

June 23, 2009
Don't be a Frog in a Boiling Pot!

Dear Friends,

While Sue and I were camping recently, I reread one of David Wilkerson's letters which I'd stuffed in my Bible some years back. This was his June 1994 newsletter entitled *God's Hidden Last-Days Army!* It's well worth your perusal, and you can find it by going to <<http://www.worldchallenge.org/en/node/6223>>.

This newsletter has special significance for the two of us as it was written two months after we arrived back in the U. S. from Israel with the Hebraic foundations our Father been making clear to us. Being prompted by our Lord to reread this particular newsletter was one of those divine timings that leave you gratefully thankful for His abiding presence. And as always, His timing is always precisely geared to meet a particular purpose He's set in motion.

When we sent out our first *Parables For Today*, we were contacted by a few clergymen who have been going through some of the material at our website. One man in particular has struggled with the realization that there is no biblical basis within the called-out Body of our Lord Jesus for professional clergy people! The parameters for *elders* were laid out quite meticulously in the epistles since their ongoing role among the Jews was both historical as well as concurrent among the writers. However, few among the Gentile believers really understood the vital role of elders as wise, older men who were entrusted with overseeing and guarding each faith family flock from ravenous wolves of deception (Acts 20:28-32).

Based on our research as well that of numerous others who have investigated the early church (especially the first through the third centuries), there was no clergy position among the faith communities. The Wilkerson newsletter we've cited foretells the downfall of the current "Eli" clergy and denominational system in which sin is tolerated and excused. (You can read about Eli's woeful tolerance of sin in his own sons in 1 Samuel 2:12-17; 22-25). God had promised Eli's house would minister before Him forever (1 Samuel 2:30). Yet their despicable actions proved that their hearts were far from Him as they dishonored His holy Name, and they reaped the just consequence of their rebellion.

And just as God destroyed the lukewarm and backslidden rule of Eli and his disobedient sons, He's bringing down the rule of sin in the pulpits of both the Protestant and Catholic communities.

Few of those in the pew are aware of the rampant immorality going on among their clergy. Fewer still have any interest in knowing about the sexual misconduct their own denominations have been reporting; they don't want their complacent religious practice to be disrupted even if the Name of our Lord is being mocked by unbelievers and other nations alike.

During the time that I (Mike) counseled church leaders, the pastor of a very large

congregation was found to be committing adultery. He refused to repent, but his congregation liked him so much they wanted him to keep pastoring them! My discussion with numerous church leaders confirmed that adultery has been a rampant and ongoing situation among clergy for at least the past 40 years — and few denominations want that fact to be known. The more highly publicized pedophilia, homosexuality and fornication among Roman Catholic clergy is nothing new. Sexual misconduct brought on by celibacy is a historical reality that has been carefully documented by Catholic scholar Peter de Rosa (*Vicars of Christ: The Dark Side of the Papacy*) and more recently by numerous articles in the *National Catholic Reporter*.

While David Wilkerson's letter addresses a basically Protestant audience, those among Roman Catholic circles will also recognize that the hand of God is applying pressure to a system He never ordained. At the end of this e-mail we'll briefly address the roots of celibacy among Roman Catholic clergy. While celibacy may seem to be overtly pious and holy, its roots as it has been practiced within organized religion over the centuries have been steeped in greed and lust.

***"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly
as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom,
and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs
with gratitude in your hearts to God"***
(Colossians 3:16)

Are you wholly convinced about the *pilgrimage aspect* of your Covenant with our Father that leads to your salvation? We want to admonish you about the intensity of your determination to walk in the love-grounded, obedient trust in Lord Jesus that is needed during these unsettled times. To *admonish* someone is to *warn* or *reprimand with firmness* someone who is heading down a wrong path. The Bible commands us to combine admonishment with our teaching, because too often those who listen to sound teaching do nothing with it! (See, for instance, 1 Thessalonians 5:12.) While teaching may impart knowledge, it *doesn't change* anyone. The Germans of this past century were the most biblically knowledgeable nation of all time — yet their Bible knowledge didn't keep them from initiating two world wars and a holocaust of epic proportion.

