

3 Ways Porn Steals From Your Marriage

John is a normal guy. He's a Christian, a businessman and a good father who happens to struggle with a pornography addiction.

Introduced to pornography at the young age of 11, he just seems to always struggle with the pull of it. Growing up, getting through school, marrying and having two kids helped life to seem normal but always right there under the surface is this pull of the forbidden that he always seems to lose.

John has great intentions and every time he fails, he tells himself, "This is the last time." John doesn't share his struggle with his wife because it will probably upset her, and it just affects him anyways, right?

Christine is John's wife and constantly struggles with her self-image. She never feels quite settled or secure in her marriage. Although John is a good provider and always comes home, there are times when he just seems to check out.

Although he is nice to her most of the time, sometimes he just seems to pick her apart. It is those times that Christine thinks about most days and wonders if she's good enough for John and if he is eventually going to find someone else if she doesn't measure up a little better as a wife.

So Christine struggles, she tries to work out, she tries different makeup, different hairstyles, better outfits, and although the *new* works for a little while, it eventually settles back in to those same old uncomfortable interactions that leaves her feeling less than.

This isn't a how-to article on eliminating porn from your life. In marriage mentoring and counseling, I have seen

countless men addicted to pornography. The ones who have successfully been delivered from that addiction all had several things in common. They recognized what their addiction was doing to their relationship with God, they recognized what their sin was doing to their relationship with their wife and they recognized the very real capability of sexual sin passing down through the generations to their children.

They then after reviewing all the evidence, made a firm decision that they wanted pure relationships more than secret sin. They confessed to God *and* their wife, and were genuinely changed through grace and forgiveness and the power of Jesus Christ to be overcomers, more than conquerors, exceedingly and abundantly free from their past.

Here are three ways porn steals from your marriage:

1. Porn steals honest and open communication from your marriage. You can never get to a level five-communication status with your wife if you are always hiding something from her. Every time the conversation goes a little too deep and you find yourself a little too open, you have to reign it back in to keep from revealing something about your hidden life.

This leaves your wife feeling abandoned and disconnected from you which, in turn, causes her to usually withdraw as well. If there is always something between you and God, is your relationship in good standing? If there is always something between you and your wife, is your relationship in good standing? A foundation for a healthy, affair proof, divorce proof marriage is honest and open communication about everyday life. The more you know about each other's struggles, the more you can pray for and support each other.

2. Porn steals a genuine unconditional love from your marriage. Once you dive in to the world of porn, it's like a slippery slope. What started at the surface soon becomes mundane and you have to go further to try to maintain an

excitement

Now what happens next is beyond your control. If you're immersed in pornography you will begin to view people as sexual objects only. Those that are "good" for sex and those who are "bad" for sex, those you are attracted to and those you aren't attracted to will be the only two categories you view people in. You no longer will think with concern for someone's well-being but only if they look hot or not. This will bleed over in to your relationship with your wife.

Does she look hot enough, does she act like the girls on the video, and does she perform as well as those girls perform? If not, you begin to become bitter towards her for not meeting your new expectations. You deserve more, you need more, and this isn't cutting it.

You become condescending and mean trying to get her to respond with more enthusiasm, more passion, but it only drives her away, because her number one need from you is security and she doesn't have it anymore. Unconditional love and security brings a whole new level of intimacy in a relationship. If your wife knows you love her unconditionally, she will more than likely be much more available to you physically (barring any other situations not mentioned).

3. Porn steals the utter relief of holiness from your marriage. Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote that a marriage is a Holy Office to hold. One to be cherished and respected and treated with dignity, ordained and sanctioned by God Himself.

Pornography addiction within a marriage is not honoring to the office and not honoring to God and completely dishonoring to your wife. There's a certain stress that lies under the surface when dealing with unconfessed sin. "But I confessed it to God, Steve!"

It is still a sin against your wife that requires confession. Carrying around a potential threat to your family

all by yourself is dangerous and deadly to your family spiritually. There are two ways this secret will eventually come to the light, by your confession or by revelation. Revelation to those around you will be much more embarrassing. There is an utter relief when holiness returns and there's nothing between you and God and nothing between you and your wife.

If your wife isn't a safe place for you to confess, (some women aren't) try a Pastor or a counselor first. Then ask him for help in revealing it to your wife. You may need counseling to stabilize your marriage. You may need a program like Pure Life Ministry to hold you accountable to finding your deliverance. Whatever the cost, it's less than what porn costs your marriage and family.

Praying for your release from this bondage and for you to feel the utter relief of freedom.

Galatians 5:1 "For freedom Christ freed us. Stand fast therefore and do not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (MEV).

Even if porn isn't your struggle, what else do you recognize that you are allowing to steal from your marriage? Share on social media or in the comments below.

