in our actions. The greatest preaching we will ever do is with our hands (which will match our words). “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” (James 2:20)

- This world is as dead as Christ was. Christ was laid in a tomb and the world is buried. If the resurrected Christ can resurrect Himself from the dead, He can certainly resurrect this dead world. He knows what being dead is all about. He's been there and back.

- "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." So, in other words, the LORD's = us not being consumed.

- The Gospel, the Solution to Disasters

The gospel is the only protection you need for all of life's disasters. It is the only solution; the only antidote. Life is worthless and can't be bandaged up without the gospel. The gospel is the glue that holds all of life's troublesome parts together. It unifies the good and the bad. The gospel is your only hope; your only sanity to this world. Without it, you are just a wave tossed upon the rocks.

- God Doesn't Need

Does God need me to have a college degree before He can bless me? Does God need to be sin free before I can fellowship with Him? Of course not. God doesn't need anything from anybody to bless people. He can use the most dimwitted person if they have committed their life to Him. Education, or lack thereof, is not an indicator of evangelizing this world with the gospel.

- Security Guards

Has anyone realized the rise in private security guards in the last 10-20 years? While growing up, I never saw any security guards. Now, there is a security guard in every store. Why is that? Because the rise of theft. More and more thieves are being born every day because of the society we live in. This selfish, God-hating society makes people poor and desperate (and desperation leads to thievery). If people were more generous with what they had, and if people were willing to work for what is theirs, there would be no rise in crime (and thus no need for security guards). Of course, a turning back to God's Law (thou shalt not steal) wouldn't hurt, either.

- Bethlehem was just the tip of the iceberg of God's love.

- "Gods" are simply ideas that you adhere to, worship and obey. Gods are what a person follows. They don't exist, though. They only exist in one's mind. Gods will leave you take all that you have and leave you for dead. Contrast that with GOD, who gave you all and left everything He had.

- Our Self-Destructive Nature

Left alone, we will destroy ourselves. Our nature is self-destructive; not just here on earth but on Judgment Day. Our imaginations are evil, our dreams are selfish, what we wish for are idols to worship. Our self-made gods will destroy us. Our lust for power and wealth and pleasure will leave us for dead. All these things point away from the Source of Life. Any dream or imagination that points you away from Christ is not of Christ and will destroy you. Why? Because we put a misplaced value on God's gifts rather than on the Giver of the gifts.

- Gastric Bypass and Abortion

I've heard people say, "If I get fat eating fast food, then I'll just get gastric bypass." That statement is very close to another statement that says, "If I get pregnant, I'll just abort the baby." Both statements hold science as their god and both statements publish a belief that real actions should not have real consequences. Let's look at the first similar statements, "If I get fat eating fast food, then I'll just get gastric bypass." Someone who chooses to eat fast food, rather than home-cooked meals has made a conscious decision to value convenience over nutrition. No one put them up to it, but that is what they have chosen to do. Fast food is completely unhealthy. It's fast, but to call it food is stretching the definition of that word. Most people know that fast food is not nutritious for you. So, to go into eating fast food several times a day is walking into that scenario with that with that knowledge. Getting fat and getting unhealthy is a natural consequence of that conscience decision. Basically, if I eat this, I will end of like this. . . . When the person does end up obese, they think that they get a "get out of jail free card" by having gastric bypass. Gastric bypass,

a modern scientific breakthrough, allows someone to skip out on the natural consequence of their actions. The natural consequence of eating fast-food is bypassed by paying a doctor and moving on with one's life. Several problems with this: it doesn't fix the fast food problem. How someone got to the obese/unhealthy state that they are in, is because of a certain mentality that they can do whatever they want with no consequences. Guess what: a post-gastric bypass person has the same "I-can-do-whatever-I-want-mentality". That's the problem. If they can just "get out of it" then they will think that way for the rest of their life. So, in reality, judgment for bad decisions is disregarded because of modern gastric bypass surgery. (I could argue that gastric bypass has judgment associated with it, too, but I won't get into it; let's just assume that judgment will catch up to the person someday.) Let's look at the other statement, "If I get pregnant, I'll just abort the baby." Women can sleep around and be unfaithful to men, get pregnant, and still have an out. Abortion takes away the natural consequence of loose-living: a baby. It provides the impetus for sin. Rather than putting their faith in one husband, women would rather put their faith in science –abortion–when "things get bad". The abortionists want women to believe that they will "be there for them" when everything falls apart" (i.e. when they get pregnant). Abortionists won't let them down; "put your faith in us", they say. My question is: why not quit fornicating and quit sleeping around and find one husband who will love you? Wouldn't that be simpler than having to abort your baby because of your sin? And, by the way, aborting your baby won't get rid of your guilt; it won't abolish your sin. It only heaps more guilt on you. Much like the gastric bypass mentality–abortion won't fix the inside of a person's heart. What it does leave in its path of destruction is a destroyed mother and a murdered baby. "There's always an out for getting pregnant"–really? Abortion is a hack for when one gets pregnant. Unfortunately, the hack eventually breaks and judgment still falls, but it is more judgment than if the woman would have just given birth. Once a woman has put her faith in science, and an abortion has been made, where is science? The abortionist isn't there to comfort the broken mother's guilty soul. No scientist is there to take away a woman's guilt. Science fails to deliver a real

solution. Science, regarding abortion, just like in gastric bypass, cannot cure a dark, sinful heart. Re-engorging on fast food and re-sleeping around is just around the corner for the unredeemed heart. And the cycle continues. Only Jesus can take you out of this vicious cycle. Quit putting your faith in science and put your faith in Him. He is the solution to your dark heart; He is the real solution to real guilt and real consequences.

- Jesus loves you. His blood paid your sin debt.

- **Ridiculing Others**

Making fun of people is basically putting yourself above others. You can tell how proud a person is by how many people he ridicules, make fun of and looks down upon. It is the same sort of mentality that led to what the Nazis did to the Jews. Once a person (or person group) is devalued in your eyes—it's all justified whatever you do to them. When a human becomes less than "made in the image of God"; there is a devaluing there that allows you to murder, steal, rape and pillage. You have to hate someone so much to be able to justify any evil to a fellow human. In addition, when you complain about a third party to someone else, you are basically evangelizing to your friend about your hate-religion. "Come join me in hating so-and-so because of x, y, z." If they don't agree with you, they are added to the hate-list. If they do agree with you, you've got a convert (i.e. two against one). That's the goal of gossip: getting converts to your side. The more converts, means more moral support to hate the enemy. But none of this matters. Hate and devaluing only hurts the person doing the hating. It will eat them up inside.

- **Respect-Bullies**

When people think that the world owes them respect; pride is their idol. A proud person demands that others respect them for any number of reasons: (how hard I work, I'm a good person, I'm talented etc.). In other words, a proud person thinks they are better than everyone around them and don't respect others. In giving respect to a proud person, you are enabling them to continue in their pride; continuing in their worship of self. Those

who worship the respect-god and the pride-god are bullies, because if someone doesn't respect them, they bully that person until they do ("You better respect me or I'll beat you up!" "OK! OK! I respect you!") But the people who falter and "respect" them only do so out of fear or hatred; not out of love. The sad part is in the pursuance of respect, the Respect-Bully actually gets no respect from anyone. The Respect-Bully may stop the whining and complaining, but as far as ever really receiving any real respect from someone; forget it. They lost that when they started bullying people around.

#### • Cussed At

When you get into a heated altercation with someone and you are cussed at and called every name on earth, there is a few things, as a Christian, that you should keep in mind. 1) Stand firm on Christ. He is unmovable and will not allow mere words to shake you. 2) The words/names being directed towards you are lies from the pit of hell. Lies have no power. Only truth has power. 3) Consider the source. Who is saying these things to you? Someone you respect? Someone who would be worthy of respect would not be saying these things to you. Anyone else, well, who cares what they say about you? Who cares what their opinion is of you. 4) words do hurt, so give your hurt to Christ. He will heal you. 5) Being cussed out is awful and words do hurt—but as a sinner (saved by the grace of God) we actually deserve much more wrath than that. We deserve hell-fire and an eternity from the Lord. What are mere words in light of eternity in Christ? 6) Remain humble. As a Christian, you are nothing. Remember that. All that you have or don't have is because of Christ. 7) God is sovereign. He is above all and has allowed someone to cuss you out. What is He trying to teach you in this moment? 8) Remember Christ suffered much more than you will ever suffer. And He wasn't just cussed at. 9) You have to forgive. You have to forgive because Christ forgave you of everything—worse sins that you did to Him. 10) Remember that you used to be a sinner who would cuss out someone in a heartbeat. You used to be the person cussing you out. You have done and said much worse to others (though you are forgiven now). 11) God knows you are being attacked unjustly. It isn't right.

God will judge this person for attacking you unjustly—just like God will put all enemies under His feet 12) You will be justified, even if it isn't in this life. You are to remain faithful to the living Christ. 13) Do not lash back. Remain calm. You don't have to sink to their level to make a point. Do not over-talk them. Make your points calmly and when they aren't talking. 14) Do all to glorify God. Staying calm, not being moved, respecting even though they aren't respecting you—all these things show the strength of Christ. All these things tear down strongholds. Who can move the one who is in Christ? No one. The victory is God's. He will never lose.

- Lovers of God will always be hated by haters of God. Haters of God will never love you because they will never love God. A hater of God is a hater of man.

- Christian's Hard Life

When you signed up to be a Christian, you signed up for a hard life. Did you think it would be easy? You signed up to be treated like Jesus was treated. You signed up to war against your flesh every day. You volunteered to be the outcast of society, backstabbed and beaten. But, as you know, it is all worth it to have Christ as my own. I would rather get cussed out every day if I can have Christ. I would rather get backstabbed everyday just as long as I have Christ. This life is a blip on the screen of eternity. It will soon be over. Live for Christ; all trials and tribulations can be considered nothing.

- Bullies Being Bullied

Bullies are usually at a loss for words when they themselves are bullied. They are beside themselves when confronted by anyone. Why? Because they think that they are above everyone else and can do no wrong. And when Goliath is confronted by a David, Goliath thinks, "How dare this little pipsqueak; I'll crush him so fast he won't even know what hit him." It's in that moment that God gives you the strength to stand firm and win the fight.

- Users Are Never Satisfied

Users are never satisfied with either people or things. They are

never satisfied with people, because people are simply assets to them. Assets eventually dry up and when they do, it's time to find another asset (i.e. person they can use). They also are never satisfied with things, for it doesn't matter how many things the user gets (from those being used), he is always ready for the next thing. He must keep using to satisfy his never-ending cravings for things.

- **Worshipping the Same Idol**

People who worship the same god will almost always get along. Why? Because they worship the same thing (i.e. a sports team, a kind of beer, athletics, movies, foods, etc.) Those who don't worship the same god as you do, will never hang out with you, because free time is essentially worship time. Free time is the time you spend worshipping your god. Why would someone spend it with someone else who doesn't worship the same god as you do? Christianity is different. We worship the true God. That's why Christians can enjoy all kinds of activities with fellow Christians (even if it's not exactly what they like to do) because they worship the living Christ.

- **True Worship to The True God**

One of the main ways of worshipping God is by not worshipping any other god. Think about it: you worship the true God by making sure He is the only One you are worshipping. That is true worship to the true God. No other god should have preeminence in your life. All other gods are non-existent. So, a turning away from the non-existent gods is a turning to the one, True Reality. Reality is something to be worshiped.

- **Free by Not Fearing**

I think as Christians we sometimes forget how free we are. Think about how free we are: we don't fear people, we don't fear death, we don't fear God. We love God, we fight against strongholds and principalities. We, of all people on earth, truly have nothing to fear. We can't be bullied into doing something against God's Law. Christians, in short, are a formidable enemy. No wonder the world wants us dead! The world says, "A people who doesn't fear the

government or death or loss of freedom or possessions—that is a people that can't be used or abused. That is a people who can't do our bidding! What good are they? They should be destroyed.” We are so free that imprisonment and capital punishment can't break us. Christians have stood as the lone wolves, the lone enemies of states and governments for all history because we are so free that they can't stop our freedom. They wish they had it, but they want our freedom apart from God.

- Hiding Sin

It's funny how the world looks at the same situation and will deliberately use less harsh words when trying to calm a conscience. One example is sin. The world never talks about “sin”. They will talk about “miscommunication” or “it was a mistake”, but they will never admit what they did was sin. Christians are the only ones that can bring any sense of reality to this farce. The world wants to believe that all the world's problems are but “miscommunication” and “mistakes”—give me a break. It's sin and man's sin nature.

- If you're going to be hated by the world, just make sure you are hated for the right reason: your love for Christ.

- The middle is the safest place to be with men and the most dangerous place to be with God.

- Not Valuing Christ's Blood

It's sad that people don't value their own souls enough to even stop worshiping the devil. For example, ACDC sang a song called, “Highway to Hell”. So, they made millions of dollars on some stupid song. With that money they partied it up and then the lead singer choked on his own vomit, in a drunken stupor one night. He was on the highway to hell. He was willing to worship the devil in exchange for some money and materialism. The devil laughed all the way to the bank when the lead singer died and went to the grave. He didn't value his own soul enough to look to Christ. He didn't value Christ's blood and paid the penalty.

- The Interview

It's amazing how many interviews a person goes through in life. For example, during a lifetime, a person will go on several job interviews for various positions. The companies will interview this person to see if he is a good fit for the position. In buying a house is another example that you and your spouse will be interviewed by the homebuilder and the lender. In renting an apartment, you also will be in an interview. Even before you are married, you are interviewing the person (i.e. dating) the person you want to marry. Interviews are important; they allow you to make a good decision to proceed or stop with the procedure. So, tell me, why would you think heaven would be any less different? Do you really think there won't be an interview to see if you are fit for heaven? Think about it: if God is going to have you in his home for all of eternity—don't you think He wants to know a little bit about you first? Some questions He will probably ask you: do you love me? How did you love me? Did you love my Son? What evil did you do? Be prepared for these questions. Don't be caught with no answer. The only answer you should have on your lips in that moment is, "Jesus Christ's Blood".

- One Choice

You were made for ONE choice. Your life revolves around one choice you will one day make. You can mess up on everything else in life—you can make mistakes, mess up, sin your whole life and, yes, even destroy your life—just don't make the wrong decision when it comes to the ONLY decision you were made for. What were you made for? What is the choice, the question you will face some day? It is this: do you love God? Will you answer yes or no? And, love is defined by Him, not you.

- Broken in A Broken World

Obviously, God didn't think letting Eve take the bite of forbidden fruit (and all the subsequent evil happening afterwards) would take away His control of this universe. All creation groaning to God isn't a handicap to His ability to rule the world. Despite what people say that this world is broken (and it is) God allowed it to happen regardless. If a broken world isn't an impediment to

God—then God must really believe that His love is more powerful than evil. He must really have true Love that can break through all evil circumstances. His love must be able to shine through even the most evil and broken circumstances in this evil world. Brokenness simply means you can desire to be made whole. And being made whole is His specialty. Brokenness is life apart from God. But you are wired to know who your Savior is. Brokenness can't take away the beauty of this world either. The world is still beautiful and humans can still experience much joy in this world despite the brokenness of the world. Who made beauty? God did. Who made evil? Man and Satan (God allowed it to happen). God knows that you will seek Him and He is waiting for you. He is drawing you nearer to Him (despite you living in the evil world). And, eventually all evil will be eradicated.

- You should spend your life not being like the devil, God's enemy. I mean, who wants to act like God's enemy? No one. But people live out the devil's existence every single day.

- Jealous of Beauty

Beauty comes with a price, namely enduring all those jealous of you. Snow White is essentially a story of God VS Satan. Satan, the ugly one, wants to be beautiful but can't. Therefore, his will is to destroy the one who is more beautiful than he (like in Snow White). What Satan doesn't realize is that beauty isn't just outward; it's inward. He only sees God's beauty from the outside. He thinks God's heart is ugly/weak but wants His beauty/strength on the outside to rule the universe in his own way. Again, Satan has no idea how the universe works. He didn't create it. He doesn't know (or cares) that God is the One that created the universe and it is only by His strength that it is sustained. Satan is continually disappointed. God continually frustrates his plans to rule the universe. And, like the Evil Queen in Snow White, will one day die.

- God's Law is over all aspects of life. The Law, as its own force, treats all equally under its authority. The Law answers to God alone above it and answers to no one below it.

- Fighting Evil in the Life

It can sometimes be a little disconcerting/frustrating that I spend my time fighting evil, but that is what God says to do. Micah 6:8 says, “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” This life is meant to enjoy God; but in enjoying Him there are billions of people who are suffering (either from themselves or from others). It is in that context that I am called to fight evil. Why should I be able to enjoy God while millions of others send themselves to hell for eternity? The evil is quite overwhelming. So, it is imperative that the fighting take place only with the strength of God. We cannot (nor should we try) fight evil within our own strength.

- Respect Others

Those who demand respect don't deserve respect. It's those who are always complaining (that they don't receive respect from others) that actually never give respect to anyone else! Is it any wonder why they don't get any respect? Respect is supposed to be mutual. But if someone is always complaining about the lack of respect (or worse) bullying people to respect you—they will never get it.

- Water of Life

Water, with the help of gravity, will always find the lowest path. It will always find the lowest, deepest part. It is interesting to note that Jesus is called the Water of Life. He too, will find the deepest, darkest part of your heart and enter it and make you a new creature. His clear, clean, holy, life-giving water will always find the most hidden things of your heart and cure you.

- Don't Make A Deal with God

People, when in a hard situation, always try to make a deal with God: “If you get me out of this, I'll (fill in the blank)”. But one of the reasons why God doesn't answer those prayers your free will. Yes, God wants you to love Him regardless what He does for you or not (and sometimes He lets the natural consequences of this

fallen world take shape). If He answered your prayers in exactly the way you wanted every time, two things would happen: 1) Your free will would be null and void and 2) He would be giving you your destruction (as your sinful nature asks for things that will destroy you). Don't make a deal with God. Just love Him as He is. Don't love Him for His blessings or lack thereof; love Him for who He is.

- Focus on the Almighty

Is your heart focused on circumstances or on God? Is your heart always thinking about things or on the Almighty? If God is not where your thoughts are, then you have idols in your heart. If you are thinking about the creation and not the Creator, you have idols. If you are thinking about your circumstances and not God, you have idols. Perhaps the idols that need to be destroyed in your life are: materialism, possession, freedom, pride, envy, control, perfection, etc.

- Managers are Meant to Protect

Managers of employees are hired to stand in the gap. Their job is to protect the company (i.e. the owner) and protect the employee. When a manager fails to do that, he fails at his purpose. For example, consider a manager who works for a penny-pinching owner and never stands up for getting safety equipment. Then, one day, a worker gets hurt because there was no safety equipment available. That manager has that person's life/health on his conscience. It is sad when saving pennies takes precedence over life-saving measures. Managers need to have the courage to stand up for what is right – whether the owner is doing something wrong or the employee is doing something wrong.

- True conversion never works if the recipient is still holding onto the belief that material possessions are more important than God's own presence. That's why the word of faith movement doesn't make real converts. There is still an idol there (materialism) that is standing in the way of coming to know God.

- Worshiping the God Who is Far Beyond Me

I wouldn't want a God who isn't holy. He has to be holy. Any god who would just let any old sinner (like me) come into His house isn't worthy of worship. He has to be so far above sin that I can worship Him. There has to be standards that He Himself lives up to. There has to be a gap between Him and me. If He is too close to me (i.e. not that holy) then what is so special about him? No. God is so beyond what we can comprehend of holiness. His every attribute speaks wonders. And His every attribute (whether actions or heart) are so beyond my abilities that I can't help but worship Him.

- Reciprocal Justice

Reciprocal Justice is married to the concept of loving you neighbor as yourself. If you plan on doing something to hurt someone else, then you should be prepared to have that exact thing done to you by someone else. If you don't want that terrible thing done to you, then you should think twice about doing it to someone else. This isn't karma. This is how God's judgment works. That's why he tries to steer us away from our evil inclinations to hurt others by saying love your neighbor. The more you hurt others is the more you are setting yourself up to get hurt. Whether you're a gangster or an unfaithful lover, hurting others will only catch up to you. Why? Because when you hurt others around you, you are teaching others around you how to act (and they will someday act that way to you).