From our Father's vantage point, there's little difference in the lives of those today who claim to be His but live in self-centered idolatry and the people of ancient Israel who took part in religious service yet were spiritually adulterous in their hearts. The Older Testament is riddled with prophetic warnings from the servants He sent to warn His beloved people. Yet, loving their darkness more than Him and His holy way of life, all but a remnant ignored or even scoffed at admonishment and warning. (Read through the prophet Jeremiah if you haven't done so in a while. The sobering parallels will grieve you.)

Christians today face similar temptation to equate religious teaching with lives that are acceptable to our Father. Pews are filled on Sunday mornings, and teaching makes listeners feel pious. However, the fruit of teaching that involves no admonishment, no accountability to *live out what is heard*, is a compromised, self-satisfied people whose core beliefs and values match that of the world.

The priests of the Older Testament could demand obedience from the people to bring their sacrifices and gather for appointed feasts. Yet these intermediaries between God and His people were reluctant to admonish the worshipers. That's why God repeatedly sent "His servants the prophets" to speak forth His Word. They warned of both the consequences of disobedience and rebellion against Him as well as the blessing of forgiveness and restoration if they turned from their wickedness and returned to Him in their heart. (Again, this theme of God's people refusing to repent and return to Him permeates the 52 chapters of Jeremiah.)

Today's congregations, however, find minimal if any prophetic input. The absence of authentic apostles, prophets and evangelists (Ephesians 4:11) is why non-admonishing Bible studies and Sunday school classes abound. These unbiblical methods fill minds with biblical facts but offer no stimulus toward the change the Spirit of Christ would make. Without admonishment, hearers continue in complacency, failing to produce the fruit of Christ-likeness in a way of life that reflects Him and His Kingdom purposes for His followers.

Paul's exhortation has personal meaning and encouragement for me (Mike) and for others who fulfill their call as apostle, evangelist, prophet, or shepherd: "*We ask you, brothers, to respect those who are working hard among you, those who are guiding you in the Lord and **admonishing you in order to help you change***" (1 Thessalonians 5:12, JNT). Sadly, countless followers of Jesus are mired in spiritual lethargy because those who love enough to admonish the unrepentant are few in number today. We personally rejoice that our Father is bringing to an end this clergy system establishment that mimics corporate America. It has hindered so many from personally fulfilling their Kingdom responsibilities by enticing them to be complacent pew-sitters.

If you've prayerfully read the **Gospel of the Covenant Is the Pilgrimage to Salvation**, then you understand that your salvation is found at the end of your earthly journey on earth when you stand before the Judgment Throne and are welcomed before our Lord. Baptists, for example, as well as other denominations that teach that salvation occurs after a "prayer of faith" preach an outright lie. Perhaps that is why those denominations that teach such a gross distortion of God's Word lead this nation in breaking their marriage covenants through divorce. They've missed the vital connection and parallel between our Father's Covenant in Jesus and the covenant of marriage.

How tragic that the clergy of so many denominations have distorted our Father's purpose for His Covenant — to bring forgiving reconciliation and spiritual union of His indwelling Spirit. Refusing to present the pilgrimage of the marriage covenant as a reflection in the physical world of our Father's spiritual Covenant with His own, they've

unwittingly absolved divorce among the unchurched. And Christians in this country lead unbelievers in rate of divorce. This is a sobering reality. A party line of lies has led to both epidemic numbers of adultery and divorce among Protestant clergy (and laypeople), as well as staggering homosexuality, pedophilia and fornication among Catholic clergy. Wouldn't you agree that the time for admonishment is long past due?

***"If anyone sees his brother commit a sin
that does not lead to death,
he should pray and God will give him life.
I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death.***

There is a sin that leads to death. I
am not saying that he should pray about that"
(1 John 5:16).

Until Lord Jesus returns, we all will encounter death. From the above verse it seems that there is a type of sin which a "brother" — one who has identified himself as a Christian — may commit that leads to spiritual death, that is, eternity in hell. The Bible bears witness that there comes a time when people's *toleration for sin* becomes so grave that our Father turns His back on them. That's the gist of John's warning in this epistle (see, for example, 5:2,3,13; 3:6-14). This is why on your pilgrimage toward your salvation you need to be especially careful during these days of increasing toleration for sin in Christendom. Don't allow yourself to be deceived by turning away from authentic trust in the Son of God or by deliberate, ongoing disobedience to His Word. Neither a watered-down false gospel nor a lifestyle of ongoing, tolerated sin will allow you to press on to the salvation that awaits those who "endure to the end" (Matthew 10:22; 24:13).