Stephen Miller is a Family Life Pastor at Crystal River Church of God, an ordained minister in the Church of God, the Men's Ministry leader of Warriors with a Covenant and a Married Life Small group marriage ministry leader. Steve and his wife Jessica present regularly for the Marriage Restored Conference. You can read more of his work at Marriage Encounter and read his book "Fight for Her! A Marriage in Crisis and God's Intervention."

Mainstream Media Claims Christians' Hysteria About Persecution in the West Is 'Groundless' and 'Morally Distasteful'

The Guardian has been criticized by The Christian Institute for claiming that Christians' concerns about marginalization in the U.K. are "hysterical", "morally distasteful" and "groundless."

An editorial in the paper suggests that the severe persecution of Christians overseas means Christians in the U.K. should not complain about the lesser problems in their own country.

It also describes Christian evangelism as "obnoxious and embarrassing" but says it should not be made illegal.

Institute spokesman Simon Calvert said: "Most U.K. Christians do not need *The Guardian* to remind them that their own marginalization should not be put on a par with the persecution of believers overseas."

'Vital for Society'

"But this does not mean that highlighting such marginalization is "hysterical." Why are Christians the only people the *Guardian* thinks should keep quiet when they are mistreated?

"The editorial seems to equate "civilized society" to "endorsing homosexual relationships." In so doing it seeks to

devalue centuries of orthodox Christian thinking and entirely ignore the fact that Christianity has made arguably the biggest single contribution to the civilized society our country has enjoyed for hundreds of years.

“More than that, they ignore the fact that the principle of religious liberty, Christians being able to live out their faith in the public square, is vital for a truly civilized society.

Ordinary Christians

“The Christian Institute has helped many ordinary Christians who have been punished for simply wanting to live out their faith in a consistent way.

“Former housing manager Adrian Smith was demoted and suffered a 40 per cent pay cut, simply for disagreeing with gay marriages happening in churches on his personal Facebook page.

“And Christian registrar Lillian Ladele was pushed out of her job after Islington Council tried to force her to officiate at same-sex civil partnership ceremonies.”

Ashers

The Guardian refers to Ashers Baking Company, another Christian Institute case, which hit the headlines when the owners were taken to court simply for declining to decorate a pro-gay marriage campaign cake.

Mr. Calvert said: “The editorial clearly implies that Christians should behave as if things they believe to be wrong are actually right. *The Guardian's* approach leaves no scope for courteous, conscientious disagreement.

“Whilst mangling the facts of the Ashers case, it says that “being asked to ice a cake for a gay wedding is hardly

martyrdom. It's just the price of living in a civilized society."

'Gratuitous'

"It may concede that 'no one should be compelled to make propaganda for a cause they think false or pernicious,' but excludes Ashers from that. It also says 'Christian evangelism should not be made illegal.'

"The fact that *The Guardian* (is) even discussing the possibility speaks volumes about where they are coming from, as does their gratuitous remark that personal evangelism is 'obnoxious and embarrassing' and their implied slur that Christian employees are 'difficult.'

"After years of being told that Christian morality should not be allowed to have any influence on the law, Christians might be surprised to see *The Guardian* now admitting that 'any society has to privilege some ethical viewpoint and some virtues.' Clearly, they mean their own secularist viewpoint, not the Christian one, which they assert is 'mistaken.'"

'Sinister'

Letters criticizing the editorial's claims were subsequently published by the newspaper.

One respondent questioned whether it would now be supporting a campaign to remove the right for conscientious objection to military service, in light of the editorial's disregard for individuals' conscience.

Another described the editorial as "sinister" and "exultant at the state seeking to suppress the expression of Christian conscience."

Loretta Lynch Confirmed as Attorney General

Loretta Lynch won Senate approval as U.S. attorney general on Thursday, becoming the first black woman to occupy the post at a time when deadly altercations between white police and unarmed black men are making headlines.

The Senate confirmed Lynch by a vote of 56-43 to end a five-month partisan deadlock over her nomination by President Barack Obama. She had waited for a vote longer than the last seven attorneys general combined.

Obama said Lynch, the 55-year-old U.S. attorney for Brooklyn, New York, had credibility with both law enforcement and the communities they police.

He told supporters from his Organizing for Action political group that he would work with her to rebuild trust so that everyone felt safe and that the law was working on everyone's behalf.

Taking over the Justice Department from Attorney General Eric Holder, Lynch also will face early tests on financial cases alleging some of the world's largest banks helped clients evade U.S. taxes and manipulated currency markets.

She is expected to start work on Monday.

Ten Republicans voted for Lynch, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. The tally in Lynch's favor was larger than expected, perhaps reflecting political concerns. Of the Republicans who backed her, four are up for reelection next year, three of them from states with big cities that have

large African-American populations.