- That Cute Little Religion

The world would love to push Christianity away from public view as possible. The world wants to push the Church to be so irrelevant and so marginalized that it is basically forgotten "in the real world". The world is fine with Christianity, as long as Christians keep their little religion to themselves. Christianity, they say, is not compatible with science or engineering or entertainment or education or politics. If Christians start delving into any of those areas (and pushing their exclusive ideas around), there will be a war. The world wants just label Christianity as just "a religion", because religions are basically "fairy tales" that can be ignored and have nothing to do with day to day life. ("That's

nice, Sweetie, you can go ahead and believe that nonsense if you want to”). The public setting in society is Satan’s domain. When the Church starts getting involved in public matters, it is attacked. We see this time and time again. The only time the Church isn’t attacked (at least not as much) is when Christians keep their opinions to themselves, sing quietly to God by themselves, read their little devotionals, pray to God quietly, watch their little Christian movies, etc. Guess what, though, the world is a terror to Christians regardless. The Church will be attacked regardless if they keep their faith private or public. So why not go public with it? 1 Peter 2: 20b-21 says this: “. . . But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.” What Peter is saying is that we are to suffer for Jesus’ sake—publicly. Jesus was hung on a tree publicly. So should Christians. Christians cannot keep their faith to themselves any more than a crack in Hoover Dam can hold back Lake Mead. Truth cannot be privatized. Socialize the Truth. Publish it. Don’t be afraid. Quit hiding behind your church walls, Church. The world hates you anyway. Do you think they will hate you any less if you don’t “bother them”? No. They know who you are. You are a threat, Church, to Satan’s dominion. The world is quite happy that their intimidating tactics (like lawsuits and smear campaigns) have made Christians retreat to their churches. Look, the world’s domain is the public forum and they don’t flinch at parading their evil ideas. Christians cannot retreat from the marketplace of ideas. They need to be right in the middle of them, in pop-culture, in politics, in schools and in the workplace. The world’s evil ideas cannot go unchallenged.

- Your Body is a Gift

Don’t take it for granted that you can move your hands and feet. God doesn’t have to give hand and feet muscle movement to anyone. He doesn’t have to give full brains. He can give partial brains. He can give muscles that don’t work “properly”. He can give whatever He wants. Muscles and brains are gifts; gifts that we too often take for granted. Be thankful for what you have and

thankful for what you don't have.

- Is Christianity Evil?

When everyone is saying the same thing, you really have to think for yourself. For example, when the whole world is saying "Christians Are Evil", "Christians Are Hypocrites", "I Hate Christians", "Christians Are Judgmental" you really have to study the issue for yourself. Are Christians evil? Are they hypocrites? It's easy to parrot blanket statements like that from the media establishment, but is it true? The truth is that Christians, despite their shortcomings, have produced more good in the world than all the other religions combined. Christianity has lightened the load of billions of people throughout history; not put burdens on them. Christianity freed the world from atheistic, evolutionary, idol-worshiping thought and replaced it with true worship of the one true God. It's because Christians speak the truth and believe the truth that the world hates them. The world doesn't want to come to the light; they love the darkness. Christians aren't out to win a popularity contest; they are out to do the will of God. The world is described perfectly in John 1:5 which states, "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." The world hates us but continues to build on the foundations that Christians built. Oh, they will ridicule laws and order and justice (which all originated from the Christian Bible) all the while enjoying a peaceful, non-war-torn environment. The truth is, though Christians are hypocrites and judgmental, they are still God's imperfect people that have been forgiven. They are His bride. And because they are His Bride, the world hates them. They want the blessings that come with Christian labor, but without the people. The world will gladly use the Christians' naivete to get what they want, all the while backstabbing their philosophy. So, what is a Christian to do? Fight back? No. A Christian is to continue fearing and loving God and the God-haters.

- Food as Security

People find their comforts in life in several things: drink, drugs, sex, food, etc. One of those areas, though not sinful in itself (food) can become a refuge in times of trouble. I get it. It's easy to run

to food when times are hard. But the thing is, that God is your refuge—not food. He comforts the downcast. He is your refuge and shelter. He is your rock. Not snacks and sweet treats (though they're very yummy). Perhaps God is trying to teach us that He alone is our comfort; not comfort food.

- If You Can't See My Mirrors

“If You Can't See My Mirrors, I Can't See You”. Have you ever seen this sign on a truck's trailer? I want to relate this sign to one's relationship with God: if you can't see through God's eyes, He can't see you. Or, to put it another way, the only way that God can see you is through Christ. If you are not in Christ, God cannot see you and will crush you. Basically, anyone standing outside of Christ will be crushed one day. God will destroy everything that is not inside of Him. In short, if you can't see Him right now, ask Him to open your eyes, so that He can let you in.

- Believe All the Bible All the Time

What kind of comfort is it on your death bed to say, “Well, the Bible isn't accurate in everything.” What part are you going to believe on your death bed? When times are good, it's easy to pick out the unsavory parts of the Bible that you don't want to believe. When times are bad, we tend to believe all the Bible. Why can't we believe all the Bible all the time?

- Calvary, the Meeting Place

All my righteousness and all my sin are on the cross at Calvary. It's where sin and righteousness meet. It is the only place they ever will meet. It's the only time God will meet with man. No other time or place. (Every other time and place that God does meet with man is because of Calvary).

- Cursing God

Cursing God, besides being condemned plainly in Scripture, is just illogical. For example, Exodus 20:7 says, “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.” Leviticus 24:15-16 says, “And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel,

saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.” Blasphemy and taking God’s name in vain (whether in word or thought) is a sin worthy of death. It is worthy of the death penalty because you have no respect for the One who created you. Why do people curse God? What instances in life are so drastic as to curse your Maker? Because you didn’t make the green light? Because you had to park far away? Because you have a lot of emails to go through? Cursing is petty because cursing is simply a frustration due to something not working out your way. My question is: how do you know if your way was the “best” way? The only way you would know if your way is the “best” way is if you were omnipotent. And, obviously omnipotence is only the Lord’s. How many times have we thought that “our way” was the “best way” and, for circumstances that we couldn’t control, had to use the “other way” and it turned out that the “other way” actually was the best way. Had you cursed God for your way not being done to begin with, you may not have even discovered the other way. In other words, you can’t curse what you don’t know. And when you do curse God, you are cursing the One who does know. You, as a finite human, don’t know if your way is the best way. You don’t know anything; you are not omnipotent like God. Don’t curse the One who knows all. He will not hold you guiltless. In fact, rather than cursing God for when things go wrong, ask Him to help you. Rather than having hopelessness in a situation, have hope in God. Rather than cursing God (by blaspheming His name), put your faith in Him and say, “God, this situation looks impossible, but you are the Lord over all. I pray that you can work through these dire circumstances and make it turn out for good.” That is called placing your trust in God. Blaspheming God, on the other hand, is a complete lack of trust in the Almighty. Blaspheming God says, “You don’t know what you’re doing, God, and I do, therefore I curse your name.” Trusting God humbles yourself under the mighty hand of God and says, “I trust you regardless of what I see in front of me.” You don’t think God can change your

circumstances? You don't think He is powerful enough to move you through the darkest hours? The truth is that He is powerful enough. He is the Lord of all. His name is to be praised above all other names. Happy circumstances are not my god. Christ is my God. Happy feelings are not my God. Jesus is my God. Like a marriage vow, I will love God through the good times and bad, rich or poor, free or slave. I will not abandon Him for He has never abandoned me.

- **Man is Corrupt to the Core**

Corruption is the core of man's heart. If you think mankind is basically good, you are mistaken. How many city councils are crooked? How many school districts? How many municipalities? How many employees steal from their company? How many politicians lie and steal from the taxpayers? How many labor unions steal money from their members? Organizations become corrupt very quickly once power is given to them. Whether it is civil governments or church governments, man is corrupt to the core. "Don't worry, my friend" I've heard several times in my life from mechanics or computer repair technicians. I do worry, though, because man is corrupt! I'll either be charged more than I should have been or the problem won't be fixed the way it should be. Trusting man is a joke. Why don't we trust God and His ways? His ways are honest, true and good. He is to be trusted above all men.

- Don't wait for everything to be perfect to make a move. Just make a move.

- What you do when no one is looking is who you really are. Your actions are like an identity badge that identify only you. Habits define who you are, more than physical descriptions, because actions reveal the heart.

- In a physical world, a Swiss army knife is essential to survival. In a digital world, a smartphone is the essential Swiss army knife. In a spiritual world your Bible is essential to survival.

- Lose Your Faith

I hope that our society starts losing its faith. I pray that people start losing their faith in corporations to give them high wages. I pray that people will lose their faith in government to provide for their every need. I hope that people will lose their faith in the almighty dollar. I pray that people will lose their hope in their own strength and the goodness of mankind. I pray that people are brought to their knees with hopelessness in other people. Why? Because the losing of faith in man will be the beginning of faith in God. The loss of one will transform into the faith in the Almighty– the One who will never let you down. It is by His hand we are sustained, His power that upholds us, His love and grace that keeps the world together.

- We Hate Sickness

Why do we hate sickness so much? It's because sickness, cancer and disease remind us of our unconquerable enemy: death. But good news: Jesus has conquered death and its minions. Disease reminds us that we are not immortal and that death is coming soon. That is why we hate it. We hate cancer because it destroys and ravages our bodies, which brings us one step closer to meeting God face-to-face. But, isn't it ironic that we can hate disease and illness so much – and fight so much against it in life– and yet never even think that the real enemy (sin) is why we even have illness and death? We are in fact, fighting the symptoms of sin; not sin itself. Illness is a result of our sin in the Garden of Eden. Let us not forget that. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We all are walking dead people who will meet our Maker someday. We live on His earth and eat His food and breathe His air. We have rebelled and raped God of His creation while trying to re-make this world into our own evil, sinful playground. Physical death is a righteous judgment for mankind. It's not too much and it's not too little. We all deserve it. Spiritual death, likewise is essential as well, as we have all hated our Creator in our hearts. We have openly rebelled against Him (and then we are shocked when sickness and illness come). Evolutionists think sickness and death are all part of "nature" and are "good". But, I tell you that they are not good. If sickness and

death are good, then why do we fight against them our whole lives and with all our science? It's because we know that sickness and death are not part of God's original design for our lives, but are in fact, brought on by our sin. Physical Sickness and physical death pale in comparison to spiritual sickness and spiritual death. Sin is simply turning away from God. The more you sin, the more you are turning away from the source of life. Continue in that pathway and it only leads to spiritual death. God is taking out those who love him out of the masses who hate him. Many who have been deathly sick (and even have died from their sickness) came to know Christ as their Savior. God even uses the sickness and death that we have brought on by ourselves to turn us back to Him. Nothing is irrelevant to bring people to God. A physical sickness (or death) is a small price to pay if it saves someone's soul. This world is not all there is. God is infinite and He has created a spiritual world that we can't even imagine. The alternative is also a world that you cannot imagine, filled with torment and fire. I cannot stand when someone says, "Oh, we'll see them again in heaven" or "They're in a better place". How do they know that? They may in fact see them again, but both of you may not be in the place where you want to be. Just because you "may" see someone again in the future, doesn't mean it will be in heaven. It's a tragedy that it has to be that way, but God wants those who love Him; not those who don't love Him. He's opening up His home for use (for eternity). He doesn't want any rebels in His home. He's in the business of destroying rebels and making them sons and daughters. Turn to Him despite your physical ailments or loss of loved ones in this life.

- The World Doesn't Need Christians?

The world seriously thinks that it doesn't need Christianity. Think about it: where would the world be if it wasn't for Christians? It would be barbaric. No entity would be holding back the evil. Everyone would be out for themselves, killing each other. They would be truly fulfilling Darwinism's Survival of the Fittest. That is why the world hates the Church: they want to be able to do whatever they want to their neighbor without restraint; without guilt. The Church brings guilt to the world. Obviously, the

world hates being guilt-tripped. I think specifically of closed-off countries to missionaries. They would rather keep missionaries' hospitals/churches/schools/trade schools/humanitarian need out of their country just to keep the Church out. They would rather let their people starve or die of sickness, or never learn a trade, just so the Church can stay out of their country. Why? Isn't that incredulous to think of the benefits of the Church (free of charge I might add) denied in an impoverished country? What do these governments fear? They fear the power of the Church. They fear the Holy Spirit. They think, "What would happen if a revival broke loose? Think of the damage it would cause to their heritage/ancestors/way of life/customs, etc. The world doesn't want the Church (and it's not just the closed-off countries). It's America and Europe, too. All countries hate the Church. They fear the guilt and being called to righteousness. They don't want to be held accountable to the Law of God. They love their sin and don't want to be stopped—even at the expense of stopping the Church's good deeds to society. That's why there are so many secular humanitarian aids now. That's why the government tries to act in the place of the Church by offering "free" health care/houses/food/cars/schooling/trade schools (even though it's not free to the taxpayer). Their logic is: who needs the Church if we can do the same good they do? Well, the sad thing is that the world will never solve wars/starvation/lack of education because many of these problems are caused by the governments' sin nature (i.e. covetousness). In other words, the Church doesn't just give cures, it finds the cause (sin) and attacks it. The Church isn't just after filling men's physical needs; they want to fill man's spiritual needs. The world needs God; they need the Church.

- Dead is Dead

How dead was Jesus' body when it hung on the cross? Or, how dead was it when they took it down from the cross? How dead was His body when they placed it in the tomb? Dead. It was beyond dead. It was crushed. Destroyed. Annihilated. Who needs to cremate a body when you have the brutality of the Jewish guards, Roman soldiers, mass crowds and the act of crucifixion itself? Jesus' body was completely and utterly without life. Shredded.

Picked apart. Ravaged. His dead body represents death. His dead body represents the absence of life. And, his dead body represents our sin. As dead as his body was, is how dead our sin is. Our death is completely dead. Because of His death and because we have his death, we also have His life. Three days later He rose from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. That same Spirit is the One in us who keeps us from sin and will keep us from God's wrath on Judgment Day.

- Liberated Hippies

What do Hippies pride themselves on? Freedom. Being liberated. Not being held down by anyone. These are the things that the hippie movement celebrates. It is for these things that Hippies don't believe in commitment, loyalty and faithfulness. That's why Hippies don't believe in things like family, marriage, America, God. Hippies will go down in history as the ones who "didn't care about anything just, holy or good." They only cared about following their own fleeting feelings. Hippies are only heroes to the selfish, the godless and the sinners. They are so free—free from everyone around them. They are free from commitments and long-lasting relationships. Their freedoms have made them the loneliest people on the planet. Their liberation has only enslaved them to "living in the moment". They never think about the future; just surviving and "experiencing" the present. What a miserable existence. They have no foundation to base their life on other than their emotions. If Hippies could ever turn to God, they would see that there is so much more to life than relativity; there is an immutable Father who will never stop loving them.

- Faith in Others, Faith in God

Faith is in every aspect of our lives. Every person in our lives we put our faith in: dentists, car mechanics, employers, parents, children, taxi drivers, airplane pilots, pastors, presidents, managers, cooks, lawyers, judges, engineers, automobile makers, tech companies, military, police, ambulance drivers, doctors, plumbers, storytellers, musicians, insurers, salesmen, leaders, spouses, etc. How many of these people have broken your trust in the past? Trust is simply a synonym for faith. Faith in others is, on

one hand, a waste of time. But, on the other hand, we really can't get through life without putting our faith in others. So, if faith in others is inescapable, what makes one think that faith in God is escapable? God made the world on a foundation of faith. Life, and living in this world, is based in faith. That's why when our faith is broken in someone (due to failure on their part) it hurts. It hurts because you trusted that person with your heart and they didn't take that cost to you seriously and broke your trust. It's irreparable at times. That's why God tells us how to live. He gives us His Law for a reason: love God and love others! It's to our destruction if we choose to listen or not. Is it any wonder why the world is messed up? Why people don't trust each other? They've tossed off God's Law (which teaches how to give and receive faith in others). When someone breaks our hearts—our trust—it turns out what we hate is the fact that that person is NOT following God's Law. We hate that they are NOT doing what God wants. Somehow that hate gets turned towards God himself: "I hate God because He allowed this to happen. . . ." So, instead, people choose to ignore, fear or hate God, though it's people's choices that have thrown off God's Law. But here's the thing: God's Law (and God Himself) is the solution, not the problem! God lives and expresses love in faith. Everything He does is done on a foundation of faith. It is sinful men that live on a faithless foundation. Don't blame God for trying to run us back to Him. Blame the sinners who have hurt you. And blame the sin that is in your own heart and for the hearts you have broken. How many people have you let down? How many people have lost their faith in you? It's the sin in all of us that has created this world of mistrust. Turn to God and He will redeem this world back to a world of faithful people.

2016

- My Lot in Life

Whatever struggles I am given in this life, I know that I deserve much more. I deserve to be cast away from God's presence. I deserve to have my breath sucked out of my lungs. I deserve to be thrown into everlasting darkness, singed by eternal fire, never quenched, always alone. In short, I deserved Calvary. But, instead,

Jesus, in His lovingkindness, took my punishment from me and put it upon Himself. Now I am free, and though I still have terrible things given to me in my life, it is my lot and I freely accept whatever God gives me. Because it could always be worse.

- Demons and Pigs

In Mark 5:14-17, is described a story in which gentiles' pigs become demon-possessed because Jesus allowed the demons to leave a man and to enter into their herd of pigs. The pigs then run over a cliff, fall into the water below and drown. Those who were feeding the pigs (presumably the owners, too) cared more about their pigs than the fact that a man had been healed by Jesus. They loved their possessions more than their neighbor who was freed from a life of pain. The pig-owners and their neighbors plead for Jesus to leave their country, basically asking, "Please don't take away any more of our possessions". They loved their money. They loved their materialism. How many Americans, if they saw a miracle that actually took away their physical possessions, would plead for Jesus to leave? How many American Christians would beg Jesus to leave if He was taking away their things and giving it to someone else? That pleading to leave (v.17) interestingly enough, is exactly what the demon-team, Legion, asked in verse 7. Demons aren't the only one that don't want Jesus around them. People also don't want Jesus around. Along the same lines, demons would never attempt to hurt Jesus physically (only Satan is arrogant enough to do that) but I ask, who hits Jesus in his life? The temple guard, the Roman soldiers. Men. Men who aren't demon possessed. Men, if given the opportunity will hurt Jesus physically, where demons won't ever take a shot. In fact, demons beg him to leave. Jesus pushes people away, but He also brings people closer to Him, namely the former demon-possessed man. He begged to follow Jesus. Three parties deal with Jesus in this passage. Two parties beg Him to leave and one party begs to follow Him. Which will you be?

- Whatever You Fear

Whatever you fear is your reciprocated idol. For example, if you fear that all your possessions will be taken away, your idol is

materialism. If you fear being thrown in jail for preaching the gospel, your god is freedom. God says not to fear anything but God. There is no fear in love (1 John 4:18). When you fear, you compromise. Don't compromise and don't fear your idols. Don't fear men. Fear God.

- Every accountable meeting, every time you have to answer face to face with a person in authority, points to your future meeting with God. Every question you must answer to someone in higher authority than you, points to God.

- The spiritual realm is more real than the physical realm. You will close your eyes and then open them to a new reality: the only reality. Your whole being will finally experience what this world was only a shadow of.

- A Hardened Heart

To not read the Bible is a sign of a hardened heart. Probably not as hardened as to the extent of a Pharaoh, but a hardened heart nonetheless. A hardened heart is a synonym for pride. A hardened heart speaks of one's own self-sufficiency apart from Christ. A hardened heart does not put God first; it puts itself first. Even Jesus' own disciples had hardened hearts at one time (Mk 6:52). So, any Christian can obviously grow a hardened heart over time. Do circumstances rule your time with God? Do life's trials harden your heart against God? Does the daily grind steal away your time from the Lord? If so, you have a hardened heart. Don't be a prodigal. Return to Jesus. Be like the Psalmist and say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works." (Psalm 73: 25-28) Trust God with your time. Trust Him with your talents and with your treasure. Trusting Him is the only remedy to a hardened heart. Don't blame God, or the kids or your spouse or your friend or your responsibilities for how you are far

away from God; blame yourself. Only you—God in you—can turn your hardened heart back into a heart of flesh. (Ezekiel 36:26)

- Trust and Faith

Trust is simply another word for faith. When you put your faith in God, you trust Him. That trust will last for all eternity. It will be a perfect, faithful relationship among all His Church. To not trust God is to be faithless. To trust God is to be faithful.

- Jesus' Priceless Blood

It's a glorious day when you realize that you could never pay for Jesus' sacrifice and that your life's value is not why Jesus went to Calvary. Your good works is not why He died, either. It is an epiphany to realize that we are so unworthy of Jesus' blood. We don't deserve one drop of it. And yet He gave it all freely. It's true that you should thank God for things like food, clothing, shelter, a job, etc. But you should especially thank God for that which is irreplaceably precious: Jesus' blood. Your salvation could never have been bought with money (unlike clothing, shelter, etc.). Your salvation should be mediated upon and you should thank God every day for it.

- Speeding and Breaking the Law

Here is the feeling of relief: while speeding past a parked policeman who just pulled someone else over for speeding. But here is the thing: eventually that policeman will get you if you continue to speed. Your breaking the law will be judged someday. How long do you think you can keep sinning (i.e. speeding) before "being caught"? God likewise will judge everyone someday. And his punishment is much more severe than a measly fine. Breaking God's Law requires your soul as payment. No one else is going to pay their soul to help you. There's only One who has done that, and His Name is Jesus.