In our November 1998 Newsletter, *Preparing Our Families*, we cite the family stages through which all civilizations pass: the Trustee Stage, the Domestic Stage, and the Atomistic Stage. This final stage heralds the end of that particular society, and it's this one that we're addressing since that's the present state of this nation.

An obsession with individualism develops during the **Atomistic Stage**. People are seen as distinct units rather than finding identification with their family. Heavy emphasis is placed on individual rights and entitlements — in other words, giving way to unabashed indulgence of their sin nature. Societies such as ours which are undergoing the period of disintegration in which the Atomistic Stage reigns resemble swarms of antagonistic insects at war with each other. Obsessed with their own desires and concerns, individuals even within the church system perceive God's commands as infringements on their own personal freedoms and choices.

Many of the characteristics of the Atomistic society pervade this culture:

1. Marriage loses its sacredness and permanence, and is frequently broken by divorce.
2. Feminist movements abound. Women lose their inclination for childbearing and for raising their own children, and the birth rate as a whole decreases.
3. There is an increased public disrespect for the role of parents and for authority in

general, so that parenting becomes harder for those who are still trying to rear children to be responsible and respectful.

4. Juvenile delinquency, promiscuity, and rebellion increase.

5. There is an increasing desire for, and acceptance of, adultery.

6. Widespread tolerance for sexual perversions of all kinds, especially homosexuality but also rape, incest and pedophilia, brings about increased occurrence of these. **This generally marks the final stage of social disintegration.**

If you want to follow Jesus with all your heart, how can you then live as an individual, a spouse, a parent, a "Body part" of a faith family? You must **apperceive** the Scriptures and put aside all of the revisionist forms you've adapted to compromise with the world. Compromise leads down the broad path of destruction, a tempting way of life that draws you away from the joyful security and assurance of our Lord's way. HIS path is very precise and is according to His Word. It's the *only one* that leads to eternal life, and that should be a powerful motivation for you! Lord Jesus continues to warn us how we should live in this lawless age: *"Enter in through the narrow gate, because wide is the gate and broad is the way which leads away to destruction, and many are the ones going in through it. But small is the gate and made narrow is the road leading away to life, and few are the ones finding it"* (Matthew 7:13,14, literal translation).

The darker it gets in this nation as we rapidly head for the chastisement that's due us from our holy Lord, the more intense and intentional we need to be about establishing a Bible-based faith walk for ourselves and our families. *Spiritual adultery* in our Lord's sight is any compromise with the way of the world around us. And that is the path down which so many clergy are leading the complacent today.

"Then the LORD said to me, 'Do not pray for the well-being of this people'" (Jeremiah 14:11).

An important lesson is to be learned from our spiritual history as it is related to us in the Hebrew Scriptures. There really does come a time in which our God has had enough — His longsuffering patience comes to an end. Perhaps you, like us, have prayerfully read through the Book of Jeremiah and are totally convinced that western Christendom is in the same stage of sinful rebellion that Israel found itself. Yet note this: God would not even allow Jeremiah to pray for the nation, for those who were under the delusion that as "God's people" they would be kept safe even as they lived in willful disobedience to Him. It was too late for any call for repentance. Our Lord goes on to say, *"Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind would not be favorable toward this people. Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth"* (Jeremiah 15:1, but please read all of chapter 15).

Think of the sorrow in the heart of a loving and faithful God to have to speak such words. But it wasn't only to Jeremiah He spoke. Ponder how offended our Lord must have been when He spoke through the prophet Ezekiel about *any* land that persists in unfaithfulness to Him: *"Even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they could save neither son nor daughter. They would save only themselves by their righteousness"* (Ezekiel

14:20).

As confirmed by John's words cited above, *"There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that"*, there is indeed a sin that is so grave that praying for that offender is not encouraged. There is also a time when a person (or nation, for that matter) can tolerate sin to such an extent that God turns a deaf ear to them (see 1 Peter 3:12; Jeremiah 18:17). This is why it is so important for you to scrutinize your relationship with our Father:

- Are you coming before our Father in persistent, believing prayer? Is He listening to you?
- Do you readily see a pattern of Him answering your prayers?
- Does praise from your lips for His answers resound from you to others?