As attorney general she will likely be confronted with civil rights cases stemming from police altercations in several U.S. cities.

On Tuesday, the Justice Department said it was gathering information to determine whether it can bring civil rights charges in the death of a man who died after being arrested by Baltimore police.

Freddie Gray, a 27-year-old black man, was arrested by white officers on April 12 and died days later after slipping into a coma. A preliminary autopsy report said he died from a spinal injury.

IMMIGRATION AN ISSUE

The voting margin in the Senate reflected many Republicans' disapproval of Lynch's support for an executive order issued by Obama in November that was meant to shield millions of undocumented immigrants from the threat of deportation.

Before the vote, Alabama Republican Senator Jeff Sessions, an outspoken critic of Obama's executive action on immigration, blasted Lynch. "We do not have to confirm someone to the highest law enforcement position in America if that someone is publicly committed to denigrating Congress, violating law," he said.

Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid berated Republicans for delaying the confirmation and said Lynch was "as qualified a candidate" as he had seen in almost 30 years in the Senate.

Lynch's elderly father, Lorenzo, a retired Baptist minister from North Carolina, watched the vote from a visitors' gallery in the Senate chamber.

Lynch had awaited confirmation since November when Obama, a fellow Harvard Law School graduate, nominated her.

Despite the delay, she was widely seen as less controversial than Holder, who often clashed with Republicans. She has said she aims to smooth relations with Congress.

Her nomination was backed by the Senate's Judiciary Committee by a vote of 12-8 on Feb. 26. But her confirmation languished over an impasse in the Republican-led Senate on an unrelated bill meant to protect human trafficking victims.

Democrats had balked at an anti-abortion provision included in that bill, but that dispute was settled on Tuesday and the bill was approved on Wednesday.

An accomplished career prosecutor, Lynch has twice served as U.S. attorney in Brooklyn, most recently since 2010. Her office there handled more terrorism prosecutions than most other offices in the United States. For two years, she also led a committee that advised the attorney general on policy.

At a Senate confirmation hearing on Jan. 28, Lynch said her top priorities would include fighting terrorist threats and cyber crime, and improving relations between law enforcement and minority communities.

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Rick Perry's Marriage Misstep

It is now the "gotcha" question being asked to every Republican presidential candidate: "Would you attend a same-sex 'wedding' ceremony?"

Rick Santorum said no, since it would be a violation of his faith.

Marco Rubio said yes, even though he disagrees with it as a Catholic, just as he disagrees with divorce and remarriage, but he would attend rather than hurt someone he loves.

Scott Walker said he had previously attended a same-sex "wedding" reception but stated that marriage was the union of a man and a woman.

Ted Cruz wouldn't answer, but apparently not because of ambiguity on his position, since he has called for pastors to preach about the meaning of marriage this Sunday. Instead, he refused to let the media determine his talking points.

Rick Perry, when asked the question by conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt said he "probably would" attend, but, similar to Ted Cruz, refused to get off his talking points, stating that the real issues we needed to focus on were the economy and national defense.

Of course, as valid as this question is, it can be a no-win question, one that caricatures the candidate in the eyes of potential voters (as either a hater or a compromiser) and one that can hardly be put forward as a main question in determining whether a candidate is ready to be president of the United States.

And so I can appreciate what Senator Cruz and Governor Perry did when asked the question, refusing to be backed into a corner, be it by conservative or liberal media, and also emphasizing what they felt was most important. After all, isn't that what politicians consistently do?

I'm also not minimizing the importance of strengthening our economy and having a robust national defense, especially in light of the many challenges that exist around the globe today.

It's the end of Governor Perry's answer that concerns me, and I say this with respect for him as a committed, God-honoring

Christian. His exact words were: "I mean, to me there's two big issues out here in front of us. It's the economy and its national defense, and if you're not really talking about those two on a regular basis and coming up with solutions on how to get this country back working, how to get this debt under control, and how to put America back into a position of being respected by our allies and being an influence in the world, then you're spending some time that, frankly, doesn't need to be spent on some issues that are secondary or tertiary to the future of this country."

Again, I understand the point Governor Perry was making, but does he really believe that the very definition of marriage is only "secondary or tertiary to the future of this country"?

Does he believe that the larger issues that flow out of the potential redefinition of marriage, which include the meaning and structure of the American family, the home environment in which hundreds of thousands of children will be raised, and the real threat posed to our freedoms of speech, religion and conscience by homosexual activism, are merely "secondary or tertiary to the future of this country"?

Perhaps preserving (really, rebuilding) the institution of marriage is of paramount importance to the future of our country?