- Jesus is the only One capable of saving me. He's the only One with the holiness, the strength, the merit and the reputation to do so. Because of His nature, He can save someone who is not holy, weak, of no merit and of not reputation.

- Do you fight evil because you don't want to feel guilty? Or, do you fight evil because you want to be pleasing to the Lord? Getting rid of guilt is putting you on display. Fighting evil for the Lord puts God on display.

- What have you given the Lord today?

- Your Value is Christ's Value

If your value is not found in Christ, you are not a Christian. If your source of joy—or the love of your life—is not found in Christ, you are not a Christian. If you pick and choose what to believe from the Bible, you are not a follower of His. If you seek to compromise your beliefs with the world, you are not a friend of God. You are either on His side or not. All the riches you can ever imagine are only found in Christ. If you don't see how infinitely valuable Christ is, you are not a Christian. To be a Christian you have to see all your pleasure, value and joy in One Person.

- Pointing Out Wrongs

You can be right and completely wrong in how you say something. The content of a statement may be true, but if the deliverance is wrong, all you will do is hurt the other person. Ask yourself: is the point of bringing up a fault in someone because you love them or because you want to hurt them? If you love them, how you frame your words is very important, because if it is not framed the right way, the likelihood of them receiving the message is highly unlikely. (Of course, even if the truth was communicated properly and perfectly there is always a chance that it would still be rejected by a prideful person.) Your goal as a Christian is to point out faults in others (with the Word of God) but to do so in a way that they listen and absorb your truth. To speak in rude and crass manners is to have no class. To use harsh words (i.e. verbal brute force) to get your point across is really pointless unless they are receptive to that kind of mannerism. Your goal as a Christian is to communicate in one note: love.

- Conversing About Christianity

Conversations among people are always going to be fallible because people are fallible. But Christianity is communication and without communication Christianity is lost. Love is lost. Love and patience have to be at the heart of our vocabulary with others. Conversing about a serious topic (and building up the courage to do it to begin with) is hard enough. Don't trip on the deliverance of it. Ask God to help you, for only His Spirit can break through to the hardest of hearts. His Spirit can give you the words to speak or the moments to be silent (and listen).

- Large Churches

Large churches are simply gathering places for two types of people: those who want to hide or, those who have been burnt in the past by too much ministry work. It's easy to hide in a large church— no one knows your name, you don't have to serve, you can leave at any point; the perfect non-committal attitude. It is a safe place for those who have been burned out on too much church volunteering in the past. Large churches allow servant-attituded people to get back into church with no commitment. I think, if given enough time, the burned-out people will eventually get involved in large churches; but for now it is a safe haven. The first group of people though – the Christians who want to hide— you have to wonder, “Will they ever get involved”? Will anyone ever know they were there? Hiding in the shadows of your church walls really isn't Christianity. Involvement at some level—even if it is just fellowship— means you are part of a church. Sitting in your pew week after week is not. Dropping your kids off at Sunday School and tithing really isn't fellowship. Fellowship is much deeper than that.

- The Mirror That Shows Our Ugliness

The Bible is like a mirror in which, when you look at it, you say, “Eww, gross!” It is a gross reflection of your dark heart. The Bible tells the truth of what it sees; and it paints an ugly and unwanted picture of who we are as people. The Bible is attacked for this very reason. Who goes sits down to read a book just to be convicted? No one. But the people who hate the Bible for its truth-revealing abilities never get to the good part: it also has a solution to our

sinfulness. That's right. God's Word isn't just here to condemn us; it's here to save us.

- Our Hearts

The loaves and the fishes miracle. A cup of cold water in his name. Two widows' mites. It seems to me that God is more concerned with our hearts than with the quantity that we are giving him. He can greatly multiply the smallest of offerings. If our hearts are offering to Him, He truly doesn't care about the quantity. He cares about the quality. Just like a mother who accepts weeds as "flowers" from her boy, God greatly accepts the sacrifices we give to Him from our hearts.

- Change comes from the outside, not the inside. Man looks on the outward appearance, God looks on the inward.

- Show Grace in the Small Things. Show Patience in the Miniscule. Show Mercy in the Little. God won't ignore the smallest sacrifice done in His name.

- Losing Weight

The problem with losing weight is that it will never be enough. Losing weight is an idol for many people, particularly women. Why will it never satisfy? Because once a woman makes it to her first goal (say, after 10 years) then it is time for the next goal. Say she meets that one, too, after 20 years). Then what, time to set one more goal right? Say she meets it again after 25 years. Now, she should be happy right? Wrong. Now she has to maintain her weight. It is the maintenance that keeps people on a hamster wheel. The idol of diet and weight loss is a never-ending cycle. It is a cruel god that wants to destroy you. Skinny people (not just big people) actually obsess over weight gain. Why, when they're skinny? Because weight loss is an idol to skinny or big. It is a sick idol that just wants your soul. It wants you to focus on it all day long; not God. It wants your worship; not to give it to God. It is an idol that will leave you for dead.

- The Depressed Idol

If you're depressed, it simply means that one of your idols has failed you. You need to consider that Christ is enough. You don't need anything else. Depression is non-existent when you are abiding in Christ. Not creative time, movie-watching time, gym time, nature time, family time, alone time, shopping time, food time or any other time can fill your need up. You have a need— a big need— that can only be satisfied by God's love for you. Spend time with your Father. And quit being depressed.

- Loving God and Your Neighbor

Your love for man starts and ends with God. If you don't love God you will never love your fellow man. If you do love God, you will love your fellow man. It doesn't work the other way: "If I love man, then I will love God" or "If I hate man, I will hate God". No, God is the foundation for all love and hate in the world. Which is kind of ironic when someone says, "so-and-so did this to me, therefore I hate God." No, they hated God before someone hurt them. They just needed an excuse.

- Valuing Vs. Idolizing

There is a balance between valuing something and idolizing something. Idolatry is just value taken to the extreme. Life is all about placing differing levels of value on things/people/actions, etc. Value is to be placed on all things, even if that value is zero. The things that have no value is sin. Idolatry also has zero value. When one worships something, it is because they first found value in it, then they wanted to continue seeing value in it. Then, they wanted to start taking pleasure from it; more and more pleasure. Pleasure and value became one. Value turned to usage and they began to ask, "How can I continue feeling pleasure in this idol and suck it dry?" But, valuing, on the other hand, is putting all pleasures under the authority of Christ; not letting the value control you.

- Trusting God

There is not a single reference in the Bible to God trusting man. Trust is something God invites from man but doesn't give to man. Man is to trust God; not the other way around. However, God does trust us enough to open up His heart to us. He wants to earn

our trust and love (faith), so He makes the first move and reveals Himself to us. He is so gracious in pouring love on us, that He “hopes” will turn to us loving Him in return. He wants our trust. He wants our faith. He has made the first move. Will you trust Him with your whole heart?

- No Regrets

It is true that we should live every moment to the fullest. We should not have any regrets, but when the Christian expresses this philosophy, he means something completely different than what the world means. The Christian means living for God. The world means living for self (meaning anything that makes you happy, even if it destroys you). Living every moment to the fullest means living every moment for God’s glory and our joy. It means capturing every moment—whether good or bad—and putting it under the authority. Making every moment a moment to love God and to love others; a moment to give to God and to others. Life is no time to snatch away from others; it is to share with them the love that only God gives. To do that, you would never have lack, as God would provide for your every need. That life would be full, with no regrets.

- Never-ending Idols

There is never a lack of idols to choose from. The moment you smash one down, another will rise up in its place. I’m talking about idols inside and outside of you. The idols of the mind, particularly are never satisfied and always wanting more and more. As sinful humans, we are “idol factories” as Paul David Tripp coined. There is only one way to destroy your idols—you have to give them over to Christ. He will take care of the destroying (even though you take care of the creating).

- Christians’ Idols

If you add any adjective in front of Christian—Black Christian, American Christian, Republican Christian, Seeker-Friendly Christian—that adjective accurately describes the idol of that Christian. That adjective, the way that Christian describes himself becomes the focus, of that Christian (or that Church) is idolatry.

One's identity, more often than not, becomes the idol. If your identity as a Christian comes from anything other than Christ, you have effectively moved Christ off of the throne in your heart and an idol has taken His place. Our identity should only be "Christian"—a little Christ. To add anything to Christian is foolish. What needs to be added to "Christian" that is already there? What could possibly add to the unsearchable riches of Christ?

- Pleasing Others

When you try to please people who use you, you will never please them. Those who try to please others, will never be pleased. For example, say someone only loves you because you have a certain high-paying job, but then one day you were to lose that job and have to work at McDonald's. Would that person still love you? To please a friend who has a materialistic mindset is futile. You will never have the latest, the biggest, the coolest (fill in the blank). There will always be something bigger and better to buy (to impress your user-friend). But if all those toys were to disappear tomorrow, so would your psuedo-friend's love for you. There is no point in trying to please the world. If you always have to be the life of the party or want to be thought of as "cool" with your friends, you will never succeed. Be content with what you have been given and live for God. God will bring you true friends that don't have to be impressed by your external gadgets. Fear Him; not man.

- Sacrifice is Worth It

A little sacrifice will do a Christian good. Just because, we as Americans, can have instant gratification doesn't mean that we should. Fasting builds character. Godliness with contentment is great gain (1 Timothy 6:6). Pain and suffering will draw you closer to God. Jesus speaks in the language of pain, because He has already been there. In this comfy, cozy American life we've been given, it's hard to imagine something like pain being good, but it is. Tithing is painful, but it is done in faith. Making a meal for a sick family at church is painful, but worth it. Raising kids—painful—but it's done in faith and the rewards are abundant. Fasting—painful—but it draws you closer to God. Can you imagine a life without air-conditioning, Starbucks, a working car, a roof

over your head, food in the fridge, clothes on your back, clean water, electricity, civil government? Jesus did. We should be thankful for what we've been given by giving it up for a time, willingly to focus on Him. It is so easy to get caught up in our life of ease and our materialism. Sacrifice is needed and will draw you closer to the One Above All Things.

- Not Self-Help

Christianity is not a self-help philosophy. Any attempt to make it so is to tame it from what it truly is. It is a love-God philosophy. It is a love-others philosophy. It is the antithesis of self-preservation. It is a give-all-you-have philosophy. It is truth based in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. All of life is filtered through that lens. To call it "self-help" is to believe another Christianity.

- True Pleasure

If you have to sin against God's Law to feel pleasure, then choose to not feel pleasure. All pleasure, if not God-centered, will be destroyed one day. God will not share His throne with the idol of Pleasure. Satan tempted Jesus in every aspect, offering him all the kingdoms of the world if He would just worship him. Here's the summary of that event: if you have to worship the devil to get what you want, then what you want is not important. The things that God created, such as pleasure, are not to be taken over His rules for receiving that gift.

- Jesus resuscitated me. Every Christian knows this to be fact. He is more important than an AED on the wall.

- Numbers and Letters

God made the world up of two distinct realms: 1.) Numbers and 2.) Letters. Every Pre-schooler knows this: numbers make equations and letters make words. If taken further, numbers allow computers to run and letters allow novels to be written. Numbers tell the facts. Letters tell the story. Authors inspire the physicists and engineers inspire the poets. If you think about it, God created numbers to be the Law and He created letters to be Grace. The world needs both rules and freedom. It needs to be contained and

let loose. Too often, people will run to one or the other and it is disastrous. You can't live your life completely free or completely confined. You can't live life with just facts and not fiction. It would be like trying to navigate life with only numbers or words. It would either be completely facts or completely experience. God created both because we need Law and Grace. And numbers and letters give us that.

- Pick your favorite organ in your body. Can't pick one? Probably because you need them all. Aren't they all your favorite?

- Narrow-minded

It's interesting that a person can be considered "narrow-minded" if they paint everything in a broad-stroke. Some people do tend to paint in generalities. But the generalities are there, even if that person is considered narrow-minded. Generalities don't (can't) include every example that doesn't follow the rule. But General rules are like a bird's eye view of the whole picture. The individual pieces seem to line up with the general rule, though there may be a few details that's stray from it. In other words, the bird sees the forest, but he can't know every single tree. But every single tree can't determine him to miss the forest (the thing that he sees).

- Being Different by Fitting In?

Those who are always trying to be "different" simply are people who don't know who they are. Being "different" (as defined as a synonym for "rebellion") is not an identity; it's a curse. For how will you ever truly be different if you look like every other different person? Being different (rebellious) means you have an empty soul that is screaming to be filled by something—anything— that will give you meaning. How about being different could mean just being who God created you to be? The world wants you to be different because "different" is codeword for "be like us". God, on the other hand, truly doesn't want you to be different. He's infinite. He didn't create a cookie cutter for people. He made you absolutely unique from everyone else. Don't buy the world's lies on being different. Truly be different by accepting God's design for you.

- All Men Are Liars

People consider a lie a small price to pay to get something in return. But, if you have to lie to your neighbor to get what you want, it's not worth it. If you have to defraud your neighbor and smile through your teeth just to get something by ill-gotten means, you will have to answer to God. We all do this in our speech. We use hyperbole (for exaggerating), we speak in generalities (when we want to hide details), we focus on details (when we want to hide the overall picture), we gossip to hurt others, we lie to benefit ourselves. Lying and humanity cannot be separated. All men are liars. God, on the other hand, is not a liar. Jesus never lied; He didn't have to, and He accepted the consequences of His telling the truth. Would we all follow His example. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." (Romans 3:4b)

- Lack of Love

When you love someone, you give them self-worth. So, my question is, why is there so much depression and self-esteem issues in the world? Because people aren't loving each other. They belittle each other, backbite, ridicule each other. People hate their neighbor, make fun of their neighbor and gossip against their neighbor. Love shows people respect. Loving others gives them value like, "Wow someone actually likes me for me." The lack of love is the problem with self-esteem issues.

- Against Euthanasia

If someone's hearing isn't 100%, does that mean they should cut off their ears? How about if their eyes aren't 20/20, should they take out their eyes? Who has a perfect life? No one. To say that an imperfect life (defined by the person themselves) is a reason to legalize doctor-assisted suicide is complete hypocrisy. No one drives their car into the river if they have a dent in the bumper. No one burns down their house just because the paint is peeling. We live in a broken, fallen world. Nothing is perfect. Why should a life be perfect to justify euthanizing people? Let's take perfection to its logical conclusion: if a dog has an ingrown toenail, should we kill it? What if ingrown toenails are especially important to the owner,

doesn't the owner have a right to take the dog's life if the dog isn't living up to the owner's expectations? Didn't the football player, Michael Vick, do the same? Perfection is but a figment of an imagination in a fallen world. To kill someone because they don't live up to "perfection" is completely insane considering there is no perfect life. Only Jesus lived a perfect life. But guess what: His life wasn't without pain. It is possible to live a perfect life and still be in pain. That's what Jesus shows us. Suicide is the weak man's escape from pain.

- Assisted Suicide is always Assisted Homicide

Suicide is the murder of one's self and it is an illegal act. So how is it that an authority figure (i.e. doctor) can help someone kill themselves not considered illegal? Isn't that aiding and abetting? Why are some people worthy to live and others not? How is that different than Hitler's philosophy? Just because a doctor in a labcoat is performing an end-of-life operation, doesn't make it any less murderous. Legality doesn't equal morality. These doctors prey on the weak and feeble-minded. Why? Because they have murder in their heart under the guise of "health care". "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. (1 John 3:15)

- Worshiping Death

America worships death. America loves the stench and decadence that death offers. Think about the movies people watch or the games people play. Look at the deathly jewelry and t-shirts people wear. Think of the music and books and TV shows that showcase death like it is the loveliest thing. People watch the nightly news just to see the carnage. They read their web pages and commentaries on the latest mass-shooting. Why? Because Americans love blood and lots of it. Americans have setup the idol of Death and the Father of Death as their King. Americans love the absence of life because they don't value life. Abortion and euthanasia are their religious sacrifices. Hollywood and the Politicians are their priests. Life is hated in America. It is no wonder that they hate the Giver of Life. "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.” (Acts 3:14-15)

- How They Treat Their Enemies

You can tell if a philosophy is evil or good by how its adherents treat their enemies. ISIS, for example murders, rapes and beheads their enemies. Not a good philosophy. FARC also does the same. Why would anyone want to believe in any of their philosophies? LGBTs destroy their enemies by firing them, suing them and slandering them. (Don't believe me? Look up what happened to Brendan Eich, the former CEO of Mozilla who was forced to resign for donating \$1,000 to Proposition 8, a natural marriage law in California, 6 years after the fact). How one treats their enemies determines if that philosophy is good or evil. If that philosophy's adherents murder their enemies, guess what: they can murder anyone. If that philosophy's adherents lie, cheat and steal from others, guess what: they can lie, cheat and steal from you. Just because you are a “member” of a philosophy today, doesn't mean that you won't be tomorrow. You may be a friend today, but you can be defined as an enemy tomorrow. Christianity is slandered against all the time by atheists, LGBTs, Muslims, etc. But how do Christians treat their enemies? They love them. They don't murder them. Murdering an enemy of Christianity is a logical fallacy. A murdering Christian is an oxymoron. It is the only philosophy that says: “. . . Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (Matthew 5:44). All other philosophies and lifestyles say that your enemies should and can be murdered.

- Females Mature Faster

I've often wondered why girls mature faster than men. (And, no, it's not because they are “smarter”). It occurred to me that the reason may be because Eve ate the Fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil first. Adam ate it second. All Daughters of Eve could have inherited this trait (i.e. getting knowledge) before men. I might add, that maturing faster is not evidence of being mature faster. Both men and women need Christ, regardless of when they mature.

- Embrace the Shame

Christ wore the shame attached to us. The least we can do is to wear the “shame” of Him. The world tries to shame Christians. Whether it’s Pro-Choicers, LGBT’s, Hollywood, politicians, family members, neighbors, co-workers, etc. We have nothing to be ashamed of. We have to live and die for the truth of Christ’s gospel. Any compromise that Christians make like OK’ing same-sex marriage, abortion, assisted suicide, legalized marijuana, socialism, means that those compromising Christians would rather be a part of the system rather than feel shame. But if Christ did that for us, we would never had peace with the Father. No. We, Christians, must be shamed by the world. We must be the outcasts, vagabonds and strangers in the earth. I would rather wear the shame of the world so I don’t lose my soul. I would rather be killed and marginalized by the world so I can be accepted by the Father. Don’t compromise. Embrace the shame. “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake.” (Luke 21:17)

- Why Do You Go to Church?

When you meet non-believers who don’t go to church, emphasize why you go to Church: “I go to church because that is where I worship God. Where do you worship God?” That puts the conversation on a heart issue (i.e. why they don’t want to worship God). It is true that we can worship God outside of church, but the non-believer usually doesn’t use that argument. The lapsed Christian believer will use this argument though, and for this person you should say something like, “Well, at church we sing, pray, read the Bible and fellowship. Do you do those things in your worship time?” Of course not.

- Dying for the Ungodly

Would you die for Hillary Clinton? If you were talking to Mrs. Clinton and a chunk of concrete broke off of a skyscraper and you had the chance to push her out of the way, would you do it? Would you save her knowing that you would get crushed to death by the piece of concrete? Hard question. It’s hard to love someone that much that you would die for them. Jesus says He as a Shepherd

lays down his life for his sheep (John 10:15). He also says that “greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13) But what about laying down one’s life for his enemies? Hillary Clinton is an enemy of America. She is an enemy of the Pre-Born. She is an enemy of the taxpaying middle class. She doesn’t deserve to be saved. But that’s not the question, whether or not she is worthy of being saved by you is it? The question is, would you die for her? Would Jesus die for her? Answer: He already has. Was he stupid to die for someone who murders the Pre-Born by her legislation? No. He loved her so much He shed his blood for her. If Jesus did it, we should do it. It’s not a question of her being worthy. It’s a question of you doing the right thing, even if it costs you everything. If you are a Christian, you have to do the right thing. Why? Because you’re already going to heaven. She isn’t. Now, if we are to love Hillary Clinton like that shouldn’t we love all our enemies (family, coworkers, neighbors, ex-friends) like that?

- Accommodating Religion

Even non-religious people have to accommodate religious people at some point. For example, I know someone who is an agnostic who has a friend who is a vegan. He sometimes barbecues for his friends of which she also attends. He accommodates her by barbecuing vegetables for her. That is very respectful. What a nice friend. He is accommodating his religious friend, though he himself is not religious. God also wants Christians to live in peace with their neighbors. Romans 12:18 says, “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” That doesn’t mean that you have to agree with them, but it does mean that you have to respect them (and sometimes) gently correct their ways in a peaceful manner. God loves peacemakers. But being a peacemaker doesn’t mean you ignore people’s sins, because they will face an eternity without God someday (the opposite of peace). Don’t trade your neighbor’s peace for eternity for temporary peace today.

- Jesus is Just Like Us

Will the first words words out of my mouth when I see Jesus be,

“Woah. . . I really am made in Your image.” Jesus is just like us (minus the sin). So why should it surprise us when we see Jesus, the Glorified Man, standing in front of us? He is the Almighty who created all things. And He is just like me. That will be a great moment, one of many in eternity.

