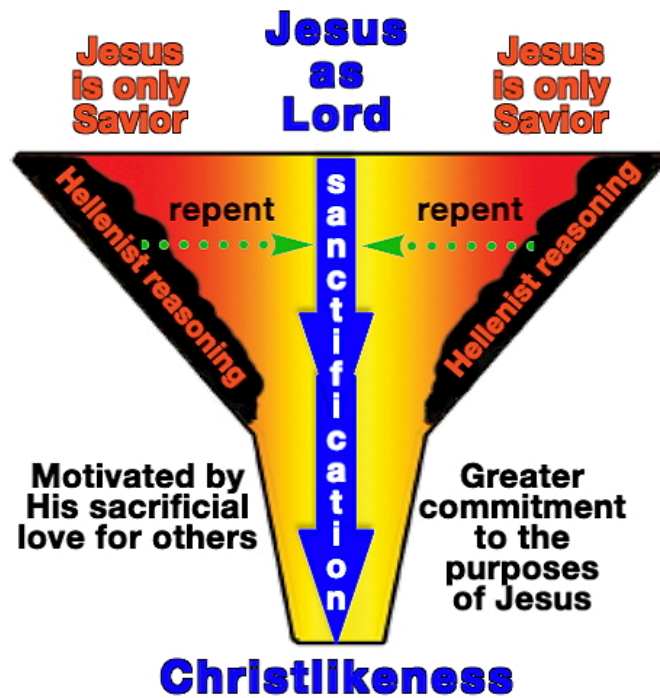


## Are You Ashamed Of Jesus?

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

In one of our earliest books, *Restoring the Early Church*, we recount a vision the Holy Spirit had given Mike many years earlier. He'd been asked to speak to a certain congregation, and early that morning, there in his mind's eye was a vision of a funnel. As he stared at the funnel he could hear in his spirit an explanation of its meaning. On his computer he sketched the funnel image he'd been given, and then made an overhead transparency of it. After speaking at the service, he put the funnel transparency on an overhead projector and explained it to the congregation. To his surprise many left their seats and came forward to repent of their sins. They'd been convicted of having believed a gospel that did not include the *Lordship of Christ* in their lives. This illustration represents an updated version of that funnel image:



The following week Mike was asked to speak to a different congregation. The Holy Spirit prompted him, "Just tell them about the funnel." He again put the funnel transparency on an overhead projector. After he had finished explaining its meaning, people again left their seats and came forward to repent. And when the funnel illustration was presented on retreats, the explanation of it elicited the same response: conviction and repentance.

For many who are within the over 38,000 denominations and sects throughout Christianity, their denomination's creed or even the centuries-long existence of their particular denomination has falsely convinced them that they are "Christian" and thereby acceptable to Jesus. But few would acknowledge that, by their own way of life that's compromised with the world's goals and values, they live *ashamed of Him*. Yet this is

what we have observed in so many encounters with self-identified “Christians.” We’ve been more sensitized to this pretense ever since our Father commanded us to **“Contend for My Son Jesus.”**

Prayerfully ponder what our Lord is warning about when He declares, *“For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels”* (Luke 9:26).

In this context, being ashamed of Jesus and His words means you are embarrassed to do something you ought to as His representative. You’re reluctant because you’re fearful of being humiliated if you do follow through. And certainly “adulterous” and “sinful” would accurately describe many “Christians” today, as affirmed by the Christian pollster, George Barna – **“A religion that bears Christ’s title yet whose moral and ethical values are no different than those of the world.”**

We’ve borne the emotional pain of observing this epidemic of “Christians” who not only are a source of shame to our Lord Jesus through their “adulterous” compromise with the world’s ways. They are also ashamed to represent Him in the world around them by living in ways that demonstrate that their life’s Standard is their Lord Jesus.

Many years ago a friend told us, “Why don’t you *love a lot less?* Then you won’t be as hurt by Christians who treat Jesus so casually in their lives.” But we take a different view. In light of what our Lord Jesus did for us that we could have never accomplished on our own behalf, our love for Him and for others only grows more and more (see 2Peter 1:4-9).