As a fellow believer in Jesus and a fellow moral conservative, I appeal to you, Governor Perry, not to capitulate to what is politically correct in our culture today (certainly, that is not how you governed Texas, is it?) and not to sidestep fundamental issues of critical importance to our national well-being.

By all means, talk about the economy and national defense, and don't major on the minor issue of whether you'd attend a same-sex "wedding" ceremony.

But please don't downplay the importance of the issue of

redefining marriage.

There are few things more important to the nation than standing for marriage and family as God intended them to be.

Michael Brown is the author of 25 books, including Can You Be Gay and Christian? and host of the nationally syndicated talk radio show "The Line of Fire." He is also president of FIRE School of Ministry and director of the Coalition of

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Study: Eating Nuts Daily Reduces Cancer Risk

A growing number of studies are giving a whole new meaning to the term “health nuts.” Researchers across the country are linking daily consumption of nuts to a lower risk for developing cancer, in addition to heart disease and other conditions.

A series of studies presented at this month’s Experimental Biology 2015 conference in Boston suggest that walnuts and other nuts hold a great deal of promise in promoting health and longevity—adding to a body of evidence that includes more than 150 similar studies.

The likely culprits are active ingredients in nuts—such as alpha-linoleic acid (ALA), a plant-based omega-3 fatty acid, protein, vitamins E and B6, and nutrients like folate, selenium, magnesium, and antioxidants called polyphenols—that boost health.

Among the latest study findings:

Colon cancer: For the first time, researchers reported that components of nuts have an effect on colon cancer cells. Research conducted by the Department of Nutritional Science and Food Management at the Ewha Womans University in Korea showed that walnut extract significantly slowed the survival of the cancer stem cells. The results suggest walnut consumption could be a helpful adjunct to standard colon cancer therapies.

Cardiovascular health: Medical specialists with the Departments of Nutrition and Internal Medicine at the University of California-Davis found postmenopausal women with high cholesterol who ate nearly two ounces of nuts a day had notable improvements in blood-vessel function—a measure of

overall heart health—likely due to the polyunsaturated fatty acids they contain.

Age-related brain disorders: Scientists with the Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University found that laboratory rats fed a diet that included nuts had notable beneficial protective effects on critical regions of the brain tied to memory, cognition, and mental functions. Although the study involved animals, researchers believe the same mechanisms are at work in human brains.

Digestive health: A study by the Department of Physiology School of Medicine at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center found nuts have a marked effect on “healthy bacteria” in the gut that boost digestive health and overall wellness. In fact, a daily diet including about two ounces of walnuts were found to change “the gut microbial environment, by which walnuts may exert their beneficial health effects.” Those changes boost the body’s ability to digest and use the food we eat, lowering the risk for a range of chronic diseases.

“These findings help advance the understanding of the many advantages of eating walnuts as part of a healthy diet, and add to the more than 159 published papers over 20 years that have shown how walnuts affect heart health, diabetes, cancer, cognition, fertility, and weight management,” said Dennis A. Balint, CEO of the California Walnut Commission—a health research agency of the State of California.

In addition to the recent study findings presented at the Boston conference, food scientists from the University of Scranton recently reported walnuts have the highest amount of polyphenols of nine nuts they tested—including pistachios, pecans, Brazil nuts, peanuts, almonds, macadamias, cashews, and hazelnuts—and two kinds of peanut butter.

Joe Vinson, a chemist who led the new study, said it takes

only about seven walnuts a day to maximize their health benefits.

“[Walnuts] are high in fiber, low in saturated fats, high in beneficial unsaturated fats, and very high in antioxidants,” he said. “Nuts are a nutritious snack and food additive providing both nutrients and bioactive antioxidants which provide significant health benefits.”

Penn State researchers also reported last month that including peanuts—or a smoothie made from them—as a part of a high fat meal helps to control dangerous blood fats known as triglycerides, improve blood vessel function, and boost overall heart health.

“Peanuts are a healthy snack when eaten as part of a healthy diet,” said lead researcher Xiaoran Liu, a graduate student in the Department of Nutritional Sciences at Pennsylvania State University.

“Previous studies have shown that individuals who consume peanuts more than two times a week have a lower risk of coronary heart disease. This study indicates that the protective effect of peanut consumption could be due, in part, to its beneficial effect on artery health.”

In addition, a series of large studies publishes this year—including the Nurses’ Health Study of 76,464 women, the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study of 42,498 men, and a clinical trial in Spain involving people who ate a Mediterranean diet supplemented with extra nuts—have all found that the more nuts people consume, the less likely they are to die from cancer, heart disease, or stroke.

In line with these findings, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration endorses the consumption of nuts as part of a daily diet to boost cardiovascular health.

“Scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating

1.5 ounces per day of most nuts as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease," the FDA says.

For the original article, visit .

Why Iraq's ISIS Escapees Are Coming to Christ in Doves

"Could this happen to us in America?" That was the question from Patrick Klein President of Vision Beyond Borders following his recent trip to Northern Iraq.

The refugee crisis in and around Iraq is mind-boggling. According to the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), there are more 250,000 refugees living in Iraq. There are another 426,000 refugees from Iraq. And, another 1.9 million internally displaced people (IDPs). That means there are 2.4 million people who have incredible needs in and around Iraq.

Klein just returned from visiting refugee camps in and around Dohuk. The stories he heard were heartbreaking. The testimonies of Christians were amazing. The needs of refugees, overwhelming.

President of VBB Patrick Klein says he visited Iraqi refugees forced from their homes in Mosul—many of them, Christians. "Most of them have lost hope, and they're just discouraged. They say: 'Where do we go? What do we do now? Maybe if we come to America or Europe, we can start a new life.' I don't want to see 300,000 Christians leave Iraq [with] no Christian witness left in Iraq."

Many of the refugees are college educated, middle class Iraqis who had good jobs and bank accounts to help support their families. That all changed with the Islamic State started taking over in June. "There were 52,000 security forces protecting Mosul and the surrounding area. There were 3,000 ISIS. They believe Maliki, the former president of Iraq, told the generals to lay down their arms and surrender, and they don't know why."

When that happened, ISIS started going from village to village forcing Christians to leave. "A lot of [the Christians] had Muslim neighbors they knew for 30 years. These Muslim neighbors said, 'Get out of Iraq. You don't belong here. We hate you Christians.'"

They were forced to either convert to Islam, leave or die. "One man told us: 'I think God is chastising us because we forgot God. We stopped reading our Bibles. We stopped praying. Maybe God is using this.' He said, 'I want to tell you, my family and I we're having devotions together every night. We're praying together. We're reading the Bible together.' He said, 'We realize that all we have is Jesus.'"

According to Klein, this trip was the hardest trip he's ever made. It forced him to ask an important question. "I thought: 'Could this happen to us in America? Could we be forced with a decision? Are we going to follow Christ or walk away from everything we own?' I pray that the church in America would love him passionately, that we would not lose our first love."

The spread of ISIS is also impacting nominal Muslims who are helping refugees. Klein says, "A lot of people—Muslims—are saying, 'If this is what Islam is, we don't want to be Muslims anymore,' and they're opening up to the gospel."

VBB is working through local churches on the ground there to provide for the needs of refugees. They hope to fill a shipping container. "We're going to send hygiene supplies:

shampoo, soap, washcloths, toothbrushes, toothpaste, basic toiletry supplies. And then, we're also going to send in some medical supplies: vitamins, Tylenol, bandaids and Neosporin—things like that.”

Klein says you can either send in cash so VBB can purchase the supplies, or you can collect them yourself and send them to VBB's Wyoming office. [Click here](#) for additional information about VBB and their work worldwide.

3 Holy Spirit-Inspired Ways We Can Stand Up for the Persecuted Church Right Now

My heart has been heavy these past few days. When I heard the news and saw the images of the 30 Christian Ethiopians who were executed at the hands of ISIS I wept. I know I am not alone in my grief.

If you're like me, you feel powerless in the face of such atrocity. I wonder what, if anything, can be done. I have spent the past few days praying and seeking the face of the Lord about that very thing.

This latest act by ISIS certainly has me conflicted. Shock, anger, fear, horror and grief are the exact emotions they hoped to provoke with this brutal act. In many ways they got exactly what they wanted. They wanted us to feel this way—and we do. At the same time, how can we not express such emotion when we see our Christian brothers and sisters so callously slain?

Friends, there is a Christian holocaust taking place at this very moment. Hundreds of thousands of Christians are facing a modern-day genocide. Our generation must not repeat the mistakes of the past by turning a blind eye to the suffering of so many.

We must take a hard look at the realities of the evil we face and act accordingly. So far ISIS has been underestimated. Trust me on this, our failure to recognize their evil has extreme consequence.

ISIS is not the "JV squad." They've proven such by conquering large portions of Syria and Iraq. Their network is rapidly expanding throughout the world. Some reports even have an ISIS camp right off our southern border in Mexico. It's very likely they have cells inside the U.S. already.

The latest video from ISIS makes two things very clear. First, they want a war. Peace and prosperity is not their aim—they want prophetic fulfillment. They believe they are called by Allah to avenge the blood of Muslims who died at the hands of "Christian crusaders" and establish a united Arab state.

ISIS's videos are created to provoke us. They know exactly what they are doing. Their propaganda isn't created by a bunch of amateurs. They put a tremendous amount of thought and planning into their message. They are making that message clear: "Come fight us."