- Love Our Enemies

Jesus says, “But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you”. (Luke 6:27-28) Paul says, “Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good”. Romans 12:20-21) In other words, our enemies will not be won over by hating them back or hurting them back. Our enemies will be won by how we love them; not by how we hate them.

- Expressing Yourself

Isn't it interesting that the world promotes “expressing yourself” to the limits? However, there are places you cannot express yourself in American culture. For example, in a classroom environment, a student is not supposed to express himself (either in actions or in schoolwork). He is just supposed to follow the rules and do the work. Doodling on math homework is cute, but it will result in an F. Another example is if you were in the military and showed up in clown shoes and a red nose, you would be court-martialed. You follow orders in the military; not express yourself. Another example would be when you are stopped by a police officer, should you express yourself or be respectful? The culture teaches that you should disrespect the officer and express yourself. You can do that but there will be consequences. Laws and orders and government were ordained by God. Those things were meant to create a structure so everyone couldn't express themselves. If everyone expressed themselves, sans rules, it would be anarchy. There has to be a general respect of rules and authority for society to function. God gave man Law— what a blessing that was! To think that there was no divine codex before Moses (minus a few to Adam and Noah) is incredible. People think that rules are

confining. Rules do confine evil and it is meant to eliminate evil. Think of a shepherd installing a fence for his sheep. That fence keeps the sheep walking towards evil and it keeps evil out (i.e. wolves). But unlike a stationary fence, God's Law is a fence that follows you. Think of it as a force field that surrounds you as you explore the world. It protects you from the evil inside and outside of you. For some, a fence is very inhibiting; it's confining. The thought of no fences is free and exhilarating. But God doesn't give a fence (the Law to confine you). He wants you to explore the world that He created. But He wants you to be safe. His Law will assure you of safety. Break the Law (the fence) and the evil inside and outside of you will break you. "Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight." (Psalm 119:77)

- Prayer and Procrastination

America is a land of procrastinators. But not just any kind of procrastinators: the ones who want to perfect their craft before ever trying it. I think of the Christian Book industry. Do you realize how many books there are on the shelves seeking to "help your prayer life"? Why do we need so many books rehashing the same things the Bible teaches? Look, everything we need to know about prayer is found in the Bible. So, why don't people read the Bible, and Jesus' own words, rather than the words of some author? Procrastination is the answer. Christians want to put off being a prayer-warrior and perfect their prayer life before they even start. Isn't that ridiculous? I'm sure that God would like you to start praying to Him, regardless if your prayers aren't A+ material. I'm sure God would rather have 10 small prayers in a day than 1 ten-minute block of prayer and ignore him the rest of the day. Prayer is about a relationship with God; not perfection. Where did we get this idea that we need to be perfect to come and talk to God? Where did we get the idea that other Christian authors "hold the key" to "better my prayer life". They don't. Just start praying. God will bless you regardless if you've read hundreds of books on prayer. The hypocrisy of this overwhelming: "I'm trying to better my prayer life by reading hundreds of books on prayer". But if you keep reading those books on prayer, you will never pray. Don't waste your time reading books on prayer; just

pray! “Pray without ceasing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

- God Loves and Hates

Proverbs 6:16-19, “These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.” 1 John 4:16 says that “God is love”. How can God hate and love? That sounds like a confusing God, right? Not when you examine closely what He loves and hates. He loves righteousness, holiness, justice and mercy (Micah 6:8). He hates sin, death, injustice, pride lust. He is completely consistent in the things he loves and hates. We all should love and hate consistently. We all should love God (and all those things that flow from Him). And, we all should hate all things that denigrate His character. We should hate things that make much of man and make less of God. We should despise things that seek to humble God. “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.” (Proverbs 8:13)

- God Doesn't Ask for Forgiveness

Why is it that we want God to ask for our forgiveness rather than asking for His forgiveness? Someone is wrong (and it's not God). Man's actions and thoughts seek to make God squirm. But it is us, humans, who are the ones squirming. Our sin has exposed us to the All-Knowing. Naked we stand before His holiness. We have no resources to hide. We have no argument against His justice. We cannot justify our sin or our pride. It is us that need His mercy. God doesn't sit at the interrogation table. We do and we need His mercy. “I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.” (Exodus 33:19)

- The Third Act

We are living in the Third Act. Jesus has stripped Satan of all his tools: death and sin. Now Christ is after him to finish him off. We

are in the chase scene. Satan only has himself and is on a time crunch to see how many he can gather to himself. He wants as many souls as he gather in order to be condemned along with him. (If he's going to be damned, might as well bring everyone else with him). Jesus is hunting him down with His Church. His Church is also on a time crunch to save and gather as many people to herself. Jesus is coming back and when He does, it's game over. The evil people will go to the lake of fire; the good people (those in Christ) will go to heaven. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. (Revelation 21:7)

- I may not be David, but David's God is my God. And He kills giants.

- Experience Is Everything

In life, experience is everything. Would you read an airplane manual that was written by someone who has never flown a plane or a pilot? Christians know Jesus and non-Christians learn about Jesus from Christians. Christians are basically "the manual" from which they learn about Jesus. Don't fail Jesus!

- Love and Hate

How does love turn to hate? People can love others one minute and hate them the next. That is a sign of a weak person who is driven by feelings. That is a sign of someone who isn't loyal to anyone and can drop someone like a piece of garbage. Humans are fickle creatures. Their loyalties sway with their emotions. That's why something more than emotions has to rule us (like commitments, covenants, contracts, sense of duty). But the main thing that will keep people from hating others is the fear of the LORD.

- Placing Your Hope in Something

You will put your hope in something in this life. So, why not

put it in God? You will put your faith in something to give you satisfaction, so why not put your source of satisfaction in God? You will worship something in this life—the something that will answer all the Big Questions of life. . . so, why not worship God? See, you can't put your hope into something that didn't create you. You can't put your faith in something created by someone else. You can't worship someone or a philosophy that isn't God. God is the only Answer who knows you. He's the One that makes you tick. Philosophers are charlatans as they say they know you, that they have the answers—but they don't. They don't even have the answers for their own lives. Their own philosophies don't answer the Big Questions in their own lives. They only want fame and to sell you snake oil and books. Vegan food manufacturers only want vegans' money. Same with electric-powered car makers. They don't care about your reasons for protecting the environment; they just want your money. These kinds of people know that not eating eggs or buying gasoline really won't satisfy you, but they shrug their shoulders and say, "Buy our products. These will make you feel better." Whatever makes you feel better, there is someone always ready to take your money. God, on the other hand, wants to give to you abundantly. He has the answers. He has the rule book. No one else has the architectural plans. Why? Because He is the One that designed this place. The philosophers, evangelists, snake oil salesman and priests pretend to have found the meaning to life, but only God truly knows the meaning. It is found in Him, His sacrifice, His blood payment for your sin. He doesn't want your money. He wants your soul.

- Secular or Christian Environment?

Some Christians look down on other Christians who don't work in the "Christian world". This Christian World includes churches, Christian schools, universities, ministries, para-church organizations, etc. However nice it might be to work in a Church environment, it just simply isn't reality. I have worked in the secular environment my whole career. Though it hasn't been easy being in the world and not of the world (John 17:16), it has taught me a lot. I've learned a lot about the sin in others as well as myself. I've learned how to seek God and rely on in Him in the darkest

of circumstances. Not all of us Christians have the pleasure of working within a safe, Christian-friendly environment. However, I do want to say that working for unbelieving bosses isn't outside of God's will. For example, consider Daniel and Joseph. They both worked in the secular environment and weren't corrupted by it. Others, like Nehemiah, worked for the government of his day, and yet they still were able to live out their faith. Others, like Noah and Abraham lived in an evil world, and yet were not corrupted. In the centuries of the Bible, there was no dichotomy between a "secular" or a "Christian" work environment. It was all secular. Does that mean there weren't true believers of YHWH in the world? Of course not. God has had His followers in every environment to make a difference. America is the only anomaly in the history of the world where one can work in a Christian safe space. Wherever God has placed you, that is where you need to serve Him, even if the prideful Christian-only people look down on you. The secular work environment is a mission field and it needs to be reached by Christians. For Christians to hang out in a "Christian workplace" isn't reaching anyone.

- Jesus is the only source of mercy you will ever find in this life. His fountain of mercy is never ceasing. Drink from it. Before His fountain of judgment falls on you.

- Freedom From God?

Without a belief in God you don't have any accountability. You have absolute freedom, but that freedom comes at a price. You no longer have to "answer" to your Creator (though you still have to in the future). For example, you have no purpose for living other than to please yourself in the moment. You also have no destiny; no ultimate good. You also have no value, especially since you were "created by chance". This is a hopeless life and it all starts with the belief that there is no God. The mental assertion that "God doesn't exist" is just the foundation one has to lay to start a life of rebellion. To not fear God is the basis for all new-found freedoms (i.e. new-found rebellions).

- Hatred of Cancer

I saw a sticker that said, “F\*\*k Cancer”. Let’s look at that statement. Obviously, there is a lot of anger for the driver’s “Madre 2013” being taken by some kind of cancer. Don’t get me wrong: there should be some anger. That is one of the steps of grieving. However, the anger is misplaced. Cancer is not what took this driver’s mother. It was sin and death that we, humans, brought into the world. If anyone needs to be hated, it is us. And Satan. God is the One who knows this hatred more than anyone. He was brutally executed for the sake of forgiving our sin. Three days later He rose again. There is a resurrection. There is new life in Him. Cancer may not always be our plan, but cancer is not outside of God’s plan for our lives. Cancer isn’t more powerful than God.

- Wanting to Kill God’s Followers

Have you ever served God so much that a mob wanted to kill you? There were several times in Jesus’ ministry that a mob wanted to kill Jesus (for example in Luke 4: 28-29). He knew what it was like to speak the truth and be hated. He knew what it was like to preach God’s love and be plotted against for murder. Does the truth you speak to others produce in them such hatred? Obviously, hatred from others shouldn’t be a Christian’s goal, but it is a good indication of what kind of truths a person is speaking.

- Persecuted

Many people claim they are oppressed (i.e. “persecuted”) by society. They demand their rights. But what about Christians? Christians are always persecuted, and we are just expected to take it. And we do take it. That’s the difference. Non-Christians cry because they can’t handle the persecution. Christians do handle it; though we do cry as well. Jesus will give us the strength to endure persecution. Jesus said, “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” (John 15:18-19). Christians are to expect persecution, as others seek refuge from persecution.

## • Mercy To Hagar and Ishmael

Hagar was an Egyptian slave and a foreigner and a servant to Abram's wife, Sarai. Sarai suggested Abram to have intercourse with Hagar so that she could have a child by her (Sarai thought she could help initiate God's promise in Genesis 15). Abram did have intercourse with Hagar and she became pregnant. During Hagar's pregnancy, Sarai became enraged with jealousy and treated her harshly. She ran away from her into the desert. Listen to what the Angel of the LORD said to her there: "And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered."(Genesis 16:7-14). What great mercy the Angel of the LORD showed to her. He knew every facet of Hagar's story, how she was a slave, had no rights, had been told to do this thing and how she had been verbally abused (maybe physically abused) by her mistress Sarai. She was out in the wilderness, with no where to go and no where to turn for help and the Angel of the LORD shows up. She was completely and utterly helpless and probably going to die in the wilderness. The Angel of the LORD showed such mercy (mercy that He didn't have to). Why did He? One reason, I think is because He was going to keep His promise to Abram and bless his seed (even seed that wasn't part of His plan). God's promise to Abram in the land of Ur was this: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them

that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” (Genesis 12:2-3) God was going to bless Hagar though she wasn’t part of His plan. He still cared for her and her child. Abram was still the child’s father. Why would He let Hagar die in the desert and have Abram’s first child die along with her? The LORD elaborates more on Ishmael (after He has detailed His plan for Sarai to give birth to Isaac): “And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham”. (Genesis 17:18-22). Again, God promises to bless Ishmael and make him a great nation. He, however, also affirms that He will establish His covenant with Isaac. Many years later, during a feast when Isaac was being weaned, Sarah saw Hagar mocking and asked for her and her son to be cast out of the tribe: “And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham’s sight because of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.” (Genesis 21:9-13). God, again confirms that Ishmael will be a great nation. The next morning, Abraham sends them away: “And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow shot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept. And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt. (Genesis 21:14) God takes care of the destitute. He heard the voice of Ishmael and of Hagar. Though he wasn't the child of promise, it doesn't mean that God gave him nothing. He continuously promised to make Ishmael a great nation (i.e. successful). God showed mercy to this single mom and her child. He showed mercy to a foreigner. He showed mercy to people who weren't part of His plan. What a great and merciful God to take care of those who are cast out and abandoned. The descendants of Ishmael would do well to remember the mercy shown to him and his mother in the desert and show that mercy to others.

- Esau Had No Time For God

Esau was the brother of the chosen one and it never affected him. Shouldn't he have seen how Jacob lived for God? Shouldn't some of that rubbed off on him? Apparently not. "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. (Genesis 25:27) Esau was too busy hunting and killing to worry about "silly" things as "following God". He probably looked on Jacob as a wimp, as he was more of a homebody. Nonetheless, Esau was living with the person who would inherit the blessing. God saw Jacob's heart. He also saw Esau's. That's why He chose Jacob to inherit the blessing. Listen to what Esau said about his own birthright: "And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?" ( Genesis 25:32). His despicement of his own birthright speaks volumes. Several lessons from this: if you don't

have time for God, He won't have time for you. If you don't bless God, He won't bless you. He despised what God gave Him and he didn't appreciate it. So, God gave it to someone else. See, the birthright wasn't just the physical heritage of the family; it was its spiritual heritage (how and who they were going to worship). "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." (Romans 9:13-15). Jacob getting Esau's blessing was a judgment against Esau but it also was a blessing towards Jacob. God saw a more worthy recipient in Jacob but Jacob had no way of ever getting the birthright. God's mercy and sovereignty made that happen. He saw in Jacob someone who could lead his family. "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." (Hebrews 12:16-17) Esau was a "profane" person. This wasn't the kind of person that God wanted to lead the family (and eventually be a forefather of the Messiah). And what do we see later as far as Edom (Esau's descendants) turned out. (Amos 1:11-12, Malachi 1:4, Ezekiel 25:12-14). Esau lead his family to not follow God. Jacob did the opposite. Two boys in the same house. Only one chose to follow God. That's why he received the birthright.

- Do any of us truly deserve an ounce of mercy from a Holy God? Answer is: No. Yet, He gives to each of us freely.

2017

- Staying true to yourself means staying true to God means loving your neighbor as yourself. Self-preservation should never be the impetus for voting for one candidate over another candidate.

- The things you are willing to lose are the things you don't love. The things you can do without are not your idols.

- **Persecution and Evangelism**

Being persecuted publicly equals evangelism. When you are ridiculed for your beliefs in front of others, that is your chance to testify to the truth. Rather than looking at persecution as something to be hated, it is, in fact, every Christian's microphone and loudspeaker to the world. The world wants to hear why you believe what you believe.

- **Worshiping in church is a release to the pressures of life. Praying with other believers, communion with other believers are all forms of release. God created it that way.**

- **Dependency on Water**

If the Colorado River didn't exist, Southern California would not exist: no people, no agriculture, no industry. Nothing. It would be a desert. If 14 million people could be wiped out so easily as the disappearance of a river, how much more could we be wiped out by Almighty God? Or, to put it another way: if we are so dependent on water, how much more dependent are we upon the Lord?

- **His Control**

Whatever thing you think that you don't have control over is the thing you should be bringing before God. If you're honest with yourself, you don't have control over anything. Therefore, you should be praying and asking God about everything. Control should be in His hands. It already is. You are the one frustrating His plans.

- **Hate Literature**

The Bible is Hate Literature: it hates sin and death. It is the mouthpiece of God. It is His instruction manual to life. Follow it and live. Dismiss it and die. Hate it and die. Change it and die. Persecute its followers and die. It is objective truth. Hate its contents and all you have is subjective/ever-changing truths. It is a spotlight that illuminates the darkness. The darkness wants to stay hidden. No roach or burglar wants to be caught in the light.

They hate the light.

- Utility Workers

If you are a utility worker and you have to go into a hole in the ground, you do not go down without oxygen. It is a tragedy that when utility workers die from buildups of methane gas and hydrogen sulfide. (For example, the 3 workers who lost their lives in Key Largo, FL on Jan 16, 2017). You need oxygen. You cannot survive without it. It's like God; he's always there even if you don't see him. Also, when He is not there, you feel it (and die). You prepare for the worst. God is your security blanket, your foundation, your rock and your shield. To go into battle without Him is so foolish. To ignore His presence and strength is the height of stupidity. He is there and all His resources are yours for the asking. But I get it, too. You don't want to lose control. You want to do your own thing; no accountability; I'm a moral person, etc. Well, you can do your own thing in your little hole and methane gas will do its own thing, too. Who will win?

- Disrespecting Oneself

Why should women disrespect themselves? Why should men disrespect themselves? Isn't it odd that women can disrespect themselves (by posing naked) but a man can't disrespect a woman (by looking at pornography)? Or isn't it odd that black people can disrespect themselves (by calling themselves the N-word) but if a white person does it, they are threatened with murder? Why should disrespect exist at all? Why should hatred reside within a group setting but then be terminated outside those bounds? God says to show love to everyone—even those who are in your own “category”.

- Sticking Your Own Neck Out

Many Christians are for “saving lives” until it endangers their own neck (or ruins their reputation). How many Christians would have “loved to have saved Jews in Nazi Germany” but never did. Saving people is very romantic; very brave. But when it comes time to weigh the costs, however, most people back out. What this era needs are Christians who will not back down even it means their

own neck.

- The “Living” Dead?

We live in a society that doesn't believe in black and white, so much so that authors actually write stories of people who are dead, but alive (i.e. zombies, the living dead, etc.) That makes no sense. One cannot be dead and alive. You are either one or the other. It is very black and white: alive or dead. One cannot be “on the fence” between those two states of existence. But the fact that this kind of fiction exists in our popular media shows at what lengths we can go to prop up our societies value system. For instance: why should living people be excluding dead people? (Answer: they need to be inclusive and invite the dead people in). Or, murder is wrong, but not if you're killing someone already dead. (But, then again, if they are dead, then they can't be murdered). Or, what's wrong with wanting existence both ways? God has laid out very simple rules for us: do not murder, choose life, do not worship the dead. His rules make for a world that makes sense. Zombies make no sense.

- Do Above and Beyond Good

God's Law is more than “don't hurt me and I won't hurt you”. It's “I'll love you the way I want you to love me”. It's going above and beyond to help other fellow sinners on this planet (who don't deserve it, by the way). The law isn't just “don't do bad”; it's “do good—above and beyond common good”.

- Hiding in The Catacombs

Churches are the new catacombs. It seems like it is pre-Christian Rome again, where the Christians are free in the catacombs, but never free out in public. Christians are “safe” in their little churches, but if they ever wander to far from home, they will be sorry. Like a mom calling out to her son, “Be back before dinner, little Johnny,” Christians have been pushed back by all means possible to reside solely in their churches. This is not God's intent for Christians. He wants us out in the world, living life with our non-Christian neighbors and coworkers and family members. He wants us out in politics and the arts and the sciences. Do not confine yourself to the catacombs, for we will be forced to be there

soon enough.

- A Superman For all Seasons

Superman of ages ago was heroic and for justice. Not today. He is a whiny, godlike brat who doesn't care about anyone but himself. Today's Superman is a millennial user who thinks he is entitled to anything. Saving others? Nah. Truth and justice? Nah. Serve yourself. That is the way the true Superman lives. Jesus is opposed to this kind of thinking. Jesus serves and loves others even when it hurts.

- The User

If you only put value on what people can do for you, you are a user. You are despicable. You use God, your friends, your relatives, your coworkers, your neighbors, your spouse and your kids for your own selfish needs. And, when they fail to perform, you hate them. As long as people do what you want (and you have control over them) you are fine. But the moment they fail to deliver, you disown them. That is the sinful heart of a user.

- He Took Our Grievs and Sorrows

Isaiah 53:4 says, "Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows..." How many griefs do you have? How many sorrows? It doesn't matter; he has carried all of them. You can't bear your own load and yet he took on the griefs and sorrows of every person who has ever lived. That's how amazingly gracious and courageous He was.

- "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance".

(Romans 11:29) God isn't sorry for what He has called you to. It is His plan; not yours. He is sovereign and in control; not you.

- Lessons From Asaph

Psalms 73 talks about Asaph (the author) being envious of the wicked. He says this, "For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride

compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.” (v.3-9) The wicked seemingly get away with everything, meanwhile those who follow God are always struggling and weak and poor. God opens his eyes, though, “Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. (v.17) . He realizes the fate of the wicked, “Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors. (v.18-19) Asaph ends his psalm with this beautiful confession and in it He reorients his praise to the Lord, “So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works. (v.22-28). Why be envious of the wicked when we have the LORD. We have everything in the LORD. The wicked have nothing but material possessions that they have bought with their souls.