Please take this to heart. People whose lives bear witness that they are living ashamed of Jesus are those who never received the indwelling Holy Spirit. He would have convicted them of *refusing the Lordship of Jesus*. If the Lordship of Jesus hasn’t been your way of life, maybe you’re confident that your denomination will get you to heaven. Maybe you’ve given way to the false mantra which excuses you from living in His Lordship: “Once “saved”, always “saved”. If that’s your situation, then our Lord’s command for you to wholeheartedly press on in His Lordship may not have the effect of intentional obedient trust that He intends for your life: *“Make every effort [literally, struggle, agonize] to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to”* (Luke 13:24). But be assured of this: even if you’re desperately clinging to His outstretched hand in trusting Him as Lord of your life, by grace He will lead you through the narrow door.

### **Mental Paralysis Is The Dung Of Shame**

The downside of living without the indwelling Spirit of Jesus guiding you through your spirit is that you are ensnared by your soul’s inherent predispositions. The one-two punch that’s holding you back is the influence of your *sin nature* and your susceptibility to *undemolished demonic strongholds* that you’re giving way to within your sin nature.

And, if your closest relationships are people who are beset by similar strongholds, such as in your family or faith community, any desire to escape these strangleholds of resistance to the Lordship of Jesus is quenched. Finding comfort in the familiarity of the shared disobedience among those close to you repeatedly reinforces your own soul-dominated paralysis as you resist listening to the Holy Spirit calling out to your spirit.

***“[David speaking] You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied” (1Samuel 17:45).***

When all of Israel’s armies were fearsomely intimidated by the formidable giant Goliath, God took action in a most unexpected way. He raised up a faithful shepherd boy who was far more concerned with the honor of God than with his own life. David indeed slayed Goliath and freed the Israelites from their enemy’s threats. But did you know that other giants are listed in the Hebrew Scriptures (see 2Samuel 21)? Below are some of these giants, the meaning of their names and how they can influence you. See if any of these “giants” have characteristics which are hindering your own loving obedience to the Lordship of Jesus in your life.

1. Ishbi-Benob’s name means “my dwelling is on the heights”. In other words, he was filled with pride and thought he’d be able to kill David. But his pride was his downfall, as he was killed by Abishai, David’s brother, whose name means “gift”.
2. Saph’s name means two-faced, or hypocritical. He was killed by David’s servant Sibbechai, whose name infers that he was already “dead to self” and thereby not afraid of taking action even against a formidable foe.
3. Lahmi, a brother of Goliath, was given a name that meant “food”, as in being full of something that satiated his appetites. He was killed by David’s servant Elhanan, whose name means “God is gracious”.
4. A Six-Fingered giant was killed by David’s nephew Jonathan. One could infer that this giant’s grasp was more powerful than that of normal men. Someone with that kind of grip could easily grab anything he wanted or coveted, and he serves as a lesson to followers of Jesus to not let coveting anything compete with their loyal devotion to Christ.

Some of you are God’s “Davids” being raised up at this time to stand up against oppression, intimidation, and any demonic inroads on behalf of your family and faith family. That kind of courage and determination are desperately needed during these adulterous and sinful times.

But if you or anyone around you can’t testify to your own obedience to the Lordship of Jesus in your life at this time, we encourage you to reexamine these various illustrations of the funnel and your life choices from our series, *The Gospel of the Covenant is the Pilgrimage to Salvation*.

16a: Visualizing the Pilgrimage of the Gospel of the Covenant—illustration 1

16aa: Remaining On The Sanctification Spiral (addendum to 16a)

[16b: Visualizing the Pilgrimage of the Gospel of the Covenant—illustration 2](#)

[16c: Visualizing the Pilgrimage of the Gospel of the Covenant—illustration 3](#)

[16d: Visualizing the Pilgrimage of the Gospel of the Covenant—illustration 4](#)

For you men, especially grandfathers and fathers, please see *Coaching Fathers To Serve Lord Jesus*

<<https://restorationministries.org/download/05.fathers.pdf>>

Finally, we also encourage each of you to read our Prophetic Insight, “*Are You Fully Prepared For the Beginning of the End?*”

[https://restorationministries.org/download/13.beingprepared%20\(1\).pdf](https://restorationministries.org/download/13.beingprepared%20(1).pdf)

“Desperate times require desperate measures.” Actions that might seem extreme under normal circumstances are appropriate during times of overriding evil. These times are desperate! And we urge you to be desperate to enter the narrow door, bringing as many as possible with you on your spiritual journey to your salvation.

Mike & Sue