They know we will be disgusted by their brutality. They hope we will demand vengeance. For ISIS, war is inevitable. Such ideology cannot be negotiated with nor contained. It can only be destroyed. ISIS is leaving no other choice.

ISIS has declared their war on Christianity. You will not hear this reported in the mainstream media, but the latest video by ISIS is entitled "Until There Came to Them Clear Evidence." This strange title is actually a reference from the Quran, which states:

“Those who disbelieve from among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and Al-Mushrikun (believers in the Trinity), were not going to leave [their disbelief] until there came to them clear evidence” (verse 98:6).

According to the Quran, Jews and Christians are the “worst of creatures” whom deserve the “fire of Hell.”

Christians are vile to ISIS because we believe God has a Son. They see this as blasphemy towards Allah—one that must be purged from the world. In the video ISIS offers Christians three choices: Convert to Islam; submit to the Islamic State; or lose your head.

ISIS purposely recorded this portion of their video in english and directed the message to “the nation of the cross.” They state this is a battle between “faith and blasphemy; truth and falsehood. Until there is no more polytheism (belief in the trinity).”

Our government is reluctant to call this what it is. ISIS is not just political extremism; they see it as a war between Islam and Christianity. The beheading of our Ethiopian brothers is a warning to Christians in the Middle East and the West: “Oppose us, you’ll suffer the same fate.”

Today they spill Christian blood in desert sands of the Middle East. Soon they may do it in our city streets. They hope doing so will provoke us to war just as the attacks on 911 did before. They are not running from it. They want it. They are convinced their coming victory over the “Nation of the Cross” is the “clear evidence” that will convince Jews and Christians to convert to Islam.

So what must we do?

First, we must stand with the persecuted!

The most vital thing we can and must do is to pray for our

Christian brothers and sisters who are literally giving their lives for the sake of Christ. Have you prayed for the persecuted believers in the Middle East and around the world today? How about in this past week? Don't look the other way, and don't discount your prayers. I encourage you tonight as your family gathers for a meal stop and pray for the persecuted.

It was the prayers of the believers that opened the prison doors for Peter when he faced execution (Acts 12:16). The answer to their prayers came so suddenly and supernaturally that the interceding disciples didn't even believe Peter was standing at their door! They didn't realize the power of their own prayers. I dare say neither do we.

Another way we can stand with the believers is to lift up our voice. We live in a world where a video filmed by ISIS can travel around the world and strike outrage in the West. The Internet works both ways. A post or video made by you can travel back to the Middle East and bring encouragement to a people who wonder if anyone even notices their plight.

Your voice also raises awareness. Our nation will remain indifferent as long as we remain silent. God gave us a voice to encourage and edify one another. May we strengthen each other here and abroad.

Second, we must radically live our lives for Christ.

I reached out to a friend of ours who works intelligence in the Middle East. He shared that as ISIS continues its reign of terror and defends itself as pure Islam, many Muslims are being forced to question their faith. They are saying, "If this is Islam, then I want nothing to do with it."

There is an opening for a great harvest in the Middle East. Scripture tells us that had the enemies of Christ known the outcome of their actions, they would never have crucified our Savior. Likewise, ISIS doesn't realize pushing people from

Christ is actually opening the door for millions to find Christ.

ISIS has exposed to the world what true Islam looks like. Let us expose to the world what true Christianity looks like. We must fully embody the faith, hope and love that Christ calls us to. This lost and dying world needs us to embrace a radical faith.

Radical Christianity is very different from radical Islam. They rely in the power of force; we rely on the power of prayer. They speak a message of hate; we speak a message of love. They offer death; we offer life. We honor the lives of those who gave their life for Christ by living our lives for Christ. Pray for a great end-time harvest amongst the muslims of the Middle East!

Last we must support the underground church in the Middle East.

Churches in the Middle East are in distress. They need our prayers and they need our financial support. These communities of believers are working hard every day to strengthen and encourage one another and make a difference in hostile environments that are unfathomable to most of us.

Every church in the U.S. should seek out churches in the Middle East, especially in the most dangerous African and Arab nations, that they can support with their missions giving. If your network of churches doesn't have any contacts in the region, contact me and I'll put you in touch with several.

Honestly, each of these action steps will not mean much if just a few of believers act upon them. However, if we all collectively will embrace them, the impact will be felt.

Recently I walked through the Holocaust museum in Israel. I've been to several of these memorials around the world. Each one is built with the same purpose in mind. To remind us of the

past mistakes and warn us not to repeat them in the future.

At every monument and memorial I've found this statement by Edmund Burke engraved or expressed in some way.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

Are we not good men and women? If so then we cannot sit back and do nothing. The times we live in are calling upon us. We must do something!