- Difference Between Optimists and Pessimists

When something bad happens to a Pessimist, he rejoices because they were proven right. When something bad happens to an Optimist, he is shattered because his happy-go-lucky life has ended. When something good happens, Pessimists turn angry because they are proven wrong, but to balance that anger, they secretly calm themselves by saying, “This good thing won’t last forever; it’s day is coming”. When something good happens, Optimists rejoice because their philosophy of life is proven right, though they have a hint of sadness because they know that it can’t last forever (much like the end of a Disneyland trip). Who

is right, Optimists or Pessimists? Both. There is good and there is bad in this world. Both Optimists and Pessimists are proven right and wrong over and over and over again. It is but the nature of this fallen world, with sin and death abounding. But grace also abounds from the hand of Jesus. Optimists must not find their joy in good things happening, but in Jesus' grace. And Pessimists must not live in a state of hopelessness, but in hope that Jesus does give grace. As a Pessimist, I love it when I am proven wrong and when Jesus' grace is proven right.

- List of Thankfulness

I recently made a list of things I was thankful to God for. I deliberately started the list with a pessimistic mindset, listing what God hadn't blessed us with. But, by the end of my list, I inevitably had more blessings than not-blessings. As a Christian and a pessimist, it was just very affirming that God's grace wins; especially when we look at the details. God has given me more than what He hasn't given me (or what I thought I should have had).

- Anger is just as sinful as pornography. Why? Because it treats people like scum.

- Choosing Between Jesus and Other Idols

Everyone, during Jesus' trial and execution, had a choice to make. The Jewish Crowd had to choose between Barabbas and Jesus. Pontius Pilate had to choose between Career and Jesus. The Pharisees had to choose between Religion and Jesus. Peter had to choose between Self-preservation and Jesus. Judas had to choose between Jewish Revolt and Jesus. Basically, no one picked Jesus. Jesus was completely ditched by his friends and enemies alike.

- Can God? (Psalm 78)

Can the Lord prepare a table in the wilderness? What a stupid question. Can the Lord provide for me? Can the Lord make a miracle happen? Can the LORD save me from dying? What kind of questions are these? these are questions that put no faith in God's goodness. They dismiss God's grace as something to be

thrown in the trashcan. The psalmist comments on the stupidity of the Israelites in Psalm 78:17-19, “And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness. And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust. Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?”

- The Word “Like”

This generation has grown up not wanting to “offend” people. This is evidenced in the fact that young people use the word “like” in every sentence when describing something. They live in a gray world where nothing ever “is”; it’s just “like” something. If something is “like” something, it means that it can never be something on its own. There is no concrete “this is this and that is that”, “boy and girl”, “right and wrong”. Something is just “like” this other thing or that boy is “like” a girl or that “right” is like a “wrong”. This generation has no answers. They just want to be as least offensive as possible.

- Satan’s Followers and Deniers

Satan would be quite content with people on either side of the fence. He would be fine if the atheists deny his existence or if the occultists worship his existence. Satan likes extremes. He likes Islamic terrorism just as much as he likes Islamic apathy. He likes Christians who pray too much and those who don’t pray at all. God is the One who brings balance to this world. He is the one who brings the extremes together in one magnificent whole.

- Mockers All Around

People tend to make fun of anyone different than they are. It doesn’t matter if they are making fun of someone with Down’s Syndrome or the smartest kid in class. One is called a “retard” and one is called a “nerd”. A talented athlete is a “jock” and a handicapped person is called a “cripple”. A beautiful woman is a “slut” and a plain woman is “homely”. Boys who haven’t reached puberty are “girly” and girls that are flat-chested are “immature”. It doesn’t matter what you lack or what you have in life, you will always be ridiculed by those who are envious around you. From

both sides of the spectrum you will always have mockers.

- Budding Stick

Aaron's dead stick that budded isn't so much as an example of bringing life out of death as it is just reversing the process back to life. The stick was alive at one point (on a tree). It was currently dead. But God brought it back to its original state. God reverses death back to life. His actions are but a full circle of life, death, life. His actions are all about bringing all things back to its original state. He will do so with this universe, the earth and every soul that turns to Him.

- Destroying the Devil's Works

1John 3:8b says, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." How did Jesus destroy the works of the devil? The answer is found in the very next verse: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (v.9)" Jesus defeated the devil by not committing sin. Or, to put it another way: Jesus kept God's Law. That is what destroys the works of the devil.

- Jesus' Conviction Notice

Matthew 27:37 says, "And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS." The conviction against Jesus—His charge—is a truth statement. Look no further than Jesus' Cross' sign. What will you do with Jesus' public conviction notice?

- Why Did He Forsake His Son?

Why did God the Father forsake His Son? He loved His Son. But He also loved us. That is something that every person should reflect upon. God gave His own Son for us sinners. This isn't a story that can just be made up because the first reaction of hearing something so cruel is "That is horrible. I would never do that!" That is true. No parent would ever do that, especially any loving parent who loved their only son. But God did do that. So, the question remains: Why?

- His Choice for Us

Everyone has a choice. Jesus made the choice to stay on that cross in the face of mockery. Staying on that cross was the foundation of His glorious Kingdom. He sacrificed it all: His clothes, His pride, His strength. But He never sacrificed His Kingdom or His throne. His Kingdom is for us. He never sacrificed us. God abandoned Him, but all things were given over to Jesus. Jesus held himself to that cross. He gave Himself over to God and to His own wrath. The Judge became the convicted One. The Master took the chains of a slave. He bore the wrath and shame. Mocked. Abandoned. Humiliated. Crucified. For us.

- A Strong Foundation

To say that something is foundational is to say that it is fundamental. Foundations are to buildings what fundamentals are to belief systems. The Apostle's Creed is foundational and fundamental to every believer's identity. Creeds solidify what we believe and what separates us from the rest of the world. The world, particularly liberal people, hates "fundamentalists" because their foundation is changing on a moment-to-moment basis. They don't care about precedent. They only want to pioneer. Foundations, in their mind are an impediment to being free. I mean, a construction company could attempt to build a building without a foundation, but I don't think it would last very long.

- The Lord's Prayer

It is the action of prayer that humbles you. You are putting yourself in a position of helplessness, being honest that you need all your needs taken care of by your "Father who art in heaven". The focus is on "our" Father, though, not on "our" needs. "Hallowed be thy name" is a form of worship. How is His name made holy? By who He is.

- Darkness encapsulated all of reality on Calvary. Darkness won the day. Or so it thought. Jesus rising from the dead was the end of darkness.

- Sunday school teachers are missionaries to our children.
- Christians and homosexuals weren't "born this way".

- Buried Treasure

No one would ever describes a pirate who is burying a treasure as inclusive. Treasure, by nature is exclusive. Liberals would want that treasure made available for all; not just the pirate. For example, LGBTs would want that treasure (i.e. marriage) available for all. Certain Treasure is given to you by God and for you and not for anyone else. Your spouse, your children, your value in Christ are gifts given to you and are to be protected. None of these things are supposed to be anyone else's. Possession doesn't necessarily mean selfishness. It means responsibility. Sole-ownership isn't evil; it's about taking care of what is yours. These treasures are a great responsibility. There are those who will say that your spouse shouldn't be just yours, your kids shouldn't be just yours, your value in Christ should be just yours. "You exclusive bigot!" – well, at least the accusers have the exclusive part right. Exclusivity is responsibility. It is love for the treasures God has given you. The accusers act as if they don't place value on their own valued possessions (as they just want everyone else's valued possessions as well). Being discontent with what is theirs, Liberals value an unequal philosophy – where the dispersion of wealth is highly valued (until it starts affecting them). For example, these liberals would never open up their own bank account to the public. They would never want their immoral sexuality contained. Their values are just as prized and coveted as Judeo-Christian values are.

- Fruit isn't just what you do with your hands, it is patience, kind words, loving your children, your spouse, your neighbor as yourself.

- Letting Sin Bite You

Snake handlers sometimes let their snakes bite them, so that they can gain an immunity to their venom over time. It's like sin: the more you keep sinning the more its venom injects into you and, eventually, you get used to it. Don't get used to sin. Don't let sin

keep biting you.

- Why Fear God?

“Why fear God?” my coworker asked me. I replied, “Because He created us and He can take us out at any point.” “I don’t agree with that— having a fear of God,” he replied. The fear of God is really the foundation for salvation. It’s how you win salvation. Without a fear of God (because of your own sin) you think that God is on the same level playing field as you. But He is not. He is set apart and Holy. We are not. Psalm 111:10 says, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.”

- Valuing Others

Christianity versus every other philosophy is the difference between valuing God/your neighbor versus valuing no one. Adulterers don’t value their spouse. Child molesters don’t value children. Abortionists don’t value children in the womb. Selfish men don’t value women. Selfish women don’t value men. Pornographers don’t value God’s gift of sex. Life is about valuing others after valuing God. Life is about putting a correct value on God’s good gifts of: food, sex, drink, nature, art, music, family, etc. Do you worship God or his creation? Do you value God or the gifts He has given us?

- Being Ridiculed and Ridiculing Others

Those who ridicule people are usually ridiculed by others. What good does ridiculing others do? Can it stop others from ridiculing you? Does it help the other person? No, it doesn’t. Praying and encouraging someone is way more effective than backbiting, slandering and ridiculing.

- Sanitizing the Truth

The world tends to sanitize the truth to make it more palatable. For example, rather than celebrating Jesus’ resurrection from the dead (due to a terrible miscarriage of justice), we celebrate some fictitious mammal laying eggs (the Easter bunny). Rather than the ugly truth that a Jewish baby boy had to be born in a stable, we

celebrate the Great Elf giving presents. It's like humanity doesn't want to look at its own sin. Why isn't Good Friday an officially observed holiday in the United States? Why is Spring Break weeks before Easter? It's because the world needs to take away from Christ's death, burial and resurrection in any way that it can (so they don't have to recognize it). For example, let's deceive our children into some fictitious characters dropping eggs or swooping down the chimney rather than looking at our dark hearts and deeds. It's easier to become an evangelist to a lie (i.e. secretly wrapping presents and making Easter baskets) than to just tell the truth, it seems. If the world had its way it would rather have Jesus never existed. How sad, because He is our only hope and salvation. It is only because of Him that we have eternal life. Yes, it's painful to watch Him kicked out of the inn or dying on a cross, but it is truth; saving truth that transcends Christmas trees and chocolate covered eggs.

- The Goal is God

The goal for a Christian, every day, is God. Sometimes it's God via your kids, God via your wife. Sometimes it's God via creative time. Sometimes it's God via your day job. Sometimes it's God via fasting, prayer, Bible Study. God wants you, but He wants you in every area of your life. He wants every area in your life brought under submission to His authority. The Christian life isn't just one outlet. It's every outlet available: food, music, art, marriage, parenting, employee, citizen. God is so robust and diverse in how He reveals Himself, it is just overwhelming. God can reveal Himself to you just as powerfully at your boring day job as when He does when you are making love to your spouse. He has no hierarchy how or when He can reveal Himself to you. We have to be open to Him, though. We need to be able to see with His eyes, then we will see Him everywhere; in the mundane, in the exciting. He doesn't discriminate by environment. His beauty isn't confined to church on Sunday mornings. His beauty can and will explode anywhere or anytime. His grace can shower you at anytime, anywhere. His love and His presence can surprise you anytime and anywhere.

- Fearing the Resurrection

Non-Christians hate Easter because they fear it. They fear it because if Jesus rose from the dead, then He has the power over life and death and eternity. He is the judge. All life and death bow to His authority. That is a fearful thought for a sinner. That is why Easter celebrations have been stripped of all Christian references.

- Not Hurting Anyone Else?

If you make an illegal U-turn at an intersection that specifically says, “No U-Turns” and you get pulled over, what do you say to the policeman? “I know I’m guilty, Officer, but I didn’t hurt anyone.” Do you think the officer will say, “Oh, excuse me, continue on your way.”? No, he won’t. Your breaking of the law is inconsequential to “not hurting” anyone. Likewise, breaking God’s Law is inconsequential to “not hurting” anyone. So, why is it that Americans’ highest good and freedom is “you can do whatever you want, as long as you don’t hurt anyone else”? It doesn’t matter if you think that you haven’t hurt anyone, you still have broken God’s Law! You are guilty, even if everyone else around you didn’t get hurt by you! His Law supersedes your friends/neighbors/family’s being hurt by you. His Law transcends your ability/freedom/choice to hurt others. The policeman isn’t going to let you off and God isn’t going to let you off for “not hurting anyone else”.

- Evangelism Should Head Straight for the Iceberg

Sometimes preaching the gospel is difficult. It’s so difficult that most Christians don’t do it. They avoid telling about Jesus/God/the Bible at all costs. Here is a lesson to take from the Titanic: the Titanic, had it been steered directly into the iceberg, would have sustained less damage than what did happen. Instead, the Titanic turned, trying to avoid it and, well, you know the rest of the story. Likewise, avoiding preaching the gospel to those around you will cause more damage to you, than going right for it.

- A True Friend

Jesus is the Best Friend you will ever have. He tells you the truth, feeds you and wants to be with you. He wants to give you advice.

He listens to you. He forgives you and enjoys time with you. He opens your eyes to life and beauty. He protects you from harm. He warns you. He will never leave you nor forsake you. He washes your feet. He died for you. That is a True Friend. He is the Friend of Friends.

- Two Types of People

There are two types of people in this world: those who worship God and those who don't. That fact alone will affect all the other two types of people in the world. There are those who show grace and there are those who show justice. Those who have allegiance to something and those who don't. Those who are liberal and those who are conservative. Those who are aggressive and those who are passive. An aggressive person who worships God is to be desired above a passive person who doesn't worship God. An unbeliever who shows grace should not be desired more than a believer who shows justice. Worship of God is the only thing that brings all extremes under His authority. Otherwise, all these polar opposites are going to continue to fight and destroy this world.

- Who Will You Follow?

Life is all about which allegiances you will follow. Who will you follow? What will you follow? Who will you be aligned with and who will you be aligned against? Who will you fight for? Who will you fight against? It is overwhelming the amount of allegiances you have to make in life, but you must make them. Where will you go to find credible causes and people to fight for? Without God and the Bible as your foundation, you could literally follow anyone and it will be your damnation. You could literally fight for any cause and it will cost your soul. Reading the Bible is imperative to knowing which side to fight on and who to make allegiances to. Humans can't make these kinds of decisions in a vacuum. In this evil world, everything is stacked against us to pick the wrong side and to fight for the enemy of God. Oh, that God would show His grace on people to reveal to them that He is the Only One to be following and fighting for.

- Hard To Get Parts

The more limited edition of car you have, the harder it is to replace parts when they go out. In other words, the more common the car, the easier it is to find OEM parts and keep it running. The more common the car, means that it isn't that unique. The more unique (or special Edition) a car is, the more expensive and valuable it is (because parts and labor are unique). Now let's apply those facts to God. Is God common or unique? Is He replaceable with other idols or gods? How valuable is He? He is unique, supremely valuable and no other god can take His place. So, why do we think we can just substitute His Godhood in our lives with other things? Why do we think He is so common that we can just come to His throne with no payment? We apply more value to our cars than to God, which is disgusting. God is so beyond value that He defines all value that there ever was. He is the definition of uniqueness and specialness and there is no replacement for His glory.

- Self Made?

I've been seeing more and more "self" marketing merchandise. For example, the other day I saw a truck with a sticker that said, "Self-Made" in one-foot letters. I also saw someone at my work wearing a shirt that said, "Self-Taught". Let's examine these statements. Is someone really "self-made"? Did they bring themselves into existence? Are who they are a complete and total result of all their actions? I think not. They didn't conceive their own being. Many people have sacrificed and shown grace to that person (whether or not they realize it). No one is "auto made". What about the statement, "self-taught"? Did a person learn how to wipe their butt out of the womb? Did a person buy groceries and cook a meal never being taught? No. A person is never self-taught; a person is always taught by someone (whether they realize it or not). These "self" statements are a result of foolish pride. They exemplify the loner/autonomous mentality that no one has helped them (and only they have helped themselves). This mentality takes grace and God out of the equation and elevates "self". It is the worship of self, leaving no room for thankfulness to anyone else. What a disgusting philosophy that is damning to ones' soul because if no thankfulness is applied to humans, it will never be applied to the

Lord of all things.

- Pro-Death

The philosophies of Pro-Life and Pro-Death have existed 6,000 years before Roe v. Wade. If one were to look back at Ancient Egypt, death was worshiped there. The ancient Greeks, Romans, Mayans all worshiped death. Israel worshiped life, as it served the one, true God. Life and God are synonymous. Death and Satan are synonymous. Whether a civilization chooses life or death, is the determining factor of its continued existence. Many a civilization started out as “Pro-Life” only to end up as “Pro-Death” and to self-destruct. Basically, if the culture worshiped Yahweh, they survived; if they worshiped any other god they died. That should be a sobering reminder to any country in the 21st century.

- Little Theft

The theft of things happens quite frequently. For example, if you put food or a drink in the refrigerator at my workplace, you run the risk it being stolen. My coworkers have put drinks in the fridge before and have found their drink gone, or sipped out of, or, their food just gone. The thief, I’m sure would say, “It’s just a little sandwich” or “It’s just a little sip of a little drink”. First of all, if it is just “a little thing” then why even do it? If it truly is a little thing then you don’t need to steal it do you? The second thing is, if it is a “little thing”, how would you like it if you came to your lunch and it was missing? I guarantee you that you would not think it a “little thing” if someone stole your lunch. It wouldn’t be a little thing that you would starve that day, or if someone drank your soda. Theft is theft—even if it is “little”. To call a theft “little” is simply the justification for it. Anyone, anywhere, can justify anything. That’s why there is so much pain, war, sickness, hatred and murders in the world. Murders and abortion can be justified. Rape and molestation can be justified. Murder is the theft of someone else’s life. War is the theft of someone else’s land/goods/people/economy. All theft will be accounted for on Judgment Day.

- Bumper Sticker Churches

You can’t reduce a church to a logo. A logo is a poor representation

of what a church is. A church is a living, breathing entity fueled by the Spirit of God. How does a logo even remotely reflect what that church is? To advertise your church on your car is to buy into the corporate way of thinking a church is (as if church was a business or a brand that you should “follow” or be “a part of”). If you attend your church out of “brand loyalty” you are completely missing the point of church. If you are a follower of a church rather than a follower of Jesus, you are missing out. The Church is a community, a village, a neighborhood of fellow brothers and sisters. Why are you trying to turn it into a brand? All that does is push people away or to makes them choose sides (i.e. Pepsi vs Coke or Windows vs Mac). It’s not helpful. Logos can and do publicize the divisions of Christianity (that are already there). Denominations are, by definition, a division of the Church. Those divisions tend to breed hatred toward others (Baptist vs Pentecostal, Calvinist vs Arminian, etc.) Promote Jesus; not your church’s logo. Publish the gospel, not your cool church logo.

- The F-Word

The F-Word is so prevalent in today’s culture that it has actually lost its potency. The F-Word is seen as the ultimate power-word; the ultimate “I tell you the truth” word. Why do we, as a culture, need a crude word like the F-Word to flood our everyday sentences? Is it because we are all a bunch of liars and what comes out of our mouths is nothing but lies? So, to beef up the validity of what we are saying, we sprinkle in the F-Word to make it more credible? Perhaps it is to give some life to what we are saying? The topics of our conversation are usually profoundly mundane in everyday life, so to beef up the excitement factor (or the interest factor) we, perhaps, feel the F-Word is the go-to “break in case of emergency” adjective? I think it is all of the above. People are liars and people don’t really “swear to G-D” anymore. So, God has been replaced with the F-Word as a final, arbitrary “this is true” statement. Anger and power are the underlying sense of the F-Word, too, to give the speaker some credibility (because he probably doesn’t have much). In a lying culture, where everyone lies to each other, the F-Word is kind of like the glue that holds some sort of “trust” among Americans. It’s sad to think how this

culture has drained itself of any honesty that it has to resort to a crude word such as the F-Word. But it is because people don't tell the truth anymore. People are dishonest with their neighbor and will never change. So the F-Word is used as the spare-tire adjective/noun/verb/non-word that can be used in any conversation scenario. In other words, this culture has nothing to say, and if it does have something to say, it is probably a lie. The F-Word hides the fact that we, as a culture, have nothing to say (and if we do, it is untrue). There is really no life behind the F-Word. It is a pseudo-front of power and strength. It is a word of nothingness. It lacks substance, value and respect. It is filled with air and means nothing. And yet this culture throws it around like water. Jesus says, "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation." (James 5:12). The proponents of the F-Word would ridicule the Jewish Carpenter who said that, but deep inside they wish they had 1% of His strength, honesty and integrity.