The seduction of the Atomistic Stage is all around us. Tolerated sin and lawless compromise abound throughout western Christendom in particular, especially in the Church Growth Movement. Resist for our Lord's sake — for His holy Name and reputation — and be all the more diligent in applying the Word of God to your life. Don't let yourself be like the frog in the pot of water where the temperature was raised so gradually that the frog was boiled before it realized what was happening. Yet, this is what is happening to so many within Christendom whose lives parallel those enslaved by the Atomistic Stage of this culture. The *teachings* they've received have inculcated them from their due response of obedience to God. They've become listeners only and have placed on Him an obligation to make their life happy.

The mindset of Cain which followed his own way of serving God resulted in arrogant anger rather than humble repentance. Isn't this what you're seeing among so many self-proclaimed "Christians" today?

***"In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits
of the soil as an offering to the LORD.
But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.
The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering,
but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor.
So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast"***
(Genesis 4:3-5).

Cain had approached God on his own terms and was rejected. He allowed his sin nature to control him and was rebuked for this: *"If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it"*(Genesis 4:7). If a survey were done throughout Christendom today, the vast majority would find that they are angry with God for some perceived failure on His part to answer their prayers. Yet, like Cain, they refuse to face that their own **unconfessed sin** and **communal unrighteousness** of those with whom they fellowship have fanned their internal anger with God. Like Cain and the Israel of

Jeremiah's time, *their sin* has caused our Father turn His back and refuse to hear them.

Once again, if you wholeheartedly yearn to be true to our Lord in this Atomistic society which is so like Sodom and Gomorrah, you must be determined to love our Lord by applying His Word to your life. Only then can you resist both the subtle and blatant influences which are swirling about you. Remember, in an Atomistic society, each person lives for himself, intent on a life of personal pleasure and self-pursuit.

We who would be true to Christ are in a time of **extremis**. To be *in extremis* means that a situation has gotten so bad that there is only **ONE** course of action that can be taken to save yourself. Our Father, in His tender mercy, has sent forth the Hebraic foundations on which you can put feet to your trust in the Lordship of Jesus — a *continuity* of Scripture from Older to Newer revelation of Himself and His commands. As He *restores* the Jewish people to the land of Israel, He is *restoring* to us Gentiles the processes of trust and obedience which were given to the earliest followers of Jesus (Acts 3:21). We must *restore* these as a way of life for ourselves because He isn't giving us another choice!

Will you be attacked by those who want to hide in the clergy-dominated system that placates sin? Yes, you will! You may be called "cultish" as we've sometimes been labeled because we don't fellowship before our Lord with the unrepentant until they do repent. Our love for our Father compels us not to forfeit Him answering our prayers by joining with those who refuse to confess their sins. *Biblical fellowship* calls for repentant hearts ready to confess and return to His way of living. If you choose to "fellowship" with the unrighteous, you'll find no testimony to His glory and faithfulness in your life.

You may still be gathering in a congregation with those who tolerate sin in themselves and others. They want only to have their soulish desire for pleasant music or entertaining sermonettes or animated activities met. Please heed this warning: **Flee this snare of pagan-adapted religious practice and leadership! Begin to live in the pattern of the earliest followers of Jesus, set apart by His Spirit for holiness as spiritual family to serve His purposes. Begin to establish your home in communal righteousness, and ONLY fellowship with others who purpose to do likewise.**

Don't become frog stew!

Mike and Sue

P.S. Underlying the rule for celibacy within the Roman Catholic Church was the motive to ensure that clergy produce no heirs to whom church property could be bequeathed. (As late as the 11th century, married clergy were allowed to enter the priesthood, though they were required to live celibately — an unrealistic and unnatural condition, to be sure!) To quote Dave Hunt in his exposé, *A Woman Rides The Beast*, "Pope Gregory VII, bemoaning the difficulty in stamping out marriage among priests, declared: 'The Church cannot escape from the clutches of the laity unless priests first escape from the clutches of their wives.'" (p. 163) Mandatory celibacy is never found in Scripture, nor was it practiced by the apostles. The concept was not, in fact, the prohibition of sex but

of *marriage*, which would create a supposed divided loyalty to wives and children. Therefore, as recorded by the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, fornication and homosexual perversion were historically rampant precisely because human nature sought out physical intimacy of one kind or another.

Whenever man tries to *add to God's commands* either to guard against transgression (as did the Pharisees) or to allow for sin (as the previous paragraph details), the heavy burden leads to greater failure.