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'Many in the Church Will Be Shocked to Find Themselves in Hell One Day'

A crisis is coming to the church. In fact, it's the church that must initiate it.

Matthew 26:73-75 (ESV), "After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you." Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately the rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

He Invoked a Curse on Himself

From the Life Application Commentary: While Peter may have hoped to seem a natural part of the group by joining in the conversation, instead he revealed, by his speech, that he did not belong there. This was too much for Peter, so he decided to make the strongest denial he could think of by denying with an oath, "I don't know the man." Peter was swearing that he did not know Jesus and was invoking a curse on himself if his words were untrue. He was saying, in effect, "May God strike me dead if I am lying."

Peter was running for *his* life. In the church today the prevailing focus is on our experience and the affirmation and protection of our lives and lifestyles. People go to church to enhance their lives. When their lives, or even their lifestyles, are threatened, people will begin to *run for their* lives. They will run to safety.

This clear and extreme denial of Christ will invoke a curse.

Jesus was so indignant about this type of reaction that he dealt with Peter in fierce fashion before this event even unfolded:

Matthew 16:21-23 (ESV), " *From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."*

Peter denied the cross, and Jesus rebuked Satan who was working through Peter (who Jesus had just identified as the rock, the CHURCH!). He made the point clear: Peter was mindful

of thing things of man and not the things of God. Jesus then said:

Matthew 16:24-25 (ESV), *“Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”*

A Crisis of the Cross

Apostles and prophets must step into their positions of authority and release a great crisis to the church. This is a necessary crisis as it will result in the true, abundant life of multiplied millions. The offensive, bloody cross must return to the church—and now.

When Jesus was hailed as King at the Triumphal Entry, the masses converged. The focus was self. They wanted Jesus to save them, make their lives better. They were crying out, “Hosanna!” which means, “save us now!”

So, Jesus complied. The only way to save the ones he loved was to face death on the cross. Yet, the rooster crowed and the crowds scattered and turned on Jesus. His closest friends ran for their lives. One cursed himself in his denial. Another betrayed Jesus and hung himself.

Yes, it’s time not to snack on some bread and grape juice, but to eat his flesh and drink his blood.

When the cross is introduced in its full, bloody force again in the church, we will watch this drama unfold another time. People will flee from the church when focus changes from personal freedom to personal cost. Betrayal will skyrocket. Fear will grip those who haven’t surrendered all.

Where will you be when the cock crows?

Generations Must Come to the Cross

Everybody ran for their lives but mom and son, Mary and John (along with Mary Magdalene) remained. The generations converged.

John 19:26-27 (ESV), *“When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, behold, your son!’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.”*

Luke 1:17 (NIV), *“And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”*

The elder generation must refuse to run. The younger generation must refuse to run. We must converge around the threatening, offensive cross of love. When we do, the harvest will come. The world is watching. The thief was watching and surrendered to the love that could only be revealed at the cross as the two generations deeply loved Jesus together:

Luke 23:43 (ESV), *“And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”*

Any movement that doesn't take place at the cross is a false movement. This is one reason I'm so troubled by some events, certain unity movements in a city, pastors meetings, etc. If a pastor isn't fully ready to resign his mission, to lose his salary, to surrender his sheep, to shut his church down, I have little interest in meeting. The cross demands everything. When pastors of a city gather around the cross and don't focus on personal gain, revival will be at hand. Yes, many will be offended, but the Harvest will flood in!

False Love and False Grace

The false love and false grace doctrines must be exposed.

These belief systems are causing Hell to continue to expand at an unprecedented pace.

These beliefs are centered around self. The focus is our benefits instead of cross of Christ and instead of the harvest.

I've heard it said that we as Christians no longer have to confess our sins. False grace.

Recently, I was challenged to focus on love and to redefine certain scriptural interpretations to make them more favorable to the homosexual community. False love.

Ignoring God's holiness and justice in our lives does not equal grace. Tolerance does not equal love.

True love and true grace are found at the cross of Christ. God's intolerance of sin resulted in the death of his Son. There is no way he has suddenly become tolerant of those sins today.

Mark 8:34 (NKJV), *"When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."*

Many in the church will be shocked to find themselves in Hell one day.

This is what God spoke to me after my life-transforming encounter with the forces of Hell 21 years ago.

The false grace/false love messages are resulting in entire church congregations unwittingly buying a ticket to Hell, all while they lift their hands and worship Jesus and read their Bibles and pay their tithes. They have an imaginary salvation.

Jesus told five out of seven churches of *believers* in Revelation that they were lost, on the way to destruction. A

total of 5 out of 7 professing Christians were Hell bound! It's horrific yet easy to believe that this ratio may be accurate in our churches today!