- Angry Millennials

The Millennial Generation, unfortunately, has no real substance. They have grown up on a healthy diet of atheism, evolutionary humanism and occultic spiritism. They have every technology and entertainment channel at their disposal. They have tremendous amounts of anger but they really have nothing to say. They are discontented and frustrated and they can't even articulate why. They are ready to fight anyone who looks at them the wrong way (and not even know why). They are loose cannons, ready to fly off the handle at any moment. They live for nothing. They care deeply about whatever it is in the moment but, by the next day, they have completely forgotten about it. They live in the present, never thinking about the past or the future. Millennials need Jesus. He is the substance of what they are looking for. They are looking for social justice in sinful humans and it is never going to happen. They are looking for perfect relationship and it is never going to happen. They are looking for the perfect education, career, purpose in life and it is never going to happen. That is because only Jesus satisfies. They hunger and thirst to know their Creator

and they, instead are worshiping His creation. They have elevated man as the ultimate authority and giver of happiness and they are sorely disappointed. They have tossed the Bible to the side, thinking it to be fables. If they would turn, instead, to the Lord, their souls would be satisfied.

- God's Stories of Justice Served

God's justice falls on every kind of person, the moment they actively rebel against His Law and Love. Adam and Eve thought they could rebel against God and they went from living in paradise to hell on earth. Cain murdered his brother, Abel. Cain was subsequently made an outcast and lived the rest of his days as a wanderer. The society in Noah's day took rebellion to a new level and they were all washed away in the world-wide flood. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah also rebelled against God's laws of sexuality; they were subsequently doused in fire from heaven. All through Scripture, we see common people, kings, farmers, LGBTs and even God's own people being judged when they break God's Law. God's Law isn't to be taken lightly. These stories of judgment should be a warning to us. Instead, today, these stories in today's society show an "intolerant God" that should be ignored. Well, ask Adam and Eve, or Noah's neighbors, or the Sodomites if it worked out for them. Don't repeat history, thinking that you can break God's Law and remain unsinged. No one has done it yet.

- Retaining Control

If you have to treat people like scum to retain control, then the control isn't worth it. How you treat others, will be judged by God. Whether you are a manager, a politician or a parent, the people under your authority are made in the image of God; treat them like scum and you will never have their respect (though you may have control over them). Would I ever go to the funeral of a manager who treated me like scum? Of course not. All their demeaning comments, threats, sarcasm and rudeness has finally died with their mortal body. It is a cause for celebration, not grief. Control means nothing without mutual respect. If you can earn people's respect while leading them, you are a true leader. If you just want control and treat people like animals you will be a very

lonely, disrespected and hated person.

- Pharaoh vs. God

After the first plague, neither Israel nor Pharaoh nor Moses knew what was going to happen. They were on the verge of an epic. God was going to free His people no matter what, but He was up against the most powerful king in the world. This king had the whole world at his feet. Why would he listen to a God whom he had never heard of? He worshiped nature and his false idols. God, in the following 9 plagues, systematically destroyed his idols. During this time even Israel's heart was tested, if they were going to trust God or not. Everyone's heart was tested: Pharaoh's, Moses', Israel's. The plagues were drawing out what was already in their hearts: rebellion. No one knew how this battle was going to end. After the death of Pharaoh's first-born son (the 10th plague), he released Israel to be free, but he changed his mind one last time—a decision that altered the course of history. In his arrogance he chose to annihilate Israel (he would rather have them be dead rather than be free). But, again, his pride blinded him to the fact that the walls of the Red Sea could come down on his whole army. Once a heart has been hardened, it is difficult to have a change in the other direction. That's why there is rarely any death-bed conversions. People live their lives a certain way; only a miracle from God can change their hearts. Pharaoh is a classic case of what happens in today's atheists and agnostics. He doesn't see the judgment right in front of them. They are so focused on the here and now that they miss God's future judgment or the world that He has created.

- Awkward Being Good

How often do we do something good and, soon afterward, we do something evil? For example, we give someone a compliment and it feels nice. But then it feels awkward too, so, to balance it out, we have to say something mean afterward. That "awkwardness" when you are being nice or kind or caring to someone is called sin. Our carnal nature hates being kind to our neighbors. It gets uncomfortable. Our nature is at home when it is being criticizing, nagging, bickering, cursing. Our carnal nature laughs at nice

people. (Although when we are in need, we are thankful when someone helps us). This culture ridicules niceness; it longs to tear down people and hurt others. That is mankind's nature. It is pure evil. The only hope for a soul to do good (and want to do it genuinely) is Christ. He is the One that empowers us to speak kind words to others and do kind things to others.

- Laughing at Isaiah 53

Can you imagine someone reading Isaiah 53 and laughing at its contents? It happens all the time. People look at Jesus' sacrifice and see no value in it. They, in fact, see so little value in it that they ridicule and mock Jesus' dying on the cross. Isaiah 53 becomes a joke to them. They find it ridiculous that someone's death could bring life to them. But that is the truth of Isaiah's prophecy: that the Son of God would give His life for us. It's nothing to laugh at. God also laughs at the wicked (Psalm 2). I don't know about you, but I don't want to be the object of God's laughter.

- Running Red Lights

If you have two lawbreakers breaking the law, someone is going to die. Say for instance that some driver is in a hurry and is running a red light. But in the other direction, another driver is doing the exact same thing, except he is making a left turn. They kill each other. Lawbreakers kill each other. How much more do lawbreakers of God's Law kill each other?

- Don't live your relationship with God like two ships passing in the night. Because one day, the night will be over. Will you even know who God is?

- Others Paved the Way

The world we live in now is like coming up to a red traffic light and it turning green for you, and, you subsequently pass all the people who were waiting for the red to turn green. They laid the foundation for you to enjoy a smooth ride (and not have to stop). How can you treat the people of the past with contempt? Without them you would have been waiting there along with them. This

society relishes ungratefulness to those who came before us and hatefulness to those who came after us. It is the church's responsibility to savor the past and dream of the future because the world won't do it. They abort the future. They wipe away the past. They only want to live in the here and now. It is exactly that selfish mentality that led to the fall of Babylon, Athens, Rome, Britain. . . and America. Selfishness. Ungratefulness. Always repeating history. Man doesn't change. We can learn so much from history if we just opened our eyes and our hearts. God shows us so much in history. Where do you think our religious tradition came from? Men who didn't care? I think of Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, the men who translated the Bible—our religious tradition is what builds churches and nations. It builds homes and families. It builds communities. Our religious history is even more important than our secular history for, without it, we would all be barbarians. Religious history is the past victories of the Spirit of God; it is because of Him that we even have a peaceful life—more peaceful than any in the history of the world.

- Snitches Get Stitches

A well-known bully/prison saying, "Snitches Get Stitches". If someone does something wrong, and you witness it, it is common prison etiquette (and life saving) not to say anything. It is imperative that you don't say anything, or you risk your own life. In prison, there is only one rule: there is no justice. Don't snitch. Turn the other way; pretend you didn't see. If someone gets raped, you didn't see it. If you get raped, you didn't see it. No justice. The law of the jungle. Everyone out for themselves. And if you do try to bring civil concepts into this uncivil environment, you will be killed. You see, the lawless have to follow lawlessness. They don't want any rats bringing their crimes to the light. That's why Jesus was hated, too. He brought people's crimes to light. That's why the Pharisees murdered him. Snitches get stitches. He was pointing out everything that was wrong in the religious establishment. They couldn't let their empire crumble at the hands of this Jewish Carpenter. Snitches get crucified. But Jesus knew that He would be killed and yet He still ratted them out. He published their wrongdoing to the culture. He brought their sin into the

light for all men and God to see. His sense of justice couldn't be ignored. His truth and holiness couldn't be abandoned for self-preservation. He knew what the cost was for our redemption and He did it anyway.

- **Circuit of the Sun**

The sun's circuit every 24 hours is but a picture of our lives. First there is nothing, then there is something. It first appears small over the horizon. Then it continues to move overhead in the morning, warming the earth. Then by midday it is at its fullest and brightest. Towards the end, it starts to descend. The warmth starts to disappear. And finally, it is gone. Our lives, also, start vibrantly as a newborn, then a toddler (still learning the basics of walking). Then a tween, teenager and young adult (as you start and end your education). Then you hit your 20's (finishing your education and starting your career; also getting married). Your 30's is where your career and children are very much a part of your life. In your 40's and 50's you're comfortable in your career and start looking towards retirement (and your children start moving out). 60's is when you can retire from your career (and you start having grandchildren). Your 70's is about enjoying retirement and then the end comes (for most people). That is a common life. There is nothing wrong with it. But where is God in each of those steps. Make sure that He is with you in each step, every day, for your life will slip away from you before you know it. One day will be your last as your heart will stop beating. Then, if you know Christ as your Savior, you will be with Him. If you don't, you won't be with Him.

- **Loyal To Something**

You can't live your life without loyalties. You will, consciously or not, adhere to a set of principles, ideals and beauties that you want to live by. You will embrace some sort of framework –a worldview by which all your actions are defined. Even for those adherents that don't believe in “any” rules or restraints marry themselves to the philosophy of chaos. Those individuals are loyal (and will die for) chaos. To say that a married woman is restrained is no different than being restrained to chaos. To say that a career is

restraining is no less restraining than living with no joy. You will be loyal to some ideology. What it comes down to is what ideology is the best for God's Kingdom. God's Kingdom is the only one that is growing, thriving and will last forever. Our little kingdom won't last very long. Build into something that will last.

- Doctors Acting Like Viruses

It's a sad world when doctors act more like deadly viruses than they act like healers. Doctors are supposed to promote and heal life; not give people over to death freely without a fight. The amount of popular professional medical opinion promoting end-of-life advocacy (i.e. euthanasia) is staggering, but it really is just another evidence that this society worships death. Rather than curing disease, doctors team up with viruses to kill someone. When a doctor joins hands with viruses to get rid of a dying patient—they have the same philosophy as the virus itself: this person is not worth life. The Hippocratic oath states not to kill anyone. Today's doctors do believe in killing someone when they can no longer make any more money from them. Today's doctors have studied disease and viruses and bacteria for so long that they actually are starting to think like them. Today's doctors are really advocating for death; not life.

- A City's First Founders

Why is it that the downtown area—the first area that starts a city—is always the most humble? In other words, why are the original people that live in a city—their dwellings—less extravagant than the uptown of a city? That is because as a pioneer, you don't live in luxury; you are just trying to survive. The infrastructure isn't there yet; you are a settler trying to make ends meet. A simple dwelling place is more than enough for an original citizen of a city. It's only the ones who come later—the ones who build on the backs of those original settlers—that luxury starts to be proclaimed. Luxury and making extravagant money come much later (as technology increases). It's only because of the hard-work, dedication and suffering of the first people that later generations get to enjoy and then focus on making their lives more comfortable. As downtown grows, people eventually move outward and the fancy houses are

the ones on the hills.

- **Wishing For Other People's Things**

The song, "Jesse's Girl" is a popular 80's song. The refrain goes like this, "Oh, I wish I had Jesse's Girl". It seems like an innocent song on the outside but upon closer listening it tells us there is something deeply sinful going on: envy and lust. God tells us not to wish for other people's things. Envy is a horrible way to live. It makes you discontented in life. We are to be thankful with what we have. Envy is a sinful way to live, but when you add lust to it, it makes your life doubly miserable.

- **The Illusion of Fame**

Why does Fame equal importance? Fame is simply "being known by a lot of people". But do those millions of people actually "know" the famous person? No. In a person's life (famous or not) one can only truly know so many people. Your circle can only be so big whether you are the president or a pauper. Fame does nothing to that. America puts so much emphasis on the god of "being known by many" that she has lost her soul. Guaranteed, billions of people have never heard of Tom Cruise or Denzel Washington. Guaranteed billions have never heard of the NFL sports team that won this year's Super Bowl. The world's most famous people are very much unknown to 90% of the world. So, I ask what does fame do? It's just an arbitrary marker of importance. It is just another false philosophy that promises to add value to one's life. It also gives false value to a famous people followers. Fame in God's eyes is meek and humble. He doesn't care how many movies, books or tickets you've sold. He doesn't care about how well renown you are. He is more famous than all. He has true fame that should be proclaimed throughout the whole earth.

- **Devaluing Others**

To say someone is a "waste of space" or a "waste of air" is exactly the kind of devaluing Satan loves. He wants to get people in a place to distance themselves from the Imago Dei. Once they do that, murder becomes a viable option (because people are just trash at that point).

- Other People's Opinions

People value other people's opinions either too much or too little. Self-loathing people value other opinions too much by saying, "I wish I had what they had." Self-aggrandizing people value other's opinions too little "I don't care what they think, I'm going to do what I want." Depressed people need antidepressants. Proud people need no drugs (for pride is their drug). It blinds them to loving their neighbor. But putting your neighbor on a pedestal isn't loving him either.

- Too Much Value on Animals

Vegans put value on things that don't have God's value. Don't get me wrong: animals have value. All life does. But those made in God's image are most valuable of all. For a vegan to ignore the image of God and place supreme value on animals is a huge error. For vegans to support abortion and advocate for no animal "murder" is a mistake.

- Canary in a Tin Mine

When Christians are persecuted, the end is near. It means society has decided to put its own ideas as the supreme authority rather than on God's ideas (ideas that Christians were simply proclaiming). When the Christians are marginalized, ridiculed, sued and their livelihoods destroyed, the end is near. For in the persecuting of Christians is shown the pure hatred of God's Law and is an evidence of the pure throwing off of any moral absolutes. Christians are the canaries in the tin mines. In the old days, in the mining caves, canaries would be the first sign that there was no longer any oxygen. If you saw the canary dead, you knew you had better run out of the mine. Likewise, when Christians are being persecuted, being treated as traitors to society and mocked, the mine has no more oxygen left in it. Americans, Christian or not, should be running.

- Blind Luck

People have more faith in lady luck, bingo or the lottery than they do in God. How pathetic. They have more faith in chance, chaos

and evolution than they do in God's design. They have so much faith in gods that don't really exist than in the God that does. That is what sin does: it blinds you to the truth of reality.

- Never Out of His Hands

Nothing is ever out of God's hands, whether you are in God's "main plan" or "your plan". Nothing is ever out of his hands. You can never run away so far that you escape God's plan for your life. Jonah tried it and he still wound up witnessing to the sailors on the ship (something that wouldn't have happened had he not run away from God's Nineveh plan). God's grace knows no bounds. You are His whether you like it or not. It's His universe. His plan. Nothing escapes His divine Authorship.

- Affection Shouldn't Be Despised

We live in a crude age where rudeness is exemplified as virtuous. Have you ever seen two people flip each other off, but it is really just a sign of affection (like waving "hi")? What is the point of that? It's like affection is treated as despicable and has to be ridiculed (but you still have to show someone you like them by being crude). I think people fear being kind. They see it as being weak. If they knew Jesus' statement of loving your neighbor they would see that love is stronger than crudeness.

- The Foundation

The foundation for any country is the family and the foundation for a family is Christ. Only families that have Christ as the foundation can build America. America is nothing without Christian families. America has to be built upon godly families. Families (and countries) have to build their house upon a rock. God designed families to have that stability. Take the stability of a family away and a whole country crumbles. "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock." (Matthew 7:24-25)

- Warranty Void

If you use a product in a way that it is not intended for, you cannot sue the manufacturer. Many products have some sort of legal type like “Warranty is Void if Misused” on their products to protect themselves against lawsuits. It protects the customer from hurting himself and the manufacturer from being sued. If a customer is stupid enough to still want to use a product for an “unintended purpose” and gets hurt, that is on him. The manufacturer is free from all responsibility. If you cannot blame the manufacturer for misusing a product, then you cannot blame the Lord of all things for misusing His product. You cannot blame God for using His creation to hurt yourself. God is not responsible for you disobeying His Law. God warns us out of love—not hate. He has warned us—fairly—that this world is evil and how to navigate it. To ignore His counsel is for our own detriment. How many people willingly use their bodies in an unintended purpose other than what its Creator made? How many people think they can get away with it scar-free? There is no pain-free life if you use your life not in accordance to the Lord’s commandments. He knows what is best for us; we don’t. We will break creation and we will break ourselves; we won’t break the Manufacturer. Hurt is only in your future if you choose to disobey the Maker; the choice is yours. God has given us a warning that if His rules aren’t followed, they will lead to death. Some people think that His warning is unnecessary, so, by all means, use a rubber band to bungee jump or use an umbrella as a parachute!

- Many Ways Lead to Christ

There are churches known for saving people and there are churches known for not saving people. There are theology churches and “spirit-filled” churches. Spirit-filled churches tend not to have real converts and the theology churches tend not to save anyone. Reformed churches look down on the Calvary Chapels and vice versa. My question is: aren’t we all the church of Christ? Theology doesn’t save anyone, nor does an emotional response to an altar call but both can point people to God. Isn’t that our job to point people to God? Only God saves. And He chooses to save in all different ways.

- I don't worship creation. Creation isn't valued as a person is. That is why words like "animal" and "plant" are not capitalized. What is capitalized in American language? Pronouns of people; not creation.

- Pursue Christ until it hurts.

- Murderers All Around Us

There are murderous people all around us. Whether it is ISIS, the KKK, the Black Lives Matter, the far left, the communists, abortionists, etc. The point is the chances of you getting murdered are pretty high whether by a government or by a citizen. So, for instance, ISIS hates Americans. You are an American. ISIS will kill you for simply being an American. Why be killed for being an American when you can be killed as a Christian? If you are going to be killed for simply existing as a citizen of the USA, that's pretty shallow. Why not stand for something (Jesus Christ) and get killed for that? You are going to be killed either way— you might as well be fighting evil before you go down. In other words, if you are going to get killed, then at least stand for Christ, not just simply for existing.

- Is God Our Servant?

I'm not going to presume to tell God what to do. That is the height of arrogance. But we—meaning all men— do it all the time. Why do we think we can tell or coerce God what to do? He is our Creator. Does He have to do obedience to us? Does He have to listen to us? Not at all. And yet mankind seeks to make God a servant of our wishes.

- Serving Others

Living life to the fullest means living for God. Sometimes that means doing things for others. Sometimes, that means being there for others. Serving others is living for God. You show your love to Him by loving others (even those who don't deserve it). "For I desired mercy, and not (animal) sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." (Hosea 6:6)

- Feelings Churches vs. Intellectual Churches

I see two kinds of churches in the world: those who follow their feelings and those who follow their intelligence. Those who follow Theology or those who follow the Spirit. Those who study about God and those who want to know God. Is one wrong and the other right? Of course not. Taken to the extreme, though, yes, they are both wrong. There has to be a balance. You should follow your feelings and your intelligence. You should follow Theology and the Spirit. You should study about God and know God. Many denominations have been created/split just from these two polar opposites. God created feelings and intelligence. He wants both from His people.

- Cursing God's Sovereignty

When someone takes God's name in vain, do they realize what they are doing? Why do they have to bring God into their cursing of someone or something? Do they think they need the highest authority to give credibility to how awful this curse is? Do they think God endorses the cursing of the object in question? I want to submit to you that, yes, I think people take God's name in vain for those reasons. Here is something to consider though: they are actually cursing their Maker in the process. When they curse others, they are cursing God, because He made them. When they blaspheme a bad thing that happened, they are cursing God's sovereignty. They are in effect saying, "Your sovereignty is damnable". A curse on circumstances, an accident, a person or a thing is no reason to curse God's nature, holiness and honor. It is a sign of disrespect to the Lord of the universe. Not only that but only God pronounces curses (and blessings) on things. Who are you to act in his stead? Would you curse the One who gave you breath in your lungs? Would you curse the One who gave you a soul and crafted you in the womb? Don't curse others. Don't blaspheme His name. Be angry and sin not.

- Rebellion Against God Never Works

Rebellion against the Almighty never works. And when I say "never" I mean in the long run. There is short term—very short

term—benefits to rebelling against God from a fleshly perspective. All rebellion will be judged at some point. God doesn't procrastinate. He will judge and He will do so in His perfect timing. His justice will be sweet and swift.

- Undoing of Creation

Jesus' sacrifice for us is much about the undoing of creation. Listen to Isaiah 53:5, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Jesus was wounded, bruised, chastised and given stripes to His body. In other words, creation was killing its Creator. The Creator was being undone (at least His body). And, yet it was through this undoing that He could remake creation. He could redeem it to Himself once and for all.

- Power Without Honor

Power without Honor. That phrase summarizes my thinking on mass shootings (like what happened in Las Vegas, Columbine or Springfield, TX). Mass murderers basically choose the day they are going to die (whether self-inflicted or shot by police). But they have no business choosing the day of their death, let alone the days of others' deaths. The death-dealer is God; not them. They are not God; far from it. The mass shooters who commit suicide take the chicken way out. Shooting a bunch of people that they don't even know. . . can anyone get any more cowardly? These murderers die as cowards.

- Walking With Inspiration

Jesus is the only Man who inspires you today and gives you strength to live out that inspiration. He empowers you with His love but then He actively empowers you to live out that love. He is not dead. He is alive. He didn't just set you on the right course; He walks with you on that course. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. ( Philippians 1:6)

- The One Who Deserves No Mockery

The One who should always be glorified should never feel shame. The One that should always be praised and not mocked is the one who was shamed, humiliated and mocked at Calvary. Glory isn't just because of His nature; it's because of what He did on that tree for us.

- Moving In God's Will

To move (i.e. putting an idea into action) means you can move by logic or emotion or a combination of those two. But there is a third option: moving by the Spirit of God. When God leads, it is beyond logic (intellect) and feelings (heart); it is based on a fine-tuning of knowing God's will.

- God Gives and Takes Away

"I'm mad at God because He took so and so away from me". This is a very common sentiment among unbelievers (and sometimes believers) who have just lost a loved one. Do they realize that they wouldn't have even had their loved one in the first place if He didn't give that person to them? God gives and He takes away. But we only want the gifts. What we don't realize is that sometimes when He takes away, it is also a gift, though it may not seem like it in the moment. We lose loved ones in this world because it is a fallen world. We long for a world that doesn't have that kind of pain of being ripped away from someone. That is a world (heaven) that God beckons all to. Being angry with God because heaven isn't on earth won't get you to the real heaven. Jesus knows your pain and He will be with all suffering people. He knows what loss is like. He had everything ripped from Him, including His life. Don't be angry at the One who knows exactly what it is like to have tremendous loss in your life.

- Divorce became popular when divorce was made profitable for women. Divorce became profitable when the State became a surrogate husband to women.

- Creating a Home

The Garden of Eden was Adam and Eve's home. Ever since man got kicked out of the garden, man has been looking for a home. He

has been looking for suitable land, resources, neighbors, a place to raise children safely, a place to work, etc. In the garden, man had everything. However, after the fall, man has had to find and create his own garden/home. Man desires a home. He longs for one, and it is hard to create one. Nonetheless he is to “dress and keep it” (Gen 2:15) like his former Garden paradise. Even in the world of thorns and thistles, God can help each of us make a home. Our home is in Him, safe and secure. He also will give us all our daily and physical needs.

- Trees For Work

Genesis 2:15 says, “And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.” Man was to take care of the Garden, presumably with tools made from wood. God gave trees to make fruit but also gave trees to make tools to work. (As a side-note, this passage of Scripture goes against the eco-friendly tree worshipers who desire to never cut down trees or “hurt” trees).

- Bethlehem means “ the house of Bread”. Jesus is the Bread of Life.

- The Castle is Breached

Many times in movies, a small group of people are shown, trying to defend their castle from intruders. Most of the time, their castle is breached and all is lost. Their efforts seem futile the moment that battering ram break through the main gate. At that point, every defender inside that castle must decide one of two things: 1) run or 2) fight. This is a hard decision to make, especially when all hope seems lost. It is no different in today’s world. There are several battering rams pummeling through the Castle of Christ. We are getting hit by the Darwinists, communists, LGBTs, Pro-choicers, every secular philosophy imaginable. Sometimes, as I look around, all seems lost and I think, “Why should I keep fighting”? I have to keep fighting first of all for the Lord. It’s Him I fight for and no one else. Also, I have to fight because my brethren are counting on me not to let my part of the castle fall to the Enemy. Every person has to defend their part of the wall– so

own it. I have to fight because what I fight for is so infinitely valuable (and the Enemy is so infinitely worthless). I cannot lose heart. I must stand firm in the face of all these attacks. Think of the Alamo or Masada. Think of Hacksaw Ridge or Dunkirk. I'm sure people trapped inside these places wanted to run but they stood their ground even if it seemed foolish. Why? Because they believed in something bigger than themselves. They saw their fight as preserving all the good. They saw their last stand as the destruction of the Enemy and all that is evil. The fight has come to the Christians. Will they fight or will they cower and preserve their own lives? "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." (2 Thessalonians 2:15)

2018

- Don't Trust Street Smarts

Someone who has "street smarts" is not someone you can trust. "Street smarts" is just code for "lying conniving, thieving" person. The streets are known for their dishonesty. Living on the streets is about survival and getting ahead (at the expense of others). So, the next time someone brags that they have "street smarts, run! For they are there to take from you; not give.

- Big Sexy Hair

"Big Sexy Hair" is the name of a shampoo product. Why? I know the word "sexy" is attractive to women, but my question is, "Why go to that extreme naming to market a beauty product"? First of all, I don't know how hair can be sexy. Secondly, how can a product make someone's hair sexy? The word "sexy" is attractive to women because they want to be desired by men. Being desired means creating value in someone. In other words, the word "sexy" is a synonym for "valuable". "Big Valuable Hair" probably wouldn't sell. It sounds like the consumer isn't valuable and that this shampoo would bring value to their life (even though Big Sexy Hair is saying the same thing). So, Big Sexy Hair it is. Consumers don't want to be looked down upon. A product that is trying to sell to a consumer has to frame its lies to make the consumer feel

worthless enough to want the product but not so worthless as to not buy it. Big Sexy Hair is a lie that women want to believe in to feel worth.

- Love is Sacrifice

Loving God is not a popular lifestyle. When someone says, “Love God” that is essentially saying “Sacrifice yourself for God.” That isn’t popular. It isn’t even popular to “love your neighbor as yourself” because that means “sacrificing for your neighbor”. It seems like everyone else benefits from your sacrifice. No one wants to love God or their neighbor like that. That’s difficult and time-consuming. Love shouldn’t be that much hard work. Love, as this culture defines it, should be easy and without any grief. But biblical love is a call to sacrifice oneself for the other. It is a gift of our resources to someone else. To love the Lord with your whole heart, mind, soul and strength is a sacrifice of one’s life (and may very well cost him his life). To love others biblically as oneself is a sacrifice. Loving others is dangerous and it may cost your life to do it. But it is so worth it in the end. The fruit of such love is unimaginable and reaches far beyond this life. Love is sacrifice. In fact, there is a verse in Ephesians where love and sacrifice are interchangeable terms: “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.” (Ephesians 5:1-2).

- Strength for Ourselves or Others?

As Christians, we tend to ask God for strength. But do we ask strength to benefit ourselves or others? If we are asking for strength for ourselves, it is selfish. If we are asking for strength to help others then God will honor that request.

- Love the Unloveable

Are we actually asking God to love the unlovable, the people we don’t agree with, the argumentative, the hurt, the downcast? Because if we aren’t loving these people and we aren’t asking to love these people, how are these people supposed to be reached? Because no one else is going to love these broken people.

- Only God can turn your hurt into healing.

- If you honor God, He will honor you. This kind of honoring doesn't come from anything else but by "drawing near to God and He will draw near to you".

- Thieves and God

What thieves don't realize is that when they steal, they are stealing something that not only is another person's but, is God's. God's possessions/money is being stolen. Take hope in that God will deal out justice. He will take care of the theft. He will make it right. He may even lead the thief to salvation through the thievery. A Christian's hope should be in God to provide; not money or possessions to take care of us anyway. What thieves don't understand is how long it takes to save money and buy possessions. All they see is the end-result and they want it. For example, it takes months of sacrificing and saving and giving up pleasures and hard work and time away from family to be able save money. And it takes 30 seconds to ruin all that work. It takes a short amount of time to steal someone else's hard work. A thief has no respect for people or property. He only cares about gaining monetarily in life. Unfortunately, living a life of not loving his neighbor will result in a very poverty driven life. He not only has no respect for his neighbor but he doesn't even have respect for himself. Think about the depths that he is willing to sink to become a thief. Think about the actions that he had to take to become a criminal. Was it worth it? Was the money he stole really worth lowering himself to those depths? Apparently, but that is exactly what the idol of money does to someone: takes a human and turns them into an animal.

- Christ knows what it is like to have everything taken from him, even down to his last possession: His own robe. He then was nailed to a cross and had his life taken. Everything was stolen from Him.

- Tall People Helping Short People

Tall people were put on this earth to help short people. I told that to my coworkers, half-jokingly. But there is a lot of truth to it. Tall people can help short people a lot, by grabbing things that they cannot. And why not? Each of us, whether tall or short, fat or skinny, smart or dumb, each of us has a gift. Each of us has been designed to use our talents for the glory of God.

- The Lens

Christianity is a lens by which you see all of life as it really is. You can look to the top and bottom or left or right of the lens and it is all truth. You can even move your head in all directions and you will see more truth. Christianity is the lens that keeps validating your heart and knowledge. It validates the world's actions and in-actions. This lens can never be broken. It encapsulates all of reality because it flows from the One by which reality exists.

- Wild and Free

Liberals want to live wild and free, and they want everyone else to live wild and free, too. They want everyone's sexuality to be freely expressed. Liberals also love their animals. However, they don't want their animals to live free sexually. Why the double standard? Free sex for humans and spay/neutering for pets? If these environment-loving liberals were consistent, then they should let all creatures keep their organs (naturally) and live wild and free. But they don't. They want control (which is the opposite of wild and free). Controlling nature is the opposite of "natural".

- Tri-une Love

The love between a husband and wife creates a child. This love is but a shadow of the love that is within the three persons of the trinity. The Trinity loves each other and with that love, mankind was created. The godhead wanted to create creatures to experience God's love which is the greatest gift He could give. He wanted to create creatures that would return glory to Himself. Why would He choose to share Himself with evil creatures like us is beyond me, but He did and wants to know us.

- Judging or Loving?

Sometimes we can spend our time judging people rather than loving people. Judging people is easy; loving people is hard. What fruit does judgment bring? What fruit does love bring? Is it faith, hope and judgment? No. It is faith, hope and love and the greatest of these is love. Spend less time judging others and more time loving others.

- His Judgment

Love that is rooted in the holiness of God has innate judgment attached to it. In other words, how you love God and love others, is always founded upon the fact that you will be judged for your actions someday. Love and judgment go together. His judgments keep people's loves at bay.

- Men Need To Protect the Weak

Women and children are the most exploited commodities on the planet. Children are the weakest and women are the second weakest. The strong prey on the weak. And do you know why these two groups of people are exploited (overworked, abused, molested, enslaved)? It's because good strong men won't fight for them. Think about it this way: strong men (the strongest people on the planet) are divided into two groups, evil and good. If the evil men are exploiting the weak and the good aren't stopping them, then the exploitation will continue. In a sense, the good, strong men who refuse to advocate, help and assist the weaker ones (women and children) are actually the reason why the weak ones are being abused. The ones who have the means to stop the atrocities won't stop the atrocities. Thus the atrocities will continue. Atrocities aren't just the result of evil men; their the result of lazy men. Men have a God-given responsibility to protect the weak. That's why men are strong. Strength was a gift given to men. But some men take that gift and turn women into sex objects, prostitutes and sluts. Those same men also turn children into slaves and sex slaves. Who will stop these evil men if the good men won't? And, the only good men I know are Christians. Edmund Burke said it perfectly when he said, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." If Christian men are being distracted by other things— it would incapacitate them to help the

weakest of the weak, wouldn't it? If they won't fulfill their God-given role as provider and protector (even to women and children who aren't their own), who will? If they would rather be lazy, who will protect the weak?

- **God's Holiness**

God's holiness is more powerful than sin. All of life and creation and power is wrapped up in holiness. Holiness is the source of all. So, why would sin have any power? Sin is but a pair of scissors cutting a person off from the source of all. When holiness meets sin, it vanquishes it. Sin has no recourse when meeting holiness. Sin is destroyed and ceases to exist in the presence of holiness. It is crushed like a gnat.

- **Men's Fellowship**

When men say, "I hate men's fellowship groups", you have to look at the side of the person who is saying it: is it their godly side or their sin nature? For me, it is my sin-nature. So, to be part of a men's fellowship is crucial to my well-being. I may kick and scream to go every week, but it is fighting my sin-nature. That is discipline. That is growing your godly side towards holiness.

- **God's Judgment In His Timing**

Have you ever heard someone say, "A good God wouldn't allow evil to continue"? "My response is: a good God wouldn't allow evil to not be judged, and, because of that, Judgment Day is coming". People want evil punished now. They want to see it and feel the punishment. But judgment is reserved for God. People's evil deeds will be judged someday. Just because we don't see it in our day doesn't mean that it isn't on its way. The people on the Titanic didn't see the iceberg until it was too late. That will be like the Day that God judges all men.

- **God Is More Powerful Than Introverts**

"I'm an introvert" is not an excuse to disobey the Great Commission. God is stronger than introvertedness. It is His strength; not our own. All people who consider themselves introverts would do well to put their faith in the Strong One and

see the blessings in others' lives abound.

- Nations Besides America

Persecution pushes you out to the nations. If America doesn't want Christians, then maybe it is time for American Christians to find a new home. Christians don't have to live in America; there are plenty of other unreached people groups that need the gospel.

- The definition of a prostitute is to do something for money. This is a works-based relationship, the opposite of love. To "do" love for money is to do something that is not love.

- Praying During the Bad Times

If you only pray to God during bad circumstances, well, it's a good thing that life is full of trouble. I don't know about you, but my life is full of trouble. And, if I'm praying to God through those bad circumstances, then all the trouble is worth it. But, if I'm not praying and drawing nearer to God, then the trouble is not beneficial to me. The trouble is just hopeless and chaotic. Trying circumstances, in that sense, is actually a gift from God; a vehicle to know God more; A vehicle for God to show you His power, love, grace, and mercy. Knowing God intimately is something troubling circumstances can't crush, but is only a conduit. You can truly have joy in the midst of pain by knowing God in the pain.

- Everyone Judges

"Don't judge me" – is a popular quip to justify one's actions. As Christians, we aren't called to condemn (today's popular definition of "judging") but we are called to point out sin. The sin that we point out is only supposed to be defined by God (not our own preferences or pet-peeves). We are to echo God's judgment; judgment as defined by God. Christians are but repeaters of God's definitions of sinful behavior. So, in a sense, we aren't supposed to judge (jut to echo God's judgment). But in another sense, we are to judge, but our judgments are biblically-based. However, the world only hears condemnation whenever a Christian opens his mouth. Christians are but trying to warn the world of the danger in they are in. The world fights back by judging Christians and killing

them. Let's get this straight: everyone judges. God, Christians, unbelievers; everyone judges everyone else. So, my question is for you: who is right?

- **Don't Define Yourself by Failures**

You don't have to be defined by your past. Take the good things and be defined by those. Look to your future in Christ and be defined by that. Those two things (good from your past and what your future is) will make your godly present. Ask God to keep you focused on His holiness, on your mission in your future and your victories in your past. Don't be defined by your failures or your future sins.

- Many people are afraid of church. That is why they don't go to church. It's not that they hate church; they are fearful that God will judge them the moment they walk through the door. Fear is the driving force of why people won't attend church.

- **Attacking Philosophies**

Being an aggressive man means more than just punching others in the face, karate, law enforcement, etc. It means attacking ideas, philosophies, agendas that go against God's Law and Word. Fighting others physically only goes so far. It is in the war of ideas that godly men need to be fighting in as well. Fighting is good, when it is for God and others. As Sam says to Frodo, "There's some good in this world, and it's worth fighting for".

- **No Other Way**

Jesus sweating drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane shows us that there was no other way for our salvation. He didn't save himself, so he could save us. There was no other door to the salvation mission, other than Jesus obeying the Father. And there is no other door to salvation of our souls without trusting in Jesus.

- **Church is About His Holiness**

Church isn't about you! Church is about God loving Himself, and for us to have the opportunity to love Him back. Church is about God's holiness and our sinfulness. It's a troubling thought,

though, that a sinner can approach the Absolute Holy. It's but a pipe dream, and yet God has called us to do just that. He never lowered His holiness to meet with us. He put all His wrath on Himself. That is what church is about: understanding God's character more. Seeing His holiness more. Praying that He makes us more like Him more.

- We Are Dead Without an Intermediary

We would be vaporized without an intermediary. I can't pay for my own sins with my own life (let alone anyone else's sins). Only a Holy Mediator could speak to God on my behalf.

- Lying, the 9th Commandment

Exodus 20:16 says, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Why is lying such a grave sin? Why do people lie? Lying, for all intents and purposes, is done for one or two or both reasons: 1) to prepare to commit a bigger sin or 2) to cover a sin that has already happened. Lying is usually the prologue or an epilogue to a bigger sin. That is why God takes it so seriously. It is the entrance or the escape to the other moral sins listed in God's commandments. To not bear false witness is God's warning to us saying, "If you tell the truth, it will keep you from most of the other sins." God is trying to keep us from hurting ourselves and others. Lying leads to murder. Lying leads to adultery. Lying leads to theft. Lying leads to covetousness. Lying leads to idolatry. Lying—falsehood—embodies everything that God isn't. Falsehood is the rules that Satan lives by (and evangelizes by) as the alternative to God's universal Truth. People were put to death for lying in the Bible (Achin, Ananias and Sapphira, etc.) Today, people put themselves to death by lying. Lying is the death before the real death. Lying means you aren't just deceiving others to "get" something; it means you are deceiving yourself to get something.

- A Rich, Caffeinated Society

Whenever I see a Starbucks coffee (or any coffee for that matter), I just think of it being a symbol of a rich society. People would pay for half a cup of water in other countries, what people pay for large

cup of coffee. Being able to sip and drink one's latte is a symbol of a luxurious society; and may I dare say, a society that has no interest in God? A culture that loves its Frappuccinos more than it loves God—that's a problem. When there are more Starbucks in the country than churches, that's a problem. Another problem I have with coffee is the picture of laziness. Imagine two people sipping coffee. The two people philosophize how best to "fight for injustice" in the world. Or, they theorize, why there are so many hurting people, but do nothing about it. You can't fight justice while sipping your coffee. That is a picture of laziness. Philosophy with no action is the problem. The Church is supposed to have a higher standard than this! The Church isn't just theory and no action. James 1:22 says, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." Luxury shouldn't be the mark of Christian, either. James says, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. (James 5:1-2). The Church is supposed to be loving God and loving others; not coffee.

- The Alt-Universe

Satan's whole foundation for life is built on a lie: that he can become God. He may not become God of the universe, but he can become god of his own little micro universe—a kind of competing alt-universe to the real universe. He offers alternatives to God's holy living. He gives people options. The pathetic thing is that all his options and creativity is based on his Main Lie. He may make you a god, but you will always be under his godhood. He does deal out authority; he is making a kingdom. Will you be part of his kingdom or God's Kingdom? Contrast his kingdom with God's kingdom, built on truth, love and justice and true freedom. There is no comparison.

- Making Disciples is Only Because of Jesus' Power

The only reason that I can "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 28:19) is because Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28:18).

Making disciples is only the result of Jesus' power (which is all power). Or, to say it another way: the fruit of Jesus' all-powerful nature is the making of disciples.

- Give yourself over to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- No Direction for Feelings-Based Lives

Those who follow their feelings have no real direction; just an endless array of mini-targets. What are the long term goals of a person who bases his life on feelings? Likewise, those who base their lives on facts miss out on the little moments, too, (though they may have the long term goal in mind). Neither extreme is good. Base your life on facts and feelings rooted in God's Word.

- The leftist bullies have a tactic: Silence Those Who Oppose You. That tactic is Stalinist and Maoist to the core.

- Hating Church

People hate going to church. One of the biggest reasons is that they prefer to worship themselves rather than God. But people who don't go to church aren't the only ones worshiping themselves. Some people who go to church also worship themselves. If you are worshiping yourself outside or inside of church, you need to get refocused on worshiping God alone.

- Use Your Skeleton for Good

We are basically all skeletons walking around on earth for about 70 years. What are you going to use your skeleton for? Good or evil?

- He Gave Himself

Jesus willingly allowed Himself to be attacked by the Roman garrison. He was beat to a pulp before He was crucified. He did all of this for our redemption.

- Leaving Your Family

Ruth left everything - - her family, cousins, parents, culture. She also gained everything: a new culture, a new husband, a new baby

and a new God. This kind of behavior is exemplified by Jesus when He said, “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26)

- Good Americans?

Americans pride themselves on being “good people”. Let’s look at that self-description a little more closely: Good, as in loving your spouse and children? Good, as in hating evil and doing justice? Good, as in loving your neighbor as yourself? Good, as in glorifying God and not blaspheming Him? What is good? God defines what is good in Micah 6:8, “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Do Americans do good, justice, mercy and walk humbly with God? Unfortunately, no. Being honest in society is laughed upon. Faithfulness in a marriage is laughed at. Not stealing is laughed at. Upholding life is laughed at in video games and movies. So, the answer to the question as to whether Americans are good, well, you can take a guess as to how Americans’ behavior line up with God’s Law.

- End of the Line Situations

God works in the “end of the line” situations. For example, in the Book of Ruth, Naomi’s family line is about to end (her husband and two sons have died). This was a hopeless situation. But God uses the faithfulness of Ruth to preserve the family line and make a way for King David (and later Christ) to come. Another example is that for 400 years the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt. It was pretty much the end of the line for them. They were to never regain their freedom from their Egyptian taskmasters, humanly speaking. But God spoke to one person, Moses, in Israel’s darkest moment. He used him to save his people from Egypt. Other examples of “end of the line” situations include: Noah, Esther, the baby king Josiah and others.