Leaders will most certainly be held accountable for this silent slaughter of God's children.

It's time to speak plainly about the truths of scripture, the severity of the hour and the mandate of obedience. Heaven and Hell lie in the balance.

Ephesians 5:4-6 (ES,), " *Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.*"

The passage goes on to say...

Ephesians 5:10-11 (ESV), " *and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.*"

We must discern, and then expose darkness. We must not become so focused on pleasure and enjoyment, especially as Christians. In fact, we can't be primarily focused on being entertained in the name of God. We must take up our crosses, discern what is pleasing to God (not to us) and expose darkness!

Check out this verse regarding focus on self:

Romans 2:8-9 (ESV), " *but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. ⁹ There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the*

Greek.”

This is the risk the false grace/false love movement presents. This is the fruit.

Watch what happens when true grace is in the equation:

Acts 4:32-35 (ESV), *“Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.”*

So, we see those in the church had great grace! Does that mean God’s judgment and holiness is no more? No way. Check out a couple of people who also had great grace on their lives:

Acts 5:1-11 (ESV), *“But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife’s knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.” When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it. The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him. After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. And Peter said to her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much.” And she said, “Yes, for so much.”*

But Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.

Their disobedience in a season of great grace resulted in great judgment. And, then, fear hit the church.

We need this fear of the Lord again!

If we are to avoid a repeat of this, we must renounce the false grace/false love messages and sound the alarm of holiness and death to self!

When the cock crows, will you be running for your life as you curse yourself or will you be at the foot of the cross as the blood of Jesus pours out over you?

Will you be using God for personal gain and experience his judgment or will you embrace the fear of the Lord?

A crisis of the cross is coming to the church again.

John Burton has been developing and leading ministries for over 20 years and is a sought out teacher, prophetic messenger and revivalist. John has authored nine books, has appeared on Christian television and radio and directed one of the primary internships at the International House of Prayer (IHOP) in Kansas City. Additionally, he planted two churches, has initiated two city prayer movements and is currently directing a prayer and revival focused ministry school in Detroit called theLab University. John's mandate is to call the church in the nations to repentance from casual Christianity and to burn in a manner worthy of the King of kings. He is equipping people to confront the enemies of God (established religion,

Jezebel, etc.) that hinder an extreme, sold-out level of true worship.

For the original article, visit .

One Sure-Fire Way to Rev Up Your Lagging Metabolism

It is believed that our ancient ancestors ate up to six pounds of green leaves per day. Can you imagine eating a grocery bag full of seasonal greens each and every day?

Few of us eat even the minimum USDA recommendation of five servings of vegetables and fruit a day or three cups of dark green vegetables per week. And yet, green veggies deliver a bonanza of vitamins, minerals, enzymes, biophotons and phytonutrients. The good news is that you can juice them and easily consume one to three cups of greens per day.

Calorie for calorie, dark green leafy vegetables are among the most concentrated sources of nutrition. They are a rich source of minerals including iron, calcium, potassium and magnesium plus vitamins K, C and E, along with many of the B vitamins.

They also provide a variety of phytonutrients including alpha- and beta-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin, which protect our cells from damage and our eyes from age-related diseases. Dark green leaves even contain small amounts of omega-3 fats.

Juicing is one way you can get these power-packed beautifiers into your diet every day. There are many greens that can be juiced such as collard leaves, chard, beet tops, kale, kohlrabi leaves, mustard greens, parsley, spinach, lettuce,

cilantro, watercress, arugula and dandelion greens. All you need is a juicer and some great-tasting recipes to make a significant change in your health.

Green juices are good because even if you took the time to chew up a couple of cups of green veggies each day, you wouldn't get as much benefit from them as you would from juicing them up. It's the mechanical process of juicing the vegetables, which breaks apart plant-cell walls and makes absorption better than even the best-chewed food. It has an effect like throwing marbles at a chain link fence rather than tennis balls—juiced contents are going to go through your intestinal tract in a way that “tennis ball-size” nutrients can't.

Juice contains easily absorbed micronutrients that will optimize your overall health and wellness. Green juices energize your body, fire up your metabolism, speed weight loss and over-haul your health.

Adapted from Cherie Calbom's *The Juice Lady's Remedies For Thyroid Disorder* (Charisma House, 2015).

Cherie Calbom, M.S., C.N., *is the author of more than 20 books, including The Juice Lady's Big Book of Juices and Green Smoothies and Remedies for Stress and Adrenal Fatigue. She holds a Master of Science degree in whole foods nutrition from Bastyr University. Cherie and her husband, John, offer juice health retreats throughout the year, along with health and healing conferences. For more information, visit .*