- Working Through Hopelessness

God likes to work when all hope is lost. He likes to choose one

person to work through—usually the weakest person. Why? Because anyone looking at the events from the outside couldn't believe it (and it wasn't that person). It was God. He gets the glory because there is no way that weak person could have done it on his own. Think of David or Ruth or Jacob. These were all weak people who didn't stand a chance against their life circumstances or their enemies. And yet God worked in them to do a mighty work. He gets the glory. "That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments: And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God." (Psalm 78:7-8)

- Today's World's Fair

We used to have a World's Fair in America. Now we don't need it anymore. We have Oprah and the Ellen Show. Those shows are today's "World's Fair", where a product can be boosted and make millions for any interviewed person. Appear on any of these talk shows, and your future is set. It's so crazy to think that an author or musician or inventor could be set for life just by being on a popular talk show. Like, who made Oprah's opinion of a book more important than someone else's? Who made Ellen the sole decision maker if a musician is good or not. These influencers weren't born influencers; they were put there in those positions by people. It is sad that other, independent reviewers and influencers (even if they have the same opinion as Oprah) will never be heard.

- Worshiping Idols That Don't Provide

Even demon-worshippers enjoy food. It sounds funny, but when was the last time a demon provided food for a person? God is the giver of all good things, including food. Demon-worshippers are biting the hand that feeds them when they eat God's food on His earth. Demons didn't make fruits or vegetables or nuts or juices. God did. Demon-worshippers are worshiping the wrong gods—the ones who don't create food, sustain it or give it. Worship the One whose things you enjoy. "They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new [gods that] came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock [that] begat thee

thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.”  
(Deuteronomy 32:17-28)

• Inconveniences Demand Blasphemy?

To think that people are willing to blaspheme the Creator God for their minor inconveniences is complete sin. For example, think of a freeway filled with frustrated people inside a large traffic jam. Think of all the blasphemies being proclaimed to God on that freeway. Instead of words of praise, there are words of cursing God. Are traffic jams worth taking Jesus' name in vain? Is the Creator of your soul worthy to be blasphemed for your little inconveniences in life, like running out of coffee or toilet paper? Are negative circumstances worth calling down God's wrath upon your soul? How about having no cell phone service or a dead battery in your car? Is that scenario worth blaspheming God's character? I hate to break it to you, but your little world isn't all there is. God is running the whole universe. Aligning galaxies and planets doesn't compare to the fact that you dropped your glass of milk on the tile. I'm not saying He doesn't care; I'm saying your calling on him to "damn" your little problem is uncalled for. The Lord damns souls to hell; not the fact that your toddler drew on the walls with crayons. God doesn't damn Monday mornings or when you're "hangry". When you call God to damn something so, you are damning things that Jesus Himself never damned (taking His name in vain just because you are on a deadline or the dog keeps barking is rebellion against the Almighty). Invoking a damn on your little world is like trying to bring the Almighty away from His other important things to deal with your little problem. Why would He do that and why should He care? Again, I'm not saying that He doesn't care. I'm saying His "damning" power shouldn't be called upon (nor used lightly) on trivial things. His name shouldn't be used flippantly no matter how frustrating something is. He deserves more respect than that. He deserves our worship; not to use His name in a manner not worthy of His endless worth. Even saying "Oh my G—" is complete blasphemy. Why would you blaspheme your Creator over something completely stupid? Chill out. It's not that important. Not only are you pushing God away (by your sin) but you are pushing the only One that can help your

heart issue. Yes, blasphemy is a heart issue. What you are cursing is a god that isn't working for you. What you are cursing the real God for is that He isn't letting that lesser god work for you. He is frustrating your plans because He does have the power to make something work right or go right, and yet He isn't allowing that to happen. So, people curse God. A powerless god, in people's minds, is a god that isn't there. So, they curse the true God who is there. But that doesn't make sense. Why take the name of a god who doesn't exist? Why curse a god who isn't there? Therein lies the problem: a god who doesn't work for "me" doesn't exist for "me". A god who won't do my bidding isn't a god. That sentiment is at the heart of blasphemy against the Almighty God. It makes you the god that God should bow to. It makes you the "Almighty". First of all, why would God bow to your wishes? He is God and you aren't. What gives you the right to act like God? You are a sinful human with no rights before Him. No privileges, special treatment or recourse. You have no right for His favor to curse or bless. You are completely bankrupt of any right standing before Him. You need to worship Him, not blaspheme him, use Him, call curses down in His name or take His name in vain over little problems. Consider this story that Moses experienced in Leviticus, "And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:) And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD shall be put to death. And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses." (Leviticus 24:11-16,23) That is how seriously God takes blasphemy against

His name, character and His actions. Don't put yourself in that position of blasphemy against the Almighty.

- Only He Sustains Us

We can't hold onto life. We don't sustain our own lives. Vitamins, exercise and eating right don't sustain us. Only God sustains us. And He can take away our lives at any point. We have about as much strength as a ketchup packet placed under a car's tire. We are frail and we can't hold onto our own souls. When this vessel is crushed, our spirit is freed. The question is: freed to where? Souls that love and serve God, go to God; those that don't, go to hell. He sustains us. Those who don't want Him don't want to be sustained and they will be scattered for eternity. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." (Ac 17:28a)

- Calvary was the death of Love. Love is a Person and love is an act. Both died when Jesus died. Thankfully, Love revived three days later and Love is now impenetrable and eternal.

- Tar of Sin

Have you ever seen a painting that depicted dinosaurs or a woolly mammoth stuck in the tar? Sin is like tar: once you are in, you are stuck and cannot escape. The sin in our own hearts is inescapable. It is sin-tar. We need a God that can pull us up out of our sin-tar because we are completely helpless. (Illustration courtesy of my wife).

- Passing the Torch

In the Bible, there is always a great leader who then hands off the duties to someone else. This archetype includes: Abraham to Isaac, Israel to Judah, Moses to Joshua, Elijah to Elisha, David to Solomon. In the New Testament, this includes John the Baptist to Jesus, Jesus to Peter, Paul to Timothy. There is a lot to say about handing off the baton to the next generation. One's life is not eternal on this earth and the mission of the Lord must be carried on. How is one to do that? By passing the mission, the passion and the leadership onto someone younger than yourself.

- **Nazi Inside**

It's easy to say that there is good inside us, but our actions, more often than not, prove otherwise. We are not good people. There is a Nazi inside each of us. We hate others, hurt others, and yes, if we were in a Nazi uniform, we could easily play the part of a Nazi. It would come natural to us. Why? Because we have hated people and fought with people and lied to people and stolen from people our whole lives. "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." (Rom 3:23) Nazism isn't an end-result of sin; it is sin. Every one of us has a sin nature and because of that, the challenge is whether to let that Nazi loose or to keep him contained. The Nazis in WWII obviously did not keep their inner sin shut up; they let it loose. What will you do? I will tell you that there is only One Person that can not only keep that Nazi inside you shut up, but actually destroy him for good. His name is Jesus Christ. He is the enemy of all Nazis and sin-nature. Without Him, there is no hope of ever destroying the Nazi inside of you. Turn to Him and put that Nazi to death inside you.

- **Don't Be Jealous**

The people who you are jealous of, could easily be on your team. Why not, instead of being jealous of someone who has great talent, invite them to join your team (or you join their team)? The world needs like-minded individuals in a team that will succeed; not in bitter rivalries of "he's got more talent than I do, therefore I hate him". This doesn't just happen in secular environments. Sadly, jealous rivalries occur all the time within the Church. Aren't we all serving Christ? Aren't we all growing His Kingdom? He gives everyone gifts, but not everyone the same gifts. Some people will inevitably be better at the thing that you also are good at. So, what? Why don't both of you be on the same team and serve Christ? "For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest [there be] debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults." (2 Cor 12:20)

- **Count and define your friends by how many of them would be at your funeral. Please don't look at your Facebook friend list as an**

accurate number of your true friends. “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.” (Pr 17:17 )

- Boaz and the Trinity

When Boaz inquired about who Ruth was to her nearest kinsman, “Who’s damsel is this” (Ruth 2:5), that action is symbolic of the action of what the Trinity did with us sinners. All Boaz’s questions and subsequent planning was done for Ruth’s benefit. The sacrifice, the bumpy road ahead was all done for her, culminating in finally marrying her. His efforts symbolize the efforts of the Trinity in eternity past, when God (probably) talked among Himself, “Look at that poor, helpless sinner. Let us help her.” Considering that the Kinsman-Redeemer Law was setup by God Himself and that Boaz is considered a type of Jesus, the Trinity connection seems plausible. It takes a God to save someone who is not like God; someone who is sinful, a foreigner, mortal, flawed, unloved and hurt. It takes God to look at His sinful bride and then redeem her.

- Someone is going to be marginalized in your life: God or you. So, who will be pushed aside? You must decide who it will be.

- Idol Killers or Idol Makers

All disciplines are designed to be idol killers but can easily be turned into idol makers. Fasting can be the tool to destroy the idol of food and distraction but can easily create the idol of pride (“I’m holy because I fast”). Worship can be the destruction of “self” but can easily be the puffing up of self. God wants to empty ourselves of the idols in our hearts. (We can’t empty ourselves as yoga teaches). God has given us disciplines: Bible Reading, Prayer, Evangelism, Worship to destroy the idols inside of us. Disciplines are to open our eyes to something bigger and better than creation: the Lord of Creation.

- We Were Hopeless

We were and are helpless sinners that need God’s grace. Consider Ephesians 2:1, “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins”. Also consider verse 12, “That at that time

ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world". Being dead in trespasses and sins, and having no hope, and being godless is not a popular message with the world. The world wants to save itself. The world wants so get itself out of its own jams. The world doesn't need God's grace (or so they think). They can try to cover up their hopelessness and godlessness with pleasure, comfort, love and sin, but all they do is create more problems that they have to pretend to solve. For the world to think it can be its own god is foolishness.

- God, give me the grace to see Christ in my brothers and sisters.

- Hypocritical Christians and Atheists

Christians aren't perfect. We are hypocrites saved by grace. The world points to us hypocrites as the evidence that God really hasn't saved us (thus justifying their atheism). But that is an unfair assessment. What about the good deeds produced by someone who formerly did zero good deeds? Hypocritical Christians (though not ideal) are still Christians. The most hypocritical Christian is to be preferred than the nicest atheist. Why? Because the nicest atheist-agnostic is stagnant (i.e. will never increase in good works in either quality or quantity). Whereas, the hypocritical Christian, with God's piercing Spirit inside of Him is a continual growing work in progress. It is the difference between zero good works versus some good works. God is changing the heart of the hypocrite (though it may seem like a slow process to those around him). The atheist isn't changing; but he is only "nice". All the atheist's "good" works won't earn him heaven. And all the Christians' hypocritical actions won't send him to hell. The Christian has been given heaven as a gift, regardless of sinful hypocrisies. That is the same exact invitation extended to the atheist. Will the atheist take that gift as the hypocrite did? If he did, he would see that being a work-in-progress is easier said than done. So, atheist, show some grace (good works) to a hypocritical Christian, if you see him failing sometimes. The Christian needs grace. And so, do you. (Note: this is not addressing "Christians" who are not Christians. Those sinners will,

in fact earn the same punishment as the atheists: hell).

- Cleaning House

Cleaning one's house can become an idol in any Christian woman's life. If you "have to clean your house" before you go help someone outside of your house (who is in need) that is a problem. Selflessness is more important than a clean house. God wants you to help your neighbor as yourself. Would you want to be in need and have your neighbor busy cleaning her house before she can come help you? Sometimes needs are time-sensitive. Don't worry: your dirty house will still be there when you get back from helping someone. And guess what: because God sees your heart, He may even help you clean your house even quicker than if you would have stayed home. The same goes for evangelizing. If your friend is not saved and you would rather clean your house than meet up with your friend to talk to her about Jesus, there is a problem. If your clean house is more important than evangelizing your friend (and possibly leading her to Christ) your clean house has become an idol. Did Jesus want to "clean up heaven" and make it sparkly before He came down to save us? No, He knew we were in desperate need and put His other plans to the side to come and save Him. We were a priority. Our lost souls were His focus; not a cleaned-up Heaven. This is all to say that a clean house is not to be desired. Of course we are to take care of the house God has given us, but not above other needs that present themselves to us. God will provide the balance and the time and the energy to do all He has called you to.

- Sin of Laziness

I can't stand laziness. I don't like it in myself and I don't like it in others. God has a lot to say about laziness (i.e slothfulness). Pr 18:9 says, "He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster." Ro 12:11 says, "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." Heb 6:12 says, "That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." God didn't put us on this world to be lazy. He put us on this world to help others and love God. It takes a diligent person and God's strength to do good in this world. "And

let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” (Galatians 6:9)

- Of Magic and Miracles

There are good miracles and bad magic. This is what I'm trying to teach my kids. Bad magic is when a power is used for selfish reasons and only benefits the person. Good miracles are from God, through a person, and are meant to help others. Magic is from the devil. Miracles are from God.

- Lie for God

Here's when you can lie: when you put yourself at great danger to put someone else in great safety. If Nazis are questioning you at your front door about hiding Jews (and you are) then you lie. Lying to one's neighbor (the Nazis) to protect another neighbor (the Jews) is not only what God calls asks us to do but demands us to do. Christians are called to deceive the evil powers. Christians should break the government's unjust laws any time it is warranted. In our example above, if a Christian has already taken the time to hide Jews, he has already broken man's law, so the point being, lying should be the next logical (though not necessarily easiest next step). Remember, this is a Christian's life on the line, so it better be a good lie: a lie to save one's Jewish neighbors and to save yourself. But it was the love of one's Jewish neighbors that he was willing to put himself in harm's way. A firing squad or gas chamber seemed too low of a punishment to be able to save Jewish lives. Lives are invaluable, yes even Jewish ones. God told us to save lives. to protect the weak, to help those who couldn't help themselves. The German resistance had God's Word as its foundation. Just like the mothers in Egypt didn't obey the tyrant Pharaoh. Or Daniels' friends didn't obey the command to worship idols. governments are not infallible and need to be resisted. If they start killing certain members of your country, you take it upon yourself, Christian, to save those members. And that goes for pre-born children, Muslims, LGBTs, people with differing skin tones than you, etc. Even Christians can be in this situation. Many non-believers have risked their lives to save those who follow God ( i.e. Rahab). Many non-Christians saved Jews. If non-

Christians were willing to do it, then what are Christians waiting for? You must stand in the gap between the oppressed and the oppressor. Save some lives. Lie, cheat and steal, if you have to, for the glory of God. “And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.” —Exodus 1:18-21

- Next time someone says “OMG” ask them if they know who God is. Blasphemy can also be turned around to be an icebreaker for the gospel.

- Irrelevant F-Word

If people took out all the F-Words out of their conversations, society would run much smoother. Think about it: the F-Word is an unnecessary adjective that means nothing. All it does is express an angry emotion from the person speaking it. It is a word that means nothing. It's also a word that can mean anything because people can use it anyway they want in any context. It is a word of relativity; not of absolution. Confusion and miscommunication abounds when the F-Word is used. If a person uses the F-Word every other word (or 50% of the time), then if it was cut out, a person's communication would increase by 50%. If you cut that unnecessary word, it would only leave the necessary nouns of a conversation, thus leading to a smoother flowing society. That society would understand each other more and communicate more and thus accomplish more. The abolition of the F-Word would be a blessing to God as well, as man's communication would be without cursing. “The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them. He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never

be in adversity. His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity”. (Psalm 10:4-7)

- The problems with the millennial generation of Christians can certainly be listed and criticized. But if you're going to do that, you have to criticize the parents that raised them, too.

- Beauty in the Eye of the Beholder

We have all heard of the phrase, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder”. That statement is true and God is the only Beholder that matters. That statement is essentially saying anything can be beautiful; or that nothing is not beautiful (given the right person). It is basically saying people can find beauty and do anything that they deem beautiful. It could easily apply to the Holocaust as much as it can a landscape painting. It can easily apply to pornography as it can be to the design of a car. Beauty isn't relative; it is absolute and rooted in God's goodness, love, justice and mercy. Apart from those things there is no beauty. “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31)

- The King of Sadness

Death can come at any time, especially when you least expect it. When death happens to those around me or around me, I question myself as to what to say to others. How do I comfort them and myself in such a time of distress? When people are mourning, it's probably best not to say, “God is in control”. What you can say, as one book suggested is, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15). In times of loss, it is important to remember that Jesus departed to a deserted place from ministry when his cousin John was beheaded (presumably to pray and deal with his loss) (Matthew 14:13). Jesus also wept for his friend Lazarus when he died from a sickness (John 11:35). Jesus was around weeping crowds (Matthew 9:23), weeping mothers ( Luke 7:13 ), weeping fathers (Mark 9:24), even a desperate Roman centurion (Luke 7:6). He knew weeping and experienced it himself. He was accustomed to sadness and he

cried out to God in Gethsemane ( Matthew 26:38 ). He cried over the lostness of people's souls (of Jerusalem). He was distraught while being whipped, mocked, crucified. Jesus knows weeping. He is the King of Sadness. He is the King of Pain. All His sadness can be summed up in His own statement, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mat 27:46) His body was broken, but so was His spirit. If anyone can comfort people in their time of need, it is the risen Christ (mat 28:6). He is no longer broken and bloodied. He has conquered death and sin. Someday, all pain will go away. There will be no more weeping in the future for He will wipe away every tear from our eyes (Isaiah 25:8)

- Two Finished Works

Two times God finished His work. Once, on the seventh day of creation. Once, at Calvary. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." (Genesis 2:1-3). There was no more creating to be done. God had completed all the work that He had to do. Evolution didn't take over from there. No other processes needed to complete what God already completed. Likewise, at Calvary, Jesus completed His work for our redemption: "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." (John 19:30) There was nothing left to do to make atonement for our sin. Our sin, as far as Jesus was concerned, was paid for. Nothing we can ever do can add to His finished work. It's "finished" for a reason. It was His work; not our work. We were never meant to redeem ourselves (because we couldn't). God owns us twofold now: He created us and redeemed us.

- Just A Little Bit of God

A little bit of Bible reading equals a little bit of God. A little bit of fellowship means a little bit of God. If you are OK with a little bit of God, then you truly don't see the value of Him. He is more valuable than anything. If other things like family, work,

hobbies and rest are more important than spending time with your Lord, there is a major problem. If spending time with your wife is more important than meeting God where He is at (in prayer, Bible reading, worship, giving to others) there is a major disconnect in your life. To want just a little bit of God is to not want God. To keep him at arm's length is to disregard who He is as a person. Disregarding God is to disregard His love, mercy, grace, forgiveness, creativity, peace, love and more. To ditch God is to ditch your own well-being. "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." (2 Cor 9:6)

- Robotic Society

A society with no beliefs is a robotic society. A people who all agree is an inhuman society; not a peaceful society. This is what the evil men want: peace at the expense of personal expression. In other words, they only want their peace. Any opposing viewpoints should be destroyed (according to them). Any living, breathing, healthy society is going to have disagreements and different points of view. That's OK. Much like a family, it is a good thing to work out your differences while treating all viewpoints with respect. However, evil men don't want to "talk it out". They don't even want to have the conversation. They want totalitarianism with themselves on the throne. Their idea of peace is themselves as the rulers and everyone else doing their bidding.

- Redefining Happiness

What makes people "happy" isn't always what is good for their soul. What makes one happy in one moment can reap regret and guilt in the next. Feelings of happiness are a poor judge of actions that one should take. We are broken fallen creatures (due to ourselves; not God's design). Our brokenness runs deep, to our very soul. We want things that hurt us. We desire things that destroy our souls. That is our fallenness. We can't help ourselves. We can't even make good decisions that benefit our souls. We need someone who is not broken to help us. Someone who is willing to help us in our weakness. We need God. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless

before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” (Jude 1:24-25)

- **Worshiping Hate and Murder**

Most of today’s society is a death worshiping society. Everything publicized is the death of people: drugs, alcohol, fast food, prescription drugs, pain killers. The music industry sings about death and immorality. The movies show self-destructive lifestyles and the loss of life. Video games allow people to “shoot” one another (hatred of the sanctity of life). The news media proudly broadcast the latest school shootings. The schools teach about abortion (hatred of babies) and war (hatred of nations). The areas of politics, entertainment and education push for new boundaries in sexuality, marriage, family. They promote suicide (hatred of one’s own life), murder (hatred of another person’s life), LGBT (hatred against one’s own body), statism (hatred of one’s own freedom). The definitions are continually expanding. Death is worshiped by all those who hate God. That is also why evil men hate Christians that dare to stand in the way of their death-march. “They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.” (Job 30:10)

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THOUGHTS ON  
CHRISTIANITY AND LIVING IN  
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